

# Announcing Intent to Run for Treasurer

By Eddie Lee, Kiwanis Club of Gulf Beaches



I very much appreciate the opportunity, provided by *Florida Kiwanian* magazine, to share with those who may not already know, my intentions to stand for election to the Kiwanis International, Florida District Board of Trustees, as Treasurer 2009-10. I do so only after much prayer and meditation, conversations with hundreds of fellow Kiwanians in all 27 Florida Divisions and after I received the support, by resolution, of my Division and my club. I have appointed you, the members of our nearly 300 clubs in Florida as my advisors and this truly will be our journey together as we elevate our beloved organization from good to great! I'm Ready! EMBRACE THE POSSIBILITIES.

In his best selling book, *Good to Great*, author Jim Collins implies that the enemy of great is good. His point being that we become so comfortable with good that we don't strive for greatness. Florida Kiwanis has been a good organization since before I first joined the K-Family as a member of Key Club at Winter Haven High School. And, it has remained good for all these years. As I traveled the District last year, at the 105 visits I made to all 27 Divisions, as a guest at Educations Days, DCM's and club meetings; I was staggered at the variety and volume of service we provide. Externally, we are much closer to greatness than we are internally. Presently 45% (134) of our clubs have less than 25 members. Nearly one-half that number has less than 20 members and 7 clubs have less than 10 members. For the most part, these are good intended clubs who almost without exception have a history of extraordinary service somewhere in their past. The members of these clubs struggle for answers to their dwindling numbers and often sharp decrease in service. In some communities we are no longer "the" club. We can't continue to do the same things over and over and expect different results. I sense a growing thirst for passionate, proven distinguished leadership that will articulate a vision that will ultimately propel us to greatness. The potential for greatness is within

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each of us and within our clubs. Our challenge is to peel away the layers of resistance to change. With few exceptions, Clubs in the Florida District need to re-tool in order to meet the ever changing environment we must learn to survive in. Change isn't on the way. It surrounds us and how we adapt to that change will determine our future. We should honor our past but we can't continue to live there. Those who will lead us next, think act, live, work and serve in different ways than many of us. It is incumbent on us to adapt to them. Perhaps we should consider less emphasis on meeting attendance and more emphasis on service. Internet clubs, clubs that encourage entire families including children to participate in meetings, young professional clubs consisting of members who are all less than 40 years old, all this and more need to be on the table. Matching a club's profile with their community profile is not a bad idea. Reaching out and extending the Kiwanis hand of fellowship to those who don't look like us, talk like us or live next door to us must be given serious consideration. The days of Kiwanis being perceived, rightly so in some instances, as a middle aged, white, male "club" should be put to rest. What an exciting time to be a Kiwanian! I'm Ready!

As we reshape the face of Kiwanis, we must remain acutely aware of why we need to change. In a word: Service. The extraordinary legacy we have built on the service we have provided can never be dulled. Yet, as we stand nearly at the end of the first decade of the new millennium we face tremendous opportunities to add to that legacy. As long as there are 60,000 homeless children in Florida, Kiwanis needs to gear up to serve. As long as there are 3,100 schools in Florida without a Service Leadership Program, we need to grow and provide advisors, as long as one child's hand reaches out to us for help we need to prepare ourselves to meet needs yet undiscovered. I'm Ready!

Please understand, I don't think even for a moment, that I have all the answers. The truth is, I don't even know all the questions, yet. So, I am going to the experts...you. I anticipate making another 100 or so visits again this year and will depend on you to engage in the ongoing conversation we started last year designed to explore our options, find out what you think is good about Florida Kiwanis and what you might want changed. No matter how good a leader I may be, I'll do a poor job if I don't know where YOU want us to go. TOGETHER, we will create a plan that will result in our moving beyond our normal expectations and leave us breathless in the high altitude of greatness! I'm Ready! EMBRACE THE POSSIBILITIES.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I sincerely hope you will support me. My promise is that when elected I will give it my best effort. The four million children in Florida deserve nothing less from any of us. EDDIE'S READY!!

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