

Illinois District Optimist Land of Lincoln Bulletin



June 2019

illinoisoptimist.org

What's Your Optimist Story?

By Governor Sandi Schmidt

As I've traveled around Illinois, visiting Optimist Clubs and meeting Optimist members, one thing really stands out for me – each of us has an “Optimist story”, that person or event that makes us proud to be an Optimist and just makes us feel good. Have you thought about your “Optimist story” lately?

My Optimist story is about the Oratorical Contest. The first year I served as the District Chair for the Oratorical Contest, a cute red-headed 10-year-old named Ethan competed in the contest. Ethan gave a great speech, and he truly gave the high school students he competed against a run for their money. As the celebration luncheon wrapped up, Ethan and his mom came over to thank me for giving him the chance to compete. The next words out of his mouth were “Can you tell me what next year's topic is because I want to start preparing now?”

Ethan returned to the District Oratorical Contest the following year, after winning his club, zone, and regional contests. Now 11 years old and still a cute red-head, Ethan won the District Contest that second year. I don't remember the topic for either Oratorical Contest, but I remember the smile on Ethan's face and his determination to win that scholarship. The world needs more Ethans!

No matter how big or how small, share your Optimist story – with your club and with Optimist International. During this Centennial year for OI, you can submit your Optimist story at <https://www.optimist.org/member/optimistcentennial.cfm>. Either video or text stories are welcome and some of the stories that have been submitted are being shared with Optimists around the world.

Check out the Optimist story from Dave Glanz, a member of the Moline Breakfast Optimist Club, elsewhere in this issue of the Land of Lincoln Bulletin. His story drives home the fact that we never really know what impact we will have on the youth we touch during our Optimist events and activities. What a great testimonial!

Please let me know what I can do to help your club be more successful. I'd love to visit your club to help you out with a project or event or to attend a club meeting. Spending time with Optimist clubs and Optimist members is the best part of my “job” as the Illinois Optimist Governor! You can contact me at schmidtsandi@gmail.com or 309-236-1342. Let's get together soon.

Welcome to New Optimists!

WOW! Fifty-one new Optimists have joined the Illinois Optimist ranks from February 1 through May 3. Congratulations to these new members and to the Optimist members who sponsored them.

<u>New Optimist Member</u>	<u>Optimist Club</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
Robert Garlish	Delavan	Sharon Hultquist
Shirley Garlish	Delavan	Sharon Hultquist
Chad Zobrist	Highland	Ben Eberwein
Bill Sloan	Highland	Ben Eberwein
Brent Knebel	Highland	Ben Eberwein
Brian Weiss	Highland	Ben Eberwein
Nicholas Sparlin	Highland	Craig Loyet
Marshall Rinderer	Highland	Ryan Goodwin
Cari Outman	Greenville	Ruth Wise
Anne Betscher	Greenville	Ruth Wise
Susan Sugg	Greenville	Ruth Wise
Harold R Williams II	Quincy	Ray Wilson
Shannon Nuzhach	Oswegoland	Jim Richter
Cecil R Ray	Lewistown	Rebecca Humphrey
Jean Schmidt	Silvis	Transfer
Brendan Phillips	Millstadt	Mark Germann
John Touchette	Millstadt	Debra Curtis
Danial Y Herrmann	Wilmette	Paul Knobel
Jozef Szadkowski	Delavan	Sharon Hultquist
Gary A Gabrielsen	Deerfield	Ron Schwartz
Briana Valdez	Millstadt	Brea Bidwell
Raimonda Pierce	Cousins Empowered	New Club
David Jenkins	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Ingrid Sanders	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Alexis Wallace	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Asabi (Cynthia) Carroll	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Charles Childress	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Donta Rice	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Aileen Johnson	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Kalana Cale	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Keith Whitsey	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Anthony Jackson	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Anita Lockett	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Debra Jones	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Jocelyn Rials Reaves	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Yvonne M Orr-El	Cousins Empowered	New Club
Sandra Shore	Quincy	C.E. Archer
Elizabeth Clow	Quincy	Laura Oakman
Debbie Mertz	Millstadt	Don Mertz
Sandra Davis	Delavan	Sharon Hultquist
John L Bell	Moline Breakfast	Pat Wendt

<u>New Optimist Member</u>	<u>Optimist Club</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
Robert R Hannah	Moline Breakfast	Pat Wendt
Shaney Malacarne	Millstadt	Lynn Hensel
Mary C Hensel	Millstadt	Floyd Hensel
Bryan Schubert	Millstadt	Larry Schubert
Lizzy Schubert	Millstadt	Marlene Schubert
Kendra L McAndrews	Millstadt	Lynn Hensel
Chris Malacarne	Millstadt	Lynn Hensel
Wayne R Brunzell	Glenview	Reed Brunzell
Tyler Burk	Millstadt	Amy Germann
Steve Santner	Millstadt	Lynn Hensel

We now have a total of 102 new Optimist members in Illinois since October 1, and I know that number will keep growing! Every time we welcome a new member, we increase our ability to serve the youth and our communities, so the real winners here are the kids. Keep up the good work, everyone!

Get your new club members involved in your club right away. Help them make a difference for the kids! In their first twelve months of membership, any Optimist member can win the **Rookie Rock Star Award**.

New members, just complete these tasks to win this award:

- Serve on a club committee
- Work on a service project
- Sponsor a new member
- Attend one of the following:
 - District meeting (our District Convention will be August 2-4 in Normal, IL)
 - Regional Summit
 - Optimist International Convention (June 30-July 3 in Louisville, KY)

As you continue your club's efforts to recruit new members, remember these special incentives, where the new member pays just \$30 Optimist International dues and \$11 Illinois Optimist dues for the first 12 months of membership:

Homecoming – welcome a former Optimist member back to Optimism
(available through September 30 – Centennial promotion)

Teachers (includes administrators, aides, etc.)

\$30<30 – new members who are not yet 30 years old

Your Optimist Club adds value in your community. Ask your family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors to be part of that value. You and they will be glad you did!

Awards and Recognition for You and Your Club

By Governor Sandi Schmidt

When we read the Mission Statement and the Purposes of Optimist International, there's nothing in there about winning awards. And I bet most of us don't put awards high on the list of why we joined our Optimist Club. But a little recognition for doing what it takes to be an engaged member and a successful Optimist Club is still a nice "pat on the back".

Check out the information below for awards you and your Optimist Club can earn during the 2018-19 Optimist year. If you have questions or want additional information, please contact me at schmidtsandi@gmail.com or 309-236-1342.

I'd really love to be able to present one or more of these awards to you and your club!

For Members

Promise Yourself award – earn this special Centennial award by completing these three simple things and having your Club President sign off on the certification form to be sent to Optimist International:

1. Sponsor a new member
2. Participate in a club project
3. Submit a testimonial / "Optimist Story" to Optimist International

Illinois Optimist Member Award – complete 5 of the items listed below to earn this Illinois Optimist Member Award

1. Attend an Illinois Optimist Conference or Convention
2. Make a donation to the Optimist International Foundation of \$36.50 or more
3. Sponsor a new member
4. Participate in a club project
5. Make a presentation at an Illinois Optimist Conference or Convention
6. Submit an article with pictures to the Land of Lincoln Bulletin
7. Submit your Optimist story to Optimist International (and send Governor Sandi an email to let her know you did this one)

And a special bonus – earn this award by June 30 to be entered in a drawing to win free registration and lunch for the 2019 Illinois Optimist Convention (August 2-4 in Normal, IL).

Rookie Rock Star – recognition for a member in their first 12 months. Check out the details in the Welcome to New Optimists! article.

Builder of Excellence – medallion for first club built, pin for each additional club built

Centennial Builder of Excellence – special Centennial Builder pin for any new adult club built between the Optimist International Convention in Ottawa (last summer) and September 30, 2019

For Clubs

Honor Club – earn a banner patch (first year) and a year bar with the Club President's name and year

1. Complete three or more service projects
2. Complete the Club Pride Report (by 9/30) and Club Officer-Elect Report (by 5/20)
3. Recognize a club member or local community individual
4. Grow club by net +3 in membership
5. Appoint a Club Foundation Rep and make an unrestricted contribution to the Optimist International Foundation
6. Conduct a membership recruitment drive (NOW or other event)
7. Club President, Club President-Elect (or two designees) attend District Convention or two other District meetings/conferences
8. Be current on District and Optimist International dues

"Bringing Out the Best" Club – earn a banner patch (first year) and a year bar

1. Complete two or more service projects
2. Complete the Club Pride Report (by 9/30)
3. Be current on District and Optimist International dues
4. Add two or more members
5. Conduct a membership recruitment drive (NOW or other event),
6. Recognize a club member or local community individual

Illinois Optimist Club Award – complete 7 of the items listed below to win a special banner patch

1. President attends Illinois Optimist Conference
2. President attends a 2nd Illinois Optimist Conference or Illinois Optimist Convention
3. President and one other member attend a zone meeting
4. Club makes a \$100 or more unrestricted contribution to the Optimist International Foundation
5. Membership is net +1 on December 31
6. Membership is net +2 on March 31
7. Membership is net +3 on June 30
8. Send an article and pictures to the Land of Lincoln Bulletin
9. Recognize a club member or local community individual
10. Achieve Honor Club status for the 2018-19 Optimist year

Distinguished Club – watch for Club President and Secretary and/or Treasurer, banner patch with the Club President's name (first year), year bar with the Club President's name and year thereafter

1. Meet Honor Club criteria plus one of the following:
2. Grow club by net +15 OR build one or more new clubs OR grow club by net+8 and build two or more Junior Optimist International clubs

Centennial Distinguished Club – banner patch, certificate (President and Secretary/Treasurer), gavel award with Centennial logo

1. Meet Honor Club criteria plus
2. Net +10 in club membership
3. Build a new adult club
4. \$100 unrestricted contribution to the Optimist International Foundation

Greenville Speaker Places First in Illinois District Optimist Southern Regional Oratorical Contest

Kyra Wells from Greenville placed first at the Illinois District Southern Regional Optimist Oratorical Contest held on March 30 in Taylorville, Illinois at the Taylorville Memorial Hospital Auditorium. The contest was sponsored by The Taylorville Optimist Club with the help of sponsoring businesses Blakely's, CTI, Breeze Courier, Angelo's, and Kroger. Ten speakers from five downstate Optimist clubs participated by delivering a speech on the topic "Is There a Fine Line between Optimism and Reality?"

Three judges from the Millikin University Communications Department selected Kyra Wells from Greenville for First Place and Candace Brehm of Delavan for Second Place. Both advance to the District Final to be held in Bloomington on April 13. Other contestants were: Sydney Rabbe of Delavan, Ajah Taggart and Marley Furhman of Belleville, Ainsley Olsen of Greenville, Ella Borrowman and Chloe Wedding of Quincy, and Jessica Chen and Reagan Crask of Highland.



Winning speakers at the Taylorville Optimist Oratorical Contest included (Left) Candace Brehm of Delavan, Second Place and (Right) Tyra Wells of Greenville, First Place.

Illinois Optimist Convention – August 2-4

The Illinois Optimist Convention is coming up soon! Plan now to join us at the Convention August 2-4 at the Radisson Hotel in Normal, IL. Optimist International Vice President Edie Harris will be joining us to participate in our fun and fellowship, training, memorial service, and Governor's banquet.

All the details about the convention will be coming to your inbox soon!

You can reserve your hotel online now at <https://www.radisson.com/normal-hotel-il-61761/usanorm>, using promotional code OPTAUG. You can also call the hotel at 309-862-0101 to reserve your room, using group name Illinois Optimist Conference.

We can't wait to see you at the Illinois Optimist Conference!

ATTENTION: New Volunteer Waivers

The Board of Directors recently adopted three Volunteer Release Waivers that Optimist clubs should use when utilizing non-member volunteers for club projects. The Board and Optimist's legal counsel strongly encourage clubs to use these waivers as a tool to protect the club and Optimist International from legal liability should one of these volunteers get hurt, cause harm, or put the club at risk in some manner.

These waivers can be downloaded on www.optimist.org under International Board Policies in the Legal section:

- Adult Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability Form
- Minor Volunteer Release and Waiver of Liability Form
- Participant Release and Waiver of Liability Form

Any questions about these waivers should be addressed to Optimist International at 314-371-6000.

Moline Breakfast Optimist Club Celebrates 60 Years

The Moline Breakfast Optimist Club was chartered on April 22, 1959, with 37 members. On Saturday, April 6, 2019, club members, spouses, and friends gathered to celebrate the club's 60 years of service in Moline and the surrounding communities.

Member Dave Glanz shared the history of the club, bringing some laughs to the group and reminding us all why we are Optimists.

Today, the club is known as the Breakfast Optimist Club, in recognition of the fact that our service to youth and community expands beyond the Moline city limits.



Illinois Governor Sandi Schmidt presents 60th Anniversary certificate to President Nick Maro



Member Dave Glanz shares club history



Club President Nick Maro presents the President's Citation to member Bob Clancy



Middle America Vice President Gerri Barnett addresses the club (l.)



Member Martin C Schmidt served as the MC for the event (c.)



President-elect Bob Moore closed the evening with the Optimist Creed (r.)

Let the Pirate Shenanigans Begin!

Ahoy mateys, all hands on deck! This year's Camp Coco is coming up Tuesday June 25th at Lake Bloomington. The theme this year is, "Let the Pirate Shenanigans begin", and we will be building Pirate forts using PVC pipe, Kraft Paper, Markers, and all the creativity we can muster! Once the pirate forts are assembled, suitably decorated, and placed on the field of battle, they will be stocked with water guns and buckets for an outlandish free for all that guarantees all participants a soaking good time!

For those that don't recall, Camp Coco was founded in 1986 by the Department of Pediatrics at SIU School of Medicine, for the purpose of providing a camp experience for children with cancer. Coco stands for Children's Oncology Camp Organization. It is for children with cancer ages 6-17, and their healthy siblings, aged 6-10. There has never been a charge for the campers. The cost, currently about \$750 per camper, has been underwritten through fundraising efforts by the SIU Foundation, including an annual golf outing. Children are chosen on a referral basis, and Dr. Greg Brandt, a pediatric oncologist at SIU School of Medicine, is the physician who oversees and attends the camp. Bet Spence is the head volunteer who runs the show.

All the gear will be provided, we just need Optimist volunteers to lead these scurvy crew members in assembling, decorating, and manning their pirate fortresses! Our time is from 10-12, so please arrive by nine on Tuesday June 25th so we can have all our prep work done and assignments made prior to the start. The location is the Timber Pointe Outdoor Center at Lake Bloomington, 20 Timber Pointe Lane, Hudson, IL. Please let Chris Smith, CCC District Chair, that you are coming to assist by emailing at papaguy1@comcast.net. We look forward to seeing you there!



Keav Zolkowski, Chicago was the Essay winner for 2019. She will be attending the University of Illinois majoring in psychology. She currently attends Lane Tech College Prep.

Champaign Urbana Optimist Club

The Champaign Urbana club had their annual fishing derby on Saturday, June 1st organized by member Cindy Harvey. The kids enjoyed themselves and it was a perfect day for fishing with just over 50 kids registered kids participating and several younger siblings unofficially competing. In addition to our club members, several youth mentors were in attendance to teach kids how to fish. Our club provided all of the bait, a meal at the end for kids and their family members, and 1st through 3rd place prizes were given for the most fish caught were given in three age divisions. We return all fish to the lake after catching them.

The C-U club had its local golf tournament on May 30th organized by Members Gene Morgan and Mason Minnes. We had 13 participants golf at the U of I golf course where one of our participants, Elaine Grant, shot an 80! We sent four to the District level tournament in Decatur and Elaine won a trip to Florida! Our club wishes her the best of luck as she competes!

The Champaign-Urbana club gave out three \$1,000 college scholarships to three deserving High School Seniors this year. The students are as follows: Doriane Tsubu Mulunda (Urbana High School) who is will be attending the University of Illinois in the Fall with a major in Global studies; Grace Prom (Champaign Central High School) who will be attending Calvin College studying Speech Pathology, and Sophia Behrensmeyer (St. Thomas More High School) who will be attending Parkland College pathways to the University of Illinois with plans to study Social Work.

The club helped support Girl Scout Troop 2207 with their Silver Award efforts to purchase violins for children in Urbana who otherwise would not be able to afford to play in their school band. The girls with the help of our club and other community members were able to purchase 14 violins. We hope to get this group of community givers to start a Jr. Optimist Club soon!



A Time to Give

Dear Optimists,

While reviewing the latest Optimist Foundation reports I've noticed that In general contributions to the Optimist International Foundation have not kept pace with last year.

This is totally understandable because I feel that most members don't really know what it is the Foundation does. In a nutshell it is the Optimist International Foundation that provides the funding for the International's youth and service programs. From scholarships to the fight with cancer, funds are collected and distributed through the Optimist International Foundation. Some of those funds will be going to the young adults that won the scholarship programs April 13th in Normal, IL. First, second and third place winners in the Oratorical contest and first place winners in the Essay Contest and CCDHH will all be receiving funds to supplement their tuition payments as they move on to education after high school.

One exception to this trend is the Dime-A-Day contribution that all members can easily make. The district has just surpassed the number of members that have chosen to give in this manner by writing a check to the Optimist International Foundation for \$36.50. On behalf of the foundation I thank you for your support this way but there is much more to do.

Just as Dime-A-Day is the easiest way for an individual to contribute to the International Foundation, so is Dollar-A-Day the easiest way for clubs to contribute to the International Foundation. Receive a banner patch for your club by sending your club's check for at least \$365 to:

Optimist International Foundation
P.O. Box 952126
St. Louis, MO 63195-2126

There are actually eight different ways to donate to the foundation. For more information about how the foundation can help your club and members visit the website at <http://www.oifoundation.org/>.

Please speak with your club board members at the next meeting and let them know you support a donation to the Foundation.

Thank you in advance,

Ron Elvin
District Foundation Representative

Greenville Optimist Club Oratorical Contest

The Greenville Optimist Club Oratorical Contest was held February 28 at the Greenville Junior High School. Six speakers delivered their speeches on the topic "Is There a Fine Line Between Optimism and Reality?" Participating were Maggie Goodson, Kaya Harnetiaux, Ainsley Olson, Gabrielle Stengel, Kolbie Tipsword, and Kyra Wells.

Selected to receive gold, silver, and bronze medals were Kyra Wells, Ainsley Olson, and Maggie Goodson, respectively. Gold and Silver winners advanced to the Southern Regional Oratorical Contest at Taylorville.



Participants in the Greenville Optimist Oratorical included: (L to R) Gabrielle Stengel, Kyra Wells, Kolbie Tipsword, Maggie Goodson, Kaya Harnetiaux, and Ainsley Olson

Optimist Club of Deerfield Essay Contest

The Optimist Club of Deerfield has been holding an Essay Contest for students with special needs for more than 30 years. Our most recent awards dinner was May 6, 2019. From left to right, Ron Schwartz, president of Deerfield Optimist Club and three of the four winners honored that night.



Silvis Optimist Club

The Silvis Optimist club had their exciting Annual Easter Egg hunt this year. After a little rescheduling due to mother nature, fun was had by all!



Cousins Empowered Optimist Club of Chicago

Cousins Empowered Optimist Club of Chicago is the first club to re-emerge in the Chicago area in over 40 years under the direction of President Raimonda Pierce! Their main focus is STEAM skill development

– be sure to check this amazing group out at <https://www.cousinscoding.com/>.



They are especially thankful for Terry Wright, and for John & Ruth Del Re for mentoring and guiding them in the process of club development.

Photos are of the youth & parents in our Cousins Coding Academy.





COUSINSCODING.COM

Cousins Coding Academy Provides Technology & Life Skills Enhancement for Youth & Their Families

Seven million job openings in 2018 were in occupations that required coding skills. Help us prepare our youth for a bright future!!!



City of Chicago One Summer Youth Employment Project 2017

Fundamentals of Time Management

S.T.E.A.M Skill Development

Self-Protection & Self Discipline Techniques

Values Clarification

Goal Setting

Character Development

Enhancing Etiquette

Grooming & Wardrobe Coordination Strategies

Communication Skills

Financial Literacy

Wellness Strategies & Disease Prevention

COUSINS CODING ACADEMY
COUSINSCODING.COM
1403-05 W. 111th Street

312.479.7702

Chicago, Illinois 60643

Engineer Donta Rice

Professor Anthony Jackson

Educator Raimonda Pierce

Assisted by Cousins Empowered

My Optimist Story

By Dave Glanz, Moline Breakfast Optimist Club

As an Optimist member, you enjoy many opportunities to serve the youth in your community!

In the 1960's, we were living in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and after I joined the Thursday Noon Optimist Club, they sought a few members to start a Junior Optimist Club. In those days, all our Clubs were "Friend of the Boy", so with the cooperation of the City our Club was able to use a converted fire station on the southwest side of town for a weekly JOC meeting. In addition, this area had a large group of boys from single family homes. As this JOC club grew the Optimist members who served as the leaders became very aware of these young boys needs and the Club supported our efforts.

As we move about in our lives and join Optimist Clubs in other areas, we take on new responsibilities and focus on other goals. To my surprise, in May 1987, a letter was delivered to our home from one of the boys who had been in the Thursday Noon Optimist's JOC. The letter began, "It is amazing after so many years have gone by, I have been given the opportunity to thank you personally for the efforts you made to help a few kids out by giving your time, talent, and treasure in the hope that they could see some value in growing up to become somebody. I was one of the boys in the charter Thursday Noon Jr. Optimist Club, that was organized over at the Riverside Recreation Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa!"

Needless to say, my heart swelled as I read his three typewritten page letter, never dreaming that this boy/man would remember me or consider taking the time to share his life with me. In addition, he outlined five of the boys in the club who had excelled in their professions. He assured me "we've climbed many steep rough mountains and I have sunk to many low valleys in life, but I wouldn't trade it for anything!" And he signed his letter Pastor Steven E. Gilmore, Sr.

You, too, can make a difference in the life of a "Friend of the Youth"!

District Oratorical Contest

The Illinois District of Optimist International hosted the annual District Oratorical Contest On Saturday, April 13th in Normal, IL. Four talented young ladies competed for cash scholarships and the opportunity to compete at the Regional & World Contests in St. Louis. Eva Szeszko, of Oak Park, took the \$2500 first place scholarship. Eva will be representing the Illinois District in St. Louis July 18th-20th. Blair Lepore, also of Oak Park, placed second and received a \$1500 scholarship. Candace Brehm, of Delavan, placed third and received a \$1000 scholarship.

As always, the contest once again gave us a glimpse of what promises to be a very bright future. The Illinois District wishes Eva the best of luck in July.

Submitted by Sam Meier

Student Appreciation Banquet

The Taylorville Optimist Club recently held its annual Student Appreciation Banquet. The five graduating seniors who were honored for exceptional efforts in the classroom and in extracurricular pursuits were:

McKenna Anderson - Jack Livingston - Nick Livingston - Brandon Odam - Cara Rivecco

Dr. Randy Brooks, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Millikin University, was the featured speaker.



Dr. Randy Brooks, McKenna Anderson, Brandon Odam, Cara Rivecco, Jack Livingston, Nick Livingston, Matt Hutchison, THS Principal.

Greenville University's Adaptive Sports Olympics

Greenville Optimist Club was a sponsor for Greenville University's Adaptive Sports Olympics. The Greenville Optimist Club helped sponsor Greenville University's Adaptive Sports Olympics which was held April 26 at the Greenville University Rec Center and HJ Long Gymnasium. The event is in conjunction with an adaptive physical education course taught by Greenville University head basketball coach, Dr. George Barber. Special needs children and adults from Bond County and surrounding counties participate in the athletic events. This is the 19th year for the event and the Greenville Optimist Club has been a co-sponsor for a number of years.



T-shirt worn by coaches and participants in the Greenville University Adapted Sports Olympics

Greenville Annual Easter Egg Hunt

The Greenville Optimist Club was a co-sponsor for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on April 20th at Patriot's Park. Optimist club members arrived at the park at 1pm to distribute the eggs in different areas for the individual age groups. Terry Barth, Optimist Club Chairman for the activity, indicated there were five age groups and a section for children with special needs. Optimist Co-Chairman, Mark Robertson, indicated that over 2000 eggs were hidden with each containing candy, money, or a combination. A golden egg and a grand prize egg were hidden in each age group. Those who found a golden egg received \$5 and grand prize winners received a bicycle, wagon, or Ziggle.

Illinois District Optimist Southern Regional Oratorical Contest

The Taylorville Optimist Club, with help from sponsoring businesses Blakely's, CTI, Breeze Courier, Angelo's, and Kroger, hosted the 2019 Southern Regional Oratorical Contest. The event held on Saturday, March 30th, in the TMH Auditorium, attracted 10 participants from 5 downstate clubs. These participants were vying for a chance to advance to the District Finals on April 13, in Bloomington. The top two participants will advance from this Regional.

With the outstanding help of a group of three judges from the Communications Department at Millikin University, the field of 10 was narrowed to the top two who will advance to the Finals. Those winners were: First place, Kyra Wells of Greenville, and 2nd place went to Candace Brehm of Delavan. Other contestants were: Sydney Rabbe of Delavan, Ajah Taggart of Belleville, Marley Furhman of Belleville, Ainsley Olsen of Greenville, Ella Borrowman & Chloe Wedding of Quincy, Jessica Chen & Reagan Crask of Highland.



L to R: Sydney Rabbe, Delavan; Ainsley Olsen, Greenville; Marley Furhman, Belleville; Ajah Taggart, Belleville; Kyra Wells, Greenville; Candace Brehm, Delavan; seated L to R; Chloe Wedding, Quincy; Ella Borrowman, Quincy; Jessica Chen, Highland; Reagan Crask, Highland.

L) 2nd Place finisher Candace Brehm, Delavan
R) 1st Place finisher Kyra Wells, Greenville



District Communication Contest for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

On Saturday, April 13, 2019, the District Communication Contest for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students was held for a second year. Last year there were three contestants and this year there were four. The participants were Paw Khu Wah from the Moline Breakfast club, Noah Baxa from the Silvis club, Angel Zepeda and Katarina Lenertz from the Oswegoland club. All four students did an excellent job expressing thoughts and feelings about the almost philosophical question, "Is there a Fine line between Reality and Optimism?" Katarina Lenertz a sophomore from Oswego High School was this year's winner.



We are hopeful that this contest will have even more participants next year. Please help us spread the word throughout the state so we can continue to provide scholarships to deaf and hard of hearing students who are seeking a college education.

Angela Flaherty & Kristen Sanders, CCDHH District chairs

Highland Optimist Club Awards Scholarships

Highland Optimist Club Awards Scholarships to 3 local high school students

Chartered on December 15th, 1948, the Highland Club donates to many projects and events in the community that benefit children. We also host an annual high school basketball shootout each January at Highland High School. Our pizza wagon is a staple at local festivals.

Each year the Highland Optimist Club award 3 scholarships from seniors of the Highland Community - the Gerry Beaird Scholarship, Wally Hug Scholarship and the Highland Optimist Scholarship.

Gerry Beaird Scholarship is a one-time \$1000 scholarship in honor of a past member of our club that wanted to see students not only get good grades and be an excellent student, but also wanted this student to have worked during his high school days. This year's recipient of the Gerry Beaird Scholarship is Trent Lammers.

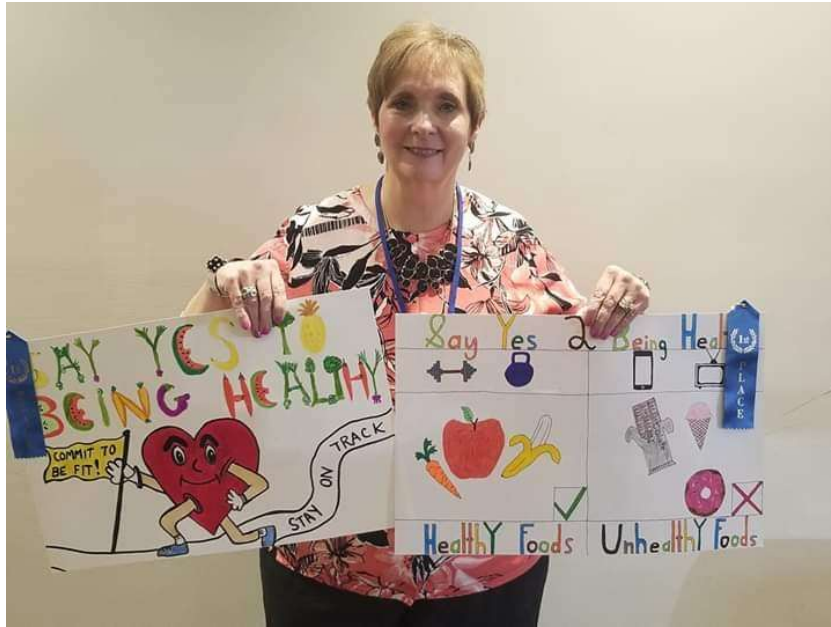
Wally Hug Scholarship is a one-time \$1000 in honor of a past member of our club that wanted to see students excel in school & who participated in some of our programs like the Oratorical & Essay Contest. This year's recipient of the Wally Hug Scholarship is Audrey Wilke.

Highland Optimist Scholarship is a \$1000 scholarship renewable for 4 years for a student that was active in school & sports programs & participated in some of our programs like the Oratorical & Essay Contest. This year's recipient of the Highland Optimist Scholarship is Olivia Loyet.



L to R: Highland Optimist Past President – Bob Dunn, students Olivia Loyet, Trent Lammers and Audrey Wilke

2019 Illinois District Poster Contest Winners



Carol Schlitt, Illinois District Poster Contest Chair holding the 1st place girl and boy winning posters.
Left - girl winning poster Heidi Adams (Freeburg) and right - boy winning poster Wyatt Widoff (Sterling)

Sixteen young artists from 9 sponsoring Illinois Optimist clubs displayed their talents at the Illinois District poster contest conducted during the 3rd Quarter Illinois District Convention in Bloomington April 13th. This year's theme, "Say YES to Being Healthy" produced some wonderful, colorful posters that made it difficult for our judges to select the best.

The following young artists were selected as the winners:

Boy Division:	1 st place	Wyatt Widoff from the Sterling Optimist Club
	2 nd place	Khalil Walker from the Belleville Optimist Club
	3 rd place	Ryan Garland from the Freeburg Optimist Club
Girl Division:	1 st place	Heidi Adams from the Freeburg Optimist Club
	2 nd place	Noelle Richey form the Granite City Optimist Club
	3 rd place	Maggie Morris from the Sterling Optimist Club

First place winners were awarded \$100, 2nd place \$75 and 3rd place \$50.

"These talented young artists did a wonderful job of artistically presenting this year's theme," Illinois District Poster Chair, Carol Schlitt said. "Winning \$100, \$75 or \$50 is not a bad day's work for making a poster" added Schlitt.

Clubs are encouraged to prepare now for how to reach the 4th – 6th grade students in your area for the 2020 poster contest. "This is an excellent way of involving 4th through 6th grade students with a positive activity," said Schlitt. For information on how to conduct a poster contest in your community, contact Carol Schlitt at carolschlitt@charter.net.

2019 Greenville Optimist Club Youth Appreciation Reception

On the evening of April, 24th, the Greenville Optimist Club held their annual Youth Appreciation Reception at St. Lawrence Posch Hall to honor Bond County Unit #2 High School class and organization student leaders. The students and parents were treated to desserts and punch.

Don Reed, Optimist member and retired Greenville teacher, gave a short inspirational presentation to honor the students for stepping forward to lead their respective class or organization. He ended with a charge to the students to continue to be active in community activities beyond their high school years. Mr. Reed commented that many community organizations, including the Optimist Club, are in need of younger members to help support aging memberships.

Following Mr. Reed's comments, the students gave a short speech on their respective activity and how they support the community with their time and fundraising. The Greenville Optimist Club recognizes the leaders for their willingness to serve and help the community. Each leader was given a framed certificate to honor their respective position by Optimist Youth Appreciation Chairman, Pat York.

Attending the reception were Mia Emken, Freshman Class President, Kyle Sunderland, FCA Representative, and Josh Doty, Junior Class President. Other representatives unable to attend included Ariana Williams and Abby Brunk, Yearbook co-editors; David Bare, Band Drum Major; Sarah Klenke, National Honor Society President; Jacqueline Forsys, Student Council President; Ethan Matthews, Scholar Bowl Varsity Captain; Cole Wall, FFA President; Emily Unterbrink, Senior Class President; and Kyra Wells, Sophomore Class President.



Participating in the Youth Appreciation Reception were:
(L to R) Mia Emken, Kyle Sunderland, and Josh Doty.

Serving Food at Greenville Airport Cruise-In/Fly-In

Greenville Optimist Club provided the food stand for the Greenville Airport Cruise-In/Fly-In held October 6, 2018. The event brings aviation interested folks to the airport for a day of aerial events. The club makes a donation to the Greenville Pilots Association to help support youths interested in flying.



Optimist members Mike Chitwood, Susan File, and Ruth Wise helping serve food to customers.

Pancake & Sausage Breakfast

Greenville Club held its annual Pancake & Sausage Breakfast on November 3, 2018. The event is a major fundraiser for the club and has traditionally been held the first Saturday in November.



Optimist members Mark Robertson and Pat York preparing the grills for early-morning sausage grilling.

Greenville Optimist Scholarship Winners for 2019

The Greenville Optimist Club sponsors two \$1,000 college scholarships for high school seniors.

The Greenville Optimist Club General Scholarship was awarded to Sarah Klenke, daughter of James and Valerie Klenke. Sarah plans to major in nursing at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

The Bill Wise Optimist Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Dalton Knerrer, son of Ronald and Tracy Knerrer. Dalton will be majoring in crop science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Springfield Luncheon Optimist Club



Vinnie Gupta, a member of the Springfield Luncheon Optimist Club, has donated food and volunteered to help feed over 400 needy children at the Ministry of Hope's Orphanage in Matapila, Malawi, Africa. The Ministry of Hope has six centers that help provide food to over 4500 children in Malawi and also assists them with their after-school programs.

Vinnie's service to this group supports the true "International" part of Optimist International's service to youth. The needs of children know no boundaries.

Highland Optimist Club Hits a Home Run With \$12,000 Donation to Baseball Field Campaign

Local Club Steps Up for the 'Start A Rally For Optimist Field' Community Fundraising Effort

The Highland Optimist Club hit another home run recently with a \$12,000 donation to a local group raising money for improvements to Optimist Field at Glik Park.

"Our group of parents, Optimist members and community leaders created the 'Start A Rally' for Optimist Field community fundraising campaign late in 2018 with a vision of making improvements to Optimist Field," said the campaign's Marketing Committee Chair Adam Koishor. "We want to make the field Highland's premier baseball facility, and the reinvestment from the Optimist Club really helps us start the rally."

Optimist Club President Rick Duft and Treasurer Bill Wagner recently presented the check to Koishor and members of the Optimist Field Improvement Group, which is the lead committee to determine how the money raised for the field will be used for improvements.

"We realize that the city, the school district and the Legion program simply do not have the budgets to make improvements and maintain the field at a top-tier level," Duft said. "The club donated money when the field was originally built, and now we are reinvesting in Optimist Field."

The Highland High School varsity baseball team and the American Legion Lee Iten Post 439's baseball teams call Optimist Field home.

The Optimist Field Improvement Group includes Highland Director of Parks & Recreation Mark Rosen, Highland Senior Legion Coach Harry Painter, Highland High School Varsity Baseball Coach Joel Hawkins, baseball parent Jeremy Willis, and Optimist Club member Phil Mason.

"The donation from the Optimist Club along with other funds we have raised helped us get the improvement projects started," Hawkins said. "We have removed the infield playing surface and it is being improved with a new dirt surface and a new natural grass surface. When it is done, the infield will rival the fields of major college and minor league stadiums."

The Start A Rally group is actively seeking sponsors and donors toward the field improvement campaign.

"We are fortunate to live in a great community where businesses, organizations, and individuals are willing to support things that make Highland what it is," Koishor added. "We have a committed group of parents who are offering their time and energy to the marketing and fundraising efforts."

Phase one of the effort for improvements to Optimist Field at Glik Park started in June of 2018 when a new scoreboard was installed, doubling the size of the board. The next phase of the effort includes the infield upgrade.

“The Start A Rally campaign is designed to raise money now and in the future,” Koishor said. “We want to make sure when the future groups of parents who have kids playing baseball are involved, the campaign is ongoing to keep Optimist Field a premier baseball facility.”

The Start A Rally for Optimist Field campaign is seeking everything from three-year corporate sponsorships to small individual donations for the field.

“We are seeking business sponsorships and individual donations,” Koishor noted. “We hope that individuals or families with ties to Highland baseball will support the campaign.”

In addition to the upgrade of the infield playing surface, future projects that the Field Improvement Group hope to complete include fencing in front of the dugouts, improved bullpen areas, a batter’s eye in centerfield, a sound system and expanded stadium seating.

“We are excited about the Legion teams playing on the new infield surface this summer,” Painter noted. “We are also looking forward to plans for additional improvements. We truly appreciate the Optimist Club making the donation to this campaign.”

For more information about the Start A Rally for Optimist Field campaign, to become a sponsor, or to make a donation online, visit www.rallyforhighlandbaseball.com.

The Highland Optimist Club, which was chartered on December 15, 1948, donates to many projects and events in the community that benefit children. The local club also host an annual high school basketball shootout each January at Highland High School, and its pizza wagon is a staple at local festivals.



The Highland Optimist Club recently donated \$12,000 to the Start A Rally for Optimist Field fundraising campaign for improvements to the field at Glik Park. Pictured from left are American Legion Lee Iten Post 439 Coach Harry Painter, Highland High School Varsity Coach Joel Hawkins, Optimist Club President Rick Duft, Campaign Marketing Committee Chair Adam Koishor and Optimist Club Treasurer Bill Wagner.

Jule Luber Respect for Law Banquet held May 15, 2019, 6:00 PM

Highland Pistol & Rifle Club

On May 15 the Highland Optimist Club held their annual Jule Luber Respect for Law Banquet at the Highland Pistol & Rifle Club. This program is a joint program co-sponsored by the Highland Moose, Highland Rotary and Highland Optimist Clubs.

The clubs annually honor local law enforcement personnel, as well as local citizens who support them, during the banquet, which includes an awards ceremony and steak fry. The banquet is named for Julius B. "Jule" Luber, a retired Illinois State Police sergeant, businessman and civic leader in Highland, who passed away in January of 2003.

The purpose of banquet is to honor the law enforcement professionals in our community. This is a small way to show our appreciation for their dedication and sacrifices that they make to keep our streets, neighborhoods, and communities safe.

Presentation of Awards:

Award #1: David McCain Memorial Award: Presented by Highland Chief of Police Chris Conrad

David McCain Memorial Law Enforcement Award went Officer Ken McCoy. Ken just completed his second full year as a police officer and through his tenacity and work ethic has gotten to experience some wide ranging and interesting cases. From working with the Postal Inspectors to seeking out cutting edge technology to conduct electronic searches, Ken made quite an impact on drug distribution among our younger population. Ken using his prior experiences as in the military and as an EMT brings a unique skill set and perspective in how he handles calls, deals with the public and approaches his role in the community. Thank you for your service to the department and the city, your actions are a great example of professional public service. Keep up the great work!



Highland Chief of Police Chris Conrad (left) presenting the David McCain Memorial Award to Officer Ken McCoy (right).

Award #2: Optimist Officer of the Year Award: Presented by Highland Optimist Club President Rick Duft

Optimist Law Enforcement Award went to Madison County Telecommunicator Brittany Rizzi. On March 5, 2019, 911 calls began coming in for a fully involved structure fire off Culp Lane in Bethalto, Illinois. Several fire departments were dispatched to assist in fighting the fire. As the fire progressed a portion of the structure collapsed injuring multiple firefighters, one critically and one fatally.

Officer Rizzi took the lead. Under her direction, the radio room succeeded in coordinating mutual aid efforts between fire departments and Fire Marshal, police agencies, dispatching emergency medical personnel including the dispatch of Arch Air Medical Service, and contact was made with utility companies to have them turned off at the structure. This was all while continuing to handle additional calls for service, additional 911 calls, and the daily work load.

The chaos this fire brought to that radio room is unimaginable, yet Officer Rizzi remained level headed and dealt with tasks as they came to her. The radio assistance of Officer Rizzi was instrumental in the timely response in all efforts throughout this incident.

Officer Rizzi is an exceptional Communications Officer/Dispatcher. Both the citizens of Madison County and the Madison County Sheriff's Office are VERY fortunate to have such a dedicated, proficient, individual taking their call.

Highland Optimist President Rick Duft (right) presenting the Optimist Officer of the Year Award to Brittany Rizzi (left).



Award #3: Rotary Citizen of the Year Award: Presented by Rotary President Shaun Voegele.

Citizens of the Year (Rotary) Is always a fun award for Highland Police Department to give out. Community policing isn't something that can only be done by the police, it requires engaged citizens who truly care about our community as much as our officers do. As you know, the Highland Police Department enjoys great support and engagement from our community and year after year we have citizens who embody what it means to have true community policing. This year we have 3 citizens we would like to recognize for their service and commitment to making Highland a great place to live they are Connie Sparlin, Cody Barwick & Tyler Elliot.

1. **Connie Sparlin:** Connie has been an early childhood/special education teacher with Highland School District for 30 Years and is retiring at the end of the school year. Connie has made an impact on countless little minds through the years with her dedication to her profession and her students. Often night officers would see her car parked in front of the primary after hours as she prepared to make a difference in her kids' lives. 11 years ago Connie brought the Young Athletes program through Special Olympics to Highland Primary, Special Olympics of course being a charity that we take great pride in supporting year after year. Young Athletes is a program that helps teach dexterity and athletic skills to kids of all abilities and culminates in an awards ceremony at the end of the year. Thank you for everything you have done for not just your students, but for your community and we wish you all the best in retirement.
2. **Cody Barwick:** While investigating a theft of several thousand dollars from our Walmart, it was learned a similar incident had occurred at the Vandalia Walmart. Officer Clewis reached out to Cody who works in the loss prevention department at the Vandalia Walmart. Cody went way above and beyond what was expected of him and through a lot of research he was able to identify the suspect from a case at another store from 6 years before. Upon identifying the suspect it was found that she had committed the same crime in several states and through Cody's efforts we were able to issue charges and tie the suspect to multiple felonies across several states for stealing in excess of \$50,000 dollars of merchandise! Great job Cody and thank you for your efforts and determination in fighting crime!
3. **Tyler Elliott:** On August 28th, 2018 at approximately 7:30pm, Tyler was at the CC Food Mart on Broadway getting gas when he saw a Highland Officer struggling with a suspect in the sidewalk between the gas station and the florist shop. Without regard for his own safety, Tyler went to the aid of the officer and helped restrain the suspect until additional officers arrived on scene. In an era when some people would pull out their phones and record the situation rather than intervene, you took action, and on behalf of the city, the department and the officers involved, we thank you for your service to your community.

Highland Rotary President (right) presenting the Rotary Citizen of the Year Award to Connie Sparlin (left). Not present for the awards were Cody Barwick & Tyler Elliot.



Award #4: Moose Telecommunicator of the Year Award: presented by Moose Governor Mike Elliot

Moose Telecommunicator of the Year went to Courtney Yearian . Courtney comes to work every day with the intent to make a difference, she always has a smile on her face and is looking for opportunities to make things better. She has worked with the Fire and EMS Chief on improving dispatch procedures, worked with other TC's on updating and improving the TC training manual, seeks out additional training to improve herself, communicates well with both her fellow TC's and the officers, volunteered for the building committee and serves as a 911 quality assurance reviewer for Madison County 911. Thank you for all you have done throughout the past year and for your service to the department, the city and your fellow employees, your actions are a great example of a fantastic public servant. Keep up the great work!



Moose Governor Mike Elliot Conrad (left) presenting the Moose Telecommunicator of the Year to Courtney Yearian (right).

Buckle Up for child safety

The Child Safety Seat Committee host their spring Safety event

Several times a year Charbonnier State Farm agency partners with the Granite City Optimist Club, the 6 Mile Regional Library, and St. Elizabeth Catholic Church to host a child safety seat event. Technicians gather from the area to help educate families about proper selection and installation of their child's Safety seat. In addition, seats have been made available through community grants so that every child leaves in a proper seat.

Brandy Robison with the Child Safety Seat Committee states their goals are:

1. Educate families on proper selection and installation. Choosing and installing a car seat is not as cut and dry as it may sound, especially with new state laws.
2. Assist families in obtaining a seat when the need arises. When a child suddenly exceeds the height or weight restrictions of their seat or the seat has reached its expiration date parents can be caught off guard.

The spring event, hosted Saturday April 27th, saw a large community turn out. Thanks to the technicians, Brandy, Eanista, Erica, Amy and everyone involved, they were able to help several families with new seats and assisted with a total of 23 installations counting a few that had to be rescheduled due to weather. Six infant seats had also been donated previously to an event held at Gateway by SSM Cardinal Glennon

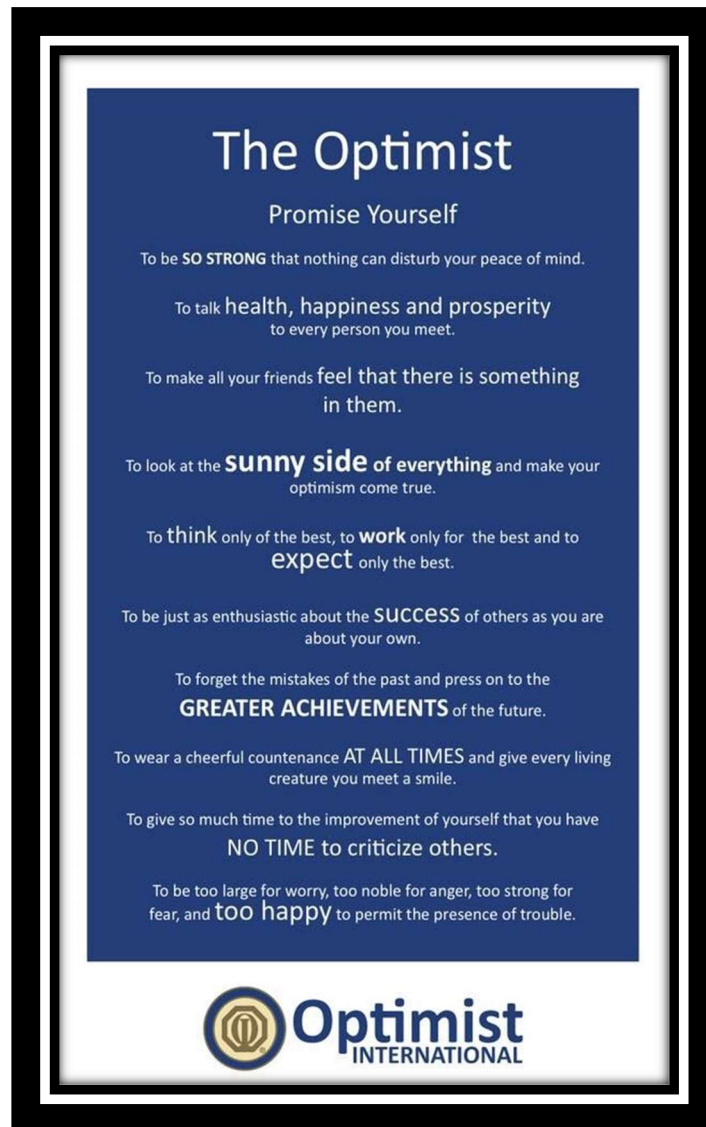
The next safety event will be held in the fall. If you are interested in participating in the event you can contact the Child Safety Seat Committee through their Facebook page or email at childpassengersafety@yahoo.com. An event page will be created once the date is set.

If you would like to help support this effort donations can be sent to Charbonnier State Farm Attn: CSSC 2231 Pontoon Rd. Granite City Il, 62040 *State Law prohibits us from accepting used seats or seats not purchased from an accredited vendor.



As always,

live the creed!



Want to see your Optimist Club in the **Land of Lincoln Bulletin**? Send your information to Michael Taylor at michaeldemosstaylor@yahoo.com. I can't wait to see what everyone has been up to! Deadline for sharing your news in the next issue is **August 16, 2019**.

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 the what your club has done. We will also publish information about your upcoming events – you never know who might show up if they know you have an activity going on.