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Letter from the President

Optimists,

Welcome to the 2009-2010 Optimist year, a year full of promises for our organization and for the children we serve.

Each of you has promised to be a leader this year, whether for your Club, Zone, District or at the International level. Thank you for your commitment. Your leadership – as demonstrated by your vision and courage – is critical to the success of the year.

You know what we need to do – we need to serve more kids with more Members and more Clubs. In short, the word for the year is GROW. I challenge each of you to GROW your Club, your Zone, your District. Yes, grow the number of Members. Yes, grow the number of Clubs. But also grow your revenue, your activities, your Foundation contributions and your visibility in the community.

A project near to my heart is the new Internet Safety Program. This very relevant program offers you a great opportunity to meet your goals of service and growth. I encourage each and every Club to request a free kit from Optimist International and to implement this program as soon as possible. Children today have so many resources and so much information available to them – both good and bad – that was unimaginable when we were growing up. We strive to be good role models and mentors. And in that role, we need to help educate kids, their teachers and their parents to make good decisions, to stay informed and to take action when necessary.

The benefits of the Internet Safety Program start with protecting children but do not end there. We should also recognize this as a great growth opportunity! We are showing what the Optimists have to offer them as parents and educators. We also need to show them what the Club and Optimist International have to offer them as volunteers! They can take what they have learned and help pass it along to others.

Thanks to each of you for your commitment to Optimism. With your dedication I'm confident that we will seize the opportunities before us. Promise yourself ... for the kids!

Mark Shriver

2009-2010 Optimist International President



Clubs in the News

Many Optimist Clubs have done a great job getting the word out about their Club projects. Now Optimist International is sharing this publicity with Optimists everywhere.

A new section of the website provides links to news stories about the great work Optimist Clubs are doing.

To read up on Optimists everywhere, go to the Members side of www.optimist.org, click on Optimist News and look for the "Optimist Clubs in the News" link at the right.

Programs Reminder

Don't forget to download the 2009-2010 scholarship contest planning guides from the Optimist website. It's important that sponsoring Clubs print the new materials each year so they are familiar with any changes made to the official contest rules. To locate this year's guides, just go to the Members area of www.optimist.org, select "Programs" and then go to either "Scholarship Contests" or "Planning Guides." The guides are also available under the "Club" and "District" tabs at www.optimistleaders.org.





No MINI Effort

Mary Thompson, 2008-2009 Lieutenant Governor, showed some dedication to the Clubs in her Zone this summer that may seem quite unusual to some but was par for the course to Mary.

Mary oversaw seven Clubs in Zone 1 of the Colorado–Wyoming District and actually relocated to Casper, Wyoming, for the summer to help the Casper Breakfast Optimist Club with a much-loved project.

The Casper Optimists celebrated their 40th anniversary earlier this year, and their main source of funding has been around for almost as long. The Club has run a 36-hole miniature golf course in a local park for 38 years, and over the past three decades the course has brought in \$300,000 that the Club can use for its service projects.



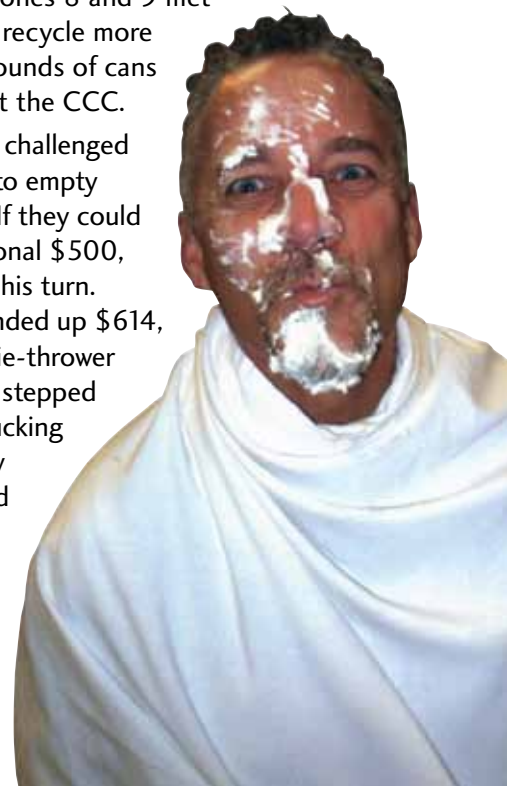
A decline in Club membership and competition from a newer course in the area has hit the putt-putt course hard in recent years. But seeing the worth of this Club project, Mary dedicated her entire summer to the course's renewal. She opened the course each morning, worked all day and locked the place up each night. She spruced the facility up in the meantime and made some improvements that she hoped would generate a little income for the course. Mary did this for more than 12 hours each day and came home each night to crash on the air mattress in a local resident's home. And she did it because she recognized the steady presence of an Optimist Club and how important that has been to the Casper community for the past four decades.

A PIE IN THE EYE FOR THE CCC

Optimists will go to great lengths to help the Childhood Cancer Campaign. Even if it gets a little messy, the results are worth it.

At Maryland–South Delaware's 2009 Convention, 2009-2010 Optimist International President-Elect Danny Rodgers agreed to accept a pie in the eye to raise funds for the CCC. Dan Hitzelberger, 2008-2009 District Governor, had already taken two pies to the face after Optimists in Zones 8 and 9 met a challenge to recycle more than 1,000 pounds of cans each to benefit the CCC.

Danny then challenged the delegates to empty their pockets. If they could raise an additional \$500, he would have his turn. Delegates rounded up \$614, and a young pie-thrower with good aim stepped up. With no ducking allowed, Danny took a whipped cream pie to the face as promised!



DUES NEWS FOR THE YEAR

The dues for the Optimist fiscal year beginning October 1, 2009, are as follows:

Tier	Regular Members (annual amount in U.S. dollars)	College Members (annual amount in U.S. dollars)
Tier 1	\$59.62	\$31.60
Tier 2	\$44.12	\$23.38
Tier 3	\$31.00	\$16.43

For each Life Member enrolled, a Club pays annual dues of \$26 regardless of the tier.

For a breakdown of dues and fees by quarter and by month, Optimists can go to the Members side of www.optimist.org and look under the Administration section for the Dues and Fees page. The page also lists the nations in each tier.



Optimist Clubs Sign On to Keep Children Safe Online

Optimist International recently unveiled its new Internet Safety program designed to educate children and adults about potential dangers they may encounter online. International President Mark Shriver explained the relevance of the issue and urged Optimists to get involved at the 2009 International Convention.

Members answered this call to action and have begun to help spread the word in their local communities. Since Convention, more than 250 program packets have been requested.

Don't miss your Club's chance to be part of this exciting Optimist program! Each Optimist Club may request a complimentary Internet Safety program packet, which contains all the information and tools needed to successfully run both the Faux Paw program aimed at children in grades 1-4 and the Adult Education presentation. Also included in the packet is a Club Member Education DVD that explains how Optimist Members do not have to be internet experts to run the program and why they should get involved.

Packet request forms are available on the Optimist website or by contacting Optimist International. Additional packets may be requested at a cost of \$20 per packet, which includes the cost of shipping and handling.

Internet Safety



If your Club has questions about the program or would like to share feedback on a presentation you have made,

please contact the Programs Department at (800) 500-8130 or via e-mail at programs@optimist.org.

OPTIMIST GOLF FOR EVERYONE

Junior golfers who participate in Optimist tournaments have two big options that will tide them over until the District qualifiers start up again next spring!

The Optimist International Tournament of Champions is now in its fifth year. The annual event will be November 7-8, 2009, at Orange County National Golf Center & Lodge in Winter Garden, Florida. Each year the tournament welcomes about 100 of the top junior golfers in the sport today.

Just a month later, the organization will kick off its inaugural Optimist Golf Parent-Child Classic. This tournament is open to junior golfers of all skill levels and Optimists are encouraged to take part. If you've always wondered about the junior golf program but have never made it to one of the big events, now is the chance to come as a competitor along with a young member of the family!

The Parent-Child Classic is scheduled for December 5-6 at *Disney's Lake Buena Vista Golf Course* at Walt Disney World® in Florida. Each pair of golfers will be made up of a junior golfer and his or her parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle.

For information, visit www.optimist.org/golf.

Get Your E-MAIL UPDATES

Check your Club's e-mail box often at www.optimistmail.org! You will receive short weekly messages about what's going on with the entire organization, from program developments and scholarship deadlines to membership news and presidential notes.

Messages promise to never take up more than a few moments of your time, but will keep you up to date on urgent developments when necessary.

To save more time, log in and turn on the "Forwarding" feature under "Account Options." Messages will go straight to the e-mail of your choice.

Do other Club Members wish to stay informed? Their e-mail addresses can be added to the forwarding list at your discretion, or they may subscribe to the Optimist News RSS feed on the Optimist News page of www.optimist.org.

For information, contact Krista Grueninger at webmaster@optimist.org.



Spousal Membership Renews Its Vows

In honor of the 2009-2010 year, the Spousal Membership offer is being renewed.

Optimist spouses who become Members between October 1, 2009, and September 30, 2010, can take advantage of huge international dues savings. New Spousal Members who sign up will receive half off their international dues for January, April and July 2010 dues billing. The earlier they join, the more they save! Those who sign up between July 1 and September 30, 2010, will receive half off their October 2010 dues billing only.

This offer is for individuals who have not been a Spousal Member previously and have not been a Member of an Optimist Club in the past 12 months. This offer does not apply to Charter Members of Clubs built from October 1, 2009, to September 30, 2010.

To sign up your spouse, check out the Spousal Membership Application on the Forms page of the website. Just go to the Members side of www.optimist.org, click on Forms/Documents and go to the Forms page.

For questions, call (800) 500-8130 or e-mail membership@optimist.org.

CCC Strives to Meet \$1 Million Commitment to Research

Five years ago, Optimist International and Johns Hopkins University signed an agreement to develop the Optimist International Research Fellowship in Pediatric Hematology and Oncology at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins. Optimist International made a \$1 million commitment to support the fellowship in childhood cancer research.

The organization has until December to meet the \$1 million goal. Funds have been generously donated by numerous Members and Clubs and raised through the CCC duck races at the International Conventions in Grapevine and Florida. However, Optimist International needs the support of all Clubs in order to reach the \$1 million mark in the last few months of the commitment.

A banner patch program was designed to acknowledge Clubs for doing their part to help meet the Johns Hopkins commitment. Clubs will receive banner patches for donation levels of \$500, \$1,000, \$1,500 and \$2,000 made between October 1, 2008, and December 2009.

Donations should be sent to the Optimist International Foundations. All checks should be made out to OIF-CCC. Make sure to write "Johns Hopkins" on the memo line of the check or include a letter that says the funds should be directed to the Johns Hopkins commitment. All funds sent to the OIF-CCC from Canadian Clubs will be designated to the Canadian CCC fund.

If you have any questions about the Johns Hopkins commitment, please contact the Programs Department at (800) 500-8130, ext. 261 or 235, or via e-mail at ccc@optimist.org.

Nomination Deadline Approaches for International Board of Directors

Optimist Members who wish to run for a seat on the International Board of Directors must submit their application to the International Candidate Qualifications Committee via the International Office in St. Louis by November 1, 2009. The election of two new Board members will take place at the 2010 International Convention in Denver, Colorado. The two individuals elected will serve three-year terms beginning October 1, 2010.

All prospective candidates must have served a full term as a District Governor and be Members of an Optimist Club in good standing with Optimist International.

Any candidate who submits a written application and meets the qualifications will have their name entered into nomination. The Candidate Qualifications Committee may also nominate candidates of its own accord.

Nomination applications should be sent to Optimist International, c/o Candidate Qualifications Committee, 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108 or faxed to (314) 371-6006. Applications will not be accepted by e-mail.