

# Illinois District Optimist Land of Lincoln Bulletin



September 2016

[illinoisoptimist.org](http://illinoisoptimist.org)

## Welcome to the Optimist 2016-17 Year!

By Ruth Del Re, Governor-Designate

I have not had the opportunity to meet many of you, but let me introduce myself as your new Illinois Governor. I have been a member of the Des Plaines Optimist Club since 2007. My husband John and I have 4 children between the ages of 15 and 27.



During these past 9 years as an Optimist member I have held positions as club Oratorical Chair, Essay Chair, VP and President. For the Illinois District I have served as Sergeant at Arms, Essay Chair, Internet Safety Co-Chair, Governor-Elect, and now Governor. I am very excited to help our Illinois District Clubs achieve anything and everything they would like to accomplish this year. As any Governor would, I would like to build new clubs, BUT that is NOT my focus for this year. I however would like to help each and every one of you to be the best Optimists and clubs you can be. When doing that we not only help ourselves and our clubs, but it benefits the children at the same time. ISN'T THAT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT? – THE CHILDREN!

I have always made myself available to the members of my club and I will always make myself available to any member or potential member of the Illinois District. I encourage each and every one of you (serving in a position in your club or not) to attend at least one District meeting this year. I promise that you will not go home disappointed. I am looking forward to not only providing you with the training necessary to help your club and your members, but also to have a lot of FUN in the process.

All four district meetings will be at the Chateau, 1621 Jumer Drive, Bloomington.



October 21 & 22 – This will be a Halloween event. Costume attire on Saturday is welcome – you won't want to miss out on this one.



January 20 & 21 – Come celebrate Margaritaville with us. You never know what will happen here. I expect to see your best Jimmy Buffet ensemble!

Continued on page 5

# Camp COCO A Huge Success!!

By Chris Smith, District Childhood Cancer Chair

The Illinois District Optimists entertained the cancer kids at Camp Coco on Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>. Thirteen Optimists representing the Springfield Luncheon, Moline, Taylorville, and Oak Park clubs oversaw the many games and activities that the kids seem to thoroughly enjoy!

These activities included a video trailer that allowed 28 gamers at once and a freezing cold dunk tank that attracted some gawkers and some expert pitchers! Also featured were a washer toss game, a Frisbee toss game, a fish fling, Tic Tac Toe Toss, Ring Toss, Velcro golf, and a basketball toss. Some activities were busier than others, but the smaller groups allowed for more interaction between Optimist and camper, which is what being a friend of youth is all about. The morning ended with a squirt gun shootout that guaranteed everyone an opportunity to cool off!



More pictures on pages 6-8

# Illinois OIJGC

By Terry Wright, District OIJGC Chair

The 2016 Illinois District OIJGC Tournament welcomed golfers and Optimists to another outstanding tournament. District OIJGC Chair, Terry Wright, Taylorville, thanks his wonderful volunteer crew for all their hard work. Every Optimist Club in the Illinois District is invited to support this stellar event, by being a hole sponsor, sending volunteers, and sponsoring a junior golf participant!



Back, L to R: Mike Koenig, Past Governor; Barb Reich, Assistant Governor; front row, L to R: Kristi Egnot, Guest Speaker; Terry Wright, District OIJGC Chair



Boys 16-18: Ryan Kaufman, T3; Rob Wuethrich, 2<sup>nd</sup>; Michael Holt, winner; Clayton Miller, 3<sup>rd</sup>; Terry Wright



Boys 14-15: Brandon Munie, Qualifier; Wesley Dixon, 3<sup>rd</sup>; Duane Nelson, 2<sup>nd</sup>; Kolton Bauer, winner; Terry Wright



Boys 10-11: Jason Gordon, winner; Joseph Sluzas, 2<sup>nd</sup>; Terry Wright

# Illinois OIJGC, cont.



Boys 12-13: Benjamin Sluzas, winner; Alex McCulla, 2<sup>nd</sup>; Terry Wright



Girls 13-14: Faith Davis, 3<sup>rd</sup> qualifier; Kylie Vaughan, 2<sup>nd</sup>; Alaina Bowie, winner; Terry Wright



Girls 10-12: Terry Wright; Sarah Balding, winner; Reagan Kennedy, 2<sup>nd</sup>



Girls 15-18: Haley Faus, 2<sup>nd</sup>; Emily Balding, 3<sup>rd</sup>; Abby Leighty, winner; Terry Wright



## Welcome to the Optimist 2016-17 Year! (cont.)



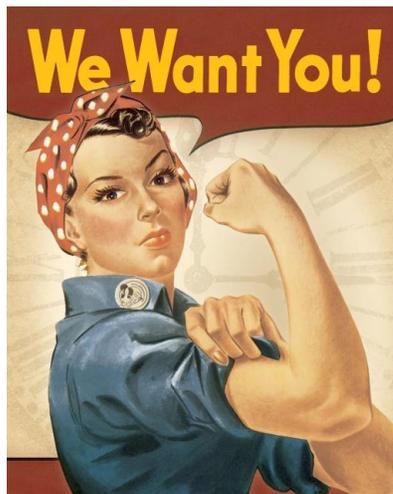
April 28 & 29 – This is our Illinois District Oratorical and Poster contest conference, but I believe we can all dress this up a bit (or not ???) with your favorite hat. Not looking for your favorite baseball hat (even though we will accept those) - I would like to see the one of a kind hats that I know you all have.



August 4–6 – Our 4<sup>th</sup> quarter Convention will round things off with a murder mystery event – WHO DUN IT?????? Why I don't know, but come and find out.

Even if you have never been to a District conference, us regulars and occasional attendees would love to see some new faces. If there is something that is stopping you from attending or there is something you would attend if we did, I am all ears. Nothing is set in stone and everything can be changed. It is time to come spend a day with fellow Optimists from around the state, swap stories, learn a few things, eat great food, make some new friends, and have a lot of fun!. How can you possibly say no to this?

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# Camp COCO Photos

By Al Hippensteel, District Childhood Cancer Chair







# Champaign-Urbana Announces Scholarship Winners

By Mason Minnes, Champaign-Urbana Scholarship Chairperson

The Champaign-Urbana Optimist Club is pleased to announce the 2016 Optimist scholarship winners for the Champaign-Urbana area. This year, the Champaign-Urbana Optimist Club is giving \$1,000 scholarships to three seniors from among the six local high schools. The purpose of the scholarship is to assist the winners in their educational goals toward a career that will be service oriented. Selection is based on service to the community, their spirit of Optimism, volunteer work, and career choice.

The 2016 winners are Rachael Courtney, Champaign Central High School; Gabrielle Greaser, Champaign Centennial High School; and Troy Weber, Urbana High School. The winners will have their names placed on Optimist Scholar plaques in their high schools, and they were honored at an Optimist Club dinner on June 2 at Olive Garden Restaurant in Champaign.



Back row: Mason Minnes, Connie Minnes, Tori Exum  
Front row: Rachael Courtney, Gabrielle Greaser, Troy Webster, Bernice Harrington

Rachael Courtney, a senior at Champaign Central High School, is very involved in multiple areas of her school and church. She is currently in the National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, All-State music conference, and varsity soccer, to name a few. She also is a camp counselor at the YMCA in the summers and a working member of her church youth group. Rachael will be attending The University of Wisconsin-Madison, studying to become an elementary school teacher.

Gabrielle Greaser is a senior at Champaign Centennial High School, and she will pursue a degree in speech pathology at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. She has always valued volunteer work and is a part of the National Honor Society, Interact, 4-H, and Best Buddies. Gabrielle also spends time working to build homes with the Applacian Service Project.

Troy Webster is a senior at Urbana High School and plans on attending Alabama State University to study music performance. Troy recently moved to Urbana and has been active in Habitat for Humanity, Honors Choir, African American Club, and Student Senate. Troy also is a volunteer for the Neighborhood Connections Center where he helps kindergarten through eighth grade children with their studies.

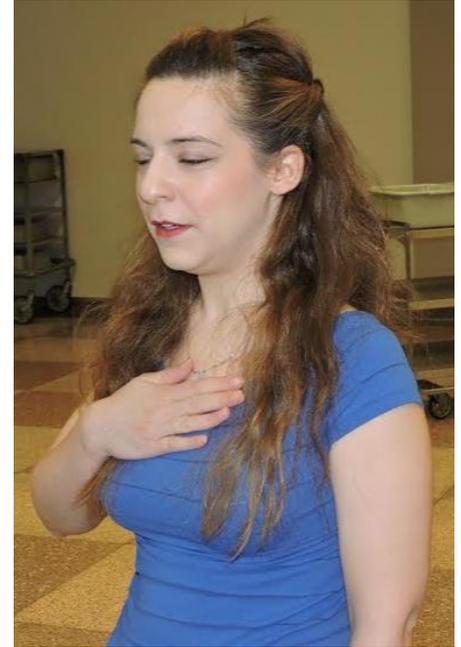
# Taylorville Optimist Becomes U.S. Citizen

By Terry Wright, Taylorville Optimist Club

We are proud to announce the Taylorville Optimist Club's newest American citizen, Florinda Guerriero. Florinda was sworn in at a ceremony at the old state capitol on Friday, June 17. She and her family own and operate Florinda's, a local Italian restaurant.



Florinda is shown with Judge Ron Spears (Ret.), who explained to the club the oath that Florinda had to affirm. Florinda also told the club about her personal experience in the citizenship process.



Florinda leads the club in the Pledge of Allegiance.

As we begin the next Optimist year, the Havana Optimist Club will begin their 71<sup>st</sup> year serving the kids in their community. The club was chartered on October 1, 1946. Congratulations on this significant milestone!



Life is short  
Forgive quickly  
Love truly  
Laugh uncontrollably  
And never regret anything that made you smile

# Flag Day Celebration by Springfield Luncheon Optimists

By Judi Dodson, Luncheon Optimist Club of Springfield

The Luncheon Optimist Club of Springfield celebrated Flag Day, June 14<sup>th</sup>, by holding a combination club promotion and fundraiser at their local HyVee Market. The club planned to distribute 500 3"X4" cling flags over an eight hour period of time. The club's contact information was attached to the back of each flag. Listed were time and place of meetings, email address, Facebook address, and a list of youth organizations supported by the Luncheon Optimists.

The display was set up at 9:00 a.m. by Joyce Stoelting, President; Judi Dodson, Secretary; and Sara Fruchtl, club member and Judi's granddaughter. At noon, club members Harold Olsen and Dan Greer, President-Elect, took over the flag distribution. By 1:00 all of the flags had been dispersed.



Pictured, l. to r.: Joyce Stoelting, Judi Dodson, and Sara Fruchtl

Want to see your Optimist Club in the Land of Lincoln Bulletin? It's simple – just email your pictures, with a story or captions, to Bulletin editor [SchmidtSandi@gmail.com](mailto:SchmidtSandi@gmail.com). It only takes a few minutes to share the great things your club is doing!

Action pictures of your club's activities are more fun to share with your fellow Optimists around the Illinois District, so keep that in mind when sending your information.

The deadline for the next issue of the Land of Lincoln Bulletin is **Friday, November 4**.