



SWIS District Newsletter 2019 – 2020



Table of Contents

Letter from the SWIS District Governor 2019-2020	02
Letter from the SWIS District Governor Designate	03
Message from SWIS District Leadership Chair	04
Message from OI Great Plains Region Growth Team	04
Message from SWIS District Fitness Chair	05
SWIS District Virtual Conference	06
OI Foundation Updates – SWIS District and OI Chairs	07
SWIS District FUND CRAZR Update	08
OI President Video Messages	09
OI Convention 2020 Fun Facts	09
A Message from the Optimist Brothers	09
OI Oratorical Contest Information	10
OI Announcements and Reminders	10
Guessin Jams in your Jam-Jams	11
SWIS District Club Stories	12-17
SWIS District Leadership Team 2020-2021	18
OI President and Convention 2020-2021	19
OI 2020-2021 Election Updates	20-21
SWIS District 2019-2020 Lieutenant Governors	22
SWIS District Governor’s Team 2019-2020	23
SWIS District Website	24
Optimist Creed	25

SWIS District Newsletter Contributors

Amanda Szymkowski

Editor, SWIS District Newsletter
amanda.szymkowski@gmail.com
(414) 202-4116

Christine Dieckhoff

SWIS District Governor 2019-2020
christidee@litewire.net
(608) 558-5828

Bonnie Spindler

Chair, SWIS District Website
blspindler@charter.net
(608)-850-9561

Conversations with Christine

Christine Dieckhoff
SWIS District Governor 2019-2020



Hi fellow Optimists! We are facing the conclusion of the 2019-2020 year, and what a year it's been! We have had three wonderful conferences, worked on new projects to serve our communities, discovered new ways to engage our youth, donated to worthy causes, and kept our optimism during one of the most difficult pandemics the world has ever seen!

I am so proud of all of you! Even though it's been hard to gain new members because of our "stay at home" orders, we have still added 102 members as of this writing. Sadly, we've lost 182 members for various reasons, leaving us with a net loss of 80 members. BUT our upcoming Governor, Maxine Lane, will have a clean slate to help build the district back up and surpass my expectations!

By the time you are reading this, the first ever Virtual OI convention will have been held. I hope those of you that attended really enjoyed it and gained new insight into this wonderful organization! I'm sure I will have discovered new and exciting ways to carry on optimism!

And I'm not done yet! I held a zoom "Coffee with the Governor" and am now planning an evening get together to socialize and exchange ideas in July and September. I'm also looking forward to our virtual 4th Quarter Convention. We will recognize outstanding Optimists for their new project with a \$500.00 prize, and Maxine will reveal her new plans for the upcoming new year.

Finally, I want all of you to know how honored I am to have served you as Governor. I have done my best, which hasn't been easy during this time of social upheaval and the COVID-19 virus; but I will continue to serve you as a past Governor in the most important Organization in the world, Optimists International!

In Optimism,
Governor Christine



Maxine's Message

Maxine Lane: SWIS District Governor Designate

Yes, **WE WANT YOU!**

We want and need you to help Governor Christine and the SWIS District to finish her year **STRONG!**



I do not know the exact history of the SWIS District; however, I do know the history of this past year...one of changes, hardships, financial stresses, etc., etc. that I never would have believed seeing in my lifetime. This concept of social distancing, wearing a mask, businesses being closed for months on end, a Pandemic taking multiple lives day after day. These things just don't happen in the Great United States of America! But, alas, as we all have learned, they certainly do, unfortunately.

We want you and we need you. We **WANT** you and we **NEED** you. Our district is drastically down in membership. Needless to say, and as we are all aware, this has been a difficult year. However, as Optimists, we know all is not lost. The glass is half full, not half empty. We can pull off the greatest event ever in the history of the SWIS District. **HOWEVER, WE NEED EVERYONE!** We have two months to bring in a new member, allowing each and every one of us to celebrate this accomplishment with Governor Christine. This request has gone out many times! This time, as Governor Designate, I am reaching out and asking each of you to personally bring in one new member to help Governor Christine finish strong.

If you are wondering how to do you do this, then I would ask you: Do you have a spouse or special friend who is not an Optimist Member? Ask them to join this organization that you believe in and support. Give them the opportunity to experience the level of satisfaction you do by serving your community and, perhaps more importantly, youth. Even with social distancing, you could gather with 4 to 6 friends, perhaps you have a card club, and make a presentation to them about your involvement in Optimism. The rewards that come back to a member is tenfold by seeing the youth we serve benefit time and time again.

Only you will know if you help Governor Christine finish strong. All we can do is make the request. I know I'm going to do my part. We perhaps cannot make up the entire deficit; however, we can certainly make an Optimistic dent in the number. Please join me in supporting Governor Christine and turning a difficult year into one of celebration!

Leadership and Growth Development Updates



Leadership Development

Barb Brinkmann

As your SWIS District Leadership Chair, it is my responsibility to offer training to any leader in your Club. I understand it is a difficult time for clubs to meet and organize events, so let me help you work through these barriers. I will set up a Zoom meeting where we can discuss your and your club's needs, and we can find solutions together. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Barb Brinkmann

barbbrinkmann@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP RETENTION THE ULTIMATE BOTTOM LINE

Because of major advances in communications and computer technology, the effects of world trends are now felt immediately by individuals as well as corporations that belong to membership organizations.

Members don't exist in a vacuum, but rather in a constantly changing world. You need to know what your Members value and how their needs are changing to be able to respond in a meaningful way. It's simple if you can not respond, some other organization will be ready to fill those current needs.

An interesting paradox surrounds first-year Members. While the first year of membership offers the best opportunity to lay the foundation for long-term loyalty to your Club, it's also the year that Members are most likely to leave your Club.

Since the early 1990s, corporate America has shifted its emphasis from obtaining new customers to retaining current customers. This shift is not just for "warm fuzzy" reasons. They do it because it is good business.

Consider the frequent flyer programs and clubs introduced by every airline. Retention is the motivation behind their acquisition of customer loyalty, customer relations, and building customer relationships. Many of these types of programs use the term "Member" or "Membership" because it appears to have a significant amount of perceived loyalty from the individual customer. American Express has used the slogan "Membership has its privileges."

It is a "privilege" to be a Member of your Club! Some hints to retention of Club Members:

- Retention starts with recruitment.
- When you lose a Member you must recruit two in order to show growth.
- Renewal is only the last step in the long process of retention.
- Members are neither identical nor interchangeable.

Pay special attention to new Members so they will convert to long term Members.

Whether you are focusing on first or second year Members, take the time to find out what each Member wants from his or her Club. When new Members feel they are getting a lot out of their Club, they will be more willing to dive deeper in their participation and commitment to remaining a Member for years to come.



Growth Development

Joanne Ganske

If you are struggling to keep new members, here are a few take-aways from this Membership Retention document (pictured on the left), published in 2004, but the message is as relevant now as it was back then:

1. "Members don't exist in a vacuum, but rather in a constantly changing world. You need to know what your members value and how their needs are changing to be able to respond in a meaningful way."
2. "An interesting paradox surrounds first-year members. While the first year of membership offers the best opportunity to lay the foundation for long-term loyalty to your club, it's also the year that members are most likely to leave."



3. "Members are neither identical or interchangeable"

4. "Pay special attention to new members so they will convert to long-term members"

5. "Whether you are focusing on first-year or second-year members, take the time to find out what each member wants from his or her club. When new members feel they are getting a lot out of their club, they will be more willing to dive deeper in their participation and commitment to remaining a member for years to come."



Imagine How Fit we can Become in a Changing World

Maureen Crombie: 2019-20 Fitness Chair

Governor Christine's theme is "Just Imagine Serving Children in a Changing World". The COVID-19 pandemic has made us change the way we do things in our clubs. Many clubs are having Zoom meetings. Some of the ZOOM meetings are with guest speakers and some are Happy Hour Zoom meetings. Many projects have been cancelled. However, this has given clubs an opportunity to do a needs assessment in their communities. Clubs have had more time to engage with their communities on social media. This is exactly what clubs in the Southern Wisconsin District and all over the world have been doing. We need to step outside of our comfort zone and find ways to engage, retain and add new members, and inform and listen to our communities. It is our optimistic spirit and positive approach that brought us together. Now is a great time to get your club back to a healthy and sustainable club in the future. It is time to renew, refresh and revitalize your clubs.

How can we work on contributing to our clubs? We can rotate committee members every year for different projects with specific job responsibilities. This encourages members to become more active and increases their knowledge of Optimism. We can send a survey to members annually to get their thoughts on how the club is doing. Form a committee to address negative responses. Make sure to reach out to those members who do not respond to get their feedback. We can contact members who have left the club to find out their reasons for leaving, what they liked about being a member and what areas of the club need improvement. Discuss what can be done to get them to come back or become a Friend of Optimists. We can host events that include members' families throughout the year. Offer educational events and leadership training as part of regular meetings or in special workshops. Organize community service projects that can be completed in a short amount of time. Provide opportunities for members to gather, perform service, socialize and foster fellowship. If a member is absent from three consecutive meetings without providing a reason, select someone to contact that person and find out their reason for missing the meetings. If the member has a complaint or issue, the club should take action to correct the situation and retain the member. Create and distribute a calendar that reminds members about scheduled meetings and programs. Print the meeting schedule in your club's newsletter and post it on the club's website. Work with another club on a service project to expand networking opportunities, community contacts and fellowship. And lastly, encourage members to attend SWIS District conferences and the Optimist International Convention. We will get through this COVID-19 pandemic and be stronger because of it. Stay Optimistic my friends!

Maureen Crombie
2019-20 Fitness Chair

SWIS District 4th Quarter Conference

Dates: 8/21-8/22/20

Time: 9:00AM – 12:00PM

Location: Virtual

Registration is FREE: Please register by August 19th.

https://swisdistrict.org/conferences/register_person.asp?conf_config_id=50

Schedule:

Friday, August 21:

7:00PM - 8:00PM: SWIS District Executive Meeting

Saturday, August 22:

8:15AM - 8:45AM: Past Governor's Meeting "Half Hour Head Start

9:00AM - 12:00PM: SWIS District Virtual Convention

- Virtual Convention Begins at the Starting Line
- IMAGINE: Getting a Head Start -SWIS District Governor, Christine Dieckhoff
- Use Your IMAGINation
- Special Presentation: Optimist John Fons “Rebuilding”
- A Little Business
- Training Opportunities: Optimist Barb Brinkman
- Introducing “MaxForce”
- OIF “It’s All About The Kids”
- Looking at the Finish line-SWIS District Governor, Christine Dieckhoff
- Honoring Optimism
- From Coffee to Convention-What’s Ahead

We hope to see you and all of your club members there!

Optimist International Foundation Updates

SWIS District OI Foundation Rep:
Wayne Dieckhoff



As I write this article, I have to say I'm saddened by the fact that so many activities are still being cancelled. However, I'm happy to hear that most people and organizations are using common sense in dealing with the

All of this presents problems for the OI Foundation as well. We don't have the in-person opportunities to have basket auctions and 50/50 raffles at our district conferences to raise money for the foundation. However, there are other ways to support the Optimist International Foundation.

First of all, if you have not yet done so, I would encourage you to sign up for dime-a-day as soon as possible. A second opportunity is to ask for donations to the foundation for any upcoming birthdays instead of asking for personal gifts. Lastly, please contact me if you would like to make a direct donation to OI Foundation and I will help you send it to the foundation.

Thank you for all the support! We will get back to some type of normal - sometime!

Yours in Optimism,

Wayne Dieckhoff
608-558-5868
wdadj@litewire.net

President-Elect, 2019-2020 OI Foundation Board:
Jan Oord Graves

The Optimist International Foundation (OIF) is proud to announce that during the 2020 - 2021 Optimist Year we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of "Helping Optimists Help Kids."

Here are a few highlights of OIF accomplishments during the past Optimist year:

- Supported the Optimist International Oratorical World Championship Contest by funding the US and International Regional winners and the top three finishers in the finals: \$70,000.
- Sent 113 students to college with Optimist International Oratorical, Essay and Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing scholarships: \$270,000.
- Contributed \$51,451 toward the OI Research Fellowship at Johns Hopkins. Plus, an additional \$69,754 towards a new research effort around pediatric bone marrow transplants.
- Assisted 367 Optimists to help 4,889 children and their families by awarding 20 Club Grants, including one grant to a Club in Africa.
- Launched the OI Childhood Health and Wellness program: \$28,000
- Paid out \$553,112 to Clubs utilizing the Club Campaign program and added \$61,361 in interest to the Club Campaign funds.



The FUND CRAZR Guarantee
Fred Dorn: Chair, SWIS District FUND CRAZR



Due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, some things may have to be altered during this NFL Football Season. Let's imagine that the football season doesn't start until some time in October. Let's assume that the teams begin weekly games for about four weeks or so, but a spike in COVID cases causes an immediate stoppage of play.

Each ticket shows a starting date in the month of September. No matter when the season starts, we will go by the week numbers instead of the dates: i.e. Week 1 is week number one, whether in September or later. If play is stopped at any point after it begins, we will continue the sweepstakes with our back up software for the remainder of the season or until play resumes. The ticket buyer will not notice a difference in the way the sweepstakes is run. The software will continue to calculate the weekly score totals and determine winners in all 11 to 15 categories. We guarantee that \$1,000 will be paid out each week.

With that guarantee, I would like to encourage you to participate in the 2020 FUND CRAZR. Please do not feel reluctant; we have your back. During this time of closures and cancelations, most of our fundraising events have also been canceled. We know our clubs are struggling, and we are here to help. Selling FUND CRAZR tickets for the NFL season, no matter what that season looks like, is an ideal opportunity for our clubs to boost their revenue.

If any of you have any questions or still have jitters about the season, please reach out to me so we can discuss.

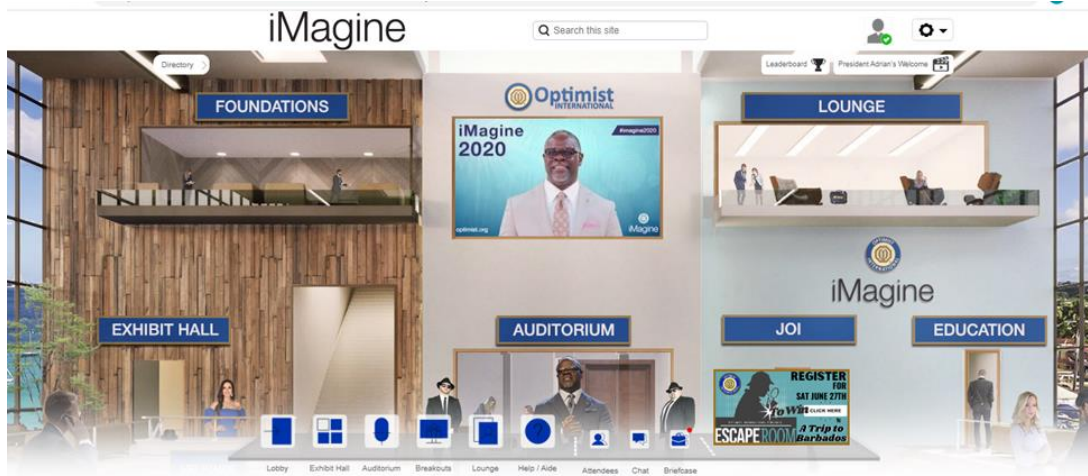
Fred Dorn
(608) 849-5290
(608) 220-1531
fdorn@chorus.net
fdorn476@gmail.com
f_dorn@hotmail.com



Adrian Elcock Optimist International President 2019-2020

Adrian’s [COVID-19/Pandemic Disaster Relief Fund](#) Message

Adrian’s [Optimist International Convention 2020](#) Message



Fun Facts about #OICon2020:

- Registration is still open
- Keynote speeches, Presidential addresses, and workshops will be available until at least September 30th!
- Keynote speaker Jermaine Harris from Cardiff, Wales in the United Kingdom is an inspirational speaker and author of "The Rut Buster: The Secrets to Taking Control of Your Body, Money, Career & Life."
- Keynote speaker Rachel Thomas spoke on the "7 Levels of Leadership," emphasizing that we are all leaders whether we lead by choice or by default.



A Message from the Optimist Brothers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q31Vn-vMiWw>

In case you missed it, the Optimist Brothers have a special invitation for you! Joliet James and JoshWood worked extra hard on the 2020 Optimist International Conventional. They picked up their keynote speakers and trainers and moved them from Chicagoland, IL to your homes. This year’s convention is affordable, easy to travel to (wherever your home computer/tablet may be) and a must-not miss! So put on your comfy pants, get your “four fried chickens and a coke” or “dry, white toast” ready, and join in on the virtual fun!



Optimist International Oratorical Contest: Re-iMaged Topic "Just iMagine a World Without Boundaries"

Congratulations to Jaylon Muchison, 2020 Optimist International Oratorical World Champion! As winner of the international competition, Jaylon will receive a \$15,000 scholarship, in addition to \$5,000 as winner of the Regional competition and \$2,500 for winning the Illinois District contest. Jaylon is about to start his freshman year at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and was sponsored by the Optimist Club of Belleville, Illinois.

The Regional Competition and World Championship took place via live-stream (YouTube and Facebook) on July 16 and 17, 2020. This year, there about 50 participants from seven regions (one French-speaking region, and six English-speaking). Each region's winner will receive a \$5,000 scholarship. Congratulations to the following Regional Champions:

- Flavie Bastien, Optimist Club of Lafleche; Centre du Quebec
- Jasmine Berasategui, Optimist Club of Lawton-Lasill, Oklahoma; Oklahoma
- Carina Bruno, Optimist Club of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Atlantic Central
- Amaya de la Cruz, Optimist Club of Elk Grove, California; Pacific Central
- Matteo Mauro, Optimist Club of Gulf Breeze, Florida; North Florida
- Ayana Stauffer, Optimist Club of St. Paul, Minnesota; Dakotas, Manitoba and Minnesota

Optimist International is grateful to the Optimist International Foundation and the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation for providing these scholarships, and all who donated to either Foundation.

Optimist International Announcements and Reminders:

1. Members-At-Large: Do you know someone who wants to join an Optimist Club, but can't find one nearby? President Adrian Elcock announced at iMagine 2020 Virtual Convention this new membership category, ideal for those who live in locations where there is no club available and are not able to commit to starting one on their own.
2. New Club Officer Reports are due September 30. You can register your 2020-21 Club officers by logging in to optimist.org and clicking on "Reports."

Guessin' Jams in your Jam-Jams

Your Hosts: Josh Zaidel and Tracy Huxley



Guessin' Jams in your Jam Jams has made our Optimist Clubs the world leaders in Pandemic Music Trivia Competitions – and that is an unverified fact.

The creators of *Jam Jams*, Tracy Huxley and Josh Zaidel, met playing Bingo at Governor Training in 2015. They've been Optimist All Stars and Optimist International Convention roommates ever since. The inspiration for the game, "was simple," stated Josh, "I guess you can say, we've been practicing for Pandemic social distancing since we first became friends. It's tough to keep a friendship going when you only see someone for 6 days out of the year and live in different countries separated by 2 great lakes." Josh, from Milwaukee, WI and Tracy, from London, Ontario.

Tracy and Josh kept in touch through FaceTime calls until the next convention where they spent long nights catching up on each other's lives and strategizing for the next day's activities. In 2019, they began working together on planning for the 2020 Optimist International Convention in Chicago. For the first time since they first met, they were seeing each other once a month. There were Optimist meetings and events, and personal visits to Ontario and Wisconsin. Then a global pandemic struck; and, with deep sadness, these two friends said, "I guess it's back to FaceTime."

But all is not lost in friendships founded on optimism. Instead of asking to sit with their feet up on the wall, as they often would at conventions, Tracy called one day with an idea: "Let's set up a game for all of our Optimist friends." And thus *Guessin' Jams in your Jam-Jams* was born.

Guessin' Jams started with a bang. Dozens of people (both optimists, non-optimists, and future optimists) logged in every Friday night to play six rounds of *Name That Tune*. "The prize is split between everyone, and it's a fun Friday night to help us forget the worries of the week and spend a few hours relaxing, enjoying all kinds of music, and seeing our optimist friends from around the world," Josh explains. Optimist Club members from Missouri, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Texas, and different Providences of Canada, to name a few, have participated. In a time where social distancing is required – these Optimists sure have come together.

They feature hits from every era from Hair Bands to showtunes, 70s to 90s, and Motown to today. Category themes, for example, have included songs about boats, songs with made-up words, and songs with "Dance" in the title. There are also two bonus rounds: Music from around the world and Get to Know your Host, a curated playlist from either Josh or Tracy's eclectic collections. Two examples are "Josh's Workout Playlist" and "Tracy's Car Jams" from when she used to ride around in a cavalier.

Although their season finale aired June 12th, don't worry, they'll be back this summer for more Jams and more elaborate Jam Jams. "Hope to see you this summer," Tracy urges, "And don't worry, music knowledge is not a must – put on your PJ's, make yourself a drink, and enjoy the banter and music with your friends from near and far." If you are interested in joining for the summer season, send an email to Josh at joshzaidel@me.com, and you'll get a notice when the new sign-up comes out. (you can read a first-hand account on page 19)

Brodhead Project captures Front Page of Local Paper!

Christine Dieckhoff

Optimist International Presents:
**THE OPTIMIST VISUAL ARTS
COMPETITION!**



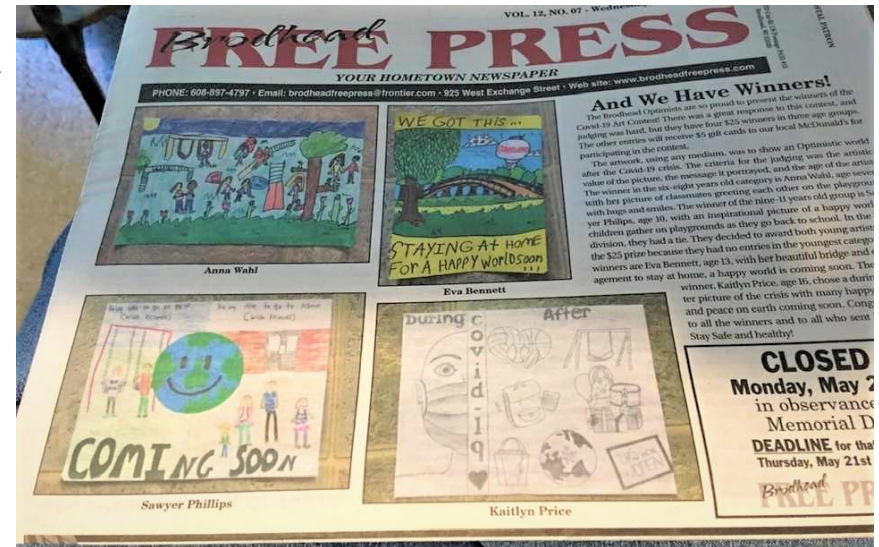
Optimist International announced two virtual competitions for youth to harness their creative talents during safer at home mandates throughout the country. The Brodhead Optimist Club held the Optimist International Visual Arts Competition. The club utilized newspaper advertising and social media to market their local competition to a wide audience. Participants must fall into one of the four age groups: Three to five years of age, six to eight years of age, nine to eleven years of age, and twelve to sixteen years of age. There would be one winner in each age group, and each would receive a \$25.00 Visa Gift card.

The club received 11 entries, in three of the four age categories. Since the club did not receive an art submission from a youth participant aged three to five years old, the club decided to award two participants in the twelve to sixteen-year-old category. All non-winning participants were surprised with a \$5.00 gift card for McDonald's. Club members received a lot of positive feedback on the competition and plan to do it again next year!



Optimist International Visual Arts Competition

If your club is interested in holding this competition, Optimist International has extended the deadline to **August 1st**. Check out the guidelines at the link below.



https://www.optimist.org/documents/Optimist_Visual_Arts_Competition.pdf

Optimist International Club Foundation Grants

Maureen Crombie

Congratulations to one of the newest clubs in the SWIS District: Lake Country Optimist Club. Their True Grit Program, featured in the previous issue of this Newsletter, was one of 21 winners of an OI Club Foundation grant this year. Winning clubs were awarded \$500 for their new club program.

The full list of recipients is as follows:

- Optimist Club of Georgetown, Indiana, 4-H Optimist Art Ecology Project
- Optimist Club of Nawalparasi, Nepal, Hope in Action
- Optimist Club of Kalamazoo-Breakfast, Michigan, Kalamazoo Kids Book Garden Project
- Playa Vista Optimist Club, California, Safe Place for Youth (S.P.Y.)
- Marana-Foothills Optimist Club, Arizona, Youth at Risk - Aging Out of Foster Care
- "Abilities" Optimist Club of Tucson, Arizona, Bike Rally(s) for Visually Impaired Kids
- Optimist Club of Oregon City, Oregon, Preserve Our Past: Art and Poetry Contest
- Optimist Club of Kewaunee, Wisconsin, Backpack for Kids
- Optimist Club of Lincoln, Nebraska, Purses with a Purpose
- Brandon Optimist Club, Mississippi, Bringing the Gift of Music to the Mississippi School for the Deaf
- Northern Wake Optimist Club, North Carolina, Rolesville Reads/Rolesville Eats
- Optimist Club of Wheat Ridge, Colorado, Autism Sensory Kit
- Rushmore Noon Optimist Club of Black Hills, South Dakota, Celebrate Our Youth Luncheon
- Optimist Club of Lower Montco, Pennsylvania, Buddy Luncheon
- Optimist Club of Greenville, North Carolina, Read to Learn
- Optimist Club of Hall County-Gainesville Inc., Georgia, Character Matters
- Hartford Area Optimist Club, South Dakota, Holiday Giving
- Optimist Club of Wake Forest, North Carolina, Emergency Clothing/Toiletries/Hygiene Products for Students
- Optimist Club of Dickinson, Texas, "A Time for Tennis" Tennis Clinic
- Lake Country Optimist Club, Wisconsin, True Grit Program
- Clinton Mid-Day Optimist Club of Missouri, Life Skills

Making It Better

John Fons, Club President, Sauk Trails Optimist Club

Four years ago I began a project that nears completion this summer: the complete reconstruction of a farm wagon that once served the Meyer Family Orchards near Milwaukee. The wagon dates from around 1900 and fell to complete ruin over the decades it sat unprotected, first in the orchards and then over the last fifty years at property here in Madison.

Once solid oak timbers could be crumbled like moldy paper mache. Iron fittings fell apart in rusted flakes like confetti. Yet enough of the wagon remained to measure and pattern and that's where I began four years ago, to remake the ruined relic of another age. An Amish wheelwright built the new wooden wagon wheels from the original rims and hub bands. A farmer cut and milled red oak timbers from his land near Fond du Lac. A family owned machine shop in Ixonia fabricated fittings after the disintegrated originals. This week

I am constructing the box of the wagon, a full twelve feet long and over three feet wide and as close to the original as I can make it.

Today something happened I didn't expect.

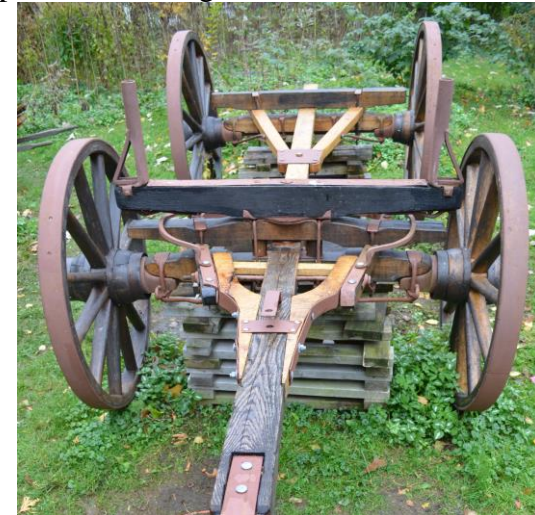
Today I made it better.

The old wagon represents so many values I cherish I could spend a long time trying to describe them. I've spent the last four years doing just that with every pull of a draw knife or push of a carpenter's plane along the length of a board. Carving the axle timbers or tightening massive bolts, I've considered what it took for men to work without anything but the few dollars they took home to feed themselves and their families and produce something so simple, so rugged and yet so ingenious a century could only add to the mystique.

And yet today as I looked at it, the wagon became better, because I saw a couple of ways that I could improve it. Drilling a hole in a brace, adding a longer carriage bolt, using a handful of lock washers where none had been used before. It took me a little while to come to that realization, that I had a right, an obligation, to make it more than a replica, more than a copy, more than a repetition of what other men had done. I had the opportunity and duty to make it real, to make it my own.

So the wagon is a real wagon. It can do the work of a real wagon, the same as it could when it came off the assembly line in some shop probably in Milwaukee, probably before anything we know today came into being. All this has something to do with being an Optimist, because in order to be an Optimist you must make things better, not just think well of things as you find them, because quite often things as you find them are in ruin. Or headed that way.

So whatever you find to work on, whatever you find to apply your talents to do or to fix, do it with the eye of an improver, the attitude of an Optimist. You can do it. You can fix it, but you can also make it better and that is Optimism personified. (see page 18 for finished wagon)



Catching up with the Sussex Lannon Lisbon Butler Optimist Club (continued on page 18)

Diane Matuszak

- **Duck Bowl Fundraiser:** We held our first fundraiser of the year back in late February and it was a great success. Teams of 4 went duck bowling, bid on raffle baskets, and had so much fun! We donated the money that was raised to youth groups in the community.
- **Soles for Jesus:** During “safer at home,” SLLB members focused on “tidying up” their closets and giving their old shoes, boots and sandals to the Soles for Jesus global project. Six large bags were filled with donated shoes for men, women and kids. For more information, please check out: www.SolesForJesus.com
- **SLLB Highway Cleanup:** On May 2nd, members cleaned up Main street in Lannon where the SLLB Adopt a Highway sign is posted. Donuts, Gatorade, gloves and masks were supplied.
- **Perennial Plant Sale:** SLLB held our annual plant sale on May 23rd and 24th. Thanks to our Friend of Optimist-Natural Therapeutics Wellness, LTD., for allowing us to use their huge driveway for this fundraiser! Over 400 plants were donated by SLB members and their friends and family. All plants were sold which made the fundraiser a great success! Due to COVID 19, it was a first time together in a while for many of the SLLB members. We relaxed afterwards and discussed upcoming events.



Catching up with the Sussex Lannon Lisbon Butler Optimist Club (continued)

Diane Matuszak



• **National Law Enforcement Week:** On May 11th, SLLB celebrated the Police officers of Sussex, Lisbon, Lannon and Butler by handing out goodie bags to the officers. President Rose Schwartz sewed face masks for each gift bag. Other members donated Kleenex, soap, energy bars and candy. While social distancing, 39 bags were stuffed for the officers, but when the cameras came out, everyone removed their masks and jumped in the picture! The Optimist International sticker was placed on the outside of each bag and bags were delivered to the police departments

Making It Better (continued)

John Fons, Club President, Sauk Trails Optimist Club

The finished wagon project as of Sunday, June 21st.





An Egg-cellently Distant Easter

By: Maureen Crombie

I really wanted to do something for the kids at Easter during this pandemic. We put together an Easter Bunny Parade in our neighborhood. We let people know the route ahead of time and of course did not throw out candy. It was a great day with so many families excited and we were escorted by the police.

It's Always Sunny in Sun Prairie

By: Maureen Crombie



The Sun Prairie Optimist Members wrapped their arms around what they could do during this pandemic. They raised money to help 158 Westside families in their "We are One Fund". Westside Elementary has a total of 420 students. Many of the families are struggling with job loss and furlough during this time. President Adam Schleicher and Immediate past Governor Maureen Crombie presented a check.

Jam-Jams ReIMagined

By: Amanda Szymkowski



As a participant of this weekly socially-distant song-guessing game, I want to share my experience with those of you who missed season 1:

1. As someone who lives alone and has been working from home since mid-March, a weekly virtual hang session was a gift. I was given the opportunity to sing, dance and chat my loneliness away with Optimist friends new and old, near and far.
2. I am beyond grateful for the amount of thought and time that Tracy and Josh put into organizing each week's evening and for being stellar hosts to a pretty rowdy bunch.
3. It wasn't until the last evening that I realized that wearing "jam-jams" was only a suggestion – and costumes were encouraged. This final night was also the first time I embraced the "change name" feature on Zoom (see AmandaCat).
4. If you are hesitant about jumping on the "jam-jams" train, please wash away your hesitation for 20 seconds under warm water. Come for the music, stay for the friends. We'd love to see your faces.

Looking Ahead to the SWIS District 2020-2021 Optimist Year

Maxine Lane, Governor Designate for Optimist Year 2020-2021 has selected her group of District leaders. We typically take photos at the 4th Quarter Conference. Since we've gone virtual this year, I would like to invite all District leaders to submit a photo of yourself (headshots are preferred) to be published in the newsletter. Here is the list of leaders:

District Officers

- Maxine Lane, Governor
- Christine Dieckhoff, Immediate Past Governor
- John Fons, Governor Elect
- Jo'El Pearlman, Event Planner
- Joan Bahr, Secretary
- Kevin Haertzen, Treasurer
- Barb Brinkmann, Leadership Development

Committee Chairs

- Joanne Ganske: OI Ambassador
- Jo'El Pearlman: Oratorical Chair
- Jessica Hodgson: Essay Chair
- Howard Crofoot and Jeff Kuchenbecker: Finance Chairs
- Amanda Szymkowski: Newsletter
- Maureen Crombie: Tri-Star
- Amy Soleimani-Mafi: Fitness Chair
- Christine Dieckhoff: CCDHH
- Tom Carls: Junior Golf
- Bonnie Spindler: Webmaster
- Wayne Dieckhoff: Foundation Rep

Lieutenant Governors

- Jerry Kuhnz, Zone 1
- Todd Paulus, Zone 2
- Dave Lowe, Zone 3
- Philip Sheahan, Zone 4
- Eileen Engelke, Zone 5
- Bonnie Spindler, Zone 6
- Fred Dorn, Zone 7

Growth Committee

- Co-Chairs: Gary Engelke and Vern Andren
- Committee Members:
 - Maureen Crombie
 - Elizabeth VanNatta
 - Phillip Sheahan
 - Rich Voegel
 - Don Kresch
 - Jeanne Voegel
 - Tom Bier
 - Dave Lowe

Please send photos to Amanda.Szymkowski@gmail.com before September 30th. Thank you!

Looking Ahead to Optimist Year 2020-2021

Optimist International



PRESIDENT DESIGNATE MARK WEINSOFF

Mark is the new 2020/2021 Optimist International President. Mark has been serving on the International Board of Directors since 2016 and has served at the International level in areas of Leadership Development, New Club Building and Membership. Join Mark to talk about what the next year in Optimism has in store and what you can do to elevate the Optimism in your Clubs. [Register for Mark](#)

Mark Weinsoff

President Designate, Optimist International

At the Optimist International Virtual Convention June 27-28, President Designate Mark Weinsoff announced that “Choose Optimism” is his theme for 2020-2021. He participated in the “Rubbing Elbows” session at the convention (bio seen here). Mark is a member of the Pacific Northwest Optimist Clubs: Optimist Club of Santa Barbara-Northside and Optimist Club of UC Santa Barbara in California.

A Message from Mark:

“In troubled times, the easy choice, the pessimistic choice, is to believe there is nothing you can do. The demanding choice, the optimistic choice, is to believe you have the power to create positive change. This choice is demanding, because the power to create positive change cannot be ignored. In the words of Stan Lee "with great power comes great responsibility. "Optimism provides the willpower to find the ‘waypower’ to overcome adversity. It is easier to find the positive way forward when we stop labeling and start communicating.” #chooseoptimism

**Save the dates for the Optimist
International Convention in Atlanta, GA**

June 30th – July 3, 2021



Optimist International President-Elect and Board of Directors 2021-2022

The results are in! Thank you to the club presidents who voted. Now meet your 2021-20212 Optimist International Leadership!



Introducing President-Elect 2021-22 Patsy Garner!



Patsy Garner will serve as Optimist International President starting in the 2021-22 Optimist Year. She is a member of the Breakfast Optimist Club of East Fort Worth, Texas, and the Arlington Community Optimist Club, of Texas.

Patsy has been an Optimist member since 1989 and has held numerous leadership positions from club president (multiple years), to District governor, to Optimist Internal Board of Directors member.

When asked why voters should vote for her, she said: “Optimism has been a part of my life for decades. I joined this great Organization around the time women were allowed to join because my mother told me it would create a bond with my daughter that would grow long into our future. I met my husband Ken while we served as Lt. Governors in separate zones. My daughter has served as club President & Lt. Governor – and my granddaughters have cheered in an Optimist program. Optimism flows through my veins.”

When asked what she will work to achieve during her year as president, she said: “As an Organization, we have made significant changes in recognizing the needs of the membership. To keep our business strong and guarantee longevity, we need to continually challenge ourselves so that we may remain the premier Youth Services organization. I commit to working together in seeking new and relevant ways to serve our clubs so they remain strong and effective in our ever-changing world.”

Click [here](#) to read Patsy’s full bio.

Click [here](#) to watch Patsy’s video message.

2020-21 Board of Directors-Elect:

Robert Doyle (EONT)

Janet Lloyd (IA)

Click [here](#) to watch her video message.

2021-2022 Optimist International Vice-Presidents Elect (continued)

A SWIS District Spotlight



Introducing Vice-President Elect, 2020-21 Josh Zaidel!



Our very own Josh Zaidel will serve as Vice-President Elect for the Great Plains Region for the 2021-2022 Optimist Year. He is a member of the Metro Milwaukee Optimist Club and Monroe Tuesday Noon Optimist Club.

Josh has been an Optimist member since 2002 when he joined the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Student Optimist Club. He has held leadership positions from Club president (multiple years) to SWIS District Governor to Optimist International Convention Host Area Committee Chair for the now virtual Chicagoland convention.

Josh speaks to his primary qualifications: "I've been an Optimist member since 2004 holding many positions at the Club, and District Level. I have experience with non-traditional clubs and their needs, as well as a voice of the Millennial generation. Tapping into this group effectively is one important thing Optimist International needs to do in order to grow and stay relevant in our society. I was Governor of the SWIS District in 2016/17 and was able to increase attendance and participation among our membership at our district meetings." When asked why clubs should vote for him, he says: "As our world evolves, our clubs need to evolve with it. A vote for me will allow for insight about how to make non-traditional clubs not just survive, but thrive."

When asked what specific things he will do for his Region, he lists:

- Bringing greater awareness to Specialty/non-traditional clubs
- Helping the districts and clubs be self-sufficient in finding information
- Providing insight to district and clubs on how to be attractive to a changing membership
- Bringing insight into new technologies that will make our clubs more efficient in our missions

Click [here](#) to read Josh's full bio.

2021-22 Vice Presidents-Elect:

- **Region 1 Northeast & Great Lakes** – Sue Armstrong (OH)
 - **Region 2 Southeast** – John Grover (SC)
- **Region 3 Mid-Atlantic** – Kathleen Manchec (AC)
- **Region 4 Middle America** – Lister Florence (EMO)
 - **Region 5 Great Plains** – Josh Zaidel (SWIS)
 - **Region 6 Southwest** – Curtis Merrill (COWY)
 - **Region 7 West Coast** – Cathy Hicks (PSW)
- **Region 8 St. Lawrence** – Nicole Paquette (EONT)

SWIS District 2019-2020 Lieutenant Governors

Zone 1

Rose Schwartz
rschwartz24@wi.rr.com
(262) 246-6390



Zone 5

Philip Sheahan
216-702-6957



Zone 2

Don Kresch
donkresch@att.net



Zone 6

Eileen Engelke
eengelke52@yahoo.com
608-732-6663



Zone 3

Maureen Crombie
crombie0112@gmail.com
(608) 576-5819



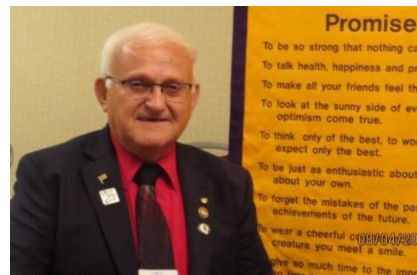
Zone 7

John Fons
jefons@aol.com
661-917-0850



Zone 4

Carol Esser
clespwi@gmail.com
608-213-3599



Zone 8

Fred Dorn
fdorn476@gmail.com
608-849-5290

SWIS District Governor's Team 2019-2020



Christine Dieckhoff
Governor



Maureen Crombie
Past Governor,
Fitness Chair



Maxine Lane
Governor
Designate



Monica Titley
District Secretary



Howard Crofoot
District Treasurer



Joanne Ganske
OI Ambassador



Wayne Dieckhoff
OI Foundation
Representative



Amy Soleimani-Mafi
Tri-Star Co-Chair



Jeffery Kuchenbecker
Finance Committee



Amanda Szymkowski
Newsletter Editor



Bonnie Spindler
Website Chair



Vern Andren
Leadership Dev. Co-Chair

Jo'El Pearlman: Conference Chair, Oratorical Chair
Tom Carls: Junior Golf Chair; **Carl Trapp:** Hospitality Chair
OPEN: CCDHH Chair, Activities Chair; **Gloria Sutter:** Essay Chair
Joe Mundwiler: Tri-Star Basketball Chair; **Richard Vogel:** Membership
Barb Brinkmann: Leadership Development Chair
Vern Andren: New Club Building
Liz VanNatta: New Club Building Chair

Visit the SWIS District Website today!

www.swisdistrict.org

Bonnie Spindler

Chair, SWIS District Website

blspindler@charter.net

(608) 850-9561



District Newsletters



Youth Programs



Conferences



District/Club Events

'Imagine: Serving children in a changing world'

Christine Dieckhoff
SWIS Governor 2019 - 2020

Leadership Tools Optimist Clubs Youth Programs District Conferences Resources/Information

- Leadership Tools
 - Leadership Tools Main
 - Succeeding As A Leader
 - Newsletters
 - Past Governors
 - District Positions Available
 - Leaderboard
- Optimist Clubs
 - District Optimist Clubs
 - Club Accomplishments
 - Featured Club
 - Join, Donate or Participate
 - Club/District Events Calendar
- Youth Programs
 - Youth Programs Main
 - Club Programs
 - District Programs
 - JOOI Programs
 - Event Registration
- District Conferences
 - District Conference Activities
 - Past Conference Information
- Resources/Information
 - Resources Main
 - Request Information
 - Optimist/Public Resources
 - District Officers
 - OI Officers
 - Optimist Regions

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 everything 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.



Thank you to everyone who contributed articles to this edition of the SWIS District Newsletter. Please send me your club stories, district and zone events, committee updates, member acknowledgments, and other articles that you would like to contribute. I will gladly accept them at anytime. Thank you!

Amanda Szymkowski
Editor, SWIS District Newsletter
amanda.szymkowski@gmail.com
(414) 202-4116