



The Division 37 Kiwanis Challenge Coin

The Concept. Lieutenant Governor Walt Schuette, Team 2007-2008, Division 37, California-Nevada-Hawaii District, Kiwanis International has introduced and initiated the Kiwanis Challenge Coin concept to Division 37 in an attempt to enhance camaraderie and to express his heartfelt thanks to deserving members of the Division's Team 2007-2008.

Challenge coins are also known by a variety of other names such as unit coins, unit challenge coins, military coins, or the "Commander's Coin." Regardless of the name, each of these coins represents affiliation, support, or patronage to the organization minted on the coin. This Division 37 Kiwanis Challenge Coin is destined to become a treasured and respected object. It boldly represents unity as Division 37's clubs are listed on the coin's obverse and clearly depicts the Division's beloved mascot Marmaduke ("Duke") and the organization's motto on the reverse.

Military Commanders have long used specially minted coins to improve morale, foster unit esprit de corps, and honor service members for their hard work. Lieutenant Governor Walt intends to use the Kiwanis Challenge Coin for the same purposes. Upon completion of their term in office, September 30, 2008, members of the Lieutenant Governor's Team 2007-2008 will receive their very own Division 37 Kiwanis Challenge Coin.

It is important to note that the Division 37 Kiwanis Challenge Coin cannot be purchased and is only awarded to Team Members who contributed significantly to the overall success of the Division as determined by the Lieutenant Governor. Club Presidents, Secretaries, Leaders, Division Coordinators, and past Lieutenant Governors serving as advisors to the incumbent Lieutenant Governor are eligible to receive the Division 37 Kiwanis Challenge Coin as are members of the District and Kiwanis International Staffs and Friends of Kiwanis who are deemed worthy of such recognition.

Challenge Coin Rules. Challenge coin rules only apply to other individuals who also have a challenge coin. A holder of a challenge coin may "challenge" any individual who is known to have a coin.

- 1) A challenge is made by raising and displaying a coin or by tapping it on a bar or table.
- 2) The individual who is challenged is required to produce their coin within 60 seconds.
- 3) If the individual produces their coin, the challenger is obligated to buy them a drink.
- 4) If the challenged individual fails to produce their coin, they are obligated to buy the drink.

The reward does NOT have to be an alcoholic beverage. It can be a soda or any other reward that the two individuals agree on. If a coin is dropped and it hits the floor, the owner is obligated to buy drinks for anyone who hears or sees the coin hit the floor (provided they have their coin on them).

Coin challengers are known to strike anywhere and at any time. They insidiously stalk the challenge, waiting for just the right moment to attack. An innocent bystander may never hear the challenge - only the challenged individual's despairing cry, "Oh...! I forgot mine!"

A wise Division 37 Kiwanis Challenge Coin recipient who attends conferences, conventions, or any social activities frequented by other Kiwanians would do well to insure their coin is easily accessible lest they become obligated to buy a drink... or more. Have fun and enjoy your Division 37 Kiwanis Challenge Coin.



History of the Challenge Coin. According to one story, challenge coins originated during World War I. American volunteers from all parts of the country filled the newly formed flying squadrons. Some were wealthy scions attending colleges such as Yale and Harvard who quit in mid-term to join the war.

In one squadron, a wealthy lieutenant ordered medallions struck in solid bronze and presented them to his unit. One young pilot placed the medallion in a small leather pouch that he wore about his neck. Shortly after acquiring the medallions, the pilot's aircraft was severely damaged by ground fire. He was forced to land behind enemy lines and was immediately captured by a German patrol. In order to discourage his escape, the Germans took all of his personal identification except for the small leather pouch around his neck.

In the meantime, he was taken to a small French town near the front. Taking advantage of a bombardment that night, he escaped. However, he was without personal identification. He succeeded in avoiding German patrols by donning civilian attire and reached the front lines. With great difficulty, he crossed no-man's land.

Eventually, he stumbled onto a French outpost. Unfortunately, saboteurs had plagued the French in the sector. They sometimes masqueraded as civilians and wore civilian clothes. Not recognizing the young pilot's American accent, the French thought him to be a saboteur and made ready to execute him. He had no identification to prove his allegiance, but he did have his leather pouch containing the medallion.

He showed the medallion to his would-be executioners and one of his French captors recognized the squadron insignia on the medallion. They delayed his execution long enough for him to confirm his identity. Instead of shooting him they gave him a bottle of wine.

Back at his squadron, it became tradition to ensure that all members carried their medallion or coin at all times. This was accomplished through challenge in the following manner - a challenger would ask to see the medallion. If the challenged could not produce a medallion, they were required to buy a drink of choice for the member who challenged them. If the challenged member produced a medallion, then the challenging member was required to pay for the drink.

This tradition continued on throughout the war and for many years after the war while surviving members of the squadron were still alive.

Great organizations thrive on custom and traditions. When their members receive due recognition for their dedication and efforts, the organization is strengthened, in spirit, in unity, and in cooperation within. It is with this thought in mind, that Lieutenant Governor Walt Schuette, a member of Team 2007-2008, Division 37, California-Nevada-Hawaii District, Kiwanis International introduced and initiated the Division 37 Kiwanis Challenge Coin concept to the nineteen clubs of Division 37 in July 2008. It is anticipated that past and future Lieutenant Governors throughout Kiwanis International will join in and strike challenge coins in honor of their respective teams as we "continue the march... to success."