

# STANDING TALL FOR THE KIDS

By Lynn Twocock, Garden City Optimist Club of St. Catharines, Ontario

The Garden City Optimist Club of St. Catharines, Ontario, took the 2013-14 Governor's challenge to our Central Ontario District to obtain giraffes for the children. These at first could be any giraffe and then they migrated toward stuffed giraffes. Gov. TTT (too tall Ted as he is known to us) took the giraffe as his motto to "Stand Tall For Kids" this last year. Our Club Members started to purchase giraffes, some plastic, some stuffed and even some from Florida via a vacationing Member. Then after Christmas our President brought forth the idea to make giraffe hand puppets for the autistic children. She had had some experience with puppets helping the child to speak and communicate. She visited the Niagara Children's Centre and spoke to the speech therapy department which indicated they would be very happy to have giraffe puppets. Thus launched our next phase of the project.



[Club Members Marilyn Pettit and Donna England with Children's Centre School Principal Staci Whittle and students Summer and Kaleb.]

We bought fabric with markings like a giraffe on it, as well as cord for the antlers and collected alternate fabric for the mouth. We used felt for part of the eyes and one Member searched the internet and ordered the safety eyes for the puppets. Another Member found hand puppet patterns on the internet and our President adapted this to a giraffe and we started the cut out of 53 giraffes. Our President, a tailor, sewed the giraffes and we made a date for a group of us to put eyes and noses on the puppets. We had a few laughs doing the "nose jobs" and putting the eyes in the giraffes.

Mission accomplished and our puppets complete we brought them all to our summer Bar BQ so all our Members could see the finished project and have a play evening with them.

In all we presented 53 hand puppets to the Children's Centre and 11 toy giraffes to the children's ward at the St. Catharine's General Hospital.

We all had fun and feel the children have benefited by this challenge.

# CREED TOUCHES Medical Students' Lives

Throughout the rural city of Lebanon, Oregon, the Optimist Creed can be found displayed in restaurants, stores, primary schools, and the local medical school.

Western University of Health Sciences' College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific-Northwest (COMP-Northwest) calls the small town home. Training more than 400 student-doctors each year, the College will graduate its first class of 100 physicians in June 2015.

The Creed is displayed with pride on a large glass plaque in the college's main hallway, thanks to a donation from long-time Lebanon Optimist Club Members Jim and Heather McDaniel.

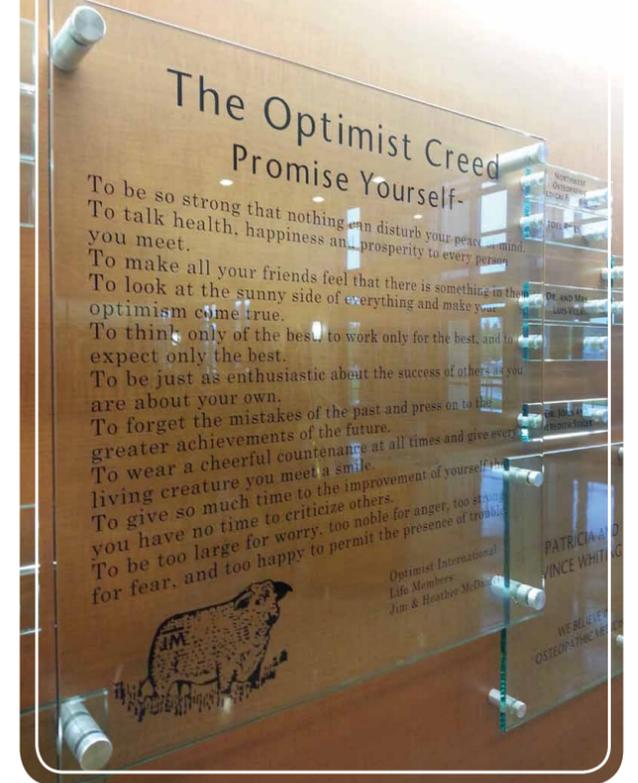
"I spread the Creed wherever I can; it's on the back of my business card," said Jim McDaniel. "I think it's important for the students to get a chance to read that, it just makes them have a better day or keep it in perspective. They have a very important job they are preparing themselves for."

The McDaniel family has been a benefactor of COMP-Northwest where the anatomy lab at the College



is named after Jim McDaniel.

"Jim and Heather are tremendous supporters of COMP-Northwest," said Paula M. Crone, Dean of COMP and COMP-Northwest. "Jim is truly an ambassador to Dr. Brion Benninger and the work his research students



complete in the McDaniel Anatomy Lab. He spreads our message throughout the community and throughout the entire state of Oregon."

In 2013, Jim McDaniel led the incoming medical students in their pledge of commitment. He provided each of the students with a business card sized copy of the students' pledge on one side, and the Optimist Creed on the other.

"I think it's fair to say, while I've never achieved a whole day of living the Optimist Creed, I am optimistic every day that I will," McDaniel said.

McDaniel was the first Member of the Lebanon Optimist Club when it formed in 1970, and was also the Club's first speaker.

[TOP PHOTO: The Optimist Creed displayed at the Western University of Health Sciences' College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific-Northwest.]

[MIDDLE PHOTO: Jim and Heather McDaniel]