

APRIL 2026

HOOSIER KIWANIAN

INDIANA DISTRICT OF KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL



GREETINGS, HOOSIER KIWANIAN!

CONGRATULATIONS, Indiana Kiwanians!

We are all members of a Kiwanis International district (Indiana, of course) that is **DISTINGUISHED!**

Thanks to Immediate Past Governor Al Riggle and his team, Indiana was named a Distinguished District for 2024–25. I was honored to make the announcement at the close of our Mid-Year Conference in Bloomington on March 21, and Governor Al proudly accepted a standing ovation from Kiwanis members. Everyone should savor this warm and fuzzy Kiwanis feeling! I have a few more things to share about Mid-Year in a moment — but first, my shoutouts.

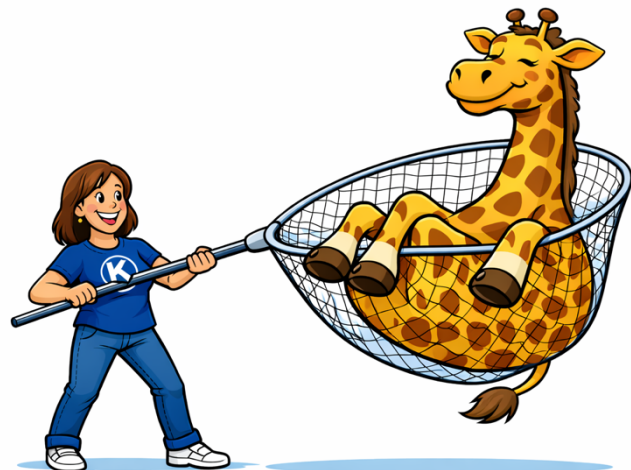
This shoutout is for the many clubs that added at least **ONE** new member during March. March was a big month for our district, and I urge all Indiana clubs to keep the momentum going. In just one month, we added 54 fine folks to our Kiwanis family.

Congratulations to: Logansport in Arrowhead; 25+ Kiwanians Who Care (four new members) and South Central Indiana (four new members) in Hoosier; Indianapolis and Northwest Indianapolis in Indy Metro; LaPorte (six new members!) and Valparaiso in Lakeshore; Ferdinand and Tell City in Lincoln; Rochester and Warsaw in Potawatomi; Lebanon in Sagamore; Batesville (ten new members!), Scott County (four new members), and Westport (three new members) in Scenic Farms; Evansville in Southwind; Carmel in Sycamore South; Plainfield (eleven new members!) in Vandalia Trail; and Muncie in Wapahoni. Good job to all of you for reaching out and helping our entire district grow tall.

April 1 marks the halfway point of our Kiwanis year, and I'm so proud of how our Hoosier clubs continue expanding their impact on children and communities. My membership plan this year — “Reach Out and Net One” — is simple, hopeful, and achievable. If every club nets just one new member, our district will grow. And just look at how many Indiana clubs are already on their way to exceeding that goal.

Here's another simple thing: Want to know how these clubs got their new members? Reach out to their membership chair or one of their officers. Ask them how they did it. Maybe it will work for your club as well.

Reach Out and Net ONE!





MID-YEAR LEARNING, LEADING, LOVING KIWANIS

Fun. Inspiring. Interesting. Uplifting. Terrific.

These were just some of the words people shared with me about our Mid-Year Conference in Bloomington the weekend of March 20 — and hearing them made my heart soar. With the help of a village (to be celebrated shortly), I planned the sessions, meals, and events, and I'll admit I was nervous about how everything would come together. But from the moment people walked in the door, the atmosphere was upbeat, warm, and full of genuine Kiwanis joy. If you attended, I hope you felt that same spark. And if you didn't, I hope you'll join us at the District Convention in August, where even more inspiration — and yes, more giraffes — await.

For most Kiwanians, the weekend started Friday evening with a delicious informal dinner and local musical entertainment. We enjoyed the gifted voices of Kiwanis Idol winners Izzy Terry and Tiara Abraham. We also sang along with All-Abilities Choir led by Jake May.

Saturday kicked off with a unique opening session featuring a robotics team ranked among the best in the world. Their story of working with young people from elementary through high school — teaching them to design, build, and problem-solve — was motivating and set the tone for the day. Thank you, RoboBoosters!

From there, we moved into the morning educational sessions, which many attendees described as both fun and inspiring. While one group rolled up their sleeves for hands-on website learning, another explored how a small-town Kiwanis club united an entire county to break the stigma surrounding mental health issues and to find real solutions.

Lunch was full of fellowship, speakers, and Immediate Past Governor Al Riggle's awards. Past Governor Al had patches, pins, awards, and mementos for numerous clubs, members, and officers at every level. The room was filled with distinguished Kiwanians — and the energy was contagious.





During the signature moment of the luncheon, Past Governor Al presented our Indiana District's check for \$250,000 to Riley Hospital. Then came the Parade of Checks for my year as governor. I wasn't sure it was ever going to end — big checks, little checks, every check full of heart. Together, they added up to more than \$138,000. Wow!

After lunch, attendees chose from more educational (and still fun) sessions, including using social media to enhance clubs, learning about Kiwanis Spirit, a communication session with Kiwanis International Trustee Amy Zimmerman, or making dog toys and sensory toys for sight-challenged infants.



By four o'clock, I think we were all ready to put our feet up — myself included. We wrapped up the day with information about the International Convention in the Philippines and our District Convention in Muncie. And then I got to share the best news of all: Indiana is a Distinguished District!

Now, about that village that helped make Mid-Year such a success. My heartfelt thanks go to District Secretary Tammy Minor, who guided me through everything that needed to be done.

Thanks also to Hoosier Division Lt. Governor and Past Governor Vanessa McClary and her SCI club. Vanessa helped plan our Friday night entertainment and the robotics team, and her club donated items for the dog and infant toys — plus those wonderful blue and yellow cupcakes at lunch.

I'm grateful to Taka Ogata for his guidance and for running the sound system all weekend.

I was thrilled that my best friend Yvonne Stika from the Jefferson County club was there to lend a hand whenever I needed it.

And I'm so appreciative that our Kiwanis International Trustee Counselor Amy Zimmerman attended; she always offers encouragement at just the right moment.

Mid-Year simply wouldn't have been the same without all our speakers, presenters, vendors, and exhibitors.

Finally, I cannot close this article without thanking EVERYONE who attended. And yes — that includes my stuffed giraffe friends, Stretch McNekk and Kay Tower, who somehow became the unofficial celebrities of the weekend. I have never seen so many photos of people standing, sitting, hugging, and posing with stuffed giraffes. They brought smiles everywhere they went, and they will definitely be at the District Convention in Muncie in August.



THE PARABLE OF KAY & STRETCH

Our Kiwanis International Trustee Counselor, Amy Zimmerman, wrote and recited “The Parable of Kay and Stretch” at our Mid-Year Conference, and it touched me deeply. This giraffe-enhanced story is meant for every Kiwanian and every Kiwanis club, even though she added a few Hoosier twists just for us. I hope every Indiana Kiwanian takes a moment to read and savor it — and that your hearts grow three sizes as you reach out to do meaningful service.

The Parable of Kay & Stretch

By Amy Zimmerman, Kiwanis International Trustee, Spring, 2026

In the heart of Indiana—where fields stretch wide, where communities are stitched together by generosity, and where Riley Children’s Hospital stands as a symbol of courage—two giraffes named Kay and Stretch watched over the Kiwanis canopy.

They were tall, yes.

But what made them extraordinary wasn’t their height.

It was their capacity to grow their hearts—again and again.

One morning, they looked across the Indiana landscape and saw something only leaders can see:

clubs doing good work but carrying too much alone,

branches strong but stretched thin,

and children waiting for the kind of hope only Kiwanis can deliver.

Stretch said quietly, “Leaders see what others miss. But seeing isn’t enough.”

Kay nodded. “Then let’s do something so meaningful, so bold, that our hearts grow three sizes.”

So they set out.

 In Terre Haute, they met a club that felt too small to matter.

Kay told them,

“Growth doesn’t start with a crowd. It starts with one invitation, one new voice, one new heartbeat.”

And when they welcomed that one new member, their energy shifted.

Their heart grew.

 In Fort Wayne, they met leaders unsure if they were ready.

Stretch said,

“Leadership isn’t about being tall. It’s about standing up.”

And when they stepped forward—nervous but willing—their confidence grew.

Their heart grew.

📖 At Riley Children's Hospital, Kay and Stretch saw the bravest hearts of all.
Children fighting battles bigger than themselves.
Families holding onto hope.
Staff pouring out compassion like sunlight.
And in that moment, the giraffes felt it—
that unmistakable warmth,
that surge of purpose,
that reminder of why leaders lead.
Their hearts grew—
not one size, not two, but three sizes larger.
Because when you do something that truly matters,
your heart expands to hold the impact.

☀️ The Message for Indiana Kiwanis' Leaders - You are the best of the BEST!
You are the ones who lift the canopy.
You are the ones who see farther.
You are the ones who decide whether your club grows, whether your service deepens,
whether your community feels the full strength of Kiwanis.
When you invite new members, your heart grows.
When you serve boldly, your heart grows again.
When you lead with courage and purpose, your heart grows three sizes—and so does your
club, your impact, and the hope you bring to every child in Indiana and around the world.
This is your season to stand tall.
To see farther.
To lead with a heart big enough to change lives.

Just like Kay and Stretch. And Governor Sue.



HAPPY “BIRTHDAY” TO THESE INDIANA CLUBS

Elkhart – 109

Valparaiso – 105

Rochester – 97

New Harmony – 79

Evansville-Green River – 60

Tipton, Suns of Tipton – 45

Rush County – 7

Warsaw – 105

Greensburg Community – 100

Elberfeld – 81

101 Lakes Angola – 72

Lakeland, North Webster – 57

South Central Indiana – 20

Greater Sheridan – 3

Thank you for serving the children of your communities. We wish you MANY more!



GOVERNOR SUE ON THE ROAD

Other than a long weekend in Bloomington for our Mid-Year Conference, March kept me busy with phone and Zoom calls (including one with International President Michael!) and with visits to clubs and divisions across Indiana.

Early in the month, I headed to the Scenic Farms Division, where Lt. Governor Tim Mohon — with the help of the Batesville club — hosted a rollicking, joy-filled council meeting. Everyone was so friendly and fun. I also brought along my small traveling companion, Jeff B. Giraffe, who enjoyed meeting the Scenic Farms Kiwanians almost as much as I did. And any day I get to see my long-time friend Yvonne Stika, president of the Jefferson County club, is a good day.

A few days later, Rose Division Lt. Governor Jennifer Feaster held her council meeting via Zoom. That's my home division, and I always enjoy seeing Kiwanians I've known for many, many years.

Next, my travels took me north to Plymouth in the Potawatomi Division for Lt. Governor Jim Molebash's council meeting. I had never been to Plymouth or Potawatomi before, so the visit was a treat. The Kiwanians there were delightful — and they spoiled me with a large travel mug and a basket of goodies (candle, lotion, notepad, pens, Ty Beanie Baby kitty, and chocolate treats). Jeff B. Giraffe came along for this trip too and was quite impressed with the hospitality. I certainly wasn't expecting gifts and I appreciated everyone's kindness.

Later that week, I spent most of Saturday grading scholarship applications with members of the Kiwanis Indiana Foundation at the district office. It's a difficult yet deeply rewarding task. This year we selected 17 scholarship recipients — one from each division. I'm very proud of our committee's thoughtful choices, which were listed in the Mid-Year Conference program. Congratulations to all the young people whose higher education we are helping to support.

After the Mid-Year Conference, I took a much-needed "ME" day — something I've done every year since high school: Opening Day in Cincinnati. I didn't attend in person, but I had a baseball-themed day at home, wearing my Reds gear, eating a brat, and watching the game on TV. It was perfect, even though the Reds didn't win.

On the last day of the month, I drove to Logansport for the Arrowhead Division Council Meeting. President-elect Becky Groff and Lt. Governor Eileen Sklar led a warm, welcoming meeting — and I learned something new: there are Prifogles in Logansport! For this trip I brought Sky Richmond, another one of my many giraffes. He enjoyed the meeting and the warm welcome every bit as much as I did.

Now my April calendar is filling up quickly. Look for me at the SCI Kiwanis 20th Anniversary, Wawasee's 49th Anniversary, and in Bluffton as we organize our first new club of the year. I'll also be celebrating my own Rush County club's 7th anniversary as part of our Spirit celebration. Maybe I'll be visiting YOU, too.

And of course... *Go, Reds!*

Yours in service,

Sue Prifogle

Governor, Indiana District of Kiwanis 2025–26