



The Lakes & Prairies

EXCHANGITE

lakesandprairiesdistrict.com

May/June 2024

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Event Calendar

- Jun 14 Flag Day.
- Jun 16 Father's Day.
- Jun 17 The Exchange Club Center for Family Unity golf fundraiser in Owatonna.
- Jun 24 Moonlighters Exchange Club chartered in 2013.
- Jun 26 District board mtg, 7 p.m.

Down the stretch we come on another Exchange year

By Sharon Klein,
Lakes & Prairies
Interim
District President



Can you believe we're already in June? Last year on July 1 when each club started their new Exchange year, it seemed so far away, and now it is here.

June is an active month with behind-the-scenes work; finishing up projects and reporting them to Na-

tional, paying those last bills of the year, installing new boards, completing club planning and budgeting for the new year, training new leaders in your club, and on and on. If any assistance is needed, please contact me.

The Lakes & Prairies District Convention was held May 16-19 in Rochester. The convention committee put a lot of work into making this convention that would bring people together, educate, and have fun. I believe those objectives were met. Great job committee!!

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District Convention in Rochester delivers with speakers, youth recognition

Approximately 80 Exchangites and guests were in attendance for the Lakes & Prairies District Convention, May 16-19, at the Empire Event Center in Rochester.

With Early Bird optional activities, May 16-17, the convention formally started on Saturday, May 18, with the One Nation Under God breakfast. The VFW Color Guard of Owatonna

conducted the Presentation of Colors, then Exchange clubs in attendance paraded their banners that were displayed throughout the convention.

The keynote speaker was retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Tom Sexton (pictured below, standing) with the Exchange Club of Waseca. He served as a combat rescue and special oper-

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We had some outstanding speakers during the district convention: Our National Representative Kevin Barker, Region 5 vice president; Tom Sexton of Waseca for the One Nation Under God breakfast, Miss Southern Minnesota along with our A.C.E. and Youth of the Year recipients. As many have said, the youth luncheon is their favorite, to watch and listen as these young people demonstrate our nation is in a good place with these young people.

As district president, I am also completing the year-end duties and starting to plan our next year. We have an outstanding new board, with some veterans and some new faces. It is going to be a great year in 2024-25.

As we complete the current year, are there prospective members in the wings that can be brought into the fold?

Did you know that a new club is coming together in the Des Moines area? Do you have family or friends you believe would be a great part of this new club? If so, please let me know and I will pass on the information.

I wish to welcome three new members to our district in May: Cary Bleckinger-Gorka, Little Falls; Alexander Blake, Waseca; and Heather Smith, Waverly.

May I leave you with this, "It is better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret." - Jackie Joyner Kersee

(Do you have an event you'd like Sharon to attend coming up? Email, text, or call her today so she can get it on her schedule.)

(District Convention continued from Pg 1)

ations helicopter pilot. Tom served as the first USAF exchange pilot of the U.S. Army Nightstalkers where he flew in Operation Gothic Serpent, which was mentioned in the book and movie, "Black Hawk Down."

In addition, he served in key roles during the initial response to the USS Cole attack, repatriating the SNI detainees following their rescue from the Taliban in 2001. Tom served in

Buckingham announces decision to leave Exchange

This past year's Lakes & Prairies District President Gail Buckingham (pictured right) emailed board of directors in the district Wednesday, May 8, to announce her decision to leave Exchange.



Her email read in part:

"It is my decision to leave Exchange, effective immediately.

This decision has not come without tears, stress, and mental health maintenance.

As a friend writes, 'Quitting is often perceived as a negative act, primarily because it is associated with giving up on challenges and goals.'

It can however be a wise choice, signaling the need to reassess the circumstances at hand."

She closed with, "I have the utmost respect for everyone on this email. I thank you for the kindness and love you have shared with me this year.

These are the memories I will always remember.

Most sincerely,

Gail Buckingham"

numerous other operations before retiring to Waseca in August 2012.

Before fully retiring, Tom started a second career as a construction manager which took him from Duluth to Houston, Texas, where he spent hundreds of hours volunteering in Houston after Hurricane Harvey decimated that area in 2017.

Tom remarks addressed values and identity, the U.S. flag, and how other people see the U.S.

He praised Exchange's commitment toward the Freedom Shrines and how they are so much appreciated.

Tom shared a story of his training and how one session involved the U.S. flag. "This flag means so much to me," said Tom adding he never wants to see it desecrated.

He noted how images leave an impression and how that impacts how other people view the U.S.

At the conclusion of the breakfast, all in attendance participated in the singing of "God Bless America."

The morning business meeting following the breakfast established a quorum for convention business to take place, division caucuses to determine any additional nominees for district officer or director positions.

An open forum was conducted to answer Exchange questions obtained during the breakfast.

A break-out session was presented

by Jeremiah Program Executive Director Ally Hanten Ebert. The program seeks to disrupt generational poverty by providing single mothers with housing in their 40-unit building that provides access to child care at their building location.

"The bulk of the work we do is coaching," said Ebert. The Jeremiah Program served 96 families with 145 children in Rochester in 2023. Ebert explained there is a 12-week program for applicants to complete before being accepted. The Jeremiah Program is funded by individuals, foundations, and grants.

The National Exchange Club representative for the convention, Region 5 Vice President Kevin Barker, presented information regarding Ready and Able Exchange clubs. Members of these clubs have special needs (intellectual, developmental disabilities, and autism), but there is no change in the Exchange mission as they develop leadership skills, pay the same Exchange district and national dues, and give back to the community.

Barker explained the importance of securing a partnership with a provider organization as they will assist in engaging families of those individuals. The provider will want to know what to expect from the sponsoring Exchange club.

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The provider will be collecting the funds from those participating members. The mentoring Exchange club members are not responsible for providing care to the members. Barker's experience with these type of clubs are that the enthusiasm is contagious.

The Youth Awards luncheon recognized the district's A.C.E. (Accepting the Challenge of Excellence) award recipient and their Youth of the Year.

The keynote speaker was Miss Southern Minnesota Morgan Mohler (pictured below, standing). She is a graduate of Viterbo University with a Bachelor of Science degree in biochemistry.

Morgan presently works as a clinical research coordinator in the Center of Multiple Sclerosis and Autoimmune Neurology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. As a coordinator, she oversees clinical research studies from start to finish while offering countless patients a glimmer of hope moving forward in life navigating their diagnosis.

Morgan spoke of the impact of going through three family deaths and a concussion as an 18-year-old college freshman, combating the mental and physical suffering. Throughout her college career, she decided to take back control of her live by developing ways to believe, strive, and fulfill her dreams.

As Miss Southern Minnesota 2024, Morgan promotes, "Living L.I.F.E. Limitless," by teaching a simple, four-step process to achieving dreams and goals no matter the circumstanc-

es. L.I.F.E. is Learn. Imagine. Focus. Earn (success). Morgan said a person needs to learn how to overcome limiting beliefs. "Failure is something that you learn from," said Morgan.

Besides presenting her Limitless L.I.F.E. Workshop, she works tirelessly to reach out across the nation through her *Living Limitless Journal*, "Limitless L.I.F.E. Leaders" Community, and "How to Live a Limitless L.I.F.E." Podcast.

Closer to home, Morgan has impacted her community by organizing fundraisers to donate local scholarships for Minnesota's next generation of dreamers.

The district's A.C.E. award recipient was Allison Norton sponsored by the Exchange Club of Faribault. She recently graduated from Faribault High School. Allison described her childhood of domestic abuse issues that forced her and her siblings to live in shelters, and living in different houses due to her mother having drug dependency issues. In time, she and her siblings would experience family normalcy after being placed in foster care. "My only constant has been my siblings," said Allison.

Throughout high school, Allison was involved in orchestra, student council, tennis, softball, math team, science team, theater, theater executive committee, and link crew.

Outside of school, Allison teaches swim lessons and helps



The Lakes & Prairies District selected Allison Norton (pictured left) as their A.C.E. award recipient. The district's Youth of the Year was awarded to Sai Pranav Kota. Each will be receiving a \$1,000 scholarship sent to their respective post-secondary institution.

with after-school children's camps. This past year, Allison has also served as a Rice County Fair Ambassador.

This fall, Allison is planning to attend Saint Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri. She is pursuing a major in biology on the pre-med track, and seeks to minor in Spanish.

The district's Youth of the Year was Sai Pranav Kota of Cedar Falls, and sponsored by the Exchange Club of Cedar Falls.

Pranav most recently graduated from Cedar Falls High School. He read his essay from The National Exchange Club's theme, "How has the increasing emphasis on diversity and inclusion impacted American youth?" submitted for Youth of the Year consideration at the luncheon.

Among Pranav's activities: vice president of his school's student government, leadership positions in Science Club, science coaching, speech, and youth philanthropy.

He's been active in academic research in working with a professor



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from the University of Northern Iowa, and conducting biomedical research at Stony Brook University over the summer.

From these experiences and by volunteering as a patient advocate, Pranav sees his future as a medical professional hoping to reform health care toward inclusive care. He is seeking to study health sciences with an interest in ethics and humanities.

The Lakes & Prairies District is forwarding \$1,000 to both Allison and Pranav's postsecondary institutions.

The luncheon ended with some district awards for Best Club Bulletin going to the Exchange Club of Owatonna, and the Best Club Facebook Page awarded to the Exchange Club of Waverly. Recognition for club anniversaries, growth, and the interclub fellowship bell was announced as well.

The election of district officers took place Saturday afternoon with 40 voting delegates representing 13 clubs in attendance for the election. Among the board members elected: Dennis Kehoe, Cedar Falls, District President-Elect; Lynn Limberg,

Moonlighters, District Secretary; Diana Sash, Waterloo, District Treasurer; Robert Orr, Little Falls, Division 2 Director; Sandra McConn Haala, Owatonna, Division 4 Director; and Jeff Magsamen, Waverly, Division 6 Director.

In addition, District Treasurer Diana Sash provided delegates with the financial report.

Region 5 Vice President Kevin Barker conducted a breakout session on The National Exchange Club. He highlighted the amount of accessible information available on the National website, nationalexchangeclub.org. Barker noted crime insurance coverage for Exchange clubs is increasing 40% starting July 1, 2024. He noted there will



The Lakes & Prairies District announced the Club of the Year was the Exchange Club of Waseca. Accepting the award and traveling banner were Club President Mikhail Rostislavovich (center) and Club Vice President Amy Schmidt (pictured right). Also pictured is Division 1 Director Katie Smith.

be a consideration to increase The National Exchange Club dues that would be voted on during the 2025 National Convention.

The final breakout session was presented by Volunteer Field Representative Katie Smith regarding the retention of your current members, and the orientation of new club members.

The awards and installation banquet closed out the day at the convention. After the introduction of special guests, the traditional memorial remembrance service was conducted of Exchange club members who died in the past year.

Following dinner, award presentations were conducted: **Rookie of the Year**, Makell Magley, Sunrise Waterloo; **Exchangeite of the Year**, Mikhail Rostislavovich, Waseca; **Exchangeite Hall of Fame** included Dan Nechville, Owatonna; Kathleen Miller, Steele County; and Stu Thorson, Waverly; **All-American Volunteer of the Year**, Frank Magsamen, Waterloo; **Outstanding Club of the Year**, Waseca. In addition, Region 3 Vice President Annette Dun-

(District convention continued on Page 4)



The installation of directors and officers for the Lakes & Prairies District was conducted Saturday evening, May 18, by National Representative Kevin Barker (pictured far right). The 2024-25 board includes (left to right): Diana Sash, Treasurer; Annette Duncan, immediate past president; Tom Helligso, Division 7 Director; Sandi Sommerfelt, Division 5 Director; Randy Sobrack, Division 3 Director; Lynn Limberg, Secretary; Sandra McConn Halla, Division 4 Director; Katie Smith, Division 1 Director; Dennis Kehoe, President-Elect; and Sharon Klein, President. Not pictured: Division 2 Director Robert Orr, and Division 6 Director Jeff Magsamen.

(District Convention continued from Pg 4)

can presented her Above & Beyond Award to Katie Smith.

National Representative and Region 5 Vice President Kevin Barker delivered the keynote address and installed the officers and directors for the 2024-25 Exchange year was conducted by Barker.

It was also announced the Silent Auction baskets donated by Exchange clubs in the district raised \$1,067, which will be used toward the district's scholarship program.

On Sunday, the district board was informed there were 14 first-time district convention attendees. The board also decided to end the convention location rotation between Rochester and Waterloo. The intent is to have the district convention in Iowa in 2025. In addition, it was agreed convention activities would be planned for a Friday and Saturday only given the participation in recent years of planning activities earlier in the week.

Golf to prevent child abuse, June 17, in Owatonna

The Exchange Club Center for Family Unity in Owatonna is conducting their 32nd Annual Golf to Prevent Child Abuse Monday, June 17, at the Owatonna Country Club.

Executive Director Beth Hortop the fundraiser is almost at capacity for golfers, but they have room for anyone who would like to join for a meal and silent auction. The cost is \$25 and doors open at 3 p.m.

The meal will be served about 4 p.m., and the silent auction will go until approximately 5:15 p.m.

Share your club's news!
 Email Randy at
rsobrack@yahoo.com

Patriotic Parade in Downtown Omaha



Members of the Omaha Exchange Club participated in a parade unlike any other parade in the metro Omaha area, with an American history lesson. Prior to the start of the parade, Exchange Club members handed out 2,000 American Flags to spectators along the parade route.

After honoring our Gold Star families, military veterans and police, the parade had historical segments broken down by



eras, such as the Birth of a Nation, Western Expansion, Civil War, WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, War on Terror. Again, the Exchange members were called upon to carry banners delineating the different eras.

The USAF kicked it off with a flyover and this year is the first with an official Parade Marshall - Governor Jim Pillen - on horseback. It was a beautiful day to show your love of country and appreciation of our military and those who have lost loved ones who died for our freedom.



Exchange Club of Waterloo conducts Proudly We Hail

PROGRAM - "Proudly We Hail"

- Sharon Droste introduced the Proudly We Hail program. She explained that Exchange is an organization that focuses on Americanism, Youth, Community Service, and the National project of Child Abuse Prevention.
- Sharon also shared that the Exchange Club of Waterloo was founded in 1948. She said that the Waterloo club had given back hundreds of thousands of dollars to the community and gave several examples.
- The longest running National Americanism project is "Proudly We Hail." This program encourages regular and proper display of the flag by individuals and businesses. Recipients are nominated by our club members each year.
- The East High JROTC gave a presentation on the folding of the flag and what each fold means. Brian Lynch assisted.
- There were five recipients this year.



Cheryl Hannah,
203 Thompson Ave



Jack Locke, Locke Funeral Homes
1519 E. 4th & Tower Park



Kim Chapman
Waterloo Public Library



Veridian Credit Union—Ansborough
Accepted by Erin Davis and Ray Scoles



Ellen and Lance Vanderloo, Vanderloo Chiropractic
3731 Kimball Avenue



The Exchange Club of Faribault presented Young Citizenship awards to eight fifth-grade students at Lincoln, Jefferson, and Roosevelt schools as part of their elementary farewell celebrations. Pictured left to right is Victoria Ortiz Huerta, Kylie Carlson, Exchangite Kristine Howell, and Miles Larson at Lincoln Elementary. The award honors students who work hard at being good citizens at home, at school, and in the community. Each student was presented with an engraved plaque.



Field of Heroes

The Moonlighters Exchange Club of Owatonna, Exchange Club of Owatonna, and Exchange Club of Steele County along with other volunteers prepared 250 flags, May 22, in the warehouse of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric for display on the grounds of the co-op during Memorial Day weekend. An opening ceremony was conducted Friday, May 24, and the flags were taken down on Memorial Day to be presented to their sponsors. The Exchange clubs conducted the project to honor local area heroes who have made a difference in the lives of those wishing to sponsor a flag. Each sponsored flag proudly displayed the name of a hero chosen by the sponsor, allowing participants to honor a loved one, veteran, first responder, or any hero close to their heart. All proceeds support Phase 2 of the Owatonna Veterans Memorial, ensuring it remains a lasting tribute to our veterans. The display attracted many visitors driving through the co-ops driveway to view the flags.



Freedom Shrine dedication

The Exchange Club of Waseca dedicated a Freedom Shrine, May 28, with an evening ceremony at the Waseca County Courthouse. Lakes & Prairies District officers are pictured with club members at the display of the Freedom Shrine.

Insurance Increase

Due to rising costs, and the supplementation of these fees for several years, the National Board of Directors has approved a 10% increase in General Liability Insurance and 40% increase in Crime Insurance effective the next fiscal year. Please be advised that this will begin with the July 1st quarterly billing, so clubs and districts will want to budget accordingly. We are pleased to continue to offer you comprehensive coverage at a low cost via a master policy.

2024 National Convention

SAN ANTONIO

Get those suitcases ready and your cowboy hats on because it's time to map out your journey to Exchange's 106th National Convention in San Antonio, TX!

Registration and Hotel

To register for Convention:
<https://bit.ly/3UMnt9w>

To make reservations at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio Riverwalk:
<https://bit.ly/3wzWoy6>

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday, July 11

- 9 a.m. Opening Convention Session
- 12:30 p.m. National Project Luncheon with speaker, Rhonda Kuykendall
- 7:30 p.m. BINGO, fun, & game night!

Friday, July 12

- 9 a.m. Awards & Elections
- 12:30 p.m. One Nation Under God Luncheon with speaker, Douglas Taurel
- 8 p.m. Entertainment from Mariachi Las Alteñas

Saturday, July 13

- 9 a.m. Youth Awards
- 7 p.m. Annual Banquet with entertainment from Mariachi San Antonio
- 9 p.m. Dancing through the Decades Party - Wear an outfit from your favorite decade!



JULY 10-13, 2024
 HYATT REGENCY SAN ANTONIO RIVERWALK

113 YEARS OF SERVICE
Celebrating TO THE COMMUNITY!
 NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUB
 America's Service Club

EXCHANGE THE NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUB America's Service Club											
National Summary Report May 31, 2024											
District	# of clubs	Active as of Jul 1, 2023	Active as of Apr 30, 2024	May 2024 Adds	May 2024 Drops	Active as of May 31, 2024	MTD Change	YTD Change	YTD % Growth	YTD % Retention	
Alabama District	22	562	582	2	2	582	0	20	3.6%	84.3%	
California-Nevada District	26	553	536	1	2	535	-1	-18	-3.3%	86.3%	
Connecticut District	34	929	897	2	11	888	-9	-41	-4.4%	87.9%	
Dakota Territory District	6	280	257	0	2	255	-2	-25	-8.9%	83.6%	
Florida District	29	762	709	7	3	713	4	-49	-6.4%	79.8%	
Four Corners District	19	302	311	1	3	309	-2	7	2.3%	88.4%	
Georgia District	32	1545	1509	9	9	1509	0	-36	-2.3%	90.4%	
Indiana District	17	427	434	22	2	454	20	27	6.3%	91.1%	
Lakes and Prairies District	17	411	412	6	5	413	1	2	0.5%	83.7%	
Lincolland District	24	589	517	6	6	517	0	-72	-12.2%	80.6%	
Michigan District	22	506	493	3	3	493	0	-13	-2.6%	92.5%	
Mid-America District	10	278	239	3	3	239	0	-39	-14.0%	69.8%	
Mid-Atlantic District	24	545	557	1	3	555	-2	10	1.8%	91.9%	
Mississippi District	22	586	556	4	8	552	-4	-34	-5.8%	80.2%	
New England District	13	446	461	0	4	457	-4	11	2.5%	90.4%	
North Carolina District	27	746	787	4	3	788	1	42	5.6%	73.7%	
Northern California District	10	220	193	0	1	192	-1	-28	-12.7%	70.0%	
Northwest District	10	299	264	0	2	262	-2	-37	-12.4%	79.6%	
Ohio-West Virginia District	25	542	534	23	6	551	17	9	1.7%	89.5%	
Puerto Rico District (8	117	127	0	0	127	0	10	8.5%	83.8%	
South Carolina District	19	1116	1010	11	8	1013	3	-103	-9.2%	76.7%	
Tennessee District	27	678	672	3	5	670	-2	-8	-1.2%	85.7%	
Texas District	25	835	831	6	5	832	1	-3	-0.4%	86.3%	
Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast District	20	599	741	22	45	718	-23	119	19.9%	60.8%	
Virginia District	16	360	344	2	1	345	1	-15	-4.2%	76.1%	
Yellowstone District	19	750	624	6	12	618	-6	-132	-17.60%	72.4%	
Total	523	14983	14597	144	154	14587	-10	-396	-2.6%		



**Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws of
The National Exchange Club**
*To be considered at the National Convention in
San Antonio, TX, July 10-13, 2024*

Method of Amending the Bylaws of The National Exchange Club

Proposed Amendments are to be considered by the Representatives of Exchange Clubs and other members of The National Exchange Club in Convention assembled. The Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the accredited delegates present and voting, except Articles I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XVII and XVIII, which require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the accredited delegates present and voting. An asterisk (*) is shown after any Proposed Amendments that fall into the category requiring a two-thirds vote.

The following Proposed Amendment was received by the Chief Executive Officer sixty (60) days prior to the date of the National Convention. Proposed Amendments must be mailed to the president and secretary of each club not later than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the convention. The form and language have been approved by the National Committee on Jurisprudence and Laws. Dissemination of information on proposals does not necessarily imply endorsement by The National Exchange Club or any official committee or board. The presenter is noted with each Proposed Amendment.

Tracey Edwards
Chief Executive Officer

PROPOSED AMENDMENT NO. 1*
ARTICLE XVII, Fiscal Matters

RESOLVED that Article XVII (*Fiscal Matters*), Section 3, of the Bylaws of The National Exchange Club be amended by increasing the convention fees from \$25/quarter/club to \$40/quarter/club.

Section 3. By the 10th day of July, October, January and April of each year, every Exchange Club shall pay to The National Exchange Club the sum of ~~\$25.00~~ \$40.00 for the Club President, Club President-Elect, Club Secretary and Club Treasurer and other delegates to which the club is entitled to at the annual convention under the provisions of these Bylaws. Said four (4) quarterly payments shall constitute the annual convention registration fee for all delegates of the club and shall relieve them from payment of any further registration fees at the time of the annual convention. No refund shall be due any club for its failure, for any reason, to send to an annual convention the delegates to which it is entitled. Any club newly formed during the current administrative year shall be exempted from the annual convention registration fee for delegates to the first (1st) annual convention following the charter presentation. The annual convention registration fee shall be used primarily in defraying the annual convention expenses.

Submitted by: 2023-2024 Finance Committee

Vision

A strong America, safe communities, and unified people.

Mission

Exchange, inspiring communities to become better places to live.

Motto

Unity for Service