

## CANADA – U.S. GOODWILL

I'm Elizabeth Bennett, Past Lt. Governor, Division 18, and Canada/U.S. Goodwill (aka International Understanding) District Chair.

My duty is to encourage you, as leaders, to encourage your clubs to foster relationships with our counterparts in Canada and the U.S.

As you know, Kiwanis was born on January 21, 1915, in Detroit, Michigan. The first Canadian club was chartered on November 1, 1916, in Hamilton, Ontario.

At the 1921 Cleveland, Ohio, convention, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

“Resolved that every effort be made to foster by all means the continued splendid relations between the United States and Canada and to that end that Kiwanis clubs of this continent be required in Canada to set apart a day to be termed “United States Day” and in the United States a day to be termed “Canadian Day” on which occasions appropriate exercises will be held in their respective clubs.”

As a result of this observance, concern for maintaining and appreciating the excellent relations between the two countries has increased. Goodwill efforts are no longer limited to one week only; many goodwill service projects are continued annually.

Canada/U.S. Goodwill Week was initiated in 1935 at that year's convention to celebrate the treaty of friendship known as the Rush-Bagot Agreement. Richard Rush was the Acting Secretary of State; Sir Charles Bagot was a British diplomat and administrator. Immediately after the War of 1812, Great Britain attempted to strengthen her position by substantially increasing her naval power on the Great Lakes. The United States developed a program of shipbuilding of equal magnitude. Negotiations led to the signing of this Agreement, and the treaty has been honored ever since by both nations. An atmosphere of mutual trust, friendship, and goodwill was developed in both countries as a result of this Agreement. Goodwill Week was to be celebrated the week in which April 28 occurs in honor of this Agreement. It was to be observed every second year; in 1939, it became an annual observance.

In 1935, Kiwanis dedicated the first of more than two dozen peace markers erected at various locations along our mutual border. The following resolution, which was adopted from the 1921 convention, is inscribed on each marker:

“This unfortified boundary line between the Dominion of Canada and the United States of America should quicken the remembrance of the more than a century of old friendship between these two countries—a lesson of peace to all nations.”

The idea for the peace markers came from the construction of the Harding International Goodwill Memorial, erected in Stanley Park, Vancouver, B.C., in 1925. In his last public address prior to his death in 1923, President Warren G. Harding, an active Kiwanian, stressed the spirit of friendship existing between the United States and Canada. Kiwanis clubs in Canada and the United States contributed funds to make this memorial possible.

Until Kiwanis expanded in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and became truly worldwide, the Pacific Northwest had the distinction of being the only international district.

Below are listed some important dates of Canada and the United States for 2012. Please use them to schedule a special event or program for your club--creativity and imagination are limitless!

#### Canada

- Victoria Day, May 21
- Canada Day, July 1
- Thanksgiving, October 8
- Remembrance Day, November 11
- Boxing Day, December 26

#### United States

- Presidents' Day, February 20
- Memorial Day, May 28
- Independence Day, July 4
- Veterans Day, November 11
- Thanksgiving Day, November 22