



Optimist International WINUM DISTRICT

First Quarter
Newsletter
October 2023

Governor Chuck's Message

Greetings, WINUM Optimists!

On October 1, 2023, we begin a new year in the Optimist calendar, and I am excited to be your Governor for the next year. I want to thank Immediate Past Governor Tammy Koehler and Past Governor Troy Dostal, for their leadership, inspiration, and support. I truly could not do this job without you!

This is my fifth year as an Optimist member. I have served as the President of the Appleton Noon Optimist Club for the past four years, and Lt. Governor of Zone 7 for the past three years. I am excited to take on this new role as Governor of the WINUM District.

This year, our theme will be "Peace of Mind," reminding us that we need to take care of ourselves so that we can better help our communities and our youth. We will have sessions on mindfulness, meditation, and self-care at our conferences and conventions this year. I also hope to promote the branding and marketing of our clubs along with promoting the numerous activities and events available to us from Optimist International.

Optimist International President Tracy Huxley ([learn more about Tracy here](#)), as well as myself as Governor of WINUM, want to encourage all of our members to be Optimists with a capital O. You can do this in four ways:

1. Take pride in the work that you are doing in your community, and tell everyone that you are an OPTIMIST! We need to get the word out about everything we do.
2. Stay connected to all of your club members because each member is important to our work as Optimists. If you haven't heard from a member in a while, give them a call or send a card.
3. Communicate with your Lt. Governor, and reach out to me, your Governor, for anything you need. I am here to help you succeed, and I want to know what you are doing for your community. Please invite me to your future events! You can email me at chuck@collegeconnectors.com or call/text me at 920-585-4300.

And finally, #4 please join me at a WINUM Conference/Convention to connect with other Optimists across northern Wisconsin. I hope to see you on November 3 & 4 in Weston, Wisconsin.

With Optimism,
Governor Chuck Erickson



2023-24 Governor
Chuck Erickson



2023-2024 Inside this Issue

1st Quarter Conference Agenda	2
1st Quarter Conference Registration	3
Lots of Blooming at 4th Quarter Convention	4
1st Quarter Conference Service Projects	5
Town Meeting Notes	6
Save the Date	6
Free District Meeting Drawings Continue	6
Report from District Foundation Rep	7
Let's Talk About Membership	7
Zone Reports	8-11
2023-24 Leadership Team Directory	12-15
Optimist Creed	15

WINUM DISTRICT 1st QUARTER CONFERENCE

November 3-4, 2023

Mountain Bay Conference Center/Dale's Weston Lanes
& Fairfield Inn
Weston, WI 54476

AGENDA

FRIDAY

- **5-7pm - Bowling & Games at Dale's Weston Lanes, 5902 Schofield Ave, Weston, WI (All bowling levels welcome!)** Hosted by Bonnie Ciesielski, Stevens Point Club
- **7-9 pm - Hospitality (Social Time) at the Fairfield Inn, 7100 Stone Ridge Dr, Weston, WI**
It's Fun-Filled Fall Food featuring Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Chips, and More!

SATURDAY

Events Held at Mountain Bay Banquet Center

- 8:00am **Past Governor's Breakfast at the Fairfield Inn** (All past governors, governor elect and OI guests)
- 8:45am **Check In & Registration Open**
- 9:00am **First Timers Meeting** - If this is your first conference, let us welcome you with a special gift!
- 9:30am **Welcome/Introductions/Housekeeping**
- 10:00am **Meditation**
- 10:15am **Board of Directors Meeting** - All members of the District Executive Board and all Club Presidents (or their representatives) are voting members of the board and should be present to conduct any business of the district. We will vote on the 2023-24 budget and install new leaders.
New Business - District Policy Updates
- 10:45am **Optimist Institute Training**
- 11:00am **Optimist Branding & Marketing**
- 11:30am **Laughter Yoga** with Carleen Sterner & **Purchase your raffle tickets**
- 12:00 Noon **Lunch & Keynote Presentation** by Kim Larsen, CEO of Boys & Girls Club of the Wausau Area, **OI Foundation Raffle**
(We will have a taco bar for lunch.)
- 1:00pm **Stretch, Connect, and Appreciate** (Service Project Time)
Service Project - Making Thank You Cards for Childcaring & Stuffing Kits for United Way
- 1:30pm **General Session**- Introductions and Reports from District Chairs
- 2:30pm **Updates from Mark Fielmann**, VP for the Great Plains Region of OI
- 3:00pm **Presentation** by Kelly Borchardt, Childcaring Central WI Early Education Resources & Present our "Thank You cards"
- 3:30pm **Town Hall Meeting** - What can the WINUM District Leadership Team do for you and your club?
- 4:00pm **Optimist Creed & Farewell**

WINUM 1st Quarter Conference
November 3-4, 2023
Fairfield Inn, 7100 Stone Ridge Dr, Weston
(715) 241-8400
AND Mountain Bay Conference Center,
5902 Schofield Ave, Weston (715) 359-8488



Name _____ Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

E-mail address _____ Phone _____

Club Name _____ Zone # _____ Your 2023-24 office (if any) _____

Is this your first conference? _____

REGISTRATION INFO

	Advance (by Oct 28th)	(\$5 late fee each item)		Total \$
		On Site	Number	
_____ Friday Night Bowling 5-7pm	\$5.00	\$5.00	_____	_____
_____ Registration & Saturday Lunch <i>Menu: Taco Bar!!</i> (all menus are subject to change)	\$50.00	\$55.00	_____	_____

Spouse/Guest/Child (non-members) Name(s): _____

_____ Friday Night Bowling 5-7pm	\$5.00	\$5.00	_____	_____
_____ Saturday Lunch	\$25.00	\$30.00	_____	_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED (Make checks payable to WINUM District) \$ _____

THREE WAYS TO REGISTER:

1. Register on-line at www.WinumOptimists.org. Pay with a credit card thru PayPal (you don't have to have a PayPal account!)
2. Register on-line at www.WinumOptimists.org and indicate that you'll pay onsite. Then bring your checkbook!
3. Snail mail your check & this form to: WINUM Conference Chair Laurel Schirmer, 1807 North 6 Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081

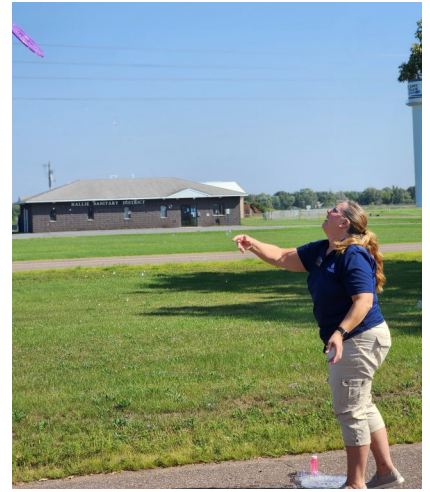
If you would like to request a special meal **due to specific food allergies** please indicate: YES NO
 Type of meal required: _____. Every effort will be made to accommodate special needs.

If you have any questions, please call Laurel at 920-946-7246 or e-mail: schirmerlaurel@gmail.com

ROOM RESERVATIONS: Call the Fairfield Inn (715) 241-8400 to reserve your room; Ask for the Optimist room block. Or use this link: <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1669864714095&key=GRP&app=resvlink>

Rate is \$99 + tax. **Rooms “unblock October 17, 2023!**

Lots of Blooming at Fourth Quarter Convention



**August 18-19, 2023
Chippewa Falls &
Hallie, WI**



Optimism in Action -- First Quarter Conference Service Projects

Chuck Erickson -- 2023-24 Governor

As part of our four WINUM conferences and convention this year, I want WINUM to make a big impact on the local community. I contacted our local Optimist Clubs in the Wausau area to learn about the amazing non-profits helping local youth. After contacting each group, I have found a few service projects where WINUM can make a difference! I hope you are planning to attend the conference. If not, you can still participate in the service projects. Please contact me (Governor Chuck) if you have any questions. chuck@collegeconnectors.com or 920-585-4300.

Project #1: Thank you cards for [Childcaring Central WI Early Education Resources](#)

Although our work as Optimists focuses on helping youth, sometimes we need to help those who work with our youth on a daily basis. Childcaring helps families find childcare for their little ones. Our goal for this service project is to create over 300 "Thank you" cards that will be sent to childcare providers in May 2024. This can be done by Optimist club members, Junior Optimist Clubs, or other youth groups. We will have time to make cards during the Conference. We will have a representative speak with us at the Conference and pick up the cards we made that day. You can also make them at home or during a Club meeting and mail them to me (Governor Chuck) or directly to Childcare. Here are the directions for making the cards: <https://childcaring.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Childcaringcardproject.pdf>

Project #2: 100 Breakfast Bags for local youth

[United Way of Marathon County](#) has requested 100 Breakfast Bags for their local youth programs. These are handed out to local children who may not have a meal over the weekend. I will bring the supplies (United Way gave me a shopping list), and we will assemble these bags on Saturday, November 4th, during the 1st Quarter Conference. If you want to help with the funding for this project, please contact Governor Chuck at chuck@collegeconnectors.com or 920-585-4300.

Project #3: Supplies for the [Boys & Girls Club of the Wausau Area](#)

Our Keynote Speaker at the 1st Quarter Conference lunch is Kim Larsen, CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of the Wausau Area. (Thank you to Butch Clay for making this connection!) During a phone chat with her, I learned that they have recently renovated their space and expanded their services for elementary, middle, and high school students. They have seen a 30% increase in students attending their facility. She praised the connection she has with our local Optimist Clubs in the Wausau and Merrill areas, but they are in desperate need of more supplies to support all of the new youth. Their entire Amazon wishlist costs less than \$4,000, with items ranging from \$1.23 to \$371, and most items cost under \$20. If you are able, please consider purchasing an item (or two) from their Amazon wishlist. Send it with a gift note saying "Donated by an Optimist." Let's make a difference for these youth! Here is their Amazon wishlist: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/8EQ0T6MYDV8T?ref=abls_nvfly_swy

Project #4: [Peyton's Promise](#) Food Pantry Supplies

Peyton's Promise provides supplies for over 60 different food pantries throughout the Wausau area and Marathon County. Many of these food pantries are located in local elementary, middle, and high schools. I chatted with their Executive Director, Teena Medick, and they really need help keeping the pantries stocked at the various schools. The demand for food is currently outpacing the supply, and they need our help. It would cost nearly \$8,000 to purchase everything on their Amazon wishlist. Items range in price from \$3.27 to \$38.90, with most items costing less than \$10. If you are able, please consider purchasing an item (or two) from their Amazon wishlist. Send it with a gift note saying, "Donated by an Optimist." Let's make a difference for these youth! Here is the link to their Amazon wishlist: <https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/1RH55JIQ8USCG>

Town Hall Meeting Notes

Sue Van Dreser -- 2022-23 Governor Assistant

4th Quarter Convention August 19, 2023

Ideas and Suggestions:

- Use local media (newspaper, radio) press releases, news shows
- “High Five Fridays” at local schools – supporting area youth
- Thank you for spreading conferences out across the state
- Time change for next year – conferences will start one hour later
- District Service Project for first quarter
- Welcome bags and note cards are “feel good” measures that make members feel welcome
- Ann Sheahan is looking for a replacement for the Snow White series – contact Chuck



Save the Date

2023-2024 Conferences & Conventions

WINUM DISTRICT

Nov. 3-4th Fairfield Inn & Mountain Bay 7100 Stone Ridge Dr & 5902 Schofield Ave Weston, WI	Newsletter Due Date: Sept. 22
Feb 16-17th Boarders Inn and Suites W7393 River Bend Rd, Shawano, WI	Newsletter Due Date: Jan. 12
May 3-4th Double Tree 150 Nicolet Road, Appleton, WI	Newsletter Due Date: March 22
Aug 16-17th Sleep Inn 5872 33rd Ave, Eau Claire, WI	Newsletter Due Date: July 6

920-585-4300 Governor Chuck Erickson
Chuck@collegeconnectors.com

Free District Meeting Drawings Continue into the 2023-24 Year!

Laurel Schirmer -- 2023-24 Conferences & Convention Chair

Governor Chuck Erickson will be continuing our campaign to bring more members with new ideas and new energy to our quarterly meetings. However, there will be two minor changes to the free district meeting drawing program.

1. The four clubs who won during Governor Tammy’s “Let Your Optimist Bloom” year (Appleton Noon, Stevens Point, Mosinee and Fond du Lac Noon) are no longer eligible to win in order to give the opportunity to more clubs.
2. It is also hoped that future winning clubs will encourage first timers or members who have not attended a conference/convention in recent years to take advantage of the “free weekend”.

The drawing for the ‘CONFERENCE PRIZE PACKAGE’ worth approximately \$250 (includes free registration for a member and guest, free Saturday lunch for both individuals, AND one hotel room for one night) was held at the 4th Quarter Convention in Hallie. Congratulations to the Plymouth Optimist Club! Hopefully, at the 1st Quarter Conference in Weston on November 3-4 we’ll be seeing some new faces from Plymouth – or some that we haven’t seen in a while!

Report from New District Foundation Rep

Troy Dostal -- 2023-24 OI District Foundation Rep

I am very excited to be the District Foundation Representative (DFR) for WINUM. This year OI Foundation President Teri Davis has a theme of "Be a Superhero." We all have a hero in us. Every time we interact with the children in our communities, we become their hero. They look up to us. We provide them with guidance and important support that they need. This year I am challenging everybody to be that super hero and take it one step further by wearing and showing off your cape! Let's not keep it a secret!

This year I will also be talking about different fundraising programs that Optimist International Foundation (OIF) offers. If you would like more information on any of these, please reach out to me, and I am happy to assist in getting you more information and helping you execute. A few off the top of my head are the "Dime-A-Day", Women's Philanthropy Council, Honor/Memorial/Veteran Banner Emblem, and Presidents Club. Some of these programs require special forms for the acknowledgement, but I am happy to get those forms submitted so we can recognize our Superheroes!

I think that it is important to ask what we can do for OIF, but also important to ask ourselves what OIF can do for us and our local clubs. OIF offers the "Pass Through Program," Club Campaign Fund, Club Grant Program (\$250-\$1,000), and the Childhood Health and Wellness Grant (\$250-\$1,000).

Some of the top highlights for 2022 OIF included:

- Awarded 22 club grants, helping 29,287 children and their families.
- Paid out \$305,346 to clubs using Club Campaign Program and adding an additional \$104,447 in interest to the Club Campaign funds.
- Awarded \$51,024 through the Childhood Health and Wellness program, including Childhood Cancer.
- Sent 140 students off to college with OI oratorical, essay, and CCDHH scholarships totaling \$296,000.

Again, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or if you need any more information. I am happy to help in any way I can. Together we can do amazing things as it reflects in the numbers above. Oh, and remember to bring a basket to the conference for the OI Foundation raffle.

Thank you for all that you do for the OIF already and let's take it to the next level and get those capes!



Let's Talk About Membership

Ann Sheahan -- 2023-24 Membership Engagement Chair

Let's talk about membership! Take the time to Just Ask! So many people said they didn't join sooner or haven't joined because nobody asked them. Put yourself out there and invite a friend to help at an event and then you have them hooked, signing the dotted line is a piece of cake!



I'm working on an incentive to not only get new members but to engage our current members and keep our deletes to a minimum. We want our ADDS to outnumber our Deletes! Let's grow our clubs, our zones and our district, one member at a time, while retaining the ones we have. Choose Optimism and ACHIEVE YOUR PEACE OF MIND!

Zone Reports

ZONE 1 2023-24 Lt. Governor: Gale Haas

Chippewa Falls: The Chippewa Falls Optimist Club has been very busy this summer working at their food stand for the Northern Wisconsin State Fair, the Indianhead Car Show,



and National Night Out. They offered a training session at the stand this year, and also held a pre-fair picnic to kick off the activities. They opened their food stand September 15-16 for Oktoberfest as well (see photo above).

This club held their annual installation and awards banquet on Sept. 26th at the Heyde Center for the Arts. Their 2023-24 President is Cathy Greenseth.

Hallie Optimist Club: The Hallie Club has had a very busy 4th Quarter. They had the honor of hosting the WINUM District 4th Quarter Convention in August. They are working vigorously at expanding their territory for their aluminum can collection to support Cancer Kids here in the Chippewa Valley. They have also sold a record number of the WINUM District NFL Raffle tickets that will help support all of the club's annual youth activities. And, they would like to introduce their president for 2023-2024, Peggy Olevson, and look forward to seeing everyone at the WINUM District 1st Quarter Conference in Weston.

ZONE 2 2023-24 Lt. Governor: Shannon Dalton

Antigo Optimist Club in August had members and sponsors fill 600 backpacks for local kids in need. This club also donated \$316 to the Langlade County Historical Society for a touchscreen display for youth education on local history. The Antigo club had a great time and raised a ton of funds for the upcoming year selling cheese curds and Sun Drop Slushies at the Langlade County Fair. The slushies sound delicious and we need those at a conference possibly.

The **Wausau Breakfast Club** had a great fundraiser with their cheese curd stand at the Wisconsin Valley Fair, and they grossed \$54k at that event. Their club also holds an annual golf event in which teams can sign up at different levels of sponsorship which then gets them signage and recognition at the event. With that outing they grossed \$22k...outstanding couple of events with great gain for scholarships.

The **Merrill Noon Optimist Club** fries cheese curds as well, but at the Lincoln County Fair. I don't have #'s from them, but with the

weather this summer I'm going to guess they had a great year like our club. They also have an Optimist of the Month program and an E-cycling event to safely dispose of electronics.

Wausau Noon Optimist Club at the Wisconsin Valley Fair 2023, had the best year in sales... ever. The beer garden, food stand and Elephant Ears stand were well attended by fair goers. They attribute that to good weather, a good line up of bands playing in the beer tent, and good menu in the food stand. The Elephant Ears always had a long line of customers that was never ending.

Our club had some challenges getting set up this year. The Marathon Park Department did improvements to the fairgrounds. Many of the posts that we use were removed and new pipes needed to be put in the ground. With our Optimist members and the local high school basketball teams helping, the tent area was set up by the end of the day. It is really something to see how well organized the workers get the job done.

A special shout out to Joni Howell, who has everything under control. Joni takes the whole week off as a vacation to be sure everything goes smoothly setting up the tents and beer wagons. Mike Fischer, Josh Reissmann and Scott Campbell, together order the beer and food. Jeff Heinz makes arrangements for the bands that play in the evenings for entertainment. Working at the fair is a good time for all. We get the job done, and have fun doing it. This year we had many volunteers which makes the time go fast. It was a success. Yeah!

The **Everest Club** also sells cheese curds at the Wisconsin Valley Fair and it was a record year for us with all great weather, meaning no rain. We grossed \$32k for our club from the fair. We had nearly as many friends of optimists volunteering as we did Optimists which was a great help. We have a new menu item that has gained some traction the last couple years which is the Mt Everest Nachos. It's got chips, cheese, pulled pork, tater tots, cheese curds, jalapeños, onions, ranch and aioli sauce. We also have a newer event that's called the Taste and Glow. It's a balloon rally with bands, beer and many vendors for everything under the sun. That has been a big event for us.

Everest Club has resumed their Student of the Month program now that school is back in. Each of them speaks at our meeting and also receive a scholarship for their efforts.

That should be a fairly complete summary of the Zone 2 clubs. Thanks everyone and carry on optimistically.

Cont. on Page 9

Zone Reports

Cont. from Page 8

ZONE 3 OPEN [Contact Governor Chuck](#) if interested.

ZONE 4 2023-24 Lt. Governor: Dan O’Leary

Optimist Club of Green Bay: Summer is over and school is back in session. In the Optimist Club of Green Bay’s programs, a shift in seasons happens as well. This club completed another successful Girls Softball season serving over 250 young ladies within their 7-week summer softball league for grades 4K-7th. To add to this softball program, a long-time expansion project broke ground this year and is well underway and will be ready for opening day for the 2024 season.



Another summer program is the club’s outreach and support of the families within Navarino Neighborhood (*see photo above*). Many families are at poverty, below poverty, or are eligible for the ALICE program through United Way. These families join the club Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and one Thursday a month June-August. On Tuesdays, a book is read, and each family is given the book to go home and read again and add it to their home library. On Wednesdays, Optimist volunteers partnered with UWGB Volleyball Team and supported the families with different projects throughout the summer such as planting seeds to begin their home garden, painting, crafts, learning about airplanes and weather, science experiments, and much more. And on Thursdays, Optimist volunteers partnered with local college teams to share with game nights. Green Bay Club supports the neighborhood by also attending their National Night Out event and concert in the park end of summer rally.

Building community within the Howe Elementary School has been a project for several years. Each student and staff member receives a T-Shirt that has their school logo



on the front and Optimist “Do your best, be your best” on the back. The students and staff wear their T-shirts with pride every Wednesday in honor of Optimist Wednesday (*see photo above*).

The club is also impacting the students by volunteering in the Literacy program and sharing the joy of reading with them and giving them confidence to continue to read and improve throughout the year.

As they finish up the last quarter of the Optimist year, they close out their fundraiser selling Your Packer Yearbooks. The club encourages each club to inquire about this sale as a fundraiser for 2024. (*Article by Zone 5 Lt. Gov. Brenda Wolff.*)



Howard-Suamico Optimist Club: September 9 was Howard-Suamico Club’s 2nd annual "Hit the Trails Choose Health and Happiness" 3Kwalk/5Krun and a Cupcake Sprint for youth ages 7 and under (*see photo above*). It was a beautiful day to walk/run on the wooded trails at the NEW Zoo (Brown County Reforestation Camp Green Bay). Activities included REACH a Child free books provided to the youth. Volunteers from the Suamico Fire Department and 36 Optimist members and family helped to make this event a huge success. The proceeds will benefit the NEW Zoo youth programs. The club will present the NEW Zoo with a check in the amount of \$3,000 at one of their lunch meetings. Save the Date for the 3rd annual "Hit the Trails" on September 7, 2024.

Under Harold Peterson's strong leadership (current president and one of Howard-Suamico’s very first presidents and life members), the club is proud to announce their 50th Anniversary Celebration on November 2 at the Rock Garden Supper Club in Green Bay. At this special event, as they celebrate 50 years of serving local youth, they will share memories with past and present members, family and friends.

Dec 2nd is the Annual Howard-Suamico Christmas Parade in Howard at 1:00 PM. This event is sponsored by the Howard-Suamico Optimist Club. The theme this year is "The Songs of the Season". Santa will surprise "all" at the end of the parade, and REACH a Child will be handing out children's books.

Shawano Optimist Club The Shawano Optimist Club enjoyed a very successful year. Their fund-raising events will help many organizations in the community that support children.

Zone Reports

Cont. from Page 9

Thursdayz@Franklin with music, beverages and 50/50 raffle proved to be very popular in Shawano. The Family Fun Night @ Franklin Park was held in July with bounce houses, face painting and other fun activities for the children. The club ended the year with the Tri-Star Football event with 75 kids participating, and they gave away many appreciated prizes and trophies.

Shawano Club is excited that we have completed all criteria to be an Honor Club for 2022-23, many thanks to all our members.

We are looking forward to 2023-24, to do great things for our kids. We held our Installation and Awards Banquet on September 20, honoring our members with perfect attendance, Optimist of the Year and a Special Award—The James Leuenberger Lifetime Award. The club will be having our Rose Day Fund Raiser in November.

(Article submitted by 2022-23 Zone 4 Lt. Gov. Gail Moesch.)

ZONE 5 Lt. Governor: Brenda Wolff

De Pere Club: This club handed out eight scholarships. The upcoming annual wine and cheese fundraiser will be held on November 3, 2023. They have been busy working with De Pere schools.

Green Bay Sunrise Club: The Sunrise Club held the annual Fish Fry as a NOW meeting. As a club meeting, the members went to the Main Street Bourbon Bar where they recognized one of their members, Mike Dobkoski, *(photo on right).*



They are tutoring again at Fort Howard School and supporting three classes. The Sunrise Club is also restarting the JOI Club at West High School. Finally, they are working with the Safe Shelter to donate bikes and replace all existing bikes at the shelter.

Green Bay Breakfast Club: Among the prominent activities, this club fed approximately 160 kids and parents at Tank School as encouragement and thanks for their attendance at Tank's "Meet the Teacher" night. They also had the help of the Altrusa Club ladies who have been helpful to them in the past and are a nice complement to their mission statement.

The Breakfast Club completed a sporting clay shoot at J & H and had 50+ shooters with a split of \$4,000 benefiting the DARE program. The club was informed by two Brown County Sheriff deputies of the need for funds for the multiple schools where they present the anti-drug, anti-bullying, correct choices and

other appropriate life choices for 5th graders. That program is funded totally with private donations.

The club has contacted numerous schools to gauge interest in the Camfel Productions Programs, which are highly energized programs with strong messages geared for specific junior high and mid-grade levels. Covered topics range from anti-bullying, appropriate behavior, dangers of drug use, proper voices, responsibility and positive attitudes. There will be more on that next quarter but they approved and awaiting about a dozen or so schools to participate. The club previously supported the Camfel Productions in person for many years in the auditorium with programs complete with accompanied loud and appropriate music and dialogue highlighting their positive messages.

This club is donating hundreds of fun, animal specific, masks and supportive pieces to Montessori Pre School to aid in activities for their kids. Weekly speakers included both men's and women's coaches for UWGB Basketball teams. The club will be attending both venues as a group in the near future just as they've recently done in support of the Green Bay Rockers at their new facility.

The Organizational Meeting was held September 11 at Mackinaws and elected Jim Jeffers as president and Bert Gagnon as 1st Vice President. Average attendance has been 24 members throughout the summer.

(Articles provided by 2022-23 Zone 5 Lt. Gov. Dan O'Leary.)

ZONE 6 Lt. Governor: Colleen Sheahan

Brillion Optimist Club: Brillion's next major fundraiser, "A Walk Through Brillion" is in downtown Brillion on Saturday, Oct. 28. This adult Halloween party features spirits, craft beer, wine, food, music, raffles, photo booth, costume contest, & fun! Non-alcoholic options are also offered. For more info go to their Facebook page or purchase tickets on club website www.brillionoptimist.org. Proceeds go to Horn Park improvements.

In November the club continues two traditions: a. Student Appreciation Month -- distributing bi-lingual dictionaries to all 3rd graders in the Brillion school district; and b. Respect for Law Program -- hosting a breakfast meeting with officers of the Brillion Police Department. Club members are invited to participate in a round table discussion on crime, drugs, scams, etc.

Chilton Optimist Club: Who said summer is time for vacation. The Chilton Optimist Club continues to be busy with several different activities.

The Football Fundcrazr ticket sales continued through the summer with a total of 410 tickets sold as of the end of

Cont. on Page 11

Zone Reports

Cont. from Page 10

August. The club is hoping for many winners!

Their Bike Rodeo/Respect for Law event is normally held in May. This year the Sheriff's Office invited them to collaborate with them at their National Night Out held July 31. It was a great idea! They had a very good crowd and gave away 68 bike helmets with some youth on a wait list as they order more sizes. In addition, Chilton club provided minor bike repairs and conducted an obstacle course for those who brought bikes to the event. By the end of the evening, they had the younger kids racing around an obstacle course on mini big wheels provided by the club. They plan to continue working with the Sheriff's Department on this event in the future.

They also ran their burger and brat food stand at Crafty Apple on September 9. The location was moved to the fairgrounds and other than a few minor issues, worked very well. The weather was perfect, and their stand made more than ever before. They now begin to prepare for their biggest fundraiser – the Friend of Youth Raffle to be held October 25.

Kewaunee Optimist Club: September 21st started the club's weekly Storm Snack Pack Program at Kewaunee school. They pack approximately 70 snack packs for needy kids, and this is their 4th year. This is a large community project: besides Optimists, there are Rotary, Lions and other local nonprofit groups, businesses and individuals who contribute and work together.

Kiel Optimist Club: The Kiel Optimist Club along with the Kiel Lion's Club recently organized its annual Kiel Community Picnic. This event was held at Kiel City Park, August 10-13. This 4-day event featured a variety of live music, rides, food, and other entertainment. The Kiel Chamber of Commerce organized a parade in conjunction with the event, *see photo on right*. The weather mostly cooperated and attendance was good. Proceeds of this event will be used to support a variety of youth and family organizations.



Manitowoc Sunrise Club – Manitowoc Sunrise had their second 2-day brat fry in July at the Manitowoc Piggly Wiggly, which was pretty successful even with Reed Ave being tore up. The club sold 150 Football Craze tickets for a \$1,500 profit. They are slated to have Art on the Lakeshore on Oct 14, but if they don't have enough groups commit, it will be cancelled for the second year in a row. The club welcomed one new member, Heather Parnau.

New Holstein Optimist Club: While things are a bit quiet now, New Holstein reports that it won't be long until their new year will get busy again.

Two Rivers Optimist Club: Two Rivers President Ann Sheahan newsletter article states that the club this year has: heard seven guest speakers, participated in four socials, entered their first parade in several years, gave away 101 bikes and helmets, taught kids bike safety skills, filled and hid 4,000 eggs, gave away over 100 prizes with the eggs, helped some kids fish for the first time, helped some families have a wonderful Christmas with fun and useful gifts, honored the fire fighters/paramedics along with the men and women at the police department, walked a few miles for Childhood Cancer, served some yummy food at the park and bandstand, had a few beers at Snowfest, provided school supplies and just gave of their time for the betterment of their community. Whew, that's a lot!

ZONE 7 Lt. Governor: Tom Binish

Greenleaf Wrightstown Optimist Club had their Tools 4 Schools Program on July 24 at Walmart in De Pere. Thank you to all the members who were able to shop for supplies (*see photo below*).



The Salvation Army needed members to volunteer for Tools For School Distribution on August 7, because they are serving double the students this year.

ZONE 8 Lt. Governor: Ben Elsner

Fond du Lac Noon Optimist Club: The Fond du Lac Night Out was held August 1 at the Fairgrounds Park. More than 30 groups had tents and booths to make it a fun and educational event for youth and their families. More than 600 youth attend the event. The Fond du Lac Noon Club had a booth at the event handing out Bicycle Safety Sticker Books to all youth attending, *as shown in photo on right*.



2023-24 Leadership Team Directory

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Governor Chuck Erickson Appleton

This is my fifth year as an Optimist member. I have served as the President of the Appleton Noon Optimist Club for the past four years, and Lt. Governor of Zone 7 for the past three years. I am excited to take on this new role as Governor of the WINUM District. chuck@collegeconnectors.com



Governor-Elect, Hospitality Angie Riemer Chippewa Falls

I am Angie Riemer from the Chippewa Falls Optimist Club. I've been an Optimist for 17 years. I am the Governor-elect for this year. My focus is going to be learning all I can. angiecolfax@aol.com



Immediate Past Governor, Marketing Chair, Finance Committee Chair, International Convention Ambassador Tammy Koehler Brillion

Hi! Welcome to a new Optimist year! I am Tammy, club member with the Brillion Optimist Club and the Hilbert Potter Optimist Club. I have been involved with Optimists for 17 years.

This year my work will focus on the new marketing committee. Goal #1 is to pro-



mote Optimist clubs in Wisconsin! My first focus will be on International Optimist Day which is February 1. Do you have pictures of your Optimists volunteering? Can we promote them on Optimist Day? Also, do you have a list of events that you can share with me or the WINUM district so we can promote your event more to people in Wisconsin? In WINUM, we will push for February 1 to be a HUGE Explosion of International Optimist Day. Send me your "in action" photos with permission to use. You may even hear about your project on the TV and Radio....more to come. Please help us promote all clubs in Wisconsin! tammy@theitdeptllc.com

Past Governor, OI Foundation Rep, Qualifications Com. Chair Troy Dostal Chippewa Falls

I am a member of the Chippewa Falls Optimist Club. I have been an Optimist since 2013. This year I am the District Foundation Representative (DFR). I am looking forward to this year and helping clubs use the programs that are available to them through Optimist International Foundation (OIF). dostalt@live.com



Treasurer Mark Sprangers Sheboygan

I am Mark Sprangers, and I am the WINUM District Treasurer for the 2023-2024 WINUM Optimist year. I have been a member of the Optimist Club of Sheboygan for 37 years. During that time, I have held a number of committee positions, a Club Foundation Rep and Club President three terms. Two of those



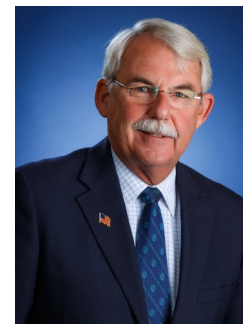
terms, through the club's dedication to the kids, we earned the Distinguished President's Award. I am currently club treasurer and Foundation Rep. My involvement in the WINUM District goes back to the WINUM District's charter year. I have been involved in many district committees, 3 terms as Lieutenant Governor, many terms as District OIF Rep and District Treasurer and 2010-2011 District Governor.

mksprs@outlook.com

Secretary Roni Kaczor-Smith Neillsville
rkaczorsmith@yahoo.com

Governor's Advisor Jann Van Dreser Stevens Point

My name is Jann Van Dreser and I am serving as the Governor's Advisor this Optimist year. I am a member of the Stevens Point Noon Optimist Club, and have been a member there since joining on May 5, 1988. I have held several district offices and served as Governor from 2001-2002. My focus this year will be assisting Governor Chuck in growing WINUM, keeping him on track, making sure things are not missed, and making sure we are the best we can be as Optimists. jannvandreser@gmail.com



Cont. on Page 13

2023-24 Leadership Team Directory

Cont. from Page 12

LT. GOVERNORS

Zone 1 Gale Haas, Hallie

I am Gale Haas. I'm looking forward for the opportunity to be the WINUM Optimist Lt. Governor for Zone 1 for the 2023-2024 year. I am a charter club member of the Hallie Optimist Club for 38 years and chaired many events and held several club offices including club president. I especially enjoy club events working with our youth and the smiles it brings to their faces, and I enjoy socializing with Optimists club members.

As your Lt. Governor I want to be available when called upon to attend any of your club functions or events. Please email, text or call me. Haashouse@yahoo.com.

Zone 2

Essay Contest Chair Shannon Dalton Everest

My name is Shannon Dalton. I'm the new president for the Everest Area Optimist Club. I'm also the Lieutenant Governor for Zone 2 for the WINUM District. I'm the Essay Chair for the District as well as my club, and handle the Oratorical Contest for my club.

I've been an Optimist member for a bit over a decade. My goal is to reach out to professionals in our area to see if we can get some new members in our club. shannon@wickershamjewelry.com



Zone 3 OPEN

Zone 4

Dan O'Leary Howard-Suamico

My name is Dan O'Leary and I am a member of the Howard-Suamico Club. I have been a member for



over 40 years and current life member. I was the WINUM Governor for 2019-2020 and have served as Lt. Governor for several zones. In 2023-24, I will serve as Lieutenant Governor for Zone 4. I will support Zone 4 and the members in any way I can to help them grow. I am truly looking forward to the coming year.

danoleary51@yahoo.com

Zone 5

Junior Golf Chair Brenda Wolff Green Bay

My name is Brenda Wolff and I have been a member of the Optimist Club of Green Bay for over 6 years. I have served on multiple projects and just completed being president. I am a children's author of two self-published books and am the founder of Secret Laws of Life Ministry Trust which supports families with books and mentorship programs. I am excited to serve Zone 5 as their Lt. Governor and look forward to meeting many more Optimist members.

brenda_wolff@yahoo.com



Zone 6

Colleen Sheahan Two Rivers

I am Colleen Sheahan and will be serving as Lt. Governor for Zone 6. I have been a Two Rivers Optimist for 15 years. I have served on the board of directors, served as president and am back on the board of directors.

colleen.sheahan@icloud.com



Zone 7

Tom Binish

Howard-Suamico

"Promise yourself" are the first words I remember speaking when I became involved with the Howard-Suamico Optimist



Cub nearly 45 years ago. Those words have stuck in my head and guided me both professionally and personally. As Optimists, we all work toward the same goals of service to youth and our communities. As individuals, that is a daunting task, but collectively, as members of WINUM and Optimist International, we can join hands to do great things!

My goal, as a Lt. Governor of the noble group of WINUM Zone 7 Optimists, is to assist in any way possible and help you complete that 'Promise' you all have made! tom.binish@gmail.com

Zone 8

Ben Elsner Appleton

My name is Ben Elsner and I live with my wife and two dogs (5 yr old yorkie and 15 yr old chihuahua/terrier mix).



I am stepping into a couple roles this Optimist year as Lt. Governor for Zone 8 and president for Appleton Noon Club. I have been with Appleton Noon since December 2022. The reason I got into Optimists was as a tribute to my dad who was very active in the Green Bay club. The mission of the Optimist Club aligns with my core values. I enjoy interacting with youth and making things brighter/better for them. I hope to reinvigorate and create new opportunities and events and see the joy/smiles on the kids' faces!

winum.ben.elsner@gmail.com

Cont. on Page 14

2023-24 Leadership Team Directory

Cont. from Page 13

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

CCDHH Chair OPEN

Communications Chair & Newsletter Editor Louise Bentley Chippewa Falls

Hi! I am Louise Bentley and serve as Communications Chair for this Optimist

Year. In conjunction with this position, I am the editor for the WINUM newsletter. This newsletter comes out quarterly, and is a great tool to read up on what is happening in your district.



My home club is Chippewa Falls, and I do the newsletter for my club as well. I have also been a club president (twice) and currently serve on our club's board of directors. I am a past Lt. Governor and have held several positions in the district. My focus this year is to improve communication within the district through the newsletter, Facebook page, emails and my favorite...connecting in person.

winumnews22@gmail.com

Community Projects & Programs Chair OPEN

Conferences & Convention Chair Laurel Schirmer Sheboygan

Hello Optimists! My name is Laurel Schirmer and I've been an Optimist in Sheboygan for 31 years. I am your District Conference & Convention Chair. If you've attended any district meetings over the last several years, we have probably met as I've held this position for about 20 years. (Yikes!!)



My job includes finding and contracting meeting facilities and hotel rooms for each quarterly conference and convention. Over the past two years, the district has transitioned to smaller hotel properties in order to avoid paying huge rental fees in large convention centers/hotels. Is there a community center or smaller hotel or meeting venue in your town that we could use? Please let me know.
schirmerlaurel@gmail.com

First Timers & Photography Mary Joan O'Leary Howard-Suamico

Hello! My name is Mary Joan O'Leary. I have been a member of the



Howard-Suamico Club for over 25 years and a current Life Member. I am the WINUM Photographer and "First Timers" Chair welcoming those members who are attending their first WINUM Conference. I will continue to support our youth and promote Friends of Youth.
mjoleary2020@gmail.com

Hospitality Chair (Food & Beverages) Deb Braden Chippewa Falls

My name is Deb Braden from the Chippewa Falls Optimist Club. I am celebrating 25 years as an Optimist. I have three children of which two of them plus one son-in-law belong to the Chippewa Falls Optimist Club. I am in charge of the Hospitality Room at conferences and the convention again this year. I hope to see you on Friday nights in the Hospitality Room with good food and socializing.
bradendm1@gmail.com



Welcome/Greeter OPEN

Technology Gary Sheahan & Luke Kolstad Two Rivers & Appleton gsheahan@charter.net lukeosk@gmail.com

Growth Chair Greg Goodchild Two Rivers gltgoodchild@gmail.com

JOI & College Club Chair

Judy Goodchild Two Rivers

Hello! My name is Judy Goodchild, and I will be your Junior Optimist Chair for the 2023-2024 Optimist year.



I have been active in our Optimist world for 28 years. Traveling this path has been amazing! For all of those years I have been an advisor to our high school Junior Optimist (JOI) Club, one of the most rewarding roads I have traveled. At the district level I have held many different committee chair positions including Governor 2005-2006.

I have a great passion for JOI Clubs. They are our future! I hope the WINUM district will grow their JOI clubs this year. I am available to spend time with your club to share the excitement of building a JOI club.

goodchildmom@gmail.com

Leadership Dev. Co-Chair Sue Vann Dresser Stevens Point

My name is Sue Van Dresser, and I am the Leadership Development Co-Chair for the WINUM 2023-24 year. I have been a member of the Stevens Point Noon Club for 31 years and have held



**2023-2024
OI Leadership Team**

OI President:
Tracy Huxley
OI Vice President-Great Plains,
Mark Fielmann

WINUM Executive Team:

Governor: Chuck Erickson
Governor Elect: Angie Riemer
Immediate Past Governor:
Tammy Koehler
Past Governor: Troy Dostal
Treasurer: Mark Sprangers
Secretary: Roni Kaczor-Smith
Gov. Advisor: Jann Van Dreser

Committee Chairs:

Communications/Newsletter:
Louise Bentley
Dist. Conferences &
Convention: Laurel Schirmer
Essay Contest: Shannon Dalton
Finance Chair: Tammy Koehler
First Timers/Photography:
Mary Joan O'Leary
Growth Chair: Greg Goodchild
Hospitality: Deb Braden &
Angie Riemer
Int'l Convention Ambassador:
Tammy Koehler
JOI & College Clubs:
Judy Goodchild
Leadership Dev: Sue Van Dreser
& Bonnie Ciesielski
Marketing: Tammy Koehler
Membership Engagement:
Ann Sheahan
OI Foundation Rep:
Troy Dostal
Oratorical Contest:
Mary Sue Edens Kuss
Qualifications Committee:
Troy Dostal
Technology: Gary Sheahan &
Luke Kolstad
Webmaster:
Andrew Schlagel

Lt. Governors:

Zone 1: Gale Haas
Zone 2: Shannon Dalton
Zone 3: OPEN
Zone 4: Dan O'Leary
Zone 5: Brenda Wolff
Zone 6: Colleen Sheahan
Zone 7: Tom Binish
Zone 8: Ben Eisner

2023-24 Leadership Directory

Cont. from Page 14

various offices in both my club and the district. Helping to develop strong clubs and future leaders is my focus this year.

kayaksvd@gmail.com

**Leadership
Dev. Co-Chair
Bonnie Ciesielski
Stevens Point**

I am Bonnie Ciesielski from the Stevens Point Noon Club. I have been an Optimist for 18 years. My role on the WINUM team is Leadership Development Co-chair. My focus for the year is Optimist Institute.

bonjane66@gmail.com



**Membership
Engagement Chair
Ann Sheahan
Two Rivers**

Hello Optimists! My name is Ann Sheahan and I am the Membership Engagement Chair for this year. I have been an Optimist member since 2003 and have been on the District Team since 2007. My home club is



the Two Rivers Optimist Club. My husband Gary (IT support for the District Meetings) and I have 4 amazing grown children and 3 wonderful grandchildren, along with 3 grand pups, 2 grand cats, and 7 grand chickens.

gsheahan@charter.net

**Oratorical Chair
Mary Sue Edens Kuss
Wausau**

My name is Mary Sue Edens Kuss. I am a member of the Wausau Noon Optimist Club, and I have been a member for 25 years. I am the WINUM District Oratorical Chair. I am also the President of the club in Wausau. I hope to get more teachers involved in the Oratorical Contest for the benefit of more students.

mkuss158@gmail.com



Scholarship Chair OPEN

Sergeant of Arms - Regalia OPEN

Supplies - Optimist Gear OPEN

**Webmaster Andrew Schlagel
Wausau**

wausaunoonoptimist@gmail.com

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



Like us on our Facebook page
[Wisconsin North-Upper Michigan
Optimists | Facebook](#)

[Visit us on our WINUM website.](#)