

Minnekotan

Minnesota Dakotas District of Kiwanis
International
September 2026



A Message from the Governor

I have been quite busy since my last letter to you. Since that time I had the great pleasure of attending the Manila Convention (ICON). The energy shown by the Asia Pacific group was impressive!

I had opportunities at ICON to talk about new ideas with the heads of Kiwanis: President Michael Mulhaul, Executive Director Paul Palazzolo, Chief Operating Officer Jeff Otis and newly elected-President Hope Markes.

Soon after the International Convention we had our DCON (District Convention) in West Fargo. It was fun as those who attended will attest. The new Governor is Karen Davis from the Lead Club in South Dakota, and the Governor-elect is Jaci Lageson from the Mankato, MN Club.

Jason Stewart (Convention Chairperson) and crew did a wonderful job in preparing this event. Thank you, Jason!! Next year's DCON is tentatively set for Fergus Falls, MN so now is the time to begin planning.

Thank you all for the strong dedication you showed during this year! I wish Governor Karen Davis the very best for her year (2026-27).

Aktion Club Contest Deadline Quickly Approaching!

Submitted by Amanda Thrift, Aktion Club Administrator

Aktion Club Leaders now is the time to start collecting the projects your club has been completing for the annual contests. All entries must be submitted online by 11:59 Eastern time on September 15th.

Once they are submitted, the entries will go through the judging process, and winners will be notified December 15th. Haven't started projects yet? There is still time! Check out the website to learn more, <https://www.aktionclub.org/awards-and-recognition/>.

Set Our Banner Free!

MISSING: Division 1 vinyl LT Governor banner. Responds to the name of "Best Division in Minn-Dak Kiwanis District". Last seen living its best life at DCON 2026 in West Fargo ND. If you accidentally took it home thinking it was a giant party scarf or new security blanket for your Division Lt Governor team, please return it. No questions asked, but be prepared next year!



A Message from the Secretary Treasurer

Happy September! Can you believe that we are entering the last month of this year? There are a few things you should be thinking about to get ready for October.

1. If your 2026-27 officers are not entered into Engage yet, get that done so that your club is listed in the Kiwanis Directory with the right contact information.
2. Send out your dues statements so that members get their payments to you before October. The dues for KI and the district are the same as last year.
3. Clean up your membership rosters so that you are only paying dues for active members.
4. Finalize your budget for next year. Double check to make sure you have dollars allocated to cover your club's priorities. Those priorities should include a plan for membership growth.
5. Complete and submit your membership plan to KI.
6. If your officers have not completed their Club Leadership Education, they can find the training on the KI website at <https://www.kiwanis.org/members/for-leaders/kiwanis-education/>

For highlights of our District Convention, go to: <https://k13.site.kiwanis.org/dcon/>

And if you have any pictures you want to share send them to me. I would like to add a picture gallery to the district convention page.



Public Relations Notes

from Katie Landwehr

Does your club have a custom Kiwanis club logo? See example below. Did you know that Kiwanis

International can make custom club logos for free?

If the answer is no, below are instructions on how to get one made for your club to use to help with promotional materials. Kiwanis International can also make special logos for your club if you are celebrating an anniversary (25, 50, 75, or 100 years).

Visit: www.kiwanis.org -> Click on members tab on top right -> scroll down and click on branding and marketing -> click on custom Kiwanis club logos -> login to your engage account -> click on request a custom logo and fill out the form provided.

Within 20 business days of your request submission, you will receive an email with a proof of your logo. After reviewing it carefully, reply to that email. You will receive your final logo package within 20 days of your final approval. Logos will be provided in various styles, in JPG, PNG and EPS formats. If you have any questions or concerns, email brand@kiwanis.org.



Kiwanis®
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS-FRIDLEY



Working Together to Open New Clubs

By sponsoring a new Kiwanis club or opening up a new Satellite group, your club helps ensure that more kids get the service and mentorship that Kiwanians provide. So if there's a need in a community, there's a need for Kiwanis.

Membership is what we do. This is how we do it.

Your Clubs 7-Steps of New Club Building!

1. Talk to your members and division Lieutenant Governor about opening a new club or expanding your club's reach by opening a Satellite group in a neighboring Community.
2. Conduct Site Survey and Site Selection with the District Club Opening Coordinator or District Club Strengthening Coordinator.
3. Once a site has been selected, an initial timeline must be established. The goal is to set a date for the new club's organizational meeting that works for all involved.
4. Designate 2 club members to attend Kiwanis International online [new club coaching training sessions](#).

5. Request your Club Secretary to fill out the Online New Kiwanis Club Charter [Reporting form](#).

6. Attend the District Club Opening discussions with the District Club opening team.

7. Work closely with the club coaches and division Lieutenant Governor team and District Club opening team.

New club opening events always add an element of excitement to the sponsoring club, stimulating enthusiasm and injecting energy. There is no financial obligation to sponsor a new Kiwanis club.

[Build. Nurture. Retain.](#) is not a membership campaign. Campaigns begin and end. By contrast, Build. Nurture. Retain. is designed as an ongoing initiative to make membership growth and club opening an integral part of Kiwanis culture.

Fairmont Early Risers Promote Bike and Scooter Safety



Kiwanis club members handed these out at our fishing derby, Interlaken

Heritage Days parade, both the kids and adult triathlons, and the Home Depot kid's building project held here in Fairmont this summer. They were also given to the Fairmont schools to go home in their backpacks before school was out for the summer.



A Message from Kiwanis International Children's Fund

By Kathy Welle

Did everyone have a fun time at the district convention in West Fargo, ND? Yes Yes and Yes.

Raffle table fundraiser for Children's Fund. Sales totaled \$860.00.



Several years ago, clubs in the MN-Dak District started the K Dollar challenge. K Dollars are collected to support The Kiwanis Children's Fund. Many Clubs bring their K dollars to the convention and are given "special recognition" for the K Dollars collected.

Some clubs send their \$\$ directly to K.I. Spring Valley Club MN. Sent \$1323.00, Sioux Falls sent \$550.00, and Jamestown, ND for \$338.00. Others bring the K Dollars to the convention, in the form of their check and some bring cash.

Here are the results of the K Dollar Challenge for 2025-2026. reported during the DCON:

1. Brainerd, MN - \$101.00
2. Fargo Rough Riders, Fargo, ND - \$280.00
3. Stillwater Area Kiwanis - \$910.00
4. Kiwanis of Madison, SD - \$500.00
5. Kiwanis Club of Lead SD - \$500.00
6. Turtle Mountain ND. - \$41.00
7. Devils Lake ND. - \$922.00
8. Moorhead Vikingland MN - \$100.00
9. Pierre-Fort Pierre SD. - \$668.00
10. Fairmont Early Risers, MN - \$598.00
11. Spearfish Club, SD - \$150.00. (Gail Arnold stated the Club submitted \$1000.00)
12. Roughrider Country, Dickinson, ND - \$780

Total K Dollars collected during DCON = \$5,555.00, and \$2211.00 K Dollar payments sent to KI Total \$7,766.00 for K Dollars collected during the year.

The July District Giving report shows \$61,861. When we add K Dollars \$5,555.00 and Raffle Table sales of \$860.00 from the convention it will be \$68,276. In addition, there will be other funds sent directly to the Children's Fund.

Thank you everyone for all you do and having another year of fun with the K Dollar Challenge!

This is a good time to complete the Club Impact Form for The Possibility Project (TPP), if your club has not sent it in yet. All dollars sent to Children's Fund are counted toward the TPP.





Minnesota Dakotas Kiwanis District Educational Foundation Makes a Difference

Submitted by: Lowell Disrud, Secretary-Treasurer

It is the beginning of another school year, and many students are beginning a new adventure in life by leaving home and going off to college. Your Foundation is providing scholarships to 56 of the brightest and most talented of these young people. The Foundation was able to provide \$850 for each of these scholarships and in most cases the local Kiwanis clubs contributed funds to make the scholarships \$1000 or more. This is one way that we can encourage future servant leaders and hopefully many future Kiwanis leaders. We have already received many sincere and heartfelt thank you notes from these recipients. They truly appreciate their scholarships.

As we receive thanks from the students the Foundation needs to thank each of you for your support and generosity. Your donations through Century Club donations, Messer Fellowships, Vantine Fellowships, Memorials, and other donations are what make these scholarships possible. You are making a difference not only to these young leaders but to the many who they will serve in the future. THANK YOU!

Red Wing Golden K Honors Ardis Kyker



Ardis Kyker of Red Wing was honored for 21 years of dedicated and outstanding service as Club Secretary and member of the Board of Directors to Red Wing Golden K Club.

Ardis joined Golden K on January 31, 2005 and was elected secretary September 30, 2005.

Kyker has received many awards for her service to the local Kiwanis club as well as recognition at the district and international levels including:

- Richard Featherstone Kiwanian of the Year - 2008
- George F. Hixson Fellowship - 2010
- Walter F. Zeller Award -
- Division Star Award - 2022
- Distinguished Club - 2021 - 2022
- Assistant Secretary - June 6, 2026
- Vantine Fellowship

Golden K Club President, Ron Ward presented Kyker with her award and highlighted Kyker's years of service and dedicated to "serving the children of the world." Kyker was honored at the Golden K Club meeting on July 9th with a framed certificate, bouquet of flowers, plus cake and ice cream that she shared with fellow Golden K members as well as friends at Village Coop that hosted the meeting.

Kyker is now the Secretary Emeritus and will continue serving on the Board of Directors and represent Golden K on the Advisory Board at MN Correctional Facility.

We Remember

Submitted by Dave and Paulette Odette

Our 2026 District Convention Memorial Service honored our district Kiwanians who have passed away during the past year. During the service we remembered the following Kiwanians. Let us remember all the good altruistic work they did during their life for their community as a member of Kiwanis! The complete Memorial Service PowerPoint program with a picture slide and short obituary for each is available for online viewing at

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

Albert Lea Day Breakers

R. Darryl Meyer
Richard "Dick" Polley

Albert Lea Golden K

Marvin H. Gehle
Clifford Thayne Nordland

Alexandria Golden K

John Henry Swanson
Vernon Eugene Wevley

Austin

Donald "Don" Henry Barnes

Bismarck

Helen Bickel
Camile Grothier

Brookings

Dean Hofland

Ely

Blane "Butch" Diesslin

Fargo

Rosemarie "Rosie" Johnk

Fergus Falls Noon

Jack Pearson

Grand Forks

Paul Raymond Fladland
Francis "Gerry" Gerald Joyce
Everett Curtis Knudsvig

Norris Orville Olson
Judge Kirk B. Smith

Lead

Stan Angle

Little Falls

Kathryn "Kitty" R. Verley

Mankato

Joseph "Joe" Dean Holland

Minot Golden K

George M. Gehant, III
Boyd Hanson
Richard "Dick" Duane Johnson
James J. Kraft

Moorhead Vikingland

Thomas Patrick Horan

North Suburban

Derek Anthony Theis

Northeast Metro Golden K

Donald Keith Ausemus

Northeast Minneapolis

William "Bill Sr." L. McReavy
Steve Mark Olson

Rochester Day Makers

Larry Ronald Scilley
Lyle Duane Solem

Rochester Golden K

Julie Ann McCoy

Sioux Falls

Robert "Bob" Doescher

Sturgis Golden K

Donald Dean Dube
E. DeWayne Hayes

Valley City

Larry J. Robinson

West Rapid City & Kerrville, TX

Charles "Walt" Roetter

Winona

Conway M. Elton

Aktion Club Members Prepare Contest Entries



Members of the Mitchell, South Dakota, Aktion Club have been hard at work

preparing entries for this year's Aktion Club contests. Club members teamed up to create posters, work on their club scrapbook, write and practice speeches, and produce a video that showcases their favorite service project.

Their completed entries will be submitted for competition, and the club is excited to share its work and represent Mitchell.

School Supplies for Kids



On Wednesday, August 12th, **Northeast Metro Golden K Kiwanis Club** members teamed up to assist the **Kids In Need**

Foundation by assembling and packing boxes that will provide school supplies for over 2000 school children. Fourteen club members formed an efficient assembly line, putting boxes together at the beginning of the line, rapidly filling each box with folders, markers, pencils, and erasers, and finally sealing the boxes for shipment.

It was a two-hour effort that demonstrated great teamwork.

Spring Valley Club Collects "K" Dollars

Our Kiwanis Club collects "K Dollars" throughout the year as a fundraiser for the Kiwanis Children's Fund. "K Dollars" are one-dollar bills with a Federal Reserve seal of "K" on the front of them.

Since this project first started, it has grown, and we now have family, friends, community members, waitresses, and business owners, from Spring Valley, Preston, Ostrander, and other towns, that save their "K Dollars" for us.

Thank You to everyone that has been a part of our collection efforts.

This photo is from today's Kiwanis meeting, and members are holding up packs of "K Dollars" that total \$1,323.00.



Get to Know Your Hosts!

Submitted by Courtney Fallway,
International Convention Chair



The 2027 Kiwanis International Convention will take place in the Texas-Oklahoma District, called T-O for short. The first club in this district formed in Dallas in 1917. Now the district has 37 divisions that are divided into 10 regions, overseen by trustees. The upcoming convention will be in Dallas too, so mark your calendars.



Minot Golden K Awards Scholarship

Hattie Heer and her mom, Cassie, attended the August 5, 2026, Minot Golden Kiwanis meeting to be awarded with a Certificate of

Recognition by the Kiwanis Educational Foundation of the Minnesota-Dakotas Kiwanis District for winning this scholarship.

Hattie, who is from South Prairie, was awarded a \$1000 scholarship from the Kiwanis Educational Foundation for her application. Hattie plans to attend North Dakota State University this fall to major in Nursing with a minor in Entrepreneurship.

Congratulations Hattie!

Rochester Day Makers Deliver School Supplies



Rochester Day Makers provided backpacks and supplies to two elementary schools in Rochester.

Helen Kolb, Maureen Bhaskaran and Dave Bhaskaran delivered school supplies and backpacks to

Riverside and Pinewood Elementary schools yesterday. They were happy to receive everything.

Thanks to Maureen for getting all the supplies and Jack Zierdt for getting the backpacks. Pinewood liked the backpacks unfilled so we did great! Hard to believe the summer is almost over.

Mitchell Club Shares the Joy of Reading



While attending the MinnDak Convention in Fargo, members of the Kiwanis Club of Mitchell, South Dakota, took a break to deliver books to Little Free Libraries around the city. Supporting Little Free Libraries is one of the club's service projects, and members

regularly help keep the libraries in Mitchell stocked with books.

The club also honors each guest speaker in a special way. A book is donated to a Little Free Library in the speaker's name. Before the book is donated, the speaker is invited to sign a sticker placed inside the cover. It's a simple way to recognize their contribution while encouraging a love of reading in the community

Fairmont Early Risers Random Acts of Kiwanians Recognition

In the fall of 2025, the Fairmont Early Risers Kiwanis Club established their Random Acts of Kiwanians Recognition. These recognitions are based on the principles of Random Acts of Kindness, which aims to spread positivity and improve someone's day. Random Acts of Kindness, regardless of their size, can create a ripple effect and encourage others to follow suit.

This recognition is given to non-Kiwanians in our community who perform actions that align with the Kiwanis "mission of improving

the world, one child and one community at a time."

To date the club has recognized four individuals and one group for their efforts in improving the world, one child and one community at a time.

The first, Random Acts of Kiwanians recognition was given to Emily Fett and Laura Odgren. This recognition is based on Laura and Emily's daily interaction within the community and their dedication to leading a book discussion on "The Anxious Generation". The book by Jonathan Haidt explores the critical issue of youth mental health in the age of smartphones, social media, and big tech.



Pictured:
School
Psychologist
Laura
Odgren,
Kiwanis
President
Jacob
Wurster,

Family Nurse Practitioner Emily Fett.

The second, Random Acts of Kiwanians recognition was given to Linda Maday and the South-Central MN Quilts for Veterans.

This recognition is based on Linda Maday and South-Central MN Quilts for Veterans mission of providing quilts to the 1200 veterans in the area. To date they have provided close to 100 quilts.

Please join us in recognizing this group for Making A Difference in our veteran's life.



Pictured:
Kiwanis
President
Jacob
Wurster and
Linda Maday

The third, Random Acts of Kiwanians recognition was given to Crystal Hanson.

On June 27, 2026, the heart of Downtown Plaza was transformed into a premier athletic stage for Vault the Plaza, spearheaded by Crystal Hanson. This unique event brought the excitement of pole vaulting out of the stadium and directly onto our city streets, creating an unforgettable experience for athletes and spectators alike.

As a community-driven competition, Vault the Plaza relied on the generosity of local partners to make this "street vault" possible. Crystal was able to bring the whole community together through partnership and sponsorships with the City of Fairmont and local businesses.

This event provided an opportunity to showcase not only 46 athletes from around the county but also the spirit and pride of Fairmont and its downtown businesses. Truly fulfilling the Kiwanis Mission of improving the world one child and one community at a time.



Pictured is Crystal Hanson

Thanks to all for your dedication to our community and out children.