



The Governor's Message

By Nebraska-Iowa District Governor Dale Doudna

The Kiwanis International Convention in Denver had a theme of **“Explore the Possibilities.”** The Nebraska-Iowa District had 46 members registered for the convention. I saw our delegates interact, listen, enjoy and work together with the other delegates from around the world.

I want to share my experience with you. I want you to experience what I experienced. Unfortunately, I don't think I have the ability to do this. I can share the events, topics and results, but I don't think I can adequately share the emotion or feelings of being at the convention.

I will break the convention down into four major areas. First, is the social interaction of people. Second, are the events and speakers designed to motivate the delegates. Third, are the educational sessions designed to provide tools for improving the Kiwanis experience for individuals and clubs. Fourth, are the decisions made to run the organization.

As I was checking into my hotel, Marcia Wallen was standing next to me. By the time I finished the check-in process, Jane Erickson was behind me, and several other people I recognized were in the lobby. Remember this is in Denver, Colorado, about 900 miles from home. Everywhere I turned, I saw a friendly Kiwanis face. I walked and I sat next to Kiwanians who I visited with and shared experiences with. At the Rockies ball game, I sat next to Dave Curry, past International president from Montana. In front of us was a group from Panama that had been at my table at dinner the night before. One morning, I visited with a delegate from Barbados as we walked to the Convention Center. On the way home from the ballgame, I helped a lady who had trouble walking find a bus and on that bus, I found myself next to and talking to Dennis Baugh, our Nebraska-Iowa 2024-25 Kiwanis Trustee/Counselor. My list could go on and on, but please remember I am an introvert from Iowa. With the exception of Marcia and Jane, I did not know any of these people prior to Denver. The social interaction is a major memory maker for me and most Kiwanians. **You really had to be there to experience the fellowship.**

The convention began with a parade of flags from all the nations where Kiwanis has clubs. This was followed by video introductions of the 2023-24 Governors. Thank you for allowing me to represent you this year. The last introductions were all of our current leaders and past International presidents. This was immediately followed by a keynote address by Chris Singleton, a former professional baseball player. But baseball was not the reason for why Chris wanted to be at the convention. He was there to talk about love being stronger than hate. A message of reconciliation for a divided world. His mother and best friend were killed in a racially motivated mass shooting.

There were other speakers at general session and at meals. Some had Kiwanis backgrounds. Others did not. We heard from the governors of Key Club and Circle K. We heard from Diana Nyad who swam from Cuba to Florida. We even heard from a mascot from an NFL team. They were designed to motivate and encourage. **You really had to be there to get the impact from the talks.**

The majority of the time on Thursday and Friday were filled with educational sessions. The sessions dealt with ideas to improve clubs, to strengthen clubs, to motivate clubs to support and form new SLPs (I know I shouldn't use abbreviations. But I did here to get your attention: SERVICE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS), and to protect clubs. Unfortunately, as your elect-ed representative, I was assigned to sessions specifically for governors. I didn't get to choose much. If you were there, you got to choose. **You really had to be there to get the information.**

On Saturday, we met as a House of Delegates to do the business of Kiwanis. We are a democratic organization run by volunteers. We get to elect our leaders. Those International leaders then run a business. A small number of employees are hired to carry on the day-to-day business of Kiwanis. We elected a president, a president elect, a vice president and three trustees to sit on the Board of Kiwanis International. The president, Lee Kuan Yong, and president elect, Michael Mulhall, are in a three year progression, so they have no competition.

The competition is for the vice president. There were three excellent candidates. The winning candidate was Hope Markes from Eastern Canada and Caribbean District. We then elected three trustees for 3-year terms. They were Dawn Hodges, Jo Schwartz and Scott Sims.

The Delegates also had to discuss and decide on 10 amendments to the Bylaws.

The first amendment dealt with increasing the International dues by \$25. The Amendment was approved with about 85% voting in favor of the dues increase.

The second amendment dealt with reducing the number of dues tiers from three to two. The amendment passed again with about 85% in favor.

The third amendment dealt with reducing the size of the Board of Trustees by 3. This amendment passed.

The fourth amendment dealt with the election of Trustees in Districts. It allows a District to elect a Trustee from another Region if no candidate is qualified and willing to serve in the home Region. This amendment passed.

Amendments five, six and seven were withdrawn and not considered.

Amendment eight dealt with allowing Remote Voting for officers and amendments. This amendment was defeated.

Amendments 9 and 10 were presented by a club. Both dealt with issues dealing with policies of the Board of Trustees. Both were soundly defeated.

I know the descriptions of the amendments are brief. I would be happy to discuss any of the decisions in more detail, but in the interest of space, I kept the descriptions brief. **You really had to be there to get the full discussion.**

After returning from Denver, I am turning my attention to the **Nebraska-Iowa District Convention in West Des Moines, Iowa, which is Aug. 2 and 3.**

In Denver we “**Explored the Possibilities.**” In West Des Moines, we are going to examine the “**IMPACT**” Kiwanis can and will have on our communities. For those of you who have not attended before, the format is very similar to the International Convention as described above. We will have interesting speakers, educational breakout sessions and a House of Delegates to elect our leaders and approve amendment to our Bylaws. An emphasis will be on the “**IMPACT**” Service Leadership Programs and Membership have on your Kiwanis experience. You will get to meet a lot of great Kiwanians, from all over Nebraska and Iowa (maybe not so much from all over the world). In addition, you will have the opportunity to explore Des Moines and see an Iowa Cubs baseball game.

When the District Convention is over, someone will write a review of the Convention, but to experience it fully, **YOU REALLY NEED TO BE HERE!**

