



Twin City Area Optimist Club

P.O. Box 475

Festus, Missouri 63028

www.twincityoptimist.org

Follow us on Facebook

Affiliated with Optimist International

Serving Youth and Community since 1919

December 2025 News Making a Difference For Kids

President Cathy Elliott

Dear Ladies,

December — The End of Our First Quarter!

As we close out our first quarter, there is so much to celebrate. Our Optimist members have worked incredibly hard, completing 15 projects, fundraisers, and donations for our community — a tremendous accomplishment and something for which we should all be very proud.

This quarter also brought change. Our ongoing program with the Head Start children required flexibility, and our annual Christmas Party was transformed into a Winter-Themed Party. What a success it was! The children and Optimists alike had a wonderful time interacting — playing games, dancing, reading books and singing together. The joy in the room was undeniable.



Our December theme, *"To make all of your friends feel that there is something in them,"* truly came to life thanks to Ruth Ann Adams' thoughtful idea. Members turned to one another and shared something positive about each other. Many were moved to tears hearing the kind and affirming words spoken about them. It was a powerful, heart-warming reminder of the impact encouragement can have.

Now it is time to slow down, celebrate the season with family and friends, and reflect on all that we have accomplished together. We will take a short break before diving back into our projects — and ladies, hold onto your hats, because there will be just as many (or more!) exciting projects ahead.

I wish each of you a beautiful holiday season. Thank you for your dedication, your optimism, and for all that you do. I truly appreciate every one of you.

Warmly,

WINTER WEATHER



Reminder to all Optimists

If the **Festus School District** does **NOT** have **buses** running due to inclement weather, the Optimist meetings, day or evening, will be **cancelled**.

In Memoriam Marsha Greenstreet



Marsha Greenstreet, one of The Twin City Area Optimist Club's charter members, passed peacefully on November 18, 2025. Marsha was not only a charter member, but the first president of our club. She was club member #1 and very proud of that fact. She viewed the Twin City Area Optimist Club as the best service club in Jefferson County and repeatedly said that this was the best group of women to work with ever.

Becoming a member of the Optimists changed Marsha's life. It taught her how to get up and speak in front of people. It helped her to build confidence in herself to the extent that she started her own business. While membership and leadership positively affected Marsha, she used these attributes to define what this club would become and how it would serve the community she loved.

The Head Start Holiday parties, a special project in her heart, were started the first year of the club while Marsha was president and continue to this day. She believed that every child deserves joy, hope, and a positive vision for the future. She made sure our club lived that belief out loud.

Marsha was an active participant in the club as time permitted. She never shied away from any project and easily recruited others to help. She helped match new members with mentors and took on the mentor role herself for some members. She

hosted the September board meeting that both the outgoing and incoming boards attend every year until this year.

One of the greatest gifts Marsha gave to the club was her friendship, which was so important to so many people. She believed in helping others and fully supported anyone who was working to do the same. She encouraged the people in her life to take care of themselves through healthy living, by saying 'no' when needed, and by facing life with a positive attitude.

Marsha faced life with optimism that wasn't naïve, but brave. She served her community with an open heart, with strength, compassion, and with tireless energy. Marsha lived the Optimist creed in which she believed so strongly, especially the last line "To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble. " She will be dearly missed by all.

[Obituary Information for Marsha Greenstreet](#)

Submitted by Carolyn McKinney



Charter members in 2023



Old Bag Auctions



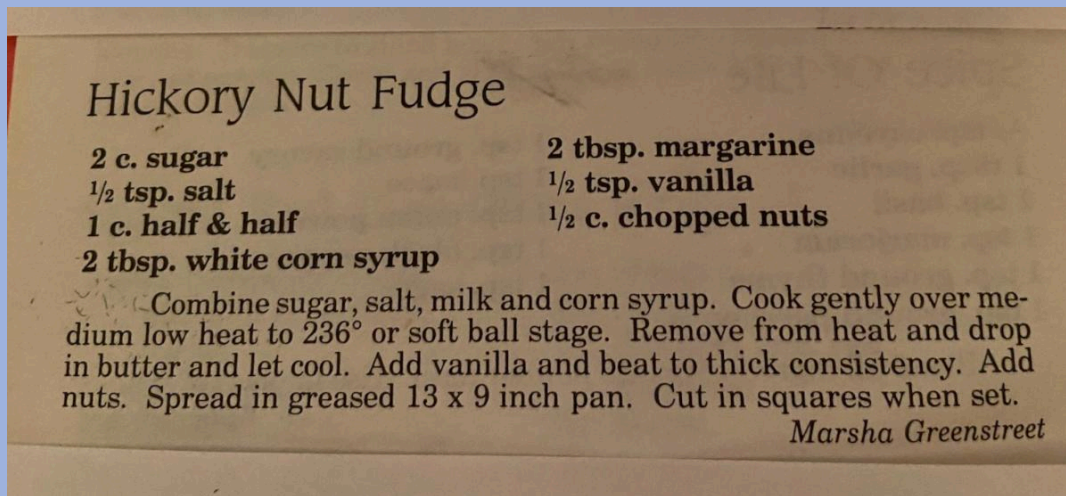
**30 Year Anniversary of the Twin
City Area Optimists in 2018**



Winner of a Gift Card Raffle



Happy International Day of Happiness!



Marsha's Fudge Recipe

December 4, 2025 Board Updates

Winterfest: Our club decided not to participate in Winterfest this year due to the prediction of cold weather.

Sponsorship Letters: Katie Huck is sending sponsor letters out at the end of December. We are always looking for more sponsors to support our projects. Members are encouraged to talk to employers and businesses about our projects to see if they would like to donate.

Dime a Day Donations: Peggy Scott is the club's OIF Representative and can provide members with a copy of the Dime-A-Day donation form or they can download a copy: [dime-a-day-form.pdf](https://www.opt.org/dime-a-day-form.pdf).

Coats for Kids: We received a donation for \$500 towards the coat project. To date, 220 coats and 155 hoodies have been given out this year.

Bunco: Thirty-eight players participated in Bunco on November 2 generating a profit of \$885.00. The next Bunco will be January 23, 2026.

Visual Arts Program: Previously our club awarded only first place winners in both age groups with \$50 prizes. Feedback from the judges was that they found it difficult to select just one winner, so the board approved a second place and third place for both divisions with \$25 and \$10 prizes at the club level. This event will start in January for younger children to draw pictures. This year's topic is **BE BOLD – BE THE CHANGE**.

Membership:

- New member Julie Reiter, sponsored by Mickie Huskey, was approved.
- In the past month, three people have resigned and two have passed away.
- Final letters for past dues have gone out to six people.

Optimist Day, Thursday February 5, 2026:

- It has been suggested that our members volunteer in the community in honor of Optimist Day. One idea is to volunteer with some of our partners such as Head Start, Foster Together, Brenden's Backpacks, Parents as Teachers, etc. on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of that week, then report back to the club at the February 5 meeting.

A new banner for our club has been donated by the North Dispensary in Hillsboro, thanks to member Karin Spinks. Jean Naeger, Barb Schmidt, and Cathy Elliott displayed the banner, which includes our club logo, the JOI logo, and our mission statement. Many thanks to Karin Spinks and North Dispensary!



Optimist Creed

Ruth Ann presented the third line of the Optimist Creed, *"To make all of your friends feel that there is something in them"*. She provided a handout for members to read about the meaning of these words, then asked everyone to turn to the ladies on their right and left and share something nice about them. This was a lovely and moving activity, with tears at several tables. Thank you, Ruth Ann!

Submitted by Cathy Elliott and Carolyn McKinney



December 11, 2025 Random Acts of Kindness

Needed:

- Bring your empty wine bottles to Jan Buechting or call her to pick them up. These will be used to make decorations for the Wine Tasting Dinner event in February.
- Carroll Metzger is asking for any cork wine stoppers. If you have any to donate, please bring them to a meeting or contact Carroll.

Optimist Day Volunteering in February:

Program chairs reached out to partner organizations about having Optimists volunteer February 2-4 as a lead-in to Optimist Day on February 5. Our partners welcomed this idea and we will need over 40 committed volunteers! Some of the organizations that requested volunteers that week include Brenden's Friday Backpacks, Foster Together, Head Start De Soto, Head Start Hematite, Parents as Teachers, and the De Soto Library. More information and sign-up information to come!

Update on Leroy:

Leroy is making progress with another doctor appointment in December. While talking to Trish, Cathy learned that several of their kids need coats. Cathy wrote down the sizes, Judy Williams picked up coats and brought them to Trish before the end of her shift! Great work ladies!

Random Act of Kindness:

After lunch, Marian introduced an activity for a Random Act of Kindness, making winter holiday cards for the Twin City Area Meals on Wheels. The cards are for the people who receive Meals on Wheels and their drivers. Marian set up a craft area in the back room for the crafty members to customize cards, while the less crafty wrote holiday messages in cards provided. When completed, we had 122 cards, 38 of

which were handmade. Approximately 90 cards will go to Meals on Wheels participants in Crystal City, Festus, Herculaneum and Pevely as well as volunteers. The remainder will be delivered to the group responsible for the De Soto Meals on Wheels service area.

This was a wonderful activity to, hopefully, share some holiday spirit with those people who need care and kindness during this holiday season.

Submitted by Carolyn McKinney



December 18, 2025 Holiday Party Time!

Announcements

Karen Huskey donated her famous peanut brittle again this year, but changed it to a raffle instead of an auction. Chances were sold for \$5.00 each resulting in a profit of \$165.00 for the club. The lucky winner: Peggy Scott! Thanks Karen and congratulations Peggy!

Qdoba Dine to Donate will be Tuesday January 13 between 4:00-8:00pm. Qdoba gives the club 25% profit from the sales so everyone should encourage their friends and family to participate!

The **Visual Art Contest** topic for this year is "Be Bold...Be the Change". This competition is open to all ages 11 and younger. Please encourage family members to participate.

Today's meeting attendance was 60 members! What a great turnout!

Cathy Elliott presented Kayla (takes care of our room and needs) with a holiday card signed by our members, many of whom also included a gift of cash. Cathy also asked Trish, Leroy's significant other, to join us briefly. She presented Trish with a coat for Leroy, a card to pass on to him, and our wishes that his recovery continues and that he's able to return soon.

Party time!

The Holiday Party Committee did an outstanding job with fun decorations, scrumptious desserts, and a fun game. After lunch, Sue Joggerst described the "Build a Snowman" game. Tables competed by answering trivia questions with each correct answer allowing the table to "purchase" an element needed to build a snowman. Once a table had all of the elements, they decorated one of their participants to win. The winning snowman was Alicia Cumiskey, with everyone at her table receiving prizes! After the game, Jean Naeger, with Phyllis Neff's

assistance, raffled off the cute snowman hat centerpieces. Everyone had great fun with the game and raffle! Thanks to the committee for an entertaining meeting!

Holiday Party Committee: Jean Naeger, Donna Long, Mickie Huskey, Vickie Campbell, Phyllis Neff, Sue Joggerst, Barb Schmidt, Marian Bozak, and Shelley Storment

Additional bakers: Katie Huck and Becky Capps

Submitted by Cathy Elliott and Carolyn McKinney



"Build a Snowman" winner Alicia Cummiskey with Phyllis Neff, ringing bells to announce a winner.



The winning table of the "Build a Snowman" game: Debbie Hogenmiller, Jan Buechting, Judy Lowe, Elsie Williams, Alicia Cummiskey, and Pat Sweet.



Desserts provided by the Party Committee, Katie Huck and Becky Capps.



Judy Lowe wore 3 sheep on her holiday sweater to Karen Huskey's 1.



Centerpiece winners Tabitha Brauch and Megan Siracusa.



Debbie Floyd with her centerpiece pick.



Jessica Korte modeled the snowman hat centerpiece she won.



Holiday Party Committee in Snowman shirts, ready for the party:
 Barb Schmidt, Sue Joggerst, Phyllis Neff, Vickie Campbell, Mickie Huskey, Jean Naeger, Donna Long.
 Not in attendance (but sent cookies!): Marian Bozak and Shelley Storment.



After the party, committee members realized some of the snowman faces on their shirts hilariously got rearranged!

CLUB FUNDRAISERS

Koeze Nut Sorting

Nineteen plucky Optimists plus one helpful hubby braved 30-degree temperatures on December 5 to unpack and sort Koeze Nuts in the Fantasy Pools warehouse. Thanks to a collaborated effort by the volunteers, all orders were filled, verified and ready for pickup within 1.5 hours! Patty Meyer's willingness to lead this

fundraiser again, and her organizational skills to complete the sorting activities so quickly is much appreciated. Thanks also to the volunteers who turned out to work in the cold: Katie Huck, Mickie Huskey, Kirstie Zych, Judy Williams, Laura Lohman, Pat Doenges, Jan Buechting, Marian Bozak, Debbie Kettler, Sue Boyer, Jean Naeger, Barb Schmidt, Carolyn McKinney, Cathy Elliott, Pat Parsons, Debbie Bradley (friend of Patty Meyer), Mary Hatfield, Susan DeClue, Patty Meyer, and Larry Meyer.

Submitted by Carolyn McKinney



Front row: Debbie Bradley, Laura Lohman, Barb Schmidt, Debbie Kettler,
Jean Naeger, Mickie Huskey, Patty Meyer
Middle row: Katie Huck, Susan DeClue, Marian Bozak, Sue Boyer, Judy Williams,
Carolyn McKinney, Pat Doenges, Kirstie Zych, Pat Parsons
Back row: Mary Hatfield, Cathy Elliott, Jan Buechting



Laura Lohman and Cathy Elliott verified orders.



Katie Huck dealt with a pile of mailers.



Cathy Elliott, Debbie Kettler, Jan Buechting, Pat Doenges, and Carolyn McKinney stopped for a photo after the work was done.



Jean Naeger, Mickie Huskey, and Marian Bozak took a photo break from filling orders.



KOEZE
ESTABLISHED 1910

Our 2025 Koeze and Mascot nut fundraisers ended with a total profit of \$5,830.73. This is an increase of \$560.90 over last year's sales. Great job everyone!!

Special thanks go to Patty Meyer and Pat Parsons for coordinating these fundraisers!

Quilt Raffle

The raffle of the Holiday Quilt, originally scheduled for the December 18 meeting, was instead held via a Facebook Livestream. Phyllis Neff hosted the livestream and announced the winner: Barb Schmidt. Congratulations Barb! Thanks to everyone who purchased a ticket.

Quilt Raffle

Optimist International

Purchase raffle chances for 72" x 93" hand stitched Christmas Quilt

<https://givebutter.com/TCAQuilt>

Drawing Dec. 18, 2025

One entry for every \$10 donation: CASH, Pay with GiveButter using QR code, or check to TCA Optimist Club, P.O. Box 475, Festus, MO 63028 (include your name and phone number).
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

QDOBA IS BRINGING FLAVOR TO OUR COMMUNITY



FUNDRAISER FOR

TWIN CITY AREA OPTIMIST CLUB

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 4-8PM

1300 VETERANS BLVD
FESTUS, MO 63028

25% of sales donated

Order online with the digital coupon on this flyer, or
show this flyer in restaurant. Also valid on Catering orders.

SCAN THIS QR CODE
IN RESTAURANT



OR ENTER THIS
COUPON CODE ONLINE
QDOBAGIVES



QDOBA commits to donating 25% of product sales (excluding any tax, delivery, gift card purchases and alcohol purchases) made lawfully and in accordance with this agreement to your organization. In order to receive a donation, your organization must reach the minimum sales amount of \$550. If this amount is not reached, your organization will not receive a check for the fundraiser. QDOBA reserves the right to withhold donations if QDOBA's fundraiser guidelines are violated or if your fundraiser website is abused and/or used in a manner not in accordance with this agreement. QDOBA Mexican Eats is a registered trademark of QDOBA Restaurant Corporation. ©QDOBA Restaurant Corporation 2025.

Twin City Area Optimist Club

BUNCO

DATE: Fri. January 23, 2026

Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

Bunco starts at 7:00 p.m.



Contact: Carol Schanz
314-222-4344

Registration Fee:
\$20

**(In advance/
non-refundable)**

Location:

H W Herrell Distributing Company
1002 White Street, Imperial, MO

**Bring your
own beverage**

**Bring a
snack/dessert
to share**

**Invite a
friend**

Wine Event ---SAVE THE DATE

Ticket sales begin the first week of December. Purchase tickets at meetings or with QR code on flyer.



Join us for a

**WINE TASTING,
DINNER, AND AUCTION
FUNDRAISER**



*Sample wines from a
variety of Missouri wineries.*

*\$60/person
May reserve
a table of 10*

**Master of Ceremonies:
Channel 4 News
Reporter Russell Kinsaul**



DATE: Saturday, February 21, 2026
TIME: 6 PM
VENUE: Oak Valley Golf Course & Resort
1230 Abbey Lane Pevely, MO

Scan QR code to
reserve spot
(service charge
applied)
or mail check to
Twin City Area
Optimist Club,
P.O. Box 475,
Festus, MO
63028

**Proceeds support the projects of the
Twin City Area Optimist Club**

Minimum Age 21 years



SPONSORSHIP CAMPAIGN

It's time for our annual Sponsorship Campaign. Below is our 2026 tri-fold brochure which will be mailed to perspective sponsors in late December or early January. It will also be used to help promote our club at local events and included in new member packets.

We appreciate your assistance. If you know a local business or individuals who may want to consider supporting our club, please reach out to them. The brochure identifies the various sponsorship levels. Contact Sponsorship Chair Katie Huck if you have a potential new sponsor.

Thank you for helping with our sponsorship program.

Jean Naeger



DICTIONARIES FOR THIRD GRADERS

Each year, every third grader in southern Jefferson County receives their very own dictionary. In an age of electronics, the children love getting the books and learning new skills.



ESSAY & ORATORICAL CONTESTS

Above, Olivia Blair wins first place and a scholarship in the district oratorical contest. At right, Olivia Lee captures first place and a scholarship in the district essay contest. Both students competed first in contests held by our club.

SPONSORSHIPS | 2026

Help us help the kids

We rely on the generosity of our community to support the Twin City Area Optimist Club's work in the community. Help us help the kids by sponsoring our club. For more information, please contact Jean Naeger, marketing chair, at 314-495-2822.

Platinum Sponsor: \$1,000 or more

- Greater visibility at club events
- Includes photo/logo of you or your business
- Announced on our public Facebook page
- Included on our website
- Recognized at public events

Gold Sponsor: \$500-\$999

- Includes photo/logo of you or your business
- Announced on our public Facebook page
- Included on our website
- Recognized at public events

Silver Sponsor: \$250-\$499

- Includes business logo
- Announced on our public Facebook page
- Included on our website
- Recognized at public events

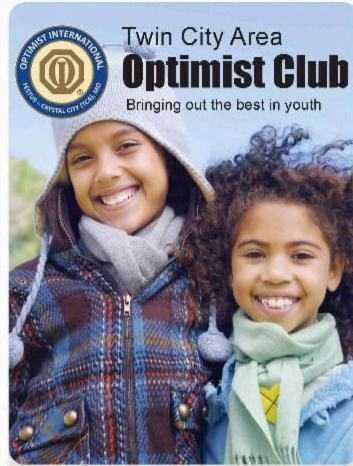
Bronze Sponsor: \$100-\$249

- Announced on our public Facebook page
- Included on our website
- Recognized at public events

Make checks payable to: The Foundation of the Twin City Optimist Club, a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Please mail to P.O. Box 13, Festus, MO 63028.



Donations are tax deductible



COATS FOR KIDS

Coats for Kids is the club's largest project and has been operating for more than 30 years. Each year, up to 500 coats are given away. The project committee works with local school counselors to identify local children in need.

Join the Twin City Area Optimist Club, a service club supporting southern Jefferson County, and make a difference today.

www.twincityoptimist.org
@twincityoptimistclub

P.O. Box 475
Festus MO 63028



CELEBRATING ARTISTS

Cassidy Hoehne, 17, won the club's annual art contest. Student artists submitted 383 pieces of art and were acknowledged for their work.

WHAT TO EXPECT IF YOU JOIN US

The Twin City Area Optimist Club includes people who want to help youth and the community. Members join to serve others and to promote Optimism as a way of life. Visit a meeting as a guest to see if Optimism is for you. Join and you will be invited to participate in projects you care about alongside people who want to make a difference.



RESPECT FOR LAW

As part of the Optimist International organization, the Twin City Optimists take part in a project held around the world to honor law enforcement officers each year.



YOUTH APPRECIATION

Bringing out the best in youth includes honoring local students for their achievements at the annual Youth Appreciation Luncheon.



FOSTER TOGETHER

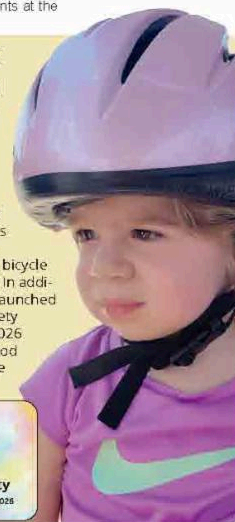
Twin City Area Optimist Club members collect donations for local organizations, including Foster Together, a community organization that supports foster families. Optimists donate toys, books, clothing, car seats and more to help foster children and their foster families.

WHEN WE GIVE, WE RECEIVE MORE

Whether you are searching for an outlet to help your community, personal development, or rewarding camaraderie, you'll find what you're looking for in your local Optimist Club.

BICYCLE and SUN SAFETY

Optimists continued to give away hundreds of properly fitted bicycle helmets as part of the club's growing bicycle safety project. In addition, the club launched a new Sun Safety program for 2026 to promote good decisions while outdoors.



CLUB PROJECTS

Women's Shelter Shopping

On December 4, 2025, the Women's Shelter Committee went shopping for the shelter's Christmas party. They purchased gingerbread houses and food, some of which was used to make party treats like marshmallow snowmen. The party, with a Polar Express theme, was a big success with Santa Claus making a surprise appearance!



Thank you to the Women's Shelter Committee for providing supplies to make this holiday party a special event for the children at the shelter. Committee members are: Jessica Korte, Barb Bates, and Judy Williams.

Submitted by Jessica Korte

Adolescent Boys Holiday Party

Over 300 children in foster care were invited for a night of pizza, soda, cookies and presents by the Jefferson County Foster Children's Fund on December 5. At the party, Twin City Area Optimists took charge of a table for teen boys. Volunteers handed out bags of personal care items for teen boys including body washes, deodorants, mouthwashes, nail clippers and files. On the table were books on "Everything Teen Boys Need to Know" and other items such as shaving cream, shaving kits, cologne samples, acne dots, and face wash (donated by Phyllis Neff) that boys could choose. Thirty-five personal care bags and 17 books were handed out at the party. The additional items were well picked over! Many thanks to the volunteers who organized the items and distributed and staffed the table at the event!

Committee: Becky Capps (Chairperson), Carroll Metzger

Event Volunteers: Becky Capps, Carroll Metzger, Phyllis Neff, and Betty Hardin

Submitted by Becky Capps



Phyllis Neff and Carroll Metzger with the teen boys table.



Head Start Holiday Parties

The Twin City Area Optimist Club celebrated another year with the De Soto and Hematite Head Start children. Although it looked a little different this year with our snowman theme, the joy on the faces of the littles was a precious sight to see. Our Optimist volunteers were so creative with the games and fun activities; there was plenty of laughter and fun had by all. From storytelling and goody bags to snowball fights and even the hokey pokey, the children and volunteers made it a successful event. Thanks to all who volunteered and to the Head Start staffs for welcoming us!

Optimist volunteers at De Soto: Jan Buechting, Phyllis Neff, Janice Boyd, Donna Long, Sandy Barnes, Ruth Ann Adams, Mickie Huskey, Laura Elbl, and Alicia Cummiskey

Optimist volunteers at Hematite: Jessica Korte, Katie Huck, Jean Naeger, Julie Reiter, Patty Meyer, Ruth Ann Adams, Donna Long, Shelley Storment, Debbie Hogenmiller, Dana Hanna, Kirstie Zych, Susan DeClue, Barb Schmidt, Rosie O'Shaughnessy, Laura Elbl, and Alicia Cummiskey

Submitted by Alicia Cummiskey



Optimists at the Hematite parties

Front row: Katie Huck, Patty Meyer, Laura Elbl, Julie Reiter, Kirstie Zych, Dana Hanna, Jessica Korte, Barb Schmidt

Back row: Shelley Storment, Donna Long, Ruth Ann Adams, Rosie O'Shaughnessy, Alicia Cummiskey, Debbie Hogenmiller, Susan DeClue, Jean Naeger





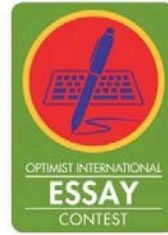
Susan DeClue read a winter story.



Katie Huck and Jessica Korte had fun playing with the children.



SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY



Visit our website for details
and application forms for
both contests
<https://twincityoptimist.org/>

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONTESTS 2025-2026



Topic
"The Moment I Realized I Belonged
— My Definition of Community"

ORATORICAL CONTEST

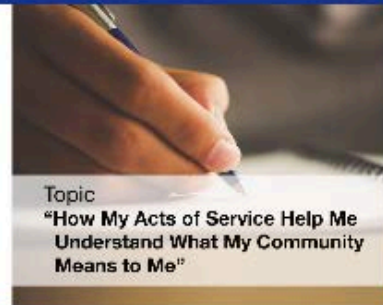
Beginning in 1928, the Oratorical Contest has become the longest-running program of Optimist International. The contest is designed for young people to gain experience in public speaking and provide them with an opportunity to compete for multiple college scholarships with a pre-assigned topic.

District Scholarships:
First Place: \$2,500 • Second Place: \$1,500 • Third Place: \$1,000
**with a chance to win up to \$22,500 at the
World Championships level**

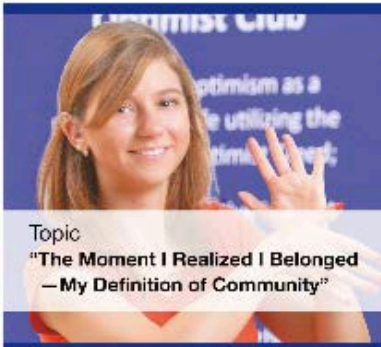
ESSAY CONTEST

The Essay Contest is sponsored by Optimist International to give young people the opportunity to write about their own 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. In addition to developing skills for written expression, participants also have the opportunity to win a college scholarship!

One District Scholarship of \$2,500



Topic
"How My Acts of Service Help Me
Understand What My Community
Means to Me"



Topic
"The Moment I Realized I Belonged
— My Definition of Community"

COMMUNICATION CONTEST FOR THE DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

This contest offers an opportunity for students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing to present their thoughts in the community, gaining skills, which can only come from signing or speaking to 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

KIDS SPEAK OUT! SPEECH CONTEST

All young people can compete in the Optimist Oratorical Contest. The "Kids Speak Out" contest is a "pre-Oratorical" program that provides a more equitable competition for younger speakers.



Follow complete Official Rules posted on www.optimist.org

The **Optimist International Essay and Oratorical Contests** are annual scholarship competitions sponsored by Optimist International to provide young people with the opportunity to express their views and win college scholarships.

The Essay Contest gives students a chance to write about their opinions on a pre-assigned topic related to the world they live in. **Prizes:** Winners at the club level advance to the District contest to compete for a scholarship, typically **\$2,500** at the District level, funded by the Optimist International Foundation.

The Oratorical Contest is a public speaking competition where youngsters prepare and deliver a speech on a pre-assigned topic. It's one of the longest-running programs of Optimist International. **Prizes:** More than **\$150,000** in college

scholarships is awarded annually. District winners can receive **\$2,500** for first place, with a chance to win up to **\$22,500** at the World Championships level.

The Twin City Area Optimists Club hosts both the Essay and Oratorical Contests. For more information and contest application forms visit our website.

<https://twincityoptimist.org/>.

Essay Contest: <https://twincityoptimist.org/essay-contest>

Oratorical Contest: <https://twincityoptimist.org/oratorical-contest>

Submitted by: Jean Naeger



Visual Arts Contest Deadline February 9, 2026. Please visit our website, <https://twincityoptimist.org/visual-arts-competition> to access the rules/entry form. Cash prizes will be awarded at the local level for first, second, and third place winners. For further information, please contact project chair Patty Meyer.

Dime -A- Day OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Dime-A-Day Program

What is Dime a Day? An annual contribution level to the Optimist International Foundation, (OIF) which is the charitable fundraising arm of Optimist International. The amount represents a donation of **one dime (\$0.10) per day** for one Optimist

year (365 days) = **\$36.50**. Individual members who contribute at this level are recognized with a special **"Dime-A-Day" lapel pin**.

What the Funds Support

The unrestricted funds raised through the Dime-A-Day campaign are critical because they enable the OIF to support the core programs that reach millions of children each year.

- **Scholarship Contests**
- **Youth Programs**
- **Club Grants**
- **Administrative Support**

Peggy Scott is the club's OIF Representative and can provide you with a copy of the Dime-A-Day donation form or you can download a copy: [dime-a-day-form.pdf](#)

Submitted by Jean Naeger

EAST MISSOURI (EMO) OPTIMIST DISTRICT



CONFERENCE / CONVENTION DATES

Feb 6-7, 2026

EMO 2nd Quarter Conference
Virtual

May 1-2, 2026:

EMO 3rd Quarter Conference
Hilton St. Louis Airport, St. Louis, MO

EMO District Convention

August 21, 22, 23, 2026
Installation of Officers
Governors' Choice Awards
Comfort Suites
Rolla, Missouri

108th

Optimist International Convention

June 28 - July 1, 2026
Hyatt Regency
Jacksonville, Florida

JOI CLUB

JOI Club members spent the afternoon of December 20 at Autumn Ridge Residences in Herculaneum. To get the residents in the Christmas spirit, club members began the afternoon by entertaining and singing Christmas carols. After caroling, JOI Club members and Autumn Ridge residents made birdfeeders with the pinecones, birdseed, and peanut butter left from the cancelled Winterfest event. The completed pinecone feeders were hung by the JOI members in the trees at Cade's Playground in Herculaneum, much to the happiness of the local birds. The afternoon ended with a Junior Optimist Christmas party at Imo's with pizza, a gift exchange, and a lot of fun socializing with kids and parents!

This afternoon was one of many great examples of the JOI Club bringing out the best in themselves by supporting the community! The JOI Club plans on returning to Autumn Ridge in February with another crafting activity to share with the residents.

Debbie Schumaker
JOI Adult Advisor

Carol Schanz
JOI Chair



JOI Club Members Caroling at Autumn Ridge



Crafting with residents!



JOI Club Christmas Party!

SAVE THE DATES



Note upcoming events. To assist with projects, please contact Committee Chair.

January 1 New Year's Day - NO MEETING
 January 6 Board Meeting
 January 8 Meeting - Board Update
 January 13 Dine to Donate - Qdoba
 January 15 Meeting - Monarch Jewelry
 January 22 Meeting - JOI Club Updates

January 23 BUNCO
 January 29 Meeting
 February 1 Leader's Wedding Fair
 February 3 Board Meeting
 February 5 Meeting - Board Update
 February 5 Optimist Day!
 February 6-7 EMO 2nd Quarter Conference - Virtual
 February 12 Valentine's Day Party
 February 19 NOW Meeting
 February 21 Wine Tasting Dinner & Auction
 February 26 Chili Cookoff and Brenden's Backpack Assembly
 March 3 Board Meeting
 March 5 Meeting - Board Update
 March 6 Celebration of Women
 March 12 Meeting - Aunt Rose Project
 March 19 Meeting
 March 26 Meeting



Members meet every Thursday from Noon - 1 p.m. at Taytro's. Please RSVP by 8:00 a.m. on Monday by contacting Kathy Todd.

The last Thursday of the month is an evening meeting held at the United Methodist Church in Festus. Members are invited to bring their own dinner at 5:30 to socialize. The meeting starts at 6:00 p.m.

Our Club will continue looking at the sunny side of everything and being committed to bringing out the best in our area youth.

Board of
 Directors
 2025-2026

President
 Cathy Elliott
 573 883 0924

President Elect
 Donna Masters

Past President
 Peggy Scott

Secretary
 Marian Bozak

Secretary Elect
 Jessica Korte

Treasurer
 Becky Capps

Treasurer Elect
 Ellen
 Bridgewater

Board Members

2024-2026
 Mary McDowell
 Debbie Kettler
 Carolyn
 McKinney

2025-2027
 Becky Francis
 Megan Siracusa



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Twin City Area Optimist Club | P.O. Box 475 | Festus, MO 63028 US

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