

# Illinois District Optimist Land of Lincoln Bulletin



August 2017

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

## Rock Falls Optimist Club Celebrates 70 Years of Service

By John Hoffmiller, Rock Falls Optimist

The **Rock Falls Optimist Club** recently celebrated our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a wonderful dinner and program. The evening was enjoyed by club members and their spouses, community leaders, members of several area Optimist Clubs, and friends of the **Rock Falls Optimist Club**.

Our club is very active with 44 members in all kinds of youth activities. Since 1990 we have awarded over \$326,000 to high school students in Rock Falls for college scholarships.



District 13 Elementary School Superintendent and past president **Dan Arickx** receiving a check for \$2,000 for educational programs from President **Jack Spencer**.



Left to right: **John Hoffmiller**, 70th Anniversary chairman and club secretary; **Marianne Hoffmiller**; **Ruth Del Re**, Illinois District Governor; **Jack Spencer**, president; **"Sam" Spencer**; **Mike Wolber**, 70th Anniversary co-chair and club treasurer; **Sheila Wolber**.

***Congratulations, Rock Falls, on this outstanding milestone!***

# A Message from Governor Ruth

Thank you!

For being a member of the Illinois Optimist District and serving your club for another year. Your help in your club and district have shown a growth in numbers and therefore we are now able to help more youth today than back on October 1, 2016.

When I first wrote my Governor's message to you, I defined what an Optimist was. An Optimist is one who usually expects a favorable outcome, and you did NOT disappoint. As of this writing, you have brought in 132 new optimist members into your clubs and I know you are not done yet. We have added a new club in Chicago and have the potential to build many more clubs throughout this state in the next few months. There are also a few clubs that are struggling due to our aging population and the economy who need our help, so let us consider what would happen if we lose them?

Who will run their Optimist programs?

Who will help the youth in those communities?

What will happen to the youth in those communities if the Optimists leave?

Working together will positively support the youth in all of our communities! This is the year of the Honor Club! Please review the requirements to be an Honor Club:

- ✓ Complete 3 service projects
- ✓ Conduct a member ship program (NOW dinner, membership drive...)
- ✓ Grow your club Net +3 in membership
- ✓ Appoint a Club Foundation Representative & make a non-restricted contribution to the OI Foundation (\$1 a day....)
- ✓ Be current on your district & OI dues
- ✓ Recognize a club member or local community individual
- ✓ Submit Club Officer Elect and President's Pride Reports
- ✓ Club President or Club President-Elect (or 2 designees) attend District Convention or two other District meetings

Start checking these off, you probably already do these, and you know the positive feeling you have while doing them! These simple steps support the Optimist International programs (Essay and Oratorical for example), engage us in our communities and allow for personal growth! The rewarding feeling of making a difference is why we joined an Optimist club.

We have about 50 days left in this Optimist year and I plan to step it up even more than my life has allotted me so far to make Illinois, your Optimist District an honor district or a distinguished district. It has been many years since either of these has occurred, and with everything else that is going on in our state, we need to show the residents of Illinois that being an Optimist is where it is! Please consider helping our youth by:

- ❖ bringing in that new member to your club
- ❖ making a donation to the Optimist International Foundation
- ❖ making sure your dues are paid by September 30
- ❖ filling out your President's Pride report

I will do my part by helping you with any of the above and building 2 more clubs in the state.

**TOGETHER WE CAN.....**

# News from the Illinois District Convention

The Illinois District Convention was held August 4-5 at The Chateau in Bloomington, Illinois. We were honored to have **Marc Katz**, past International Vice President and past OI Board Member, from the Michigan District, and **Bob Floyd**, past International Vice President, and his wife **Debbie**, from the West Missouri District, as our Optimist International representatives. Bob announced that he has accepted the role of International Vice President for the Middle America region for 2017-18. The Middle America region includes the Indiana North, Indiana South, Illinois, East Missouri, West Missouri, and Kansas districts.

The three finalists in the first Illinois Club Grant Program made presentations about their programs. Convention attendees voted on the winners:

## **Millstadt Optimist Club**

Poster Contest

1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$250 grant

## **Granite City Optimist Club**

Bicycle Safety Rodeo

\$50 grant

## **Highland Optimist Club**

Avenue of Flags

\$50 grant

Congratulations to all the winners.



**Paul Hellrich, Granite City Optimist Club**  
**Dave Callahan, Highland Optimist Club**  
**Carol Schlitt, Freeburg Optimist Club**



Marc Katz, OI rep, installed District leaders for the 2017-18 Optimist year, beginning October 1. L to R: **John Del Re**, Governor; **Ruth Del Re**, Immediate Past Governor; **Steve Turner**, Past Governor; **Sandi Schmidt**, Governor-Elect; **Marc Katz**.

# Optimist International Jr. Golf Championships - Illinois

By Terry Wright, District OIJGC Chair

The Illinois District Optimist International Jr. Golf Championships recently completed their competition to determine the young golfers winning the opportunity to advance to the International tournament in West Palm Beach, FL. The four days of competition started on Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, with a practice round at the tournament site of Red Tail Run Golf Club in Decatur, IL.

That was followed by a banquet on Monday evening at the Decatur Conference Center & Hotel, where some 120 players, family members, and tournament volunteers gathered for dinner and to hear two fine speakers. The first speaker for the evening was the men's head golf coach from Millikin University, **Sam Osbourne**. Coach Osbourne gave the youngsters information on how to proceed with any future plans of furthering their golf careers at the collegiate level. Next to speak was Taylorville native and one of the top senior golfers in the state of Illinois for the past several years, **David Ryan**. David is the current reigning USGA Senior Amateur Champion. He spoke of some of the experiences he has had playing competitive golf, and his experience in the Senior Amateur Tournament, where he had to compete in 36 holes of medal play followed by six matches to become the champion.



**Kurt "Turtle" Rodgers**, Head Pro, Red Tail Run G.C.



**Sam Osbourne**, Head Men's Golf Coach, Millikin University



**David Ryan**, reigning USGA Senior Amateur Champion

Tuesday was the first day of competition for all divisions. The boys 10-11, 12-13, and 14-15 age groups along with the girls 10-12, & 13-14 age groups played two days, completing their 36-hole event on Wednesday. The boys 16-18 and girls 15-18 age groups had a cut after 36 holes. Those making the cut advanced to Thursday's round to determine the 54-hole champions.

Winners and qualifiers advanced to the International tournament July 18<sup>th</sup>-August 2<sup>nd</sup>.





Boys 14-15, L to R: Qualifier, **Patrick Adler**, 82-84-166 (Winnetka, IL); 2nd Place, **Patrick Moorhead**, 78-76-154 (Lake Forest, IL); 1st Place, **Cole Davis**, 76-75-151, (Marshalltown, IA); 3rd Place, **Alex McCulla**, 78-80-158 (Quincy, IL); Tournament Chair, **Terry Wright**



Girls 13-14, L to R: **Faith Davis**, 81-86-167; **Dani Grace Schrock**, 78-80-158; 2nd Place, **Sarah Balding**, 79-78-157; 1st Place, **Kylie Vaughan**, 78-74-15; Tournament Chair, **Terry Wright**



Boys 10-11: 1st Place, **Owen Bolles**, 98-100-198; Tournament Chair, **Terry Wright**



Boys 12-13, L to R: Tournament IT Chair, **Adam Vocks**; 1st Place, **Paulius Malcius**, 81-89-170 (Lemont, IL) - won playoff; 2nd Place, **Jack Massa**, 84-86-170 (Highland, IL)



Girls 10-12, L to R: 2nd Place, **Madelyn Young**, 86-92-178 (Mt. Carmel, IL); 1st Place, **Reagan Kennedy**, 87-85-172 (Bloomington, IL); Tournament IT Chair, **Adam Vocks**



Girls 15-18, L to R: 3rd Place, **Sarah Breslin**, 80-84-81-245 (Duquoin, IL); 1st Place, **Savannah Wyerauch**, 79-83-79-241 (Bloomington, IL) - won playoff; 2nd Place, **Ali Schrock**, 81-81-79-241 (Pontiac, IL); Tournament IT Chair, **Adam Vocks**



Boys 16-18, L to R: Qualifier, **Reis Dreyer**, 76-75-74-225 (Quincy, IL); 3rd Place, **Kyle Edwards**, 70-80-75-225 (Bloomington, IL) - won playoff; 2nd place, **Kolten Bauer**, 71-73-73-217 (Alton, IL); 1st Place, **Michael Holtz**, 75-70-72-217 (Godfrey, IL) - won playoff; Tournament IT Chair, **Adam Vocks**

# Lights, Camera, Action at Camp Coco

By Chris Smith, Childhood Cancer Chair

It was another great year at Camp Coco, the camp for kids with cancer! Optimists from all over the district gathered on June 27 at Camp Coco at Lake Bloomington for this year's activity. In the tradition of Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland (I know! We'll give a show!), we proved Optimists have a lot of director talent! We worked with the campers to create and perform skits that were videotaped for posterity! All of the 150+ kids were engaged and had fun. And that's what camp is about!

**Doug Faulkner** of OneMoment Video did a great job working with us, along with his son **John**, and we look forward to seeing the DVD that we will be sharing with the campers.

Thanks again for the district support, especially the fearsome foursome from **Moline Breakfast!** Who knew those guys had such theater skills?! **Oak Park** came a long way through Chicago traffic to provide two volunteers (thanks **Al!**), and **Steve** and **Ruth** represented the District leadership brilliantly!

And, of course, a shout out to **Springfield Luncheon Club**, which (including me) provided five helpers.

It's all about the kids, and it doesn't happen without **Illinois Optimists** support. THANKS!!





Congratulations to the **Marshall-Clark County Optimist Club**, celebrating 25 years since they were chartered on October 29, 1992.



# Planning for the Future

By Sandi Schmidt, Governor-Elect

I am very happy to have been elected Governor-Elect at our recent District Convention. Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to serve you in this important role. I know that when we all work together we will be able to accomplish great things for the youth of Illinois!



Just a little background about me – I’ve been an Optimist member since November 1993, first as a member of the **Silvis Optimist Club** and currently as a member of the **Moline Breakfast Optimist Club** and the **Bettendorf (Iowa) Optimist Club**. I’ve served in many roles in both these clubs and the Illinois District. My club roles include President, Vice President, Board Member and Club Foundation Rep for several years, and a member of numerous committees. I am currently the Treasurer of the Moline club, and I recently introduced a new Guest Reader program in a local pre-school. At the District level, I’ve served as the Secretary-Treasurer (3 years), District Foundation Rep (3 years), Bulletin Editor (2 years), Oratorical Contest Chair (4 years), and several other committee roles.

I’ve started making plans for my term as Governor in the 2018-19 Optimist year. I’m looking forward to an exciting year, celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Optimist International and working with all the Illinois Optimists and great international leaders, **Rebecca Butler Mona**, International President-Elect, and **Gerri Barnett**, International Vice President-Elect for the Middle America Year. Both Becky and Gerri are from the Iowa District, and they’ve been very involved in their clubs, their District, and International offices and committees.

There are three major areas I believe we need to work on as we strive to build on the past successes of the Optimist clubs in Illinois:

- Building camaraderie and a sense of community among our clubs. This includes how we interact at the district, zone, and club levels. All of us have a responsibility to make our clubs the best they can be. Improving relationships and learning from our peers are great ways to make that happen.
- Growing our membership. This includes building new clubs, adding new members to our existing clubs, and retaining our experienced members. I have some ideas for how to make this happen, and I look forward to hearing how you make this a priority for your club.
- Serving more kids in our communities. I believe this will be a natural side effect of our successes on the two items listed above.

None of this can happen without **you**! We must all work together as a team to achieve our goals and grow Optimism in Illinois. I know I can count on each of you to give your best effort for your club and the kids as we move forward.

Building a strong District team is critical to the Illinois Optimists’ success. I’m starting to work on identifying the leaders who will be members of that team. If you’re interested in serving in a District position, as a Lt. Governor, officer, or committee chair, or if you just want to know more about how these roles work in Illinois, please let me know. You can reach me at 309-236-1342 or [schmidtsandi@gmail.com](mailto:schmidtsandi@gmail.com).

If your club has an event, activity, or meeting you’d like me to attend, please let me know so I can get it on my calendar. I want to visit your club! My role is to support you and help make your club even more successful than you are today. Together we can make a huge difference in the lives of Illinois kids!

# Greenville Optimist Scholarship Recipients Announced

By Larry Martin, Greenville Optimist

At the Greenville High School Awards Night on May 11, the **Greenville Optimist Club** announced the recipients of their two \$1,000 scholarships. **Brooke Krankel** received the Bill Wise Optimist Memorial Scholarship, and **Hannah Gaffner** received the Greenville Optimist Club General Scholarship. Representing the **Greenville Optimist Club** at the Awards Night were **Ruth Wise** and **Don Reed**.



Ruth Wise, Brooke Krankel, Hannah Gaffner, and Don Reed

# Moline Breakfast Optimist Avenue of Flags a Success

By Bob Clancy, Moline Breakfast Optimist

This year, the **Moline Breakfast Optimist Club** joined the ranks of Optimist clubs across the country who have a successful "Avenue of Flags" program in their community, raising money to support club youth projects and promoting patriotism. Flag customers now have a flag flying in their yard on five flag holidays, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, and Veterans Day.

Club Flag Chair **Mike Tyler** has worked tirelessly, with the support of many members of the club, to make this project a success. He received valuable support from the **Quad City Morning Optimist Club** (Iowa), learning how to assemble the flags and get this project moving.



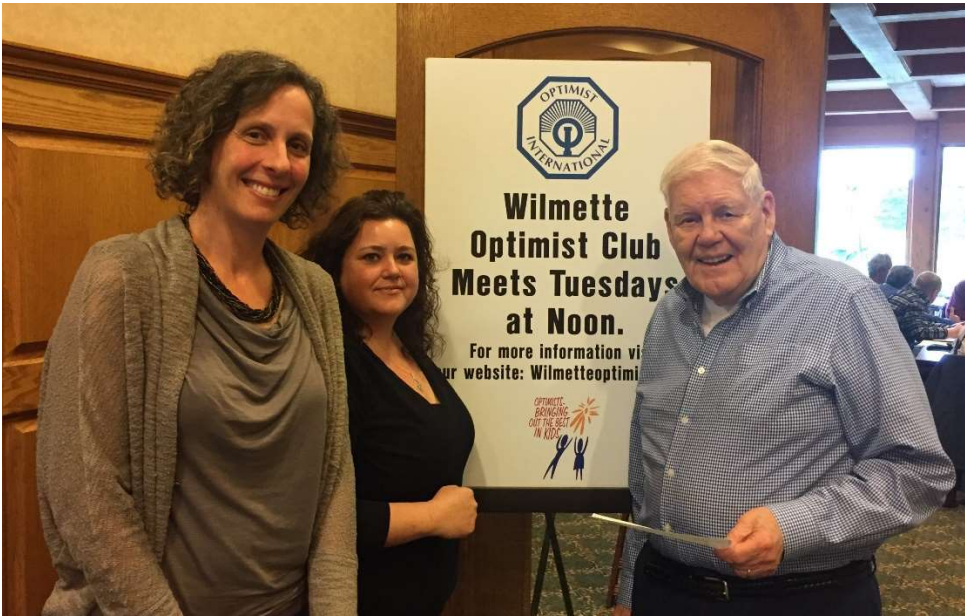
Flags flying along the Mississippi River in Moline

Team captains have completed successful door-to-door sales events, assisted by other members of the club. The initial goal was to have 200 flag subscriptions for 2017, and the club is happy to have surpassed that goal with almost 340 subscriptions sold to date.

Future plans for this project include sub-contracting the placement and removal of flags on each flag holiday to youth organizations in the community, sharing the profits with those groups for their efforts.

# Wilmette Optimists Provide Strong Community Support

By Noel Jackson, Wilmette Optimist



Pictured from left to right: **Kristen Dean**, Co-President, **Karen Funari**, Executive Director, of Youth Connection, and **Don Butzen**, Chairman of the **Wilmette Optimist Club** Foundation.

The **Wilmette Optimist Club** is pleased to announce that it has awarded \$2,000 to a local non-profit that is "bringing out the best in kids" as part of its ongoing commitment to the community.

Youth Connection's mission is to offer low or no cost social, service, and learning opportunities to Wilmette area 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders. They provide experiences that encourage kids to participate, grow, and have fun in a safe, inclusive environment.

The Warming House Youth Center is a non-profit agency that is open to teens in grades 8 through 12 five days per week. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade teens are welcome on Saturdays. The Warming House provides a welcoming environment to all teens. Teens are welcome to drop in voluntarily during open hours and to use the Center in whatever way best suits them. Whether playing pool, cooking in the kitchen, doing homework, or chatting on the couch, teens build healthy relationships with staff and peers. Structured programs are offered daily and include multiculturalism, volunteering, creative arts, health discussion groups, youth leadership board, academics, community service, and recreation.

The **Wilmette Optimist Club** is a supporter of this organization and on Friday, May 19, 2017, was awarded Youth Advocate of the Year at their Annual Benefit and Silent Auction.



Pictured from left to right: **Noel Jackson**, President of the **Wilmette Optimist Club**, and **Cynthia Doucette**, Executive Director of the Warming House.

# Optimist Club of Deerfield Service Recognition Award

By Judy Geuder, Deerfield Optimist

The **Optimist Club of Deerfield** held its' first annual Service Recognition Award program this past May. This program recognizes students in the high school for their outstanding service to their school and community.

In December, an email was sent to all the teachers and staff at our local Deerfield High School announcing the new program. In January, as everyone came back from winter break, we launched the program.

All teachers and staff were asked to participate and to recommend a student that met the service criteria determined by the committee. 20 students were nominated. An application form was then sent to each student, but the nominator remained anonymous. 16 students chose to participate. After the applications were received by the Club, each nominee was interviewed by two Optimist Club members and the winners were chosen, with a maximum of three in each class (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior). In all, there were 3 winners each in the Junior and Senior classes, two in the Sophomore class and one in the Freshman class.

The Club was literally "blown away" by the achievements of these remarkable young people. Some examples are:

- A student who developed her own blog on internet security after hearing about a district breach which resulted in identity theft. She has since started working with our Village and local schools doing presentations and education about identity theft.
- A student who created a "socktopi" stuffed animal to donate to organizations so that they can sell them for fundraising
- Students who raised tens of thousands of dollars for the high school School Chest, an annual fundraiser
- Students who work with underserved and special needs children
- A student who created a non-profit organization to raise money in honor of a friend diagnosed with cancer
- A student who created a DJ company and donates his services complimentary to non-profit organizations for their fundraisers



A reception was held in a local restaurant for the winners, and our attendees included members of the Club, the mayor, the school principal, and the Forest Preserve District president.

Each student received a \$100 award.

The Optimist Club of Deerfield will be launching the 2018 program in January. If you would like any additional information to perhaps launch this program in your area, please contact Judy Geuder, [judygeuder@gmail.com](mailto:judygeuder@gmail.com) or 847-508-0427.

# Lewistown Optimist Recognized for Community Involvement

By Robert Peterson, Lewistown Optimist

We say that Optimist Clubs are the best kept secret around, but Becky Humphrey is doing her part to change that. Becky was recently featured in the Fulton Democrat, and she shared the good works of the **Lewistown Optimist Club** in the article shown below.

Thanks, Becky, for all you do!



Becky Humphrey



By JOHN FROEHLING  
editor1855@gmail.com

Being involved in the community means more than actively volunteering for projects in Lewistown for Becky Humphrey. It is essential to success.

"My father told me, 'You must be involved in the community to succeed at your business,'" Humphrey said. And she has followed that advice steadfastly.

Humphrey has lived in Liverpool for 35 years. Perhaps unsurprisingly, spending many years as Village President.

The depth of her involvement in Lewistown may be greater than many realize, however.

Humphrey has been President of the Lewistown Chamber of Commerce for nearly 15 years, and she's been very actively involved as a member of the Lewistown Optimist Club for just about as long.

Civic groups are often eager to add new members to their rolls. Club officers hope new faces will provide fresh leadership as well; someone else can take a turn presiding over meetings, chairing project committees and holding other positions of responsibility.

When Humphrey moved into the Lewistown business community, it didn't take long for that sort of scenario to unfold. If she ever felt like a stranger there, she thought soon perished.

She and her father opened C.A.R. Financial Inc., a tax preparation and insurance business, in December 2002 at 195 West Euclid Street. To show her support for the community, Humphrey attended a Lewistown Chamber of Commerce meeting in January 2003.

Before that meeting was over, Humphrey had become Vice President of the Chamber. And they knew they had chosen well. Six months later she was President - and she's been President ever since.

Humphrey's also been with the Lewistown Optimist Club since 2003 or 2004. She plays a key role with that group, too.

"I just turned 60, and I'm the youngest in the group," Humphrey said. She added she'd like to see younger people get involved with the Optimists.

## Community service

The Lewistown Optimist Club and Lewistown Chamber of Commerce do countless projects for children, families and businesses with the support of the community.

The Optimists conduct the annual Easter Egg Hunt for more than 200 children, stuffing 3,000 to 4,000 eggs with candy, prizes and money.

They also host Fright Night at the elementary school to provide a safe environment for children to trick-or-treat. Businesses sponsor various doors and hand out treats.

To provide gifts for needy children at Christmas, they place Tag Trees at the Fulton County Courthouse, the two local Casey's stores and all the local banks. Members of the public are encouraged to pick a tag off a tree and purchase a gift for the child indicated.

A lot of preparation goes into this. To raise fund the Optimists hold an auction the first week of April and man a lemonade stand at the Fulton County Fair. In early November, the Tag Trees cam-

paign is advertised in the newspaper.

"Theresa and I fill out 125 to 200 tags, laminate them and distribute them" where the Tag Trees are set up, Humphrey said.

When it's time to pick up the gifts purchased, they are taken to Humphrey's business to prepare for distribution. It's a busy scene at the office.

"It looks like something exploded in here," Humphrey said.

In addition, the Optimist Club fills all the tags not taken. "We spend three to five hours shopping" for all those tags, she said.

"But without the community support, there wouldn't be any Tag Trees. So we're very grateful," Humphrey said.

She said they gave gifts to 157 kids last year.

"We also donate to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts," Humphrey said.

In addition, the Optimists sponsor an essay contest for scholarships. Those who go on to win at the state level win more scholarships. Locally, the essays are assigned by English teacher Susan Lafary to students in her honors class.

The Optimists also sponsor the float for Santa Claus in the annual Lighted Christmas Parade, the decorated float contest for the parade and treats after it in the Presbyterian Church. "You get to decorate a cookie and sit on Santa's lap," Humphrey said.

The Lewistown Chamber sponsors the parade itself. They've tried to organize a Tour of Homes the last couple of years, but to no avail, Humphrey said.

For some reason homeowners have resisted letting visitors

tromp through their houses in the middle of winter, she laughed.

The MAPPING Committee sponsors activities at the Visitors Center the day of the parade, Humphrey added.

## The Chamber

The Chamber sponsors the Little Mr. Firecracker and Ms. Sparkler Contest, fireworks, music and other activities for the Fulton County Independence Day Celebration, along with numerous other events throughout the year.

The Chamber is best known for welcoming new businesses, supporting existing businesses and promoting the local economy.

"The Chamber does ribbon cuttings for new businesses in town as an honorary thing, and invites businesses to join the Chamber, which in turn gives them free advertisement. People go to the web and look us up, so it's advantageous to be in the Chamber," Humphrey said.

She added ribbon cuttings are conducted for new members of the Chamber as well.

Humphrey said her office has received calls from people asking whether some business even exists. Others request more information about local businesses, and they provide it.

It all seems about treating others the way they wish to be treated.

"I support the community, and I just hope the community will support us," Humphrey said.

## Background

Before starting the business in Lewistown with her dad,

Humphrey worked for State Farm Insurance agent Gene Zook and other agencies from 1993 to 2000. Her father, the late Charles Arnold Alexander, owned C.A.R. Financial in Pekin. He specialized in tax preparation.

They talked about joining forces. Her clients were in Lewistown. He maintained an office in Pekin but moved the headquarters to Lewistown. It was cheaper to buy than rent, so they purchased the building on West Euclid, she said.

"Heck, we bought the building on a gentleman's handshake," Humphrey recalled.

Theresa Strode joined the business in March 2003 and soon after became a partner. She provides payroll and other financial services. In fact, she overlaps with Humphrey in most of the work now. Later, Sheldon Burget joined and became a partner. He

## Changes

Humphrey's father died in 2015. The business moved December 15, 2016 to its present location at 144 West 12th, behind the Casey's North store. Another change is still being being implemented - a new name for the business.

Humphrey said she and Strode and Burget have formed a new corporation called Cani2Co. They still say "C.A.R. Financial" when answering the phone, but the old company will be retired in November. They'll transition to the new name after the tax season, Humphrey said.

The characters in the name "Cani2Co" stand for "computers and consulting, accounting and audits, numbers and network, insurance and internet - to the power of 2 - Company," Humphrey said.

# Highland Honors Police, Firefighters, and EMTs

By Kevin Hemann, Highland Optimist

On May 17, the **Highland Optimist**, Moose, and Rotary clubs held their annual Respect for Law Banquet, where special members of local law enforcement are honored for their service to the community.

This year, three outstanding law professionals received awards from three categories, the David McCain Memorial Officer of the Year, the Optimist Officer of the Year, and the Moose Lodge Telecommunicator of the Year. The evening included a short awards ceremony and steak fry. Highland Police Department Chief **Terry Bell**, Highland Optimist president **David Callahan**, and Moose Lodge member **Dave Wirz** presented the awards.

Highland Police Department **Chris Flake** was given the David McCain Memorial Officer of the Year award for the second time. Flake has been with the police department for 8 years. In April of 2014, Flake became an investigator and has been assigned as the lead detective in countless felony cases. Flake plays a large part in all major cases and can always be counted on to complete his task with professionalism and dedication, says Chief Bell.

**David Callahan** presented patrolman **David Brines** with the Optimist Officer of the Year award. Brines has been with the police department since March 2008. Callahan said that Brines is known throughout Highland as a knowledgeable senior officer, who helps guide unsure officers through incidents. Brines handled 945 incidents in 2016 and was one of the leading officers in arrests and citations.

"He has consistently been one of the top performers among all of the officers," Callahan said. "He is a dependable, consistent patrolman, who requires very little instruction and assistance in performing his duties. As a seasoned patrolman, he is able to use his discretion to best serve our community. His hard work is greatly appreciated."

**Greg Stoff** was presented with the Moose Telecommunicator of the Year award. Stoff has been working for the HPD for a little over 15 years. "Greg's dedication to the Highland Police Department makes him worthy of the Moose Telecommunicator of the Year award," said Highland Moose Lodge member **Dave Wirz**, who presented the award. Stoff's knowledge and connections within the community are always beneficial when helping officers on the street. Wirz said that Stoff has a willingness to help out coworkers and has the ability to go above and beyond helping officers to gather information.



Highland Police Department Chief **Terry Bell** (left) hands Investigator **Chris Flake** (right) the David McCain Memorial Officer of the Year Award at the annual Respect for Law Banquet on May 17. The **Highland Optimist** and Rotary clubs and Moose Lodge hold the banquet every year at the Highland Pistol and Rifle Club.

The **Highland Optimist Club** has supported this program for more than 40 years.

The July 17<sup>th</sup> Optimist meeting was a very special night for the **Highland Optimist Club**. The **Highland Optimist Club** treated the Highland Fire Department, Highland-Pierron Fire Department, and Highland EMS to a steak fry dinner at the Highland Country Club. For the past several years, the Optimist Club has held this banquet in honor of the service these individuals do for our community. The club presents awards each year, with recipients selected by their captains. It was a wonderful night of fellowship that the **Highland Optimist Club** got to share with these departments. Our club greatly appreciates their service to our community.



Highland EMS Chief Wilson presented the Optimists' EMS Award of the Year to paramedics **Todd Zobrist** and **Ty Barr**.

Awards continue to pile up for the two Highland paramedics who saved a baby from the frigid waters of Silver Lake in March.

Zobrist and Barr had already worked nearly a 24-hour shift when they responded to an emergency call around 5:30 a.m. March 16 at Silver Lake, where an SUV was partially submerged.

When Zobrist and Barr arrived, they could still see the headlights from the SUV beaming through the cold water in the predawn darkness. They knew they must act fast, knowing that firefighters with a boat and special diving gear were stuck at a railroad crossing.

At the Optimist meeting, Zobrist, who also serves as a captain with the Highland-Pierron Fire Department, was presented with the Fireman of the Year award for HPFD, for his work with fire prevention, particularly with the fire prevention trailer and for always bringing new ideas.



Highland Fire Department Chief **Rick Bloemker** presents the Optimists' Fireman of the Year award to HFD Captain **Stephen Clayton** for his efforts in public education and fire prevention.



Highland-Pierron Fire Department Chief **Steve Plocher** presents Optimists' Fireman of the Year award for HPFD to Captain **Todd Zobrist**.

# Silvis Optimist Bike Rodeo Brightens Cold, Gloomy Day

By James Patrick Schmidt, Silvis Optimist



**James Patrick Schmidt** helps kids line up for the Giant Figure 8 at the **Optimist Club of Silvis'** Bike Rodeo.



The club offered face painting, and Governor-Elect **Sandi Schmidt** helped out. She even volunteered to let two of the kids paint her face for a change!

## Coming Attractions:

**Optimist International Convention** – Ottawa, Ontario, Canada - July 8-10, 2016

The 100<sup>th</sup> International Convention will kick off the celebration of Optimist International's 100<sup>th</sup> year in 2019. Watch [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org) for more details on this special convention.

### District Conferences and Convention

Look for announcement of the dates and locations from Governor-Designate **John Del Re**. Contact him for questions at [johndelre@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johndelre@sbcglobal.net).

Want to see your Optimist Club in the **Land of Lincoln Bulletin**? Look for an announcement soon, naming the Bulletin Editor for the next Optimist year.

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.