

Optimist

Summer 2021

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Ellerbe
Born
Optimist**

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Dedication



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MISSION STATEMENT

By providing hope and positive vision,
Optimists bring out the best in youth,
our communities, and ourselves.

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

Purposes: 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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Optimist

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On the Cover

Benny Ellerbe and his great grandson Brice.

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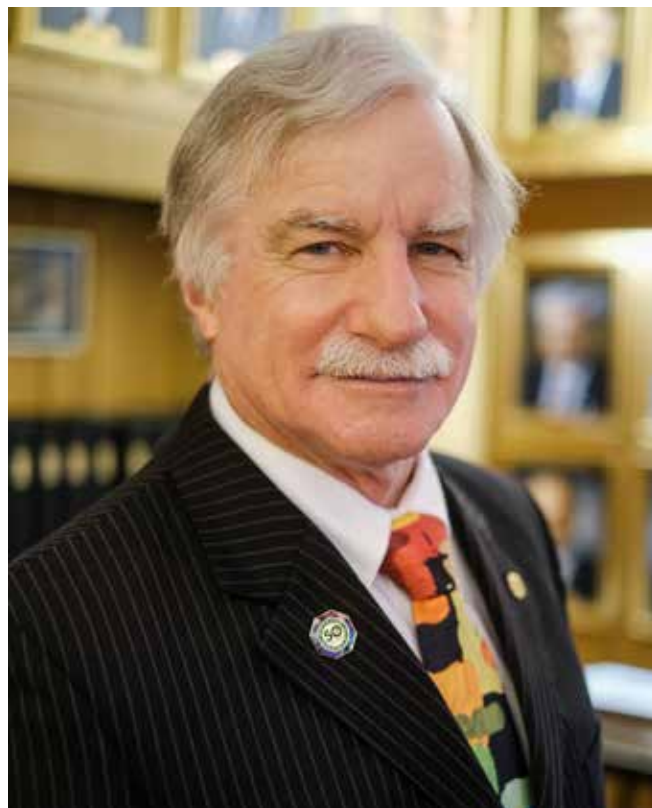
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How do we measure success?

The theme for this quarter is success. Recognizing our accomplishments is one of the five components of well-being essential for all people. This means it is important for us to set goals, then take time to recognize our accomplishments as we look back on the last 12 months. How do we measure success in our Optimist Clubs?

The basic measure of a successful Club is to fulfill the **requirements** of the honor Club program. These requirements cover the minimum actions a Club should undertake: Service, Community, Charitable, Education and Administration. Take a look at where your Club stands in each of these areas, and work to make your optimism come true. If you missed a deadline for a report, file it now. If your officers still need to view the Learning Management System training, do it now. If you still need to make a donation to the Foundation, do it now. If you still need to add Members to your Club, do it now. There is still time to run a successful membership recruitment effort. Please contact membership@optimist.org if you would like assistance for your Club.

This year has been a difficult one for our communities and our Optimist Clubs. Achieving honor Club status may look like an insurmountable challenge. I want to encourage you to make the effort anyway. Success is not measured by the awards we win. It is measured by the growth and vitality generated by the effort we put in to achieve our goals.

Let me share with you the story of Katie Grimes of Las Vegas, Nevada. Katie is 15 years old, and she surprised everyone when she made the US Olympic swim team with the second-fastest time in the 800-meter race.

She went to Tokyo intending to win an Olympic gold medal. While the goal is the gold medal, any athlete will tell you they will be satisfied if they put forth their best effort.

Katie did just that. As I watched the final seconds of the race, I thought she might win the bronze medal. As you can see by the picture, she missed the bronze by three-tenths of a second.

My first reaction was disappointment for her that she came that close without winning a medal. When they interviewed her after the race she was extremely happy. I realized she did not need a medal to know she was a success. Years of effort resulted in a 15-year-old being the fourth-fastest swimmer in the world. She was successful because she competed at the highest level with the best effort she was capable of. It would have been nice to have a medal, but she did not fail.

The effort she put forth in the years leading up to this competition, and the way she performed that day set the foundation for her future success. Is there anyone who doubts 18-year-old Katie Grimes will come home from the 2024 Paris Olympics with a medal? I believe she will build on the present success for even greater accomplishments in the future.



Katie Grimes is about to touch in fourth place.

It is the same way for your Club. No matter where you stand now, the effort to achieve Honor or Distinguished Club status will lay the foundation for future success even if you fall short this year. You can consider this year a success if your Club put forth the best effort to be the best it can be.

Let's remember to be optimistic in everything we do.

MARK WEINSOFF
International President 2020-21

Club of the Year

The Centerville Noon Optimist Club



The Centerville Noon Optimist Club Members are like many, dedicated to bringing out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves. The Club sets examples and embraces an optimistic mindset for all to see. We pride ourselves on consistently providing mentors, optimism, scholarships, and recognition for their local youth.

How we help kids:

- Reaching out with meaningful youth programs
- Making a major impact with our youth
- Working with youth-oriented organizations
- Providing scholarships
- Working closely with schools, libraries, and parks

How we give back:

- Oratorical and Essay contests
- Easter Egg Hunt and Haunted Trail events
- Tri-Star Basketball and Soccer
- Youth scholarships
- Build-A-Bear events for sick children
- Fishing Derby and Safety on Wheels Bike Rodeo
- Visual Arts and GOT TALENT contests

Citizens of the Centerville, Ohio, community, who want to give back look toward joining the Centerville Noon Optimist Club to advance personal development. Our weekly lunches are full of fun, food, friendship, and a little frivolity. Within two weeks after the pandemic shutdown announcement, the Club kept meeting via Zoom, holding weekly meetings and a guest speaker. Above all, we are proud that we grew our legendary Avenue of Flags program as residents of the community stood on the front porches (socially distanced) and applauded our efforts during the shutdown. We found ourselves helping other organizations that served at-risk children like Food2Go and Shoes4theShoeless. We discovered an overwhelming need. With proceeds in the bank from the success of our Avenue of Flags Program, we sought out and donated funds to each program enabling them to truly make a difference in the lives of the children we most wanted to serve.

During the most difficult year in memory, the Centerville Noon Optimist Club continued to not only grow but to also showcase what makes our Club the very best this year.



Opening Ceremony 1993
JCI Hong Kong World
Congress, Left to right,
JCI EVP George Lung, UK
Governor of Hong Kong,
JCI President Robert
Dawkins, Congress Director
Goh San, JCI Secretary
General Benny Ellerbe

Benny Ellerbe

Born Optimist

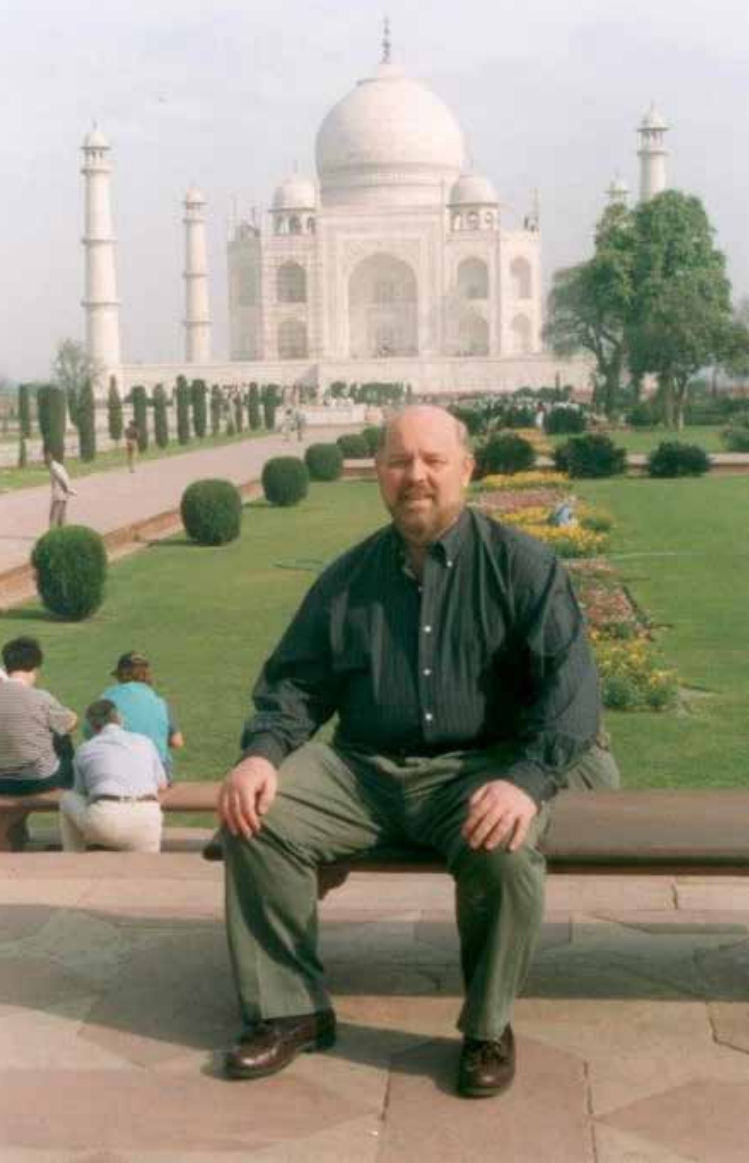
After sixteen years at Optimist International and fifteen Presidents, our Executive Director, Benny Ellerbe is retiring!

Over the years his travels have taken him all over the world, but he has called St. Louis, Missouri home for over twenty-eight years. Originally from West Monroe, Louisiana, Benny's early career had him working for the Junior Chamber International (JCI). He found his philanthropic spirit after volunteering to help in 1976 after an earthquake devastated the country of Guatemala. Without hesitation, Benny volunteered and became the chairman of the project. The honorable plaque he received for his hard work and efforts is displayed even today in his office. Benny would go on to become Club President up to the National Vice President for the United States Junior Chamber (USJC), where he served on the Board of Directors from 1979-1980.



His career at the JCI would take him to many locations including Hong Kong, Japan, Glasgow, and Singapore. His office is decorated with all the gifts and memorabilia he acquired during his trips. Eventually he moved back to his home state of Louisiana, only to return to St. Louis in 2005 as Executive Director of Optimist International. Benny could tell a story or two with the years of meetings, conventions, programs, and overseeing the staff of Optimist International.

Benny's very first year would have him and 2005-2006 President Michel Listenberger hitting the ground driving... literally. Both believed that to focus on growth they needed to get out and be amongst the Clubs. With that goal, halfway through President Michel's year, they took a tour and traveled to different Clubs throughout a large part of the nation. "We traveled from St. Louis, all the way through to Quebec City, Canada," Ellerbe reminisced, "We would have breakfast with a Club or Zone for a couple of hours, get back in the motorhome and have lunch with another Club. Then we would have dinner with a group of 100 Members." For two weeks, their travels took them to Montreal, New York, Maryland, the Carolinas, Georgia, and back to St. Louis with stops in Tennessee and southern Illinois, all to connect and engage with Members. "That was the key," Ellerbe said and through the efforts of their travels, the Clubs they visited grew in Members.



Secretary General Benny in India attending the JCI Indian Business Conference, visiting the Taj Mahal

"I have had the good fortune to work with Benny for 13 years. During the entire time, I have observed that at the core of his leadership style has been Optimism. As such, his Optimistic attitude has been contagious, uplifting, and truly brought out the best in the entire staff and me! I am blessed with a zillion fond memories of working with Benny. This is because Benny follows the Optimist Creed and looks at the sunny side of absolutely everything! The fondest memory of Benny would have to be the annual Optimist Staff Christmas Parties. Benny would go above and beyond to make sure every single employee felt valued for their commitment and dedication to the Optimist organization. Plus, it was an opportunity for Benny to let his magical

inner Santa Claus spirit shine bright and create the jolliest of Christmas parties!

Congrats and best wishes on your retirement, Benny! Your happy spirit and positive energy made work tons of fun! You will be greatly missed, but never forgotten! Enjoy retirement and may it be the best time of your life!" – **Connie Pellock, Chief Financial Officer**

While he wasn't working on the growth of Optimist International, Executive Director Benny's job was also to keep a professional staff and work with the two Optimist Foundations. Craig Boring, Executive Director of the Optimist International Foundation (OIF) says, "It's been a pleasure to serve alongside Benny since my arrival in 2016 as Executive Director of OIF. He has been outstanding in working through common opportunities and challenges. Most importantly Benny has been a great champion in promoting the partnership between the Optimist Organization and the Foundations. Business aside Benny has been a great friend over the years."

"The Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation extends best wishes to Benny Ellerbe on his upcoming retirement as Executive Director." – **CCOF**

"I am very pro staff and I think we have a very talented staff," Ellerbe said with confidence, "We have always maintained high-performing staff and I trust them. We hire good people and we let them do their jobs." The staff members at Optimist International appreciate that trusting nature.

"The thing that I like about Benny as a boss is that he does not micromanage his people." – **Stephanie Monschein, Senior Director of Leadership Development & Club Support**

Benny has been a part of the Optimist Club of St. Louis since 2009. There he served on the Club's Board of Directors.

"He served on the Club's Board of Directors, and we benefited from his experience with not-for-profit groups and knowledge of Optimist International." – **Tom McNeely**

"Benny has been a great boss! He let me do my job and trusted me to do all tasks. He listened to my comments and took all of my suggestions into consideration." – **Dana Thomas, Senior Director of Administration & Operations**

After Benny's retirement, he will stay on and serve on the pension committee.

While a member Benny even sponsors new Members to the Club, one being Amy Keller.

"Benny and I both started in the same year (2005), and he has always been positive and supportive with the expansion of our Programs and the Junior Optimist International Departments. For his well-deserved retirement, I wish him a wonderful future to enjoy time with family, friends, and college football (Go LSU!)" – **Amy Keller, Senior Director of Junior Optimist International**

From left to right: Dave Bruns, Diana Carlin, and Benny Ellerbe.



Left to right, Benny, Carol (wife 51 years) son Ben Jr., daughters Kimberly, Amanda, Cory and Kirstie

A favorite memory of his, among 16 years' worth of memories, would be the first World Oratorical contest in 2016 at Saint Louis University. "It was such a special weekend," Benny said, "Going from no budget to \$100,000 budget in the first year was a huge feat." That love for the Optimist World Oratorical was also apparent to Dave Bruns – 2015-2016 Optimist International President – and Oratorical Committee Member, who said "One of my favorite



Optimist Junior Golf 2021

walks throughout the office!
We are going to miss him!”
– Ronda Vaughn, Sr. Director
Communications, Marketing,
and Meeting Services

Through the years Benny Ellerbe had loved seeing the impact each Club had on the youth and their community, because to him it’s all about making children smile. His giving nature and kind words will continue to impact the world as he moves into retirement. Benny is looking forward to spending extra time with his family and grandkids. He plans to play more golf and continue being an Optimist Member, but no matter where he goes and what he does, he continues to bring out the best in others and himself. He will forever be an Optimist at heart.

memories from the first World Championship in 2016 was of a young student—probably in 5th grade—who did not know how to tie his tie. So, Benny stepped in to help him. After he was finished, the young student had a big smile on his face and said, ‘I’ve only worn clip-ons before!’

Besides the Oratorical every year Benny would be more than happy to volunteer his time to help the Optimist Junior Golf Programs.

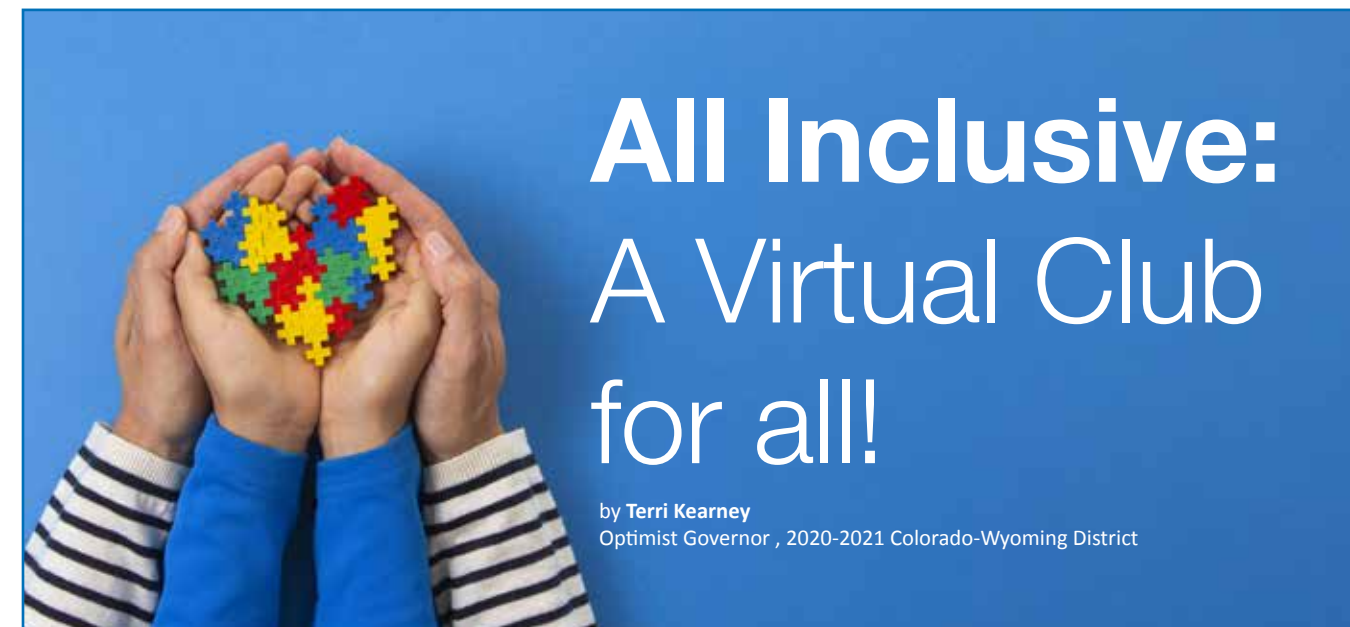
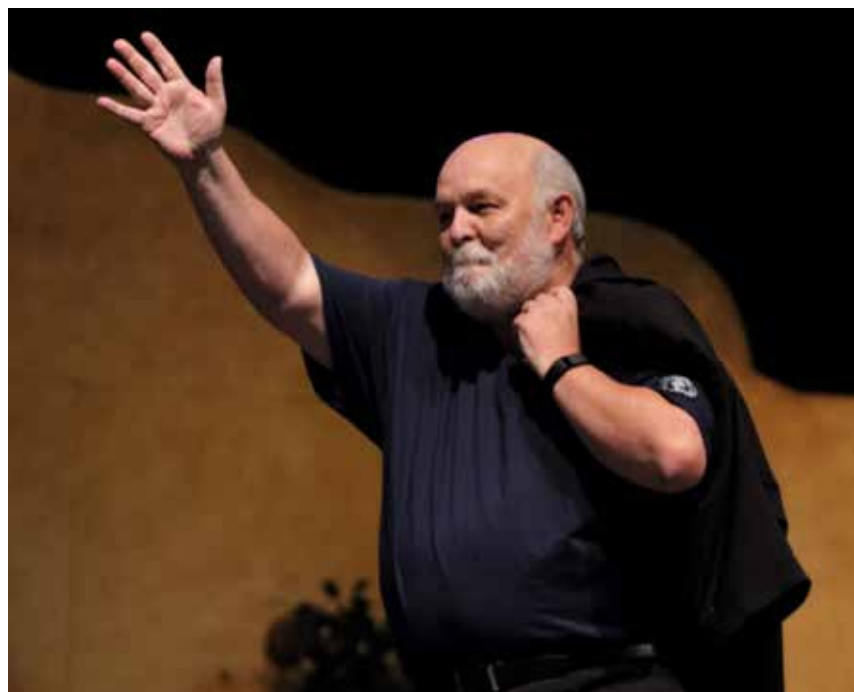
“Benny is a great leader and a great asset to the organization. His door has always been open; he is a good listener and an excellent problem solver. He has always been easy to talk to. In addition, he has always been a huge advocate of the Optimist Junior Golf Program. I wish him all the best! He will be greatly missed!”
– Sharon Parton, Sr. Director
Optimist Junior Golf

The 2021 Optimist International Convention in Atlanta Georgia was his last as the Executive Director of Optimist International and he was

honored on stage by International President Mark Weinsoff. Many gifts were presented.

“I have enjoyed working for Benny and want to wish him all the best! His happiness is contagious. I appreciate his leadership, encouragement, and support. He was always available when I needed his input. My fondest memory of Benny is him singing as he

*It's not goodbye,
see you later Benny!*



Terri Kearney has been an Optimist Member for seven years. She became Club President less than a year as a Member of the Arvada-Lake Arbor Optimist Club in Colorado. She created her first Club, called the Purpose Driven Optimist Club, in 2019. She became a Lieutenant Governor and is currently a Governor. One of her goals as Governor was to charter an Optimist Club.

From the first moment at the Club Building Seminar that she attended in St. Louis, MO, she was determined that a virtual Club would be chartered. On her lunch break, she posted on Facebook about the ability to see this Club come to life. Within an hour, Larry Brown from the Academy Optimist Club, (also Leadership Development Chair and Lt. Governor at the time) commented that he would be on board! In addition, Tony Carpenter from Wheat Ridge Optimist Club (Immediate Past Governor) wanted to help. Last but not least, Bill Cassel from Wheat Ridge Optimist, founder of Noah’s ARK (Autism Rescue Kits) & Childhood Health and Wellness Chair, wanted to join us.

“I wanted to have a special interest Club and I wanted to reach out and work with people on the Autism spectrum,” Kearney said, “It isn’t my specialty, but I wanted to do something and have ideas on working with someone on the spectrum.”

The Joint Venture Virtual Optimist Club (JVO) was finalized on April 29 during National Autism Awareness month! The Joint Venture Virtual Optimists

is personal and very special to me because my grandson is on the autism spectrum. The JVO will be working with organizations like Firefly Autism which is a school in Lakewood that specializes in teaching children on the autism spectrum. Firefly Autism donated \$150.00 to JVO to pay the first quarter dues for six new Members.

The first project that JVO helped with was the Firefly Autism Vaccination Clinic. The clinic had 500 plus people scheduled to get their vaccines. Jesse Ogas, Executive Director and CEO of Firefly Autism, and Tobin Truslow, Director of Development and who are both Members of the University Hills Optimist Club told me I was welcome to put up the JVO banner. Besides the banner, I had flyers and applications. From there, things took off!

Not just individuals on the Autism Spectrum, but those that are deaf and hard of hearing. “If anything, we want to make this an inclusive Club for all,” Kearney said. The ability to have it online allows Members to make an impact from their community, wherever that may be. While they are still getting up and running, they are continuing to give those individuals on the Autism spectrum a voice and a chance to be heard. JVO had our first Board Meeting and we are officially meeting as a virtual Club on the third Thursday from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

New Members are always welcome!

Optimism in Atlanta

Reunited!

President Mark Weinsoff and First Lady Connie thank all attendees for participating in the 103rd International Convention in Atlanta, GA.



1. From left to right: Connie Weinsoff, Mark Weinsoff, Nick Cosmos, and Beverlee Weinsoff.
2. Optimist Leadership Academy Future Leaders.
3. President Designate Patsy Garner and 2014-15 International President Ken Garner.
4. 2021-2022 Vice Presidents and Governors.
5. Southeast International Vice President Patrick Prendergast and his wife Doreen.
6. Becky Mahoney and Sandy Rogers admiring posts on the Happiness Wall.
7. Optimist International Foundation Celebrates 50 Years.
8. Registration
9. The Atlanta Host area worked hard to prepare every Registration Bag.
10. Convention Chair Judy Boyd and Past First Lady Sue Creswell.





11. Town Hall. From left to right: Sandy Williams, Sandy Cyphers, Benny Ellerbe, Mark Weinsoff, Cheryl Brenn, Janet Lloyd, and Sandy Larivee

12. Exhibitor Teri Lynn.

13. EXPO Caribbean Display.

14. Exhibitor Adnaw Publishing.

15. Kevin Bush and Company, "Take Me Out To The Ballgame!"

16. Trivia Night with Virtual Attendees.

17. From left to right: Lorna Moseley-Grant, Winsome Halliman, Movelette Edwards, Eulit Desgouttes, and Patricka Wiggan Chambers.

18. President Mark Weinsoff, President-Designate Patsy Garner, and President-Elect Bob McFadyen.

19. Keynote Speaker Patrick "Blake" Leeper.

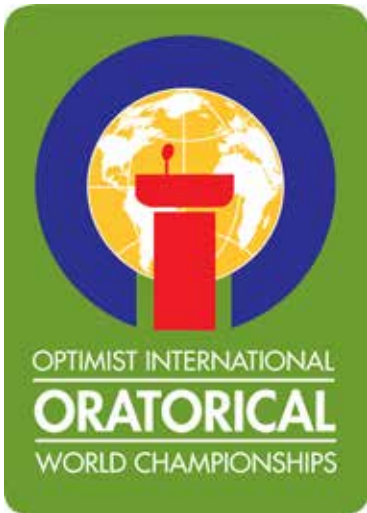
20. Keynote Speaker Michelle Gielan Broadcast Happiness.

21. Gwen Gable preparing the flowers for the Brunch. "Thank you and the Host Area Team for all their hard work!"

It was great seeing you all in Atlanta!
Join us next year in Reno at the Silver Legacy!

Healing the World with Optimism

Is Exactly What We Needed



When the Oratorical Committee selected the 2020-2021 topic in fall 2020, no one foresaw how badly the world would need healing in July 2021. The writers and the committee making the selection envisioned an oratorical season with students discussing societal divisions or addressing the many ways that the earth needed healing from fires, storms, and environmental damage from its 7.9 billion inhabitants. Instead, the world was in a flashback moment to the life of the contest's first winner, Carlo Purpero of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who at age 12 in 1928 had lived through the 1918 influenza pandemic. Past International President Dave Bruns mentions Carlo in his article about the 2020 virtual world championship contest and noted that Carlo would have recognized many of the aspects of the world in 2020. With the exception of virtual classrooms, Carlo most likely would have identified with many of the feelings expressed in orations by this year's 52 contestants in the 6th Annual Optimist International World Championship Oratorical Contest.

The Oratorical Committee (led by Ron Graves and composed of Past President Dave Bruns, Sunny Fridge, Ann Richer-Doyle, Carol Haynes Jacobs, and Diana Carlin Pierron, with support by OI staff member Amy Keller) was optimistic that the contest would be back at Saint Louis University's Center for Global Citizenship in July 2021. By late winter, administrators at SLU determined that conditions were not right for outside groups to hold activities on campus. The vaccine was just rolling out with only a small percentage of Americans vaccinated and COVID numbers were still high across the country. It was the right decision, but a disappointing one for everyone involved in the contest.

As Optimists, we knew we could adapt once more just as we had reImagined the contest in 2020. This time around, we were more confident as a result of having hosted some of the 2020 Zone or District contests virtually as well as the 5th Annual World Championships. With a seasoned OI staff team of Amy Keller, Josh Castleberry, Jennifer Bagwell, and Tom Carver and Zoom training through Bonnie Jean Sherbert's efforts over the past 15 months, we produced a nearly flawless championship. Students were also more comfortable with the communication medium for a speech since many competed that way in 2021 from the Club level on. Keeping in mind Dave Bruns' mantra when he chaired the Oratorical Committee in 2020, all levels of the contest maintained a "flexible and fair" approach to hosting contests. Across the country all contests in a District were virtual but in others there were hybrid or in-person at one or more levels. Chairs were encouraged to conduct contests in a manner that was most comfortable for the contestants,

judges, and Optimist members. Through Optimist Cafes and oratorical chairs shared lessons learned all gained a comfort level with virtual contests.

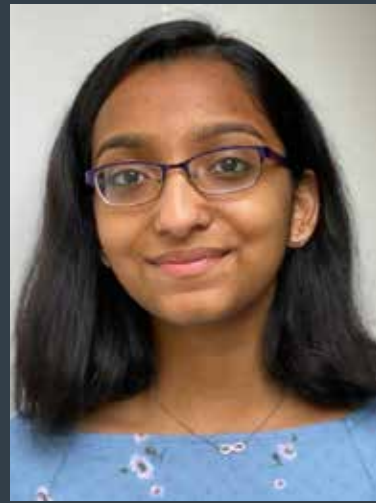
When the 6th annual contest convened for orientation the evening of July 21, we had 52 contestants from seven countries—the United States, Canada, Jamaica, Haiti, South Korea, Hong Kong, China, and Russia. South Korea and Hong Kong were new global entries and each location had over 20 students compete in their final to select the regional participants. Both organizers promised even larger numbers of participants next year with multiple levels of contests. South Korea is considering forming a JOI Club in Seoul which could be a prelude to another location for an adult club. The Haitian student represented the Optimist Club of Hinche, Haiti, which was formed as a result of student participation in the oratorical contest. When the World Championship was added, Executive Director Benny Ellerbe and then OI President-Elect Dave Bruns envisioned using the contest to expand global Clubs, and that goal is being realized.

The nine regional competitions were judged by individuals from Missouri, Kansas, California, Texas, and Canada. With a virtual competition, we were fortunate to have a highly experienced set of judges with a variety of backgrounds. Judges commented on the high quality of the speeches. Contestants drew on their personal experiences of not just adaptation or survival during the pandemic, but of their own approaches to healing their own worlds. Others discussed the need to heal the planet or to use the

experiences from the pandemic to move us forward on a variety of fronts. Contestants shared their experiences of community engagement, recovering from losses of family members or friends either from COVID, cancer, or accidents during the pandemic, and learning how to be creative to stay connected to friends. They all exhibited optimism and characteristics of an optimistic life as outlined in the Optimist Creed, and many quoted from it to show how it guided their thinking and actions.

When the last ballot was tabulated, our 6th champion was Nayana Celine Xavier from Virginia, USA, from the Mid-Atlantic Region taking first place honors. Second place was awarded to Julia Abbott from California, USA from the West Coast Region. Third place went to Corinne Quynh Lan Marie Hoang from Ottawa, Ontario, Canada from the St-Lawrence Region. Nayana is a rising senior at Chantilly High School and staff writer for the school paper Purple Tide. She serves as the Senator of Chantilly Model UN, is a member of Future Health Leaders, and advocates for e-waste recycling. She is a strong believer in the power of student voices and the importance of sharing diverse stories. In concluding her speech, she declared that "Optimism is the very essence of human nature." Optimists know and believe that, and over two days of competition, we learned that another generation understands the meaning of optimism and its power to heal the world in crisis times such as we have experienced with the pandemic and in our daily lives.

2021 Optimist International Oratorical World Championship Winners



Nayana Xavier

2021 Oratorical World Champion – 1st Place

Nayana Xavier
Mid-Atlantic Region

2021 Oratorical World Champion – 2nd Place

Julia Abbott
West Coast Region

2021 Oratorical World Champion – 3rd Place

Corinne Quynh Lan Marie Hoang
St. Lawrence Region

2021 Optimist International Oratorical World Regional Winners

Eileen Kim Global Region	Abram Marrett Southwest Region and Caribbean District
Sara Abernathy Southeast Region	Lauren Menke Northeast and Great Lakes Region
Ellen Joseph Great Plains Region	Corinne Quynh Lan Marie Hoang St. Lawrence Region
Maria Yakubovich Middle America Region	
Nayana Xavier Mid-Atlantic Region	
Julia Abbott West Coast Region	



An Optimistic Approach to Bed Bugs – A Solid Solution

by Paul Keller

With recent events, we have many needy families in the country. There are a multitude of organizations supporting needy people with food, clothing, household goods, and furniture. One problem area is providing bedding and fabric furniture due to the risk of bed bugs. Many people throw away good bedding because many charitable organizations do not take them. Additionally, many families in need pass on bedding and furniture for fear of bedbugs. Partnership 4 Hope, with the assistance of the Omaha Home for Boys, the

Miracle Hills Optimist Club, and many volunteers, have built a bed bug chamber to sanitize beds and furniture prior to distribution. This article is designed to provide a general overview of the development and processing of the chamber.

As general background, Partnership 4 Hope is an Omaha based charity that provides a full range of assistance to young adults who are former foster youth. This is done in part through the assistance of the Omaha Home For Boys. Miracle Hills Optimist

is an Omaha based Optimist Club, which is part of Optimist International, an organization whose goal is to be friends of youth.

When developing the chamber, the main need is a space for the chamber inside a warehouse that receives donations of beds and furniture. In this case, we had spacing available to build a chamber 12 feet by 8 feet. Additionally, the chamber location needs to have access to a water line, as it is necessary to include a sprinkler system inside the chamber as a security measure.

The quantity of materials will vary by the size of the chamber you build. The key materials we used for our chamber included premium construction framing, Toughrock fire rated drywall board, fiberglass insulation, steel door, an electric bed bug heater, and a digital thermometer and sensor. For labor, you will need a carpenter, an electrician, and a sprinkler system installer.

The cost of the materials for the room itself, was approximately \$2,600 and the cost of the bed bug heater, thermostat, and sensor added another \$1,200 to the project. Partnership 4 Hope, like other charitable organizations, relies a lot on volunteer labor. In this case it is the Truck Brigade Men, who not only are the backbone for obtaining furniture donations, but also provided the labor to build the chamber.

In order to ensure that bedbugs do not become a problem in the warehouse, it is critical to separate the beds and furniture from any other donations. When beds and furniture are picked up by the Truck Brigade Men they are immediately placed in the bed bug chamber for sanitation. Typically, 6-7 items can be sanitized at a time. All beds and furniture are separated from each other in the chamber using foam blocks. This allows the flow of air through each item as it is sanitized. Although a bed bug chamber must get up to at least 123 degrees Fahrenheit in order to kill the bed bugs, the temperature is set for 135 degrees to ensure sanitization. It typically takes approximately 2 hours to get the chamber to the desired temperature and another two hours to sanitize the beds and furniture. Once the sanitation is complete, the beds and furniture are wrapped in plastic to help ensure there will be no new contamination.

As mentioned, this process is being used by the Partnership 4 Hope with the help of the Omaha Home for Boys to provide safe, clean beds and furniture for young adults that are former foster care youth, but the need for clean beds and furniture is in every community. Properly building and utilizing a bed bug chamber can be a cost-effective method to stop the spread of bed bugs in your community without the use of chemicals.

Out now in Digital and Print versions

available at
amazon

All proceeds benefit the Optimist Oratorical Contest.





It's Never too Late

by Russell A. Thomas

Here we are, in the last Optimist quarter of our 2020 – 2021 Optimist year and soon the start of a new one. Rather than look at what time of the year it is, we know it is always the right time to share Optimism. It is always the right time to help more children and serve more communities. Because today is the right time to bring out the best in the world around us.

We have faced many challenges and as Optimists we have had to overcome them. There is nothing we can do about the past, but as the Optimist Creed tells us, “Press on to the greater achievements of the future”, change the here and now, and impact our future as we spread Optimism across the world. [Read the Optimist Creed.](#)

This is an exciting time to be an Optimist and even in the thick of things, anything is possible. We must believe, remember who we are, and why we do what we do.

If you had the opportunity to attend the great 2021 Optimist International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia or virtually, you would have witnessed new energy and recommitment from our members to spread Optimism. The roots of Optimism grew bigger and stronger and our service to the children and our communities was reawakened.

Every day Optimists are saving children’s lives and every day we as Optimists are a standing example of positivity within the communities in which we live and work.

The 2021 Optimist International Convention was a launching pad to success and has opened our eyes to a world of possibilities.

Optimists can see the light at the end of the Pandemic tunnel and people around the world are looking for ways to become involved, ways to support their local communities, and ways to help others in need. Optimists are needed more now than ever. People are looking for ways to serve, so we must strike while the iron is hot! Invite a new prospect to see what we do and our impact on our children and community.

It is time for Optimists to act! People from all walks of life are realizing how crucial it is for us to come together to help and serve our communities, help each other, help our children, and in return help ourselves. Individuals are coming in and out of the Pandemic quarantine leaving fear, doubt, and stress behind. They are ready to help and give to their neighbors and communities. The only thing they need is someone to lead them, give them structure, and guide their desire to serve. People are looking for things that give value to their lives, make them feel good, and give them a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment. Optimism is the answer to all of this.

The opportunities to shine are numerous, but our approach must be appealing and logical. Here are some key points the membership committee envisions:

- Conduct a minimum of two WOW events, one before year-end and one to kick off the new year. We can do this since every Club activity can be easily utilized as a membership recruiting event. If you need assistance, the International Membership Committee stands ready to assist you and show you how to conduct a successful WOW event. [More information here.](#)
- Launch a “Just Ask” membership outreach campaign. This can be as simple as reminding your Club members to “Ask” people to join your Club, or it can involve a full-blown “Just Ask” program. Contact your International Membership team if you have questions. [Watch the Just Ask Webinar.](#)

- Focus on every Club activity as a recruiting opportunity. Invite prospects to participate in a service project or program. Showing a prospect what you do and getting them involved makes your membership recruiting that much easier. Focus on the benefits of being an Optimist and the prospects passions, not the meetings. Keep in mind people want to be involved in activities that add value and purpose to their lives. You must demonstrate to them that Optimism is the answer to their search.
- Recognize your Members’ accomplishments. On your Club’s Facebook page, in your newsletter, or utilizing a special recognition email blast, feature an “I’ve Shared My Optimism” post, column or listing highlighting every Member that has shared their Optimism by recruiting a new Member. People like to be recognized. Make it a big deal. Show these members we value their efforts.

Optimist International is a hands-on organization. Now is the time to mobilize and increase our volunteer ranks. People want positivity in their lives, they want to feel good and useful again, and they want to make a difference. There is no reason the days ahead can't be a new beginning. It is easier than you might think, nothing is impossible. Extend your hand in friendship and “Just Ask”.

Every day is the time to rally our Members, move into high gear, and open our minds to the Optimist mission. We've got to step out from behind our membership tables, from behind our meetings, reach out to our families, friends, neighbors, and even that stranger standing in the grocery line. We must feel no fear when we are asking people to be part of one of the greatest organizations ever conceived. We must have the confidence when we ask others to join us in our quest to heal the world by sharing Optimism and helping each other be positive members of the community and in the lives of the youth.

We can do this! It’s never too late!

Club News



Optimist Club of Red Deer

The Optimist Club of Red Deer celebrates the 10th Annual Red Deer Reading Program. This program thrives and has changed the lives of local youth and families through stories. "Even with summer holidays just starting, kids and parents were excited when they got on the bus today to start Reading College. In 20 days, we will see significant improvement using approaches that have demonstrated real success. Students will be working hard at reading and writing, but also playing hard with lots of great literacy-based activities around RDC," said Bruce Buruma, Executive Director for the Foundation for Red Deer Public Schools.

[Read More Here.](#)



The Wave Makers

Newly chartered Club, The Wave Makers seen here at their Beach Party event helping kids decorate painted rocks with happy messages.



Hammond Optimist Club

Big Shoulders Fund helped fund the installation of new flooring at St. John Bosco Catholic School in Hammond. The organization partnered with Hammond Optimist Club and United Rental Flooring, meeting their mission to develop a close connection with local businesses and nonprofits.

[Read More Here.](#)



Brookings Optimist Club

Brookings Optimist Club hosted a bike rodeo with the SD Highway Patrol to promote youth safety.



Sacramento Breakfast Optimist Club

The Sacramento Breakfast Optimist Club celebrated meeting and exceeding their goal of \$5,000 on our Big Day of Giving fundraiser, by giving their fearless leader Wally Borland a pie in the face.

Playa Vista Optimist Club

Playa Vista Optimists served the children at the local Los Angeles Paralympic Games.



Here are Barb, Millie, and Ginni on a lunch break as they served the children at the local Los Angeles Paralympic Games. "I'm Ginni and four years ago, my neighbor, Millie, reached out to me. She knew that after my move West, I was new to

Playa Vista and had no friends here. She offered me the opportunity to meet like-minded, good, and fun people, and I began attending Playa Vista Optimist Club meetings to do just that. I'm so glad that I decided to join."

Optimist Club of Westfield

The Optimist Club of Westfield this week recognized two Edison Intermediate School teachers, two Roosevelt Intermediate School teachers, and for the first time created a Special Nurse's Award for performance during the pandemic.

[Read More Here.](#)



Duncan Optimist Club

Duncan Optimist Club orchestrates blood drives through the Oklahoma Blood Institute to help local elementary school teacher battling leukemia.



Optimist Club of Al Iklim

The Optimist Club of Al Iklim distributed to more than 500 patients (diabetes, heart pressure, and glands medicines) for the people and residents of the town.



New Optimist Club of New Hamburg

The New Optimist Club of New Hamburg is Raffling off a truck to raise funds to help their community!

A Note from the JOI President



JOI President Sophie -Chanel Bourré poses at home for the President's Banquet

Dear Junior Optimist stars, as we have all been working hard while shooting for the stars of Optimism this year, from June 30th to July 2nd, the time had finally arrived to come together and celebrate this year's hard work and dedication within our communities through JOI. I am proud to say that with your help, even through this difficult year, we have accomplished many of our goals and have reached distant galaxies with our combined efforts.

There have been many firsts that I am very proud of. As I strongly believe that communication is key to the success of any organization, we were so happy to meet many of you during our first JOI Officer quarterly meetings, to meet with you and share important information, and to hear what was going on in your Districts/Clubs. This opened international communications with JOI Clubs from around the globe. Another first this year, with the help of the Rainbow Optimist Club, was the creation of the first-ever JOI cookbook which includes recipes from you, our JOI members from around the world! If you haven't purchased yours yet, it is not too late to do so. Let's not forget our Star of the Month contest that allowed everyone to show us what one of their Members or Clubs has accomplished throughout this very different year.

Finally, our first ever Hybrid (In-person and Virtual) Annual JOI Convention gave every member the possibility to participate this year more than ever! Although this has been a very different year for everyone, and borders are still closed for many countries, I was very happy to be able to offer the opportunity for our members to get together and interact with one another. With the hard work of my Board of Directors, the JOI Committee members, Amy Keller, Josh Castleberry, and everyone who made this convention possible, we were able to bring you a Starry Night



JOI Members at the Atlanta Convention with backpacks and donated items for the Multi-Agency Alliance for Children Service Project



Junior Optimist International Paint Night

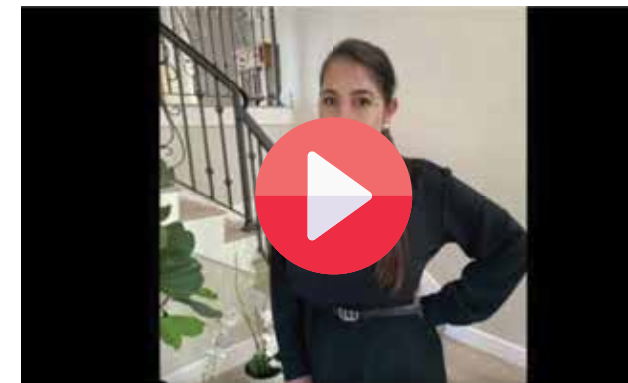
Paint Night, a Convention t-shirt Tie-Dye activity, a Movie night, Workshops, Canada Day and Fourth of July presentations, gift baskets and prizes, a Scavenger Hunt, a Talent show, a Stargazing event and so much more... Our main guest Speaker Dr. Jessica Ward-King spoke about how to crush stigma surrounding mental health and mental illness. We also heard from Optimist International President Mark Weinsoff as well as Optimist International President Designate Patsy Garner about the importance of continuing our Optimist journey.

This year marked the first time the Board of Directors organized a Paint night fundraiser (and we had three!). With these activities, we raised almost \$2,000 for our annual Junior Optimist International service project. The money raised was donated and presented to the

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) during our International Convention and will be used to purchase multiple items to help the children and families that need these with their treatments and beyond. Not only were we able to give this amazing donation to CHOA's Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorder Center, but we were also able to accomplish last year's service project that was put on hold due to the pandemic restrictions. Members were asked to bring donations to help fill foster care backpacks and duffle bags. In turn, these bags were presented to the Multi-Agency Alliance for Children which is an organization that serves foster children in the Atlanta area. We are also appreciative to the Optimist International Foundation for donating an additional \$1,000 toward our convention service projects!

I am so happy and very proud that you trusted me to lead the JOI organization and gave me the opportunity to represent all of you, dear JOI members as this year's Junior Optimist International President. You truly have shown that with hard work and dedication, anything is possible, and I hope you will keep shooting for the stars of optimism.

Your 2020-2021 Junior Optimist International President, Sophie-Chanel Bourré.



JOI Board intro video



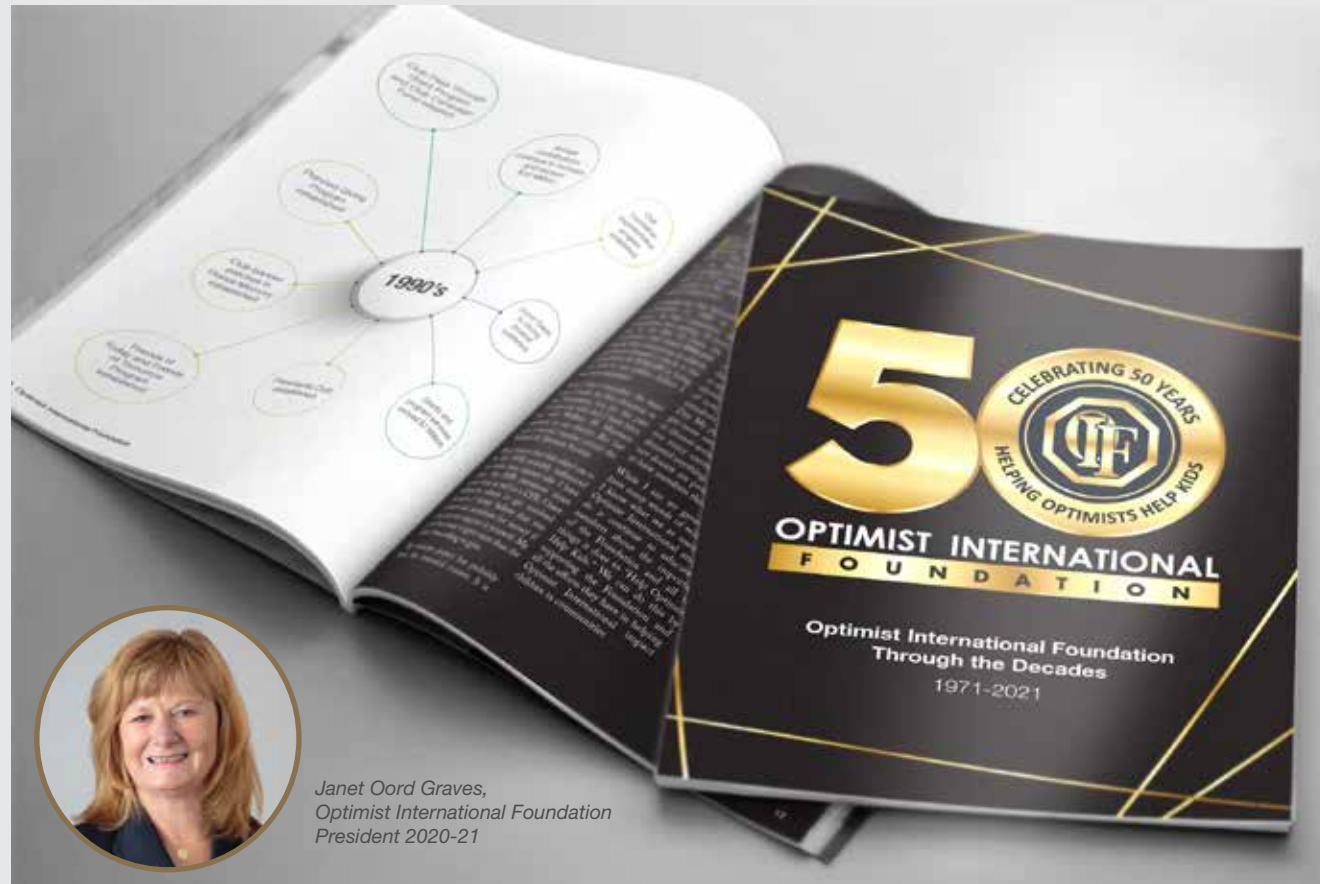
JOI Past President video



JOI Board Talent Show



CHOA Video



OIF Through the Decades

This booklet was developed to celebrate our many historical achievements over the last 5 decades. We hope that you enjoy learning more about your Foundation. Please share with your fellow Optimists and encourage them to make a contribution at whatever level is comfortable for them.

Wouldn't it be incredible during this 50th anniversary year to boost the level of members contributing from 8% to 50%! Think of how many more youth we could serve! [Read Online!](#)

Financial Information

Optimist International Foundation is very proud of the continued high level of Stewardship provided from our donors. We continually receive high marks from our Auditor, Rubin Brown. Plus, have the highest rating from the Better Business Bureau (BBB for nonprofits)

Below are the links to our Annual Report and the Audited Financial Statement for the 2019/2020 fiscal year. They reflect the outstanding job your Foundation does to oversee the funds entrusted to us by the many great donors.

[OIF Annual Report 2019/2020](#)

[OIF Audited Financial Statement 2019/2020](#)

Top Ten Things OIF did in 2020

- 1 Supported the modified Optimist International Oratorical World Championship Contest by funding the US and International Regional winners and the first place winner in the finals totaling \$45,000.
- 2 Paid out \$251,985 to Clubs utilizing the Club Campaign program and added an additional \$70,869 in interest to the Club Campaign funds.
- 3 Worked through the challenges that came as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain a high standard of stewardship.
- 4 Assisted Clubs in receiving \$201,580 in charitable contributions for their own local programs through the Pass Through program.
- 5 Awarded \$76,447 through the Childhood Health and Wellness program, including Childhood Cancer Campaign.
- 6 Sent 121 students off to college with Optimist International oratorical, essay, and CCDHH scholarships totaling \$259,500.
- 7 Paid out \$100,275 on endowments for community projects and scholarships.
- 8 Assisted Optimist International to have the first Virtual International Convention.
- 9 Assisted 334 Optimists to help 9,691 children and their families by awarding 20 Club Grants.
- 10 Contributed \$85,000 to support the ongoing work of the Junior Optimist program.

50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ITEMS



Net proceeds of 50th commemorative items will benefit the Optimist International Childhood Health and Wellness program. **PURCHASE NOW**



Congratulations to our 2021 Election winners

Robert "Bob" McFadyen has the knowledge, experience, passion, and drive to make a difference in our organization. He promises to be completely dedicated to helping our Members, our Clubs, and our organization in any way that he can. He has excelled in all roles that he has held within Optimist International and plans to bring that success forward in his role as the 2022-2023 International President.



Bob McFadyen

Bob's focus, with the other International Board Members and in his role as the President, will be to increase the reach of the organization by supporting YOU the Club Member through regular communications with all Clubs and Members emphasizing the value and positive impact YOU have on the children served in YOUR community.

Bob is married to Penny, has 2 daughters, Cheryl and Heather, and 4 grandchildren, Mathew, Meghan, Emma, and Evan. He retired April 2013, after 40 years with Manulife Financial and has served the Optimist Organization in several capacities from Club President in 1997-98 to Vice President in 2013-2014. His understanding of the Optimist International finances is a strong point as he has chaired the International Audit and Finance Committee 3 years and committee member another 4 years.

Additional Races

2021-22 Optimist International Board of Directors

(Will serve a three-year term)

Carol Haynes

Russ Thomas

2021-22 Vice Presidents-Elect:

Marlene Phillips

Region 1 Northeast & Great Lakes

Gwen L. Gable

Region 2 Southeast

Donna M. Aker

Region 3 Mid-Atlantic

Julie Robison

Region 4 Middle America

Rod McKendrick

Region 5 Great Plains

Linda McDonald

Region 6 Southwest

Lynn Reiter-Woodhead

Region 7 West Coast



Optimist
INTERNATIONAL



JOI Board



Maya Gluck

2020-2021 JOI President

Maya Gluck

Altamonte Springs, FL

Immediate Past President

Sophie-Chanel Bourré

Ottawa, Ontario

Directors

Chloé-Angélique Bourré

Ottawa, Ontario

Miranda Stidham

Kettering, OH

Fatima Zaidi

Oakville, Ontario

Bo Zimpel

Cumming, GA

Outsourcing

Increase your fundraising capability and community outreach with the CCOF's Outsourcing Program

Did you know the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation could provide tax receipts to your donors thanks to the CCOF's Outsourcing Program? [Follow this link](#) for more information about the Outsourcing Program and how to submit an application.

The Optimist Club of Orangeville (Ontario)'s Bench Art Contest was approved as a project under the CCOF's Outsourcing Program. This is an example of a project with a lasting legacy in the community. The

CCOF's notoriety and credibility are associated with the project resulting in increased fundraising capability for the Club due to the issuance of tax receipts for the donations and enhanced visibility of the project. Below is a random sampling from the array of artwork that was submitted.

The Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation is here to help you help more Canadian children. Let's invest today for the future of our youth!



Rock Lobster by Chloe - age 15
Acrylic on Canvas



Bicycles by Emma - age 12
Paint on board



All Hands by Sienna - age 9
Marker on Paper



Xmas Elves by Jack - age 12
Marker on Paper



Big Tree by Abbey - age 10
Pencil Crayon on Paper

The CCOF welcomes several new Canadian Optimist clubs

The Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation welcomes the following new Canadian Optimist clubs:

- Reaching For The Stars - Windsor And Essex County
- Swont Conductive Education Optimist Club
- London-Fanshawe
- Rainbow Warriors
- Junior Optimist Club of Forest Glade

The CCOF invites these new clubs to designate a Club Foundation Representative ('CFR'). A CFR is a volunteer who is responsible for informing Club Members of the mission and purpose of the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation and how crucial the Foundation involvement is in the local Clubs' charitable activities. The District Foundation Representatives (DFRs) are available to assist the CFRs in their role.



CCOF FOUNDATION DONORS

CCOF TOP THREE from October 1st, 2020 to March 31st, 2021

District	Representative	Average Contribution Per Member
Alberta, Montana, Saskatchewan & Northern Wyoming	Edie Harris	\$23.61
Pacific North West	Peter H Smith	\$18.07
Central Ontario	Barbara Holly and Gordon S Holly	\$9.74
District	Representative	Total Contributions
Alberta, Montana, Saskatchewan & Northern Wyoming	Edie Harris	\$18,721.50
Quebec Central	Nathalie Gravel and Roland Rhéaume	\$12,870.15
Midwestern Ontario	Warren Bechthold and Jim Pipe	\$12,459.00

CCOF DONOR LISTINGS

This is a record of lifetime accumulation levels newly achieved from January 1st to March 31st, 2021, for individuals and Clubs. This listing is for gifts recorded up to the deadline date for the printing of Optimist Magazine.

Eminent Benefactor - \$10,000

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO
Business Optimist Club of Watford

Benefactor - \$1,000

CENTRAL ONTARIO
Gordon Steven Holly

Distinguished Benefactor - \$5,000

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO
Optimist Club of Dorchester-South
Optimist Club of Forest
Optimist Club of Mount Brydges and area

QUÉBEC CENTRAL
Serge Martel

QUÉBEC SOUTH
Claude Blanchard

EASTERN ONTARIO
Ginette Quesnel



Canadian Children's
Optimist Foundation

OIF FOUNDATION DONORS

OIF CHRISTIAN D. LARSON PARTNERS MEMBERSHIP

768 Linda L. Thompson

769 Katherine Forster

OIF TOP TEN as of May 31, 2021

District	Representative	Average Contribution Per Member
Arizona	Marsi Salmi	\$28.97
Alabama - Mississippi	Nancy Boyd	\$16.12
North Carolina East	Billy Edgerton	\$15.29
New York – New England	Debra Davis	\$14.90
Colorado - Wyoming	Ron Benson	\$14.11
Capital - Virginia	Skip Foy	\$12.19
New Mexico - West Texas	Lynne Martin	\$11.36
Maryland – South Delaware	Teri Branch	\$10.93
Kansas	Dale Fox	\$10.87
Gateway	Kathy Forster	\$10.49
District	Representative	Total Contributions
Michigan	Theresa Jarratt	\$27,598.40
Gateway	Kathy Forster	\$20,243.03
Colorado - Wyoming	Ron Benson	\$16,589.48
Alabama - Mississippi	Nancy Boyd	\$16,425.04
Ohio	Bill Stone	\$14,511.50
Arizona	Marsi Salmi	\$14,398.62
Iowa	Janet Lloyd	\$13,317.15
North Carolina East	Billy Edgerton	\$12,079.05
Wisconsin North – Upper Michigan	Romey Wagner	\$11,198.36
Kansas	Dale Fox	\$11,047.04

OIF DONOR LISTINGS

This is a record of lifetime accumulation levels achieved from March 1, 2021 – May 31, 2021 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

NORTH CAROLINA WEST
William H. Teague

SOUTH TEXAS
Janet Oord Graves

Bronze Benefactor - \$15,000

CAPITAL – VIRGINIA
Jeffrey M. Johnson

Eminent Benefactor - \$10,000

ARIZONA
Peter T. Filiatrault

COLORADO - WYOMING
Optimist Club of Pueblo, CO

GATEWAY
Optimist Club of Hall County-Gainesville Inc., GA

PACIFIC NORTHWEST
Edward R. Murphy, III

Distinguished Benefactor - \$5,000

CAPITAL - VIRGINIA
Thomas D. Wagstaff

COLORADO - WYOMING
Sharon M. Pearn

DAKOTAS-MANITOBA-MINNESOTA
Rushmore Noon Optimist Club of Black Hills, SD

MICHIGAN
Daniel J. Mills

NEBRASKA
Optimist Club of Omaha-Miracle Hills, NE

Honored Benefactor - \$2,500

NEBRASKA
Corinne N. Wastell
Marvin Wastell

NORTH CAROLINA EAST
Daniel and Barbara Durham

NORTH FLORIDA
Michael D. Sprague

WISCONSIN NORTH – UPPER MICHIGAN
Brian Hakanson

Benefactor - \$1,000

ALABAMA-MISSISSIPPI
Michael Hanshaw
Jeanie W. Ward

ARIZONA
Marsi Salmi

COLORADO - WYOMING
Linda McDonald

NORTH CAROLINA EAST
Samuel A. Toler

IOWA
Timothy A. Kessler

MARYLAND – SOUTH DELAWARE
Glen L. Rotner

OHIO
Bellbrook – Sugar Creek Optimist Club



Rewind



Photo: Optimist International Archives

56th Annual Convention

1973-74 President Ron Thompson with Georgia's state Governor, Jimmy Carter at the Opening Session of the 56th Annual Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, 1974. Georgia's then-Governor Jimmy Carter welcomed the delegates to his state and outlined the similarities between running a good state government and operating a good, solid service organization. Each, he said, must start and end with compassion.



IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES!



OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
ESSAY
CONTEST



OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
ORATORICAL
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS



OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNICATION
CONTEST
FOR THE DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

Over **\$500,000** in Scholarships
for post-secondary education
for more than **25,000 Students**
around the world!

SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

104th ANNUAL CONVENTION | JUNE 30 – JULY 3, 2022

RENO, NEVADA

optimist.org/convention



CLICK HERE

to make your hotel reservation
at the Silver Legacy