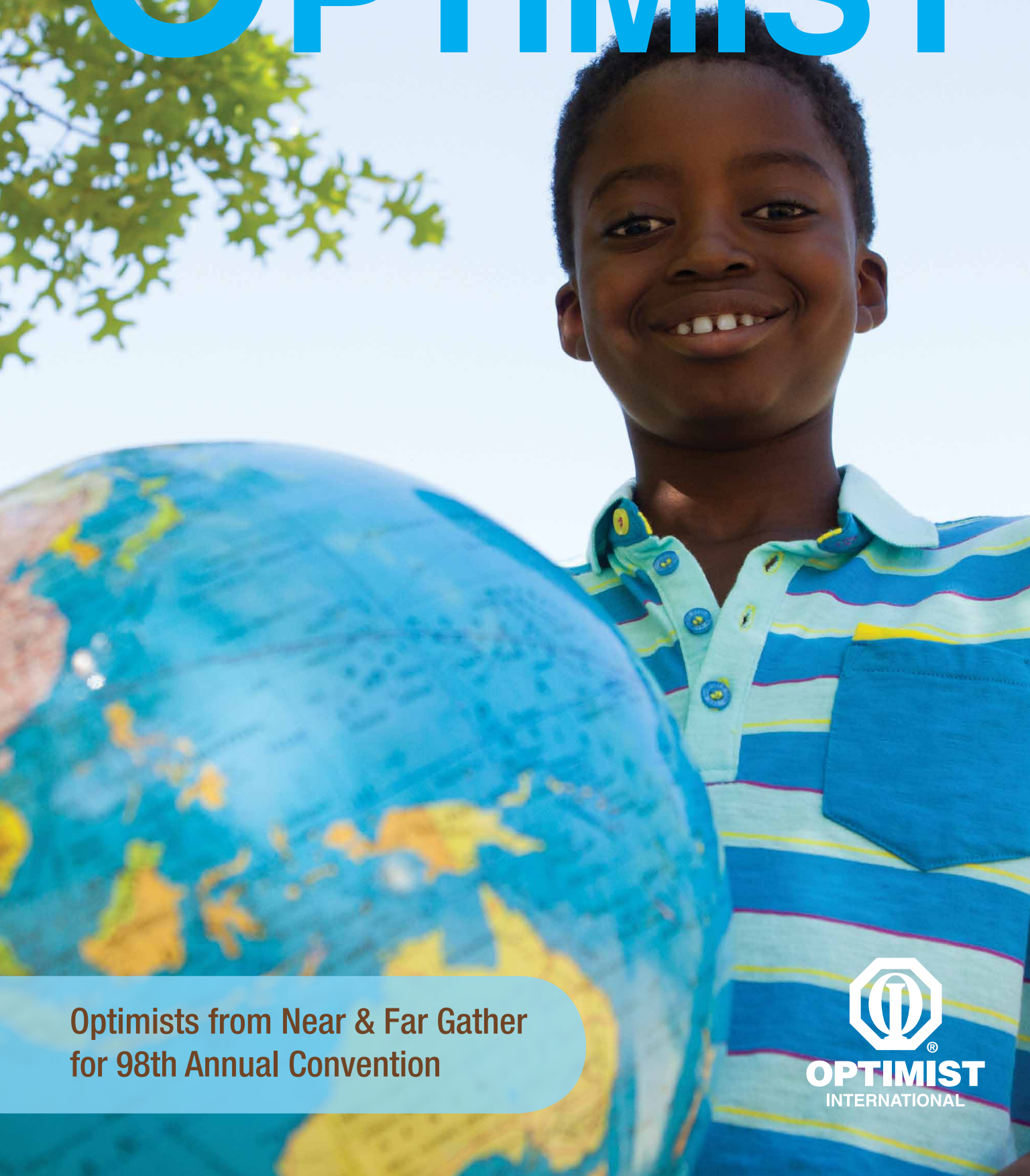


Spring 2016

The OPTIMIST



Optimists from Near & Far Gather
for 98th Annual Convention



OPTIMIST
INTERNATIONAL

SWEN NATER: SEVEN FEET OF MOTIVATION!

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION KEYNOTE SPEAKER

FRIDAY, JULY 1 – FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

Swen Nater is one of basketball's best rebounders and has records to prove it. Although he's seven-feet tall and played at the highest level of his sport, he is down to earth and understands where people are in their journey toward self-development. He motivates people to action. His goal is not to create a temporary emotional lift, but rather to help each "audience participant" create a new personal plan. Highly-entertaining, Swen's presentations are flavored by tasteful humor, poetry (some his own), and powerful quotes.



FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS, SWEN NATER HAS BEEN A HIGHLY-SOUGHT-AFTER MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER AND HAS PRESENTED HIS ENERGETIC, HUMOROUS, AND POWERFUL MESSAGES AROUND THE WORLD FOR CORPORATIONS, SCHOOLS, AND VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
WWW.SWENNATER.ME

MISSION STATEMENT

By providing hope and positive vision, Optimists bring out the best in kids.

VISION STATEMENT

Optimist International will be recognized worldwide as the premier volunteer organization that values all children and helps them develop to their full potential.

PURPOSES OF OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

To develop optimism as a philosophy of life utilizing the tenets of the Optimist Creed; To promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs; To inspire respect for the law; To promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people; To aid and encourage the development of youth, in the belief that the giving of one's self in service to others will advance the well-being of humankind, community life and the world.

THE OPTIMIST CREED

Promise Yourself-

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind. To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet. To make all your friends feel that there is something in them. To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true. To think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best. To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own. To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future. To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile. To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others. To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

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On the Cover The 98th Annual International Convention will take place June 30-July 2, 2016 in Quebec City. For more information, see pages 18-19.

CHALK TALKS

WITH COACH DAVE

SPRING—A Time for Optimism!

Spring is a time of new growth and renewal. The signs of change are all around us. Flowers bloom, birds sing, and the grass turns green. The days are longer, the sun seems brighter, the temperature is rising, and the smiles on the faces of children are wider. It is a time for Optimism!

Because Spring is a time of rebirth and new beginnings, we are inspired to put our dreams into action. As Optimists, this means that it is time for us to renew our "commitment to youth" and our "commitment to growth." Just as a farmer plants seeds each spring in anticipation of a future harvest, we bring in new Members with the knowledge that each Optimist serves 30 to 35 children each year.

Spring is the perfect time of the year to plant the seed of Optimism by asking someone we know to join our Optimist Club or to become a "Friend of Optimist." It is also a perfect time to hold a New Optimist Welcome (NOW) program, or to bring Optimism to a new community by starting a new Optimist Club. In other words, now is the time to invite others who share our passion to join us in our noble mission of making the world a better place—one community and one child at a time.

In addition, this is a great time to make plans to join Optimists from around the world for the 98th Optimist International Convention to be held from June 30-July 2 in beautiful and historic Quebec City. Together, we will Rediscover Optimism in this delightful "City of Explorers"—founded by French explorer Samuel de Champlain in 1608.

In Quebec City, we will have the opportunity to share ideas to help strengthen our Optimist Clubs, to increase our ability to provide service to youth, to collaborate on ways to increase fundraising, to learn how to become better leaders, and to enjoy fellowship with one another. Bring the family and make plans today to join us for a fantastic adventure in Quebec City!



PRESIDENT DAVE BRUNS

As the days grow longer and the temperatures begin to rise, let's share our Optimism with others. In doing so, we will be helping to bring out the very BEST in youth, in our communities, and in ourselves—Right Here, Right Now!

Yours in Optimism,

Dave Bruns, 2015-16 President Optimist International



NOW IS THE TIME TO HOST A NOW EVENT

NEW OPTIMISTS WELCOME (NOW) EVENTS ARE ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL WAYS TO RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS. BUT DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR TO HOLD ONE! HOLD A NOW EVENT NOW!

NOW events can take many forms. It could be a happy hour, a Saturday brunch, or a wine and cheese party. Many Clubs have held successful NOW events, so if your Club needs help planning one, just ask around. Ask your District Membership Chair, or find a Club nearby that has held one. Your District is full of great resources to help you plan a NOW event.

Just remember: don't wait to hold your NOW event. Do it right here, right NOW!

For more information on the NOW program, contact the Membership Department at (800) 500-8130 or membership@optimist.org.



TARGETING MEMBERS FOR Purpose/Mission Driven Clubs

Many Optimist Clubs focus on a specific area of service within their community. These are sometimes referred to as purpose or mission driven Optimist Clubs. When looking at recruitment options, Optimist Clubs should strongly consider who in the community would fit in well with their Club's mission or purpose. This type of recruiting will also help the Club by bringing in someone with expertise in their focused area. It can also easily be done at Club events.

SOME EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

Sports Clubs Target coaches at all levels, college athletes, parks and recreation employees, and parents of participants. Promote the Club by setting up a recruiting table at events/tournaments.

Childhood Health Issues Target hospital employees and parents of afflicted children. Host a walk/run benefiting a cause for like-minded people in your community.

Scholarship Opportunities Target school employees and parents of contest participants. Promote your essay, oratorical and CCDHH programs.

NEWS

SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST DEADLINES

Grab a pen and your calendar because Optimist International has some important dates for you to remember!

District Essay Winners Deadline

District Essay winners must be submitted to Optimist International by April 15. The District Entry Form, Winner's Information Form, a copy of the essay and the winner's birth certificate or passport must be sent to the Programs Department.

District Oratorical Winners Deadline

The deadline to submit District Oratorical winners is May 15. The District Entry Form, Winner's Information Form, Regional Winner's Information Form, a copy of the speech, and the birth certificate or passport must be submitted for each of the winners. The Student Evaluation Form is also required.

CCDHH Winners Deadline

The District CCDHH chair must submit the District Entry Form, Winner's Information Form, a copy of the speech and an audiogram by June 15.

All required documents must be completed and submitted by the due date in order for scholarships to be processed. If you have questions, contact the Programs Department at (800) 500-8130 or via e-mail at programs@optimist.org.

VOTE ONLINE

For the next Optimist International President, two At-Large Board Directors and your Regional Vice President.

Your Optimist Club will once again have the ability to participate in the election of Optimist International officers by casting its vote online. Elections open online at 8:00 a.m. (CST) on Wednesday, June 1. Delegates attending the International Convention in Quebec City will be able to vote at a kiosk during regular convention office hours until election balloting closes at 11:00 a.m. (CST) on Friday, July 1.

President Dave Bruns will announce election results at the 2nd/closing business session at 1:30 p.m. (CST) on Saturday, July 2. Election Results will be posted on optimist.org as soon as possible thereafter.

To be eligible to vote: Your Club must have a valid email address for your Club President on file with Optimist International. Also, your Club will need to have all of its financial obligations paid by April 30.

DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL 30 – Club voting strength is determined per International Bylaws.

MAY – Email is sent to every Club President outlining online voting procedure.

JUNE 1 – Online election voting will open for 30 days.

JULY 2 – Results of elections posted on the Optimist website.

Make sure your Club President's email address is correct in the Optimist membership database to ensure that your Club receives the voting procedures. The Club President or Secretary should:

- Go to www.optimistleaders.org.
- Login with your credentials.
- If you do not know your credentials, click on the "Password Recovery" link.
- Click on your name and confirm email is correct or enter correct address.

VIEWS

Optimists Accomplish P.G.I. Goals

The following Optimists submitted their requirements for achieving Levels VII and X of the Personal Growth & Involvement Program between November 1, 2015 and January 31, 2016:

Level VII

Wally Smith	AZ
Anita Still	GATE
Gary Williams	NMWTX

Level X

Tolanda Beal	ALMS
Lou Anna Hardee	NCE
Russ Testorff	KS
Gary Williams	NMWTX

Registering Club Officers Has Never Been Easier

Optimist Clubs can now register their 2016-17 officers online effective February 1, 2016. A current Club officer will need to login to the Optimist Leaders website and click "Reports" on the right-hand side of the screen. Then click on "Club Officer Elect Report" and you will be able to select the names of the Club Members who will be filling leadership roles during the upcoming Optimist year. If you have questions or need assistance, please call Charlotte in the Member Services Department at (800) 500-8130 ext. 247.

NEW CLUBS BUILT IN 2015-16

We are excited to announce that since the first of October, 17 new Optimist Clubs have joined our organization! Hundreds, if not thousands, of children will directly benefit from these new Clubs. Thank you to both our new Charter Members, as well as our Members who were active in building these Clubs, for making this possible.

- 1 *Happy Hour Optimist Club of Johnson County* (37308) – Kansas
- 2 *Club Optimiste Vanier 2015* (54002) – Quebec East - North Shore
- 3 *Ya Ya Xpress TennArk Optimist Club* (34153) – TennArk
- 4 *First State Optimist Club* (02425) – Atlantic Central
- 5 *Highway 365 Optimist Club* (34154) – TennArk
- 6 *Chamorro Optimist Club San Diego* (41665) – California South
- 7 *DC/UOIT Optimist Club* (47021) – Central Ontario
- 8 *Tema District Optimist Club of Ghana* (79645) – Associate Clubs
- 9 *Gainesville Optimist Club* (60704) – North Florida
- 10 *Optimist Club of Warman* (13872) – Alberta, Montana, Saskatchewan & Northern Wyoming
- 11 *New Detroit Unity Optimist Club of Detroit* (17549) – Michigan
- 12 *Missouri University of Science and Technology Optimist Club* (30559) – East Missouri
- 13 *Carolina Cardinals Optimist Club* (44605) – North Carolina West
- 14 *Alexander Optimist Club* (44606) – North Carolina West
- 15 *Club Optimiste Montréal-Mercier* (50017) – Quebec Central
- 16 *Gateway Optimist Club of St. Louis* (30560) – East Missouri
- 17 *Blackbird Optimist Club of Rocky Mount* (43517) – North Carolina East

*As of Friday, March 11, 2016



CAST A VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE REEL OPTIMISM VIDEO

When creating a video entry for the 2016 Reel Optimism contest, adult Clubs, youth Clubs and other community groups, nonprofits and individuals were asked to construct a short video that visually illustrates the topic, "How My Best Brings Out the Best in Others." Optimist International received many outstanding submissions and the International Marketing & Communications Committee has narrowed the contest down to a limited number of finalists in each category.

An integrated Facebook and online contest experience allows you to view, share and vote for your favorite video. Votes are tabulated based on "likes" with Facebook users allowed to submit one vote per day during the voting period. So make sure to help promote your favorite videos by visiting the contest site and the Optimist International Facebook page often. And, encourage your social media connections to participate, too! Public voting will be open from May 10 to May 31.

During the Optimist International Convention in Quebec City, winning videos in each category will be announced and shown on stage. Each winning video will receive a \$1000 grant, courtesy of Optimist International, the Optimist International Foundation and the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation. Attendees of the convention, in addition to anyone watching the live stream broadcast, will have the opportunity to vote onsite for their favorite winning video. The winning video receiving the most onsite votes will receive an additional \$500 bonus grant!

SAVE THE DATES OF MAY 10 TO MAY 31 to cast a vote for your favorite Reel Optimism entry by visiting www.optimist.org/ReelOptimism or the Optimist International Facebook page.

MORE DETAILS: WWW.OPTIMIST.ORG/REEOPTIMISM

IT'S TIME FOR A CLUB CHECK UP!

Every Optimist Club wants to be the best it can be for the youth and communities it serves. An excellent way to participate is in the 3 "R" Program. Whether your Club needs to renew itself, refresh itself with new challenges, or revitalize with new goals, this program is just the ticket!

RENEW: Develop new leaders by attending an Optimism Summit & Regional Conference or District meetings.

REFRESH: Look at positive points for improvement. Analyze and develop new programs that match your area. Concentrate on finding additional people who share your Club's passion.

REVITALIZE: Understand the organization with the PGI program. Set goals and objectives and communicate them to your Lt. Governor and District Club Fitness Advisor. Discuss with your District Club Fitness Advisor on how to make this program ensure a healthy and stable Club for your area.

Program Requirements:

- 1 Reach out to at least 75% of your Club Members and ask for suggestions and ideas on areas that could be improved on.
- 2 Develop an action plan on ways to improve your Club. Communicate the plan to all Members and plan at least one activity with the help of either your District Leadership Development Chair or your District Membership Chair with a goal to increase membership by three new Members.
- 3 Share your action plan with all your Club Members and District Club Fitness Advisor. Renew participation in the PGI program with a goal of 60% of your Members advancing at least one level during the year.

Upon completion of this program, you'll receive a customized press release that can be submitted for use to your local media. Be sure to include pictures of your activities. Don't forget social media sites, too! And, as a bonus, your Club might just find your results in the next edition of *The Optimist* magazine.

These Clubs are currently participating in the 3 "R" Program:

- 49784 Hammond, ON
- 49855 St-Pascal Baylon, ON
- 49902 Bourget, ON
- 49914 Kanala, ON
- 49505 Gloucester-Beacon Hill, ON
- 49512 Blackburn Hamlet, ON
- 52270 Grantham-Ouest, QC
- 53481 St-Janvier, Mirabel, QC

Get your 3 "R" Program started this week by contacting your District Club Fitness Advisor. Contact information for District Club Fitness Advisors can be found at www.optimistleaders.org.

HONORING OUR HEROES

Every community has ordinary individuals who give their lives to causes bigger than themselves. They strive each day to teach our children, to protect our safety, and to defend our freedom. Unfortunately, we often take for granted these heroes.



In order to show our gratitude for the heroes in every community, Optimist International has created the **"Honoring Our Heroes"** program to run from March 1 to June 30. During this time frame, Optimist Clubs that add a Member from one of these three "Optimist Hero" categories – educators, public safety officers, and active duty military personnel or veterans – may add a second Member from one of these categories without paying International dues for the first year.

In other words, each Optimist Club can bring in up to three "Optimist Heroes" and bring in three complimentary "Optimist Heroes" as Members – for a total of six new Members – under this program.

You can also honor your favorite "Optimist Hero" by posting a photo, video or comment on social media along with the hashtag **#OptimistHero**.

Please note this incentive only applies to individuals who have not been a Member of an Optimist Club or Friend of Optimists since March 1, 2015. For full details about the **"Honoring Our Heroes"** program, visit www.optimist.org/heroes.

HONORING HEROES IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers and educators are paramount to the success of our children and our future. Optimist Clubs are known for their support of educators and schools.

The Kent Optimist Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan made a donation of over \$1,500 in books to the library of Godfrey Lee Elementary School on January 19. This is the third donation of books to Godfrey Lee since 2013, and is a part of the Club's "Books for Kids" program. Godfrey Lee is one of the poorest school districts in the Grand Rapids area and have been extremely appreciative of the donations.

Ideas to support educators and schools in your community:

- Provide supplies or materials for a project for the teacher's classroom that does not fit into the school's budget
- Stock a classroom with basic supplies such as tissues, paper towels or paper and markers or simply ask a teacher what the room needs
- Offer to read to a class or individuals at a specific time each week



HONORING HEROES PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

The dedicated individuals who serve and protect our communities are vital for our safety. We respect the service and protection provided by our law enforcement and public safety officers.

In 2015, the Forest Park Optimist Club of Ontario was proud to acknowledge the efforts of past Member Gilles Gervais with the Respect for Law Award. Gervais is a sergeant in the Parliament Hill Security Service in Ottawa. He also was on duty on October 22, 2014 when a gunman attacked at the National War Memorial and on Parliament Hill. Club Member Tony Edge mentioned that over a period of nearly 30 years as an Optimist he has made some of his greatest friendships, but it is easy to forget that some of our friends have greater responsibilities outside of volunteerism that put their lives on the line daily for the security of others. The Forest Park Optimist Club recognizes the bravery and leadership of Gervais and his team on that October morning.



HONORING HEROES WHO DEFEND OUR FREEDOM

The men and women who serve and protect our nations have given so much to each of us. Thousands of veterans and active duty personnel serve as key Members of our Clubs. In many communities, veterans are the foundation of the Optimist Club.

The Sauk Prairie Inc. Optimist Club of Southern Wisconsin are fortunate to have four veteran Members: Denman Kramer, Woody Zantow, Carl Stoikes, and Bartley Mauch. In fact, Zantow and Kramer have been Members since the Club was chartered in 1951 and still attend the weekly meetings. For Veterans Day, the Club honored and recognized their veterans and presented them with Quilts of Valor. The Quilts of Valor organization's mission is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing quilts. The Club has also welcomed two members of the Sauk Prairie Community Club to present information about Badger Honor Flight fundraising. They are raising \$100,000 to honor local veterans by sending them to Washington, D.C. to see the memorials that have been erected in their honor.



Ideas to support law enforcement and public safety officers in your community:

- Ask law enforcement and public safety officers to speak at your Club meeting
- Donate new and gently used stuffed animals, books, blankets, children's clothes, and baby items to your local police department
- Check with local agencies for volunteer programs in which your Club can participate

Ideas to support veterans and active duty personnel in your community:

- Visit patients in a Veterans Affairs hospital or drop off books, movies or something special
- Say, "thank you for your service" when you see people in uniform
- Ask families who have a member deployed how you can help such as lawn care or babysitting occasionally

Optimists Team with Denver Broncos Player to Promote Reading Among Kids

Submitted by Paul Simon, Optimist Club of Denver-Monaco South, Colorado-Wyoming District

The Monaco South Optimist Club in Denver embraces projects that further the education of children. It was natural for the Club to collaborate with a Denver Broncos football player's program promoting reading among underprivileged students in grades K-3.

The Club collected more than 3,000 books and helped Denver Bronco David Bruton distribute the books at the Club's annual Thanksgiving Dinner at the Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver. Each of the 750 or so children at the dinner received three books, along with a card bearing the Optimist Creed and a sticker from Bruton encouraging the children to read.

The David Bruton Jr. Foundation and Bruton Books seek to help low-income children in grades K-3 become strong readers through tutoring and by providing books to underfunded schools, libraries and classrooms.

Monaco South Member Steve Kady saw a video about Bruton's work and reached out to the organization to seek his participation in the longstanding dinner.

"That's when I organized the book drive so we could give each of the kids a book," Kady explained. "The Club conducted the drive, placing collection boxes in each of the ten schools it serves through its Super Citizen program. Word got out and donations started pouring in."

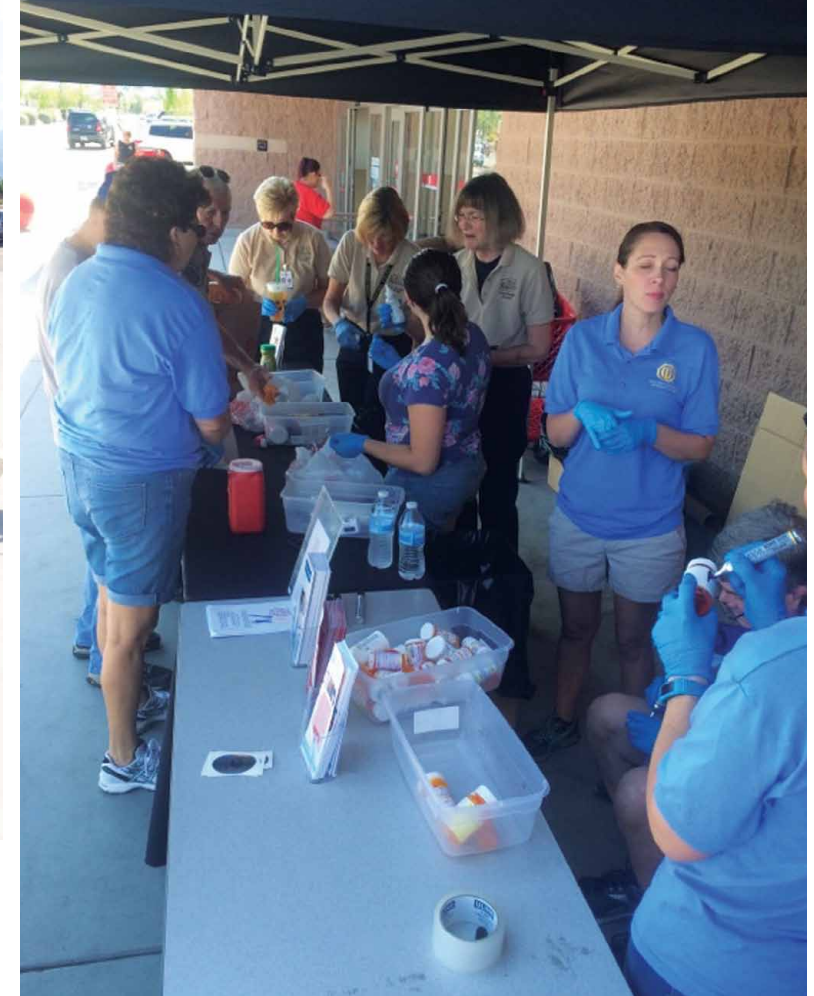
The Thanksgiving Dinner is named after the late Bill Walters, its long-term Club chair for the dinner, and it feeds children bused in from a center around the Denver metro area. Club Members serve food in a long serving line that lets them interact with the kids and in some cases, their families.

Bruton spoke to the kids before they went into the gymnasium for dinner.

"His interaction was fantastic," Kady said. "The children took to him instantly. He informed them of how important it is for them to read books; his smile and gentleness is an instant attraction."

Kady said collecting and sorting the books in one month took some serious effort. He had the support of his wife Susan and various family members and Optimists. Books were donated by the Englewood Public Library and the Denver Public Library, and a manager of a local Verizon store donated 800 bags to the cause.

For information about Bruton's program, visit www.davidbrutonjr.com.



Marana-Foothills Optimist Club of Tucson: Dispose-A-Med

Submitted by Wally Smith & Nancy Lyngby, Marana-Foothills Optimist Club, Arizona District

The Marana-Foothills Optimist Club of Tucson, Arizona are "Optimists in Action" all year long. A project that keeps the Club busy is the community Dispose-A-Med event. The Club has successfully participated in the event for four years. Working with the Marana Arizona Police Department, the Primavera Foundation in Tucson, the Arizona Youth Partnership and Target, the Club regularly participates in Dispose-A-Med.

Dispose A Med is comprised of concerned citizens like yourself focused on minimizing the abuse of prescription medications amongst teens and preventing accidental drug poisonings of children and the elderly. Unused prescription drugs thrown in the trash can be retrieved and abused or illegally sold. Drugs that are flushed contaminate the water supply. Proper disposal of unused drugs saves lives and protects our environment. Bring any unused or expired prescriptions, over-the-counter and/or veterinarian medications and they will be properly disposed of.

The Marana Police Department schedules the events for the entire year. The Dispose-A-Med collections are on the second Saturday of every even numbered month for two hours. Scheduling the events for the entire year allows the Club Dispose-A-Med Chairperson, Nancy Lyngby, to have one flyer made with the time, the location and all the dates. Nancy, other volunteers in the Club, and the Marana Police Department work with the area pharmacies, doctors' offices, community bulletin boards, and the Town of Marana and Marana Police Department websites to post the information. Many of the local pharmacies are so very glad to have the information on hand.

The Primavera Foundation provides pathways out of poverty through safe, affordable housing, workforce development and neighborhood revitalization. For the Dispose-A-Med event, the Primavera Foundation picks up the empty prescription containers to use to dispense shampoo, soap, sunscreen and other lotions to their clients. They pick up the empty containers after the event and clean the containers for re-use.

Arizona Youth Partnership mission is to partner with communities to cultivate healthy foundations for youth and promote strong families. Their role in the Dispose-A-Med event is to provide medicine lock boxes to distribute to families.

The Marana Police Department liaison, Officer Kevin Litton, provides the law enforcement supervision, the disposal of collection containers, and the disposal of the drugs. The Marana Police Department volunteers, also known as VIPs, work with the Club Members to set up the event, take control of the drugs, sort the empty containers, mark out any identifying information on the containers and cleanup after the event.

The Target store provides a protected space, which is very appreciated in the hot Tucson summer months. Target always provides tables, chairs, and during the cold months, coffee.

The average amount collected is about 200 lbs. at each event. During the four Dispose-A-Med events in 2015, over 1100 pounds of drugs were collected. Not only does this keep the drugs out of our ecosystem, it keeps them out of the hands of the youth.



Portalbuzz: **NEW! Club Website and Member Portal for Optimist Clubs**

When volunteers, potential Members and your community are looking for Club information, an event or a meeting, can they find you? Does your Club take advantage of technology to inform, organize and empower your Members? Optimist International has partnered with Portalbuzz to offer a robust, online Club management system that includes a website and a Member portal so your Optimist Club can thrive with technology.

REACH YOUR COMMUNITY

These days you have to have a Club website; it's expected and it's how people find you. The Portalbuzz Club website features Optimist-branded, mobile-ready templates that are easy get started and maintain, yet offers the flexibility to customize with features like photo albums, volunteer signups, calendars and more.

EMPOWER YOUR MEMBERS

The Member portal provides an online suite of resources and tools for Members and administrators. Club information, Member directories, calendar, volunteer signups, newsletters, events, dues billing, committees, meetings, communications, a PayPal shopping cart and more that are all easily to accessible from a Member-friendly dashboard.

INNOVATE

At Portalbuzz, we are passionate about working with service Clubs. We strive to provide innovative, online tools that are simple to use. Members and volunteers are busy and not everyone is comfortable with technology, so we offer tools so that even technology-shy folks can get in and work with all aspects of Portalbuzz.

Here's what one Club Member had to say:

This system is very easy to use. After the quick tutorial to understand the basics, it was very easy to start setting the site up. After working with other websites, this has definitely been my favorite.

—Wes D., Georgia District

Come see what great Clubs are buzzing about. Learn more about the features and pricing at www.portalbuzz.com. Sign up for your free 30-day trial at www.portalbuzz.com/optimist.



[Wife of the Leader of the Opposition, Shirley Linton, Leader of the Opposition, Lennox Linton and Secretary of the Optimist Club of Barbados Bridgetown, Zahidha James]

OPTIMISTS BRING CHEER CHEER TO CHILDREN IN DOMINICA

Submitted by Faye Wharton-Parris, Optimist Club of Barbados-Bridgetown, Caraibes District

THE DEVASTATION IN DOMINICA WREAKED BY TROPICAL STORM ERIKA WAS WELL DOCUMENTED AND THE PLEAS FOR ASSISTANCE WERE HEARD ALL OVER THE WORLD, AND MOST DEFINITELY IN BARBADOS.

The Optimist Club of Barbados, Bridgetown along with the Harrison College Junior Optimist Octagon Club (JOOI) responded to the call by hosting a fundraising back in time party.

As the Christmas season drew closer, it was evident that many children in Dominica would have a very different Christmas due to the ongoing efforts to bring the country back to a state of normalcy.

Zahidha James, Secretary of the Bridgetown Club and a Dominican attorney practicing in Barbados, was asked by Dr. Carol Jacobs, President of the Club, to identify the best way in which the funds raised could be used to help children in Dominica.



[Children of the Marigot Constituency, Dominica, waiting patiently for their gifts]

She identified the annual children's Christmas party which had been held in the village of Marigot for the past 25 years and which was indeed in jeopardy of being cancelled. She knew that it provided the only gift and party many of the children in this village would enjoy. The efforts of the Optimist Club of Barbados, Bridgetown and the Harrison College JOOI Club made it possible for the party to be held and for every child to receive a gift.

Zahidha James said, "It was very fulfilling to see the excitement on the faces of the 300 children, as they waited patiently to receive their gifts."

President Dr. Carol Jacobs expressed her delight at the fact that the Clubs could make such a meaningful impact on the lives of the children and reiterated that the motto "Friend of Youth" was indeed the driving force behind all projects undertaken in the name of the Optimist movement. She added, "It was particularly pleasing to see the Harrison College JOOI Club join forces with our Club to make this project a reality. They raised the money by having a cake sale, and through other activities at their school."

The Optimist Club of Barbados, Bridgetown is the first Optimist Club formed in Barbados in 1992 and is now joined by five other Clubs on the island, and 79 in the Caribbean.

OPTIMIST CLUB OF GARNER CELEBRATES 50TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY!

Submitted by Jerry Medlin, Optimist Club of Garner, North Carolina East District



"There were all these kids from different neighborhoods and we were playing together, and our families were sitting together. That's not always the case in society," Tyrance said.

Tyrance, who has written two books on transitioning from adolescence to adulthood, said the league helped him learn how to compete. He says it was the first time his athletic ability had been recognized.

Working hard and doing his best came naturally for Pat Watkins, who would one day play in Major League Baseball for the Cincinnati Reds and Colorado Rockies.

"The Optimist basketball league was my first team," he recalled. "I remember picking out my shoes and buying sweat bands. All of the teams had different color jerseys. I'd go to the games early and watch my friends play. I realized success requires effort and teamwork is very important. I used to dribble and shoot all the time - basketball was my game. And when I got on a team and played in games, I could see that working together could help make you a better player. I never forgot that."

Jeremy Woodard, who recently starred in the Broadway musical "Rock of Ages," has not forgotten his Optimist basketball league days either. He has performed at the Tony Awards, been named an outstanding alumnus of East Carolina and received standing ovations from thousands of audiences. But he will never forget winning an Optimist basketball league title.

"We won the title," Woodard said. "It may be the only championship I've been a part of. It was a big thing. When I think of my biggest thrills that is one of them. The league was one of the best things about growing up in Garner. I just hope the kids have as much fun as I did."

It is difficult for the Optimists who started the league to realize the boys who gathered 47 years ago in a 1920's-era gym to play the first Optimist league game are now in their 50's and 60's. There has been an unbroken stream of players, about 200-250, each year playing in the League.

A reunion is planned on Saturday, May 7, 2016, to celebrate the Club's founding, 50 years ago. It was chartered with 39 Members. It will be a time to look back and celebrate, but also to look forward, optimistically of course, to more basketball, more work, more serving the community and more ways of helping children.

The Optimist Club of Garner in North Carolina is the sponsor of a successful youth basketball league that will begin its 47th consecutive season this spring. More than 10,000 kids have played in the league since the Club recognized a need in its community. Opportunities, such as the league, are what has allowed the Club of about 90 Members to remain vital in a community of about 25,000 residents.

The Club recently made a \$7,000 donation for cancer research and will sponsor youth baseball and softball teams along with a Youth Essay Contest in the spring. The Club will also present nine \$1,000 scholarships to area high school graduates. Not bad for a Club that came close to folding in 1978! The group had drifted away from its intent of being a "Friend of Youth."

"We weren't doing anything except meeting," recalled Nick Sarrocco, a founding Member. Sarrocco said some of the Members asked him about being President the next year and he told them he was leaving the Club. He wanted to be a part of something that was making a difference. Sarrocco changed his mind and agreed to be President. In one day, Elwood King, Bill Weathersbee and Sarrocco contacted all 30 Optimist Club Members and asked if they wanted to continue to meet or stop. Sixteen men, including new President Sarrocco, signed on and agreed to give it at least a year.

"We knew we had to change if we wanted the Club to survive," Sarrocco said. "We started being more involved in the community and inviting new Members."

Elwood King said the goal of helping youth was too important to abandon.

"I always felt that we had to have the Club to help our kids," King said. "Something would be missing without it."

By the end of the following year, the Club had rebounded with an active membership of over 100, had purchased eight acres of land for a clubhouse, and acquired a house to be moved to the land. The old cinderblock house is still there, but it is now part of a 4,600 square foot clubhouse.

"One of the things we did was recognize the men who were doing positive things for the Club," King said. "We improved our meetings, got more involved in the community and reached out to the community. Many people did a lot of work to get the Club turned around. With the identity crisis resolved, the Club hasn't looked back and has remained focused on helping children."

"Our mission is to help young people," Bob Harvin said. "That's what we do. It is hard not to get emotional when I talk about it, but the whole thing comes back to helping children."

The Club does many projects for the kids and the community, but it is best known for the basketball league. The league doesn't have a structure to teach citizenship and responsibility, but players learn about those character traits, and others, in subtle ways.

Attorney Brian Meacham, a former player on the University of North Carolina junior varsity basketball team for two years, said the league helped him in ways that are difficult to articulate. He loved playing the game, but said his most lasting memories in the league involved adults.

"To me, that was one of the biggest things," he said. "I read recently that it is important for children to learn how to relate to adults outside their family. That is something the league did for me. I got to know men and see how they related to each other, as well as with us. I still have relationships with the men who coached me and who were involved in the program."

Dr. Shaun Tyrance, another former player, was a four-year letterman as a football quarterback at Davidson College. He understands how the league helped him in his development as a person. The league was the first time he thought seriously about sports. He is now a sports psychologist who works with college and professional athletic teams. He remembers watching a diverse community coming together at the games on Saturday morning.

Seeking Outside Funding Support for the Optimist International

ORATORICAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The new Optimist International Oratorical World Championships Contest will be June 23-24, 2016 at the Saint Louis University Center of Global Citizenship in St. Louis, Missouri. The event is designed to empower youth to become effective communicators and confident global citizens.



Here are some shocking U.S. student loan debt numbers:

- \$1.1 trillion outstanding student loan debt
- 37 million Americans have student loan debt
- Wise investment in youth which yields a greater return of educating and engaging of youth in global awareness, responsibility, and participation.
- An opportunity to show your customers and employees your dedication to supporting an important

cause: Bringing Out the Best in Youth!

Optimist International is thankful for the generous financial support from Optimist Members for the oratorical contests. Additionally, we are seeking support from grant funders, corporate sponsorships, and non-Optimist Member friends and family. If you have a connection with a potential corporate sponsor, please share the following list of sponsorship benefits with them.

Benefits of Being a Corporate Sponsor:

- Put your business in the spotlight at an event designed to strengthen the confidence of youth to become effective and efficient speakers.
- Today's youth need the support of civic minded corporations to aid in the funding of their higher education costs. The cost of a college education is alarmingly high. In many instances, the cost is so high that it prevents youth from attending college. Young people are finding it increasingly difficult to keep up with the student loans they took on to help ensure a successful career.

Spread the word about funding this unique educational opportunity to your non-Optimist friends and family via social media!

We have set up an online fundraising campaign to seek donations from friends of Optimist Members who recognize the tremendous importance of helping to fund scholarships for students to be able to fulfill their higher education pursuits.

To make a contribution, visit our *FirstGiving* donation page: www.firstgiving.com/38005/OI-Oratorical-World-Championship/Donations

We encourage all Optimist Members to post the FirstGiving donation link on your Facebook/Twitter pages to share with your non-Optimist Member friends.

Your Support of the Expanded Contest:

- 1 Promotes the mission of Optimist Clubs by providing an opportunity to bring out the best in our Clubs, in our Members, and in the youth we serve.
- 2 Advances the vision of Optimist Clubs to gain worldwide recognition as the premier volunteer organization that helps youth develop to their full potential.
- 3 Fosters the purposes of Optimist Clubs and the philosophy of the Optimist Creed by promoting an active interest in good government and civic affairs; by inspiring respect for the law; by promoting international accord and friendship among all people; and by aiding and encouraging the development of youth to advance the well-being of humankind, community life, and the world.
- 4 Serves more youth at home and abroad.
- 5 Introduces more youth to public speaking and improves their self-esteem.
- 6 Increases the number and the amount of scholarships available.
- 7 Provides a unique opportunity to interact with other youth from around the world.
- 8 Heightens the name recognition of Optimist Clubs.
- 9 Offers partnership with experts in the field of communication, speech, and debate.
- 10 Enhances both the Oratorical Contest and Kids Speak Out programs.
- 11 Stimulates the recruitment of contestants.
- 12 Attracts new Members into Optimist Clubs who share our passion for developing public speaking skills in youth.
- 13 Provides opportunities to start new adult Optimist Clubs and Junior Optimist Clubs with emphasis on public speaking activities.

THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY WITH YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY!

For additional information about sponsorship opportunities, please contact the Optimist International Finance Department at (800) 500-8130 ext. 202 or via email: finance@optimist.org



Quebec City

The Quebec City area is full of unforgettable and fun things to do with your children in a safe and beautiful setting. Be sure to bring good shoes—there's so much to see and do!



Following are a few of the tours that will be offered before or after the convention:

QUEBEC CITY, QUEBEC CANADA Rediscover Optimism!

Your Source for up-to-date Convention Information

Visit www.Optimist.org/convention to view the agenda and learn more on numerous topics, including registration fees and group meals costs, housing, travel and rental car discounts, youth activities, group tours, featured events and more. If you would like information sent to you, email convention@optimist.org or call (800) 500-8130 ext. 221 or 205.

Convention is for Everyone

The annual gathering of Optimists is open to each and every Member! There truly is something for everyone. Are you an everyday Optimist from whom others could gain insight? How about a volunteer who has a successful program, a Member looking for a unique project idea or maybe a first-time Club or District Officer? Are you thinking about being a Club or District Officer in the future? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you have something to contribute and something to gain from attending the International Convention. A big shout out to all our first time attendees from last year – hope to see you again in Quebec City!

Volunteers Needed

- Volunteers are needed to distribute registration packets on Wednesday, June 29, Thursday, June 30 and Friday, July 1. To volunteer, contact Sherman Phillips at (303) 946-3501 or swphill@comcast.net.
- Participate in the fun by serving as a table host or hostess at the "New France" Appreciation Luncheon. International Convention Coordinator Claire Labreche is looking for registered Members and guests who would like to volunteer their time. For more information, contact Claire at labrecheclaire@gmail.com.

Roommate Wanted

If you would like to share expenses with another Optimist Member, send us an email and we will put you in touch with each other. Send an e-mail to convention@optimist.org.

NEW THIS YEAR: House of Optimism (Exhibits) – Open to the public!

Do you know of a not for profit fundraising company that Optimist Clubs would benefit from being present at the International Convention? Please send contact information to convention@optimist.org.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

During the convention, your children (ages 5-18) will be well looked after and entertained – here is an overview of the days and hours of the youth activities:

THURSDAY

1-5pm (Optional – for an additional fee)

**6-9pm ("Get Acquainted Party."
Dinner included)**

FRIDAY

8am-1:30pm (Lunch will be provided)

SATURDAY

8am-4pm (Lunch will be provided)

6-9pm (Dinner included)

If you are interested in being a chaperone, contact Jeremy Neel at (314) 881-1321 or email jeremy.neel@optimist.org.

A detailed list of fees is available on the registration form and a schedule of events will be available closer to convention time at www.optimist.org/convention.



DISCOVER QUEBEC, A HISTORICAL CITY

A must-do tour! For more than 400 years, the sun has risen and set over the cradle of French civilization in North America: Quebec City. Experience the European charm of Quebec City, visit the Upper and Lower Town districts, and discover the Latin Quarter, the Ramparts, the main churches. Quebec City is a taste of Europe right here in North America.

WHALE WATCHING EXCURSION IN CHARLEVOIX

It's in the Charlevoix region that we find the most varieties of whales. Departing from Baie Ste-Catherine, situated approximately 300 km northeast of Québec City, the discovery excursion will allow you to explore this important whale's refuge. All ships used are government inspected and approved by the Canadian Coast Guard. Warm clothing is recommended since cool temperatures can be expected on the river.



ISLAND OF ORLEANS TOUR

The island is one of the earliest French settlements in North America. Its extensive shoreline offered fertile soils which were less arduous to clear. Its forests abounded with game, and the St. Lawrence with fish. The river also protected the settlers from Iroquois raids. Take in the exceptional Saint Lawrence River landscape, to go to l'Auberge la Goéliche for exceptional pictures of Quebec. Visit the Manoir Mauvide Genest; a Quebec interpretation site on the seigniorial regime of New France, as well as the Domaine Steinbach; a bio-certified farm the estate features a duck and goose husbandry, a vinegar factory, and an interpretation centre.



ST-LAWRENCE CRUISE

Set sail with our costumed guide, portraying the explorer Louis Jolliet! The cruise is a perfect combination of nature and culture. As the cruise navigates from the Cap Diamant to the Montmorency Falls, discover the history of Quebec City, the river and the surroundings.

Continue to check www.optimist.org/convention for the tour schedule, and all other convention updates.

SHARE YOUR IDEAS

OPTIMISM SUMMITS & REGIONAL CONFERENCES

Did your Club host a successful event or fundraiser in the past? Share your success story at an Optimism Summit & Regional Conference! This is an excellent opportunity to "share the wealth" with other Optimists in your area. At each summit, attendees can voice your strategy of making Clubs and Districts the best they can be. You will have the chance to network with Members who share your same passion of bettering the lives of children in every community.

All Optimist Members are invited to attend the Optimism Summits & Regional Conferences. This unique training experience will provide you with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to lead a relevant and thriving organization. Each summit/conference will offer energetic



and inspiring trainers who will provide training and skills building exercises designed to help each participant become a better leader and improve the operation of their Optimist Club. The topics covered will include Optimistic Fundraising, Marketing Your Optimist Club, Recognizing the Greatness of Optimists, and many more!

Have you attended or will you be attending one of the upcoming Optimism Summits & Regional Conferences? Post photos/videos/comments from the events on your social media channels with the hashtag **#OISummit**. We will publish some of the best in future Optimist International publications!

UPCOMING OPTIMISM SUMMITS & REGIONAL CONFERENCES:

APRIL 23 WinStar World Casino, Oklahoma

APRIL 30 Niagara Falls, Ontario

MAY 14 Bloomington, Minnesota

MAY 28 Barbados

For more information about Optimism Summits & Regional Conferences, visit www.optimist.org/summits.

MAY IS OPTIMISTS MONTH

IN ACTION



Stacy Campbell
937.531.4983
stacy.campbell@shumsky.com

Bring out the best in your club, your community and yourself!

ORDER YOUR OPTIMISTS IN ACTION SHIRTS TODAY!

Available in Red, Yellow, Royal and Purple. Pricing includes Optimist in Action logo on the front and your Club/District name or logo on the back in 1 color.

Sizes S-XL (add \$2.00 for extended sizes)
12-23: \$22.50 • 24-35: \$14.50 • 36+: \$12.50

Optimist Websites

For Your Club... For Your District... or For Both!



- ✓ Member Data Imported Right from OI
- ✓ Member Communications
- ✓ Online Event Registration
- ✓ Online Event Calendar
- ✓ Meetings & Agendas
- ✓ Online Applications
- ✓ Post Accomplishments

1-888-582-7085
info@clubux.com

TAKE ACTION in May

During the month of May, Optimist Clubs will create a widespread spirit of unity bringing together Optimist Members and other community volunteers for a variety of local-based activities, fundraisers and special events. Optimist Clubs can conduct any program or special event that meets the needs of their community, such as:

- Hosting a bake sale or pancake breakfast
- Planning a 5k run/walk
- Cleaning up trash at a local outdoor space

Optimist Clubs should contact local media with details about their Optimists in Action Month program. Take photos and videos and share your Club's program on social media by tagging **#OptimistsInAction**. After completing your May project, send in your Club's project details and photos to Optimist International to be featured in a future issue of *The Optimist* magazine! Stories can be sent via email to magazine@optimist.org or a hardcopy to: Optimist International, Attn: The Optimist Editor, 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108

PRESIDENT DAVE BRUNS: WEST COAST SURGE TOUR

Optimist International's Board of Directors has set a goal of 100,000 Members by the organization's 100th year in 2019. President Dave Bruns is doing his part to help our organization "Bring Out the Best" well into the future. He followed his Growth Surge Tour of Quebec, Ontario, and Michigan in October with a West Coast tour to close 2015 and bring in 2016. During the West Coast Growth Tour, President Dave visited three Districts in the West Coast Region, toured establishments with Optimist history, and discussed ideas with other international service club organization leaders.

Tuesday, December 29:

1 President Dave and First Lady Shawn visited the Optimist Youth Home located in Highland Park, a neighborhood in the northeast section of Los Angeles, California. Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services provides culturally sensitive, comprehensive treatment, specialized education and support services to abused, neglected or at-risk children, youth and their families, to establish stability within families and communities. Optimist Clubs in Los Angeles have been involved in the organization since the 1920's. Sil Orlando, Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services Executive Director, led the tour and presented President Dave with an Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services certificate.

2 Tuesday evening was full of Optimism at a joint dinner with Pacific Southeast and Pacific Southwest District Members. The dinner included an induction of a new Member!



Wednesday, December 30:

3 President Dave and First Lady Shawn attended the International Service Club Presidents' Summit. The Summit recognizes the work of the largest international service club organizations. President Dave had the privilege to meet and share ideas with International Presidents of Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis. Pictured left to right: Optimist International President Dave Bruns, Rotary International President K.R. Ravindran, Lions International President Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada, and Kiwanis International President Susan Petrisin.



Wednesday, December (cont):

4 The Optimist International organization has a longstanding history with the Tournament of Roses. Led by President of the Pasadena Optimist Club Vance Weisbruch, Dave and Shawn toured the Tournament of Roses Home.

Thursday, December 31:

5 With an eventful day planned for Friday, Thursday was low-key with a visit to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in Simi Valley, followed by dinner with West Coast Members.

Friday, January 1:

6 To start 2016, Dave and Shawn attended Rose Parade in Pasadena to view the beautiful floats and enjoy the weather. After the parade, they traveled to San Diego to have dinner with San Diego Area Optimists.

Saturday, January 2:

7 A tour of Optimist Children's Rainforest at the Pediatric Oncology Department of Kaiser Permanente San Diego, led by Georgia Langhorst of SUCCESS Optimist Club, allowed President Dave Bruns to meet with patients and staff.

8 The last event of the West Coast Growth Surge Tour was a California South Optimist District Dinner. President Dave Bruns inducted two new Members, and met with District Officers, and Members of new Chamorro Optimist Club of San Diego.



TRANSITIONING FROM JOOI



James Rhodes

I became a Charter Member of my school's JOOI Club during my sophomore year of high school. However, I didn't become heavily involved until I was a junior and senior. I was Club President and Iowa District Secretary/Treasurer my senior year. That year, our Club grew in membership significantly, introduced a number of new projects, and continued to have a larger impact on the youth in our community. Toward the end of the year, I had the opportunity to attend the Optimist International Convention in Cincinnati, a trip that sparked a much greater passion for Optimist than I had previously been able to find. Being able to hear from people from all over and see how they are able to carry out the mission of Optimist International in their own communities showed me that my work with this organization wasn't done at the JOOI level.



I had already chosen to go to school at *Iowa State University* that August, and Iowa State did not have an Optimist Club at the time. My fear was that if I was not able to stay involved during my short time at Iowa State, the passion would have died out by the time I could join the adult Club. I decided to use the convention to make connections that would be able to assist me in forming the *Iowa State Optimist Club*.

Upon returning to Iowa, I put the inspiration from the convention to work almost immediately, making phone calls and sending emails to people at Iowa State without even having set foot on campus. I quickly learned that starting a new Club at this school and getting past the regulatory burden of a state institution was not going to be simple. It seemed like we went months with essentially zero progress. Finally, right before break in December, we had a faculty advisor in place and the membership required to use University resources. At that point, we were able to really start recruiting new Members and working towards chartering. We got to that point in the middle of the Spring semester, and ended up chartering with more than 50 Members, the largest new Club to charter in the organization's history.

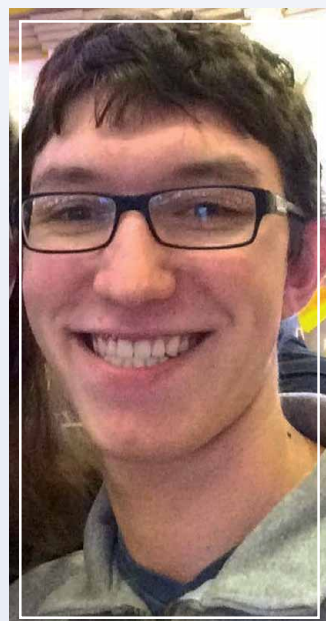
I saw how difficult it was to get the Club started at Iowa State, and how much "free time" it took away. I'm sure that if I had been approached about starting it without prior experience with Optimist, I would have quit in a week. It was the experiences that JOOI gave me that were the

inspiration to keep working. I've graduated from Iowa State and have joined the *Wayne (Corydon) Optimist Club*, but the *Iowa State Club* is strong and active and a true source of pride. The University owes a great deal of gratitude to JOOI for inspiring a group that is doing so much for the school and the Ames community.

Sean Mueller

As a JOOI Member for seven years, I learned the importance of service towards others. Sadly, I had to graduate and leave JOOI, but I knew my service to the community had not ended. It was just getting started! On January 6, 2016, I was officially installed as an Optimist Member in my local Club. There are many reasons why I joined an Optimist Club, but the main reason was to bring out the best in JOOI Members.

JOOI is a stepping stone for all youth to learn about service towards others and optimism. It is full of young leaders that are eager to continue in making a difference in their communities. But they are not shown the opportunity of becoming an Optimist Member. Many JOOI Members feel that after graduating high school, they are done with being a part of this organization - and that is far from it. Optimist International is always looking for new Members, and what better Members are there than past JOOI Members?



I encourage all adult Members to talk to JOOI Members about continuing on with an Optimist Club. The JOOI Members will be able to bring new ideas to the table and help Optimist International reach to the sky with endless possibilities of serving youth and bringing out the best in them. We need to show the youth that being an Optimist Member is just as fun as it was being a JOOI Member.

As a past JOOI Member, I have done many things for my community. I love the dedication that both JOOI and Optimist International have in helping every community they touch. I was fortunate enough to have an adult Optimist Member bring out the best in me and that is another reason why I decided to join. I want to give back to my community. I want to help bring out the best in kids and JOOI Members. Optimist International is a great organization and I am glad to be a Member.

UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL COLLEGE CLUB

Submitted by *Carolynne Villeneuve*, Optimist Club of *Université Laval, Québec East-North Shore District*



Since 2013, the Optimist Club of Université Laval has worked with troubled youth living at the Centre jeunesse de Québec. Every year, different programs, such as the Physical Education Project and the Remedial Education Project are offered. This winter, a third project, called the Student Speech Therapy Pilot Project was launched. The goal of this project is to develop communication skills for young people with language difficulties (speaking, understanding, reading and writing). All of these projects are part of the "Healthy Lifestyles and Troubled Youth Development" program. More than a hundred young people benefit from Club Optimiste de l'Université Laval activities each year.

University students are committed to providing quality services in every project they undertake for the youth at the Centre jeunesse de Québec. Our guiding principal is "young people helping young people." We offer positive role models for troubled youth, thus permitting them to develop meaningful relationships with young adults they can identify with.

JOOI CONVENTION

QUEBEC CITY, QUEBEC, CANADA
JULY 3-5, 2016

The annual JOOI convention is the best way to enhance your JOOI experience. Attend for fellowship, networking, and of course, fun! Featured workshops include Club Fundraising, Budgeting for Students, and Setting Priorities – Clearing the Clutter in Your Life.

Housing arrangements can be made in advance at the Four Points by Sheraton Quebec Resort for \$145 CDN per night.

If you have questions, please send them to youthclubs@optimist.org or call (800) 500-8130, ext. 218. Continue to check optimist.org/jooi for updates!



OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF IS LAUNCHING TWO MORE



[Kingsville Golf and Country Club]



[PGA National Resort and Spa]

OPTIMIST JUNIOR TOUR EVENTS

- **AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 1, 2016** Kingsville Golf and Country Club in Kingsville, Ontario, Canada
- **OCTOBER 15-16, 2016** Green Valley Ranch Golf Club in Denver, Colorado

These competitions are 36-hole stroke play events and are ranked by Junior Golf Scoreboard. The top five in each age division advance to the 2017 Optimist International Junior Golf Championships at PGA National in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. Age divisions offered are Boys 16-18, 14-15, 11-13 and Girls 14-18 and 11-13. All players must meet the scoring criteria for this event in order to qualify for the Championships.

For more information on these tournaments, plus our other Junior Golf Tour events held early in the year at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Fort Worth, Texas and Orlando Florida, visit www.optimist.org/golf-tour.cfm.

Optimist Junior Golf Championships
PGA National Resort and Spa, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida
JULY 20-25, 2016 - Boys 10-11, 12-13 and Girls 10-12
JULY 25-30, 2016 - Boys 14-15 and Girls 13-14
JULY 30-AUGUST 4, 2016 - Boys 16-18 and Girls 15-18

How we are different than other tournaments?

- three phases of competitive junior golf
- top-notch sleeping rooms
- scrumptious meals
- adult-child golf tournament
- long drive competition
- World Cup Tournament
- glow ball event
- USGA rules officials
- dedicated volunteers
- college coaches
- awards ceremony

Help a child advance to the Championship by sponsoring them. Contact your local District Junior Golf Chair for more details. This is a once in a lifetime chance for our junior golfers. To find the nearest qualifier, visit www.optimist.org/golf-qualify.cfm

For more information on the Optimist Junior Golf Program: call 800-500-8130 ext. 207 or email golf@optimist.org

NEW FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBER



The Foundation is pleased to welcome Mr. Bill Meyers from California South as the newest member of the Optimist International Foundation Board of Directors.

Bill has been an Optimist since 1999. He is a Presidents Club Member, William H. Harrison Society Member, and Christian D. Larson Partner. He served as a Distinguished District Governor, Distinguished District Foundation Representative and International Vice President. He is retired after 27 years in the United States Navy and 15 years in the private sector.

"I believe the Foundation is a great organization that deserves our continued support," said Bill. "My Club was able to transform a hospital pediatric ward into a vibrant world of colors and animals because the Foundation was there to support us. I want to help ensure the Foundation continues to be an indispensable asset to Optimist International, to our Clubs and to children everywhere."

Bill will be serving on the Foundation Board for a four-year term beginning October 2016. Welcome Bill!

Sell For \$1!



45% Profit!

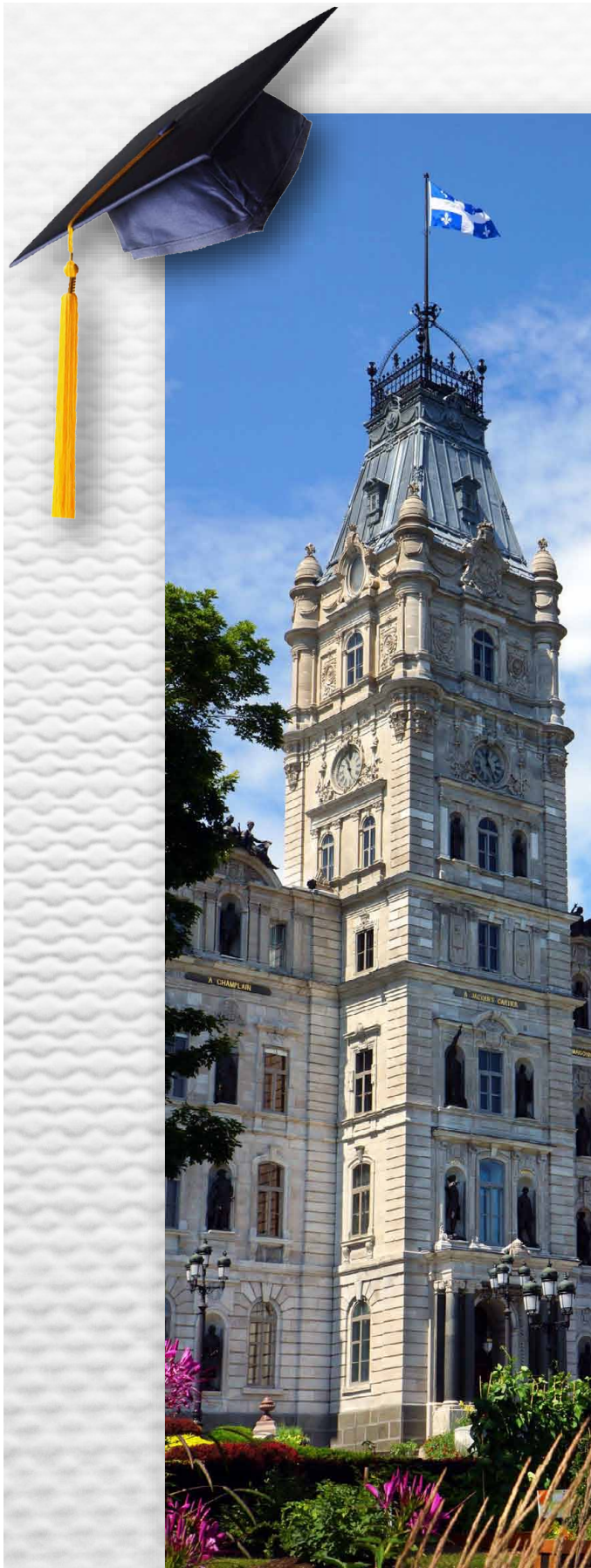
Smoked Snacks For Easy Fundraising!



2 NEW FLAVORS

Call or Click For FREE SAMPLES!

1-800-277-8989 or CountryMeats.com/Samples



Canadian Children's
Optimist Foundation

An invitation from President
Yves Berthiaume

Gala

To recognize
scholarship award
winners

At the National Assembly of Quebec

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

- Guided tour of the National Assembly
 - Cocktails
- Dinner at the *Le Parlementaire*

To obtain tickets, please visit :

ccof-foec.org

A charitable tax receipt will be issued upon ticket purchase.



THE CANADIAN CHILDREN'S OPTIMIST FOUNDATION RESPONDS TO THE CALL

The following article was featured in the *Chilliwack Progress* on May 14, 2015. It was written by reporter Jessica Peters. Original article titled "Evans elementary playground officially opens" can be found online at www.theprogress.com.

Mayah Abelman is "over the top excited" about the new all-inclusive playground at her school.

The Grade 5 student sped around in her wheelchair chatting with friends, teachers and EAs at the school's grand opening celebration of the playground Thursday afternoon.

Abelman is one of about 15 students at the school who have varying abilities or special sensory needs that make enjoying a traditional playground difficult. For her, the new rubber tile ground cover makes scooting around the playground a breeze. The play structures are spaced far apart, giving ample room for navigating classmates during a busy recess or lunch hour. It's a nice break from bumping over uneven grass and shifty sawdust, she said, where she's more likely to get stuck.

And then there's the playground. The swing is a large saucer, big and sturdy enough to lay down and stretch out in the sun or fly into the air. The old-fashioned, hand-spun carousel has been redesigned as a spinner. With child-friendly back rests and low-to-the-ground entry points, it looks more like a spinning pizza shell. Finally, right in the centre of the park, there's an open air hideaway for children to take a break from the action.

The playground has taken almost two years to build, with a massive fundraising effort carried out by a team of nine parents on a special committee. Optimist Club of Chilliwack is proud to have been part of this fundraising effort.

Katrina Eng spoke on their behalf at the celebration, thanking the community and corporate sponsors for believing in the project. In total, the playground cost \$103,000, with a third of the cost going toward the special ground cover.

The accessibility is going to make a difference in the school, Eng said, but also for the community in general. Just around the corner is the *Chilliwack Society for Community Living's* Mathieson Centre, and kids from that program use the playground as well.

"That's a big part of why we brought this here," Eng said.

Their efforts began in September 2013, and included entering in an online Avitas contest. They won \$5,000 through votes from the community. They garnered support quickly and earned grants, fundraised with parent nights, and even entered a float into the Chilliwack Christmas Parade.

They had raised enough money to begin building earlier this March, completely replacing an older wooden structure, and adding to some previously purchased playground pieces.

There are now plenty of play areas to go around, and the students erupted in cheers on Thursday as the ribbon was cut.

"This is amazing," Abelman said, waiting her turn on the giant swing. "I love everything here."



Christian D. Larson Partners Membership

612 Don Kelley

613 Charles Tapp

615 In Memory of Norman Heimbecker

Top Ten as of December 31, 2015

District	Representative	Average Contribution Per Member
Arizona	William Lundquist	\$22.14
Colorado-Wyoming	Joe Priester	\$6.58
North Carolina West	Bill Teague	\$6.22
Kansas	Dale Fox	\$4.36
Alabama-Mississippi	John Varnado	\$4.28
Kentucky-West Virginia	Sandy Ruman	\$3.83
Michigan	Barry Burnham	\$3.71
North Carolina East	Bill Edgerton	\$3.69
South Texas	Irvin Williams	\$3.38
Capital-Virginia	Barbara Grizzard	\$3.22

District	Representative	Total Contributions
Arizona	William Lundquist	\$17,315.66
Michigan	Barry Burnham	\$12,356.00
North Carolina West	Bill Teague	\$12,093.00
Colorado-Wyoming	Joe Priester	\$10,088.73
Kansas	Dale Fox	\$6,203.50
South Texas	Irvin Williams	\$5,645.34
Dakotas-Manitoba-Minnesota	Jeri Gorman	\$5,164.92
Alabama-Mississippi	John Varnado	\$4,726.00
Southern Wisconsin	Maureen Crombie	\$4,455.10
East Missouri	Sallie Westenbarger	\$4,294.48

Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation

District	Representative	Average Contribution Per Member
Alberta, Montana, Saskatchewan & Northern Wyoming	Rod McKendrick	\$11.71
Dakotas-Manitoba-Minnesota	Wesley Shewchuk	\$9.84
Pacific Northwest	Peter Smith	\$7.06

District	Representative	Total Contributions
Central Ontario	Jim Lynge & Susan Lynge	\$9,984.53
Alberta, Montana, Saskatchewan & Northern Wyoming	Rod McKendrick	\$9,845.74
Quebec Center	Manon Daigneault	\$7,399.50



Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation

Donor Listings

This is a record of lifetime accumulation levels achieved from October 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 for individuals and Clubs. This listing is for gifts recorded up to the deadline date for the printing of *The Optimist*.

DIAMOND BENEFACTOR - \$75,000

 ARIZONA
 Esthermarie Hillman

BRONZE BENEFACTOR - \$15,000

 ATLANTIC CENTRAL
 Optimist Club Lancaster, PA
 NORTH CAROLINA EAST
 Optimist Club of Rocky Mount-Evening, NC
 SOUTHERN WISCONSIN
 Optimist Club of Brodhead, WI
 SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO
 Optimist Club of Essex, ON

EMINENT BENEFACTOR - \$10,000

 ILLINOIS
 Optimist Club of Highland, IL
 KENTUCKY-WEST VIRGINIA
 Jennifer Ruman & David Moffat
 NORTH TEXAS
 Kenneth & Patricia Garner
 PACIFIC CENTRAL
 Optimist Club of Sacramento-Evening, CA

DISTINGUISHED BENEFACTOR - \$5,000

 ALABAMA-MISSISSIPPI
 Nancy E. Boyd
 DAKOTAS-MANITOBA-MINNESOTA
 James Bisek
 EAST MISSOURI
 Loretta & Tom Kelly
 MICHIGAN
 Mary Lou Moss
 NORTH FLORIDA
 Robin & Daniel Rich
 QUEBEC EAST & ACADIE
 Bernard Labrecque
 WEST MISSOURI
 Optimist Club of Maryville, MO

HONORED BENEFACTOR - \$2,500

 ALABAMA-MISSISSIPPI
 Nancy Ryan
 INDIANA SOUTH
 Richard & Patricia France
 NEW YORK – NEW ENGLAND
 Richard J. Gagnon
 QUEBEC SOUTH
 Jacqueline Fontaine
 Danielle Lamontagne
 Sylvain Ménard
 SOUTH CAROLINA
 Optimist Club of Chapin, SC

BENEFACTOR - \$1,000

 CARIBBEAN
 Marcia Hendricks
 CENTRAL ONTARIO
 Steven K. Holly
 COLORADO-WYOMING
 Randy S. Marcove
 EAST MISSOURI
 Optimist Club of Washington, MO
 EASTERN ONTARIO
 Optimist Club of St-Pascal Baylon, ON
 GATEWAY
 Gary L. Cox
 IOWA
 Bernard R. Mack
 Optimist Club of North Scott, IA
 KANSAS
 G. Joseph and Diana Pierron
 KENTUCKY-VIRGINIA
 Harold Brussell
 Rita G. Wallen
 QUEBEC CENTER
 Mario Tanguay
 QUEBEC EAST – NORTH SHORE
 Optimist Club of Cap Rouge, QC
 WEST MISSOURI
 Ernest H. VanHooser


For more information about the Foundations, visit oifoundation.org or ccof-foec.org.

Sunnyside



"Election season is very stressful for me. I love people and I want to vote for everyone, whether they are running or not!"



"The key to successful leadership is knowing how to make people follow you. Leave a trail of doughnuts."

A man was driving and saw a truck stalled on the side of the highway that had ten penguins standing next to it. The man pulled over and asked the truck driver if he needed any help. The truck driver replied, "If you can take these penguins to the zoo while I wait for the truck to be fixed that would be great!" The man agreed and the penguins hopped into the back of his car. Two hours later, the truck was repaired and the driver decided to check on the penguins. He showed up at the zoo and they weren't there! He headed back into his truck and started driving around the town, looking for any sign of the penguins, the man, or his car. While driving past a movie theater, the truck driver spotted the guy walking out with the ten penguins. The truck driver yelled, "What are you doing? You were supposed to take them to the zoo!" The man replied, "I did and then I had some extra money so I took them to go see a movie."

A woman was taking an afternoon nap. When she woke up, she told her husband, "I just dreamed that you gave me a pearl necklace. What do you think it means?" "You'll know tonight," he said. That evening, the man came home with a small package and gave it to his wife. Delighted, she opened it to find a book entitled *The Meaning of Dreams*.

An elderly couple noticed that they were becoming more forgetful, so they decided to go to the doctor. The doctor told them that they should start writing things down. They went home and the old lady told her husband to get her a bowl of ice cream. "You might want to write it down," she said. The husband said, "No, I can remember that you want a bowl of ice cream." She then told her husband she wanted a bowl of ice cream with

whipped cream. "Write it down," she told him, and again he said, "No, no, I can remember: you want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream." Then the old lady said she wants a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top. "Write it down," she told her husband and again he said, "No, I got it. You want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top." So he goes to get the ice cream and spends an unusually long time in the kitchen, over 30 minutes. He comes out to his wife and hands her a plate of eggs and bacon. The old wife stares at the plate for a moment, then looks at her husband and asks, "Where's the toast?"

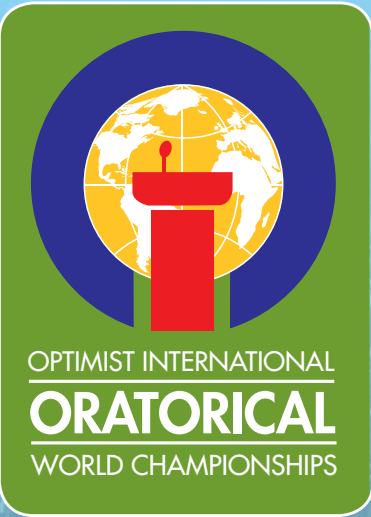


**100,000 MEMBERS STRONG
= BETTERING THE LIVES
OF 3.5 MILLION CHILDREN**

Your Club is urged to do its part in setting its own goal of increasing membership between now and our 100 Year Anniversary in 2019.

Celebrate our Heritage...ASSURE OUR FUTURE





JUNE 23-24, 2016
ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

**TOPIC: HOW MY BEST BRINGS
OUT THE BEST IN OTHERS**

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT
DISTRICT WINNER:
MAY 15**

VISIT OPTIMIST.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.