



# Kiwanis Insider

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For the Leadership of Kiwanis

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Dear Kiwanis Leaders:

## **Revolution**

Earlier this month Kiwanis members from all over the world gathered in Gdansk/Sopot, Poland, to celebrate forty years of Kiwanis in Europe. Six hundred delegates came together for three days of meetings, educational activities and fun. The personal highlight of the convention for me was the opportunity to hear from former Polish President Lech Walesa. President Walesa began his address by introducing himself as a rebel and a revolutionary. Although it was 25 years ago that Poland began its remarkable freedom transformation, it was obviously a dream in the hearts of the women and men of Poland for years. I can only imagine how many times President Walesa must have been told that this dream was impossible and that Poland would never experience the freedoms enjoyed by some of their neighbors. Although sometimes change comes in an evolutionary way, there are other times when only a rebellion or revolution can create the energy to make it happen. As a leader, do you have any dreams for your family, your profession or for the Kiwanis world that might require a revolution to deliver? And if you do, have you shared it with others to see if anyone shares your passion? Although not all leaders are called to lead radical change, for those of you that are, I trust you will answer when the call comes. Fortunately for the people of Poland, Lech Walesa did.

## **Initial Observations**

After spending the past two weeks meeting with Kiwanis members and leaders from Europe, I can offer the following initial observations:

1. Kiwanis members in Europe are very proud of the service projects (social action) that they perform for children and adults. Their commitment to serving others is inspiring.
2. Many Kiwanis members in Europe believe that the key to a successful club is creating an environment where lifelong friendships can flourish.
3. European members want to know more about what is happening in other parts of the Kiwanis world and would like to see our communication improve at all levels.
4. Young people in Europe are not joining Kiwanis at the same rate as past generations. Efforts to expand Kiwanis Junior are already underway in some countries and may be able to coordinated with Kiwanis Next.
5. Leadership is critical at all levels in Europe. Districts and clubs with strong leaders are vibrant, active and alive; those with weak leadership are struggling.

Although there are some unique ways that Kiwanis clubs organize and operate in Europe, it appears that our clubs worldwide are more alike than they are different. While many people in the world are fighting over land, money and politics, Kiwanis members have a shared interest in making the world a better place for children. The more Kiwanis members I meet, the more I am encouraged about our future!

### **New Trustee Elected**

Peter Wüllenweber was elected by the European delegates to serve for the next three years as an International Trustee. Peter is a long-time Kiwanis member who has twice served as Governor of the Germany District and will be a great addition to the Board. He will begin his service on the International Board in October.

### **New Procedure For Future Elections**

After nearly a year of development, discussion, and input from a broad section of Kiwanis members, the International Board has approved a new procedure for future elections. Beginning with the 2007-08 administrative year, candidates for International Vice-President will be invited to participate in a leadership evaluation process. This is a voluntary process using an independent committee of Kiwanis members who would evaluate candidates on a specific set of leadership criteria. The results of this evaluation would be the selection of two outstanding leaders who would be presented to the delegates as recommended candidates. These two candidates, along with anyone else who has the support of their district to run, would be presented for election at the International convention. This Leadership Evaluation Committee would be made up of Kiwanis members from 10 different districts world-wide, and membership would rotate each year so that every district has an opportunity to participate. At the Convention in San Antonio there will be public drawing held to determine which districts will have representatives on the committee for the first year.

Following is a list of potential benefits of this new process as outlined by the Task Force who developed the concept:

- Very similar to the process used by most Kiwanis Clubs to elect their club leaders.
- Increases the likelihood of electing candidates that are fully qualified to lead.
- Insures that candidates have demonstrated a clear record of accomplishment before, during, and after their service on the Board.
- Levels the playing field for non-North American candidates, some of whom may be at a disadvantage speaking in front of a largely North American audience
- Widens the pool of qualified candidates well beyond 3<sup>rd</sup> year North American Trustees

Details about how the Leadership Evaluation Committee will be determined, the rotation schedule for the committee, the benefits of this new procedure, and much more is available online at [www.kiwanis.org/leadershivevaluation](http://www.kiwanis.org/leadershivevaluation). Questions about this process can also be directed to the Chairman of the Board Committee on Membership Diversity, Fred Bishop at [fredwbishop@comcast.net](mailto:fredwbishop@comcast.net).

### **Personal Update**

My daughter Andrea has begun her job search here in Indianapolis and in the meantime is serving as an Intern with the Kiwanis International Foundation. My wife Stephanie is preparing for a number of summer visits by family and friends, including my son AJ and his wife Erika with our two grandchildren. I am totally focusing my attention on Kiwanis at this time, but hope to take some time off after the International Convention is completed. I trust that you are all doing well and will find some time for a vacation or holiday this summer.

I look forward to seeing many of you in San Antonio. Thanks for leading.

*Rob*