

# Hotline



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## Notes from the neighborhood



Hey Optimist Leaders!

How's it going? Together we have been the leaders of Optimist International for two months now – can you believe it? Time flies when you're having fun and I am having a blast. Jill and I have had the amazing opportunity to participate in seven Parallel District Conferences this fall. We have met with thousands of Optimists from more than 40 Districts – and man, have we had a good time.

We have shared with each other and found new and exciting ways to serve. And yes, we have laughed and had more than our share of fun. Optimists truly are the best people I know.

The holiday season is upon us and I cannot think of a better time to be an Optimist. I am excited that we are able to see what you and other Optimists are doing for the holidays through the videos that you all are submitting. I cannot think of a better gift to share than the gift of Optimism – Friend of Optimists, new Club Members or perhaps something as simple as giving away a copy of our creed. And how can you not have fun bringing a smile to the face of a child this holiday season? I would love to hear what you are doing to serve, share and have fun, so shoot me an e-mail at [jdr731@yahoo.com](mailto:jdr731@yahoo.com) or give me a call at (817) 714-7261.

I hope you are well on your way to becoming a Distinguished/Honor President/Lt. Governor/Governor. The recognition program is challenging but so worthwhile to the future health of our Clubs. Remember the 20% Member additions for Clubs is not a net number – add 20% of your number of Members as of October 1 and pay your District and International dues and your Club is Honor. Add building a new Optimist Club to that, and your Club is Distinguished. We are focused like a laser beam on adding new Members who will bring energy, excitement and new ideas and help us all have healthier Clubs. Regardless of the size of your Club, I urge you to work throughout the year to add new Members – the goal of 20% is a challenge, no doubt, but one that is attainable by every Club. Go to [www.optimist.org/recognition](http://www.optimist.org/recognition) for all the details.

Know that I believe in you. I believe that you are leaders of this organization because you want to do everything possible to “Bring Out the Best in Kids” and your community. I am right there with you. If I have not done so already, I hope to meet you somewhere down the road. You never know where I might show up.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all that you do.

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads 'Danny Rodgers'.

Danny Rodgers  
Optimist International President

## Coming SOON!

The special 2009-2010 Awards issue of the *Leadership Hotline* is coming soon! See which Clubs can now call themselves “Honor” and “Distinguished” and which Optimists led the way during the “Promise Yourself” year!



Everybody needs Friends.  
See page 3 for more.

### Inside this issue:

- 2 – A look back at the PDCs
- 4 – First Caribbean Club celebrates a big birthday

# PARALLEL OPTIMISM



*PDC attendees took a gamble but came out big winners this fall. At the Dallas PDC, Optimists take that luck to the tables at a Casino Night to benefit the Optimist International Foundation.*

The talk of the year so far has been the Parallel District Conferences, which concluded a couple of weeks ago in Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

For seven weekends in a row, Optimists gathered with others in their region for training, District-level business, inspiring speakers and tons of Optimistic fun.

Despite the newness of the concept, approximately 2,000 Optimists jumped on the bandwagon and attended their local PDC. The PDCs started in Branson and then moved to Asheville, Niagara Falls, Laval, Bloomington and Dallas before winding up in Ocho Rios.

The conferences had a little something for everyone, and attendees ranged from 50-year Optimists to those who had been Members for less than two months.

The big question before the PDCs began was whether the conferences could adequately replace District meetings. As it turned out, those in attendance saw this was possible, with some added benefits of the larger group setting. Districts had time to take care of business as they would at a quarterly conference. But because of the size of the events, the opportunities for several international-level speakers and trainers were greater than at the average District conference. Another plus was that the socializing was multiplied many times over by the sheer numbers in attendance. This created new opportunities for sharing and getting to know new friends, some from far outside District boundaries.

The PDCs were great proof that when Optimists are faced with something new, they are willing to accept it and see its potential.

## Overheard at the Dallas PDC

"I thought it was a great idea," said Richard Bolling, Member of the Optimist Club of Nederland-Port Neches Eve, Texas. "We met Optimists from seven different Districts ... It's a good thing to get together and meet other people, see what they're doing."

**"I think it was just fantastic. Great!"**

**International Vice President Ron Graves said.**

**"The best group outside of the Convention that I've been to in 10 years, at least."**

"I thought it was great that so many Optimists came so far to come together and meet new people and share ideas," Immediate Past President Mark Shriver said. "The energy and enthusiasm is something we need and we need more of, and this is a great step in the right direction. I hope it's something we will improve upon and do again in the years to come."

**"There truly is no place like home," President Danny Rodgers said. "It was so awesome to bring the PDC to the Southwest Region in Dallas – so many longtime Optimist friends to share, celebrate and laugh with. It was certainly the most emotional PDC for me ... a truly amazing and heartfelt experience for both Jill and me."**

## New JOOI Club is a ray of sunshine

Congratulations to the Golden Sunshine Junior Optimist Club of Lydford, Jamaica. This was the first new JOOI Club to charter this year!

A big thanks goes out to their sponsor, the Optimist Club of Lydford, Jamaica, for their support!



# PNW Optimists hone their building skills

There's something new and exciting taking place January 19-21 in the Pacific Northwest District. This unique and proactive event in Seattle, Washington, is known as the Targeted Growth Seminar. It is a three-day opportunity for this District's Optimists to take part in classroom training for new Club building, but also to hit the streets of Seattle with expert trainers who'll lead the charge in the field to build at least three new Clubs over a stretch of six weeks. An added goal is for other Districts to be able to use this program as a prototype and carry on the example of Pacific Northwest Optimists in other areas of the organization. Visit [www.optimist.org/seattle](http://www.optimist.org/seattle) to find out more about this event and see it unfold.

## Why wait?

Are you on the edge of your seat with anticipation? Why not get off the seat to plan your own event today to match the efforts in Seattle? E-mail [newclub@optimist.org](mailto:newclub@optimist.org) to get started.

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## FRIENDLY INCENTIVE

## A likable goal for 2011



Last November, Optimist International introduced its Facebook page. Since then, Optimists have used the page to have fun and encourage each other – all in the name of Optimism!

Just shy of the one-year anniversary, the page surpassed 1,800 fans. That led to a new thought: "Wouldn't it be great to welcome in 2011 with 2,011 Optimistic fans?"

If you already "like" Optimist International – keep visiting the page and sharing good news! If you have not yet visited, just go to [www.facebook.com/optimist.international](http://www.facebook.com/optimist.international).



Starting January 1, Clubs will be rewarded for making new Friends – Friends of Optimists, that is!

Friendship is the foundation that holds our communities and Clubs together. Friendship gives us the strength, innovation and commitment to be successful in our endeavors. Everyone needs a Friend, and every Club needs Friends of Optimists!

Optimist International is excited to announce a new Membership incentive. Clubs that add three new Friends of Optimists in the second and third quarters (January 1 through June 30, 2011) will be able to also add a new traditional Member at no processing charge. It gets better! That Member's International dues will be waived through September 30, 2012. The Member just needs to be added before August 31, 2011.

There's more! Clubs that make Friends easily and meet this incentive's goals will also receive a special banner patch so they can proudly show what a friendly Club they are!

# First Caribbean Club celebrates 30 years



The Optimist Club of Kingston, Jamaica, turned 30 this past August with a big celebration.

As the first Optimist Club in the Caribbean, the Club has served from the beginning as a leader in the District, and many of its Members have moved on to serve the organization in other capacities. The Club can boast among its membership many Lieutenant Governors, Governors, Vice Presidents and, of course, 2007-2008 International President Theodore Golding.

The anniversary celebration brought together all of these leaders as well as the dedicated Members of the Club and quite a few Charter Members. Many other Clubs from across Jamaica attended the celebration as well.



Top: Past International President Theo Golding addresses the crowd.

Above: Members feel like they have stepped back in time 30 years. Enjoying the celebration are (from left) Past International Vice President Ron Bourne, Al Tenn, Past International President Theo Golding, 2009-2010 Club President Marlene Hines, Thaddeus Blythe and Winston Barrett.

## Three decades of service

Here are just a few ways the Club continues to serve Kingston and beyond:

- Church of God Girls' Home
- Essay and Oratorical Contests
- OptiSpell Contest
- Bustamante Hospital for Children
- School renovations

## Optimism on exhibit

In celebration of the 30th anniversary, the Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Library arranged an exhibition in August featuring the Club's accomplishments and the history of the Caribbean District of Optimist International.

## Lights, camera, service!

Optimist service projects peak in the holiday season, and Optimist International wants to see what everyone is up to. President Danny Rodgers has requested that Clubs submit videos of their special holiday projects.

The videos can show coverage of an actual project, or they can feature Club Members talking about projects that may not have happened quite yet.

Clubs can submit short videos (2 minutes maximum) that will be posted on the Optimist website to bring holiday cheer to all! YouTube links are easy and welcome, so feel free to pass those along.

No video camera? No worries! Optimist International will accept digital photos, too. Send all submissions to [leadership@optimist.org](mailto:leadership@optimist.org) no later than December 15, 2010.

Some Clubs got a jump on the season. To check out the videos that have already been posted, visit [www.optimist.org/holidays](http://www.optimist.org/holidays).



## Three young champs

Congratulations to the champions of this year's Optimist International Tournament of Champions. Winners are (from left) Giovana Maymon (girls 14-18), Harrison Winger (boys 16-18) and Evan Deroche (boys 14-15). For more, visit [www.optimist.org/golf](http://www.optimist.org/golf).

## BIG CHANGES in scholarships

The Essay and Oratorical contests are expanding this year, and Optimists should take note.

Beginning this Optimist year, the word limit for the Essay Contest has been raised to 700-800 words. The increased word limit will allow students to thoroughly develop their opinions and viewpoint on the contest topic.

The Oratorical Contest age limit has been raised to under the age of 19 as of December 31 of the current school year. This change provides many new opportunities for Clubs to find contestants!

Club Members may try approaching a debate team or drama club at the local high school to find new Oratorical participants. Ask an English teacher to make writing the speech a class assignment. Invite the Members of a local JOOI Club to enter.

Hang posters promoting the contest in the library or local community center. Make sure your Club Chair's contact information is on the poster. Ask the local high school if they will run a promotional piece about the contest in the school newspaper. The possibilities are endless!

Clubs are still encouraged to invite junior high and middle school students to participate. Competing in the contest provides younger students with valuable public speaking experience and gives them a chance to showcase their skills. Students may enter the contest every year until they win a District-level scholarship, as long as they meet the age requirement.

### Tap into new groups for the Oratorical Contest

**Debate teams | Drama clubs | JOOI Clubs**

## Showcase your District's best projects

Deadlines are looming for the Community Projects Awards – make sure your District's top projects are among the international-level contenders!

The District-winning CPA entries and the First Place Entry Form must be submitted to the Programs Department by December 15. Please remove the District evaluation sheets before sending the books to the International Office.

The District Entry Form was due to the International Office by October 20. This form should list the names and Club numbers of all submitting Clubs along with the categories in which they entered their CPA books. The form must be signed by the District Activities Chair and the District Governor. If your District has not yet submitted this form, please do so as soon as possible.

If District-winning books and all paperwork are not submitted by the December 15 deadline, the entries may not be judged at the International level.

If you need either of the District CPA forms, please contact the Programs Department at (800) 500-8130 or via e-mail at [programs@optimist.org](mailto:programs@optimist.org).

# Above and beyond

*The Optimist* magazine is introducing a new section called “Above and Beyond” for Optimist Clubs that have had the honor of recognizing citizens for amazing acts of kindness. Below is a sneak peek at this new section, featuring a story that unfolded this time last year. The next story will be available in the winter 2011 issue of the magazine, due out in mid-January.

## Honoring extraordinary YOUNG PEOPLE

*By Connie Hunter Roberts, Member of the Martinsburg—  
Berkeley County Optimist Club in West Virginia*

To risk your life for someone you love takes courage, but risking your life for a stranger is viewed by many as simply incredible.

In the incredible category are Jesse Franks, 20, and Andrew McDermott, 19, who were traveling through Bunker Hill, West Virginia, on their way home to Virginia on December 24, 2009. They noticed smoke and fire coming from a home in Bunker Hill. Instead of just calling 911, Franks and McDermott turned around in the parking lot of the Bunker Hill United Methodist Church and went to the home, where flames and smoke were visible on the first floor.

The men forced their way into the home and found Patricia Miller lying unresponsive on a couch. She had

suffered severe smoke inhalation. They carried her outside to safety and administered to her until police, firefighters and an Emergency Medical Team arrived on the scene. Miller was hospitalized for three weeks but made a recovery.

After reading an account of the rescue and how the local Methodist church played a part, church member Bonnie Brannon was inspired to honor these two young travelers who had risked their lives for a stranger. Church member and Optimist Connie Hunter Roberts believed that such a gesture was perfect for his Optimist Club to help with, and his fellow Optimists agreed. They created a new annual award, the “Good Samaritan Award,” and also set aside a financial gift for the two heroes and a celebration.

The celebration came together in June, with Franks’ and McDermott’s families and friends, the local EMTs and plenty of Bunker Hill residents in attendance. The Club looks forward to honoring more amazing citizens this coming year.

## Share the good deeds

Has your Optimist Club given a shout out to a local citizen who has gone above and beyond what is expected of them? Share the story with all of Optimist International! Send stories to [magazine@optimist.org](mailto:magazine@optimist.org). Photos are welcome, too!

## BE MORE IN BALTIMORE – AND SEE MORE BEYOND!

The 2011 Convention is July 3-5 in Baltimore, Maryland. For those who’ve never been to the area, consider coming in early or extending your stay to see the city and beyond. Did you know that Washington, D.C., and New York City are an easy drive away? These three big cities make up one of the top must-see areas of the United States!

For more information about the Convention, visit [www.optimist.org/convention](http://www.optimist.org/convention) or check out the links below!

### Quick links

[Online registration](#) | [Travel deals](#) | [Youth Adventures](#)



# VOICE YOUR OPINION

The time to speak up is now. Please take time to re-evaluate the Optimist International Bylaws and make sure they continue to effectively serve the organization. By doing this, you and your Club can help shape and improve Optimist International.

If your Club wants to recommend a revision to the Bylaws, it must submit a proposed amendment citing the article and section, and exact proposed wording change to all articles and sections cited, along with a written rationale (in 200 words or less) for the change. The Club must submit the proposal on Club letterhead signed by the Club President. The proposal may be e-mailed or faxed to the International Office, but the original Club letter must be received in the International Office in order for the proposal to be considered. The rationale as submitted will be printed in the May issue of the *Hotline*. All submitted changes will be brought before the 2011 Convention delegates for vote and possible endorsement.

All proposed change submissions for the Bylaws must be received at the International Office by 5 p.m. (CST) April 4, 2011. Items postmarked on or before but received after April 4 will not be accepted. Please mail them to: Dana Thomas, Executive Assistant, Optimist International, 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108.

## CONSIDER SUBMITTING A RESOLUTION

The Convention Resolutions Process can be used for any aspect of the organization not covered in the Bylaws. Clubs must submit resolutions by May 4, 2011, to the Resolutions Committee. The committee will choose the strongest resolutions and report them to Convention delegates on Tuesday, July 5, for debate and vote (note: Resolutions endorsed by Convention delegates are non-binding and are sent to the International Board of Directors for further consideration and study).

Please type resolutions on Club stationery and include your Club name, Club number and Club President's signature. All resolutions should be written in standard resolution format: "Whereas ... , Whereas ... , Whereas ... , Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of Optimist International is asked to consider..." Please mail your resolutions to: Resolutions Committee, Optimist International, 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108.

## AMENDMENT PROPOSALS: HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

- ✓ Rationale of 200 words or less
- ✓ Submit on official Club letterhead
- ✓ Club President's signature is required
- ✓ Due at International Office by 5 p.m. April 4, 2011

## Leaders: A call to serve

Optimist Members who wish to run for a seat on the International Board of Directors now have a little more time to submit their applications. The new application deadline is February 1, 2011.

Applications should be sent to the International Candidate Qualifications Committee via the International Office in St. Louis. The election of two new Board members will take place at the 2011 Convention in Baltimore, Maryland. The two individuals elected will serve three-year terms beginning October 1, 2011.

Each prospective candidate must have served a full term as a District Governor and be a Member 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.

### To send applications

Mail to:  
Optimist International  
c/o Candidate Qualifications Committee  
4494 Lindell Blvd. • St. Louis, MO 63108  
Or fax to: (314) 371-6006  
Applications will not be accepted by e-mail.