



The Torch

JOOI Dishes Out Help



One Club in Jamaica combines its hurricane relief efforts with the Souper Bowl of Caring. See page 3 for more about the project!

JOOI introduced the Souper Bowl of Caring this year for JOOI Clubs to have a little feel-good fun leading up to the Super Bowl.

Souper Bowl of Caring has reported that 20 JOOI Clubs registered for the project and nine of those Clubs reported their results. Together, these nine JOOI

Clubs raised more than \$3,000, which is far beyond "Souper"! If your Club took part but either didn't register with the JOOI name or didn't report your results, please do so! Just go to www.souperbowl.org to take care of the details.

And congratulations to all of those Clubs that had fun and helped out in JOOI's first full year with this program.

Fill Those Backpacks

What's a JOOI Convention without a little service? And this year, all JOOI Members can help!

JOOI Members at the 2009 Convention will be filling backpacks with school supplies for students in Florida's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program to be used in the 2009-2010 school year. The cost for each child's backpack and supplies is \$25, and the JOOI Board of Directors has set a goal of 250 complete backpacks.

Any JOOI Club can help with the service project, even those not attending Convention. JOOI Clubs can seek out donations or plan a fundraiser to make sure these children go to school prepared next fall! Each JOOI Club that participates in the project will have their name published in an upcoming issue of *The Torch*. Checks can be made out to Optimist International with "JOOI Service Project" written in the memo line. Donations should be submitted by June 1, 2009, to Optimist International, Attn: JOOI Department, 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108.



Convention Basics

This issue of *The Torch* includes tons of Convention info. But here's what you need to know first and foremost in order to make the JOOI Convention part of your summer plans.

The dates are Saturday, July 4, through Monday, July 6.

The Convention is at the Marriott Orlando Airport Hotel, which offers free transportation to and from the Orlando airport. The hotel is just \$82 plus tax per night, and rooms can accommodate up to four JOOI Members, so you can definitely pair up and save!

Registration is also a great deal this year – \$260 for the weekend, which is less than last year.

So now that you have all of the numbers, check out the details throughout the next few pages so you can really start planning the trip!

Support Pours In

A number of students can already plan on full backpacks next year thanks to the following Optimist Clubs:

Optimist Club of West Branch, Michigan

Optimist Club of Topeka, Kansas

Optimist Club of East York, Pennsylvania

Optimist Club of Van Nuys-Airport, California

Optimist Club of South Winnipeg, Manitoba

Sunset Optimist Club of Pinellas County, Florida

Optimist Club of Underwood, Iowa



Three Members Get to Work

JOOI wants to make leaders out of its Members. One way to help do that is through the Personal Growth & Involvement program. PGI is designed to get JOOI Members excited about participating in their Clubs and learning more about all aspects of JOOI.

There are three levels to the program, and three JOOI Members recently completed the second level and have received the Silver Level Award. Congratulations go out to Kaitlin Lucas, Samantha Lucas and Cassidy Wright, all in the CMS Helps Club (A1945)!

To find out how you can get involved, check out details of the PGI program at www.jooi.org.

PAPERWORK, PAPERWORK!

If your District has had a conference this year, make sure someone turns in the District Conference agenda and the newly elected officers! All of the information can be submitted at once by simply filling out the District Conference Form, which is available at www.jooi.org.



Mark Your Calendar

A big awards deadline is coming up on May 30, 2009. That is the day that all nominations are due for three JOOI awards – Member of Excellence, Advisor of Excellence and Ruby Blair.

The awards are a huge honor and the two JOOI Member awards even involve scholarships! Check out the JOOI website or the JOOI Planning Guide to find out requirements and to see whether someone you know is eligible.

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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
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BUILDING FOR JOOI

Teaming up works! JOOI would like to announce yet another JOOI/Optimist collaboration on a new JOOI Club:

JOOI Member Tiffany Meade and Optimist Chris Townsend – M4 JOOI Club of Yuma, Arizona (B2103)

BY THE NUMBERS

Here is the makeup of JOOI as of March 31, 2009:

JOOI Members: 18,237

JOOI Clubs: 683

New Charters: 43

JOOI is doing great this year – keep it going!



CARIBBEAN CLUBS IN ACTION

JOOI Clubs in the Caribbean District have been busy this year! Here is just a glimpse of the service these Clubs are providing locally.

JOOI Club Helps Home Bounce Back After Hurricane



Last August, one of the most destructive hurricanes of the season was Hurricane Gustav. With Jamaica in its path, the local JOOI Clubs certainly didn't have to look far to find someone who needed help picking up the pieces.

The Immaculate Conception High School Octagon Club in Kingston, Jamaica, focused on My Father's House, a home for mentally and physically disabled residents as well as a shelter for abandoned children. The home was destroyed during the storm.

Members of the Octagon Club asked their school principal whether they could expand the project to the entire student body. Then they asked students and teachers for donations of canned food, clothing, toiletries and funds that could be used to purchase additional food and cleaning supplies. The response was so great that the drive continued for four months! And even after the donation deadline, *Continued on page 4*



Members of the Immaculate Conception High School Octagon Club help restock the home's supplies of food, cleaning supplies and more.

JOOI Club and Sponsor Team Up for the Holidays

The Octagon Club of St. Andrew High School teamed up with its sponsor, the Sunset Optimist Club of Kingston, Jamaica, to bring cheer to those who needed it this past holiday season.

JOOI Members and Optimists in the Caribbean District focused on the Mary's Child home for girls. The facility provides a home for girls who are pregnant or recently had a baby and do not have a place to live.

The JOOI Members and Optimists spent some time with the home's residents, and they certainly didn't come empty-handed! They decorated the home for the holidays, provided refreshments for the residents, spent time with the girls and their children and presented gifts for mothers and babies alike.

Club Visit Raises Awareness

The Octagon Club of Campion College in Kingston, Jamaica, recently organized an immersion event. Fifteen of the Club's Members spent the afternoon at the Blind Society.

The Members were split into three groups, and each group was able to bring something different away from the day. One group went to a work station where people carefully created rocking chairs by weaving straw for the chairs' seats and backing. The JOOI Members offered words of encouragement, helped in any way they could and saw how the people worked together like a family.

Another group watched a man using a Braille typewriter to create labels for audio Bibles. The students also helped attach the labels to the audio cassettes.

The final group helped put labels on cans that the Blind Society plans to send to different stores to get support for their foundation.

The Club enjoyed the visit and plans to return soon!

Stay True to Yourself

As young people in Anguilla become more influenced by international cultures and lifestyles, one JOOI Club is looking to their roots for guidance.

The Progressive Youth Octagon Club of Anguilla recently attended a book launch for *Bless Our Forebears*, a historic narrative about Anguilla by Colville Perry. JOOI Club President Krystal Webster even read an excerpt from the book at the launch party.

The book coincides with the JOOI Club's theme – "bridging the gap between now and yesteryear." The JOOI Members hope the book revives a sense of respect for the island's history that will help young people in Anguilla move forward.

JOOI 2009 Convention Tentative Agenda

Friday, July 3

Optional Tour Day

Saturday, July 4

(casual dress or "theme" day dress all day)

10 a.m.-5 p.m.	JOOI Registration
3:30-4:15 p.m.	Advisor/Chaperone Meeting
3:30-5 p.m.	Welcome/Point of Order
5-6 p.m.	JOOI Dinner
5:30-6:30 p.m.	Talent Show Screening
7-9 p.m.	JOOI Opening Business Session
9-11 p.m.	Pool Party



Sunday, July 5

(casual dress or "theme" day dress all day)

8-9 a.m.	JOOI Breakfast
8:30-9 a.m.	Advisor/Chaperone Meeting
9-10:15 a.m.	JOOI Workshops
10:30-11:45 a.m.	JOOI Workshops
Noon-1 p.m.	JOOI Lunch
1-3 p.m.	Service Project
3-5 p.m.	Mystery Forum
5-6 p.m.	JOOI Dinner
6-6:45 p.m.	Meet and Greet the Candidates (Mingling)
7-9 p.m.	JOOI Business Session (Voting)
9-11 p.m.	Talent Show/Group Dance

Monday, July 6

8-9 a.m.	JOOI Breakfast
9-10:15 a.m.	JOOI Workshops
10:30-11:45 a.m.	JOOI Workshops
Noon-1:30 p.m.	JOOI Lunch/Candidate Speeches
1:30-2:30 p.m.	JOOI Meet the Candidates Forum
2:45-3:30 p.m.	Elections
3:30-6 p.m.	Free Time
6-7:30 p.m.	President's Banquet (Banquet Best Dress Attire – don't forget to add a bit of pink!)
7:30-9 p.m.	JOOI Closing Business Session (Banquet Best Dress Attire – don't forget to add a bit of pink!)
9-9:30 p.m.	New Officer Meeting
9-9:30 p.m.	Advisor/Chaperone Meeting
9-11 p.m.	President's Dance
11 p.m.-Midnight	Goodbyes
Midnight	Curfew

Tuesday, July 7

Optional Tour Day!

JOOI to Consider Dues Increase

An e-mail has already been sent out to all JOOI Advisors, stating that a dues increase will be voted on at the 2009 JOOI Convention.

The proposal would increase annual dues from \$8 to \$12 for Members in Tier 1. Tier 2 dues would increase to \$8.88, and Tier 3 dues would be \$6.26.

The proposal is in recognition of the downturn of the world economy. Fifty percent of the dues fee would go to offset JOOI Convention costs, which have increased significantly since the last JOOI dues increase in 2004.

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contributions continued to come in from students who just wanted to keep on helping.

The Immaculate Conception Octagon Club decided to tie the project into the "Souper Bowl of Caring." The Club visited My Father's House in late January to present all of the donations to the home. The chief caregiver of the home noted that the facility was out of supplies and the Club's timing was perfect. While they were there, the JOOI Members toured the facility to learn more about the place they were helping. The Club has decided to continue to help My Father's House through future projects.

LAST CHANCE TO PAY DUES

All JOOI dues are due by Friday, April 24. Payment must be postmarked by April 24, 2009. Final revocations will take place on Thursday, April 30. No exceptions.



In Style with JOOI

JOOI plans to attract some attention this year with the always-popular theme days. This year, if it's bright, crazy and flashy, it should work!



Saturday, July 4 – Disco Day

Raid your parents' or grandparents' stash of clothes from back in the day and throw your best finds in your travel bags.

Sunday, July 5 – Jewel Day

Don't forget to pack the bling! If you go a little overboard with the gold chains and chunky necklaces, you might try putting it all in checked luggage if you're flying. You don't want to cause a traffic jam at security checkpoints!



Monday, July 6 – Shiny, Crazy Hair Day

Find the latest product and bring it with you for some makeover experiments. If there's a bold look you've always wanted to try but never had the nerve, here's your chance!

Later in the day, President Julie would like everyone to wear a little pink for the President's Banquet and Closing Business Session.

More Convention Style Dos and Don'ts



Now that the theme days have been determined, JOOI has a few reminders about dress code for the rest of Convention.

During business sessions, JOOI Members should not wear swimsuits or wet clothing. This means that if JOOI Members have spent some time in the pool, they need to plan ahead before arriving at the next big JOOI event.

Monday, the final day of Convention, is Shiny, Crazy Hair Day. However, that evening is the President's Banquet and Closing Business Session. This year, the Optimist International Board of Directors will be attending the banquet and business session. It is important to wear your "Sunday Best" during these events. The Optimist Board does not usually attend, and this is a great opportunity to impress them!

JOOI's Got Talent!

If you can sing, dance, play the guitar, keep the crowd rolling with a standup comedy routine or even if you have some weird talent that entertains kids in the hallways between classes, JOOI wants to see you on stage at Convention. The talent show returns this year, so start practicing!

WHAT COULD IT BE?

Convention is taking on a mysterious new twist this year.

A Mystery Forum will take place from 3-5 p.m. Sunday, July 5. JOOI Members will have to show up to find out just who or what is involved!

Learn a Few New Things

The JOOI Convention has an educational component in addition to all of the fun.

Workshops are part of the learning experience, and JOOI is offering several new workshops this year. Topics include the Leadership Secrets of Santa Claus, the new PGI program, the transition from JOOI to OI and Life Lessons in Sports.

Think about which workshops you would like to attend so you can bring valuable information back with you from Orlando.

IT PAYS TO COME PREPARED

Orlando has so much to offer that it can seem like a faraway place. But while it is definitely still in Florida, the Convention will require special "JOOI passports" for everyone attending.

The passports return this year, and the chance to win a prize is even better than last year!

Each JOOI Member will receive a passport at the beginning of Convention. The JOOI Members should have it with them at all times, because they will get it stamped by attending certain events. Those who get all of their stamps will be entered into two different drawings for a \$50 gift certificate.

Why Go?

If you still need convincing about Convention, here's your JOOI Board's take on the big event of the summer!

Hey JOOI Members!

I hope you enjoy your Optimist year! As you surely know, your JOOI Convention is coming soon! We can't wait to see you in July! You will appreciate this opportunity to learn about many aspects of your organization. You will also have the time to meet others kids, who, like you, live a similar experience in another country! It is also the perfect occasion to finish the year and be much more prepared for the next one! You came last year? Come again! We want your experience to enrich the event and don't forget to tell your friends how fun it was last year!

I wish you a shiny moment before seeing you!

Julie d'Auteuil
President

As immediate Past President of JOOI, I am very much looking forward to being involved with the 2008-2009 JOOI Convention in Orlando, Florida. I, along with the rest of the Board, am looking forward to meeting those of you who are able to attend the Convention. JOOI Conventions are always a learning experience, and it is my hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to meet new people, explore (and have a blast at) Disney World, and most importantly take back lots of knowledge to your own JOOI Clubs and Districts. Let's stay strong and enthusiastic in 2009 and keep spreading the "JOOI" throughout our communities and across the world by uniting in Orlando!

Raquel Ravaglioli
Past President

The weather is getting warmer, which can only mean one thing ... Orlando is almost here. Now of course last year's Convention was grand, but it's a new year. So get ready to have fun like no other Convention has been. Are you ready to see new/old friends, taste some of the most amazing food, dance the night away with all of your JOOI friends, and most importantly spend the Fourth of July with cool people? If the answer is YES!!! I will definitely be seeing you in Orlando.

Craig Peder
Director

Hello everyone! Are you all ready for the JOOI Convention? This year is going to be an amazing Convention because we're all working hard on this project and that's why I hope all of you will attend this event! What is cool about Convention? You meet people from all over the world! You discover different cultures and make a lot of friends who also love JOOI! Other things? You have the chance to participate in a very big service project! And also, it's near Walt Disney! Finally, I would like you to know that the International Convention is a very good way to understand and believe in our organization! So be ready because it's going to be an unforgettable week! See all of you in July!

Marie-Pier Tremblay
Director

I have been to about seven International Conventions, which are each unique in their own way. What I like most about International is meeting the other Members from Canada, the Caribbean, and the United States. The greatest part though is when you go to Convention, and you pause just to realize that everyone in the room that you know, or don't know, is there for one common purpose – to help change the world one community at a time. JOOI is absolutely the greatest, and I hope you come and discover the fun that is in store.

Benjamin Pudzes
Director

Last year was the first year that I attended the Convention, so I really didn't know what to expect. It turned out to be the best part of my summer. The speakers were great and funny at the same time, while also making a point. There were several different workshops that allowed you to grow in your knowledge of JOOI and get ideas to take back to your Club and Districts. But the best part was by far the people that you meet. I can't even begin to describe in words how great these people are. Some of them I had never met before and now I talk to them almost daily. These relationships help unite JOOI as we move forward in service to others.

Peter Von Der Vellen
Director