



The Torch

Winter 2011



JOOI aims for 'Souper' repeat effort

Souper Bowl of Caring, a youth-led movement of giving and sharing, is happening right now, and JOOI is involved for the third year in a row. Souper Bowl of Caring targets the weeks leading up to the Super Bowl and uses that time to think of neighbors in need. JOOI Clubs all over are working hard to collect canned goods and funds to benefit organizations in their own communities.



JOOI's involvement started in 2009 and skyrocketed last year. This year, JOOI Members once again have a great opportunity to invest themselves and make a significant impact in their local communities.

The 2011 Souper

Bowl of Caring started January 17 and runs through February 6. Has your JOOI Club registered yet? Just go to www.tacklehunger.org to register. Make sure your Club registers using a name that includes "JOOI" so that JOOI can track how many Clubs participate and how much everyone collects.



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JOOI Club leads a secret mission

The elves have been busy this year!

FEBRUARY

A real page-turner!

This February is JOOI of Reading Month! JOOI Clubs all over will use this month as a time to get involved with JOOI of Reading, a program designed to help JOOI Members show kids in their communities how enjoyable reading can be!

What better incentive can there be than convincing kids to read for fun? How about winning a contest? JOOI has a JOOI of Reading contest each year, and JOOI Clubs that submit the best JOOI of Reading projects are eligible to win a prize that benefits their whole Club!

For more information, visit www.jooi.org or check out the February section of the JOOI Planning Guide.

Eight-Member Club gets creative for the holidays

As Members of the small Valley Vista Junior Optimist Club in the California South District, fifth- and sixth-grade students designed and promoted an outreach holiday activity. They created greeting cards and wreaths that were delivered to deployed military service men and women and to military families with members far away from home. More were delivered to Kaiser Hospital rooms for children sick with cancer.

The eight Junior Optimists, who are also student council officers, decided to make it a school-wide activity, so they visited each classroom of their 500-student elementary school. In every room they visited, they explained their ideas for the project, showed samples of cards and their 15-inch handmade wreaths and encouraged younger students to remember others who would appreciate their thoughts and artwork. *Continued on page 7*



That's a wrap!



The JOOI Members and Optimists seem pretty attached to the little gifts – the children at the hospitals will love them, too!

Promote internet safety this March

The JOOI Board and Committee are teaming up with the Optimist International Programs Committee to develop an Internet Safety Program geared toward teenagers. Currently the Internet Safety Program includes an adult section and the Faux Paw program for younger students.

Once the teen component is complete, it will be a JOOI program that is supported by adult Optimist Clubs. It will also give JOOI Clubs a great new yearlong project to focus on.

A special month

While the new program is being developed, why not get into some practice by presenting the adult program or the Faux Paw program to a group near you? March is Internet Safety Month and would be the perfect time to make this happen.

For information visit www.optimist.org/internetsafety.

Recently the Making a Difference JOOI Club of Southfield and Lathrup Village, Michigan, worked on a project that really lived up to the Club's name. The JOOI Members and adult Optimists from the Michigan District threw a "Swaddling Party" as part of a Childhood Cancer Campaign project.

Just what is a Swaddling Party? The JOOI Members and some adult Optimists met up to put together gifts for hospitalized children. First, the Optimists hand-knit tiny blankets. Then, everyone used the little blankets to wrap up – or swaddle – Beanie Babies to send off to children in area hospitals.

The JOOI Members had a great time putting together the cozy little gifts!

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The JOOI Club, which has about 300 Members in grades five through eight, definitely has some pull in the school to make sure good things happen. And this year, they all came together to brighten the holidays for more than a hundred students.

First, the Club runs the school's store, which is the JOOI Club's biggest fundraiser. Junior Optimists work in the store from 7:20 to 7:45 each school morning, and some of the older students also open the store during their lunch period. All money raised goes toward the Club's projects.

For the past several years, one of those service projects has been to put together "Secret Santa" bags that are delivered to the lockers of students who have been recommended by their teachers. The students may have a difficult home life or might be in need of a little pick-me-up during the holidays.

During the first year, they put together bags for about 30 students, and the number keeps growing each year. This year they had a list of more than 100 students! While JOOI Members help gather everything together, only a few of the older JOOI Members actually pack the bags to keep Secret Santa as much of a secret as possible.

This year each Secret Santa pack included a drawstring bag and a wool hat donated from the school store as well as toiletries that were collected earlier in the year by the JOOI Members. They also



Just some of the Club's 300 JOOI Members gather for last year's group photo.

added in little gifts such as stuffed animals, games and "wooden dollars" that can be redeemed at the school store. Each student also received pens, pencils, erasers and sharpeners – all donated by the school store.

The Club also takes special requests from teachers for students who may need extra school supplies or toiletries. One student even received sweatpants and a sweatshirt with the school logo on it.

Each bag comes with a note telling the student that they received the bag from someone who cares. Then some of Santa's helpers deliver the bags to the lockers and wait for the students to open them up and find their gifts!

"The best part is watching them open their lockers, pause, close them to look at the number on the outside, then open them again as they try to figure out whose bag it is and how it got there!" says JOOI Club Adviser Dave DeRosa.



Six JOOI Clubs come together to celebrate in Anguilla.

CELEBRATE JOOI

JOOI is something to celebrate, and this past year the Kids for the Future Junior Optimist Club and the Optimist Club of Anguilla hosted a JOOI Awards Banquet and Ball for the six JOOI Clubs in Anguilla.

The JOOI Members dressed to impress and spent an evening honoring big accomplishments and looking back on a year well done.

Baltimore: The place to be this July!

The new year just started, but summer will be here before you know it. That means the 2011 JOOI Convention will be here before you know it, too!



This year's JOOI Convention is July 5-7 in Baltimore, Maryland. All events will take place at the Baltimore Renaissance Harborplace Hotel, which has a great location next to the harbor with tons to do nearby.

Room rates at the Renaissance are \$129 (plus tax and fees) per night, and rooms can fit up to four JOOI Members. The deadline for hotel reservations is June 9.

Convention registration for JOOI Members and adults is \$250, with an early registration cut-off date of June 15.

More information such as the Convention agenda and service project details will be coming soon. Visit www.jooi.org for more information.

A lot to think about

JOOI Members who attend Convention will be asked to vote on a number of items. Details about the proposed changes to the JOOI Policy for Governance are available on page 8.

Continuing the legacy

The JOOI Board and Committee will once again be selling a JOOI Legacy Pin at the adult Optimist Convention and at the JOOI Convention. Plus, JOOI District Chairs will receive a sample of the pin early and will be encouraged to pre-sell the pins at their District Conventions. All of this benefits the JOOI Legacy Fund!



Building up JOOI

JOOI recently said hello to several new JOOI Clubs:

- BEE Optimistic Alpha Club sponsored by the Centerville Noon Optimist Club in Centerville, Ohio
- Creekland Middle School Junior Optimist Club sponsored by the Optimist Club of Laurel Canyon in Canton, Georgia
- Woodland North Middle Junior Optimist Club sponsored by the Optimist Club of Radcliff in Radcliff, Kentucky
- Nettle Creek Junior Optimist Club sponsored by the Hagerstown Optimist Club in Hagerstown, Indiana
- DC Everest Rothschild Elementary Alpha Optimist Club sponsored by the Optimist Club of Everest Area, Wisconsin
- DC Everest Riverside Elementary Alpha Optimist Club sponsored by the Optimist Club of Everest Area, Wisconsin
- Golden Sunshine Jr. Optimist Club of Lydford sponsored by the Optimist Club of Golden-Lydford, Jamaica
- JOOlous Jazz Octagon Club sponsored by the Optimist Club of Sylmar/San Fernando, California
- Wayne Blue Devils Octagon Optimist Club sponsored by the Optimist Club of Wayne, Nebraska
- Navarre High School JOOI Club sponsored by the Optimist Club of Navarre, Florida

A nod to the Builders

Several new Builders of Excellence need to be recognized for their excellent work on building new JOOI Clubs!

Optimist Peter Williams is the Builder of Excellence for the Optimist Prime Octagon Club of Dayton, Ohio.

Optimist Steve Kesicki and **JOOI Member Kevin Kesicki** are the Builders of Excellence for the Youth Optimist Club of Strongsville High School in Strongsville, Ohio.

Thanks for all of your hard work!

Become a Builder of Excellence

Build a JOOI Club and you can be recognized for your hard work, too! Up to two JOOI Members can be named as Builders of Excellence for each JOOI Club started this year. One adult Optimist can also be named for each new JOOI Club.

It's not too late to claim your award. Just fill out the Builder of Excellence form in the Awards and Forms section of www.jooi.org.

Builders of Excellence will be listed in an upcoming issue of *The Torch* and will also be honored at the JOOI Convention this summer!



All in a day's work

The AEP Junior Optimist Club in Carrollton, Georgia, put in a hard day's work recently.

The JOOI Members met up at the local Community Soup Kitchen to pack and move boxes full of canned goods and other non-perishable food items. The soup kitchen serves homeless in Carrollton and the surrounding area.

The JOOI Members didn't do it alone. Members of the Optimist Club of Carrollton were on hand to help the JOOI Members.



Top projects of the year

JOOI Clubs all over did some amazing projects last year. Here are a few that won top honors in the Club Project Awards. Congratulations to all of the JOOI Members involved!

Category/Place	Club Name (Number)	Project
Joint Project with Sponsoring Club		
First place	Inwood Elementary JOOI Club (A1965)	Memory Garden
Second place	AEP JOOI (A1771)	Mayfest
Community Service		
First place	Half Way Tree Primary (A1780)	Drop Everything and Read
Second place	Lyman Octagon Club (B1564)	Special Time Out for Parents
Fundraising		
First place	Junior Optimist Society (A1760)	Relay for Life
Second place	R.T. Milwee Jr. Optimist (A0980)	Wekiva Dog Fest

JOOI Club gets it right from the start

By Linda Waldheim, Club Adviser and Member of the Optimist Club of California City, California



The JOOI-ful Jets have been making a difference in their school since day one.

Hacienda Elementary opened its doors just four years ago. As the JOOI Club developed, more and more students have become excited to be a part of it. This year, because so many students joined the Club, it was decided to elect fifth-grade officers and sixth-grade officers who work together to keep the momentum going. With the leadership of the sixth-grade officers, who were active members as fifth-graders, so much progress has been made.

The students have set high goals for themselves. They volunteer at many of the school functions as volunteers, guides and cleanup teams. They vote on what projects they want to be involved with. These include being school site hosts at the back-to-school and open house programs at school. The JOOI-ful Jets wear their Club shirts proudly! They want to see their leadership and community service develop, and they strive to maintain being a good example to other students.

They also work on fundraisers. They have an ongoing recycle program at the school, and operate their own booth at the local swap meet, which is held twice a year. Many dedicated their entire day to work the booth last fall.

As part of the community, they voted to be a part of a cancer walk at the local park and helped hand out bags and water to those participating. JOOI Club Members have also participated in city cleanup activities; funded a dinner and helped serve at the local "Feed the Hungry" program; and sponsored and decorated a Christmas tree for the school's December "Festival of Trees."

It is a delight to see the enthusiasm and dedication that so many of the JOOI Members show.

"Build it and they will come" seems to be so appropriate for the California City Hacienda Elementary JOOI-ful Jets Alpha Club in California. The vision of an active group of children who care about their community and school has developed over the past four years. What began as a small group of students in fifth and sixth grades has grown to more than 70 students who now meet once a week during their lunch time.

2009-2010 award winners

The following Clubs are Distinguished Honor Club and Honor Club award winners for the 2009-2010 JOOI year. Congratulations to all of these Clubs for their hard work!

Distinguished Honor Club

District	Club Number	Club Name	Club President
10	A1614	Norfolk Panther Jr. Optimist Club	Blair Collins

Honor Club

District	Club Number	Club Name	Club President
5	B1759	Greensburg Community H.S. Octagon Club	Kylie Wood
10	B1845	Norfolk Panther Octagon Club	Anneeta Ketelsen
10	A1798	RAOK Jr. Optimist Club	Kalynne Brauer
16	B1890	Madison Octagon Club	Katherine DeFazio
17	B2037	Making a Difference	Clare Luckey
20	B2095	Lowell High Octagon Club	Michelle Liu
49	B1422	Club Octogone Région de Cornwall, ON	Darquise Brunet
54	B5039	Club Octogone St-Honoré, QC	Marie-Pier Tremblay
54	B1524	Club Octogone Opti-Jeunes de Jonquière, QC	Marie-Claude Bourgeois
54	B0066	Club Octogone Les panthères d'Hébertville, QC	Anne-Shirley Tremblay
54	B0510	Club Octogone Le P'tit Polair de Falardeau, QC	Johannie Bouchard
78	A1780	Half Way Tree Primary Jr. Optimist Club	Khandyce Broughton

JOOI Members earn all types of medals!

Congratulations to the following JOOI Members for achieving bronze, silver and gold levels of the Personal Growth & Involvement program:

Name	Club Name (Number)	Level
Chris Carnes	Soaring Eagles (A1866)	Bronze
Emily Clough	Lambeth Junior Optimists (A5013)	Bronze, Silver
Jessica Davies	Palmetto Octagon (A1848)	Bronze
Seth Davis	CMS Helpers (A1945)	Bronze
James Dennis	Soaring Eagles (A1866)	Bronze, Silver
Rainey Elmore	Soaring Eagles (A1866)	Bronze
Samantha Fentress	Making a Difference (B2037)	Gold
Manju Freeman	Making a Difference (B2037)	Silver
Taylor Garland	Making a Difference (B2037)	Silver
Julia Howett	Lambeth Junior Optimists (A5013)	Bronze, Silver
Brett Jankura	Lambeth Junior Optimists (A5013)	Bronze, Silver
Kristin Jordan	Making a Difference (B2037)	Gold
Savannah Knight	Palmetto Octagon (A1848)	Silver
Makayla Loncaric	CMS Helpers (A1945)	Bronze
Clare Luckey	Making a Difference (B2037)	Silver
Caitlin McPhee	Lambeth Junior Optimists (A5013)	Bronze, Silver
Drew Melesky	Making a Difference (B2037)	Bronze
Carlie Moyer	Lambeth Junior Optimists (A5013)	Bronze, Silver
Nicole Phillips	Palmetto Octagon (A1848)	Gold
Brittany Reece	Soaring Eagles (A1866)	Bronze
Jeremy Rice	Making a Difference (B2037)	Bronze
Darren Sanders	Palmetto Octagon (A1848)	Bronze
Donovan Smith	Making a Difference (B2037)	Bronze
Dorian Summerour	Making a Difference (B2037)	Bronze
Darion Twitty	Making a Difference (B2037)	Bronze
Maria Wardell	Making a Difference (B2037)	Bronze
Rachel Webb	Making a Difference (B2037)	Silver
James Willis	Making a Difference (B2037)	Gold
Sierra Witcher	Making a Difference (B2037)	Silver

A simply outstanding Governor!



Congratulations go out to Caitlyn Miller, the recipient of this past year's Outstanding JOOI Governor Scholarship.

In addition to being a member of last year's JOOI Board, Caitlyn served as Governor of the Iowa District. In recognition of her extraordinary Club services work in Iowa (District 40), Caitlyn receives the Governor of Excellence Award and a \$1,000 scholarship!

What is PGI?

Visit www.jooi.org to learn more.

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In several classrooms, Junior Optimist leaders also found students of military families who were willing to deliver the finished artwork through personal contacts. Each classroom then wrote their own greeting cards and students pressed their handprints into a 15-inch circle to make colorful paper wreaths on which they wrote personal messages.

They are also looking forward to making more greeting cards for Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day.

Follow and 'friend' JOOI

JOOI Members have new ways to stay connected with JOOI! JOOI is now on Twitter. JOOI Members can follow JOOI at www.twitter.com/jooiclubs. Hear about the latest news as it happens, and see what other Clubs are up to!

JOOI is also starting a new Facebook page. Search for the Junior Optimist Octagon International/Optimiste Junior Octogone Intl page. JOOI will get a shorter user name as soon as the page has enough "likes" to be eligible!

Proposed changes to the JOOI Policy for Governance

A. POLICY FOR GOVERNANCE TITLE

POLICY FOR GOVERNANCE OF JUNIOR OPTIMIST OCTAGON INTERNATIONAL, A ~~PROGRAM OF OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL~~ **DIVISION OF OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL**

B. GENDER-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE

Change all gender-specific language to gender-neutral language (throughout the entire document).

C. "YOUTH CLUBS" TO "JOOI CLUBS"

Change the phrase "Youth Clubs" to "JOOI Clubs" (throughout the entire document).

D. "JOOI BOARD" TO "JOOI BOARD OF DIRECTORS"

Replace "JOOI Board" with "JOOI Board of Directors" (throughout the entire document).

E. POLICY V: MEMBERSHIP IN CLUBS

Section 2: Membership. Members of JOOI shall not be 19 prior to ~~October 1~~ **September 30th** of the current administrative year. Suggested age ranges:

- Alpha Clubs – 6 to 9
- Junior Optimist Clubs – 10 to 13
- Octagon Clubs 14 and older to 19 and a High School student or its equivalent

F. POLICY VII: INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 1: Administration. Junior Optimist Octagon International shall be governed by a Board of Directors with the approval of the Optimist International Board of Directors.

Section 2: International Board of Directors. The JOOI Board of Directors shall consist of the President, the Immediate Past President (**age requirement exempted**), and four Directors, ~~and the Youth Club Committee Chairperson appointed by the Optimist International President, as well as a staff liaison (who is a nonvoting member of the board).~~ **JOOI Clubs Committee Chairperson appointed by the Optimist International President and staff liaison are non-voting members.**

G. POLICY VII: INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 3: Qualifications. The President and JOOI Board of Directors shall be elected by the delegates at the annual convention. They shall take office October 1, following their election. No more than two candidates per District will be eligible to run for the International JOOI Board of Directors. Those eligible for the office of Director shall be a member in good standing belonging to a Club in good standing, shall have served a term as Club president or a District

officer and shall be the age of 14 ~~and not 19, and shall remain a high school student or its equivalent~~ by October 1 ~~of the current administrative year~~. Those eligible for the office of President must have served as an International Director or District Governor, must be 16 by October 1 ~~of the current administrative year~~, and meet the requirements for an International Director. In order to be listed on the ballot, potential candidates for the International JOOI Board of Directors must submit an official application and a signed letter from their school principal or equivalent, for those applicants who are still in high school or its equivalent, to the International Office by June 1 prior to convention. Candidates from the floor will be allowed to run for the International JOOI Board of Directors and International JOOI President. If elected from the floor, the election for that office will be contingent upon the submission of a signed letter from their high school principal or equivalent **if in high school, to the Optimist International Staff by September 1**. Those nominated from the floor will receive the same privileges as **pre-announced** candidates, with the exception of their name being pre-printed on the ballot. ~~Elected officers shall not be eligible to hold that same elected office upon completion of their term unless there is an insufficient number of qualified candidates after nominations from the floor are taken and the current officer remains eligible. Those eligible for the office of Director will be able to run for a second term with a maximum of two being elected to another term. Current Board members wishing to run for a second term must follow the same nomination procedures as pre-announced candidates and may not be nominated from the floor. If more than two current Board members run for election then a primary election will be held and the two highest vote receivers will be added to the ballot.~~

H. POLICY XVII: INTERNATIONAL REVENUE

Section 2: Annual Dues

Member Clubs. An annual \$10.00 (U.S.) per Club member Membership fee, shall be paid to Optimist International by Junior Optimist and Octagon Clubs for Clubs in Tier 1 countries, \$7.39 (U.S.) per Club member Membership fee for Clubs in Tier 2 countries, and \$5.22 (U.S.) per Club member Membership fee for Clubs in Tier 3 countries of not more than 50 members per Club. Alpha Club members will pay \$8.00 (U.S.) per Club member Membership fee in Tier 1 countries, \$5.91 (U.S.) per Club member Membership fee in Tier 2 countries, and \$4.17 (U.S.) per Club member Membership Fee for Clubs in Tier 3 countries of not more than 50 members Club and paid to Optimist International. ~~Fifty percent~~

of the increased **One dollar (U.S.) of each membership** fee shall be set aside to help fund and offset the costs of the JOOI Convention. This fee is due 30 days after receipt of billing in October. No increase in this membership fee shall become effective unless voted upon by a majority of the delegates at the annual JOOI Convention.

I. POLICY XVIII: INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 3: Voting by Mail or **E-mail**

a. The JOOI Board of Directors may transact business by mail **or email** by voting upon any proposal mailed **or emailed** to the members thereof by certified mail or **to known email address with delivery receipt** with the approval of the president.

J. POLICY XX: INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEES

Section 1: Name and Purpose. The committees of JOOI shall be established by the JOOI Board of Directors as follows.

a. The Convention Rules Committee which shall be responsible for credentials and rules. Duties: The Convention Rules Committee shall present its report as early as possible after the opening of the convention.

~~b. Candidate Qualifications Committee which shall be composed of the Youth Clubs Committee Chair serving as chairperson, two members of the International Youth Clubs Committee as appointed by the Chair, and two members of the JOOI Board~~

~~appointed by the JOOI President. This Committee shall verify the credentials of potential JOOI Board candidates.~~

b. Other Committees to be established.

K. POLICY XXIV: JOOI DISTRICT OFFICERS

Section 1: Administration. The business of the District shall be administered by a Board of Directors.

Section 2: Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of each District shall consist of the Governor, the Governor Elect, the immediate past Governor the Lieutenant Governors or directors, the District Secretary/Treasurer, and the president or a representative of each JOOI Club in the District.

Section 3: Executive Committee. The ~~officers~~ **Executive Committee** of each District shall be the Governor, Governor Elect, immediate past Governor, Lieutenant Governors or directors and the Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 4: Vacancy. For good cause or upon death, resignation or incapacitation of any elected or appointed officer or any officer designate of a District, or in the event of the failure of any officer to carry out the duties of his office, the Optimist District Board may declare said office vacant and shall select a successor to fill the remainder of his term based on the recommendation of the District JOOI Clubs Chair and JOOI District Executive Committee.