

# Illinois District Optimist Land of Lincoln Bulletin



June 2022

## Hello Illinois District Optimists:

Last time I wrote to you it was very, very cold outside. Now it's as hot as...well you know... and summer is not even officially here! I love spring and just wish it would hang around a little longer before plunging us into the hot, humid Illinois summer.

I hope you have been busy with your club designing and carrying out programs that enhance your community. Three clubs received "Club Grants" at the recent 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Illinois District Optimist Conference so I know they will be carrying out some fantastic projects that impact the youth in their communities. The Marshall Clark County Club was presented \$500 for their "Shoes for Youth" project; The Quad City Optimist Volunteers (a club within the Silvis Optimist Club) received \$300 for their "Teacher Grant" program; and the Glenview Optimist Club received \$200 for their "Concert on the Course for the Kids." You'll hear more about these great projects in future Land of Lincoln Bulletins.



Speaking of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter District Conference, it was held at the beautiful Holiday Inn & Suites in East Peoria. This conference featured the finals of the Oratorical Contest, Essay Contest and Poster Contest. In addition, those present heard from Marc Katz, Optimist International Foundation President on all the Foundation does for our youth. A STEM "Make Your Own Catapult" kit for deserving Peoria-area youth was put together by the attendees. Everyone had a great time learning and sharing from each other so you'll want to put the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Convention dates on your calendar – August 12-13 in East Peoria. Registration information will be sent in an email in early July so watch your email inbox for details. Information about the convention will be posted on the Illinois Optimist website – [www.illinoisoptimist.org](http://www.illinoisoptimist.org). I hope to see you at the convention.

At our 1<sup>st</sup> quarter IL District Conference, we kicked off the year of "Living the Creed" – my 2022 theme since it is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the creed - with a session that looked at the first 3 tenets of the creed. At our 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Conference we looked at the next 4 tenets and how we can truly live these wise words every day to enhance our lives. We will finish up the last 3 tenets at the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Convention. I hope you have taken the time to discuss the Creed tenets in your club meetings. I assure you that by "Living the Creed" this club year you'll see opportunities others miss.

As I stated in the last bulletin, my goal this club year is to physically visit each club within the Illinois District. I have a lot of clubs yet to visit and if I haven't contacted your club yet about attending a meeting or event, please call, text or email me. 618-977-7787 or [cschlitt54@gmail.com](mailto:cschlitt54@gmail.com)) I love visiting our wonderful club members and having the opportunity to see firsthand all the exciting projects that Optimists are conducting across the state.

Carol Schlitt  
Illinois Optimist Governor 2021-22

# Welcome New Members

Since the last Land of Lincoln Bulletin in March, we have added 32 new members to the Illinois District Optimist Family. We welcome these new members and thank their sponsors for leading them into their clubs. Since the beginning of the Optimist Club Year, we've added 68 new members!

## New Member

Fred Henry  
Jana Sobecks  
Yvonne Wolf  
Syed Hamid  
Daniella Duarte  
Jim Wenzbauer  
Albert Johnson  
Tim White  
Ernie Bain  
Newlyn Hosea  
Timothy Ogier  
Kara Rosenkranz  
Adam Rosenkranz  
Kimberly Atkins  
Mark Atkins  
Ben Steppig  
Shelia McAllister  
Kevin Kinder  
Connie Kinder  
Michelle Hensel  
Rick Hensel  
Greg Haas  
Scott Fahrner  
Amy Brown  
Mike Brown  
Nick Kessler  
Curtis R. Haentzler  
Brent Frey  
Gary Griesbaum  
Dennis Rottmann  
Kevin Quitmeyer  
Marvin Warner

## Club

Deerfield  
Glenview  
Glenview  
Glenview  
Glenview  
Glenview  
Glenview  
Chillicothe  
Quincy  
Springfield Breakfast  
Belleville  
Millstadt  
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## Sponsor

Ron Schwartz  
Bob Clausen  
John G. Good  
Wayne R. Brunzell  
Bob Clausen  
Bob Clausen  
John G. Good  
Terry L. Quick  
Dennis M. Zapletal  
Mark R. Depue  
Rich R. Gaebel  
Lynn Hensel  
Lynn Hensel  
Phyllis Schaefer  
Phyllis Schaefer  
Brian McCormick  
Peggy Vallandingham  
Lynn Hensel  
Lynn Hensel  
Floyd C. Hensel  
Floyd C. Hensel  
Brian McCormick  
Wayne L. Muskopf  
Lynn Hensel  
Lynn Hensel  
Kerry Kelly  
Richard D. Schutt  
Terry Lammers  
Craig Loyet  
Gary K. Reed  
Steven Pfetscher  
Friend of Optimist



# Rock Falls Optimists Celebrate 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



The Rock Falls Optimists celebrated 75 years of service to the youth and their community on Friday, May 27, 2022 at the Rock Falls American Legion, the site of the very first meeting 75 years ago. Governor Carol Schmitt and husband Glennon were on hand to help the club remember and recognize their many years of providing many outstanding projects. Club scrap books, memorabilia and pictures told the story of this club from its inception. Two noteworthy projects are their scholarship project which has given out \$398,975 since its inception in 1990 and an historical calendar produced each year highlighting the local history of both Rock Falls and neighboring city, Sterling.



Lyle Dirks was recognized for being a member of the Rock Falls Optimist Club for 51 years. Governor Schmitt presented a proclamation from Optimist International President, Patsy Garner, to club president, Bill Wescott.



*Congratulations Rock Falls for 75 years of service to your community.*

# Anniversary Clubs

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The following clubs will celebrate a milestone anniversary during the 2021-22 Club year. Congratulations to each of these clubs and here's too many more years as a vital part of your communities.

Havana – 75 years

Deerfield – 50 years

Princeton – 55 years

Rock Falls – 75 years

Sterling – 55 years

Milan – 55 years

Delavan – 40 years

Marshall Clark County – 30 years

Belleville Westside – 70 years

O'Fallon – 20 years



# ***District Membership Campaign offers Clubs Opportunity to win up to \$500***

**From William Wagner, Past Governor, District Membership Chair**

**Purpose: To create a positive atmosphere for growth within the Illinois district.**

## ***Could Your Club Use \$150? Can you Act quickly?***

That is what is on the table for the spring quarter, April 1 – June 30, provided your club submits a list of prospects and a plan as to how you will approach these prospects encouraging them to become OPTIMIST members. Clubs need to forward their names and plan to District membership chairman Bill Wagner at [wwagner6@charter.net](mailto:wwagner6@charter.net).

Many clubs have success with new membership recruitment by hosting social events and inviting potential members to mingle and participate in a less formal event. Examples are club picnics, euchre tournaments, steak fry, or a taco bar. The other option is just ASK. In other words, invite someone.

This contest is structured so clubs are competing with clubs of similar size and is divided into three divisions which are as follows.

Division	Club size	Number of Prospects
1	20 members or less	3
2	21-59 members	6
3	60-100 members	9
	101 members or greater	12

Clubs turning in their list of prospective members and a plan of action on or before June 30 will be entered for the upcoming quarter prize of \$150. Clubs who submitted names and plans in the previous quarter are entered as well.

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Conference concluded April 30 the Moline Breakfast and Freeburg Optimist clubs won \$75 each. The clubs who participate in this membership plan will compete for an ultimate prize of \$500 to be awarded at the Fall 2022 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter conference.

Feel free to contact me either by email or by phone, 618-401-0681 with questions.

***Bill Wagner, Illinois District Membership Chairman*** Member Questions:  
**Contact: Bill Wagner, Illinois District Membership Chair, 618-401-0681**  
[wwagner6@charter.net](mailto:wwagner6@charter.net)

## **LOOKING FOR OPTIMIST TALENT**

**Hi all,**

**The new Optimist year will be here before you know it and so is the opportunity to be involved at the District level. With that in mind I wanted to invite anyone with an interest in becoming a Lieutenant Governor or a Chairman for one of several important committees to contact me for further information. There are many ways to be involved at the District Level and many ways to use your current talents or to develop new ones in the pursuit of Optimism in the State of Illinois. Not ready to be a chairman? Contact me with your interests anyway and we can find a place for you to contribute until you're ready.**

**As a current Lieutenant Governor, Committee Chairman or Club President you also have an ideal position to observe the talents of those who work with you. If you know someone in your club or zone that you feel would excel at a zone or district position please let me know and I would be happy to contact them and have that discussion.**

**By keeping the pool of leadership fresh we will be able to stay strong on a District level and develop skills and strength on a personal level as well for many years to come.**

**I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your help and recommendations.**

**Ron Elvin, Governor-Elect Illinois District**





**From: Nancy Roach-Wilder, Editor,  
Co-Lt. Governor Zone 1, Deerfield**

**New members to Optimist International  
will be inspired by every member they meet,  
and by our history. Born during tough times,  
OI shines light on the power of optimism.**

Coming out of a world-wide pandemic which has heavily impeded the activities and health of our membership, I am greatly heartened by the roll out of new activities and I hope you will be too. Congratulations to the Marshall Clark County Club for their inspirational “Shoes for Youth” program. They achieved a \$500 grant to continue their service. When Optimists lend a hand, we help restore hope.

Of special note in this bulletin, The Optimist Illinois District Golf Outing, (Calling all golfers from 10-18), Continuous Membership Drive Grants, and the National Conference. Most importantly, you need to know your district leadership has a plan for our continued success. It’s the “3 year Strategic Plan” noted within.

From the Governor and Lt Governors, to the Regional, National and International officials, volunteer professionals stand ready to help your club deploy the resources it needs for success.

**\*Very important\*** In advance of the national conference in Nevada, there are some policy considerations that need to be communicated. Please open your email from Governor Carol labeled Town Hall meetings, and attend one of these information meetings via ZOOM.

As always, in gratitude, I look forward to hearing about the difference your club is making for youth.

**[nroach12@gmail.com](mailto:nroach12@gmail.com). Nancy Roach-Wilder, CFP\*, Editor,  
[Or: nancy.roach@prudential.com](mailto:nancy.roach@prudential.com) 224-305-2257**

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## Illinois District – 2022 Poster Contest “Climate Change: You Can Make a Difference”

The Poster Contest is open to all 4th, 5th and 6th grade students and is run by the Illinois District of Optimist International. There are two divisions – one for girls and one for boys. The contest was open to all 35 of the Optimist Clubs in the Illinois District. This year we had entries from 8 of the clubs. Those clubs were: Belleville, Clark County, Des Plaines, Freeburg, Granite City, Highland, Moline Breakfast, and Sterling. District winners received \$100 for first place, \$75 for second place and \$50 for third place. All entries received prize ribbons. Checks and letters of congratulation have been sent to each winner with a copy to the sponsoring club. Thanks to all the clubs who submitted entries and to those students who competed in the competition.

Yours in Optimism,

Charles Mayhew, 2021-2022 Poster Chair



### First Place – Boy's Division

Teague O'Donnell, 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
Washington Elementary School  
Club: Optimist Club of Sterling



### First Place – Girl's Division

Ava Renner, 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
Freeburg District #70  
Club: Optimist Club of Freeburg



**Second Place – Boy's Division**  
 Sebastian Philo, 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Freeburg District #70  
 Club: Optimist Club of Freeburg



**Second Place – Girl's Division**  
 Jasalynn Trimble, 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Douglas Elementary  
 Club: Optimist Club of Belleville



**Third Place – Boy's Division**  
 Chance McQuarrie, 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Union Elementary  
 Club: Optimist Club of Belleville



**Third Place – Girl's Division**  
 Isabella Garcia 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Rosemont Elementary  
 Club: Optimist Club of Des Plaines

# Southern Region Oratorical Contest

The Taylorville Optimist Club hosted the 2022 Southern Regional Oratorical Contest on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. Contestants from three clubs competed for the opportunity to advance to the District Final on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Two competitors each from Belleville, Champaign, and Highland, gathered at the People's Bank in Taylorville. The contest was judged by members of the Communications Department of Millikin University. Headed by Department Chair Dr. Nancy Curtin, and Adjunct Professors Melinda Reuter and Candace Baker, they heard six outstanding speeches on the topic of "Staying Optimistic in Challenging Times". The top two finishers were, Abigail Barger, Belleville; and Mycal Turner, Champaign. They will advance and represent their home Optimist Club and the Southern Regional at the District Finals and potentially win a \$2500 scholarship.



L to R seated: Abigail Barger, Belleville, 1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Mycal Turner, Champaign, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Julia English, Highland, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

L to R standing: Brodan Lewis, Highland, Neah Franklin, Champaign, Essence Ocean, Belleville

## IL District Essay Contest Winner

The Illinois District Essay Contest winner was present during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Conference in East Peoria April 30<sup>th</sup> where he read his prize-winning essay. Finn Anderson, a senior from United High School District 30 in East Moline was presented a plaque and \$2500 scholarship funded by Optimist International Foundation for his prize winning essay on the topic "**How Does an Optimistic Mindset Change My Tomorrow?**"



L to R: John Ohnemus, Chair of the IL District Essay Contest, Finn Anderson, and Marty Schmidt from the Silvis Optimist Club who sponsored Finn in the contest.

# Illinois District Oratorical Contest

The finals of the Illinois District Oratorical Contest was held on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Illinois District Conference in East Peoria. The four contestants from the Northern and Southern District Contests held earlier in April competed for the top honor. Four excellent speeches were given by the contestants who were judged by faculty members from Illinois Central College. The topic of this year's contest was, **"Staying Optimistic in Challenging Times"**

The first place winner will represent the Illinois District at the Optimist International Oratorical World Championship at St Louis University, July 21-22, 2022.

It was a tough decision for the professional speech judges and they selected Abigail Barger from Belleville as the First Place winner. Abigail will receive a \$2500 scholarship courtesy of Optimist International Foundation. Abigail was sponsored by the Belleville Optimist Club. Second place was Mazah Sherif, sponsored by the Silvis Optimist Club, Third Place Mycal Turner sponsored by the Champaign-Urbana Optimist Club and Fourth Place Laya Prakash sponsored by the Des Plaines Optimist Club.

Best wishes Abigail at the International Contest in July. We're rooting for you!



L to R: Laya Prakash, Mycal Turner, Mazah Sherif and Abigail Barger

# Strategic Plan 2022-2024 IL District

During the 3rd Quarter IL District Conference Board Meeting, the following Strategic Plan was adopted after much discussion and revision. Below is the plan as adopted. Please note, this plan encourages clubs to appoint a membership chair to keep in contact with the club members who are not active in the club. In addition, members who leave the club will be asked to fill out an exit survey as to their reason for leaving. An exit survey will be developed by the District and forwarded to each club.

## **GOAL #1 - RETAIN MEMBERS**

1. Each club to retain 95% of their membership
2. Each club will establish a membership chair to contact members who have not been attending meetings to encourage them to be active.
3. Get all members involved in something the club is doing. Let new members make their own decision as to where they get involved.
4. Bi-Annually membership survey to get valuable feedback.
5. If a member leaves the club, ask them to complete an exit survey to determine why they left. Share bi-annual and exit survey information with Zone Lt. Governor.

## **GOAL #2 -GROWTH**

1. Each club to have a NOW (New Optimists Welcome) event each club year.
2. Each club will increase membership by 20% between 2022-2024 (3-year goal)
3. The Illinois District will build at least one new club each club year.

## **GOAL #3 - COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

1. The District will appoint a Social Media Chair who will pursue social media outreach at the District Level.
2. Encourage clubs to appoint a communications and/or social media chair to post articles about their Optimist club happenings in local media and social media outlets.
3. Promote working with sister organizations in community (Elks, Kiwanis, Rotary, etc.) to increase common service projects and increased outreach.

**John Good, President Glenview Club and District Leadership Chair says the requirement to complete the LMS system has been dropped for Presidents and Board members to qualify for awards this club year.**

The LMS is an extremely valuable tool and we encourage its use, but it is no longer a requirement. The direct link is

<https://www.optimist.org/member/learning management.cfm>

Login in, using the credentials sent to you this fall by OI and complete the modules for your club leadership position. If you have any questions, please email [LMS@optimist.org](mailto:LMS@optimist.org)



**From: William Wagner, District Golf Tournament Chair**

**Illinois District Junior Golf Tournament fast approaching!**

On June 13, 14, and 15 the Illinois District will host some of Illinois's finest junior golfers in the annual Illinois District golf tournament known as the Midwest qualifier. This year's tournament will be held at Red Tail Run golf club in Decatur, IL. Some of last years golfers have already registered along with an out of district golfer. This tournament is shaping to live up to its reputation as being the "Best of the Summer Tournaments."

Clubs are encouraged to be a hole sponsor for \$200 which helps the district defray the tournament costs including the ability send the seven division winners to the Optimist Tournament at Doral Golf Club near Miami Fl. this July. If every club would be a hole sponsor the district would receive enough money to send our winners to the international tournament. Club Presidents received an email earlier requesting hole sponsorships. Hole sponsor checks should be made payable to Illinois District – Optimist International and mailed to Bill Wagner, 36 Willow Creek Dr., Highland, IL. 62249. If your club has not sent your check, please do so to get your club recognized as a tournament sponsor. Also, many clubs in the district sponsor golfers by paying all or a portion of the registration fee for each golfer.

In addition, the tournament can use helpers on the June 14 and 15 serving as course marshals, shuttle drivers, starters, score recorders, or helping the fantastic food crew keep the food and refreshments stocked both in the clubhouse pavilion and pavilions on the course.

For more information, including each days schedule, cost to enter, and what is provided by the district over the three day event go to: [www.oijgc.org](http://www.oijgc.org) or [www.oijgc-il-dist.org](http://www.oijgc-il-dist.org)

***Still not sure?*** Come spend a day with us in Decatur. You will be exposed to not only some fine golf but some of the nicest, most polite youth you could possibly meet from throughout the Illinois District and possibly the world. In addition, you will have the opportunity to be around some **GREAT** Optimist members who support this tournament from all over the district. **You will not be disappointed.**

Bill Wagner, Past Governor and IL Junior Golf Chair [wwagner6@charter.net](mailto:wwagner6@charter.net) 618-401-0681

## Catapult STEM projects delivered to Peoria Boys and Girls Club



During the 3rd quarter IL District Optimist Conference, attendees got a chance to put together a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) project for the youth at the Peoria Area Boys and Girls Club. Each Optimist made a Popsicle stick catapult and then tried them out using cotton balls and hard candy to see how far they could shoot the projectile. Then they assembled a kit which included their premade catapult, instructions on how to build a catapult of their own with all the needed supplies and a personalized note. Above are some of the kids with their catapult kits. A total of 22 kits were delivered to the 3-6 grade students at the Peoria Boys and Girls Club.

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*So good it bears repeating:*

### **ACH Payments for Club Dues By Sandi Schmidt, District Secretary-Treasurer**

Here's a great idea to save your club's Treasurer time, while reducing the effort required to pay your Optimist International and District Dues – sign up for ACH Payments today. My club, along with several other clubs in Illinois, use this method and we're very happy with how it works!

An article in the Winter issue of The Optimist magazine detailed the advantages of using the Automated Clearing House (ACH) payment system to pay your club's dues and new member fees. You can check out that article on page 19 in the online magazine

[https://issuu.com/optimist551/docs/winter\\_2022\\_magazine\\_final.ndd?r=sMmM3NDQ2MTA5MDk](https://issuu.com/optimist551/docs/winter_2022_magazine_final.ndd?r=sMmM3NDQ2MTA5MDk)

Making the switch to ACH Payments means your payments for dues and new member (CRA) fees will be paid automatically. No need to worry about missing a payment or sending it in late. No more checks to write for dues or stamps to mail

the payments. It's simple and it works well.

When you use this payment method, your Treasurer receives an email with the club's dues invoice, showing the amount due for the quarter. Then about 5 days later, the money is automatically withdrawn from the bank account your club authorized. Optimist International deposits your club dues amount in our District Bank Account and sends a report to the District Secretary-Treasurer of the payments that have been made.

To enroll in ACH Payments, simply follow these steps:

Go to [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org).

Select Member Resources.

Under Administration & Tax Information, select ACH Debit.

Complete and submit the applicable Authorization Agreement.

If you have any questions about the ACH Payment enrollment process, please email [ar@optimist.org](mailto:ar@optimist.org). If you have questions about how this all works, you can contact me at [schmidtsandi@gmail.com](mailto:schmidtsandi@gmail.com) or call me at 309- 236-1342.

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## TAKE NOTE: Important District Dates

Program	Paperwork Due	Event Date	Resource	Contact
<b>IMPORTANT</b>  REGIONAL TOWN HALLS	ZOOM REGISTER	Choice of  June 1st or  June 11th.	<u>Register in advance for this meeting:</u> <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMvcOGorT8vGdN7zLJ6uRZeByfeRAvTL7ZV">https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMvcOGorT8vGdN7zLJ6uRZeByfeRAvTL7ZV</a>	Lister B. Florence Jr. OI IVP Middle America Region (573) 647-1268
Essay Contest	Complete		<a href="http://www.illinoisoptimist.org">www.illinoisoptimist.org</a>	John E. Ohnemus, District Essay Chair
District Jr. Golf Tourney	May 30	June 13-16	<a href="http://www.oijgc-il.org">www.oijgc-il.org</a>	Bill Wagner, District Golf Chair

<b>LMS Officer Completion</b>	<b>NO LONGER REQUIRED</b>	<b>NA</b>	<a href="http://www.optimist.org">www.optimist.org</a>	<b>John Good, District Leadership Chair</b>
<b>District Oratorical Contest</b>	<b>COMPLETE</b>	<b>April 30th District Conference</b>	<a href="http://www.optimist.org">www.optimist.org</a>	<b>Sam Meier, Oratorical Chair</b> <a href="mailto:sam.meier@edwardjones.com">sam.meier@edwardjones.com</a>
<b>IL District 4th Quarter Conference</b>	<b>August 10th</b>	<b>August 12th and 13th</b>	<b>Holiday Inn East Peoria</b>	<b>Carol Schlitt, Governor</b> <a href="http://www.illinoisoptimist.org">www.illinoisoptimist.org</a>
<b>Poster Contest</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>See Above</b>	<b>at conference</b>	<b>Charles Mayhew, Poster Chair</b> <a href="mailto:charles.c.mayhew01@gmail.com">charles.c.mayhew01@gmail.com</a>
<b>GRANT APPLICATION</b>	<b>Awarded</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Marshall Clark County Club</b>	<b>Carol Schlitt</b> <a href="mailto:cschlitt54@gmail.com">cschlitt54@gmail.com</a>
<b>OI National Conference</b>	<b>June 30- July 3rd</b>	<b>June 30th to July 3rd</b>	<b>Reno, Nevada</b>	<a href="http://www.Optimist.org/Convention">www.Optimist.org/Convention</a>
<b>Town Hall, Please register</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	<b>June 1st 7:30 pm</b>	Register in advance for this meeting: <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8122122222">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8122122222</a>	<a href="http://www.illinoisoptimist.org">www.illinoisoptimist.org</a>

Want to see your Optimist Club in the Land of Lincoln Bulletin? Send your information to Nancy Roach-Wilder at [nroach12@gmail.com](mailto:nroach12@gmail.com) Watch for my email announcing the deadline for the next issue which is August 19, 2022. The deadlines are also in the IL District Directory and on the Illinois Optimist website <http://illinoisoptimist.org> but go ahead and send me your club's information ANY time. I can't wait to see what everyone has been up to! Action pictures of your club's activities are more fun to share with your fellow Optimists around Illinois, so keep that in mind when sending your information. Always include captions or a story to explain what your club has done. We will also publish information about your upcoming events – you never know who might show up if they know your club is active.