

Land of Lincoln Bulletin


Illinois Optimist District Newsletter

illinoisoptimist.org


Princeton Optimist Club Celebrates 50 years!

By John Plummer & Jim Dunn

*Celebrating 50 Years
of Service to Princeton!*

 **Optimist**
CLUB

*By providing hope and positive vision, Optimists bring out
the best in youth, our communities and ourselves.*



-Serving Bureau County Since 1967-
Bureau County Republican
Wednesday, November 15, 2017

A half-century of community service

Dr. Harold Hutchinson, charter Optimist Club member, reflects on an Optimistic life

BY DAVE COOK
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PRINCETON — As the Princeton Optimist Club commemorates its 50th anniversary, the club's last remaining charter member has plenty reasons to celebrate and be proud of the group's many accomplishments.

Harold Hutchinson and his wife, Jeanne, moved to Princeton in 1965, and the Princeton Optimist Club was organized on Nov. 7, 1967, with the help of the Kewanee Optimists. The club was initially comprised of 35 members, led by Bob Clem, who was elected their first president.

"Princeton was such a pristine city back then, it's been a wonderful town to spend my life in," Hutchinson said.

Optimist International was founded in 1919 and has since grown to approximately 4,000 clubs with more than 100,000 members in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

"The goal of the Optimists are to support our youth and to make our communities a better place," Hutchinson said.

According to Optimist International, the purpose of the organization is to develop optimism as a philosophy of life; to promote an interest in good government, civic affairs and a respect for law; promote patriotism; promote friendship among all people; and encourage youths in the belief that giving oneself in service to others will advance the well-being of themselves, their community and the world.

After reading the lengthy list of community projects and donations the Optimists have been a part of, it's no wonder

Hutchinson had difficulty in choosing a favorite memory from the past 50 years.

"It'd probably be 1980, which was the year I was president. Everyone was fired up and enthusiastic, and we completed a lot of projects during that time, including helping Mendota begin their club," he said.

Hutchinson was also proud of how the Princeton club had grown to include 100 members by the end of his year as president.

As with most fraternal organizations, the Optimists have struggled recently with recruiting new members. Their membership now numbers 19, and Hutchinson said most of the members are seniors.

"Every club is having the same problem. We want to be active and to have more activities centered around children, but we need new and younger members who want to help us better their hometown," he said.

Hutchinson added that you don't have to look far to find something that needs to be done in the community.

"It's going to take a concerted effort to turn the club's membership levels around, but I'm confident it can be done. I'd love to see Princeton sparkle for the next generation the way it did for us," he said.

Hutchinson's lifetime of community service has taught him what should also be appealing to members of younger generations seeking a way to give back to their hometown.

"Fellowship and friendship are important, but let's also use that to accomplish something important for our community," Hutchinson said.



BCR photo/Dave Cook

Harold Hutchinson, shown with his wife, Jeanne, is the last remaining charter member of the Princeton Optimist Club, which was organized on Nov. 7, 1967, with the help of the Kewanee Optimists. The club started with 35 members, led by Bob Clem, who was elected their first president.

Early Optimist Club project – Little League diamond and lights



Submitted photo

One of the earliest and biggest projects was the building of the Little League diamond and lights at Zearing Park. Pictured are Ray Vetter, Dr. Harold Hutchinson, and Frank Bratcher, who are present Optimists that worked on the project many years ago.

Optimist International – A brief history

Optimist International was founded in 1919 in Louisville, Kentucky, the site of the First Annual Convention. The oldest club at this meeting was the Club from Buffalo, New York, being organized in 1911. From these small beginnings Optimist International has grown to comprise about 4,000 clubs with a total membership of over 100,000 members in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

The Princeton Optimist Club was organized Nov. 7, 1967, as a result of the efforts of several civic-minded citizens together with the help of the Kewanee Optimist Club. Our club consisted of 35 charter members led by President, Bob Clem.

The primary focus of our club and of Optimist International is to promote the youth of the community.

The Princeton Optimist Club raises money for their activities by selling sweet corn in the summer and Texas fruit in the fall.

Purpose of Optimist International

To develop Optimism as a philosophy of life, to promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs, to inspire respect for law, to promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people; to aid and encourage the development of youth in the belief that the giving of oneself in service to others will advance the well-being of man, his community, and the world.

On the cover

Welcome to Princeton

Several years ago, the Optimist Club of Princeton built Welcome to Princeton signs that held the signs showing all the civic organizations in Princeton. Pictured at the sign are Julie Wayland and Jackie Davis, co-presidents of the Optimist Club of Princeton.

Optimist Easter Egg Hunt



BCR file photo

The Optimist Easter Egg Hunt is an annual event held on the grounds of Soldiers and Sailors Park and the Courthouse lawn on the Saturday before Easter. This event was one of the first events sponsored by the club. For years children from around the area have enjoyed hunting for Easter Eggs. Since the event is for children ages 0-12, this is sometimes the child's first experience hunting Easter Eggs. This event, which includes over 4,000 eggs, takes time to prepare but only about 5 minutes to execute.

The Optimist creed

Promise Yourself —

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.

To look at the sunny side of every thing and make your

optimism come true.

To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to

permit the presence of trouble.

Princeton Optimist Club annual projects

Boy Scout Troop #1063
Easter Egg Hunt
Halloween Parade
Logan Jr. High Science Award
PHS Service Learning Award
Highway Clean-up
Pumpkin Races

Projects and donations over the years

BC Soil and Water Conservation Ed. Program

Homestead Festival
Festival 56

Prairie Arts Council

Special Olympics

Princeton Jaycees Fireworks

Princeton Chamber of Commerce

Lions Club Christmas Parade

Princeton Public Library

Optimist International Foundation

PHS Student Leadership Seminar

Princeton Elementary Schools

Princeton High School

Youth Football

Youth Baseball and Softball

Traveling Baseball Teams

Princeton Youth Soccer League

Scoreboard at Vetter Field

Princeton Community Band

Princeton Fire Department

Princeton Police Department

Christmas for Kids

Welcome Signs to Princeton

Princeton Park District

Log Cabin Restoration

Picnic Shelter at Zearing

Grill and Cover at City/County Park

Swimming Pool

Baseball and Softball Clinics

Baseball Diamond and Backstop

Baseball Dugouts

Baseball Lighting

Volleyball Sand Courts

Plus others totaling nearly \$250,000 spent for our community plus uncounted volunteer hours.



Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH)

Topic: “Where are My Roots of Optimism?”

April 28, 2018

Purpose:

To offer young people who are deaf or hard of hearing the opportunity to present their thoughts in a public forum. This experience helps students develop the skills and confidence to present in sign or orally to a large audience.

Eligibility:

- ☒ Young people through grade 12
- ☒ 4-5 minute presentation
- ☒ Students may use sign language, an oral presentation or a combination of both to compete. Both styles are judged using the same criteria.
- ☒ Students must have an uncorrected hearing loss of 40 decibels or more in order to be eligible to participate.
- ☒ Participants must submit an audiogram or a Cochlear Implant Programming Report done within 24 months of the date of the contest from a qualified audiologist

Prize: The program also provides a valuable opportunity to compete for up to \$2,500 in college scholarships

To Enter: Go to www.oswegooptimists.com/event/ccdhh/ for complete details, rules and registration

Location: The Chateau Hotel
1621 Jumer Dr, Bloomington, IL 61704



Great letter about a great Tournament!

RED TAIL MISSION STATEMENT

WHEN YOU ARE DRIVING PAST CORN FIELDS IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS IT IS USUALLY RARE FOR A SMILE TO START CREEPING ACROSS YOUR FACE. BUT EVERY YEAR AROUND THE MIDDLE OF JUNE, PEOPLE HAVE SMILED. MAYBE THEY SMILE BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT THEY WOULD ABOUT TO BE PUT INTO A ELITE TOURNAMENT ATMOSPHERE. MAYBE THEY SMILE BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT THE ILLINOIS OPTIMIST STAFF WOULD TREAT THEM LIKE ROYALTY OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS. MAYBE THEY SMILE BECAUSE REDTAIL IS A FANTASTIC GOLF COURSE. OR MAYBE THEY SMILE BECAUSE OF THE HISTORY THEY HAVE HAD AT THIS EVENT. REGARDLESS OF WHY PEOPLE SMILE THEY KNOW IT DOESN'T MATTER. THE ATMOSPHERE THAT THEY ARE ABOUT TO ENTER IS UNEQATABLE TO ANY OTHER EVENT THAT THEY WILL PLAY ALL SUMMER. DECATUR, ILLINOIS ISN'T GENERALLY KNOWN TO DRAW A LOT OF GOLFERS TO THE AREA AND TO BE QUITE HONEST IT DOESN'T. IT IS THE OPTIMIST TOURNAMENT BECAUSE OF THE ATMOSPHERE IT CREATES THAT ATTRACTS GOLFERS FROM MANY NEIGHBORING STATES TO COME AND TRY TO COMPETE AGAINST THE BEST TALENTS AROUND. SIMPLY PUT, NOBODY'S YET TO PLAY A BETTER TOURNAMENT THAN THE OPTIMIST QUALIFIER AT RED TAIL RUN GOLF COURSE IN DECATUR ILLINOIS.

WES DIXON, LAKE FOREST, IL

Bringing Out the Best into the Next Century

By Sandi Schmidt, Governor-Elect

It's an exciting time to be an Optimist! Optimist International will be 100 years old in June 2019. The centennial celebration begins at the 100th Optimist International Convention in Ottawa, Ontario, July 8-10, 2018, and continues through the 2018-19 Optimist year. Details of the celebration are still being finalized, and we expect to be able to share those with you soon.



Make your plans now to attend the convention in Ottawa, when International President Nick Prillaman and President-Elect Rebecca Butler Mona officially kick off the celebration. The celebration continues at the Optimist International Convention in Louisville, Kentucky in July of 2019. These conventions promise to be once in a lifetime experiences, and you don't want to miss them!

Trivia note: Did you know that the very first Optimist International Convention was held in Louisville?

In late January, I attended the Governor-Elect Conference in St. Louis. It was a super time of team building, work sessions, and being reminded of how important it is to work with a great team in Illinois to bring out the best in our kids. I'm working to build that team. When I call you, I hope you'll say yes to being part of the team that will bring our District into the next century of Optimist success. If you, or someone you know, has an interest in being part of the team, please let me know – I'm looking for people who want to bring new ideas to the table and make Illinois the best it can be.

President-Elect Rebecca Butler Mona introduced her logo for our centennial Year during our conference. The picture I took, shown here, doesn't really do it justice, and I'm looking forward to getting the official electronic version to share with all of you. In addition to this theme for the 2018-19 year, Rebecca announced that the Centennial theme will be "Bringing Out the Best into the Next Century". I'm really looking forward to everything that's coming our way!



I encourage your club to start making plans for how you'll celebrate the Optimist International Centennial in your community. What a great chance for us to make our friends and neighbors aware of our organization and all the things we do to help the kids in our communities! Share your plans with me and we'll plan to share them with all the Optimists in the Illinois District.

Call me if you have questions or want to talk about what's coming our way. My number is 309-236-1342. I'm ready and willing to work with you and your club to make sure everyone knows what we already know – that Optimist International is the best organization in the world and that Optimists truly do "bring out the best"!



Optimist Club of Glenview—NOW event

Highland schools get \$8,750 grant from Optimists for VR gear

BY MEGAN BRAA
mbraa@bnd.com



MEGAN BRAA mbraa@bnd.com

As part of their President Project this year, the Highland Optimist Club presented the Highland School District with a check for \$8,750. The money will be used to buy Google Expedition virtual reality gear. From left is Optimist member Bill Wagner, the school district's Chief Educational Technology Officer Matt Fredericksen, Optimist President Robert Dunn, Superintendent Mike Sutton, the district's Technology Specialist Alicia Farris and Optimist member Kevin Hemann.

How many students get to say they have swum at the bottom of the ocean or traveled to distant places, like Machu Picchu? Probably, not many. And being able to participate in the American Revolution or take a tour inside of a human body, that's sci-fi stuff, right?

Well, not in this day and age. Soon, Highland students will be able to do all those things, thanks to a gift from a local club.

On Feb. 20, the Highland Optimist Club president Robert Dunn presented the Highland School District with an \$8,750 grant for the organization's "President Project" this year.

"We went a little over, but it was a cause worth pursuing," Dunn said.

Each year, the club donates money toward a specific cause. This year, Dunn said he wanted to focus on education. After contacting the district, he was put in touch with the district's chief educational technology officer, Matt Fredericksen, who said the money could be used to buy and support a Google Expeditions virtual reality kit.

"It's a re-enforcement, not a replacement for lessons," said Alicia Farris, the district's technology specialist who saw the devices first used at a conference two years ago.

Through this immersible technology, students across all grade levels will be able to explore about 745 different lessons and field trips. These experiences range from taking tours of the human heart to visiting historical locations and events during different time periods. Students can also step inside literary classics, visit landmarks, museums, and cities.

"It's really an opportunity for our kids to see something they may not have the chance to see," Fredericksen said,

Fredericksen also said that high school students will be able to utilize the technology to take tours of prospective universities if they cannot make the trip to visit in person. The expeditions also explore "a day in the life of" scenarios, so students can explore different professions.

The kit includes 30 Mattel Deluxe Master Viewers, which are the virtual reality goggles and one 10-inch Zenpad. This tablet allows teachers to guide students on the field trips. Fredericksen said teachers can lead and address points of interest by using arrows and teacher prompts. It will also include 30 Magellan devices, which will help students do their own self-led lessons.

The cost also covers one wireless router, four charging stations and three rolling cases. Fredericksen said the cases allow the devices to be moved between schools, so teachers at each school will have the ability to incorporate the technology into their lessons.

2018 Poster Contest “Help Others: Be a Volunteer”

By Charles Mayhew—charles.c.mayhew01@gmail.com

- Contest is open to boys & Girls in 4th, 5th & 6th grades
- Two divisions—one for boys and one for girls
- Each Club may submit one boy winner and one girl winner
- Posters shall not have been entered in any previous Optimist Contest
- Students are allowed to enter only one Optimist Club’s Poster Contest
- Posters must be on poster or illustration board and be horizontal—14” H X 22 W and have a flat surface with no moving parts
- Posters shall include only original artwork. No computer-generated pictures or wording are allowed. Poster designs may not incorporate and photographs, magazine or newspaper illustrations.
- Dark colors show best, and markers, paints, crayons and colored paper all work well on posters.
- The contest slogan “Help Others: Be a Volunteer” MUST BE ON THE FRONT OF EACH POSTER. Illustrations must be used in addition to words and must be related to the contest slogan.
- District winners will receive \$100 for 1st, \$75 for 2nd and \$50 3rd. All enteries will receive prize ribbons.
- Entry form must be attached to the back of each poster entered with the student’s full name, gender, address, phone number, grade, school name, teacher’s name and the name of the Optimist Club submitting the entry (entry form’s below)
- A \$10 District entry fee, paid by the local Optimist Club, must accompany each poster entered. Checks should be made out to: Illinois District—Optimist International.
- Posters will be judged at the Illinois District Third Quarter Conference (April 28, 2018). Local Optimist Club’s poster contests should be completed in time to bring your one winning boy’s poster and one winning girl’s poster to the district for judging.
- If no members of your Club are planning to attend the District Conference, contact your Lt. Governor or a Club near you to bring your poster contest entries. Please also arrange for someone to pick up the posters after the judging to return them to the local club.
- Any Questions—Please contact Poster Contest Chairperson—Charles Mayhew 618-806-5145 or Charles.mayhew01@gmail.com

Must be on the back of each poster submitted for judging

Illinois District Optimist Poster Contest 2018 – Entry Form

Name _____ Gender _____

Address _____

City _____ IL Zip _____

Phone No. _____ Grade _____

School _____ Teacher _____

Optimist Club Name _____



2018 Oratorical Contest

This years topic is "Where are my Roots of Optimism".

By Ron Elvin

All of the local contests be completed by March 18th and the regionals be done April 14th or 15th. That gives enough time for the necessary paperwork to make it's way to the next level. The District competition will be April 29th in Bloomington at the same Chalet Resort hotel that we have used for the past few conferences. There are a couple of changes that you need to be aware of. Most importantly the contests this year and going forward are to be non-gender specific. That means that all contestants will be competing against each other. There will no longer be separate boys and girls contests. The first and second place contestants from each club will move on to the District Regional contests. Likewise the first and second place contestants from the two regions will move on to the district contest held April 28th in Bloomington. The scholarship prizes for the District contest will be \$2500 for first place, \$1500 for second place and \$1000 for third place with the first place winner moving on to the National Regional contest in St Louis in June.

Club Officer-Elect Reports **(COER) Due May 20**

By Sandi Schmidt
Governor-Elect

Club leaders, be sure to elect your new officers for next year and submit your Club Officer-Elect Report to Optimist International no later than May 20. It's important that all clubs in the Illinois District complete this report, so we can be sure that the right leaders in your club are receiving information from Optimist International and the Illinois Optimist district for next year. The COER is also one of the requirements for your club being identified as an Honor Club for this year.



Brother John Bailanda - Optimist from Jinja Uganda visits Des Plaines Optimist Club



It has been long since I wrote to you. I am fine and settled back in Uganda, in city of Jinja. For the last three months since I got back I have been doing lots of Optimist work. For the later part of December and early January I attended to KAMP Optimist Club business. I will share that in a different email. Then in late January and February I worked with two adult groups to Charter as Optimist Club. Mother of Tomorrow Optimist Club of Jinja was chartered on 11th January while COCLAD Optimist Club of Kagadi was chartered on 31 January. These were exciting moments.

I want to specifically write about St. Theresa Girls Science Junior Optimist Club, Nsenyi, Kasese, Uganda. This the JOI club with 147 girls in high school that you sponsored. During the months of December and January we could not do much because it is school holiday time and being a boarding school, the girls were all on holiday. I met several times with the two teachers who had organized the club and are continuing to oversee its work. Mr. Albert Kahamulhwa was officially inducted by KAMP Optimist Club as the St. Theresa Girls Science JOI club liaison.

Bro. John





The Optimist Club of Rock Falls visited CGH Medical Center for our annual Santa Visit. All patients were offered a visit from Santa and given a Special Gift. Special Thanks to Optimist Club Members [Lyle Dirks](#), [Bill Wescott](#), Leonard Johnson, Eric Woodard, John Watts (Santa) and Helper Elf [Emma Hand](#).

Last Saturday, we had a speaker from PAWs Giving Independence...Linda Kosner explained to us that PAWs also works with therapy/guide/comfort dogs. It was a very interesting event and we all learned a lot about PAWs that we did not know.



62nd Annual
Glasford Optimist Club
Community Auction
Auction to be held at the Tiger Bluffs Park in Glasford, Illinois
Saturday, March 17, 2018
At 9:30 A.M.
Farm Machinery Sells at 12:00 Noon
See complete sale bill at www.Auctionzip.com

Thanks to all area businesses for helping the Optimist Club serve the youth

NO TITLED VEHICLES WILL BE SOLD THIS YEAR

How well does your team work together???

With spaghetti noodles, duct tape and a marshmallow, build the tallest tower to hold the marshmallow on top

The Optimists at the 2nd Quarter District Conference knew what to do!



AND WE HAVE A WINNER



Raffle to benefit *Optimist Junior Golf*

1st Prize • Win a set of Warrior Tomahawk Irons

Driver, 3 Wood, 5 Wood and Golf Bag • Valued over \$1750

2nd Prize • Set of three trouble woods, graphite shafts (18°, 21°, & 24°)

3rd Prize • Set of three Custom Grind Wedges (LW, GW, & SW)

Deadline • June 1, 2018 • Drawing • June 11, 2018

Need not be present to win

\$5 each or 3 for \$10

**Contact Terry Wright
217-**



The 2018 Illinois Optimist International Junior Golf Championship qualifying tournament will be held at Red Tail Run Golf Course in Decatur June 11-14, 2018 Please visit <http://www.oijgc.org> for all current information.

Illinois Junior Golf Tournament—needs you!!!

Terry Wright—the Illinois Optimist District Chair for this event NEEDS your help. We need you to sell the raffle tickets or become a hole sponsor. This is your chance to help bring out the best in our kids, ourselves and our communities.

So far, only two clubs have responded to the raffle. One sold \$30 worth of tickets and returned the rest, and the other club sold none and returned the tickets. Only three clubs have responded to the call for hole sponsors.