

Twin City Area Optimist Club P.O. Box 475

Festus, Missouri 63028 www.twincityoptimist.org

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March 2025 News Making a Difference For Kids

President Cathy Elliott



Did someone say, "March Madness"?

Calling us "busy" would be an understatement!

In this 2nd quarter alone, we've taken on **17 projects, events, and fundraisers**, all while welcoming **six new Optimist members** to our club! Some of our projects require months of planning, while others come together quickly—but what truly stands out is how we consistently achieve our goals by working side by side.

One of my favorite lines from the Optimist Creed is:

"To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best."

It perfectly reflects who we are and what we strive for as Optimists.

Thank you all for your dedication and continued support!

Cathy Elliott President – Twin City Area Optimist Club

Welcome New Members

Welcome to the three new members inducted in March!



Denise Brown



Jennifer Wooldridge



Lisa Schevers

March 6, 2025 Board Update Mardi Gras Party



Updates from the March 4 board meeting opened the March 6 noon meeting followed by a Mardi Gras celebration. Party planners Debbie Floyd and her committee provided cupcakes, three of which had a plastic baby in them as is the Mardi Gras custom. It took a few extra trips to the cupcake table, but the three babies were finally found by Tracy Johnson, Ruth Ann Adams, and Vicky Campbell!

The second game was a guessing game for the number of strands of Mardi Gras beads in a container. Pam Cernik was the lucky winner with the closest guess. The final game was two truths and a lie. While nobody got all six answers correct, several

people got five out of six which forced a roll-off. The lucky winner was Betty Hardin.

Paige Laiben provided musical entertainment during the party by singing "On the Bayou". She did a great job and had most people tapping their toes and trying to sing along.

Congratulations to all of the winners who each took home a gift basket. Thank you to the party committee and Paige for a fun afternoon!

Board Updates

Katie Huck has \$18,000 in sponsorships to date!

Easter Food Basket collection will be starting soon. Tracy Johnson, Lynne Wendell, Debbie Hogenmiller and Alicia Cummiskey will let everyone know what items are needed.

The board approved a new project for Fidget Mats by supporting the United Methodist Women of the First United Methodist Church of Festus/Crystal City. Carroll Metzger will provide a list of items that we can supply.

The next NOW/WOW Meeting has been scheduled for the July 31 evening meeting at the United Methodist Church. The church cooks are being asked to prepare a meal.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, April 8, at Amy Baum's home. Please note this is the second Tuesday of the month instead of the first.

Reminders to members

When responding to a meeting reservation email, please hit **"Reply"**, not **"Reply All"**. To verify, the only name showing in the **Send To** will be <u>Kathy@ optimist@gmail.com</u>. This will prevent people who are planning to attend from being missed in the final count.

If you shop for an Optimist program:

- Please use the tax-exempt form whenever possible. We can give you a Tax-Exempt Form for Optimist purchases only.
- Keep your personal items on a separate receipt from the Optimist items.
- If you buy coats to donate, please turn in the receipts as they are needed for our grant.

Submitted by: Carolyn McKinney









Some of the game winners: Top, left to right: Vicky Campbell, Pam Cernik, Tracy Johnson

Left: Ruth Ann Adams

Right: Betty Hardin



March 10, 2025 Nominating Committee



The nominating committee including Becky Francis, Cathy Elliott, Sue Boyer, Kathy Todd, Debbie Hogenmiller, and Peggy Scott, met at Sue Boyer's home on March 10.

March 13, 2025 Joe Hatfield St. Patrick's Day Party



What better way to start an Optimist meeting than with the announcement that Debbie Hogenmiller rang the Cancer-Free Bell! She received a standing ovation in recognition of the battle she has waged against breast cancer all while participating in meetings and events with the club. Congratulations Debbie! Prayers answered.

And more great news - three new members were inducted: Lisa Schevers, sponsored by Becky Francis, Jennifer Wooldridge sponsored by Mary McDowell, and Denise Brown, sponsored by Judy Williams. Welcome, ladies!

The speaker for the meeting was Joe Hatfield, President of the Jefferson County Optimist Club and Lt. Governor of over eight clubs in our district. Since today was also our St. Patrick's Day party, Joe shared some information about St. Patrick including that he is the patron saint of mines. St. Patrick was a real person and while he did not drive the snakes out of Ireland, an island that didn't have any snakes to begin with, he did lead an interesting life.

Joe shared that our club is the busiest in our district, although the Washington, Missouri club is also very active. He also mentioned how popular the Twin City Area Optimist Club is, not only in our area and district, but throughout Optimist International!

While we are able to have fundraisers all year, other clubs may only have one or two major fundraisers a year. Joe encourages all of the district clubs to support each other's activities. One upcoming event he mentioned is a Trivia Night on April 5 being held by the South Side Optimist Club of St. Louis in Fenton.

The upcoming Junior Golf Tournament is another activity in which Joe is very involved. He is the tournament chairman that will be held June 6 at the Ste. Genevieve Golf Club. Several of our members have worked at that event in the past and are looking forward to participating again.

After Joe's talk, we had a St. Patrick's Day party with a party game of a coin toss into a cup. The winners from each table advanced to compete against each other. All in all, it was a very busy, fun-filled meeting.

Erin go Bragh!!

Submitted by: Carolyn McKinney



Donna Long and Cathy Elliott showed their Irish spirit.

Sue Boyer, Beth Watts, and Lisa Ermer showed off their green.





Our favorite cook, Leroy Brown.



Becky Capps and Becky Francis reminded members of the holiday at check-in.



Guest speaker Joe Hatfield tried his hand at the coin toss.

March 20, 2025 Trailnet Gina Otto





The March 20 noon meeting welcomed guest speaker Gina Otto. Gina is the Special Events Manager for Trailnet, the organization the Twin City Area Optimists partnered with last year for our Bike Rodeo event. Trailnet advocates for better walking, biking, and transit.

One of the ways Trailnet supports the community is by working to affect policies. They work with local and state governments to promote projects and legislation that stress bike safety. Currently, they are involved with the city of Hillsboro to improve safety for students who need to cross Highway 21 to attend the school district's campuses. They also campaigned for the Missouri anti-distraction driving law to prevent cell phone use while driving.

The area in which TCA Optimists has partnered with Trailnet is education. Trailnet offers education on safe biking and walking habits, pedestrian safety for motorists, practical skills such as changing bike tires, bike handling through bike rodeos, and the benefits of transportation alternatives. Education programs are offered for adults as well as youth.

Gina is involved in arranging 13 to 14 bike rides a year. There are seven classic rides including the Bottleneck Bridge ride in Festus in which Trailnet participates. In addition to the classics, there are community rides which tend to be slower paced and include regular stops where docents may provide educational information about the area. Rides range from 10 to 100 miles with varying terrains. The Bottleneck Bridge ride is one of the hilliest.

Trailnet bike rides are fully supported, meaning that riders use a tracking device which enables them to be found quickly in the event of an emergency. Support vehicles are present along the route in case of first aid needs or mechanical failures, as well as rest stops which provide drinks and snacks. Some rides also offer timing for riders who like to track their progress.

Submitted by: Carolyn McKinney



Go Cards!

Wearing their baseball attire, Twin City Area Optimists celebrated the St. Louis Cardinals Opening Day at the March 27 evening meeting held at the First United Methodist Church in Festus. Program Chair Beth Winkeler organized decorations for the meeting room and provided baseball snacks of popcorn, peanuts, bubble gum, and pretzels. And for fun, there was Baseball Trivia!



Angie Eisenbeis and Marian Bozak talked about the OASIS reading program and how it has helped to improve kids' reading abilities. Marian shared her

story of reading with the kids one- on-one. For more information on this muchneeded and rewarding program go to: https://tutoring.oasisnet.org/

Phyllis Neff reminded everyone that Monarch Jewelry will be set up at the Optimist International Convention in St. Louis. If anyone would like to take collections for unwanted or broken jewelry, we can take it to the convention for them. Monarch Jewelry's mission: "Our mission is to create artistic jewelry and accessories as a unique way to engage in the fight against modern-day slavery." For more information on this project go to:

https://www.facebook.com/Monarch4Freedom https://monarchjewelry.org/

Submitted by: Cathy Elliott



TCA Optimists in their Cardinals attire.



Carol Schanz enjoyed the bubble gum!

CLUB PROJECTS

Head Start - Easter Baskets and Food Supply

Please bring to weekly meeting - 5 like items Drop off at Taytro's parking lot for day meetings and Methodist Church for evening meeting. (March 27, April 3 and April 10) Monetary donations accepted Project Chairs: Tracy Johnson (314) 225 6126 and Lynn Wendel (314) 808-6799

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

Hand Soap -Body Soap Shampoo & Conditioner (Adult) No Tears/Baby Shampoo Razors Toothbruch and Toothpaste

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Dish Soap Laundry Soap Fabric Softener Sponges/Dish Towels/Pot holders Aluminum Foil/ Saran Wrap/Ziploc bags Cleaning Products PAPER GOODS Toilet Paper Paper Towels Napkins

FOOD ITEMS

CANNED VEGTABLES (green beans, corn, peas) CANNED FRUIT CANNED SOUP/PASTA CEREAL/OATMEAL CANNED TUNA/CHICKEN PEANUT BUTTER GRAPE JELLY APPLESAUCE MAC AND CHEESE SALT AND PEPPER PASTA AND PASTA SAUCE STAPLES: FLOUR, SUGAR CAKE MIX/FROSTING CRACKERS PACKAGE PASTA/RICE DISHES **INSTANT POTATOES** GRAVY/CAN OR JAR

Spring Shopping

The Women's Shelter committee was busy shopping in Walmart on March 11 for the children residing at the local Women's Shelter. They purchased Easter crafts, egg dyeing kits, and dyeable eggs in preparation for Easter. They also invested in small flower pots, seeds, and soil for the gardeners at the shelter to start spring planting.

Submitted by: Barbara Bates



Women's Shelter Shoppers Judy Williams, Mickie Huskey and Vicky Campbell

Aunt Rose Project

On March 17, 2025 the Aunt Rose Committee of the Twin City Area Optimist Club met at St. Louis Bread Company to plan the purchase of feminine hygiene products. We chose to use the Amazon wish list on Aunt Rose's Facebook page as our product guideline. We decided to buy something from each category listed. Our item tally came to 27 books, 1,336 tampons, 36 period panties and 1,856 pads for a final cost of \$1,085.53.

The Aunt Rose project provides teenage girls in need with free feminine hygiene products as well as educational books about puberty and menstruation.

Chair: Karen Huskey Committee: Debbie Benninger, Debbie Floyd, Donna Long

Submitted by: Karen Huskey





Renee Gerlach, aka Aunt Rose, and the supplies purchased by the Twin City Area Optimist Club.

Photo by Patty Meyer and The Leader

Oratorical Contest

Participants in the Oratorical Contest made their presentations to the TCA Optimist Club judges on March 24 at Poppy's. First, second and 3rd place winners were identified to advance to the next level.



Left to right: Karsyn Lucas, Olivia Drinen (2nd Place),

Katelyn Blair (3rd Place), Olivia Blair (1st Place)

Optimist Members Celebrate Women

On the evening of March 28, dressed up and looking beautiful and wearing their best jewelry, Optimist members attended as well as sponsored the Leader's Celebrating Women's event held at Oak Valley Golf Course and Resort in Pevely. Not only was it a fun and lovely



evening, TCA Optimist members also helped raise \$1,000 for the club's Aunt Rose Project by selling 50/50 tickets and balloons.

About those balloons! They made the room look colorful and festive. Half of the proceeds were returned to the participants in the form of a raffle which the winners enjoyed. Congratulations really go to the Optimist members who untangled the balloons and retied them to their weights just before the event started! Despite the good intentions of Debbie Hogenmiller and Carroll Metzger who tied the balloons to their weights in the afternoon, the wind had other ideas. But it was no match for Debbie Hogenmiller, Sue Joggerst, Pat Parsons, Laura Elbl, Cathy Elliott, Kathy Jensen and Barb Schmidt who worked successfully to untangle and retie them before the event.

Kathy Jensen, Barb Schmidt, Tracy Johnson, Rosie O'Shaughnessy and Mary Kay Scott sold 50/50 tickets while Dorothea Kehm helped by tearing the tickets prior to the drawing.

Contributing to the Pamper Raffle basket, displayed at the TCA sponsorship table, were Jean Naeger, Katie Huck, Laura Lohman and Barb Schmidt who made the basket look so pretty. Other contributing Optimist members were Carol Schanz, Kathy Jensen, Donna Long, Debbie Floyd, Patty Meyer, Janice Boyd, Carroll Metzger and Vinty Med Spa. The sponsor table also drew membership interest from four women attendees and a potential new sponsor.

A fun time was had by all.

Submitted by: Carroll Metzger



TCA Optimists and a look at the balloons.



President Cathy Elliott giving her speech.





Mary Kay Scott, Rosie O'Shaughnessy and Dorothea Kehm entering the event.



Ruth Ann Adams struck a pose on the red carpet.

Carroll Metzger on the red carpet.

CLUB FUNDRAISERS

Please help promote the golf raffle with your family and friends. You can share flyer from our public Facebook page.



CRYSTAL HIGHLANDS GOLF COURSE & BISTRO

One entry for every \$10 donation Drawing Orawing Orawing



view qr code to pay

4 rounds of golf at Crystal Highlands Golf Course (includes cart rental, valid M-F)

TOTAL VALUE \$240



Holy Moly Cleaning Cloths

The sale of Holy Moly Cleaning Cloths has been a very successful internal fundraiser that began 10 years ago. The price has stayed at \$5.00 the entire time, which is not something you can say about very many things in today's world. We have enjoyed a profit of 31% average over that period of time. This fundraiser is ongoing throughout the year with the profits being used to support the club activities in the community. These wonderful cleaning cloths are chemical free. Just wet with warm water and clean glass, mirrors, and stainless steel without streaks! Use them over and over again. They may be washed in the washing machine.

Kathy Todd carries the Holy Moly cloths to all meetings throughout the year. Thank you Kathy!

Submitted by: Kathy Todd and Ellen Bridgewater





Share Night at Culver's Restaurant

Approximately 20 Twin City Area Optimist Club members participated in Culver's Share Night on March 11 at the Culver's restaurant in Festus. Members greeted customers at the door and thanked them for their patronage as they left. They also delivered food orders to customers in the drive-thru and inside the restaurant, as well as cleaning tables. In addition, other TCA members showed up to provide support, eat, and socialize.

At the end of the night there was \$35 cash in the tip/donation jar. Ten percent of the night's receipts from 5pm to 8pm were shared with our club resulting in approximately \$450 to add to our bank account.

Thank you to everyone who worked and dined!

Submitted by: Kathy Todd



Many Optimists came out for dinner.



Sue Joggerst and Debbie Hogenmiller with a delivery order.



Tracy Johnson with a drive-thru order.



Debbie Hogenmiller, Kathy Todd, and Carroll Metzger received training from a Culver's employee.

Please Note: Dining out fundraisers will include 10% of sales from gift cards. Stop in and dine and purchase gift cards for future dining. The gift that keeps on giving!



New Marketing Brochure

The revised tri-fold marketing brochure is now available. This document provides basic information about the projects and services we provide to the community. It will be used for new member packets, sponsorship campaigns, and available at club public events. This is a great way to spread the word about our club. Members can request copies from Marketing Chair Jean Naeger.

SERVI





BICYCLE SAFETY

Optimists gave away and properly fitted hun-dreds of bicycle helmets as part of the club's new and growing bicycle safety project.

Optimists partner with community organizations to serve children

- Jefferson College: Scholarships
- . Aunt Rose Project: Serving period poverty
- · Second Hand Heros: Providing items and support
- Atlas Youth Outreach: Therapy for local teens
- Foster Together: Supporting foster families
- Spotlight Community Theatre: Encouraging the arts
- Helping Hands and Horses: Equestrian therapy

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

New for 2025: Donations are tax deductible

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



Choose Optimism

By providing hope and positive vision, Optimists bring out the best in youth, our communities and ourselves. Join the Twin City Area Optimist Club, a service club supporting southern Jefferson County, and make a difference today.



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 coun-selors to identify local children in need.

www.twincityoptimist.org @twincityoptimistclub P.O. Box 475 Festus, MO 63028



CELEBRATE



JUNIOR OPTIMIST CLUB

Children ages 11-18 are encouraged to join the Twin City Optimist's Junior Optimist Club. Above, bers learn about careers while enjoying a craft project. The club elects officers, plans its own projects and gives members a chance to develop leadership skills, meet new people and



DICTIONARIES FOR THIRD GRADERS

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

JUNIOR GOLF

One of junior golf's most prestigious events, the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships, starts with a local qualifying tournament supported by the Twin City Area club.



Club members organize food drives and other collections throughout the years to serve members of the community. Above, a truckload of food was gathered for Brenden's Friday Backpacks, a community organization providing food

OPTIMIST CLUB MEMBERS RECEIVE AS MUCH AS THEY GIVE

· The fellowship of proactive people with optimistic mindsets

 New social and working relationships with individuals from a cross section of our communities The opportunity to develop and demonstrate leadership skills locally, regionally, nationally and

internationally The satisfaction of making a difference in our communities

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.



YOUTH APPRECIATION Bringing out the best in youth includes honor local students for their achievements at the annual Youth Appreciation luncheon.



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.

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 Optimist is for you. Join and you will be invited to participate in projects you care about alongside people who want to make a difference.

facebook.com/twincityoptimistclub www.twincityoptimist.org

EAST MISSOURI (EMO) OPTIMIST DISTRICT









EMO 3rd Quarter Conference

May 2-3, 2025 Hilton St. Louis Airport Hotel 10330 Natural Bridge Road St. Louis, MO 63134



SEE YOU AT THE CONFERENCE!

District **Essay Winner** Announced

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Registration: Early bird rate \$65 through 4-9-25, \$75 after.



Scan QR code for online payment

https://givebutter.com/EMO3rdQtrReg

Please register for the upcoming Third Quarter Conference with Secretary Elect Sandy Barnes. Attending conferences is how we grow as Optimists. Until I started attending district meetings, I did not understand the reporting structure or all the benefits of being part of this outstanding international organization. When our members get together with other club members, the magic happens. We share ideas, encourage each other, celebrate our successes, and return to our clubs energized and ready to tackle new challenges.

Our conference theme, "Optimism Through the Decades," will include a Friday evening speaker from the State Historical Society of Missouri. Attending clubs are asked to bring a poster-type display from the year they chartered. Since we will be hosting our Oratorical Contestants and their guests, it will be a good opportunity to share our Optimist history with them.

Conferences always include updates that help keep clubs in the know. Afternoon training will focus on growth and how to retain our current members while actively seeking new Optimists. We will learn how to market our clubs through social media and much more.

I look forward to seeing you at the conference.

Jean Naeger EMO Governor

Friday evening guest speaker

SHSMO

EMO THIRD QUARTER GUEST SPEAKER

Join us for the upcoming 3rd Quarter Conference. Friday evening, the Guest Speaker will be A.J. Medlock, CA, MA, MLIS from the Historical Society of Missouri. A.J. will share the society's efforts in preserving Optimist history. Learn how your club can be a part of this endeavor.





MAY 2, 2025

7:30 pm after Executive Committee meeting



2025 Junior Optimist International Summit July 17-20, 2025



EMO Third Quarter Service Project

Third quarter service project will benefit the JOI members attending upcoming JOI Summit to be held in St. Louis this summer.

Please bring the following items: bottled water, individual serve snacks, breakfast bars, travel size shampoo, conditioner, soap CASH DONATONS ACCEPTED



For the second year, the EMO District Third Quarter Conference Service Project will be providing snacks for this summer's JOI Summit.

Optimism Through the Decades	
Create a display board with photos, projects, etc. from the year your club was chartered. Add fun facts. Bring display to third quarter EMO Conference.	
Date Club Chartered	Photos
Awards	News M clippings
Projects	

Showcase Club's Charter Year

SAVE THE DATE



Nov. 8-9, 2024 EMO First Quarter Conference K.C. Hall, Jackson, MO

Feb 22, 2025 EMO 2nd Quarter Conference Super Zone Conference Zone 1 - Columbia, MO Zones 2-3-4 Washington, MO Zone 5 -Cape Girardeau, MO

May 2-3, 2025 EMO 3rd Quarter Conference Hilton St. Louis Airport - St. Louis, MO

June 30-July 3, 2025 St. Louis Union Station - St. Louis, MO

JOI Club

JOI Club members toured the Festus Police Department at their March meeting. Sgt.



Drummond led the group on a 2-hour tour of the department that included operation of the dispatch system, prisoner cells, and interrogation rooms. In addition, Sergeant Drummond showed the group the supplies provided to prisoners including clothes, shoes and hygiene products.

It was an interesting and insightful meeting which gave members a good idea of the internal workings of the Festus Police Department.

Thank you, Sgt. Drummond.

Submitted by: Debbie Schumaker, Adult Advisor

Debbie Schumaker JOI Adult Advisor

Carol Schanz JOI Chair



SAVE THE DATES



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

April 3 Meeting - Homeless Youth Initiative April 8 Board meeting - hostess Amy Baum April 10 Youth Appreciation Lunch April 17 Spring Fling party April 22 Dine to Donate - Texas Roadhouse April 29 Dine to Donate - Texas Roadhouse May 1 Oratorical and Essay Lunch May 2-3 EMO 3rd Quarter Conference May 6 Board meeting - hostess Carroll Metzger May 8 Meeting - board update, vote for new board May 22 Respect for Law Lunch June 3 Board meeting - hostesses Caryl Harness / Sue Boyer June 5 Meeting - board update June 6 Jr. Optimist Golf June 6 BUNCO June 12 Meeting - Foster Together



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 2024-2025

President Cathy Elliott 573 883 0924

President Elect Debbie Hogenmiller

Past President Peggy Scott

> Secretary Kathy Todd

Secretary Elect Sandy Barnes

Treasurer Becky Francis

Treasurer Elect Becky Capps

Board Members

2024-2026 Amy Baum Beth Watts Kirstie Zych

2025-2027 Mary McDowell Debbie Kettler Carolyn McKinney



Keep current with club activities, like us on Facebook, and visit our website.

Visit our website



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

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