

Guide to the Kiwanis Club Records, 1919-1983

Last Modified on 07/12/2021 10:48 am CDT

Summary Information

Title: Register of the Kiwanis Club Records

Inclusive Dates: 1919-1983

Creator: Kiwanis Club (Eau Claire, Wis.)

Call Number: Eau Claire Mss CA

Quantity: 4.2 c.f. (11 archives boxes)

Repository: Housed at the Area Research Center, William D. McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire; owned by the Wisconsin Historical Society, Library-Archives Division

Archival Locations: UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library / Eau Claire Area Research Ctr.

Abstract: Administrative records, photographs, and a film of the Eau Claire, Wis. chapter of Kiwanis International, a voluntary service organization. The collection includes weekly program announcements, which were printed on members' business letterhead, minutes of Board of Directors meetings, correspondence, member information, and papers generated by the new member approval process. Kiwanis youth-oriented and social activities are documented by photographs, programs, committee papers, and a short 16 mm. black and white film about the 1967 Pancake Day fundraiser. There is also material from the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Kiwanis District, to which the Eau Claire club belongs, including the 1937-38 Manual for District Officers.

Language: English

Search Terms/Subject Terms

- Men—Wisconsin—Eau Claire—Societies and Clubs
- Clubs—Wisconsin—Eau Claire
- Civic improvement—Wisconsin—Eau Claire
- Eau Claire (Wis.)
- Kiwanis International. Wisconsin-Upper Michigan District

Biography/History

The Kiwanis Club of Eau Claire is a voluntary organization of local business owners, executives, managers, administrators, and professionals joined for purposes of fellowship and community service. Founded in 1919, the Eau Claire club operates under a charter from Kiwanis International and belongs to the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Kiwanis District. The club holds noontime lunch meetings every Thursday, for many years gathering at the Hotel Eau Claire. Over the years the membership has included many prominent citizens of Eau Claire. It has also had, and continues to have, strong ties to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Kiwanis International was founded in 1915 in Detroit, Michigan, as a service club for businessmen and professionals. In addition to Kiwanis clubs, Kiwanis International oversees Key Clubs for high school students, Circle K for college students, and Golden K for retirees. Membership rules require that Kiwanis members have community ties within the territory of the local club they join, that they hold positions of administrative authority in their place of work or be members of recognized professions, that no more than two members of each local club be engaged in the same vocation or profession, and no more than one member be from a single company, institution, department, or division. Individuals are proposed for membership by a current member of a local club, screened by the membership committee and Board of Directors, and then invited to join. Women were first admitted to membership in 1987.

Kiwanis clubs are organized into divisions and districts within Kiwanis International. Eau Claire is part of Division 16 of the Upper Michigan-Wisconsin District. The District acts as an intermediary between local clubs and Kiwanis International, administering club membership, attendance, and activity reports. The District also holds annual conventions and other meetings. Eau Claire hosted District conventions in 1934 and 1961. District Governors who came from Eau Claire include Glen V. Rork (1937) and Chauncey Cook (1969-70).

In the spirit of the Kiwanis motto, "We Build," Eau Claire Kiwanis club activities have ranged from long-term projects like the construction and support of the Paul Bunyan Camp Museum in Carson Park, to coordinating the McLaughlin Fund, an emergency relief fund for a family that lost its home to a fire. In their choice of projects the Kiwanis show a particular interest in children and youth, sponsoring athletic teams and events, safety programs, organizations that promote good citizenship, and scholarships for students going on to college or vocational and technical training. The Kiwanis have regular social events for members, families, and neighboring clubs. Since 1957 they have held an annual Pancake Day fundraiser with proceeds going to support youth activities and a children's medical fund.

The club's links with the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (formerly Wisconsin State College at Eau Claire) include sponsoring the UWEC Circle K Club, providing scholarships, and setting up a revolving loan fund for UW-Eau Claire students. Prominent members of the UW-Eau Claire community who were also members of the Kiwanis include Harvey A. Schofield, W. L. Davies, Sr., Charles Brewer, and Leonard Haas.

Scope and Content Note

The records of the Kiwanis Club of Eau Claire consist of materials collected or accumulated by a succession of club officers. The collection includes long runs of basic organizational records such as Board of Directors minutes, annual reports, newsletters, and news clippings, as well as photographs, film, programs and records of events and activities sponsored by the organization. There is also scattered administrative material from the Wisconsin Upper-Michigan District, to which the Eau Claire club belongs.

The bulk of material coincides with the terms of service of three officers: Noel Buckstaff (club president and district secretary, 1937-1938); Julius Dinger (club treasurer, ca. 1949-1955; vice-president, 1956; president, 1957; and secretary, 1958-1963), and Don Bartingale (vice-president, 1961; president, 1962; and secretary 1964-1980).

The present arrangement divides the material into three series: EXECUTIVE; ACTIVITIES; and WISCONSIN-UPPER MICHIGAN DISTRICT. Photocopies of photographs are filed in sequence with the other records; original photographs and the film are listed as a fourth series. They are stored in the SHSW Visual Materials Archive in Madison.

The EXECUTIVE series reflects the regular activities and responsibilities of the Secretary, President and Board of Directors. The series includes Board of Directors minutes, annual club achievement and treasurer's reports, standardized monthly reports to the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan District, newsletters and newspaper clippings, and some general correspondence. Also included are the monthly reports of committee activities that were submitted to the Secretary for use in the preparation of club monthly reports and material that reflects the Board of Directors' involvement in the new member approval process.

The *Weekly Bulletin*, a newsletter that was edited by the club secretary, includes the featured speaker or program for the group's regular Thursday meetings and announcements of special events.

It was printed on business stationery supplied by club members on a rotating basis, providing a glimpse of the Eau Claire business and professional community. In 1979 the club began a monthly newsletter, the *EauKlarian*, that included occasional board reports and committee membership lists as well as a program schedule for the month.

Membership records include membership lists and directories, group portraits, correspondence regarding membership status or the selection and approval of new members, and information collected from new members upon induction into the club. Information forms may include place of birth, length of residence in Eau Claire, wedding anniversary, spouse's name and birthday, names and ages of children, business and professional organization affiliations, sports participation, and musical ability. Directories produced after 1957 include a portrait and the occupation or employer of each member. Informal photographs of club members and families may be found in the Activities series under "Social Events."

Standing and Ad Hoc Committee files in the Executive series include committee membership lists and monthly activity reports used by the club secretary in the preparation of reports to the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan District. These files reflect the oversight and reporting functions of the Executive committee. Working papers of standing and ad hoc committees and records of committee activities may be found in the Activities series under the name of the committee, project, or event.

The ACTIVITIES series consists of scattered photographs, working papers, reports, and publications produced in the course of community projects, fundraisers, and Kiwanis functions. Coverage is haphazard. Identifiable committee correspondence and material that is clearly not part of the executive committee correspondence have been placed in this series. Where possible, events or projects have been grouped under the name of the committee responsible. Social events, which are mainly documented by informal photographs of Kiwanis members, families, and guests, also have been grouped together. Formal photographs of the entire club are filed under "Membership" in the Executive series. Further information on specific committees or events may be found in the Executive series in the Standing and Ad Hoc Committee Report files, appended to the Board of Directors minutes or in Correspondence.

The WISCONSIN - UPPER MICHIGAN DISTRICT series consists of administrative reports, meeting programs, and other records that were produced at the District level. The series is made up of material collected by Noel Buckstaff during his term as District Secretary, correspondence sent to Eau Claire club officers, and convention material and programs. The 1937 Manual for District Officers describes the structure of Kiwanis, the duties of various District Officers, the importance of membership and new club development and rules for achievement

and attendance contests. Correspondence sent to club officers includes announcements, reminders, convention registration material, and results of attendance contests. Results of attendance, achievement, and other contests also can be found in Annual Reports. These provide both a summary of club membership levels and activities and a means of comparison between clubs in the Upper Michigan-Wisconsin District.

Administrative/Restriction Information

Acquisition Information

Presented by Kiwanis Club of Eau Claire, Wis., via Terrance Sheridan, 1984, and Robert K. Gizlaff, 1989.
Accession Number: M84-214, M89-175

Processing Information

The collection had been arranged chronologically by Dan Norstedt at the UW-Eau Claire ARC in 1993, with additional processing by Daardi Sizemore in 1997. Final processing by Lisa Pfaff, 1999.

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