



THE KIWI CLUB NATIONAL CONVENTION 2026 - San Antonio
FIESTA FLIGHT ROYALE, *Nacho Ordinary Convention!*
April 29-May 1, 2026

Hola Kiwis!

One last Briefing from your Contessa Captain who is rarely at a loss for words... And so I say **MUCHAS GRACIAS** to you all! And warmest congratulations to our new Co Chairs for 2028: **Paula Brodnick Schmikrath and Connie Nemes!** Before I have the pleasure of turning over everything Convention to this dynamo duo, I wish to share what an honor it was to serve The Kiwi Club in this way once again - *to work with so many of our wonderful Kiwis - friends from long ago and new friends - all of whom made this convention so special, as did every single Kiwi who came...oh, and one llama!*

To set a vision and work together toward common goals, to invite a multitude of talents of many in facilitating it all coming together during our greatly anticipated biennial 'reunion' of Kiwis who gather from near and far around the country, is a wonderful experience: to celebrate, to commemorate, to reconnect, to learn, to explore one of our nation's great cities, to wine/dine/giggle and even cry, to recognize great and small accomplishments, to involve our community, and to plan for the future - there is nothing quite like it! And truly, this was nacho ordinary convention! And yet, every single Kiwi convention is anything but ordinary and has its own unique signature - because we're Kiwis and love to do things in a big way! "Duty makes us do things well, love makes us do them beautifully..." Here is a recap of what made our 2026 Convention "Nacho Ordinary Convention" - and muy fantastico!

- **The Fiesta Flight Crew!** Without our group of dedicated Kiwis, our Kiwi convention could not take place... **The line up of Kiwis who volunteered from day one as well as those who were 'Reserve Standby Crew - all made this convention so memorable and great.** Please see the KUDOS section on our website.
- **Our Kiwis! And Their Guests!** Such a special, fun-loving, delightful group of ladies and gentlemen whose flying careers spanned from 70 years ago to still flying!
- **The Property Site Location! Hotel Contessa** - the popular City of San Antonio, its welcoming Convention Bureau, the River Walk, the River, the Attractions, Shopping, Dining at the hotel and in the area, and the all-suite boutique 4 diamond hotel situated at picturesque Marriage Island.
- **The Theme!** An all F/C flight (with one aircraft reconfiguration!) fit for royalty, as in Contessa - and Kiwis. Festive, joyful, colorful, delicious, and perfectly matched for San Antonio, where the cultures of Texan and Mexican merge so beautifully with traditions rich in heritage.

- Our **logo** that captured all the key elements and the spirit of Convention 2026 by our KK editor!
- **The Celebrations and Commemorations!** The **250th birthday year of our great nation**. The **100th anniversary year of American Airlines**. The **50th anniversary of graduating classes 1975-76**. The **60th anniversary of graduations classes 1965-66**, and the extraordinary milestone of 1 Kiwi celebrating her **70th anniversary year from the Class of 1956** who was trained at Midway, plus and 4 other Kiwis celebrating **their classes of 1958 and 1959!** The **30th anniversary of adopting WINGS as The Kiwi Club National Endeavor**. The **25th anniversary of 9-11**, with the inspiring Guest Speaker featured at Opening Luncheon, Capt Beverley Bass, first female to achieve Captain at American Airlines and whose life-story about the landing she made in New Foundland on 9-11 with her crew and passengers moved everyone - and amazingly, our new Kiwi Club National Treasurer was on that very flight!
- The **Awards and Awardees!** See website and KK. Warmest Congratulations to all!
- An encore of the outstanding **Convention App** by our own Webmaster!
- A robust printed **Communications Welcome Packet** for those still getting used to - or not - to the use of tech savvy apps!
- Helpful and colorful **signage, and printed communications** including Program Sheets for all 3 Main Events, and our All-Kiwi Registration Information Packet mailout!
- **Gifts and favors** at all Events from the moment of being welcomed at Hot Tamale Junction at the hotel, through the 'crowning glory' finale of our Sombrero Serenade - Ole Banquet Night!
- Our generous **Sponsors and Underwriters!** A big list of Chapter, Individual and Businesses who helped make the special touches and entertainment possible, as recognized in the Welcome Packet, Opening Luncheon and Closing Banquet Program Sheets, and here on the Website.
- **Boutique (Kiwi Mercado) and Hospitality (Kiwi Kantina)** presented robust displays of items for sale, many to benefit Chapter charitable projects and/or Wings Foundation. Plus featured **Uniforms** from the Collection to correlate with convention milestones: 1956-59, 1975-76, 1996, 2001, and current. A comprehensive photo/story album of Kiwi who have **Flown West** during the term. **NEW - Door Prize Poster Board** of Prizes and Winners! Lots of Winners!
- An **Optional Event, (Noche del Rio)**, offered in loving memory of our **2024-2026 National Secretary**...that featured the surprise unexpected, wonderful entertainment - **'Lefty the Llama'** and Loretta who greeted all Kiwis on the hotel's Patio before Kiwis embarked on the Go Rio River Boat ride, all wearing festive Neon bandanas) a tour, and ended up at iconic, happily decorated **Casa Rio**, the oldest restaurant on the River and known for the best Fajitas and Ritas plus other authentic Tex Mex cuisine, with outstanding service! 123 of 130 Registrants!
- **The other great Main Events** also complete with a plethora of decorations - Kiwis adding to those decorations in Texan/Fiesta attire: **The Past Presidents Luncheon** - (Crown Jewels and Chandeliers), **The Delegates/Candidates Reception** - (Boots, Bling, Bigotes & Blue), **Opening Luncheon** - (Royal Fiesta de Flores/A celebracion fit

for a Contessa) complete with an encore **Photo Op** sponsored by AA Credit Union, and **Closing Banquet** - (Sombrero Serenade - Ole/The Crowning Glory Finale)!

- The return of featuring **Installation at Closing Banquet**, a meaningful opportunity for our Outgoing and Incoming National Executive Boards to be recognized, as well as our Past Presidents (11 in attendance) with a Past Presidents Toast, a tradition that began in the late 1990's.
- The return of featuring the **Reveal Announcement of the next Convention Site at the current convention! PSP** here we come!
- The gift of **500,000 Award Miles for the AA Opportunity Prize Drawing** and an increase in ticket sales since the previous convention, with 3 lucky Winners drawn!
- The **local band from New Braunfels Tiffiny Dawn** that provided stellar entertainment at Closing Banquet - and to which everyone who was able to dance was dancing - including the enormous Conga lines! Truly a grand finale, dancing the night away!
- **The blessing of it all!** That we continue to host convention after convention, giving Kiwis the opportunity to gather and see old friends and make new ones every two years with members representing most of our Chapters and our MALs at Delegates Reception and Meeting! And, all - always flying in the same direction: **the destinations of FUN, FRIENDSHIP, and PHILANTHROPY!**

You all are a blessing. Thank you again, from deep in the heart of Texas and mine,
Sherri

All the best to our Outgoing Board and our Incoming Board and to our new Convention Co Chairs! See you in PSP!