



The Lakes & Prairies EXCHANGITE

lakesandprairiesdistrict.com

October/November 2025

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Event Calendar

Nov 27 Thanksgiving.

Dec 5 Exchange Club of Waterloo Holiday Party. Social at 5 p.m. at Elks Club, dinner at Gatsby's at 7, invited to bring a gift (\$10-\$15 value) that will be shared with children at Irving Elementary as their Partners in Education. Dinner reservations required. Email Donald Faris at ddfari@mchsi.com.

Dec 6 5th Annual Santa Bowl, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sparetime Entertainment in Owatonna. Proceeds support programming for The Exchange Club Center for Family Unity to prevent child abuse.

America 250: The time to prepare is NOW!

By Dennis Kehoe,
2025-26 Lakes & Prairies District President



Soon Americans will be celebrating the 250th anniversary of our country.

As Exchangites, seldom do we get an opportunity to show our patriotism and community spirit as we will next year. Our clubs need to raise our awareness and America 250 gives us this special opportunity. The National Exchange Club President Joe Dudek has asked each club to participate in America 250. We have many options in how to do just that:

1. Sponsor a Healing Field or dedicate a Freedom Shrine. The National Exchange Club partners with the Colonial Flag Foundation, which has several options and price points to do a Healing Field. Several clubs are al-

ready planning large scale displays. The Waterloo/Cedar Falls area clubs led by District President-Elect Trent Hunter has an ambitious 1776 flag project in the works. The Owatonna area clubs and the Omaha club also have large scale projects planned.

This is a perfect time to dedicate (or rededicate) a Freedom Shrine. Many organizations and schools will be open to this idea.

2. In 2026, our One Nation Under God and Prayer Breakfasts should be especially significant. Let's plan something extraordinary this year.

3. Join in our communities ceremonies on Flag Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day. Many of our cities will have parades and events honoring the anniversary. Let's make sure we take part in these.

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The Lakes & Prairies District wishes to recognize the newest members who joined their respective Exchange club in October and so far in November:

Medford: Mary Stanley, Oct. 13; **Omaha:** Kerry Hanson, Nov. 4; **Sunrise Waterloo:** Tom Novotney, Oct. 21; **Waseca:** Wendy Buffington, Oct. 29.



Book of Golden Deeds

The Exchange Club of Rochester conducted their Book of Golden Deeds banquet Wednesday, Nov. 5. This year's recipient Val Koster was unable to attend due to health reasons. Her granddaughter, Danielle Koster (second from left) accepted the award. Also pictured (left to right): Immediate Past President Jim Oeltjenbruns, President Sherry Irvin, and Rochester Mayor Kim Norton. Irvin in her remarks of Val Koster, "This person has always been a pioneer for other parents of special needs children. Their wisdom from raising their own child with special needs led them to help start programs and other advice to hundreds of other parents and organizations...From their years of serving on a variety of boards as a member to creating a new fundraiser, if something needed to be accomplished this person is the one to get it done...A person who quietly gives to our community with no expectations of anything in return." Unfortunately Val has had her spouse, and son die in the past year.



Thanking veterans



Members of the Exchange Club of Des Moines Area, Nov. 9, attended the Star-Spangled Salute to Veterans at the Des Moines Civic Center to hand out pins (pictured left) and personally thank area veterans for their service.

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4. Educate students about the history of the American flag. The Colonial Flag Foundation has a special display on the history of the American flag. Check out colonialflag.com and healingfield.org for more information.

5. Community Service. Organize a "250 hours of service" for our clubs. This is a perfect time to beautify our cities. Planting trees, cleaning parks and roadways are just a few things we can do for our cities.

6. Plan community concerts and picnics. Many cities have patriotic singing groups such as Sweet Adelines and barbershop quartets. I am sure they would love to partner with us in events this coming year.

7. Work with local civic and community organizations. Now is the time to partner with area veterans organizations, libraries, museums, historical societies, and other service clubs to make America 250 events happen.

This is the perfect year to raise the profile of our Exchange Club. I have listed just a few ideas that can make 2026 an amazing year. Let's get planning!

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



Phase 2 completion

The Moonlighters Exchange Club of Owatonna conducted a Veterans Day ceremony at the Veterans Memorial in Owatonna to not only honor the men and women who served our nation, but to celebrate the completion of Phase 2 of the Memorial with the addition of gold statues. The ceremony included the traditional Steele County Honor Guard flag raising, three volleys of rifle fire to honor fallen service members, the playing of Taps with two trumpeters playing from each side of the Memorial, and comments from Club President Rhonda Guthier.



Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

Exchange Club of Steele County President Dom Korbel (pictured left) was the emcee for the One Nation Under God Mayor's Prayer Breakfast Thursday, Nov. 13, at the Owatonna Country Club. The Breakfast was conducted through the collaboration of the Exchange Club of Owatonna, Moonlighters Exchange Club of Owatonna, and the Exchange Club of Steele County. Owatonna Mayor Matt Jessop (center) reflected on his first Mayor's Prayer Breakfast as mayor. The keynote speaker was Rev. John Weisenburger regarding One Nation Under God. The Breakfast concluded with the singing of "God Bless America."

For clubs that submit nominees for Youth of the Year, A.C.E., or Legacy, there is a completely new form and process. Information on this will be sent out to each club in early January. Please watch for it, as it will be used for judging district awards.

District		# of Clubs	Active as of Jul 1, 2025	National Summary Report October 31, 2025							
				Active as of Sep 30, 2025	Oct 2025 Adds	Oct 2025 Drops	Active as of Oct 31, 2025	MTD Change	YTD Change	YTD % Growth	YTD % Retention
Alabama District	19	583	613	25	5		633	20	50	8.6%	95.4%
California-Nevada District	25	538	546	37	7		576	30	38	7.1%	97.0%
Connecticut District	32	759	744	20	29		735	-9	-24	-3.2%	92.6%
Dakota Territory District	6	265	247	1	0		248	1	-17	-6.4%	93.2%
Florida District	24	628	587	29	13		603	16	-25	-4.0%	86.6%
Four Corners District	19	299	293	24	25		292	-1	-7	-2.3%	87.6%
Georgia District	32	1516	1513	40	11		1542	29	26	1.7%	96.5%
Indiana District	18	467	462	3	10		455	-7	-12	-2.6%	93.4%
Lakes and Prairies District	19	430	434	3	2		435	1	5	1.2%	93.3%
Lincolnland District	23	450	432	0	5		427	-5	-23	-5.1%	94.2%
Michigan District	21	476	459	10	3		466	7	-10	-2.1%	94.7%
Mid-America District	8	268	257	17	19		255	-2	-13	-4.9%	85.8%
Mid-Atlantic District	23	510	511	1	0		512	1	2	0.4%	98.8%
Mississippi District	19	471	488	36	65		459	-29	-12	-2.5%	84.5%
New England District	13	431	429	4	1		432	3	1	0.2%	95.1%
North Carolina District	27	631	515	55	2		568	53	-63	-10.0%	75.4%
Northern California District	10	187	187	9	19		177	-10	-10	-5.3%	86.6%
Northwest District	10	265	254	0	1		253	-1	-12	-4.5%	94.3%
Ohio-West Virginia District	25	517	512	5	9		508	-4	-9	-1.7%	94.2%
Puerto Rico District	7	111	93	7	0		100	7	-11	-9.9%	83.8%
South Carolina District	20	1030	1036	24	69		991	-45	-39	-3.8%	89.7%
Tennessee District	28	644	655	29	9		675	20	31	4.8%	95.8%
Texas District	22	798	740	28	2		766	26	-32	-4.0%	88.7%
Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast District	20	985	1076	55	229		902	-174	-83	-8.4%	71.4%
Virginia District	15	326	310	2	3		309	-1	-17	-5.2%	86.8%
Yellowstone District	16	503	505	10	32		483	-22	-20	-4.0%	91.8%
Total	501	14088	13898	474	570		13802	-96	-286	-2.0%	



5TH ANNUAL Santa Bowl

End
Child
Abuse!

Raffle!

December 6th, 11:00–3:00 pm
at Sparetime Entertainment

Bake
Sale!

Fun for the whole family!

Get ready to bowl and enjoy some holiday cheer!
Proceeds support programming to prevent child abuse.



EXCHANGE CLUB
CENTER for
FAMILY UNITY

Visit Our Website:
www.centerforfamilyunitymn.org

