



Twin City Area Optimist Club

P.O. Box 475

Festus, Missouri 63028

www.twincityoptimist.org

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Affiliated with Optimist International

Serving Youth and Community since 1919

January 2024 News Making a Difference For Kids

President Peggy Scott



FUNDRAISING CHAIRS NEEDED



**If you really want to do something,
you'll find a way. If you don't, you'll
find an excuse.**



~ Jim Rohn

Optimist Institute powered by Optimist International

First off, thanks to Carol Schanz, Tabitha Brauch, and Karleh Brauch for bringing back BUNCO on Friday March 15, 2024. (See flyer below for details.)

That said, we are in need of additional fundraising chairs to help meet our financial commitments for budgeted club projects. We need ideas for a fall fundraiser and someone to chair/co-chair the event. What fundraising events have you attended that you think would be fun and profitable? In the past we have held both a spring and fall fundraiser. Post COVID we have only held a fall fundraiser. This year we have nothing on the calendar.

We cannot continue to serve our youth/community at the current level if we do not have the funding. We have 120 members, together we can make it happen if everyone just does a little, we can accomplish much!

Please step up and others will be there to help.

Jean Naeger
TCA Marketing Chair
TCA Grant Chair
TCA Newsletter Editor/Publisher
EMO Governor Elect



January 4, 2024 Board Update

Highlights from January 4, 2024 Board Meeting:

- Marketing/Sponsorships - Jean Naeger sent a news release for the Head Start parties to Leader Publications.
- Sponsorship letters were hand delivered or mailed by January 4. Sponsorship Chair Katie Huck reported a total of \$3,250 has already been received.
- Cathy Elliott reported that the Head Start parties were successful and parents appreciated the age-appropriate gifts.
- Coats for Kids program has distributed 200 plus coats. As temperatures drop the demand will increase.
- Treasurer Elect Becky Francis has researched digital banking platforms the club can use to receive payments. A motion was passed to initiate the use of Givebuttr. (More information will be available as the club moves forward using this fundraising platform.)
- The East Missouri Optimist District is asking all clubs within the district to hold a food drive from January 1- February 24, 2024 for their local community food pantry or school backpack program, etc. Refer to EMO section of this newsletter to see how our club will participate.
- Peggy Scott provided information for a new Leader event. A women's conference to celebrate women in our community will be held Friday March 8, 2024. A motion was passed to be the Title Sponsor for this event. Networking with women in our community has marketing potential to recruit new members, community partnerships, and sponsoring. (More information will be shared as it becomes available.)
- The post project report for the \$1000 matching Optimist International Foundation (OIF) grant for Homeless Youth Initiative has

- been completed and submitted to OIF by Jean Naeger.
- Sarah Bauman's application for membership was approved.
 - Fundraiser chairs are needed to meet our project commitments. Suggestions open for fundraising ideas/events.
 - Carroll Metzger and Ellen Bridgewater continue to move forward with the process to form a 501(c)(3) foundation. They have met with the attorney and have completed some of the necessary forms. (Post board meeting update: As of January 15, 2024, The Foundation of the Twin City Optimist Club is incorporated in the State of Missouri as a public charity! Next step obtaining IRS designation as 501(c)(3).

Submitted by Jean Naeger

January 11, 2024
Warren Robinson
Director of the Jefferson County
Emergency Management Department



The speaker for our January 11th meeting was Warren Robinson from the Jefferson County Office of Emergency Management (OEM). The focus of this office is to make Jefferson County more disaster resilient and to engage with community partners in the coordination of public safety initiatives.

As one of three full time employees, Mr. Robinson has spent the past 10

years at OEM enabling our community to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. This office works directly with Fire Protection, Emergency Medical Services, the Police and other first responders. Opened in 2017 and located in Herculaneum, the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) enables the team to coordinate and respond to emergencies as necessary.

The Office of Emergency Management also works to educate the public to better handle emergency situations by offering Community Emergency Response Training (CERT). This 20-hour course teaches how to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community when professional responders are not available.

Those interested in this training should contact Jina Akins at 636-797-5381.

Submitted by Sue Joggerst

January 18, 2024
Heidi Rosenthal (with Tracy McManus)
Little House of Neurodiversity



Pictured: Tracy McManus and Heidi Rosenthal

January 18, 2024 Meeting

Our speakers today were Heidi Rosenthal, the co-founder and CEO of Little House of Neurodiversity, and Tracy McManus, the parent of a program participant.

Little House of Neurodiversity is a non-profit agency with a mission of helping individuals with autism, a variety of learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders to maximize their potential. Little House provides socialization activities including gaming, art and cooking to not only provide a sense of community, but to explore the talents of each participant. Ideally, finding their talents and passion can lead to mentorships and possible jobs for individuals in unique fields. Ms. McManus spoke about the mentorship her son receives in learning the skill of piano tuning.

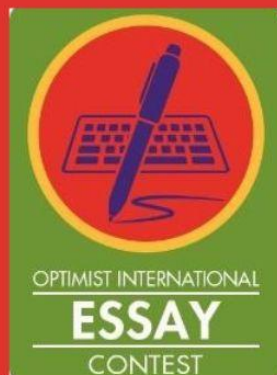
Little House, founded about a year and a half ago, uses an all-volunteer staff to provide services in various locations in the community, notably Jefferson College and Sunny Hill Presbyterian Church, with hopes of purchasing a permanent location in the future.

Little House operates on donations from the community and a grant from the Jefferson Foundation. Future goals include funding for direct support staff, class offerings for study and social skills, counseling and respite services for families and an enhanced gaming therapy program. Currently, Little House is serving about 40 participants, ages 11 through adult. See their website for more information: www.littlehousemo.org

Submitted by Beth Watts

CLUB PROJECTS

Twin City Area Optimist Club Essay Contest



The essay contest is a wonderful opportunity for students! Monetary awards are earned at the local level. The club winning essay will then be submitted to the district level competition. The district winner will be awarded a \$2,500 college scholarship. Please refer to our website for further information and application form.

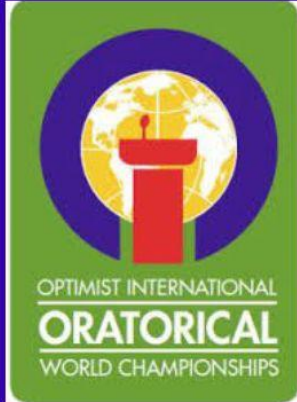
**Essays must be postmarked
by January 31, 2024**

Please visit our website for details and applications for these two contests:
[Volunteering, Helping Children - Twin City Area Optimist Club \(twincityoptimist.org\)](http://Volunteering, Helping Children - Twin City Area Optimist Club (twincityoptimist.org))



Twin City Area Optimist Oratorical Contest

The Oratorical Contest is designed to give the youth experience in public speaking, improve their communication skills, and provide them with the opportunity to compete for a college scholarship.



Deadline to apply
February 12, 2024

Local contest will be held
March 11, 2024 (time/place TBD)

ZONE 10

2ND QUARTER MEETING

Wednesday, January 31, 2024

6:00 p.m.

PIETRO'S RESTAURANT
3801 WATSON ROAD ST. LOUIS, MO 63109
314-645-9263

Please RSVP to Phyllis Neff,
EMO District Governor
by Monday, January 29
text 636 795 3665



Save the date!

Optimist Day

Feb 1st 2024

What is Optimist Day?

Optimist Day is the first Thursday in February. Optimist International Clubs and Members celebrate Optimist Day to encourage positive thoughts and actions and bring awareness to their community projects.

How do Communities Celebrate Optimist Day?

In addition to our Clubs and Members, many local governments issue proclamations to celebrate the volunteers who share their enthusiasm, skills and talent to make tomorrow a vibrant and peaceful one.

How can you honor and celebrate Optimist Day?

You can celebrate Optimist Day by volunteering in your community, teaming up with your local Optimist Club, or doing something that brings out optimism in yourself or others.

The next Optimist Day is Feb. 1, 2024

Members of Optimist International around the world encourage everyone to make random acts of kindness every day and especially on Feb. 1, 2024, as we all celebrate Optimist Day!

It is also a great day to promote the Optimist brand by wearing Optimist shirts, pins, hats and other attire, post photos of your volunteer activities on social media and tag Optimist International or use the #OptimistDay and #OptimistDay2024 hashtags. You can also send your photos to: marketing@optimist.org, and they could be featured in future publications.



Remember to wear your Optimist shirt ALL day February 1. Share Optimism wherever you go, with everyone you meet.

**East Missouri Optimist District
Second Quarter Conference**

Winter Wonderland

EMO DISTRICT 2ND QUARTER CONFERENCE



Friday, February 23, 2024

EMO District Executive Board of Directors Meeting
Virtual Only via ZOOM

Saturday, February 24, 2024

Virtual via ZOOM or Live

at: Poppy's Parlor, inside Quonset Lanes
2002 N Truman Blvd, Crystal City, MO 63019

Registration and details will be coming soon!

**East Missouri District Food Drive Challenge
TCA Project benefitting
Brenden's Friday Backpack Program**



FOOD DRIVE CHALLENGE

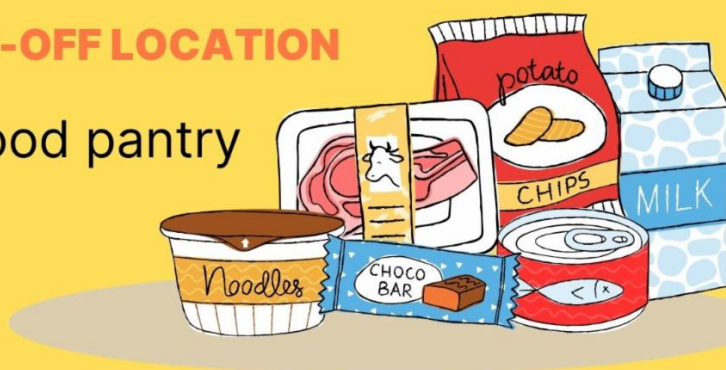


SECOND QUARTER EMO DISTRICT SERVICE PROJECT

All EMO clubs are challenged to host a food drive as a service project for the second quarter. Hold drive anytime between January 1 -February 24, 2024.

📍 DROP-OFF LOCATION

Local food pantry



GOAL: Collect minimum 100 items per club to recognize the 100 years OI has been an international organization.



Our club has chosen Brenden's Friday Backpack Program as our service project to meet the EMO District Food Drive Challenge. Kirstie Zych will chair this project. She will be our speaker for our February 22, 2024, meeting. Her program will include a hands-on project with members creating snack bags for the weekly Brenden's Friday Backpack food distribution. A snack pack consists of one fruit item and three snack items in a ziplock bag. This project will use part of our budgeted funds. We ask anyone who is interested to bring additional food items as noted below. This has been a project our club has supported for several years and continues to provide a needed service to our community.

The goal of the challenge is for each club to donate a minimum of

100 items to a local food bank or school backpack program. Of course, TCA Club members are over achievers; there will be more items for sure!

Submitted by Jean Naeger



Below are the items most needed at this time. Thank you for your support of this project.

- Breakfast bars (granola bars, cereal bars, fruit & grain bars)
- pop tarts
- single serve cereal
- fruit (fruit snacks, fruit cups, pudding/jello cups)
- any and all snacks (Rice Krispie treats, sandwich crackers, crackers, cookies, trail mix, chips, etc.)

CLUB FUNDRAISERS

Twin City Area Optimist Club **BUNCO**

DATE: Fri. March 15, 2024
Doors open at 6:00 p.m.
Bunco starts at 7:00 p.m.



Registration Fee:
\$20

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

Contact: Carol Schanz
314-222-4344

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

**Bring your
own beverage**

**Bring a
snack/dessert
to share**

**50/50
Drawing**

**Invite a
friend**

JOI Club

January 2024 Meeting of JOI Club

The JOI club's first meeting in the new year was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on January 4, 2024 by President Maddie Blair. Attending the meeting, in addition to Maddie and new members Addison, Sparrow, Avalon and Lorelei, were Abbey, Olivia, Addisen, KK, Oscar, Marcus and Blake. All members responded by saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jacob Costello, an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in Jefferson County, was the guest speaker. He presented the club with different types of law (civil, criminal, patent, and disability). He discussed the difference between civil and criminal law. The members listened attentively and asked thoughtful questions. Mr. Costello invited the

club to tour the Jefferson County Courthouse which will be arranged when school is out for the summer. He also is going to help with the club's fundraiser by selling mums this fall.

New business was presented. Katie Huck handed out oratorical and essay forms to the members and encouraged them to apply for the contests. In other business, the club is planning a bingo event to benefit the Homeless Youth Initiative, a date to be decided later. A confirmed date for the annual BB-5K was also announced. It will be held on October 19, 2024 at Larry Crites Park in Festus.

A trip to Missouri Kids Unplugged in Dittmer is being planned for this spring. Missouri Kids Unplugged focuses on outdoor activities with parents and siblings such as bike riding, fishing, hiking etc. While participating in the activity no electronic devises of any kind are used. It promises to be an exciting and fun day for the members.

Meeting adjourned.





*Debbie Schumaker
JOI Adult Advisor*

*Carol Schanz
JOI Chair*



Below is the recipe for the chicken stew Ellen Bridgewater served at January board meeting. It was delicious and so fitting for the cold days of winter.


Enjoy!



Slow Cooker Chicken Stew

Author: Stephanie Kay

A creamy chicken stew without the cream, this hearty slow cooker chicken stew recipe is perfect for a cold day.

-  Prep Time: 15 minutes
-  Cook Time: 7 hours
-  Total Time: 7 hours 15 minutes
-  Yield: 4 servings

UNITS SCALE

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 pounds chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to season
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 2 large potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch cubes (1 pound)
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 cup green peas, frozen
- Black pepper, to season

Instructions

1. Place chicken on a cutting board, dice into 1-inch pieces, and season generously with salt and pepper.

2. In a large skillet, warm the olive oil, add the chicken, and cook for 4-5 minutes until browned on all sides. You don't need to cook the chicken all the way through, simply sear it in the juices before adding it to the slow cooker. Note: If the slow cooker has a removable stovetop-safe pot, you can place it directly on the stovetop top and cook the chicken directly in the removable pot and then return it to the slow-cooker base.
3. Once the chicken is seared, place it in the slow cooker, add flour, thyme, rosemary, and salt, and stir until the chicken is well coated in the flour and herbs.
4. Add the garlic, onion, carrots, and potatoes to the slow cooker, and stir to combine. Then pour in the broth and add the bay leaf.
5. Cover and cook on low for 7-8 hours or on high for 3-4 hours.
6. Once cooked, add the frozen peas and milk, stir to combine, and cook for an additional 10-15 minutes on high until the peas are warmed through. At this point, you can also adjust the thickness of the stew by adding a bit more flour if it's too thin or a splash of chicken broth if it's too thick.
7. Once complete, taste the stew and adjust the salt and pepper as needed before serving.
8. The stew can be served immediately, and leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days or frozen for up to 3 months.

Nutrition

Serving Size: 1 serving **Calories:** 516 calories **Sugar:** 11 grams **Fat:** 15 grams
Carbohydrates: 54 grams **Protein:** 42 grams

Find it online: <https://kaynutrition.com/slow-cooker-chicken-stew/>

SAVE THE DATES



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

February 1 - Optimist Day -- Wear your Optimist shirt

February 6 Board Meeting

February 22 Package snack bags for Brenden's Friday Backpack Program (refer to flyer for details)

February 23-24 EMO District Second Quarter Conference (registration coming soon)

March 8 - Leader's Celebrating Women Event - TCA Optimist Club Title Sponsor

March 14 - NOW meeting - Chairs Marsha Greenstreet and Mary Hatfield

March 15 - Mark your calendar -Bunco's back (refer to flyer for details)

Board of
Directors
2023-2024

President
Peggy Scott
314 420 0897

President Elect
Debbie
Hogenmiller

Past President
Carroll
Metzger



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

The last Thursday of the month is an evening meeting held at Poppy's Parlor. Meeting starts at 6:00 p.m. If you would like to order food, please contact Phyllis Neff on Monday prior to meeting.

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

Secretary
Ruth Ann
Adams

Secretary Elect
Kathy Todd

Treasurer
Janet Mace

Treasurer Elect
Becky Francis

Board
Members

2022-2024
Cathy Elliott
Katie Huck
Patty Meyer

2023-2025
Amy Baum
Beth Watts
Kirstie Zych



[Visit our website](#)

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visit our website.**



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

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