



The Torch



It's a JOOI World After All

Some real characters showed up at the 2008 JOOI Convention. Disney characters, that is. The JOOI Members jumped into the local spirit in Orlando, Florida, with some fun dress-up days but also got down to business and completed a couple of service projects during the big event. For more photos from the week, check out page 5.

Caribbean Clubs Take On a Special Project

The JOOI Clubs in the Caribbean District celebrated Jamaica's Child Month this past May by investing in the education of Britaniel Wong. Britaniel, 9, is fighting leukemia and is unable to attend school regularly. The JOOI Clubs have provided her with plenty of reading and other learning materials and a check for \$20,000 to help in tutoring. The Optimist Club of Norbrook Springs, Jamaica, joined in by presenting Britaniel with a computer.

JOOI Members traveled from all over to District of Mines, St. Ann, in Jamaica to present Britaniel with the materials. Britaniel and her mother, Ann-Marie, described the JOOI Members as their very own heroes.

JOOI Clubs in the Caribbean plan to continue to help Britaniel with her schooling.



Britaniel Wong looks through some of the new reading material that will help her keep up with her education.

JOOI CAN SCORE BIG WITH THE RIGHT GAME PLAN!

This January, push the winter blahs to the side and move the fight against hunger to center stage with Souper Bowl of Caring!

Souper Bowl of Caring is a youth-led movement of giving and serving that is transforming the traditional Super Bowl Weekend into a time to think of neighbors in need. In schools, participation takes place during the week leading up to Super Bowl Sunday (January 26-30, 2009).

Your JOOI Club can take the lead in your school and make a significant impact in the community. And it's easy to do!

First, register your JOOI Club at www.souperbowl.org. Please make sure you use "JOOI" in your Club's name when you register on the website. By registering, your Club will receive a free resource kit that is full of helpful info, including a DVD, posters, pointers, ideas and more!

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Then, use the week before Super Bowl Sunday to collect canned goods and/or money to benefit a local not-for-profit that serves those in need.

Total up your Club's collection and report back to Souper Bowl of Caring so your Club's efforts count as part of the grand total!

Donate all of your collection to the not-for-profit organization that you have chosen.

Regardless of whether you are rooting for one football team or the other, whether you watch the game for the action on the field, for the halftime show or for the commercials, you can now use the big event to do some good, and everyone will come out a winner!

One JOOI Community Shares its Strategy

The Norfolk Panther JOOI Clubs at Norfolk Junior High and Norfolk Middle School got in on the Souper Bowl of Caring action in January 2008.

Right after students returned from their winter break, the JOOI Members started posting event flyers and making announcements about Souper Bowl of Caring.

Collection envelopes were delivered to all homerooms at the schools along with some "hunger facts" (which a local agency could probably help your Club with). Each classroom was considered a "team" and was asked to collect a minimum of \$15 during Souper Bowl week. They were also asked to pick the winner and the score of the more widely known Super Bowl.

On the Friday before the big game, the JOOI Clubs collected the classes' envelopes. About 30 "teams" had met the minimum \$15 requirement and only two of those teams had picked the actual winner of the Super Bowl (the 2008 game was a big upset, if you recall). From these two teams, the tiebreaker was determined by the score of the game. The first-place team received a tailgate party with sandwiches, chips, ice cream and refreshments. The second-place team received ice cream.

In the meantime, the real winner was Kids Against Hunger, the JOOI Clubs' organization of choice. On the Saturday before the Super Bowl, JOOI Members presented Kids Against Hunger representatives with a check for \$750 from their Souper Bowl of Caring. In addition, Members of all nine JOOI Clubs in Norfolk were on hand that day to help package meals for 5,616 children. That's a lot of caring!

This is just one way that Clubs can get their schools excited about the Souper Bowl of Caring. What will be your JOOI Club's strategy for the big game?

Details to Remember

- Register at www.souperbowl.org
- January 26-30, 2009, is the big week
- All canned goods and money collected benefit the group of your JOOI Club's choice

Have You Read a Good Book Lately?

If you haven't discovered a page-turner recently, February is the month to mark on your calendar! JOOI has designated these 28 days as JOOI Reading Month. Help kids in your area remember that reading can be fun and isn't always connected to a homework assignment! And make sure the students in your JOOI Club get in on the reading as well.

Before the big month, get your Club Members together to come up with a fun "suggested reading list" for students of all ages. Make bright posters and banners to promote it, and make your JOOI Club's presence known. Have fun with this event - get the different classes at your school involved in some friendly reading competitions.

If February isn't a good time for your school or your JOOI Club, that's OK! JOOI encourages Clubs to promote JOOI Reading Month whenever is best for them. The most important thing is to get kids excited about opening up a good book!

For more information about this and other parts of the JOOI of Reading, go to www.jooi.org, look under "JOOI Clubs" and select "JOOI of Reading."



Club Leader Gives Big Boost to JOOI



Stacie Lee

JOOI calls youth to service and also gives Members a chance to develop leadership skills within their schools and Clubs. The annual Ruby Blair Award is an honor that JOOI bestows upon one JOOI Member who stands out in their dedication to and leadership within their JOOI Club.

Stacie Lee of Rochester, Minnesota, is this year's recipient of the honor and has certainly lived up to the spirit of Ruby Blair, a former JOOI staff member who threw her heart and soul into JOOI.

Stacie, who recently graduated from Century High School in Rochester, was a Member of the Octagon Club of Century High School. Stacie helped the Club prove that young Clubs can make great strides in their schools and their communities. The Club is only three years old, but Stacie's leadership skills helped elevate the Club from 12 Members to 40 Members in just two years.

She first took a leadership role in 2006-2007 as Vice President and spent time involving the Club in a variety of events and getting the Club noticed in the school and the community. She served as Club President in 2007-2008 and focused recruiting efforts on freshmen and sophomores, increasing Club numbers to 40 and solidifying the Club's presence for years to come.

Stacie was involved in a number of JOOI service projects that reached out to a variety of people in need. She initiated the Channel One Food Drive at her high school in 2007-2008. She also spearheaded the Club's Operation Hometown Gratitude, which packs boxes for soldiers serving in Iraq. Stacie helped coordinate the CHS-Mayo Clinic Blood Drive, which set new donor records. In addition, the JOOI Club assisted the Optimist Club of Rochester on a couple of projects, helping the Optimist Club with the Frozen Goose Run for the Childhood Cancer Campaign and the Club's Toys for Tots shopping sprees.

Stacie is not only a leader. She is also respected by her peers, being voted the Octagon Member of the year two years in a row and, in the greater school community, homecoming queen her senior year.

And while Stacie began her freshman year at the University of New England this fall, she did not leave the JOOI Club behind without a glance back, in true Ruby Blair spirit.

"Stacie has worked very hard with the incoming officers to ensure they have a plan for the 2008-2009 school year and has provided good continuity for others to follow for future years," says Lyle Felsch, JOOI Club Chair.

Congratulations to Stacie Lee for this honor and for bringing a heightened enthusiasm for JOOI to her school!

An Example of Excellence



Gavay Watt

Members of JOOI are involved to help serve others, so it is only natural that the organization recognizes one JOOI Member each year for exemplary service in their Club and their community. This year's Member Excellence Award has been presented to Gavay Watt of Kingston, Jamaica.

Gavay Watt has been a JOOI Member since 2003 and has made a big impression in his school and beyond since that time.

As a Member of the Wolmerians Octagon Club at Wolmer's Boys' School in Kingston, Jamaica, Gavay first served as Club Secretary/Treasurer and then moved on to Vice President and President. He has served as Lieutenant Governor for the Caribbean District as well and was recognized by the JOOI District for commendable leadership in 2006-2007. He received the Sponsor Club Award for outstanding achievement in 2005-2006 and again in 2006-2007. And in 2007 the JOOI District recognized him for being the most cooperative Member.

"Gavay is quite businesslike and dependable, and with his quiet demeanor, he is the epitome of Optimism," says Janet Lewis, JOOI Club Adviser. "He has worked tirelessly to assist youths who have special needs and has provided invaluable support in several projects to realize this goal."

His accomplishments in the Wolmerians Octagon Club and beyond include donating much-needed items and making numerous visits to the Matthew 25 Children's Home for children living with HIV.

"He is a true humanitarian who can bring hope to a situation no matter how dull it may seem and is someone who will be remembered as a true optimist who has made an indelible mark on the hearts of many," says David Kerr of Wolmer's Boys' School.

Gavay has served as camp counselor and most recently camp director for the Iris Gelly Primary School camp for present and past students. "I volunteer my time each year for this camp, as it seeks to develop the youth of the inner city community of Arnett Gardens," Gavay says.

The camp is a chance to get away from the tough environment in which many of the children live, and the campers look forward to the event each year.

"He has set the bar high for many to follow and is seen as an inspiration to the people of his community, as it is not known to produce outstanding individuals or, even more so, young men

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Building Up JOOI

JOOI would like to send out a big thank you to the following JOOI Members and Optimist Members who were Builders of Excellence this year. As Builders of Excellence, they worked hard to start new JOOI Clubs.*

JOOI Members Timmoy Whyte and Orlando Bartley and Optimist Kevin Grant - Octagon Club of Bishop Gibson High School (B1968)

JOOI Member Sabrina Ahmed and Optimist Janet Lloyd - Valley High School Octagon Club (B2062)

Optimist Avon Carty - Progressive Youth Octagon Club (B2063)

Optimist Jack Akerman - St. Albert the Great Junior Optimist Club (A1909)

Optimist Angelina Bonta - UB Octagon Club of Yuma, Arizona (B2075)

JOOI Members Garvin Grandison and Julian Taylor and Optimist Angela Daley - Octagon Club of St. Andrew High School (B2087)

Optimist Dattel Minott - PMPS Outreach Junior Optimist Club (A1920)

Optimist Hope McCormack - Eastern Rays Octagon JOOI Club (B2051)

Thank you for the many hours you put in to make these Clubs a reality!

*This list includes JOOI Clubs built through September 23, 2008.

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of such high caliber," says Veronica Gaynor, Iris Gelly camp coordinator.

Within his school community, Gavay has brightened up his surroundings, literally. He has worked on beautification projects for classrooms and the general school environment, and then he moved on to the offices of the vice principal and other staff members!

"He continues to live by our school's motto - *Age Quod Agis*: Whatever you do, do it well - and therefore he continues to be successful as he blazes a positive trail in our Jamaican society," Kerr says. "Gavay has always voiced his positive visions for our beloved school and country and has used this noble service organization [JOOI] to impact people positively in all facets of life."

Gavay has certainly lived out the JOOI call to serve, and congratulations go out to him for receiving this year's Member Excellence Award!

Top Adviser Makes JOOI the True Winner

"Elaine Lucca is simply the most dedicated and hard-working JOOI Adviser in the entire organization."

Those are the simple yet convincing words of Donovan Chu, 2007-2008 JOOI Director, regarding Elaine Lucca, this year's recipient of the Adviser of Excellence Award.

"She gives a large part of her life to mentor and guide students in her Clubs in each and every endeavor they take," Donovan says.

Donovan credits Elaine

with helping him achieve big goals in JOOI

Elaine Lucca

at the Club, District and International levels but says her work doesn't even come close to stopping there. "Her work has brought hundreds of young people into the JOOI program over the years, helping the organization and its Members to thrive."

Elaine has served as a JOOI Adviser for nine years and has been involved with five different Octagon and Junior Optimist Clubs. She has also encouraged her JOOI Members to sharpen their leadership skills and get out there and meet other JOOI Members by bringing them to six out of the last seven JOOI Conventions. That's not just dedication - that's bravery!

All joking aside, JOOI in Bonita, California, and beyond wouldn't be the same without Elaine's involvement. Congratulations to her on such well-deserved recognition!

Does This Sound Familiar?

Is someone in your JOOI Club eligible for an award like one of these? Check out the JOOI Awards section of the JOOI Planning Guide to find out more details. It could mean well-deserved recognition for someone in your Club, and the Ruby Blair and Member Excellence recipients even receive a scholarship!

Just go to www.jooi.org, look under "JOOI Clubs" and click on the "Planning Guide" link.

SHARE YOUR BEST STUFF!

JOOI knows that every Club is out there doing awesome projects. Share them with other Clubs! JOOI would love to know what's going on in each Club and would love to pass the news on to the rest of the organization.

Let's face it, when you hear about the great stuff everyone else is doing, it gets you even more motivated about your own plans!

Send all of the great details to youthclubs@optimist.org.





Get in on the Fun at Convention!

When you think of Orlando, the word "fun" usually comes to mind! It is a great city with tons of fun (there's that word again) things to do. The JOOI Convention is no exception! Coming off a fun-filled 2008 Convention, JOOI will return there July 4-6, 2009. If the photos on this page don't convince you of the good times ahead of you, keep looking for future issues of *The Torch*. There are more plans on the way!



2008-2009 JOOI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Julie d'Auteuil

President

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Hi JOOI Members! My name is Julie d'Auteuil and this year, I have the honor to serve you as your International President! I am 18 years old and I am presently at the college of my city (we call that Cegep in Quebec! Just call me if you need more explanations about Canada's education system!). After college, I would like to go into international law and, of course, to pursue more into Optimist! Since starting my five years in my JOOI Club, I have been Finance Director, Treasurer, Lieutenant Governor and International Director. When I have free time, I do a lot of road biking in my region and swimming. I love to read *Harry Potter* and car magazines! Fun fact that you have to keep secret: my favorite movie is *Dead Poets Society* ... I enjoyed seeing you at our Convention in Florida! Have a good year in Optimism!



Raquel Ravaglioli

Past President

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Hey JOOI Members! My term as International President, as well as past years spent with JOOI, have been an amazing growing experience for me as well as a fun adventure. I am at University of the Pacific as a freshman this year double majoring in music therapy and either biological sciences or communications. I am looking forward to another fabulous year of JOOI, serving as the Past President on the International Board. I wish the best to all of you in your academic endeavors, social times and encounters with JOOI for the 2008-2009 year!



Craig Peden

Director

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I'm a senior at Henderson County High School in Henderson, Kentucky, which is the second largest school in Kentucky. Currently I am President of my JOOI Club, I'm a former Governor of the Kentucky-West Virginia District, and last year I was your 2007-2008 JOOI Parliamentarian. I am involved with a lot of activities at my school that range from being president of the student bank and president of my class to supporting the Colonels and the list goes on. So let's go out in our communities and make a difference and have an amazing JOOI year!



Ben Pudles

Director

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I have been a Member of JOOI for seven years and have been to the International Convention five years. Fun facts: I am into any form of art. I have played the harmonica for four years, and in my free time I love to roller skate at Semoran Skateway, where a scene from the movie *Monster* was shot.



Marie-Pier Tremblay

Director

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Hey! I'm Marie-Pier Tremblay and I'm 16 years old. It's my fifth year as a JOOI Member and I'm proud of being on Julie's team! I've been Secretary, Treasurer and Governor of my District (East Quebec-North Shore). I'm the kind of girl who needs a lot of action in her life! That's certainly the reason why I love sports, mostly tennis and volleyball. I hope I'll meet each of you this year at the Convention in Orlando!



Peter Von Der Vellen

Director

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I'm Peter Von Der Vellen and I'm a sophomore at Alter High School. I started a new JOOI Club at Alter last year and I attended my first JOOI International Convention last year and loved it. I'm a big Packer and Badger fan. I also play football for the Alter Knights. Go Knights!



Dear JOOI Members,

It is with great pleasure that I formally announce that your new JOOI year starts immediately! This year, apart from being dynamic, wonderful and incredible, you will have a chance to enjoy many rewarding experiences that will enable you to shine brightly everywhere you go! You can rest assured, Junior Optimist Octagon International is in the good hands of a competent and motivated Board of Directors.

This year, in order to innovate and make a concrete contribution to the well-being of your community, we are launching a new project. The Souper Bowl of Caring will give you a golden opportunity to raise funds and non-perishable food for the neediest members of our society. Your designated directors will be giving you information to help you make sure that this new project will be successful.

Another change this year! Dear members, through our annual fundraiser for the JOOI Legacy Fund (fundraising for the benefit of the JOOI Legacy Fund in order to help next year's JOOI Board of Directors in their leadership activities), you may buy a beautiful T-shirt at a cost of \$25. This will also be our JOOI Convention official T-shirt next July. Wear it proudly!

To continue the tradition, the JOOI of Reading program will be better than ever this year! February is the official JOOI Reading Month, and we take the opportunity to encourage you to actively participate and to promote the benefits of the program in your school and community. I also invite you to push ahead with projects designed to assist and support childhood cancer patients through the Childhood Cancer Campaign. Rest assured, your participation is necessary and greatly appreciated.

Have you been particularly brilliant within your club or taken part in a project of which you are justifiably proud? Please send us the information and the photos! You will perhaps have the opportunity to become an Optimist star in *The Torch*, the official JOOI newsletter! Do not forget to reward your good deeds through the Junior Optimist Octagon International Recognition Program! For more detailed information, please go to our website (www.jooi.org), where you will see all we can offer, and what you will need to carry out your work with boundless enthusiasm during your Optimist year!

Finally, it is with great pleasure that I cheerfully invite you to Kissimmee, Florida, for our 20th JOOI International Convention! You will have the pleasure of meeting with many young people who, just like you, are passionate JOOI Members, and of attending a multitude of really sound workshops dealing with important subject matters that will help you move up within the organization. You will also be asked to take part in a local community service project giving you a chance to participate in a Convention reflective of our community vision. Hoping to meet with you at YOUR JOOI Convention, I wish you the best year ever!

Julie d'Auteuil



President Julie d'Auteuil



JOOI Goals for 2008-2009

Growth of JOOI

- Build 150 new JOOI Clubs
 - Build at least 2 Clubs in each Optimist District
 - Promote JOOI to schools
 - Develop good communication with each District Chair to have his/her support
- Increase membership by 10%
 - Recruiting activity at the beginning of the year through school and community
 - Promote all the positive aspects of JOOI organization
- Build JOOI Districts
 - Obtain a District JOOI Chair in each Optimist District
 - Increase communication between JOOI Committee & JOOI Board and Districts
 - Establish JOOI Districts in Optimist International Districts that do not have them

Communication

- Each JOOI Board member will contact

- each District under his/her charge every other month.
 - To motivate and encourage them
 - To remind them to use the e-mail box system and to complete all the international forms
 - To inform them about the award system, Souper Bowl of Caring, JOOI of Reading and CCC
 - To support and help them!
- Each JOOI Board member will complete a report and submit it to all other Board members, all JOOI Committee members and JOOI staff.

2009 JOOI Convention

- Increase attendance to 200 delegates
 - Start early to promote
 - Each JOOI Board member to remind his/her assigned Districts about the Convention when they contact them (phone and e-mail) **Tell them about your own experience; send pictures of the past Conventions to show them how fun it is.

- Promote it in *The Torch* and e-mail box system
- Send out info packets with personalized letters

JOOI Legacy Fund

- Raise \$10,000 for the JOOI Legacy Fund
 - Special pins for \$25 donation at Optimist International Convention
 - T-Shirt for JOOI Members and Advisers for \$25
 - Personal sponsors

Souper Bowl of Caring

- Raise \$5,000 for Souper Bowl of Caring

JOOI of Reading

- Send out informational brochures to all Optimist International District Governors
- JOOI Board members have to encourage Governors to act!
- Promote February as JOOI Reading Month

Childhood Cancer Campaign

- Every JOOI Club participates in some type of CCC project

Help JOOI Stay in Contact

Does your JOOI Club have a valid e-mail address on file with the JOOI office? JOOI uses e-mail for much of its communication and would like all Clubs to make sure they have a valid address on file for this year. JOOI prefers the e-mail address for the Club Adviser, but a general JOOI Club e-mail address will work as well.

Make sure your Club doesn't miss out! To check to see whether your Club has an address on file, send an e-mail to youthclubs@optimist.org.

No News is Good News for Dues

The big announcement about JOOI dues for this year is that there is no big announcement. Dues will stay the same for 2008-2009!

If you need a refresher course about what that means for your JOOI Club, keep on reading.

Dues are based on tiers defined by the World Bank. Basically, dues depend on what country you live in, and the World Bank classifies countries as High Income Economies (Tier 1), Upper Middle Income Economies (Tier 2) and Low and Lower Income Economies (Tier 3). For example, the U.S. and Canada are in Tier 1, and JOOI Clubs in these countries will pay the same dues per Member that they paid during 2007-2008 - \$8 (U.S.). For Tier 2, the fee is \$5.92 and for Tier 3 it is \$4.18.

The Club registration fee remains at \$60 (U.S.).

Dues billing will be sent out to each Club in early October, so if your Club has not received it yet, it should be on its way.

In addition to paying all dues and fees, it is mandatory that a current Club Roster be filled out using the Membership Roster form. This form needs to be completed and sent in, along with the officer report forms. You can find the form on the JOOI pages of the website.

Please fill out the form and send it to Optimist International, Attn: JOOI Clubs, 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108. For questions about dues, please call (800) 500-8130.

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Florida 2009 - Here's What We Know

Most of the details are still being worked out for the 2009 JOOI Convention. But there are a few important numbers that JOOI already knows, so get out your calendars and calculators!

The Convention returns to Orlando, Florida, for the second year in a row. The dates to remember are July 4-6, 2009.

Advance registration is just \$260, which is less than this past year. That means a little less fundraising to send someone from your JOOI Club!

The JOOI Convention will be at the Marriott Orlando Airport Hotel. Hotel rooms are just \$82 (plus tax) per night. This is quite a deal (and also less than last year)! And since rooms can fit anywhere from one to four people, JOOI Members could end up paying just ... Hey, you're in school - you do the math!

So this is what you need to know for now. Keep these dates and costs in mind, start thinking up fundraising ideas to help pay the way, and JOOI will see you in Florida in July!

