



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

August 2026 News Making a Difference For Kids

President Cathy Elliott

The Challenge: Give the Gift of Your Time

Dear Optimists,

As we head into the busiest and most exciting part of our Optimist year, I want to challenge each of you to do something simple—but incredibly meaningful.

From now through the middle of December, give some of your time to our club.

We all have busy lives, families, jobs, appointments and commitments. But our club cannot **“bring out the best in kids”** without the time, energy and hearts of the women who make up this amazing organization.

So here is my challenge:

Volunteer for at least ONE thing between now and December.

It might be helping at an event, working a fundraiser, delivering items, helping with a youth project, making phone calls, setting up or cleaning up, serving on a committee—or simply stepping forward when someone asks for help.

You don't have to do everything.

You don't have to give hours and hours.

Just give something.

Imagine what we can accomplish if every member gives just a little of her time. More importantly, imagine the difference that time can make in the life of a child.

I challenge you to look at your calendar, find one opportunity and say:

“Yes, I can help.”

Let's make the next few months a season of **showing up, pitching in and making a difference.**



Because Optimism isn't just something we talk about.

It's something we do.

Let's finish 2026 strong—and together, let's continue **bringing out the best in kids!**

With Optimism,

Cathy Elliott

President

Twin City Area Optimist Club

NEW MEMBERS



Carol Watson

ANNOUNCEMENTS & BOARD UPDATES

The Optimist Bicycle Park presentation will be given during the September 3 meeting. Becky Francis, Katie Huck and Carroll Metzger will have a visual presentation about the project.

TCA Optimists will again be the title sponsor for Leader Publications' Celebration of Women event coming in March.

The board approved \$250 for the Bottleneck Bridge Sponsorship through the Jefferson County Growth Association. Our logo will be used on t-shirts and advertising.

The board approved the purchase of new name badges for the club as it is no longer possible to get the badges we currently have. The badges will be purchased in bulk and Wehner's will laser print names on them. The timeframe for the new badges is October 2026.

- The club will cover the cost of the first badge for each member.
- There will no longer be badge boxes. The new badges will be given to each individual to hold and bring to meetings.
- If you lose your badge you will need to pay for a new one.
- Badges or an Optimist shirt with your name should be worn at all meetings so that people can put a name to your face – helping us all to meet each other.

One of the ways to increase the General Fund (our operating expense account) is to have “fines” for \$1. This is a fun way to collect some cash to help support the club. The \$1 collection will be for:

- Not wearing your name badge and/or top with your name on it
- Singing Happy Birthday to you!
- Brags...we all have something we want to boast about – tell us your brag!
- Photo in the Leader Newspaper

The Board approved new member Carol Watson, sponsored by Patty Meyer. Welcome Carol!

DUES REMINDER...Our Optimist year starts on October 1. Invoices for annual dues will be sent to all members by Ellen Bridgewater by September 1. **Invoices are due before September 30.**

September and October are going to be extremely busy so all members are encouraged to sign up for any of the upcoming events. Just an hour or two will make a huge difference!

Submitted by Cathy Elliott and Carolyn McKinney



Member Spotlight JoAnn Thompson



JoAnn Thompson was initially introduced to the Twin City Area Optimist Club by current member Pat Parsons. At the time, she declined to join due to a heavy workload in real estate management. After she reduced the number of managed properties, a local banker and friend, Jenna Pappic, invited her to another Optimist meeting and JoAnn joined in October 2007.

JoAnn's early career was in teaching sixth grade at Seckman Elementary in Imperial, Missouri. She also taught an evening GED program for adults at Oakville Senior High. While teaching, JoAnn started investing in real estate, growing her portfolio to over 60 properties at one time.



The Herculaneum community has been very important to JoAnn since moving back to Herculaneum in 2000. In recognition of their commitment to the community, JoAnn and her late husband Gene were honored as Herculaneum's Citizens of the Year in 2010. JoAnn was also a major proponent of building the All Bark Village dog park next to the William C. Haggard City Park. She continues to maintain a close relationship with the Herculaneum Police Department, which checks in on her regularly.

A special Optimist project for JoAnn is the Women's Shelter. She, along with Barb Bates, co-chaired the committee for the Women's Shelter for 13 years. They stayed

in regular contact with the organization to learn their needs and found creative ways to stretch their budget to provide meaningful support for the shelter. During her time in the club JoAnn has participated in many other projects, from packing dictionaries to working at community events to playing Mrs. Claus in Head Start Holiday parties. JoAnn is also a regular attendee of Optimist meetings and a frequent chaplain.

Family is very important to JoAnn, and she's grateful that her son, grandson, and three great-grandchildren all live in the area. She also shares her home with Tony, her two-year-old goldendoodle who ignored every size chart and now—quite literally—has outgrown JoAnn.

JoAnn is an avid reader and estimates she's already read at least 100 books since the beginning of the year. In her earlier days she was a singer, traveling to vocal competitions with her first husband, who taught band and chorus. They also loved to travel, visiting all 48 contiguous states and camping in most of them.

The line of the creed that means the most to JoAnn is “to be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own”. In her own life she has seen support shift as she made positive changes in her life and it has strengthened her commitment to helping others.

JoAnn's journey reflects a life filled with service and quiet determination. From her years of teaching to her leadership with the Women's Shelter, she has consistently found ways to make a meaningful difference. She lives the Creed with sincerity, celebrating others' successes, offering encouragement wherever it's needed, and bringing a steady, heartfelt optimism to everything she does.

Submitted by Carolyn McKinney



With Tony, from shaggy to sleek



Fun at club meetings!



In action at club events!





August 6, 2026 JOI Summit



Olivia (left) and Katelyn (right) Blair

At the August 6 meeting, the Twin City Area Optimist Club had the privilege of hearing Olivia and Katelyn Blair from our Junior Optimist Club speak about their experience while attending the JOI Summit held July 16-20 on the St. Louis University campus. This was their third year of participating in the summit and each experience has enlightened them. Thank you, Olivia and Katelyn, for representing the EMO district.

In addition, this year's summit was very special because Olivia was elected to the JOI International Board of Directors for the coming year starting October 1. We are very excited and proud of her and wish her the best in the coming year. She will be an excellent leader for the Optimist International JOI board.

Olivia Blair

Olivia is 17 years old and has been a member of the Twin City JOI club for ten years. She is currently the interim president of the club. She is starting her senior year of high school at Herculaneum and has competed in the Optimist Oratorical Contest for eight years, winning the regional level in 2025. She currently works at the Harness Law Firm in Crystal City, owned by the son of our founding member Caryl Harness.

Olivia shared how educational JOI Summits have been for her. While comfortable speaking in front of a crowd with a prepared speech, such as in the Oratorical contests, the summits have helped her build confidence in impromptu conversations and speeches. She has also learned more about what the international organization has to offer the individual clubs. Each year there are scholarships, recognition awards, and more that she intends to share with our local club. Finally, she spoke of the importance of connections. This was her second year running for the international board and she sees a correlation between her election this year with how much more effort she put into meeting and speaking with people.

Exchanging ideas with other clubs is a bonus to attending the JOI Summit. Olivia was especially impressed with an event a California club hosted, Dance for a Cure. This was a dance competition combined with street vendors and a fall festival to raise money for cancer research. The event netted nearly \$6,000. She recognizes that this would be a daunting project to plan, but hopes that our club can organize something similar in the future.

Olivia pointed out the differences between JOI clubs that are hosted within a school versus a community-based club like ours. She sees the community-based club as having greater reach and flexibility, not limited by school administration and budget. She did come away with the idea of presenting the JOI club at local schools to increase membership, similar to promoting it at open houses. She recognizes that clubs within schools gain most of their new members within the first weeks of school due to kids wanting to try new clubs, especially in the transition from middle school to high school.

Katelyn Blair

Katelyn is 14 years old and has been a member of the Twin City JOI club for seven years. She is currently the JOI club secretary. She is starting her freshman year of high school at Herculaneum, and has competed in the Optimist Oratorical Contest for five years.

While the main purpose of the JOI Summit is to elect an international board, Katelyn spoke of the other outcomes including clubs connecting with other active clubs. While not aware of the attendance numbers, Katelyn mentioned sharing ideas and collaborating with specific clubs from Iowa, Michigan, Ohio, and California.

Katelyn's favorite breakout session was called "Own the Room" and it focused on how to captivate your audience and present your topic with confidence. Even though Katelyn is an experienced public speaker, she still gets anxious before talking in front of large crowds. This session gave her tips on how to be a more effective speaker, to focus on what she's doing and to not worry about mistakes she might make. What she took away from the session has helped her become more self-assured, not just with her public speaking, but with herself.

Another takeaway from the summit for Katelyn was a change in her perspective about JOI. When she first joined, she thought the organization was all about service projects. Over the years and with the JOI Summit experiences, she has learned that it is more than that. She explained the service project this year at the summit was building bikes that were sent to a facility that teaches bike riding classes. Kids that pass all of their classes are given a free bike. While the kids are helped, there is a community impact as well. Katelyn is now recognizing the rewarding feeling that comes from helping strengthen the community.

Katelyn hopes to use the problem-solving skills she learned from the summit to help benefit our JOI club and our area through fundraisers and other activities. She also wants to apply her team working and strengthened communication skills to have a positive impact on her fellow peers this school year by making the environment enjoyable and helping them experience a little bit of the optimism she has learned from JOI.



Olivia aptly sums up how much she and Katelyn appreciate JOI and the Twin City Optimist Club by saying, "Katelyn and I just wanted to say thank you to everyone in this room. You all have been so supportive in everything that we have done as individuals and as members of the junior optimist club. If it weren't for the people in this room, I wouldn't be the person that I am today. From Katie always encouraging me to chase any dream I had, to Mrs. Storment being a huge source of my confidence over the years, to Phyllis and Mary Kay always supporting us in Oratorical, to everyone who has been in our corner the last three years. Thank you, for the opportunities you have given us, and for being a group I've known always had my back."

Submitted by Carolyn McKinney

August 13, 2026

The "Rising Above" Activity

At the August 13 meeting, Marian Bozak welcomed members with a container of numbered slips and encouraged each person to draw one. The number guided their seating for the day, offering a cheerful nudge to step away from their usual seating pattern and opening the door to new connections across the club.

After lunch, Ruth Ann Adams led a creative activity tied to the final line of the Optimist Creed: "To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble." Each table was assigned a part of the final line and asked to create a short cheer, poem, chant, rhyme or skit to describe how to live that phrase, and share it with the group. Ruth Ann even provided a table of props to choose from!

The resulting presentations were lively, creative, and humorous pieces filled with poetry, rhythm, and imagination, each one a nod to being "too large for worry," "too noble for anger," "too strong for fear," or "too happy to permit the presence of trouble." It was a fun-filled activity that brought out smiles and laughter for all.

Submitted by Carolyn McKinney



August 20, 2026 Random Acts of Kindness

The agenda for the August 20 meeting featured a “Random Acts of Kindness” activity, inviting members to write supportive notes to the employees of Festus Elementary School and Crystal City Elementary School. Both schools begin their new year the week of August 24, making the gesture a timely boost of encouragement.

This activity was organized by Marian Bozak, who provided a list of all employees along with their roles so that each note could be personalized. In addition to the handwritten messages, Marian supplied everything needed to assemble small bags filled with office supplies and snacks, ensuring every school employee will receive a cheerful, useful treat.

Festus Elementary School starts their new year Monday, August 24 and Crystal City Elementary starts Tuesday, August 25. A total of 118 school employees will be

greeted with customized welcome notes and gift bags from the Twin City Area Optimists – a most welcome surprise to kick off the new school year.

Submitted by Carolyn McKinney



Marian Bozak introducing the activity



Selecting notecards to write



Packing gift bags



August 27, 2026 Baby Shower & C.A.R.E.

The evening meeting of August 27 had a packed agenda and a full house including a number of visitors:

- **Liz Christman** – Middle America Vice President with Optimist International and Jefferson County Optimist Club Member. Liz was attending to act as facilitator for the C.A.R.E discussion.
- **Mike Bowles** – member of the Optimist International Board of Directors, Leadership Development Committee Member, and Jefferson County Optimist Club Member

- **Renee Rueter, Susy Bay and Doris Quiles** – all three have turned in their membership applications and will be voted on at the September 8 board meeting.
- **Yvonne Moser** has come to see what we are about!

Also, in attendance were new mom and club member Karleh Brauch, attending to celebrate her bundle of joy along with her mother Tabitha and grandmother Carol Schanz, both also members. Barb Schmidt presented Karleh with gifts from the club members for her baby boy including some adorable onesies and a stuffed elephant. And, of course, there was cake!



Barb Schmidt introduced Karleh and presented baby shower gifts and dessert.



Karleh showed off one of the new baby onesies.

C.A.R.E. Program

While cake was being served, Cathy Elliott introduced Liz Christman to lead the C.A.R.E discussion. This is the third year our club has participated in the C.A.R.E program, an Optimist International program for clubs to celebrate their accomplishments and identify issues. The C.A.R.E. acronym stands for **Celebrate+Address+Recognize= Excel**.

The program started with an anonymous survey of four questions sent to all club members. This year, 48 of our members responded to the survey. Liz compiled the responses into "word clouds" which is a method for evaluating the survey results by selecting recurring words. The more often the word or phrase is found in the results, the larger it appears in the cloud.

The first question on the survey asked members what they thought went well this past year. The most popular responses were related to projects - youth and children, community, successful – with the bicycle playground making an appearance.

The second question—*what does the club need to work on*—sparked the most conversation. Two themes rose to the top: new member engagement and more volunteers. Members shared ideas for helping newcomers feel connected from the start, with several of our newer members offering input from their own experiences.

Another response was more children's activities, which Liz clarified as opportunities for hands-on interaction with kids. A few responses also emphasized a desire not only to get to know new members better, but to strengthen connections among all members.

The third question on the survey – *what makes you happy to be member of the club* – had fewer unique responses, indicating that many of our members have similar feelings. The work we do supporting children and the community, and our friendships were the primary responses from this question.

The final survey question invited members to share ideas for new club projects or activities. Interestingly, the most common response was “no new idea.” As Liz pointed out, this wasn't a negative sentiment at all. Instead, the comments suggested a desire to strengthen the projects we already have, building on what's working and investing in the activities that define our club's impact.

Thank you to everyone who shared feedback through the survey, and to Liz Christman for guiding such an insightful discussion. Both the survey and conversation provided thoughtful perspectives that will help us to continue strengthening our club, and supporting our members and community.

Submitted by Carolyn McKinney and Cathy Elliott



Liz Christman leading the C.A.R.E survey results discussion.



Liz with a thank you gift from TCA Optimists for her 3rd year of leading this program for us.

What do you feel went well with the TCA Optimist Club this year?

adaptability and resilience
volunteering together
newer-member leadership new members guest speakers
sponsorships fundraising Head Start
youth and children projects
community service projects
Creed reflection successful projects membership drive
foundation and reserve fund friendship and fellowship welcoming atmosphere
variety of activities communication larger visible projects Sun Safety project
organized leadership party planning
Optimist Bicycle Playground
supporting members in need

Twin Cities Area Optimist Club • 2026 C.A.R.E.

What do you feel the TCA Optimist Club needs to work on?

spending more in the community
meeting listening and courtesy share accomplishments publicly
more children's activities
focus existing commitments fewer or deeper speakers
lighter, more social meetings
delegation shared ownership explain Optimist acronyms
get to know all members lunch cost
board transparency inclusive meeting practice
more volunteers cliques and elitism
new ideas and creativity communication younger members
new-member engagement
less fundraising pressure respectful member behavior
more hands-on service
lunch menu and dietary options
role clarity and boundaries
flexible project groups and meeting times
volunteering access for working members

Twin Cities Area Optimist Club • 2026 C.A.R.E.

What makes you happy to be a member of the TCA Optimist Club?

pride in the club
positive attitudes belonging fun and socializing
helping children and youth
meeting new people friendship teamwork
learning club reputation
community service
helping members supportive members
positive women

Do you have a new idea for our club as a community service project / youth activity / fundraiser? Please describe.

after-school program for boys
nursing home and hospice outreach
sponsorship growth flowers for neighbors outside visibility strategy
Don't Give Up signs hygiene drive more bingo
Optimist Bicycle Playground pedestrian mall partnership
fewer costly member asks JOI Club collaboration peanut-bag fundraiser
trivia night bike helmets
Super Bowl squares read with Head Start
pickleball tournament homeless youth support school library books
community garden donations
potluck or salad night food pantry support
Ronald McDonald House
new-project grant opportunities

FOUNDATION UPDATE



Second Quarter Report (Apr-June) 2026

The Foundation of the Twin City Optimist Club

The board of The Foundation of the Twin City Optimist Club met in March and May 2026.

The following business was completed:

The policy regarding the annual membership campaign was changed to: May Be conducted annually. This year we will not conduct this as there will be a capital campaign for the Bicycle Playground.

Additional funds were deposited in short term CD's as a result of revenue from the sponsorship drive.

Gerty O'Leary resigned from the Board of Directors. Judy Williams has been acting secretary (the position Gerty held). The 2026 replacement for Gerty is Kim Elbl. In addition, Carolyn McKinney will join the board in 2027, bringing the total number of board members at 7.

Payments to the American Ramp Company (design of the bicycle playground) and the legal fee to review the contract were made for a total of \$4,810.

Please note: The Foundation of the Twin City Optimist Club follows the calendar year. This board report is for business conducted in April, May, and June 2026.

CLUB FUNDRAISERS



Our 3rd Rock 'n' Roll Bingo event was a triple success!!!

It was successful in **FUN HAD BY ALL!**

It was successful in **VOLUNTEERS** who designed, donated, delegated and decorated for the event!

It was successful in **FUNDS RAISED** for the club to support projects for our youth and community!

A full room of 201 attendees plus great music was a formula for success. We had raffle baskets, a 50-50 prize, two special prizes consisting of a basket of restaurant gift cards retail value of \$500 and a display of lottery scratcher tickets with a retail value of \$265. A new entity, "Bid for a Baker," was added in which bakers volunteer to bake or cook their specialty dish for the winner at a later date scheduled within the next six months. Eleven items were bid on accounting for \$615 raised. The committee and club members worked hard putting together the prizes and the event. The Arch Rivals Company was our MC and DJ providing great music that inspired the crowd to sing along many times. The funds raised amounted to a little over \$8,300.00 about 25% more than last year.

Congratulations to Becky Francis who won three times including \$1,090.00 in the 50/50 and the \$500 restaurant gift card basket. She publicly stated that she would donate the funds to the Optimist Bicycle Park project and gift cards will be helpful at their pickle ball fundraiser. The gift that keeps on giving.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this a wonderful and successful fundraiser.

Submitted by Phyllis Neff



A Fun Time for All



Some of the amazing raffle items





A couple of big winners!



Bid for a Baker Sign-ups



Dine to Donate

Twin City Area Optimists gathered at Culver's on August 25 to eat and/or work at Culver's Share Night. From 5pm – 8pm Optimists wiped tables and delivered orders to customers. Ten percent of all sales during that same time frame were donated to our club. The Share Night was advertised by Optimists online and by word of mouth, and posted by Culver's on their advertising sign outside the restaurant.

Optimists and the community turned out for the evening, enjoying delicious food as they

supported our club. Approximately \$450 from sales will be donated by Culver's, along with \$93 cash from a donation jar.

Kathy Todd did a great job organizing the event, with assistance from Carol Schanz. The Optimist volunteers that worked were Alicia Cummiskey, Michele Horrell, Debbie Hogenmiller, Pat Doenges, Peggy Scott, Sue Joggerst, Pat Parsons, Becky Francis, Barb Schmidt, Jean Naeger, Rosie O'Shaughnessy, and Jessica Korte.

Thank you to everyone that participated by working, eating or both!

Submitted by Kathy Todd



Debbie Hogenmiller, Kathy Todd, Sue Joggerst, and Pat Parsons



Jessica Korte, Carol Schanz, Jean Naeger, and Kathy Todd



Carol Schanz, Peggy Scott, Pat Parsons, and Becky Francis

Ready to
Work!



Debbie Hogenmiller, Alicia Cummiskey, and Michele Horrell



Katie Huck, Jessica Korte, Carroll Metzger, Kathy Jensen, and Peggy Grieshaber

Dinner Time!



Jean Naeger and Mary Hatfield with their husbands



Patty Meyer with her husband



Judy Kuhlman, Debbie Schumaker, and DaNelle Winters

CLUB PROJECTS

Back to School with the Adolescent Boys Project

On August 11, 2026 Becky Capps, Paige Laiben and Carroll Metzger attended the Back to School Event sponsored by the Jefferson County Foster Fund for Jefferson County foster kids. While the Foster Fund distributed school supplies and Renee Gerlach from the Aunt Rose Project distributed period products for the girls, Optimists distributed bags specifically for boys age 12 to 18. The bags included hygiene products, deodorant, pimple pads, and cologne samples. Also available for

each boy was an age-appropriate book about puberty. The boys were very appreciative there were things just for them!

Submitted by Carroll Metzger



Paige Laiben, Becky Capps, and Carroll Metzger with supplies at Back to School night.



Twin City Optimists Take to the Radio

On August 17, Twin City Area Optimist Club member Katie Huck lit up the airwaves on KJFF Radio, spotlighting the exciting projects and community-boosting events the club has on the horizon. Tune in to hear optimism in action!

[Click link to listen](#)

Optimist Bicycle Playground

Join the September 3 noon meeting at Taytro's for an update on the Optimist Bicycle Playground. Becky Francis, Katie Huck and Carroll Metzger will have a visual presentation about the project.

Be sure to check out the article about this project in the August 27 edition of The Leader at this link: <http://www.myleaderpaper.com/tncms/asset/editorial/098a4b3f-759e-46e2-a53b-7c53aaca9667>



LET'S STRIKE UP SOME FUN



FAMILY BOWLING EVENT

DATE: Friday September 11, 2026

TIME: 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

PLACE: Quonset Lanes
2004 N. Truman Blvd5
Crystal City

Per Person:

- 1 FREE Game
- FREE Shoe Rental
- \$5 Food & Beverage Voucher (First 100 bowling kids only).

For more information contact:

Junior Optimist Adult Advisor

Debbie Schumaker debbie268244@gmail.com

Sponsored by:



Contact Katie Huck to volunteer for Twin City Days Bike Helmet Project 314 520 6340.



TWIN CITY DAYS

FREE BIKE HELMETS

DONATED BY THE TWIN CITY AREA OPTIMIST CLUB

**SATURDAY
12TH SEPT
9AM - 3PM**

**BIKE RAFFLE WINNER
ANNOUNCED AT
2:45 PM**



**LOCATION:
FESTUS MAIN STREET MARKET**

Contact Marian Bozak to volunteer for De Soto Fall Festival 216 509 6810.



Hosted by the TCA Optimist Club

Contact Kirstie Zych to volunteer for Brenden's Friday Backpack Food Drive 314 221 3708



TWIN CITY AREA OPTIMIST CLUB FOOD DRIVE

**Let's Spread Kindness
to Others!**

**SEPTEMBER 26, 2026
9 AM-1PM**

Most Needed Items

Single serve, kid friendly
food. Refer to list on right.

Drop Off Location



650 S. Truman Blvd.
Festus, MO

**Optimist members will collect
donations outside both store
entrances**



**Brenden's Friday Backpacks Program
uses single serve,
non-perishable, kid-friendly foods**

- single-serve cereal
- breakfast or granola bars
- canned soup and pasta
- pudding and fruit cups
- individual snacks such as
crackers, cookies, chips, Rice
Krispie treats, trail mix, etc.
- 16-18 oz plastic jars of
peanut butter for long breaks

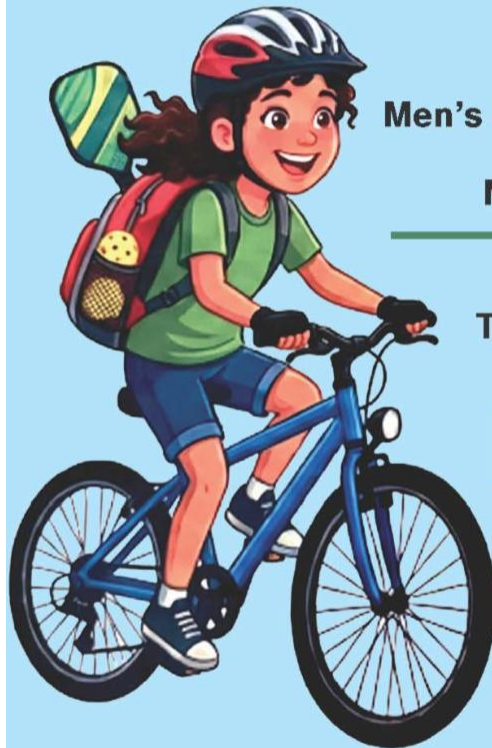
1700 kids served weekly!

**For more information please contact:
Optimist Kirstie Zych 314-221-3708**

TWIN CITY AREA OPTIMIST PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

OCTOBER 3RD & 4TH, 2026

JOKERST MEMORIAL
PICKLEBALL PARK



Saturday:
Men's & Women's Doubles
Sunday:
Mixed Doubles

Registration
Fee:

\$40

Benefits
The Bicycle Playground
at Crites Park

Registration Link →



The mission of the
Optimist Bicycle Playground is to
create a safe and engaging outdoor
park where youth can learn to ride
bicycles, develop skills and safety
habits, and have FUN!



Donate



TWIN CITY AREA OPTIMIST CLUB ANNUAL ART CONTEST



November 15, 2026

2:00PM - 4:00PM

Elks Lodge 1721

4 Elks Acres, Festus, MO



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](https://www.optimistinternational.org/dime-a-day-form.pdf)

Submitted by Jean Naeger

EAST MISSOURI (EMO) OPTIMIST DISTRICT



2026 EMO Convention

The 2026 East Missouri (EMO) Optimist District 4th Quarter Convention took place at the **Comfort Suites in Rolla, MO.**

The weekend featured a "**Casino Night**" theme, training sessions, district business, officer installations, and recognition of club accomplishments across the district. In addition, a memorial service was held on Sunday morning.

Key Highlights & Agenda Overview

Friday, August 21

- **Past Governors' Dinner & Executive Board Meeting:** The weekend kicked off with the Past Governors' Dinner followed by the District Executive Committee meeting.
- **High Rollers Hospitality & Casino Night:** Attendees gathered for food, fellowship, and casual Casino Night-themed evening.

Saturday, August 22

- **Board of Directors & General Session:** Opened by Governor **Jennifer Bagwell**, featuring an introduction to the new *Club Health Awards Program* (CHAP) presented by Michael Boles.
- **Optimist International Foundation (OIF) & Keynote:** Optimist International President Janet Oord Graves spoke on Foundation Grants. Keynote speaker Kelly Kingsbury, of Missouri Leadership Seminar, Inc. (MLS) provided information about this leadership organization.
- **Leadership & Training Track:**
 - The afternoon was devoted to training with Mary Hatfield, Governor Elect providing New Officer training while general session offered: *Fundraising DIY* with Jessica Kennedy from the Optimist Club of St. Louis.
- **District Updates & Showcases:** Included District Foundation Training with Mary Dewey, a showcase of clubs presenting their OIF Grant Award projects, and a recap of the EMO Junior Golf Tournament by Joe Hatfield.

- **Awards Banquet & Governor's Ball:** The evening featured the formal **Installation of 2026–2027 District Officers**, Governor's Choice Awards, music/entertainment by DJ Eric Bohanan of the Rolla Optimist Club, and a **A&A Live Auction** using accumulated District Dollars.

Sunday, August 23

- **Annual Memorial Service:** Led by Mary Dewey to honor and celebrate the lives and service of EMO Optimist members who passed away over the previous year. Memories were shared of Caryl Harness, Marsha Greenstreet, and Cindy Cherry TCA Optimists who past away this year.



Governors' Choice Award, Bringing Out the Best in Youth Presented by Assistant Governor Lauren Dell to Marian Bozak, accepting on behalf of Katie Huck.



Rookie of the Year Award: Presented by Assistant Governor Lauren Dell to Jan Buechting as part of the Governors' Choice Award presentation.



Club members attending convention:

Pat Doenges, Marian Bozak, Barb Schmidt, Kathy Todd, Jan Buechting, Mary Hatfield, Donna Master, Peggy Scott, Jean Naeger, Phyllis Neff



Installation of officers for the **2026–2027 East Missouri (EMO) Optimist District** administrative term included:

- **Mary Hatfield** – Installed as District Governor
 - **Joe Hatfield** – Installed as Governor-Elect
 - **Jean Naeger** – Installed as Executive Committee Member (Past Governor)
 - **Barb Schmidt** – Installed as Lt. Governor (Zone 4)
-



Pat Doenges, Jan Buechting, and Donna Masters -- EMO First Timers





Thank you to our club for covering the costs for Friday night's hospitality event. A special thanks to our TCA attendees who planned, prepared, and set up the evening, including creating themed centerpieces and a fantastic casino-style appetizer and dessert buffet. Pinterest may inspire some wild ideas, but Barb Schmidt and Jean Naeger had a wonderful time bringing the theme to life.

Submitted by Jean Naeger

CONFERENCE / CONVENTION DATES **2026-2027**

First Quarter Conference
Oct. 22-25, 2026
EMO/WEMO Joint Conference
Jefferson City

Second Quarter Conference
Feb. 5-6 , 2027
Virtual Conference

Third Quarter Conference
May 14-15, 2027
St. Louis

Fourth Quarter Convention
Aug 20-22, 2027
Columbia

JOI CLUB Summer Activities

JOI Club members wrapped up their summer with a pool party hosted by Debbie Schumaker on August 15. Co-advisor Carol Schanz, incoming JOI Advisor Marian Bozak, TCA President-Elect Donna Masters, and several family members joined the celebration. The pool offered welcome relief from the Missouri heat, and the group enjoyed a fun afternoon.



On August 19, Debbie Schumaker dropped off about \$200 in Halloween candy and toys from the JOI Club to Wendy Wulf at Jefferson Memorial for The Crisis Nursery. Working with Wendy is always a pleasure, and the JOI members were grateful for the chance to help bring joy to children in need.

Debbie Schumaker
JOI Adult Advisor

Carol Schanz
JOI Chair



SAVE THE DATES



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

September 3 Meeting - Bicycle Park Presentation
September 8 Joint Board Meeting
September 10 Board Meeting Review
September 11 JOI Club Bowling @ Quonset Lanes
September 12 Twin City Days
September 17 Foster Together & Sponsorship Luncheon

September 19 De Soto Days
 September 24 Meeting
 September 26 Brenden's Backpacks Collection
 October 1 Officer Installation
 October 3-4 Pickleball Tournament
 October 6 Board Meeting
 October 8 Board Update & All for Family
 October 10 Bike Rodeo
 October 15 Perfect Attendance Awards & BB5K Update
 October 22 P.A.T. Boxes
 October 23-25 1st Quarter EMO Conference
 October 29 Halloween Party
 November 3 Board Meeting
 November 5 Board Review
 November 12 Meeting
 November 13 Art Contest sorting
 November 15 Art Show
 November 19 Meeting
 November 26 NO 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

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2024-2026
 Mary McDowell
 Debbie Kettler
 Carolyn
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2025-2027
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