

East Missouri Optimist (EMO)
First Quarter Conference / October 28th-29th 2022
Courtyard by Marriott – Columbia, MO
SUMMARY & RECAP

Fellow EMO Optimists! I would like to thank all of you that attended the conference and helped us exceed our goal of 50 attendees. THANK YOU! To the elite team that helped put it all together, you are the best a Governor could ask for! And to those that couldn't make it, hopefully you can catch it next time, as these conferences are a lot of fun, informative, and filled with comradery. Here is a summary/recap that will touch on a few of the important items covered.

1. Executive Session

- a. Budget: A balanced budget was approved. It was noted that due to surpluses being used as a large part of last year's income, this year's budget would need to be reduced by about \$15,000 overall. That's ok, as we have been able to identify key areas for reduction and/or improvement that will better position EMO for next year.
- b. Annual Audit: EMO did not complete/submit an annual audit last year which resulted in the loss of allotments. I am pleased to report that by the end of our first conference, we had completed the audit for this year, and Treasurer Kristin Ham has submitted the audit to OI.
- c. Our budget is dynamic, subject to change by the executive board as needed. I am meeting or communicating with our Treasurer at least twice a month. As we go into each quarter, I will be providing the executive board with recommendations for increases and decreases. At the conference it was also suggested that we provide balance statements on a regular basis to the Executive Board, which I fully support.

2. Membership

- a. My goal as Governor is to offer whatever assistance I can to clubs so that we achieve two primary goals as a district:
 - i. Do NOT lose any clubs
 - ii. Every club ends the year with at least +1 member over their total at the beginning of the year.

It would be great to build a new club, and to increase club members by more than one, but if we can at least end the year in the positive on clubs and members, I will have considered this year a success.
- b. Membership can be viewed as three words: Me / Member / Ship
 - i. Me – What I can do personally to bring in at least one new member this year? Do I have a membership application with me? How can I help out at event membership tables?
 - ii. Member – Once I've brought in a new member, what can I do to help mentor that member? How I can help her/him find their fit in the club that makes them happy? What can I do to follow up, ensuring their success as a club member?

- iii. Ship – What can I do to help this “ship” that is called “club”, “district”, and “OP”? How can help steer a New Optimists Wanted (NOW) program, or other such event? I don’t want to wait on others to make it happen!

3. Guest Speakers

- a. Nicole Amick Slusser – Wow! What an inspirational story she shared, along with her fantastic singing! Her experiences with the Central Missouri Honor Flight were inspiring. She had recently travelled on an Honor Flight with Downtown Optimist member, Red Leighton (former Governor, WW2 veteran, and Honor Flight attendee). Her singing was beautiful, and when everyone in the room stood while she sang “Proud to be an American”, there were quite a few tears and goosebumps throughout the crowd.
 - b. Julie Robison / Mid-American Region Vice President – so engaging! We really appreciated her explaining some of the OI programs currently being recommended, such as the “Partners in Optimism” in which a larger club teams up with a smaller club to offer assistance and/or resources in building up membership and strength. She also had us do a charades exercise in which teams acted out an OI program, such as “curling”, while the audience tried to guess what it was. It was a blast! Very engaging and hilarious!
 - c. Dr. Danna Wren – to whom I am fortunate and blessed to be married to! Danna shared information and strategies on using social media platforms to reach out to different demographics in your community. The use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok for your club can be different, yet effective, when the right platform is used. We’ve had a lot of requests for her slides, which I am attaching to this summary.
 - d. Tony Parision and Jean Naeger – A&A Gurus! While the new A&A structure and reporting process is more efficient, it can be a bit tricky for some. This presentation helped answer some major concerns, and we plan to push out the details and additional information regularly.
 - e. Jan Palmer – Zone 3 Lt. Governor – Jan provided a popular session on ideas for making club meetings more interesting. Some of the examples shared were attendance games, monthly poker contests, “mystery greeter”, and more.
 - f. Curt Porter – Zone 1 Lt. Governor – Curt also did a great session on how to recruit new members and opened it to the floor for recommendations. A key takeaway shared by many is that regardless of the event/venue, have a table set up to share with attendees the excitement and advantages to being an Optimist.
- ### 4. Recommendations & Other Topics
- a. Several attendees mentioned the need to add a motivational speaker or other such exciting event to the Friday night session, making it more worthwhile and beneficial to attend. I love this idea, and we’ll be working on this for the future quarters.
 - b. Club Directories – should be out soon! By going online with the directories, we can save \$1,000, make revisions a lot easier, and provide instant access to those with passwords.

As your EMO Governor I am committed to making these conferences of great value to you and your clubs. You need to know that when you attend, you will return with new ideas and enthusiasm to spark your Optimism. I hope to see you at the next conference. Here are some additional information tidbits I'd like to share with you:

- Link to Optimism Benefits Card
https://www.optimist.org/documents/2023/Benefits_Credit_Card_Size.pdf
- The New Member Optimist Institute is open to all members:
<https://www.optimist.org/member/optimist-institute.cfm>
Passcode: **2223CLUB**
Club Number: **Your specific Optimist club 5-digit number**
Member number: **The member's individual membership number (available on your club roster on OI Leaders site)**