

North Carolina East District Bulletin

1st Quarter District Meeting November, 2025



Message from Governor Timothy Johnson

Mission Ready

We are standing at the Dawn of a new Optimist Year. I want to commend each and every one of you for remaining a part of your local Club, and thereby a member of the North Carolina East District of Optimist International.

The new Optimist Year ushers in a new team of servant leaders, ready to work hard, on your behalf, to continue the legacy of our District. We have - YOU have - made a significant impact in the lives of youth in your communities. From tee-ball to fishing, from football to volleyball, from cleaning the roadways to feeding the needy... you are impacting lives in our District of North Carolina!

I couldn't be more proud to step into the role for which you have elected me! I follow in the footsteps of giants, frankly! Angela, Sandy, Austin, Terry, Ray, Pamela... so many others... I look over the years and just see greatness.

And, there is greatness to come. But, we have much to do. The world is in crisis right now. Make no mistake. I believe in my heart that we find ourselves at a turning point in American history. Our world, and our Nation specifically, needs Optimism now more than ever before. And guess what? WE possess it. We hold the key to a brighter future. Its essence is found in our Creed! A positive outlook heals a broken spirit and soothes a broken mind! The words of the last line of our Creed - "[Promise yourself] To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble" - are the solution of what ails the country in this day.

Worry. People are worried about the economy and their rights and their voices ...

Anger. Injustice abounds. And people are angry about it. This side is against that side. Us versus them ...

Fear. We're collectively afraid of what may happen or what may not happen. We see murder and crime and even assassination. We see and read about hate rearing its ugly head in every conceivable venue. ...

Therefore, we acknowledge the presence of trouble...

Yet... Optimism is the view of a brighter future and it begins within ourselves. Optimism is the answer to each of the stressors that threaten to plague our wellbeing. Right living, just and honorable treatment of "every living creature we meet," the "wearing [of] a cheerful countenance at all times," investing love into one another - "to talk health, happiness, and prosperity to every person you meet," regardless of race, political ideology, age, social status... Refusing to criticize others...

Being enthusiastic and supportive of others, just as much as you are of your own successes...

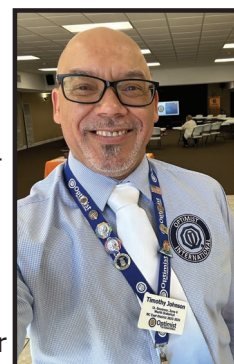
"To look at the sunny side of EVERYTHING and make your Optimism come true..."

These words are the Battle Cry of our Day! And, I stand, Mission Ready, to advance the principle of Optimism up and down the North Carolina East District.

It matters to me. Yes, this "organization" that you have called me to lead matters to me, but the underlying precept of OPTIMISM is the guiding principle that must be embraced and advanced!

So please, let's "Forget the mistakes of past (real or perceived), and [let's] press on to the greater achievements of the future!"

2025-26... Here We Come!
Timothy Johnson



Governor Elect 2026-2027 David Jennings, Henderson

Hello to my favorite Optimists of all - NC East Optimists!

We set the bar above and beyond the normal scope of Optimism! It is my duty this year to serve as the North Carolina East District Governor-Elect. I will subsequently serve as the Governor for the 2026-2027 year. I hope to fill the shoes that Timothy has left for me and to serve with honor and dedication. In the near future, I will formulate a vision to build upon the great work that Terry, Ray, and Timothy have done.

I now have sixteen years of service to the Optimist organization as a member of the Henderson Optimist Club. I am well-versed in the oratorical and essay contests; I have served as committee chair for both in my Henderson club. I have also been the President of the Henderson Club, as well as serving for two years as the Lieutenant Governor of Zone 5. I also took the mantle and chaired the Optimist Junior Golf program for the last two years. In each of these experiences, I learned one valuable lesson - you are only as good as those you surround yourself with! The support that I have received has been nothing less than amazing.

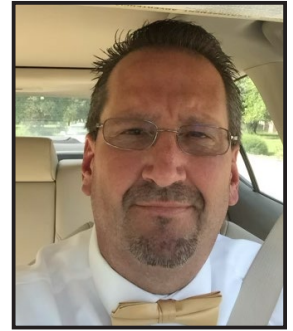
I am a proud United States Navy Veteran and participated in Operation Desert Storm. I was stationed in Florida, New York, and Bremerton,

Washington, during my six-year enlistment, where I finished as a Petty Officer Second Class (E5).

I am originally from the Pittsburgh area and am a graduate of Penn State University. I moved to North Carolina in 1999 to pursue my career in teaching. I semi-retired in 2023; however, I am still part-time employed as the Master Teacher at Franklinton High School, where I serve to mentor the beginning teachers.

I look forward to attending your meetings and learning about all that the clubs do for our youth. As you know, the club is the smallest and most important unit of OI because it is in the "trenches". I look forward to supporting Timothy and providing any additional support you may need. Please feel free to reach out to me as I learn my new role!

David Jennings
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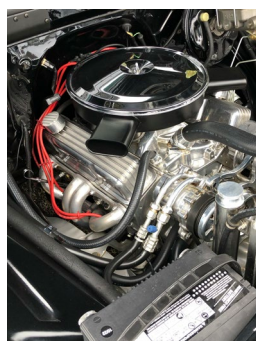


Optimists Make a Difference!!

Zone 1 Update

Bennie Bass, Lt. Governor

Cape Fear



Zone 2 Update

TBD, Lt. Governor

Laurinburg OptimistFest

Join us for a celebration of the bountiful autumn season at our first OptimistFest!

Saturday, 20 September 2025 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Optimist Park
9961 Turnpike Rd

Admission is free, and there's something for everyone to enjoy. So, gather your friends and family!

Food Trucks • Vendors • Pumpkins • Mums

JOIN WITH US! **TOMMY BRIGMAN** • **BILLY NORRIS JR**
910.610.2337 910.706.1258

Zone 4 Update

TBD, Lt. Governor

HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL 50/50 RAFFLE

SPONSORED BY **THE ROANOKE RAPIDS OPTIMIST CLUB**

FREE ADMISSION

OCTOBER 31ST 6-8 PM

T. J. DAVIS RECREATION CENTER
ROANOKE RAPIDS, NC

CONCESSIONS AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE

CONCESSION PRICE LIST

NACHOS WITH CHEESE	\$3
PIZZA	\$2
HOT DOGS	\$2
CANDY	\$2
SOFT DRINKS	\$2
WATER	\$1
PICKLES	\$1
CHIPS	\$1
BAKED ITEMS	\$1
POPCORN	\$1
COOKIES	.50

FREE GAMES AND PRIZES FOR CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER

Zone 3 Update

Robin Murtha, Lt. Governor



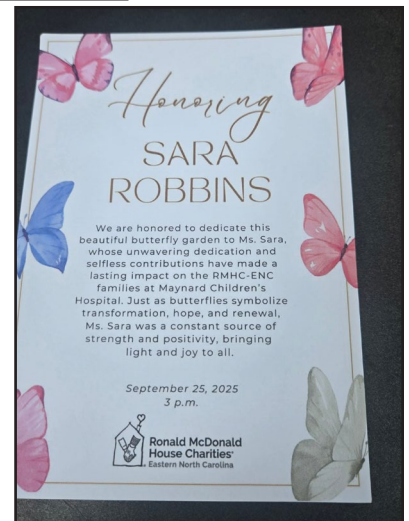
Wilson Golf Tournament



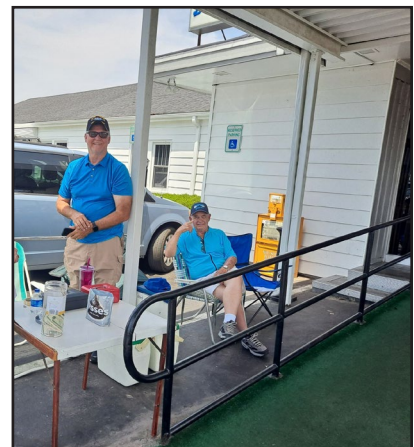
Wilson Installation of Officers



Wilson Golf Tournament



Bennett - Kisses for Cancer



Mason benefited from our fundraiser.



Zone 5 Update TBD, Lt. Governor

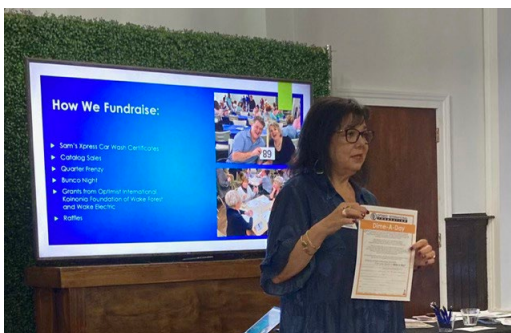


Orange County
Hog Days

Wake Forest CropWalk
Fundraiser at Culvers



Henderson
Shower



Wake Forest
Meet and Greet

Northern Wake
Mile of Hope



Zone 6 Update

Tony DeRico, Lt. Governor

Tony has been a dedicated professional in the insurance industry since 1995. With a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of the field, Tony has made significant contributions over the years. In October 2006, Tony became the owner of Diversified Benefits Administrators, where they have successfully led the company to new heights. Currently, Tony serves as the President of the NC State Chapter of the National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals (NABIP), demonstrating their commitment to excellence and leadership in the industry.

A native of Tallahassee, Florida, Tony DeRico, is passionate about serving and supporting others in many capacities. He serves as Area Directors for BNI (Business Networking International) in the Raleigh, NC area, President of the Garner Police Department's CAPT (Citizen And Police Together) Team; former Chair of the Town of Garner's Senior Citizen's Advisory Committee for 5 years; and Past President of the Garner Optimist Club; recently elected as Lt. Governor for the NC East District of Optimist International.

THIS MONTH

I visited the **Optimist of Garner**, and I'm happy to report that they are doing an exceptional job in serving our youth, having completed BBQ plate sales, reverse raffle and recently their annual golf tournament, they are paving the way for excellence in service.

Their upcoming events are as follows:

November 3, at 6:30pm

Last Monday meal night of 2025

November 17, at 7pm

Last regular meeting of 2025

November 22, (Saturday) at 9am

Unload Christmas Trees

November 23, (Sunday) at noon Tree Lot opens

December 6, (Saturday) at 4:30pm

Garner Optimist Christmas Parade

In February, I will be highlighting another great club in our Zone...



Boys & Girls Homes Ray Cockrell – Wilmington

It is with mixed emotion that we bid farewell to Tom Lamont as Director of Community Engagement at BGHNC. After two years of bolstering our connections with civic clubs, Tom is leaving Boys & Girls Homes and returning to his baseball roots to become the General Manager for a new collegiate baseball team forming in Leland. One thing Tom loves just as much as children is baseball!

In his third tour at Boys & Girls Homes, Tom has renewed connections with all of our civic clubs and made many new ones. He has told stories about our children and programs of care throughout North Carolina and South Carolina. He got the word out about the need to renovate our cottages. He encouraged and facilitated donations for your Optimist Cottage – along with Lions, Jaycees, and Kiwanis cottage renovations. Tom's fierce passion for our children shines through in all he has done and will continue to do to support the BGHNC program of care.

Let's keep it going!!
Linda did an amazing job creating the program to have clubs across our District provide gifts,

support and encouragement for the girls in your Optimist Cottage at Boys and Girls Homes.

Thanks to everyone who made the girls feel special throughout this past year. Think about which holiday will work best for your club. I will get signup information out for all to respond.

Thank you for loving our kids!!

Ray



PROMISE YOURSELF



To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.
-Optimist Creed

Optimist Junior Golf David C Jennings, Henderson Club

Greetings Optimists!

The Optimist International Junior Golf Championship is one of the largest and best-known junior golf tournaments in the world. Each year, more than 600 golfers participate in the championship. Optimists have been involved in the sport of junior golf for more than 30 years by holding local, regional, and international tournaments. The championship consists of qualifiers and culminates with the championship at Trump National Doral Resort and Spa in Miami, FL.

Our NC East Qualifier was held on Friday, June 13, 2025, at the Timberlake Golf Club in Clinton, North Carolina. Last year we had seven golfers go on to Doral. This year we had four golfers make the trip.

If you have any interest in helping with this event in the future, please let me know. I need all the volunteers I can get.

Thanks for all your help.

David Jennings
zone5ltgovernor2023@gmail.com
252-204-5160



The Winner



Last year placed #7 at Doral!

THE OPTIMIST 
International Junior Golf Championships

District JOI Club Paige Bivens, Wake Forest Club

Hoping for a "JOI-ful" New Year

The new year begins with **hope**: **Hope** that our District will grow in membership, **Hope** that our fundraisers will be successful so that we can continue our mission, and **Hope** that our work with youth will be seen. My hope is that we will increase the number of JOI Clubs so that our organization will continue to impact our communities, sustain Optimist Clubs, and grow with our youth.

I have been taught that to progress in life, you may need to know where you came from. Understanding the past is a step towards the future. So, please allow me to remind you of a little bit of where we came from. While many influential cities founded Optimist Clubs as early as 1911, the unification of these clubs did not occur until 1919, their main goal was helping young boys who were impoverished or troubled.

Optimists officially made helping America's youth their mission. By 1922 the clubs were structuring help for these boys by mentoring them, providing for their needs, and providing opportunities for them to strive not just to survive. By 1923 these initiatives were adopted by Optimist International as "Friend of the Delinquent Boy", although many clubs included girls. By 1924, each member was asked to spend 2-4 hours a week helping youth. These Optimists partnered with the YMCA, Boy Scouts, and many other organizations.



One of the boys at a meeting asked if they could be Junior Optimists. And so... JOI Clubs were formed. Optimists continued their vision of advisor, helper, and friend. Over 100 years ago...1924. Then in 1928 something important happened in our organization and our state. The first oratorical contest was held in Asheville, North Carolina. The topic, "What Junior Optimism Means to Me." These boys and these clubs were structured not for the elite, but for those who needed the most help. And today, we have continued that goal except with all youth who need a place to be helped while helping others. In other words, we have youth helping each other.

I hope we will have a "JOI-ful" New Year by making history again in eastern North Carolina, to include growth of more than one club in our District. Let's get back to the mission and vision of our Founding Fathers of the International Optimist Club and promote our motto, "Friend of Youth."



Wake Forest Optimist guiding JOI Club members in making blankets for foster children.

Oratorical Contest Liz Griffins, Garner Club

Optimist Essay Scholarship Contest 2025-2026

This year's Topic is **"How My Acts of Service Help Me Understand What My Community Means to Me"**.

The District Essay Contest winner will receive a \$2,500.00 Scholarship. A club planning guide is available at www.optimist.org under the heading scholarship programs. This is a step-by-step planning guide to planning a club contest.

The contest is open to all student under the age of 19 prior to October 1, 2025.

All club contest winner essays must be submitted to the District Essay Chair on or before February 28th,



2025.2026. I encourage all clubs to participate. A good source for providing information to student participants can be via local English and Language teachers, and school counselors. Don't forget the home-schooled students.

Additional Questions Contact:
Essay Contest Chair, Liz Griffiths
Email: lizabethg1948@gmail.com
Cell: 703-216-1845

Please contact me to attend your Club or Zone meetings.





**It's a new year -
and everyone needs
to get recertified on
the Optimist Training
Website.**

**You can
do it!**

<https://optimist.tovuti.io>



Personal Growth & Involvement (P.G.I.) Program

There are many benefits to becoming an Optimist. And since "Bringing Out the Best in Kids" is the consensus top benefit, the organization's Personal Growth & Involvement (P.G.I.) program ranks a cool second. Where else can you become a more knowledgeable volunteer?

The P.G.I. program offers every Optimist member the opportunity to learn more about Optimism while advancing through 10 levels of involvement, leadership growth and achievement.

The P.G.I. program will make you a better volunteer. Through communication training, self-development modules and other personal growth activities, Optimist International is

giving you a fantastic opportunity to continue to learn and grow into a leader. For additional P.G.I. information, go to the P.G.I. section of the Optimist Leaders website or contact the Leadership Development Department at (800) 500-8130, ext. 261, or by e-mail at leadership@optimist.org.

Certified Trainers

Certified Trainers are pre-qualified "official" representatives of Optimist International who are chosen for their presentation skills, go through a qualification course and are available to speak to Districts and Optimists by contacting the Optimist International Leadership Department.

Training Materials

Training materials on a variety of subjects are available to Optimist Members through the Optimist Leaders menu.

New Club Building (NCB) Ray Cockrell, Wilmington

We stand on the shoulders of those that come before us! Dave, Linda and Terry have done important work to generate some interest in two areas. We will take up the baton and work to re-energize key contacts in Apex and the Outer Banks. Additionally, Governor Timothy has some really good ideas for positive growth that we will begin exploring.

We are open to exploring all possibilities. Perhaps you remember clubs in previous locations that can be revisited and reenergized. Perhaps you have a unique perspective on an area that has not been explored or where you have a friend/contact that can connect us to

the community. Or perhaps you just have an idea you want to share. We are here to listen! We will do the legwork – just share your thoughts.

The more opportunities for clubs and members provides the ability to share our Optimism and serve more kids! Let me hear from you!!

With Optimist Spirit,

Ray **NEW CLUB
BUILDING**



Childhood Health & Wellness Ray Cockrell, Wilmington

Childhood Cancer has been a long-standing focus for NC District East. We have members of our Optimist family who have been directly impacted by this tragedy. It is time for us to re-focus on this important area of service for our clubs and our district.

In 2019, OI broadened the effort to include many other areas of childhood health needs and renamed the program to Childhood Health & Wellness.

Childhood Health & Wellness now includes four focus areas (not limited to the examples below):

- **Healthy Lifestyles** (Child Obesity, Healthy Eating, Physical Fitness, Happy Heart Advice, March of Dimes)
- **Chronic Diseases** (Childhood Cancer, Juvenile Diabetes, HIV, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Sickle Cell Anemia)
- **Mental Health** (Depression, Bullying, Abuse)
- **Disabilities** – Physical, Intellectual & Developmental (Autism, Special Olympics)

Any and all of these are critically important, however, I would like to focus our club and district efforts this year on the chronic disease of Childhood Cancer. Let's be creative on how our clubs and our district can have an impact.

The aluminum can tabs and collection items for Ronald McDonald House to support families impacted is a start. I know we have some creative folks that can make quilts, blankets or toboggans for the kids in care. What other creative ideas do we have? How can we make a difference?

I look forward to working with all of you to make a difference for these kids and families.

With Optimist Spirit,

Ray

OI Foundation Representative Gary Pender, Goldsboro Club

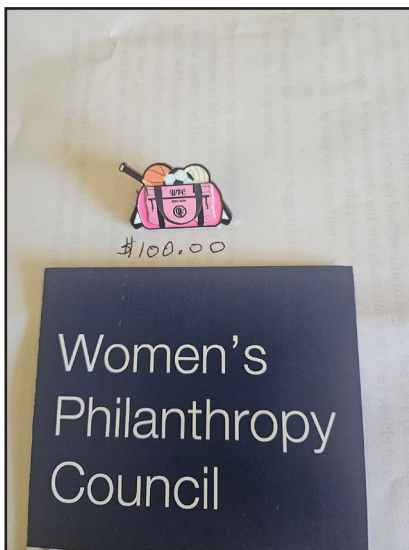
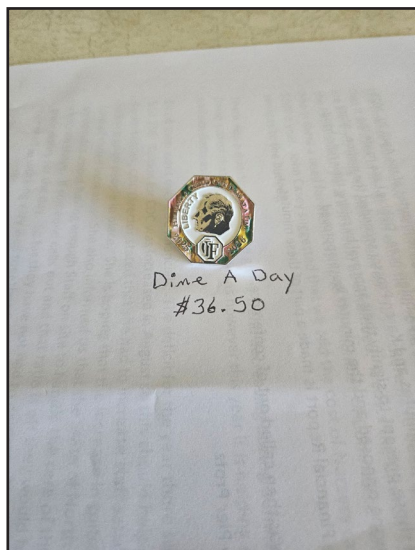
Hello Optimists – here we are in a new Optimist year. I'm looking for Dime A Day members, Women's Philanthropy members, President Club members and much more.

Here is your chance to help a young lady or young man get a scholarship for college. As you can see by the pictures we have some beautiful pins this year and I would love to see all of you wearing one or all three pins.

The Dime a Day \$36.50,
Woman Philanthropy
\$100.00, and the
President Club \$250.00.



Let's show how much we support the OI Foundation this year and be in the top 10 in the Foundation. I will be calling on you for your help so let's get going.
Gary Pender DFR



How we communicate to you:

Facebook: North Carolina East District

Website: OptimistNCEast.org

Int'l Website: Optimist.org

Email: Constant Contact



Oratorical Contest

Timothy Johnson

As you may already know, Optimist International sponsors three scholarship contests for students to earn money to pursue opportunities in higher education: the Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH), the Essay Contest and the Oratorical Contest. The contests are conducted at the Club level, then Zone and Regional (if necessary) and at the District level. District-level scholarships are funded by the Optimist International Foundations and awarded by Optimist International.

The Topic for the 2025-2026 Optimist year is: **"The Moment I Realized I Belonged — My Definition of Community"**.

The contest is open to contestants under the age of 19 as of October 1st of the current Optimist International contest year (October 1 – September 30), and who have not yet completed high school. There is no minimum age.

Interested students submit a speech on the pre-assigned topic to their local Optimist Club. To find out the contact in your area, please e-mail the District Oratorical Chairperson, Timothy Johnson, at NCEastGovernorTimothyJohnson@gmail.com.

The deadline to enter is determined by the sponsoring Optimist Club. All Club-level contests

are typically held by late March, so that the District Contest can be held at our 3rd Quarter District Gathering.

Districts and Clubs may opt to hold an online Oratorical Contest. Please contact our District Oratorical Chair Timothy Johnson for guidance on holding an online contest.



The Optimist Oratorical Contest gives young people the chance to speak to the world. More than \$150,000 in college scholarships funded by the Optimist International Foundations is awarded annually from this program.

First conducted in 1928, this is the second most popular Optimist International Program. Nearly 2,000 clubs participate in this program each year. The winners at the Club level receive medallions and Zone winners receive a plaque. Districts have the opportunity to provide a first place scholarship of \$2,500, a second place scholarship of \$1,500, and a third place scholarship of \$1,000.



OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONTESTS 2025-2026



Topic

**"The Moment I Realized I Belonged
—My Definition of Community"**

ORATORICAL CONTEST

Beginning in 1928, the Oratorical Contest has become the longest-running program of Optimist International. The contest is designed for young people to gain experience in public speaking and provide them with an opportunity to compete for multiple college scholarships with a pre-assigned topic.

District Scholarships:

First Place: \$2,500 • Second Place: \$1,500 • Third Place: \$1,000

**with a chance to win up to \$22,500 at the
World Championships level**

ESSAY CONTEST

The Essay Contest is sponsored by Optimist International to give young people the opportunity to write about their own opinions regarding the world in which they live. The approach can encompass a young person's personal experience, the experience of their country or a more historical perspective. In addition to developing skills for written expression, participants also have the opportunity to win a college scholarship!

One District Scholarship of \$2,500



Topic

**"How My Acts of Service Help Me
Understand What My Community
Means to Me"**



Topic

**"The Moment I Realized I Belonged
—My Definition of Community"**

COMMUNICATION CONTEST FOR THE DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

This contest offers an opportunity for students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing to present their thoughts in the community, gaining skills, which can only come from signing or speaking to a large audience. Patterned after the Optimist Oratorical Contest, the contest offers youth the chance to compete in speech or sign language with the chance to win a college scholarship.

One District Scholarship of \$2,500

KIDS SPEAK OUT! SPEECH CONTEST

All young people can compete in the Optimist Oratorical Contest. The "Kids Speak Out" contest is a "pre-Oratorical" program that provides a more equitable competition for younger speakers.



**NC Optimist East District Convention
September 6, 2025
Wilmington, NC**

9:30am – Ringing of Optimist Bell.

NC Optimist East District Chant - Governor Ray
Pledge of Allegiance
Prayer - Timothy Johnson
Optimist Creed

First-timers attending - Tracy and Fred Thomas from Garner Club. They help with the Big Band Bash. They are a big help with the BBQs. Club is redoing their back deck on the event hall space.

Past Governors attending - Al Ludlum, Sandy Cyphers, Dave Griffiths, Terry Corle, Tom Shearer, Angela Iwaniuk, Linda Shepherd and Auston Pusey

Vice Presidents attending - Tom Shearer, Sandy Cyphers, Terry Corle and Dave Griffiths

Optimist NC West attending: Kathy Howard (also NC East FOO) and Greg Phipps will attend evening banquet

History of Optimist Clubs - Governor Ray

Motion to Adopt Agenda –
-Motion to accept - Dave Griffiths
-2nd - Tom Lamont
Approved

Minutes of Last Meeting – Update Robin Murtha's name - Dave Griffiths, Jonathan Bivens

Q3 Financial Report – Terry Corle
\$16,000 in bank - waiting on 4th quarter expenses.
-Dave Griffiths - in his district, the clubs covered oratorical expenses for participants – not the district.
-File to audit

Memorial to honor district members who have passed.

Member Engagement – Angela Iwaniuk
District has added 10 new members since the last district meeting. Sponsors for new members receive a \$10 Walmart gift card. District is currently minus 35. We lost the Washington Club. GOAT trophy for the most members at this meeting goes to the Cape Fear Club.

New Club Building - Dave Griffiths
History is important and shows us others had a passion before us. We have an opportunity to serve youth in our communities. Each club decides if they want to share that compassion with new clubs by talking to another community. We can continue to grow and keep members involved. The need is greater now. School districts are no longer doing programs and clubs pick up that slack. What you get out of it is smiles on kids' faces and you search

within yourself why did I become an Optimist?
Governor Ray - Remember to find your Why and share that.

JOI Clubs - Paige Bivens

We are sowing seeds of opportunity of JOI. In Garner, those kids need a JOI Club. Heritage HS is looking for a new faculty advisor. Wake Forest JOI Club is participating in a Fair Club this week. They had 55 members last year. JOI Club's do not have to be at schools. They could be sports or scouting. We are the future of this country as well as future Optimists.

Jr Golf - Dave Jennings

This past June was my 2nd year as chair. Dave recognized the volunteers that helped at this year's tournament. For the last two years we worked with Carolina Golf Association for boys qualifier tournament. We will add a Peggy Kirk Bell Golf Tour event to host a girls tournament this year. This year 3 participants qualified but only 1 went to the OI tournament at Trump Doral in Miami, FL.

Essay Scholarship Contest - Liz Griffiths

We had 9 participants. The winner was from Golden Circle in Wilson. The new topic is "How My Acts of Service Help Me Understand What My Community Means to Me." – Please get the announcement out to your area before Christmas. Essays due February 28. Several clubs sponsored individuals that did not have a club in their area. I may send out a plea for judges for 2026. Any questions, you can reach me at dliz7898@outlook.com. If the same person in your club handles oratorical and essay, get the essays done. Thomas Academy at BGHNC had great participation this year.

Oratorical Scholarship Contest – Timothy Johnson

We had a great oratorical contest this year. Jeremiah was our first-place winner. A participant can only win OI once. The 2026 topic is "The Moment I Realized I Belonged, My Definition of Community." Don't be afraid or leery of hosting an oratorical contest. You have plenty of support. You can reach out to Toastmasters or colleges or local media for judges.

OI Foundation – Governor Ray

Please keep Gary and Louwanna Pender in your prayers. Grants come from The Foundation. Compliments to Terry Corle for the Dime-A-Day jars on the tables. Timothy Johnson had their club members bring in change and names went to a raffle.

Women's Philanthropy - Sandy Cyphers

I am here to offer a \$300 raffle to those who have become a Women's Philanthropy member this past year. Please see Sandy if you need information. There were 10 members this year. Let's change that to 20 names next year. John Shepherd was the winner of the raffle. Women's Philanthropy affords us to give scholarships to females for college. Sandy will be chairman for the OI Grants Committee this coming year.

Optimist Day at BGHNC – Tom Lamont

We stopped at the Lake House on the Optimist Day tour and one of the mom's infants had a Care Bear outfit on. Tom Lamont came into the room with a Care Bear outfit on. Linda Shepherd - every month a club did something special for the Optimist Cottage residents. We want these young people to feel like they belong. The residents are appreciative of everything. There are currently 8 in the cottage of middle schoolers to high schoolers. The Country Store is happy to receive items that are gently used and the profit goes back to BGHNC.

BGHNC - Tom Lamont

Thank you Linda Shepherd for starting a new tradition for the Optimist Club. Christmas is overwhelming but small gifts are special throughout the year. Final number is close to \$50,000 for new vans from the Duck Race Fundraiser. Look at photos for updates on the Optimist Cottage renovations. Hallways now have sheet rock and common rooms are updated. The bedrooms are now updated. Bathrooms were cleaned and it did not work. Staff areas updated to help with staff hiring. We updated the pantry area and last but not least we were able to update the resident's bathroom floors. The contractor was Harold K Jordan who provided \$30,000 worth of work at no cost. In 2026, we will be updating the kitchen and hopefully getting new appliances.

OI Convention - Timothy Johnson and Tom Shearer

There is a minimum of 15 members to start a new club. There was a motion to change to 10 members but it did not pass. VP overseeing a region that they do not dwell in, motion did not pass. Convention was an awesome experience. St. Louis was a fun place. The energy, camaraderie, world class keynote speakers, workshops, and information provide. Next year dates are 6/28 - 7/2/2026. We will find out fun things about Jacksonville, FL.

10:58am Break

11:13am Begin again

District Convention - Sandy Cyphers

Thank you to Bennie Bass for the snacks and peach ice cream last Thursday. Buffet tonight for dinner at The City Club. Don't worry about attire just come enjoy fellowship and food. Door prizes will be given away tonight back here at the hotel. Any suggestions for next year, please let Timothy Johnson know. This year is the lowest number we have had at the district convention.

Lt Governors:

Zone 1 - Auston Pusey- The Cape Fear Club will be going through a renovation from a gift. Not a lot of the members here today as they have a softball tournament today. They have a Car show coming up in October. Winter Park Club is a very active ball club. Christmas trees are coming up. Supper Club is strictly ball but have committed money to BGHNC each quarter.

Zone 2 - Tom Lamont – He has worked all year long to get Elizabethtown Club meeting again. But they are there and getting the soccer community involved with the younger players. Get families involved early. Laurinburg Club is awesome. They are really serving their community. Their activities include Optimistfest, a free girls softball tournament with food trucks and craft vendors and selling pumpkins and mums as a fundraiser. We need to try to get them back involved with the district.

Zone 3 – Bennett Club – Angela Iwaniuk - They have Kisses for Cancer which helped a six year old little boy and his family. They have a Bluegrass Festival for a local fire house. Goldsboro Club – Dawn Clark – This club is staying active by partnering with other community organizations. Still need to find a new home. She suggests clubs to join their Chamber of Commerce.

Zone 4 – Roanoke Rapids - Dan Durham – They have added 2 new members and still holding boston butt fundraisers. Greenville - Joshua Cockrell – Their activities are ECU concession football games, buddy benches at elementary schools and working at recruitment and fundraising.

Zone 5 - Dave Jennings - Wake Forest Club – Jonathan Bivens – Activities were helping a boys and girls club with landscape, built 108 cubbies for afterschool program, and assisted with emergency clothing in the community. Starting to work with elementary students as literacy buddies about the OWL program. Henderson Club is extremely active. They honored 2 students with \$1,000 scholarships. They give a \$1,000 community mini-grant each year. They received a grant through NC Dept of Motor Vehicles for bike helmets and raffled off two bicycles at a bike rodeo. They sponsor "Attend and Win" in elementary schools and classrooms recognized for their get a \$100 gift. They hold a "Respect for Law" banquet honoring local heroes. Quarter Auction made \$3,000. All members provide 4-5 donated items. It is high-speed and fun. The next one is October 23 at The Forks Cafeteria at 6:30. Meet and Greet coming up in lieu of a normal meeting to generate new members.

Zone 6 - Timothy Johnson - Raleigh Club - Christmas tree sales coming up. They hold a roadside cleanup in Fuquay Varina. They had 35 youth participate in a fishing tournament, which was the most participants ever.

Garner Club – Rebecca Lakey – They held an installation banquet, a chicken BBQ, a 2nd Annual Big Band Bash, golf tournament, Halloween Trick or Treat the Trails, Garner Optimist Town Christmas Parade and Christmas tree sales. The District meeting will be in Garner coinciding with their 60th anniversary. East Wake – Gail Craft - Boys and Girls Club kids do not get dinner when they are there from 6-8pm so the Club feeds them twice a month. They provide simple meals and is supported with an OI grant. Bingo is their biggest fundraiser. They host Trunk or Treat and adopt five kids from the Boys and Girls Club and provide Christmas presents.

Special Guest - Tom Shearer - Mid-Atlantic Vice President This region is in the green for members. Governor in any district with a +1 members gets a green coat. Celebrate

Community by encouraging clubs to collaborate with other civic organizations that improves and benefits communities. Get ready for Jacksonville, FL for the OI convention.

Incentives for Timothy's year as Governor, the recognition is changing for coming year for club and district. I will be assisting Timothy with training this year. We are growing internationally. Nepal is growing the fastest. US Clubs give a \$350 donation to build a club in Nepal and the district gets club building credit. Childhood wealth and wellness grants can be for multiple years. Governor Ray – gave a Wilmington gift to Tom for his support.

End of meeting comments
Gov Ray – Give can tabs to him today.
Golden Circle is raffling a Christmas quilt.
Past Governors can meet tonight.

Optimist Creed

Adjourn 12:15pm

Meeting Attendance Roster:

Bennie Bass
Robin Bass
Jonathan Bivens
Paige Bivens
Fred Burke
Dawn Clark
Hayley Cockrell
Joshua Cockrell
Kimberly Cockrell
Ray Cockrell
Sarah Corle
Terry Corle
Gail Craft
Sandy Cyphers
Lydia Dameron
Barbara Durham
Dan Durham
David Griffiths
Liz Griffiths
Kathy Howard
Angela Iwaniuk

Will Iwaniuk
David Jennings
Jeanetta Jennings
Timothy Johnson
Rebecca Lakey
Tom Lamont
Robin Murtha
Alice Pusey
Auston Pusey
Tom Shearer
John Shepherd
Linda Shepherd
Tracie Thomas
Fred Thomas
Al Ludlum



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



Optimist

INTERNATIONAL

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