

Meet *Charlotte Baker* @ the International Office

If you have called Optimist International in the last few years, it is likely you have spoken with Charlotte Baker in the Membership department. Charlotte recently set aside some time to chat with the editor of *The Optimist* to talk about how she assists Members in “bringing out the best in kids.”

How long have you been with Optimist International?

I have been with the organization since August 2005. I work in the Membership department as the Friend of Optimists and Data Entry Manager.

How does Membership staff help Members and Clubs accomplish their goals on a local level?

Our goal in Membership is to be available to assist Clubs with any roster adjustments, adding and deleting of officers and ordering supplies. We help Members with any requests or concerns they may have. Just talking to Optimist Members is like making a friend forever.

Who is a Friend of Optimists?

A Friend of Optimists may be an individual or company who does not have the time to attend Club meetings or volunteer for fundraisers. While they may have a hectic schedule, they would still like to support the children in their community and the Friend program gives them that opportunity. The cost to become a Friend is \$100 and the Club receives \$40 of those funds to use as they see fit.

When someone becomes a Friend of Optimist, they receive a copy of the Optimist Creed, a membership card, decal, membership certificate and most importantly *The Optimist* magazine, which gives them the latest information on what Clubs are doing.

Once a Friend is added and has the chance to see what Clubs do for kids and their community, they realize this is a wonderful organization and often want to become regular Members. Companies can display the membership certificate in their offices and that may influence visitors to attend an Optimist meeting. This is also a great way to let people know about the organization. If anyone has questions, they can call me at 800-500-8130 ext. 227 or e-mail me at bakerc@optimist.org.

Why is it important for Optimists to register their Club officers?

It is very important that current officers are registered with Optimist International to make sure your Club receives the most up-to-date information. You can now add your 2014-2015 officers online. A current officer should login to www.optimistleaders.org, click on “Reports” on the right side of the screen and then click on “Club Officer Elect Report.”

Is there a question you get asked often? If so, what is the answer?

The most frequently asked question is, “how do I change an officer?” I also often hear, “I need to delete a Member and cannot because that Member is listed as an officer.” Members can submit a Club Roster Adjustment Form (CRA) with current officer changes



to the International office. Another option is to notify me by e-mail.

At the annual International Convention, you can often be found in the Optimist convention office. Which convention have you most enjoyed attending and why?

I have enjoyed all the conventions I have attended. I can finally put a face to the Member that I have talked to on the phone.

You're not only an Optimist staff member, but also a Member of a Club. Is there an Optimist activity you enjoy most?

I am a Member of the Southside Optimist Club in St Louis, but I am not able to attend their meetings due to my work schedule. They have many good projects. My favorite is supplying dictionaries to third graders in the local area.

What do you do in your free time outside the office?

I have been the Vice President of Our Lady of Sorrows Women's Guild for 20 years. Our main fundraisers are our quilt socials, which are held in the spring and fall. We play bingo and everyone wants to win a quilt. I am one of the quilters, but have not won a quilt yet. I am on the Parish Picnic Committee. I am also a soccer, baseball and basketball grandma, who enjoys watching my 3 grandsons play ball. I enjoy all sports, but bowling is my favorite.

