

NEWS & VIEWS

A Young at Heart Optimist

To begin an athletic career at age 77 is the sign of a true Optimist. And for Olga Kotelko of Vancouver, British Columbia, becoming an Optimist Club Member at age 78 seemed like the thing to do.

Optimists in Vancouver are celebrating the life of this amazing, optimistic woman who passed away at the age of 95 last summer. (She was born three months before Optimist International was formed.) Olga joined the North Shore, Vancouver Optimist Club in 1998 and was an active Member right up until last June when she spoke to the Club about her athletic career that really took off after she gave up playing slo-pitch baseball at 77 in favor of track and field.

Olga set 30 world records for her "masters" age group in the 100-

and 200-meter sprint, long jump, high jump and hammer throw. She earned more than 750 gold medals, and in her age group set records in four Canadian Masters track and field events and 11 World Masters events. In 2010, she proudly carried the torch in the Vancouver



Olympic Games Torch Relay.

Though only five feet tall and 120 pounds, she believed an optimistic attitude and regular exercise contribute to good health, better energy and a happier

disposition. According to her fellow Club Members she was a true Optimist and an inspiration to many.

AMONG HER FAVORITE SAYINGS WERE:

"It's not your age, it's how you age."

"Giving up is never an option."

"Focus on the positive and feel good about yourself every day."

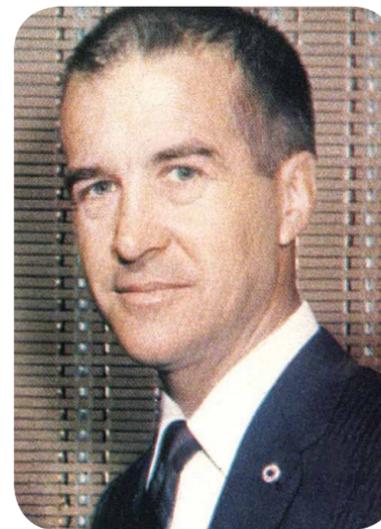
"Every day is a gift we should celebrate."

"I prefer to be a young at heart athlete rather than an old woman."

175 New Members and Counting

Optimism continues on every day with Bill Scott of the Optimist Club of Jeffersonville, Indiana. Bill received his 175 Member pin from Optimist International recently, and in Bill's words, "that's a lot of Members and I can't remember all their names but if you told me who they are, I would remember each one." When asked if he was going for his 200 Member pin, Bill, a Past International Vice President, commented that he already has a couple of people in mind. Now that's an Optimist!

[PHOTO: Olga Kotelko, then a Member of the Optimist Club of North Shore, Vancouver, British Columbia, carried the Olympic torch at the 2010 Winter Olympics.]



In Memoriam

Past International President Dr. George Copley (1963-64) passed away on August 15, 2014, at the age of 95. Dr. Copley first joined the Optimist Club of Santa Monica, California, in 1948. At the time of his death he was a Member of the Optimist Club of Palm Desert, California.

Dr. Copley served in all leadership capacities at the Club and District level and served Optimist International on many committees, as an International Vice President/ Board Member and as International President.

Writing at the beginning of his term as President in 1963, Dr. Copley noted that, "it is imperative that we keep our sights on the future and be ever mindful of our obligation to seek and develop prospective leadership for this organization. Whether we be serving at the Club, the District or the International level does not matter. The important thing is that we be a unified team."

A Club Tool To Reach Out To The Community

By Jean Jensen, Optimist Club of Gresham, Oregon

Last summer an unfortunate event happened at one of our local high schools, Reynolds High School, in Troutdale, Oregon. There was a shooting and two students died. The whole community was rocked to its core. We discussed at our next meeting what we as a Club could do to reach out to the youth of the community to let them know that there is someone out there they could talk to and that cared about them. After much brainstorming, our then-President, Kevin Schmid, thought it would be good to have something to give to anyone that looked like they needed a positive word in their day. We came up with the idea of having business cards made up with the Optimist Creed. To take it one step further, on the other side of the business card we incorporated Kevin's motto for the year "It's All about the Kids" a phrase he borrowed from one of our deceased beloved Members, Ed Beaver.

To follow that theme, Member, Ken Manske, added: "The Optimist Club of Gresham is a community service group dedicated to furthering the success of the youth in our community. We are involved with Oratorical events, self-improvement programs for youth, support for

scholarship advancement, and leadership training for all ages and gender. Our fund-raising programs go towards these goals and include scholarships for deserving students regardless of financial or social status" At the bottom of the card there are two lines for the Members to put their name and phone number in case someone needs to contact us.

We have our Club logo at the top of the card on one side and as a watermark on the other side under the Creed. Our President, Ben DeRemer, showed our card to another Optimist Club that he visited and they want to do the same thing. We feel this is a wonderful tool that all Optimists can use and is very easy to do. We invite any and all Optimist Clubs to follow our lead.

Optimist Couples

Did you meet your significant other through your Optimist endeavors or know of someone who has? If so, please reach out to magazine@optimist.org to be featured in a future issue of the Optimist!