



Kiwanis Insider

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For the Leadership of Kiwanis

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Dear Kiwanis Leaders:

Traveling by Train

This past week, while traveling by train in Europe, I was reminded of what it feels like to be an outsider. Although there were thousands of people traveling on the same trains, because I did not speak the language or have the ability to read the directional signs, I was at risk of losing my way. The people around me all seemed to know where they were going, and for most of them this was very familiar territory. Fortunately, our world also includes special people who pay attention to those around them and are always willing to help. Because I was able to ask questions and receive guidance, my journey was successful. For someone who is new to Kiwanis, I am sure it feels much the same. As outsiders they don't know our Kiwanis language and they are not familiar with the customs and traditions that we take for granted. Fortunately we have thousands of classic Kiwanis members who have traveled this way before and have the knowledge and experience to assist. As we grow Kiwanis to a million members over the next eight years we need to keep in mind that 740,000 of these people will be new to the organization. As leaders I would encourage you to consider how we can organize ourselves so that newcomers are warmly embraced, and that everyone feels like they are part of the Kiwanis family.

Another observation from my train experience was how people's behavior changes when the train is getting ready to leave the station. Those that are already on the train are usually sitting comfortably in their seats, without concern for what is happening around them. But for those not yet on the train, the experience is quite different. As the clock winds down to departure, people approaching the train glance at their watches and pick up their pace. When the train sounds its warning whistle, those that are still on the platform begin to run to an open door. Some people push their way past those who are struggling with their bags, totally focused on their own needs. Others stop to assist the elderly and the children to make sure that everyone gets on the train. Those that are already in their seats are not even aware that some people are struggling to get on. At Kiwanis it is time for us to look at our watches and pick up the pace. Our public announcement of our goal to have a million members by 2015 was much like the train whistle at the station. The whistle has sounded and it is time for everyone to get on the train. For those that are already comfortably seated, it is time to get up and assist others to get on board. As leaders it is our job to make sure that there is a seat for everyone and that no is left standing at the station. All aboard!

Survey to be Conducted

Over the next few weeks, Kiwanis will be conducting a survey of non-North American Kiwanis members to capture information that will help shape the future of our services to our members around the globe. Surveys will be sent to randomly selected Kiwanis members to discover why they joined Kiwanis, how do they prefer to communicate, what they like most about Kiwanis, what they would like to see changed, and much more. This survey will be conducted using

methods that will insure that the information is statistically valid. It will be translated into appropriate languages and will be delivered by mail with a pre-paid return envelope included. A similar survey was conducted in North America and was used to help shape some the services of the North American

Member Services Department. The results of the new survey will be shared as soon as they are available.

Regional Service Center Update

At the April meeting of the International Trustees, the board received a report detailing the finances of the Regional Service Centers, and a performance summary for the past ten years. A review of the RSC in Bogota, Columbia revealed annual revenues of \$38,000 (10 year average) collected from 1692 members. Despite the investment of nearly 10 times that amount each year, Kiwanis has not experienced measurable progress in this region. Based on this review, a decision was made to temporarily integrate Latin America into the North American Service Center with Marcella Ilinas continuing to serve as Manager of Latin American Services. A growth plan for Latin America is under development and additional resources are being sought for investment in this region.

New Websites Under Construction

In San Antonio we will be previewing some new Kiwanis websites that are currently under construction. Our current public website www.kiwanis.org is being totally redesigned and refreshed in a way that should allow for much easier navigation. This site will be focused on information that will be of interest to the general public, the media, potential donors and new members. A new site www.kiwanisleader.org is being designed as a resource for all of the leaders in the Kiwanis family from the International Board all the way up to the local club officers. This site will be loaded with resources and information designed to improve communication among Kiwanis Leaders, while providing a host of new tools and resources. Kiwanisleader.org will include online communities where leaders can not only receive information, but can also respond and react and transfer information to other Kiwanis leaders.. We look forward to sharing with you some major advancements in technology and communication that will be delivered using these two new sites, as well as some additional surprises.

“Listening Tour” Update

In the past 2 weeks I have had the opportunity to spend some very important time listening and talking to Kiwanis members and leaders in Belgium, Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and Poland. The Kiwanis members in each of these countries treated me like a member of their family, and the visits were very productive. In addition to visiting these seven countries, I am also maximizing my attendance at the European Convention by meeting with Kiwanis members from the balance of the Districted and Non-Districted areas of Europe. A meeting of the Kiwanis International European Federation Board this week revealed a strong desire on behalf of the Board to grow Kiwanis in Europe. Additional funding for growth has been identified and key volunteer leaders are being recruited for growth leadership positions. Outgoing KI-EF President Giampaolo Ravasi and Incoming President Stephan Huber are both committed to a smooth transition that allows the momentum to continue to build. In future issues of this Kiwanis Insider I will share the results of this portion of the listening tour, as well as plans for listening tours in Asia-Pacific, North America and Latin America.

Thanks for leading.

Rob