

# Kevin I. McConnell Nomination Address

## 91st Annual Illinois-Eastern Iowa District Convention

### House of Delegates

#### Hotel Pere Marquette - Peoria, Illinois

First of all...I'd like to thank Sara and Matt for their kind words. I asked both of them to be involved this morning for a special reason...here are two of our Service Leadership Program alums that have played key roles in helping to build their respective Kiwanis Clubs. To those that say that young people are too busy...here are two great examples. Matt's Normal Club increased membership by 45% last year, and Sara's South-West Peoria club has added 18 new members this year. We are looking into a cloning process, but (until then) keep up the great work!

## Where is my ticket... where am I supposed to be going?

I'm reminded of a story about baseball great Babe Ruth boarding a train in New York...and as the train began its journey ...he discovered he had lost his ticket. The conductor recognized The Babe, and said, "Don't worry about it, sir. I'm sure when you find the ticket ...you'll send it in".

The Babe replied, "Young man, the question is not where is my ticket...the question is where am I supposed to be going"? Well, I'm here to tell you where I believe the I-I District needs to be going.

We must never forget our core mission...to serve the children of the world. Through our actions, we define...what Kiwanis "is".

Kiwanis is...the Fort Madison, Iowa Club installing new playground equipment for their local housing authority, side-by-side with Iowa State Penitentiary inmates.

Kiwanis is...the Tuscola Club building study skills and tutoring at North Ward Elementary School.

Kiwanis is...the Wood River Township Club's Shopping with Santa Program, as they accompany 80 children on a Wal-Mart shopping spree (totaling \$10,000).

And...Kiwanis is...the K-Family clubs of Aurora leading a crew of 250 volunteers to clean-up Indian Creek on Kiwanis One Day.

I chose to highlight these "hands on" service projects, as they exemplify what we are as an organization. Quite Honestly..."hands on" service is what differentiates us from our service club rivals.

Everything we do at a District level...every goal we set...every program we create...must answer these questions:

#1 How does it provide or add value to our club and its members? And, #2 How does it better allow us to serve the children of the world?

All of that said, here is what I see for the I-I District:

I see...creative membership campaigns at the club, division, and district level

I see...13 new Kiwanis Clubs built in all corners of our great district

I see...an increased emphasis on new member orientations...strengthening the bond between new members and their clubs.

I see...the I-I District as the membership leader in North America

I see...14 new Key Clubs, 4 new Circle K Clubs, and 12 new Builders Clubs with record memberships in each



I see...creating opportunities for the district boards of Kiwanis, Key Club, and Circle K to meet together to plan their years, with the intended effect of strengthening our bonds down to the club level.

I see...record attendance at club officer training sessions across the district, with training focused on creating stronger clubs prepared for service.

I see...over 550 I-I Kiwanians and guests in Las Vegas for International Convention, exceeding our attendance goal from Kiwanis International.

I see...1100 members and guests attending District Convention to celebrate an outstanding year of service

I see...creation of a communication plan, with an emphasis on getting the right message...to the right people...in the most cost effective way possible.

I see...a more member focused I-I Kiwanian with increased club news and spotlights on club bulletins.

I see...a Spastic Research Foundation Month, with a travelling speakers' bureau to educate everyone about Our District Project.

I see...leading the Kiwanis world in the Annual Gift Campaign for the International Foundation.

I see...the I-I District as second to none!

I am able to see these things not because I'm some great visionary, but because these are my memories of the I-I District in the mid 90's.

This is where we were...

This is where we must be...

And (if you allow me the opportunity) this is where we will be again!!

## **With your help... history starts now**

I believe in the future of Kiwanis...I believe that the best days of our organization lie ahead of us... and not behind us.

I think we have found our missing train ticket, and I'd be honored to be your conductor. With your help, together we can write a new history of Kiwanis in our District. From my standpoint... history starts now.

*Following this address to the House of Delegates, Kevin McConnell was unanimously elected Governor-Elect for the 2008-09 Kiwanis year.*

