

Optimist

Fall 2022



Choose

Optimism

with International

President Bob McFadyen



Optimist
INTERNATIONAL

SAVE THE DATE!

2023 Optimist International Convention
Arlington, Virginia | July 2-5, 2023

Hyatt Regency Crystal City
at Regan International Airport



ARLINGTON
105th ANNUAL CONVENTION | 2023

MISSION STATEMENT

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

VISION STATEMENT

Optimist International will be recognized worldwide as the first volunteer organization that values all children and helps them develop to their full potential.

PURPOSES OF OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

To develop optimism as a philosophy of life utilizing the tenets of the Optimist Creed; To promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs; To inspire respect for the law; To promote patriotism and work for international agreement and friendship among all people; To aid and encourage the development of youth, in the belief that the giving of one's self in service to others will advance the well-being of humankind, community life, and the world.

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.



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Optimist

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On the Cover

Optimist International President Bob McFadyen and his wife Penny.

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Meet your 2022-2023
Optimist International
President, Robert McFadyen

Choose Optimism

We all have our own Optimist story! How we became involved. How we Chose Optimism. For me, volunteering has always been a part of my life.

I started by coaching my daughters' t-ball teams, beginning when they were 5 years old. I did that for 15 years and was elected President of the T-Ball Association under a reorganized executive structure, requiring the development of policies and job descriptions for the new executive positions. Moved with my daughters to chair the parents' fundraising committee for the competitive dance groups. When my daughter, Heather, was recognized for her volunteer time at the local Optimist Club Youth Appreciation program, I decided this was the type of organization that I would enjoy belonging to. Of course, I needed to discuss it with my wife, Penny. She said she would support me, if after I joined, I would "just participate as a member and didn't get into running everything." I think you know how that worked out!





I joined the Kitchener West Optimist Club in 1994. Six months later I was on the Club's Board of Directors. Then three years later I was Club President and two years after that, I was Lt. Governor where our Zone earned the Distinguished designation. Then went on to lead a District that helped me become an Outstanding and Distinguished Governor in 2002-03.

Then I started serving on an international level: Vice President in 2017-18 with our region #1 for growth. Nine years on various international committees including seven years on Audit & Finance (three years as Chair). I was also a Member of the Review of Optimist Structure & Administration (ROOSA) and Investment Ad Hoc Committee.

I love being an Optimist! Not just for the service we do around the world but also for the lifelong friendships I've been privileged to become a part of.

Born in Northern Ontario in a small landlocked town of Wawa, Ontario (pop. 1,000). After elementary school, my family moved south to the big city of Toronto where I finished my high school education. Then off to the University of Waterloo where not only did I graduate with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics, but I married the love of my life, Penny. We are celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary this year!

We have two daughters, Cheryl and Heather, and four grandchildren, Mathew, Emma, Meghan, and Evan. I always think of Penny as my first love and my children and grandchildren as our enduring love. Ask me about my grandchildren next time you see me – I love to share stories and pictures!

Professionally, I worked for 40 years in the Insurance Industry (Manulife Financial) managing staff and budgets. I spent most of my career on the Life Insurance side of the business, split between the Underwriting and Issue departments and the Policy Administration Departments (Death Claims, Call Centre, and Policy Change). When I retired in 2013, I had over 300 employees in 4 different cities reporting to me.



Heather Hortie (daughter), Tyler Hortie (son-in-law), Bob, Penny, Jeff Jankowski (son-in-law), Matthew Jankowski (grandson), Evan Hortie (grandson), Emma Hortie (granddaughter), Cheryl Jankowski (daughter), Meghan Jankowski (granddaughter)

What is my vision for the organization?

Optimist International, like other service and volunteer organizations, has been impacted by the changes in our society. Our membership has declined over 30 years, from a peak of 175,000 in 1990 to our current membership of approximately 53,000. If our organization is to continue to meet our mission and bring out the best in our youth, our communities, and ourselves, we need to not only choose optimism but share that optimism with others. I'm not saying anything new when I say that what we offer is needed more now than ever!

Albert Einstein defined insanity as “doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” We cannot continue to do things we always have and yet expect different outcomes – we need to change. Of course, as someone told me, “Only wet babies like change.” I realize how difficult change can

be for the rest of us. Someone else told me that we can't grow our organization organically (without a merger), and if I believe that we can, then I am either extremely arrogant or very naive.

Given a choice, I will select being very naive every time, because I believe in Optimism. If I didn't believe I could make a difference, I would not have put my name forward for President of our great organization. I wholeheartedly believe that if we can engage ALL our members, we can make a difference in the future of this organization and the communities we serve. But it must begin at the Club level. At the Member level. We have one of the best service organizations in the world, looking after the most vulnerable within our communities and developing our future leaders, one child at a time.

We also have so much to offer anyone looking for a more purposeful life, a positive, optimistic environment

in a society ravaged with social and political unrest. And there are distinct benefits to being part of the Optimist organization:

- We make a positive impact on the lives of children, making our community a better place to live.
- We develop strong friendships and relationships with like-minded, Optimistic Members in our Club, District, and Optimist International.
- We can access personal growth opportunities in leadership, public speaking, and other skills.
- We become better people by trying to live the tenets of the Optimist Creed.
- Science has shown that Optimists are healthier, happier, and more successful people. We bounce back quicker from personal setbacks and live longer.
- Through hope and positive vision, Optimists bring out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves.

I believe our core issue is that only about 7% of our Members sponsor a New Member in any given year (pre-Covid numbers). We need to engage all our Members to “Just Invite” someone to one event in their Club. A project they are passionate about, get the most reward from, or simply enjoy the most, so the guest will see our Clubs and Members in action. Maybe they’ll be motivated to join an organization that offers so much on so many different levels. When each Member Chooses Optimism and shares that choice, then there is nothing we can’t do. Together.

Towards the goal of direct and open communication, I invite you to reach out to me personally if you have a comment, suggestion, or just want to share your Optimist story. Here’s my email: presidentbob@optimist.org. Or call me on my cell phone at 1-519-500-9458. Please note that I’m located in Eastern Standard Time so if I don’t answer right away it might be midnight where I am!

Together we can continue to bring out the best in more youth, more communities, and more people. I hope you’ll join me in Choosing Optimism now and for the future!



**CHOOSE
OPTIMISM**

Some of the areas we’re focused on for the benefit of our organization and Members:

1. Direct communication between Optimist International and our Members:

- Regular monthly email updates from me to every Member.
- Open lines of communication between you, our Members, and Optimist International.
 - I want you to feel free to talk directly to me, your International President.

2. More strategy and focus on future initiatives from the international office:

- Targeted growth initiatives (bringing Optimism to communities that can sustain Clubs.)
- Enhancing Club and Membership procedures (i.e., fillable forms, online reporting, etc.)
- Bringing more relevant content to Members via the new Optimist Institute, including personal and professional development, leadership development education, inspiration, and insight.

3. Developing Marketing tools to assist Members in promoting Optimism in their communities and being an Optimist Member:

- Business style card promoting the benefits of being an Optimist and our Creed.
- Expanding Optimism into new communities.

4. Alternative revenue sources. Although much of this will take time to develop, we are starting the work on these types of initiatives now:

- Expanding our Optimist Store(s): moving beyond logo/branded items to include more “Optimistic” inventory that can be marketed both within and outside our organization.
- Developing new avenues for individuals to connect with our organization and Choose Optimism. We understand that as society changes, we need to create avenues for people to network and engage in ways that meet their needs.
- Enhancing our youth programs to deliver premier content and opportunities, developing Social Emotional Learning content for students of all ages, and modernizing our JOI program to continue to be relevant to the needs of students, schools, and communities today.

Calendar

A look at what's coming up for Optimist International

OCTOBER

- Optimist New Year
- Q1 Oct/Nov/Dec



NOVEMBER

- Fall Magazine Release
- Optimist Junior Golf: Tournament of Champions
- World Kindness Day
- Giving Tuesday
- Webinar: A New Year... New Opportunities
- Optimist International Board of Director's Meeting



DECEMBER

- Optimist Junior Golf: Hugh Cranford All Scholastic Scholarship Application Opens
- Webinar: Sharing the Gift of Optimism
- Club of the Year Submission due

JANUARY

- Q2 Jan/Feb/Mar
- Great Plains Region Vice Presidents and Governors-Elect Conference
- District Trainer Class
- Club Trainer Class
- MLK Day of Service
- Webinar: Inspiring, Educating, and Engaging All Members
- Registration and housing open for the 2023 International Convention

FEBRUARY

- Optimist Day
- Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, Southwest, and West Coast Regions Vice Presidents and Governors-Elect Conferences
- Winter Magazine Release
- Random Acts of Kindness Day
- Webinar: Keep Them Coming Back!
- IRS Annual Filing due for all U.S. Optimist Clubs, the IRS annual 990 series returns are due
- Junior Optimist Reading Month

MARCH

- Optimist International Board of Director's Meeting
- Middle America and Northeast & Great Lakes Regions Vice Presidents and Governors-Elect Conferences
- International Day of Happiness
- OIF & CCOF Club Grant Deadline
- Webinar: Spreading JOI

of Events

2022-2023

APRIL

- Q3 Apr/May/June
- OI – Essay District Winners Due
- National Volunteer Week
- Global Youth Service Day
- Webinar: Optimist International Foundation: Helping Optimists Help Kids

MAY

- Optimists in Action Month
- Spring Magazine Release
- Optimist Junior Golf: Hugh Cranford All Scholastic Winners Announced
- Webinar: PGI and PDP-What's in it for Me?
- Deadline for Districts to submit Winners for Oratorical Contest to OI
- Early Bird Registration Deadline for International Convention



JUNE

- National Children's Day
- Optimist International Board of Directors Meeting
- Deadline for Districts to submit Winners for CCDHH
- Deadline for Clubs to submit Winners for Visual Arts Competition
- International Convention and Junior Optimist International Convention



JULY

- International Convention and Junior Optimist International Convention
- Q4 July/Aug/Sept
- World Oratorical Contest
- Optimist International Junior Golf Championship



AUGUST

- Summer Magazine Release
- National Nonprofit Day
- Webinar: Growing Your Membership Retention through Improving Member Experience



SEPTEMBER

- International Day of Charity
- Deadline to submit Club Pride Report
- National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
- Closing of the Optimist Year
- Celebrate Community 2023

Letter from the Editor

Dear Optimist,

Welcome to a new Optimist Year! One that is filled with opportunities to look in new directions, try new ideas, and expand the possibilities of how you and your Club live in Optimism every day while serving your communities.

I came across this quote not long ago and it resonated with me and where we are as an organization:

“Without Optimism, there is no hope. Without hope, there is no change. Without change, there is no progress”. -Unknown

Change is an inevitable part of life, yet it remains something so difficult for many of us. Why is change so hard? According to Psychology Today, “The mere mention of the word ‘change’ may cause some to feel uneasy. We often find ourselves resisting change, perhaps because of the perceived risk or fear associated with it.” And there it is, perceived risk or fear... as human beings, we tend to gravitate towards what we may fear losing in the name of change, instead of what we may gain through change.

About a year ago I was attending the Service Club Leaders Conference, and the keynote was given by the husband and wife team Erik and Emily Orton, authors of *Seven at Sea*; they talked about the process of navigating some pretty serious life changes for their family which

included five children, and the question they asked themselves as they came across each challenge was “What could go right?”

What if we center ourselves on that particular question every time we think about change? What could go right?? As Optimists, we must acknowledge that we are in a transformational period for our organization at every level, and yes, that may feel a bit scary, but it’s also an exciting place to be.

Change is rarely one-dimensional, it’s not a singular event. It is an ongoing series of steps, some discreet, others overt that will allow us to continue to serve communities, kids, and members and even expand our impact into areas we haven’t been before. To do that though, we must be open to change, which means overcoming the fear of the unknown and fully embracing the messiness of risking something new.

Personally, I’m excited to see what we can accomplish, what can go right, as we work together to ensure the future of our organization, I hope you are too!



Cheryl Brenn
Executive Director



Save the date!

Optimist Day

Feb 2nd 2023

Optimist Day is celebrated throughout the world annually on the First Thursday of February.

Make this an extra special day of Optimism. Do something that brings Optimism into your world and see how it brings Optimism into the lives of others.

Did you know that Optimists Live Longer?

That is just one of the many scientifically proven benefits of being Optimistic. If you're not already blessed with Optimism, there is still time to learn it.

Share your story with communications@optimist.org.
How did you share Optimism on this day?





Optimist Institute

Now a Member Benefit

Optimist Institute (originally known as the LMS) was launched last quarter and is now free for all Optimist Members to subscribe to the quickly growing content!

The International Board of Directors voted unanimously to waive the Optimist Institute subscription fee of \$25 for a 12-month subscription, therefore the Optimist Institute is now available at no cost to all Members! It is renewable annually and anyone that had an account in the LMS, which was rolled over into the Optimist Institute, can log in with your username (which is your email address) and your password. If you have already logged in and added a new subscription to your account, you should now have access to all current content and more that is coming soon.

If you did not have an account in the LMS, you can [register here](#) or go to the website at www.optimist.org, scroll down to the “Leadership Development” section located in the second row/fourth column from the left, click on “Optimist Institute”. There you will find the instructions on “How to Register for the Optimist Institute”.

In addition to the annual Club Officer Courses, the Optimist Institute will offer courses in:

- Leadership Development
- Technology (with focus on Microsoft Office products and social media to help your Club!)
- Optimism
- Youth and Sports
- Optimist sponsored Programs
- Personal Development Skills
- Diversity

It does not end there! You can complete the Optimist Personal Development Program (PDP) through the Optimist Institute.

The Optimist Institute also offers video, recorded webinars, and motivational blog posts! The content will continue to grow and serve as a great resource and learning tool for all Optimist Members!

Did we mention the fee is now \$0 for all Members?!

2022-2023 Webinars



Save the dates for our leadership webinars! Webinars are held on the second Monday of each month, from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., Central Standard Time. Registration information is included, so mark your calendars! Send an email to leadership@optimist.org for more information.

► November

[A New Year . . . New Opportunities](#)

The new Optimist year is upon us. Now is the perfect time to set aside an hour to look towards an Optimistic future. Hear from our International Committees their plans including new ways to serve and grow. The goal is to meet the needs of your Club and your community. Don't miss this opportunity to ask questions and discuss these new ideas!

► December

[Sharing the Gift of Optimism](#)

Optimism is the greatest gift of all. Now is a good time to share this gift through Membership, our most valuable asset! Does your Club need new volunteers, new ideas, and fresh energy? Are you having a difficult time launching a recruitment campaign? Join us for ideas to help you recruit new Members for your Club while keeping your existing Members involved.

► January

[The Optimist Institute](#)

[Inspiring, Educating, and Engaging All Members](#)

As a new Member benefit, the Optimist Institute is now available to all Club Members for no fee! Join us for a walk through of the system and to see how to easily navigate the system to get its full benefits.

► February

[Keep Them Coming Back!](#)

Do your Club Members attend meetings and activities on a regular basis? Are your Members enjoying the "Optimist" experience, or do they pay their dues and stay at home? Is rebuilding fellowship one of your primary concerns? This session is filled with quick and easy ideas for conducting fun, effective meetings and activities.

► March

[Spreading JOI](#)

It's time to spread JOI! Are you interested in sponsoring a Junior Optimist Club, or are you currently sponsoring one and have questions? Members of the JOI Committee and JOI Board of Directors will cover the basics of building Junior Optimist Clubs, including creative ideas and innovative tips to take your sponsorship to the next level.

► April

[Optimist International Foundation:](#)

[Helping Optimists Help Kids](#)

The Optimist International Foundation (OIF) is the charitable arm of Optimist International. It provides Club Matching Grants and Scholarships for the Oratorical, Essay, and Communication Contest for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing and supports our Junior Golf and Junior Optimist International (JOI). Learn how this works and how it can support your Club fundraising so you can accept donations from additional entities in your community.

► May

[PGI and PDP—What's in It for Me?](#)

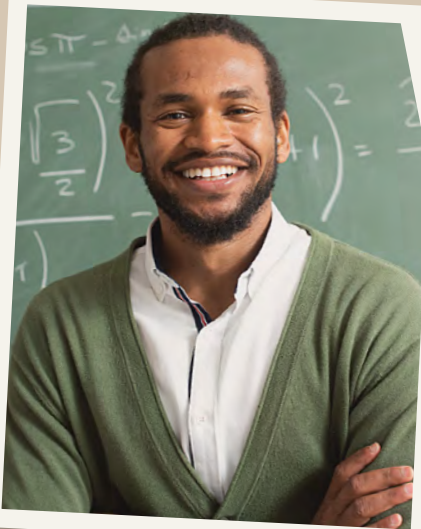
How do you become a more knowledgeable, involved Optimist? The Personal Growth and Involvement and the Professional Development Programs are your answer. Learn the basics of each program, updates, changes, and how both are designed to promote Member engagement and provide opportunities to improve your leadership and professional skills.

► August

[Growing Your Membership Retention through Improving Member Experience](#)

An exciting presentation that will teach you how to develop an exceptional and engaging membership experience. It will leave your members wanting more--more connection, more belonging, more community, and more Optimism. Do not miss this opportunity!

Teachers



Co-Workers

Business Leaders



Just Invite

“Just Invite” is about getting non-Optimists to come to a Club activity. Many of our Members were drawn into the Optimist world because they served at an event or activity. They saw how Clubs make a difference – first-hand! And most importantly, they got the feeling we are all so familiar with – a feeling of satisfaction and making an impact!

To add a little extra spice to the program, if every Member of your Club invites just one person, your Club will be recognized in the Optimist International magazine! It’s a great opportunity to highlight your Club to other Optimists and get a little recognition for your Members’ hard work! The reporting is on the honor system. Print out a Club roster by name and simply write down the name of the person they invited. As easy as that!

If someone asks why they should “Just Invite” respond with this: we want to serve more youth, do more in our community AND share that feeling we all get when we volunteer!

Who will you invite?

Friends



Neighbors



Partners in Optimism

A new way to reach distinguished Club status!

“Partners-in-Optimism” is about two Clubs working together. Ideally it would be a larger (50+ Members) working with a small Club (less than 25 Members) combining forces to grow both Clubs. If both Clubs complete the program requirements, both will be recognized as Distinguished Clubs at the end of the year.

Each Club will commit to:

- Helping each other with Membership growth.
- Perform at least one joint task per quarter (outreach or youth event, fundraiser, NOW/WOW program, Member social event, etc.).
- Meeting all requirements of the ICD-135 so both Clubs will attain Honor Club status.
- Clubs starting with less than 20 Members will commit to adding at least 10 Members and having at least 20 Members on the roster by September 30, 2023.
- Both Clubs have at least plus 15 in Membership on September 30, 2023.

Club Presidents will sign the [Presidents agreement](#) then decide on their joint task and how they can help each other get new Members (like a combined NOW event).

Ideally the two Clubs could meet at least once with all Members of both Clubs, so everyone is rowing in the same direction and working together. This is a great opportunity for brainstorming and building excitement!

Promise Yourself to be a Partner in Optimism!

PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



Childhood Health and Wellness

The Childhood Health & Wellness Program builds on the highly successful Childhood Cancer Campaign to expand our impact. Clubs and Districts will now have the opportunity to initiate projects and services to improve the quality of life for children in their communities across a broader spectrum of needs.

Optimist Photography Contest

Photographers for the contest should be students at any age up through high school and prior to post-secondary education. Students are asked to submit photos that illustrate/exemplify one of the ten verses/lines of “The Optimist Creed”. This contest’s purpose is to expose young people to “The Optimist Creed” and our philosophy of Optimism and to assist them with developing an interest in the area of photography.

A Kaleidoscope of the Performing Arts

The term “performing arts” refers to forms of art in which artists use their voices, bodies, or inanimate objects to convey artistic expression. The performing arts include a range of disciplines which are performed in front of a live audience. Performing arts may include dance, music, opera, theater and musical theater, magic, illusion, mime, spoken word, puppetry, and even circus arts. Talent showcases highlighting these performing arts are not only fun, but innovative, giving young people the opportunity to express themselves using their own unique talents.

Optimists Spark Fun in the Park

This Optimist International event is staged at the club level annually where clubs can choose any date to host their event. This fun and exciting event has been coined to target JOI and College Club members, working with adult Optimist Club Members. The event will further facilitate camaraderie between JOI, College Club Members, adult Optimist Members, and the community at large, while providing an avenue for meaningful interaction and care for children with differing abilities by our Optimist Members at all levels. It is a fun way of sharing our philosophy of Optimism to a wider cross section of the children we serve globally.

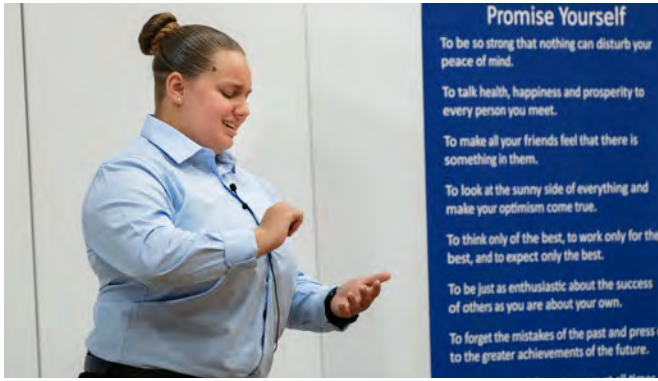
Youth Appreciation

Optimists recognize youth for a variety of reasons, including their achievements at school, dedication to community service, improvement in their grades and doing their best in sports or the arts. This activity allows Optimists to build the self-esteem of the youth in their community and show them that their efforts and hard work really do make a difference.



Tri-Star Sports

This is an optional activity Clubs can sponsor that focuses on three skills competitions in each of the following sports: basketball, baseball, soccer, football, hockey, golf, volleyball, and curling. More detailed information about Tri-Star is available in the Tri-Star Planning Guide.



Kids Speak Out

The 'Kids Speak Out' program is broadening its scope to engage children in our primary/preparatory and elementary schools to compete with peers from their own and neighboring schools. All young people can compete in the Optimist Oratorical Contest. The "Kids Speak Out" contest is a "pre-Oratorical" program that provides a competition for younger speakers.

Essay Contest

The Essay Contest is sponsored by Optimist International to give young people the opportunity to express their opinions regarding the world in which they live. The approach can encompass a young person's personal experience, the experience of their country or a more historical perspective. Participants also have the opportunity to win a college scholarship! One District Scholarship of \$2,500 is awarded.

Communication Contest for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

This contest offers youth who are deaf or hard-of-hearing the opportunity to gain skills and confidence from their experience presenting in front of a large audience. Patterned after the Optimist Oratorical Contest, the contest offers youth the chance to compete in speech or sign language with the chance to win a college scholarship. One District Scholarship of \$2,500 is awarded.



2024 Calendar Visual Arts Competition

This exciting project is designed to encourage and celebrate youth visual art skills. Cash prizes will be awarded for the 12 drawings selected for the 2024-year calendar. The Optimist Visual Arts Competition gives youth 11 or younger (as of Oct. 1, 2022) another outlet for their creativity! Send inquiries to communications@optimist.org. Drawings can be submitted until June 1, 2023.

Optimist Programs and Activities are updated and added often, so be sure to visit the Optimist website and/or subscribe to our quarterly Optimist magazine for any changes and new program and activity announcements.

Optimist International Oratorical World Championships

The Optimist Oratorical Contest offers youth the opportunity to speak to the world. More than \$150,000 in college scholarships funded by the Optimist International Foundations is awarded annually from this program. First conducted in 1928, this is the second most popular Optimist International Program. Nearly 2,000 clubs participate in this program each year. The winners at the Club level receive medallions and Zone winners receive a plaque. Districts have the opportunity to provide a first place scholarship of \$2,500, a second place scholarship of \$1,500, and a third place scholarship of \$1,000.

International Day of Happiness

The International Day of Happiness in March is an annual activity that encourages Optimist Clubs and Members to host an event showing how their Optimist Club shares happiness with the youth and their community.

Avenue of Flags

Share your Optimism and patriotic spirit in the community with an Avenue of Flags project. This Fundraiser can help support youth programs and scholarships in your community!

Respect for Law

Optimist Clubs participate in activities to inspire respect for law enforcement among young people and to educate them on the jobs these brave men and women perform. Events are also held to promote a sense of well-being in the community such as child ID events, poster or essay contests on alternatives to violence and various family-friendly activities.

Youth Safety

This activity focuses on teaching youth about important safety issues that they encounter every day, such as traveling in a car or on the school bus and riding their bike. Optimist events such as a bicycle rodeo can make learning safety skills fun for everyone involved.



GIVING TUESDAY

During this season of giving, remember The Optimist International Foundation or the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation as your charity of choice. A donation to our Annual Fund helps strengthen communities close to home and around the globe.



OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
FOUNDATION



Canadian Children's
Optimist Foundation

GIVE TODAY

oifoundation.org/donate
ccof-foec.org/donations/online

Member Benefits Card

President Bob McFadyen would like you to share the benefits of being an Optimist with everyone you meet by handing them a Member benefits card.



Download the print-ready PDF from Optimist.org and send it to a printer of your choice.



Optimist International President Patsy Garner, Lions International President Brian Sheehan, Kiwanis International Vice President Katrina Baranko, and Rotary International President Jennifer Jones continue to meet to discuss how we can do more for our communities together. Join us as we #CelebrateCommunity during our joint week of service from September 10 to 16, 2023..

Celebrate Community 2023

Celebrate Community, a joint initiative of Optimist International and three other major volunteer service organizations, continued this year with a focus on local community service. Events were scheduled for the week of September 10-16, 2023.

The organizations — Kiwanis, Lions Clubs International, Optimist International, and Rotary International — continue to encourage local Clubs to reach out to one another for collaboration on projects that improve and benefit their communities.

A joint project allows community members who are serving in different Clubs to learn more about each other, their organizations, and their combined efforts to help children and adults with environmental or financial difficulties.

Be sure to share the photos taken on social media and use the hashtag **#CelebrateCommunity**.

6 Ways to be Happy This Year, according to Science

Here are a few less-discussed strategies to fill yourself with contentment.

by **Tracy Brower**, February 22, 2022
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There are days when the world can feel extremely chaotic and overwhelming in complexity – whether it's politics, the economy, global issues, or just the stress you face at work or at home. Through it all, happiness is a key priority. People want joy, contentment, and satisfaction in their work and life. While happiness may seem fleeting, there are paths you can take (some that may strike you as surprising) to find happiness.

In my research on happiness, there are some significant sources that matter most. Feeling a sense of purpose in your contribution; sustaining meaningful connections with others; having opportunities to stretch, learn, and grow; and gratitude are all correlated with happiness.

But there are also some certain pathways to feeling happy which may surprise you.

Don't chase it

The happiness paradox suggests if you seek to be happy, you'll be less likely to accomplish it. Instead, you should seek to create the conditions associated with happiness, rather than pursuing happiness for its own sake.

This is true because chasing happiness reminds you of what you don't have (since you are pursuing it, after all) and it focuses you on your own needs, rather than those of others—and the opposite is linked with happiness. You're more likely to experience happiness when you're contributing to the needs of others, rather than yourself.

Spend time wisely

If you want to be happy, you'll also do well to spend your time on activities which are both relaxing and rejuvenating. Research at the University of Nottingham found when you spend time on a hobby you enjoy or whiling away the hours playing games, these are correlated with happiness. Taking naps is also a great way to boost your happiness.

And interestingly, research at the University of Colorado found if you set your alarm to wake up an hour earlier each day (assuming you're getting enough sleep overall), this is also correlated with happiness—likely because you have more control over our time and because you can fill your day with more of what you love to do.

Invest in experiences

In creating the conditions for happiness, it's also smart to seek experiences which are meaningful. While you can spend money on items or objects, experiences are much more likely to pay off in our sense of joy or contentment. This is because purchasing things tends to offer only fleeting satisfaction, while experiences tend to engage you over time and in multiple parts of our sensory brain circuits. You enjoyed sightseeing in Venice, tasting great meals, and feeling the rocking of a gondola ride and the cobblestones under your feet while you walked throughout the city. These experiences make memories, which are more lasting than objects can deliver. In addition, usually experiences are enjoyed with others—also making them greater sources of happiness. The skydiving you did with your son will live on for you, delivering a dose of joy each time you recall those moments.



Eat your veggies

If you're a picky eater, you can scroll on to the next source of happiness, but for all the healthy eaters (or wannabe healthy eaters), this will, likewise, make you happy: Studies at the [University of Warwick](#) found greater consumption of fruits and vegetables was correlated with greater happiness. A related study at [University of Leeds](#) hypothesized the greater presence of carotenoids in the blood is what contributed to greater senses of subjective well-being when people ate more healthfully.

Contribute to your community

Another sure pathway to happiness is strong connections with your community. This can be with children, as a study published in [Social Psychological, and Personality Science](#) demonstrated. Those who put children's needs ahead of their own experienced greater happiness. Of course, you must still set healthy boundaries for children, but selfless investments in children's well-being through spending time and demonstrating unconditional love were strongly linked with greater happiness.

You can also [volunteer in your community](#) and experience greater happiness. People all have an instinct to matter and crave to contribute their talents

and skills to their communities. This was born out by a study at the [University of Illinois](#), which found when people saw others whose needs were fulfilled, they felt happier themselves. In short, boosting others, boosts you as well.

Look beyond the dollar

It's a misnomer that money can buy happiness. Everyone needs a threshold level of income to ensure safety, adequate food, and shelter, but these result in only baseline satisfaction. Beyond this threshold, money won't buy additional happiness. True joy tends to result from all the other factors discussed above—from purpose and health to making meaningful contributions to the community.

In the end, you don't need to simply wait for happiness to blossom around you. Instead, you can create the conditions for your own happiness—and taking positive action can be its own source of happiness, as well.

Tracy Brower, PhD, is a sociologist focused on work-life happiness and fulfillment. She works for Steelcase, and is the author of two books, [The Secrets to Happiness at Work](#) and [Bring Work to Life by Bringing Life to Work](#).

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Dear Fellow Optimists,

When considering a theme for my year, I wanted it to reflect not only on the Foundation, but on the organization we support. After much contemplation, I settled on “Hearts United in Optimism”. “Why” you ask?

The word “hearts” came from the knowledge that there is one common thread that binds all Optimists - our desire to help kids – and we have all committed our hearts to achieving this goal.

The word “united” was chosen for several reasons. The first is to reflect the unity between Optimist International and the Optimist International Foundation - since our two entities are totally dependent upon one another for success. The second reason is because Optimist International has seen significant growth internationally in the past several years. I truly believe we are uniting the world in Optimism.

I am truly honored to serve as President of the Foundation this year. I hope we can be a beacon of hope and show the world we are truly “Hearts United In Optimism”.

Debra Merritt
Optimist International Foundation President 2022-2023



Hearts United In Optimism

How OIF can help your Club

Optimist International Foundation has a long and successful partnership with Optimist International. One of the great programs to assist OI Clubs specifically is the Club Grant Program. This grant is set up to fund new projects developed by Clubs. Enabling them to reach deeper in their communities with impactful programs.

The program has been in existence since 2007/2008 and has assisted hundreds of projects by Optimist Clubs. Recent examples:



Morning Optimist Club of Moreno Valley

The Morning Optimist Club of Moreno Valley developed a unique and fun project aimed at welcoming youth to school and hopefully brighten their day. The effort included Optimist Members welcoming children to school with cheers, smiles and words of encouragement. The children greatly appreciated the support and sharing of Optimism.



Metro Riverfront Optimist Club

Metro Riverfront Optimist Club launched a new project, "Reading is Fun in the Summertime". This project was aimed at encouraging children from Thurgood Marshall Middle School to use their summer to read and continue learning over the summer. Make reading fun as well as educational.

2021/2022 OIF President Marc Katz shared, "The Foundation takes great pride in providing grants back to Clubs that assist them in launching new projects in their community. As Optimists we continue to strive to bring out the best in our youth, our community and ourselves. This is a shining example of living into our mission.

We encourage Clubs that have new projects starting in the 2022/2023 to apply after January 1, 2023. More information available on the OIF Website; www.oifoundation.org

Foundation Board Nominations

The Optimist International Foundation is accepting nominations for the Board of Directors to begin their four year term on October 1, 2023. Nominations must be received by December 1, 2022. The Election will be held February 2023.

For more information and the nomination form, please contact
Craig Boring, OIF Executive Director
Craig.Boring@oifoundation.org



2022 World Regional Winners: Samiksha Gaherwar, AdyLynn Anderson, Zafina Zaman, Abigail Richner, Amrutha Challa, Maryam Al-Sabawi and Mukta Dharmapurikar. Not Pictured (virtual contestants): Rin Choi and Maeva Giroux

Empowering young women to find their voice

Hope was very evident this past July as the 7th annual World Oratorical Championship was held in St. Louis, Missouri. Youth from all over the world competed in this year's Championship. The oratory skill and talent the young adults showcased was remarkable. For the first time in the 7 years the World Oratorical Championship has taken place, each of the Regional Winners was a young woman. Each gave a speech that was robust and inspiring.

Coinciding with the young ladies leading the way, was the fact that the OIF Women's Philanthropy Council (WPC) was a significant supporter of the Championship. Their efforts raised significant funds to support the World Oratorical Championship.

WPC Chair Sandy Cypher shared "The Women's Philanthropy Council was formed to empower women of all ages to be involved in endeavors to make a difference. The WPC is so proud that they were able to fund the scholarships at the World Oratorical Championship to assist young women sharing their vision, dreams and hope for our world"

OIF is very appreciative of the work the WPC does to assist the Foundation's cause. If interested in learning more about the WPC, please check out the information on the OIF Website (www.oifoundation.org)

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Dear Optimist friends,

I am proud to be serving as President of the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation (CCOF) in 2022-2023. I have served on the Foundation's board of directors since 2019 and my commitment to the organization continues to grow!

The theme I have chosen for 2022-2023 is '**Stronger Together**'! Don't we say that the whole is stronger than the sum of its parts?

The well-known African proverb states "It takes a village to raise a child". It underscores the importance of an entire community to provide for, and interact positively with, children and youth so that they live and grow in a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment. This proverb resonates loud and clear with Optimists in Canada and around the world! In the communities served by an Optimist Club, young people are offered a wide range of activities and programs that empower them and allow them to develop to their full potential. Over the past few years, I have seen the benefits of a wide range of community projects that have come to fruition through the Foundation's programs. It is also heartwarming to receive messages of thanks from young people who can pursue post-secondary studies thanks to the scholarships we have awarded them!

Optimist International and Optimist Clubs are fortunate to be supported by their Foundations, both American and Canadian! While there are many challenges our communities will never control, it's helpful and healthy to focus on what we can control – our commitment to supporting what matters most, today's youth.

Sincerely,

Ann Richer-Doyle
2022-2023 President,
Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation

CCOF is proud to welcome Sylvain Ménard on its Board of Directors.

Sylvain became an Optimist in May 1994. He is part of Optimist Club of Magog and since joining the organization, he has held most of the leadership positions both at the club level and in Southern Quebec District that is part of Optimistes Francophones Canadiens. He has also served on an Optimist International committee. Sylvain has been a CCOF Representative in his District in 2020-2021. He is proud to undertake a new challenge by sitting on the Foundation's Board of Directors.



Canadian Children's
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JUNIOR OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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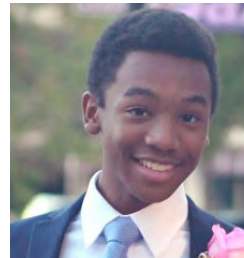
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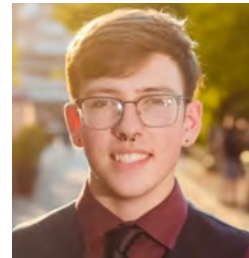
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Hello fellow Junior Optimists!

My name is Fatima Zaidi, and I'm very excited to be your Junior Optimist International President for the 2022/23 year! I'm a Senior at White Oaks Secondary School in Oakville, Ontario, Canada. I first joined my local JOI Club in 2018 when I was in middle school, and since then I have served as a leader on the Municipal, District, and International levels. I have experience being a Club President, Vice President, District Lieutenant Governor, and International Board Director prior to my Presidency this year.

As an ethnic and gender minority, I've faced many obstacles throughout my lifetime. Facing these challenges allowed me to become the person I am today, but all the same made it harder to find opportunities for myself in order to succeed. Due to these experiences, I strive to help others facing similar hardships. Hence, my theme for this year is "Breaking Barriers Through Optimism."

With our Members located worldwide, we have thousands of Members each with their own set of unique skills and traits. Instead of isolating one another because of these differences, we should be using our diversity to uplift and support others to power our service and projects and spread Optimism throughout our individual communities. My mission is to allow JOI Members worldwide to unite, to accept their differences and use it to their advantage, and to share perspectives as individuals. By tackling important social issues that face our youth today, such as equity and environmentalism, we can collectively make a bigger impact on the world, raise awareness amongst others, and create an accepting society for generations to come.

So this year let's join together as a community; let's celebrate our individuality and use our determination, perseverance, and citizenship as JOI Members to help our neighbors and friends. I hope to grow our Optimist family and expand our Membership to new countries and regions. In addition to this, I aim to increase communication. Whether it be from our Board to our Members, or connecting Clubs from varying nations, we can share our ideas and goals to play our part in making the world a happier place for all. My goal this year is to listen to and support YOU, JOI Members, and work as a team to expand our contributions through our work.

A special thank you to all the Advisors, adult allies, and JOI friends who have helped me become who I am today. To my incredible International Board and Committee, I look forward to making a lasting impact by collaborating with you all this year. Finally, thank you to all JOI Members - you are the reason our organization is so great and without you, we could not spread the much-needed message of Optimism across the world.

Fatima Zaidi
Junior Optimist International President, 2022-2023

Lester R. Craft

1986-1987 Optimist International President

Lester R. Craft, a small-college Kentucky football coach who later became a nationally prominent civic leader and advocate for youth causes, died on Sept. 23, 2022, in Glenwood Springs, Co., at age 91. Notably, Craft led groundbreaking diversity and inclusion advances in both of those fields.

Prior to graduating from Georgetown in 1953, Craft enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and completed the undergraduate Platoon Leaders Course at Parris Island, S.C. During his four years in the military, Craft served as a Navy Ensign before being promoted to Lieutenant (junior grade) and a shipboard officer in the Pacific.

After his Navy service, Craft returned to Georgetown as an assistant to the renowned, late basketball coach Dr. Bob Davis, who was doing double duty as both football and basketball coach. Davis soon suggested turning football over to Craft. Craft's greatest success as a football coach came when he led a team to an undefeated (9-0) season at Georgetown College in 1965. Craft, the first football coach at Georgetown to put players of color on the field as members of the team, continued coaching there until the early 1970s.

That is when Craft was offered the job of Executive Director at Boys Homes of North Carolina. During his 16 years there, he led an expansion to serve girls too, along with a name change to Boys and Girls Homes of North Carolina. The position built upon a long standing voluntary calling for Craft, who for years had been active in Optimist International. Craft later rose to prominence as president of Optimist International in 1986, where he oversaw admission of women as members for the first time.

After Craft retired from Boys and Girls Homes in 1989, he continued his affiliation with Optimist International, spending two years at its headquarters in St. Louis putting his endowment and fundraising experience to work in helping further develop the organization's financial foundations.

To read the full obituary:

<https://www.peacockfuneralhome.net/obituary/Lester-Craft>

Memorials may be directed to the Georgetown College (Ky.) scholarship fund in honor of Lester R. Craft.



Lester R. Craft 1930- 2022

2022 Optimist Junior Golf Championship



Another record-breaking event! This past July, 596 junior golfers representing 28 Countries and their families made their way to Trump National Doral to battle it out to see who could take home the trophies. We had some very impressive low scores in each age division and three holes-in-one. Simply amazing!

Suritpreeya Pruksanubal, an 11-year-old from Bangkok, Thailand wins with an impressive final score of 200 over three rounds (73-65-62) on the Red Tiger (5,005 yards), including a 16 under par in her final round to win the Girls 10–12-year-old division.

Suripreeya is a second-generation participant of the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships, previously, her Dad, Nonthapat “Mick” Hattakanont represented Thailand multiple times in the event.

We had approximately 25 college coaches choose the Optimist International Junior Golf Tournament to watch our golfers.

Our golfers say this tournament is a lifetime experience. Experiences like these are priceless because golfers learn how other young men and women are not much different than themselves.

Thank you to the all the Optimist Members who help continue to grow the program and make these golfers' experience, for some, a once in a lifetime dream.

Stay tuned for the Optimist International Tournament of Champions held December 10-11, 2022 at Mission Inn in Howey-In-The-Hills, Florida. The Tournament of Champions is an invitational junior golf championship for previous participants of Optimist Junior Golf events and other top junior golfers. This competition is of the highest caliber of golfers.

Phase 1

Boys 10-11

| | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 st Uthai Ruttanawetwong (Thailand) | 76-74-74 (224) |
| 2 nd Kai Molina (California) | 79-77-74 (230) |
| 3 rd Hudson Hurt (Virginia) | 80-79-72 (231) |

Boys 12-13

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1 st Lucas Gimenez (Florida) | 71-71-75 (217) |
| 2 nd Evan Pena (Puerto Rico) | 74-72-75 (221)* |
| 3 rd Aadi Parmar (Texas) | 74-73-74 (221) |

Girls 10-12

| | |
|--|----------------|
| 1 st Suritpreeya Pruksanubal (Thailand) | 73-65-62 (200) |
| 2 nd Maria Mercedes Tablante Marin (Venezuela) | 78-72-68 (218) |
| 3 rd Elena Zreik (New York) | 77-76-74 (227) |



Phase 1 winners

Phase 2

Boys 14-15

| | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 st Jackson Saroney (New York) | 72-69-74 (215) |
| 2 nd Ezequiel Cabrera (Paraguay) | 74-74-71 (219) |
| 3 rd Franco Fernandez (Paraguay) | 71-77-72 (220) |

Girls 13-14

| | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 st Gianna Singh (California) | 70-71-70 (211) |
| 2 nd Jiranan Lim (Thailand) | 72-73-75 (220) |
| 3 rd Athena Singh (Kentucky) | 73-70-78 (221) |



* Won by Scorecard Playoff
** Won Sudden Death Playoff



Phase 3 winners

Phase 3

Boys 16-18

| | |
|--|------------------|
| 1 st Rafael Estrada, (Mexico) | 76-72-69 (217)** |
| 2 nd Lance Smith, (Utah) | 71-74-72 (217) |
| 3 rd Michael Long (Kentucky) | 71-75-73 (219) |

Girls 15-18

| | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 st Jasmine Youn (Guatemala) | 69-71-72 (212) |
| 2 nd Katie Vu (Virginia) | 72-71-75 (218) |
| 3 rd Thanpitcha Kongthong (Thailand) | 75-72-72 (219) |



Hole in one winners, Thanpitcha Kongthong and Dante Nichols.

Holes in One

| | |
|---|--------|
| Lincoln MacKay (Colorado, USA) | Age 15 |
| Blue Monster Course Hole #4 Par 3 176 yards | |
| Thanpitcha Kongthong (Thailand) | Age 16 |
| Red Tiger course Hole #16 Par 3 181 yards | |
| Dante Nichols (Kansas) | Age 17 |
| Blue Monster Course Hole #9 Par 3 185 yards | |

Volunteers always needed

The Optimist Junior Golf Program relies heavily on the support of dedicated volunteers who are committed to "Bringing Out the Best in Youth". Volunteer for any number of days.

Dates

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| July 14-19, 2023 | Boys 10-11, 12-13 Girls 10-12 |
| July 19-24, 2023 | Boys 14-15 Girls 13-14 |
| July 24-29, 2023 | Boys 16-18 Girls 15-18 |

Volunteers receive:

- Discounted room rates
- Receive breakfast and lunch for days you work
- Complimentary parking
- Two tournament shirts (working two or more days)
- And Discounted golf on designated days

Positions available: Registration help, marshals, shuttle drivers, scoring, and range area. If you are interested in becoming a part of our volunteer team or have questions, please contact Optimist Golf at 800-500-8130 ext. 207 or golf@optimist.org.



Volunteers Bob Garner, Marlyne Monahan and Lawson Headley take a break to smile for the camera at the 2022 Optimist Junior Golf Championship

Sponsors

Our sponsors help us to become a larger and more successful tournament each year. We are very appreciative of the continued support. We are already looking forward to the 2023 Optimist International Junior Golf Championship!

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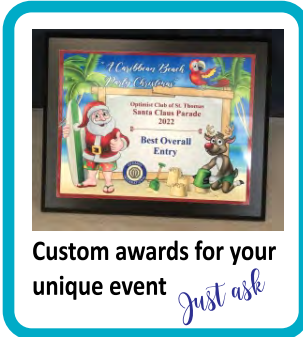


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Focusing on the Future



Your Dues Increase in Action!

- Automating systems for efficiency and ease of use
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- Developing and implementing comprehensive marketing and communication strategies to build brand equity
- Reinvigorating JOI to increase relevancy for today's students and expand student access and participation
- Enhancing and developing Signature Programs that meet the mission and elevate the organization's reputational equity
- Developing non-dues revenue programs and opportunities for members and non-members
- Updating and creating relevant Member and Club resources

Thank you for your support!

Rewind

A look at more than 100 years of Optimist International memories



Photo: December 1986/January 1987 issue of *The Optimist*. Optimist International Photo Archives.

Passing the Gavel

For the first time ever, incoming and outgoing Optimist International Presidents held an official passing of the gavel at the close of the administrative year. Lester R. Craft, left 1986-87 President, accepts the gavel from James E. Attarian, 1985-86 President. They used the September 30 charter banquet of the new Optimist Club of Diamond Bar, California as the occasion for their presentation. Craft traveled from his Lake Waccamaw, North Carolina home to meet Attarian near his Los Angeles home.



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