



OPTIMIST CLUB of Chippewa Falls

Jan and Feb
Newsletter
March 2024

Jan-Feb 2024

Weekly Club Meetings

6:45 a.m.-7:30 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church
130 W Central St.
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

OFFICERS

Cathy Greenseth, President
Tom Cushman, VP
Marty Tlachac, Pres.-Elect
Deb Braden, Treasurer
Jack Halbleib, Secretary
Amanda Blonigen, Past
President

BOARD MEMBERS

Louise Bentley, 2nd year
Nadine Bresina, 2nd year
Tom Eder, 2nd year
Dina Brennen, 1st year
Scott Marty, 1st year
Lisa Thelen, 1st year

Club Foundation Board

Ralph Cushman
Jack Halbleib
Joe Niese
Angie Riemer
Dave Schaller
Cathy Greenseth, Ex-Officio

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

MARCH

March 7 - Ralph Cushman
March 8 - Jerry Verwey
March 31 - Mike McGinley

APRIL

April 11 - Amanda Blonigen
April 16 - Julia Jilek-Proue

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

President Cathy's Message

Dear Members and Friends of Optimism,

Please see the article below announcing our club essay contest winners. Thank you to all the young people who took time to send in their essay with the topic of "Optimism: How it Connects Us." The top three winners read their essays during a February morning club meeting. I just have to say, "Wow!" Thank you to the judges whose expertise came up with the winners, and to committee member Yvonne Zwiefelhofer.

Everyone, save the date of Wednesday, April 24 for an Optimist evening Spring Fling to be held at the Fill-Inn Station beginning at 5:30 p.m. Current members and people of the community who wish to learn more about becoming an Optimist are most welcome to join us for a fun evening of pizza, drinks and raffles.

The 2024 calendar year marks our 55th year as a club officially on July 17. Optimist International has evolved over their 105 years and we are happy to be a part of that history through service, volunteering, and spreading and sharing optimism most especially to the youth.

One project we are looking to start up annually is a Bike Rodeo. We are looking to partner with other organizations or clubs. Please contact me or a club member if you are interested. Together we can bring out the best in youth, our communities and ourselves.

Keep your Optimism alive.

Cathy Greenseth, President ChippewaFallsOptimistClub1@gmail.com



President Cathy Greenseth

Congratulations to our Essay Contest Winners

*First Place, Olivia Clark, McDonell Central Catholic High School, Senior - \$200 and medallion
Olivia's essay has been submitted for the WINUM District level competition where the winner will receive a \$2,500 education scholarship from the Optimist International Foundation. *Good luck Olivia!*

*Second Place, Greta Sokup, McDonell High School, Senior - \$100 and medallion

*Third Place, Kylee Jenson, McDonell High School, Senior - \$50 and medallion

Congratulations to all of our winners!



Kylee Jenson, Greta Sokup and Olivia Clark



Jan-Feb 2024

THANK YOU TO OUR SPEAKERS!

JANUARY PROGRAMS

Jan 3 - New Website, Lisa Thelen

Jan 10 - Lavender View Lavender Farm, Stephanie Sworski

Jan 17 - Youth of the Month, TJ Coughman

Jan 24 - Camp Nawakwa, Sherry Jasper & Lisa Herrmann

Jan 31 - Ground Penetrating Radar Research, Harry Jol

FEBRUARY PROGRAMS

Feb 7 - OI, Angie Riemer

Feb 14 - Brain Health, Kerri Crank

Feb 21 - Essay Contest Winners

Feb 28 - Youth of the Month, Sarah Manter

SECRET HANDSHAKERS

Jan 3 - Jody Kranig to Nancy Post

Jan 10 - Nancy Post to Ralph Coughman

Jan 17 - Dina Brennen to Yvonne Zwiefelhofer

Jan 24 - Nadine Bresina to Vicki Wilson

Jan 31 - Bob Nelson to Yvonne Zwiefelhofer

Feb 7 - Lisa Thelen to Yvonne Zwiefelhofer

Feb 14 - Carleen Sterner to Nadine Bresina

Feb 21 - Jack Halbleib to Vicki Wilson

Feb 28 - Jack Halbleib to Tom Eder

BOOST WINNERS

Jan 3 - Nancy Post

Jan 10 - Vicki Wilson

Jan 17 - Lisa Thelen

Jan 24 - Jack Halbleib

Jan 31 - Nadine Bresina

Feb 7 - Vicki Wilson

Feb 14 - Scott Marty

Feb 21 - Nancy Post

Feb 28 - Tom Eder

Brain Health and Keys to a Healthy Life

On Feb. 14, Health and Wellness Coach Kerri Crank was our guest speaker. Kerri is a Nurse Practitioner at Mayo Clinic in Barron and Eau Claire who specializes in family neurology, and spoke to our club about brain health and the “Keys to a Healthy Life.”

Kerri said that there are seven areas that are key to a healthy life:

- Physical (growth and development, exercise, nutrition, sleep, energy)
- Social (bonding, sharing, cooperating, listening, personal space, eye contact)
- Emotional (unconditional love, self-esteem, self-control, emotions, empathy, and dreaming)
- Cognitive (problem solving, goal setting, learning, mindset, curiosity and creativity)
- Environmental (stable housing, safety for exploring, access to play, eliminating toxins, access to nature, and clean air and water)
- Family (Safety in the home, nurturing and responsive care, parenting village, validation and modeling and resilience) and
- Social Needs (Access to care and mental health services, financial stability and resources, access to education).

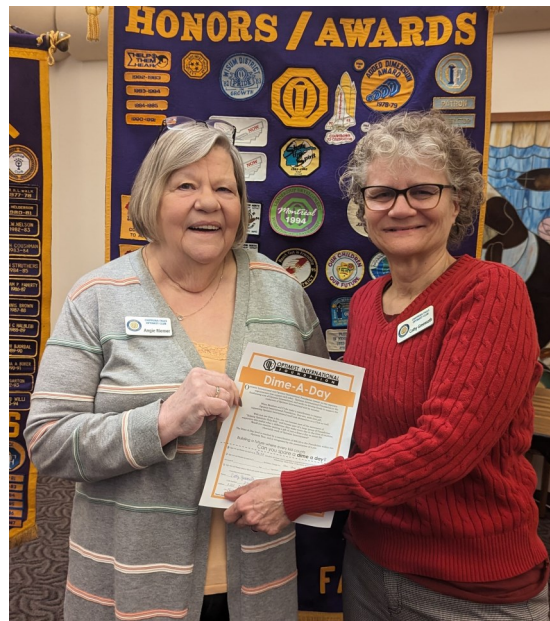


Kerri Crank and President Cathy Greenseth

Kerri added that all of us can help by providing Community Support.

Thank you, Kerri, for providing us with this valuable information. She can be reached on Facebook at InspiredAction15.

Gov.-Elect Angie Updates Club on Two OI Programs



Governor-Elect Angie Riemer and President Cathy Greenseth holding a Dime-A-Day form

Club member and Governor-Elect Angie Riemer was our speaker on Feb. 7. Angie spoke to our club on topics concerning Optimist International. These include [Optimist Institute](#), which offers courses that our club’s executive officers are participating in.

Angie also talked about the Dime-A-Day Program in which members contribute \$36.50/year to the Optimist International Foundation to support kids. Our club presented checks toward this program at the Second Quarter District meeting. If you are interested in supporting Dime-A-Day, click on the downloadable form. <https://www.oifoundation.org/downloads/dime-a-day-form.pdf>.

Thanks, Angie, for telling us about these two important OI programs.



Our Club Earns Honor Club for 2022-23

The Chippewa Falls Optimist Club was recognized for achieving 2022-23 Honor Club at the WINUM District Second Quarter Conference in Shawano on Feb. 17. We are one of two clubs in the district to achieve this award!



Pictured above, attending the Second Quarter District conference, were Vicki Wilson, 2023-24 President Cathy Greenseth, Treasurer Deb Braden, Gov.-Elect Angie Riemer, Louise Bentley and Troy Dostal.

In the photo on left, 2022-23 President Amanda Blonigen accepts her Honor Club Plaque from Gov.-Elect Angie Riemer.

Congratulations to Amanda and everyone who played a part in a very successful Optimist year!



Harry Jol Shares his Archeological Research



Professor Harry Jol accepts an Optimist coffee mug from President Cathy Greenseth at Jan. 31 meeting.

On Jan. 31, our speaker was Harry Jol. Harry is the husband of Optimist club member Carleen Sterner and is a professor of geography and anthropology at UW-Eau Claire.

Dr. Jol talked to our club about his fascinating research using ground penetrating radar (GPR) to conduct archeological digs. He has used GPR in local cemeteries and potters' fields; and he has traveled with UW-EC students throughout North America, Europe (including digs of Holocaust sites), Israel, New Zealand, Australia and Antarctica uncovering mass graves.

We appreciate it that Harry spoke to our club about the important research he has done throughout the world.

Jan-Feb 2024

OPTIMIST MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

FEBRUARY

Mike McGinley - 1975 = 49 yrs.
 Jack Halbleib - 1987 = 37 yrs.
 Deb Braden - 1998 = 26 yrs.
 Karin Schuler - 2008 = 16 yrs.

MARCH

Yvonne Zwiefelhofer - 1990 = 34 yrs.
 Norb Kirk - 1999 = 25 yrs.
 Joe Niese - 2015 = 9 yrs.
 Jenny Stark - 2016 = 8 yrs.
 Megan Fenner - 2019 = 5 yrs.
 Jordan Stoll - 2019 = 5 yrs.
 Robert Parkhurst - 2019 = 5 yrs.
 Jody Kranig - 2023 = 1 yr.
 Joe Kranig - 2023 = 1 yr.
 Mark Brennan - 2023 = 1 yr.
 Jay Thelen - 2023 = 1 yr.

2024 EVENTS

WINUM Second Quarter Conference - Feb 16-17, Shawano

WINUM Third Quarter Conference - May 3-4, Appleton

Northern WI State Fair - July 10-14, Chippewa Falls

WINUM Fourth Quarter Convention - Aug. 16-17, Eau Claire

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

On-Site Chiropractic
 Dr. Amanda Blonigen
 2029 Co. Hwy I Ste 5
 Chippewa Falls, WI
 715.382.6864

[Website](#)

To sponsor our club with an ad or if you have newsletter questions: [Send us an email.](#)

February Youth of the Month -- Sarah Manter

Congratulations to our February Youth of the Month Sarah Manter. Sarah is the daughter of Barbi and Robert Manter, and she is a senior at Chippewa Falls High School.

Sarah's extra-curricular school activities include the Color Guard, American Club and Chemistry Club. She participated at Badger Girls State.

Sarah was inspired by her biological mother, who died from cancer, to pursue biochemistry at a university and plans to continue into cancer research after graduation.

Congratulations to Sarah!



Barbi Manter, February Youth of the Month Sarah Manter and Robert Manter

Lavender Farm to Open in Summer

Pres. Cathy Greenseth and Stephanie Sworski

Did you know that there is a lavender farm in Chippewa Falls? Stephanie Sworski, the owner of Pondview Lavender Farm, spoke to our club on Jan. 10 about the new business that will be opening to the public at 3739 90th St. this summer.

The farm was a personal dream of Stephanie's and is providing a new career in retirement. This organic working farm features purple and white lavender, that Stephanie said that it is hand-planted, harvested, dried and bundled. The farm will offer several opportunities for people: pick the lavender, visit the retail shop, relax on the patio, as well as provide a place for yoga and meditation.

We are thankful to Stephanie for sharing her new venture with us, and look forward to visiting her lavender farm in June. View their website at <https://pondviewlavenderfarm.com>.

January Youth of the Month -- TJ Cushman

Our January Youth of the Month is Thomas "Tommy or TJ" Cushman, Jr., son of Valerie and Tom Cushman. Tommy's father Tom and grandfather Ralph are both members of the Chippewa Falls Optimist Club. TJ is a senior at McDonell Central Catholic High School.

He is a trumpet player who participates in the Jazz Band, Concert Band and Pep Band at school. His favorite class is History of Jazz.

In his free time, when not at work, he enjoys target shooting, board games, video gaming and developing story lines and concepts for video gaming and programming. TJ's future plans are working and possibly attending University of Wisconsin-Stout in Game Design and Development.

We are pleased to honor Tommy as our January Youth of the Month! Congratulations!



The Cushman family: Ralph, Tom, Youth of the Month TJ, Valerie and Lucy

Club Serves Dinner at Agnes Table February 15



In photo above are Angie Riemer (holding grape stems) and Laurie Ewings. On right, Laurie Ewings, Diane Meyer and Carleen Sterner provided music for the guests.



International Optimist Day Feb. 1: Random Acts of Optimism

February 1 was International Optimist Day! Our club celebrated by wearing our Optimist shirts to the January 31 club meeting for a group photo (as shown on right). We then wore them again the next day while performing random acts of Optimism. Members were given business-size cards with the Optimist Creed printed on them and handed them to people they were kind to. The next week members shared all the different ways that they were kind: buying others coffee, buying lunches, handing out roses and chocolates, handing out stickers, and just sharing the Optimist Creed with others who may need some encouragement throughout their day.



SAVE THE DATE
CELEBRATE OPTIMIST DAY
February 1, 2024



Camp Nawakwa Becomes Youth Camp

Have you ever been to Camp Nawakwa? Sherry Jasper (board president) and Lisa Herrmann (property manager) attended our club meeting Jan. 24 to tell us all about it.

You may remember Camp Nawakwa as a girl scout camp or a boy scout camp before that. In 2024 it formed a non-profit and is now a rental camp for youth organizations. Organizations may rent the entire camp or individual facilities year-round. Camp Nawakwa is 75 acres and includes lodges, a dining hall and a wild 26-acre lake. It is located near Cornell, WI.

For more information, go to their website at www.ournawakwa.org. Thank you, Sherry and Lisa, for telling us about this beautiful, historic camp.



President-Elect Marty Tlachac with Sherry Jasper and Lisa Herrmann

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 fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

--Optimist International