



# Optimist International WINUM DISTRICT

Second Quarter  
Newsletter  
January 2025

## Governor Angie's Message

Welcome to 2025! I hope your holidays were happy and blessed. What will you do to improve your club in this new year? Have you thought about running a C.A.R.E program? It's a four-step program to keep members engaged. C.A.R.E. stands for Celebrate, Address, Recognize, and Excel. Let me know if you are interested, and I will help you get started.

Remember Optimist Day is February 6. What is your club planning? See Louise's article on Page 2 of this newsletter for some ideas. Let's have all clubs join in!

Start making plans to attend our next conference April 25 and 26th in Stevens Point. It will be a packed couple of days with Immediate Past Governor Chuck's awards banquet and the Essay and Oratorical contest winners. It should be fun, so plan to be there.

Have you completed your Optimist Institute training as training closes on March 31? (See Page 7.)

If there is anything I can do to help you and your club get your ducks in a row, let me know. In closing, don't forget how ducking amazing you are.

In Optimism,  
Angie [angiecolfax@aol.com](mailto:angiecolfax@aol.com)



2024-25 Governor  
Angie Riemer



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## A Word from the Gov's Assistant Duckster

As I stare out into my Optimist Pond, I see all the "ducks" paddling around in their own little part of the big pond we call WINUM. Some are larger groups and some are smaller ones, but all seem to be content and smiling at little ducklings they are helping.

On a wider look at the pond, we see some little ducklings with no apparent direction or comfort zone, and of course the Optimist ducks don't need to be reminded that we can give the ducklings reason to feel someone cares. On the surface the WINUM Ducks of 2025 have the look of "smooth swimming clubs", however like other ducks the real action is what is going on under the surface of the pond. Their legs are just churning away towards the ducklings to let them know they have "friends" in the duck world, or those legs are pushing them into the lives of potential new members as we all know it is easier for them to help additional youth if we add new members to the group.

Don't wait till the pond freezes over! Kick up some splash and recruit new members! NOW!

Your Governor's Assistant Duckster,  
Romey "you quack me up" Wagner [romey.wagner@gmail.com](mailto:romey.wagner@gmail.com)



2024-25 Assistant  
Romey Wagner

# Let's All Celebrate Optimist Day February 6th!

Louise Bentley -- 2024-25 Communications Chair

What is your club doing for Optimist Day? It is being celebrated around the world on February 6, so start planning now. The easiest way to find out all about it is to go to the Optimist International website to the [Optimist Day page](#). There is valuable information on what it is, how to participate, and even links to flyers, images, and proclamations.



Louise Bentley

If your club doesn't meet February 6, no problem! Plan something special that week or later this month. Be sure and *communicate* to ALL your members about Optimist Day. Use email, Facebook, your website, whatever will reach the most people. This is a great time to bring more people to your meeting or club or community activity you are planning. Have your club members wear their Optimist shirt and take a photo to send to Optimist International and this newsletter.

The important thing is to start working on it NOW, and help make the world more aware of our great organization, and maybe spread some kindness at the same time. [This link](#) takes you to ideas on how you can specifically practice



Random Acts of Kindness (RAK), including Happy Optimist Day cards that you can print. Yes, it is that easy!

RAK is something you can practice every day, like buying the person behind you their coffee in the drive through, but to tie in with this occasion, hand them the printable card or an Optimist Creed card with "Happy Optimist Day!" or some other handwritten sentiment on the back. You could also ask them to "pay it forward" if your gesture made their day. And wouldn't that be wonderful.

OPTIMIST DAY QUESTIONS? Contact Louise Bentley at [winumnews22@gmail.com](mailto:winumnews22@gmail.com).



## Celebrate Optimist Day!

Be part of the celebration on the first Thursday of February to spread positivity and showcase the power of optimism in our communities.

**Adopt an Optimist Mindset:** Practice gratitude, spread kindness, and look for the good in every situation. Inspire others by sharing your optimistic outlook with friends, family, and colleagues.

**Make a Difference:** Plan a meaningful project—plant trees, clean parks, tutor students, or host a blood drive. Small actions inspire big change!

**Share the Joy:** Post on social media with #OptimistDay and #OptimistDay2025 and reach out to local media to share your story.

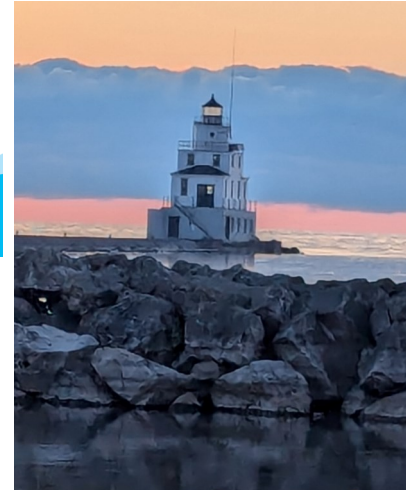
Together, we can make Optimist Day a celebration of hope, kindness, and positivity—within ourselves and our communities!



Celebrate Optimist Day!



# Flock Gathers at First Quarter Conference in Manitowoc



**First Quarter  
Conference  
November 1-2, 2024  
Inn on Maritime Bay  
Manitowoc**



# Climb Aboard for the SS Optimism Cruise

Ann Sheahan -- 2024-25 Membership Chair

Our WINUM District added 37 new members since October 1, 2024; however, we deleted 47 members which leave us at -10. Just keep asking and that number will be in the positive before we know it!

**Don't forget to Opt-In for the SS Optimism Cruise-it is very easy!**

- 1) Go to [optimist.org](http://optimist.org)
- 2) Search SS OPTIMISM BROCHURE
- 3) Click on the link that is in the: Terms & Conditions section
- 4) Sign up your club!

Whatever your net membership is at the end of each quarter in the positive = the number of entries into the drawing.

Example: Beginning membership as of Oct. 1, 2024 is 50

As of Dec. 31st 2024 your membership is at 55, you would have 5 entries into the quarterly drawing.

As of March 31st 2025 your membership is now at 52, you would have 2 entries into the quarterly drawing on March 31st

As of June 30th 2025 your membership is at 49 you would have 0 entries into the quarterly drawing on June 30th 2025

As of September 30th 2025 your membership is at 60! you would have 10 entries.

1st quarter has one drawing for \$250.00; 2nd quarter has two drawings for \$250.00; 3rd quarter has three drawings for \$250.00; and 4th quarter has 4 drawings for \$250.00. **You cannot be entered into the drawings unless your club has completed the Opt-In form.**

Tip for the Quarter: Invite a non-member to your next club activity or event and let them experience the joy of helping a child; getting them to join the club after is the easy part! Just ASK!!!

MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS? Contact Ann Sheahan at [gsheahan@charter.net](mailto:gsheahan@charter.net)

## Does Your Club Have JOI?

Judy Goodchild -- 2024-25 JOI Chair

I had the honor to visit with the Kewaunee Club in the fall, as they are rebuilding their JOI (Junior Optimist International) club! It has a lot of energetic members who are hoping to reestablish this club.

My hope is that we will have a representative from one of the district JOI clubs join us at our WINUM Conference at Stevens Point on April 26.

If you are interested in building a JOI club, let me know. These clubs are very rewarding and they truly do bring out the best in Optimist!

JOI QUESTIONS? Contact Judy Goodchild at [goodchildmom@gmail.com](mailto:goodchildmom@gmail.com) or 920.794.4787



Ann Sheahan



Judy Goodchild

# OI Foundation Update

Troy Dostal -- 2024-25 Optimist International Foundation Representative

Greetings WINUM Optimist Members! I hope that you all had a great holiday season and were able to spend some time with your loved ones, enjoy great food, and able to relax some as well. Kudos to all the clubs that hosted Christmas events, decorated a park with lights, sponsored those in need, and spent time celebrating with our club members everything that was accomplished in 2024!



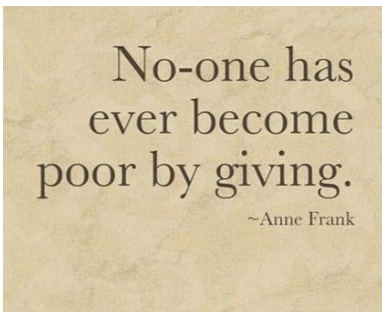
Troy Dostal

As we look forward to 2025, I am hopeful that we will make it the best year yet for WINUM. As we begin the year, some of us maybe have sat down and completed our resolutions or a list of things that we would like to accomplish in 2025.

I ask that you consider making a donation to the Optimist International Foundation (OIF). Those of retirement age are able to do qualified charitable distributions from tax advantaged retirement accounts. Making a donation to the OIF ensures that Optimist International is able to provide scholarships to the amazing youth in our communities.

Last year we had 109 members donate to Dime-A-Day. We currently have 1,265 members as of Oct 1, 2024. I encourage all members to contribute \$36.50 to become a Dime-A-Day member. You can contribute online at <https://www.oifoundation.org/us-canada-donate.cfm>. You are able to select Dime-A-Day or any other amount as well. You can also complete the form at: <https://www.oifoundation.org/individuals/dime-a-day-form.pdf> or bring a check to the district's quarterly conferences. I hope to see you at the next conference in April!

I would like to leave you with this:



*Sometimes we can all lose sight of the fact that we have something to offer. Doing things for other people actually has a beneficial effect on developing our own wellbeing. Recent research in neuroscience shows that helping others and working cooperatively activates and strengthens certain parts of the brain, enhancing well-being. Research has shown a simple act of kindness directed towards another improves the functioning of the immune system and stimulates the production of serotonin in both the recipient of the kindness and the person extending the kindness. Even more amazing is that persons observing the act of kindness have similar beneficial results. In a world where you can be anything, BE KIND!*

Thank you for all the amazing work each of you do as Optimist International members and members of the WINUM District!

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION QUESTIONS? Contact Troy Dostal at [dostalt@live.com](mailto:dostalt@live.com) or 715.531.5085

## OI Convention Registration Opens February 1st

Join our WINUM delegates at the 107th Optimist International Convention in St. Louis, MO, June 29-July 3, 2025. Registration will open on February 1, 2025.

The convention will be at the St. Louis Union Station Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton, 1820 Market Street, St. Louis, MO. (Our WINUM International Conference Rep Chuck Erickson plans to travel by Amtrak from Milwaukee to St Louis, get in touch with him if you want to join him.)

OI CONVENTION QUESTIONS? Contact Chuck Erickson at [chuck@collegeconnectors.com](mailto:chuck@collegeconnectors.com).

**SAVE THE DATE!**

107th Optimist International Convention  
St. Louis, Missouri  
June 29-July 3, 2025.  
<https://www.optimist.org/member/convention.cfm>

Contact [Immediate Past Governor Chuck Erickson](#)  
for more information.

# District Oratorical Contest is April 26

*Chuck Erickson -- 2024-25 Oratorical Contest Chair*

The Topic for the OI Oratorical Contest this year is “How Optimism Has Guided Me Through Trying Times”.

The Purpose: The contest is designed for youth to gain experience in public speaking, perfect self-expression, gain self-assurance, improve communication skills, and provide them with the opportunity to compete for a college scholarship.

Funding: The Optimist Oratorical Scholarships are funded by member donations to the Optimist International Foundation. It is important that all members understand the significance of supporting the Foundation in order to continue funding the contest.

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

Club Contests: A club may be represented at the District by no more than two qualified contestants. There is no minimum required number of participants for club contests. Here is the Oratorical Contest - Club Planning Guide: [https://www.optimist.org/documents/2025/programs/24-25\\_Oratorical\\_Club\\_Planning\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.optimist.org/documents/2025/programs/24-25_Oratorical_Club_Planning_Guide.pdf)

District Contests: Each winner of the District level contest will receive a scholarship for use at a college, university or trade school only. There will be three winners awarded scholarships of \$2,500, \$1,500, and \$1,000, respectively, for first, second, and third place. District contests must have no fewer than three participants. The 3rd Quarter WINUM conference will host the 2025 District Oratorical Contest in Stevens Point on Saturday, April 26, in the morning. Please let me know if you will be participating this year. The winner will repeat their oratorical speech during the conference lunch, with the 1st place winner attending the World Championship in St. Louis.

ORATORICAL CONTEST QUESTIONS? Contact Chuck Erickson at [chuck@collegeconnectors.com](mailto:chuck@collegeconnectors.com).



*Chuck Erickson*

# The Time for Essay Contest is Now

*Shannon Dalton -- 2024-25 Essay Contest Chair*

The District Essay Contest is on now and the club winners are due to me by Feb 28th. It works best to make your club deadline in the middle of February because clubs need time to judge them and get them sent off to me.

I require a printed and digital copy of the essay as well as the printed application. The digital is for AI check, and the printed is for judging.

The topic this year is “How Optimism has Paved My Way to Success.” [Click here](#) for a copy of the application and planning guides.

ESSAY CONTEST QUESTIONS? Contact Shannon Dalton at [shannon@wickershamjewelry.com](mailto:shannon@wickershamjewelry.com).



*Shannon Dalton*

# A Few Reminders from the District Treasurer

*Mark Sprangers -- 2024-25 District Treasurer*

1. IRS form 990 is due. This must be filed with IRS to keep your non-profit status.
2. Dues payments: Optimist International dues are payable to Optimist International and mailed to OI in St Louis.
3. WINUM District dues are payable to WINUM District and mailed to the treasurer. Name and address are on the dues invoice.
4. And, the district treasurer cannot make any changes to a club's information. As an example, if an address needs to be changed, the club must submit the change to club roster on OI website, the treasurer cannot.

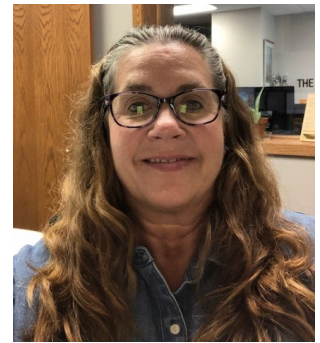
TREASURER QUESTIONS? Contact Mark Sprangers at [mksprs2outlook.com](mailto:mksprs2outlook.com).

# Have You Completed Optimist InSTITUTE?

Bonnie Ciesielski -- 2024-25 Leadership Chair

Happy New Year!

Let's start the new year with getting all club leaders to complete their training on the Optimist Institute on the OI website. Club leaders include: Presidents, Vice Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers, and Foundation Representatives. All training on the institute must be completed by March 31, 2025. The new password is (2425member).



Bonnie Ciesielski

OPTIIMIST INSTITUTE QUESTIONS: Contact Bonnie Ciesielski at [bonjane66@gmail.com](mailto:bonjane66@gmail.com) or 715.496.7527.

## Tri-Star Invitational Basketball Skills Contest

Logan Krueger -- 2024-25 Tri-Star Basketball Skills Contest Chair

I hope this message finds you well! My name is Logan Krueger of the North Fond du Lac Optimist Club, and I am excited to introduce myself as the new chairman for this year's WINUM Optimist Clubs Tri-Star Competition. I am honored to take over this role from John Leonhard, who has done a fantastic job leading this event in past years.

This year, we're making some updates to the event details:

**New Location: Bessie Allen Middle School Gymnasium**

305 McKinley Street  
Enter Main Entrance  
North Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

**Date and Time: Saturday, April 5, 2025**

Registration: 9:00 AM  
Competition: 10:00 AM  
Conclusion by: 12:00 PM

**Cost: \$12.00 per entrant**

Each club is limited to one boy and one girl from each age group. Maximum of 12 entries per club. Please make payment to *North Fond du Lac Optimist*. Each age group, both boys and girls, will receive trophies for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places.



Club Registration forms listing each participant must be received by Thursday March 20, 2025 for inclusion in the printed program and entry in the official tabulation PC program. Do not send us the forms that you used in scoring your local contest. New forms must be filled out and signed by a parent or guardian. Do not forget to mark either the boy or girl category and fill in the age as of March 15, 2025, along with the entry forms.

Email me the completed club registration form that can be found on the WINUM website. Late entries will not be accepted unless previous authorization is granted. I'm eager to work with all of you to ensure this competition continues to be a success. We are looking forward to hosting your club at this annual event.

TRI-STAR BASKETBALL QUESTIONS? Contact Logan Krueger at [lkrueger@vesta.cpa](mailto:lkrueger@vesta.cpa) or 920.904.7179.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**2024-25 Conferences & Convention**  
**WINUM District**

**Nov. 1-2, 2024** Inn on Maritime Bay  
101 Maritime Dr, Manitowoc, WI  
Newsletter Articles Due: Sept. 15, 2024

**April 25-26, 2025** Holiday Inn Convention Center  
1001 Amber Ave, Stevens Point, WI  
Newsletter Articles Due: March 9, 2025

**Aug 15-16, 2025** Hampton Inn  
2017 Stout St., Menomonie, WI  
Newsletter Articles Due: June 29, 2025



# Zone Reports

## ZONE 1 Lt. Governor: Louise Bentley



Lt. Gov. Louise Bentley

[The Chippewa Falls Optimist Club](#) has had a busy fall and winter under the leadership of President Marty Tlachac. In early October, the club prepared and served dinner at Agnes Table, Chippewa Falls' free community evening meal. The club also packed and delivered over 500 dictionaries to all the third graders in Chippewa County, *see photo on right*. At the end of the month, Chippewa Falls club participated in Trunk or Treat in partnership with the Moose Lodge at First Presbyterian Church.



Six members (including Governor Angie Reimer and Zone 1 Lt. Governor Louise Bentley) attended an excellent First Quarter Conference Nov. 1-2 in Manitowoc. On Nov. 20, they held a special breakfast welcoming 10 international high school students to our community. The club recognized a Youth of the Month in October, November, and December. They also did two days of Salvation Army Bell Ringing, *photo on right*, and held a club Christmas Party in December. This club looks forward to participating in the Essay Contest again this year and continuing a Just Ducky Optimist Year.



[Hallie Optimist Club](#): Jim Bakken and Jim Reppert are working on the upcoming Essay Contest from Liberty Christian School in the Chippewa Falls area. The judging will be completed by Feb. 14, and the winning essay will be turned over to the District contest.

The Hallie Optimist Club also made donations to children with cancer and "Make a Wish."

The club had a wonderful turn out for Breakfast with Santa in December with many families attending along with the Hallie Police Department and Hallie Fire/EMS as shown in photo on right.



Hallie is looking forward to an Optimistic 2025 and has a new Hallie Optimist Club President Dave Zschernitz taking on his new role January 23.

[Menomonie Optimist Club](#) has had a good quarter with five new Optimists inducted by Lt. Governor Louise Bentley. Thanks Louise.



This club has recognized six Youth of the Month, two per month from the four high schools in Dunn County. *The December Youth of the Month are pictured in the photos above with their parents.*

Menomonie Club was once again participants in the Optimist Fundcraz and wish to thank Romey Wagner for his management of this fundraiser. Several members were able to bring in \$1,000, which was needed for the club's fiscal health. This club is in the process of rebuilding their club membership and finances as they barely got through COVID, surviving thanks to a few dedicated members and help from WINUM.

The [Superior Optimist Club](#) Annual Meatball Dinner was held on October 8. It went very well, and netted around \$3,000, which was better than last year's event.

[UW-Eau Claire Optimist Club](#) had a successful first quarter. Some of their activities included volunteering at Joshua's Camp and the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Gala. They also made blankets to donate to the Eau Claire Area School District.



This club is also so thankful for how welcoming the Hallie Optimists were when they joined them for Breakfast with Santa, *members pictured on right.*

## ZONE 2 Lt. Governor: Shannon Dalton

[Antigo Club](#): The Annual Antigo Optimist Club Tree Burn and Food Pantry Drive was held January 14 at



Lt. Gov. Shannon Dalton



# Zone Reports

Cont. from Page 8

Antigo High School parking lot. Community members could bring a tree to throw in the fire or drop off the week prior. Hot dogs and hot chocolate were available during the burn. Baskets were also set up to collect food and monetary donations for the Antigo Area Food Pantry.

Students of the AHS Junior Optimist Club, *pictured on right*, kicked off the holiday season ringing bells for the Salvation Army. Next up was helping at the cheese curd booth at the Christmas parade. Thank you for spreading Christmas Cheer and helping those in the community!



The Antigo club also held their annual Christmas Holiday Social where they presented awards for Optimist of the Year and Rookie of the Year. Each year, the Optimist Club membership votes to select among its members each of the recipients. Roger Fuller was selected as Optimist of the Year for his continued numerous contributions throughout the year supporting club fundraising events and serving on the Board. Manda Morrison, one of the club's newest members, was selected as Rookie of the Year. Manda was instrumental in bringing back the Bike Safety Rodeo this past summer and is a wonderful addition to the Optimist Club! Congratulations to both recipients!

[The Everest Club](#) is currently holding an Essay contest. Very shortly Everest will be helping with Jr High History Day as well.

At Kids Voting 2024, *pictured on right*, 700 students from Everest and Wausau East spent the day at NTC in a mock presidential convention. Everest Club provided financial assistance for the event and several of their members volunteered.



This club has been doing a little fundraiser at Red Robin. Local restaurants and chains hold these special nights where a local organization receives 20% of the food sales on a specific night. They made over \$1,000 the last couple of years just from signing up. The club also held their Christmas Party and annual Packer Party, which is a NOW event.

**Merrill Optimist Club** selected Haley Rindt as their December Youth Optimist. November Youth Optimist winner was Merin Yates. Both students display the qualities of an outstanding youth Optimist.

Kids could watch a special screening of *Moana 2* at no cost at the Cosmo Theater in Merrill, thanks to the Merrill Noon Optimists. The club also was a sponsor of Winter Wonderland, a Sensory Santa event, held Dec. 6 at the Agra Pavilion. At this event, children could visit with Santa, and enjoy refreshments and a craft.

Merrill Club's Jr. Optimists recently packed 242 bags for Food For Kids, *as pictured on right*. [#KidsHelpingKids](#)



The [Wausau Noon Optimist Club](#) will hold their Youth Fisheree on January 26 at Rookery Park. Club members donated 216 pounds of food to The Neighbors' Place as well as \$1,860. Through the Share Your Holidays match another \$1,425 will go to the Wausau Salvation Army.

In some sad news from the Wausau Noon Club, an arson fire destroyed their elephant ear stand. At the time, the stand was at the Rothschild Pavilion because the club was providing free food for a private event. The devastation is shown above. We are optimistic that they will be back!



## ZONE 3 Lt. Governor: Anna Flahaut

I am a member of the Stevens Point Optimist Club, and this is my first year as a Lt. Governor. Here are a few tidbits about me:



Lt. Gov. Anna Flahaut

✨ Beachbody Coach dedicated to helping you transform your life and discover your best self.

🌸 Proud mother to an amazing 18-year-old. I found my soulmate 7 years ago and together we moved to beautiful Wisconsin.

🏦 Started my career in banking as a teller and worked my way up to branch manager and mortgage lender, now managing

Cont. on Page 10

# Zone Reports

Cont. from Page 9

two branches.



Devoted dog mom to Tiger, my loyal companion for the past 8 years.



Passionate about travel and engaging in deep, vulnerable conversations.



Grateful member of the Juliets, an empowering group of women who have profoundly changed my life and continue to guide me in finding my true purpose.

## ZONE 4 Lt. Governor: Ben Elsner

**Green Bay Optimist Club** will take part in the Junior Golf Invitational June 12. It is an annual junior golf outing in partnership with First Tee that for those that qualify are then able to partake in the OI international tournament down in FL. They are looking for additional support/committee members to help make this event great and work with their local communities. If interested in helping, please email Optimist Jr. Golf Chair Jim Glover ([gymnast15@new.rr.com](mailto:gymnast15@new.rr.com)) and/or Zone 4 Lt Governor Ben Elsner ([winum.ben.elsner@gmail.com](mailto:winum.ben.elsner@gmail.com)) for more information.



Lt. Gov. Ben Elsner

On November 23, the Green Bay Club was part of the Green Bay parade and was responsible for the Booyah Battle coming up in April 2025. The Preble Softball team helped and were in balloon ingredients for the booyah, as shown in photo on right.



**Green Bay-Allouez Optimist Club** held Pals Program NFL Play 60 night at Synergy Sports Performance October 30, as shown in the photo. Eighty plus area youth were treated to an evening of pizza, soda, Packer garb and football with Malik Willis and Ellis Merriweather of our very own Green Bay Packers



as well as members of the UWGB Women's basketball team. It was an absolute blast of an evening for these kids. The level of engagement and giving was at an all-time high leading to some very happy and somewhat sweaty kiddos. Thank you to all who made this evening happen!

**Howard Suamico:** Howard-Suamico Optimist Christmas Parade was December 7 with over 60 floats including REACH a Child non-profit. This club donates \$500 annually during Law Week lunch in May to help fund books and restock all law enforcement vehicles to hand out books to children when needed. Several Optimist members and family handed out over 400 free books and Optimist Creed bookmarks to children on the parade route, see photo on right. Books were donated by the REACH a Child. President Dan O'Leary and Suamico fire trucks were all in line supporting the Optimist Mission.



The Annual Howard-Suamico Optimist Club's Christmas Lunch was held December 10. Over 45 members and their families were entertained by the Bay Port Choir. The choir has joined them for over 40 years at this holiday event. A check for \$2,500 was presented for "Raise the Sails" Campaign, which provides funds for various programs and needs in the school district.

The Whitetails Unlimited Banquet is March 11. This has been one of Howard Suamico's largest fundraisers, and will be held again at the Rock Garden Supper Club.

**Pulaski-Krakow Optimist Club** will hold Pulaski Polka Days on July 17-20. This is one of the largest fundraising events for the club. More details in the Q3 newsletter.

**Shawano Club** completed Rose Day Fundraiser in November. Rose day is held the Wednesday before deer hunting (can you guess why it is then?). The club sold over 350 dozen roses and made over \$3,800.

The Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 30, their club participated in the Holiday Stroll and Tree Lighting held at Franklin Park. They partnered with Toys for Tots for this event, where they gave away almost 500 toys and gift bags to the kids that attended this event with their family. Shawano SunDrop was also given out by the Shawano Optimist, see photo on right.



# Zone Reports

Cont. from Page 10

On January 25 & February 22 Shawano club has two of their biggest fundraisers with the Girls & Boys Tri-Star Basketball Tournament. This is a one-day tournament with approximately 40 teams from Grades 4-8 for each date. They need "all hands on deck" to make this tournament run smoothly.

## ZONE 5 Lt. Governor: Brenda Wolff

The **Green Bay Thursday Breakfast Optimist Club** continues to forge ahead with many contacts purchasing raffle tickets for the annual fundraiser held at The Woods. This is the club's main fundraiser and has been very successful for many years.



Lt. Gov. Brenda Wolff

The club has also done a Clay Pigeon "Shoot" at J and H Game farm in Navarino with great fun and prizes while raising some money for the many needs of the Green Bay area.

They've continued to have a terrific group of speakers every Thursday morning for entertainment and education. Such folks as both UWGB Basketball coaches, the Chancellor, Green Bay's Police Chief, DGBI Executive Director, as well as numerous others. Thursday Breakfast Club continues to provide a meal for St. John's Homeless Shelter as well as honoring many requests from many needy organizations.

A huge "thanks" to the entire membership who've provided the work and dedication to make this a sustainable club. Finally, a thank you to Brenda Wolff for continuing in her position as Lieutenant Governor.

## ZONE 6 Lt. Governor: Colleen Sheahan

**Brillion Optimist Club:** The Brillion Club ended 2024 with their holiday luncheon at Cobblestone Creek. They were entertained by the Brillion High School Jazz Band and Chamber Choir. They also received an update on their Horn Park Playground Project. All bills to this point have been paid, and they will continue to do some fundraising to add some benches and signage.



Lt. Gov. Colleen Sheahan

The next upcoming event is the Pizza Make Fundraiser to be held on February 8 at Brillion Middle School. Pizza sales are currently going on from any member or they can be ordered online on their [Facebook page](#). This event funds many of the programs their club supports throughout the year.

**Chilton Optimist Club** had a very busy December with several activities. The club holds a Meet & Greet Santa event for children with disabilities, by appointment. Thus, no long lines at the mall, and the setting is quiet, yet very festive. The club also responds to Letters to Santa, which has been a long-time tradition.

As far as serving the elderly, one of their members takes on the task of gathering fruit to fill bags for residents of the various nursing facilities. All of the items are donated by the generous business places in and around their community/county. This year the club filled almost 400 bags, along with individual Christmas cards from the club, *as shown in photo on right.* Member Don Knaus, who also does singing engagements at the



various facilities, came up with this idea and delivers the bags. It puts a smile on the faces of the elderly as they receive their gift (and it's healthy, too!). Lastly, members volunteer to drive residents of the various assisted living and elderly housing facilities for a ride through the city to view the many beautiful Christmas lights. This is one of the club's favorite activities as members listen to stories from years ago by the residents, and it makes them smile too!

**Manitowoc Sunrise:** In October, Manitowoc Sunrise participated in Manitowoc Public Library's "Trunk or Treat" where they passed out candy to about 1,500 kids. Also in October, the club met with Lincoln High School's Interim Principal Lee Thennes, to present a donation to their "Caring Closet" and later in the month delivered \$200 worth of lunch/snack items to each of 10 public schools for their Food for Schools campaign, *pictured on right.*



Manitowoc continues to hold monthly raffles to earn money to support this initiative, since they no longer do scholarships to three high school students, and feel good about being able to reach more students. In December they supported the Salvation Army's "Adopt-a-Family" program as well as "Shop with a Cop".

**New Holstein Optimist Club:** In addition to this club's usual events this time of year like Husky Hangouts for 6-8th graders and Tri-Star Basketball in March, the New Holstein Club is putting a lot of their attention on a new project. Fundraising has

# Zone Reports *Cont. from Page 11*

begun to build a playground at Optimist Park. The first fundraising event was a cookie sale at the Twinkling Lights events in December. They decorated 75 dozen cut-out cookies to sell, and the sale went very well.

On February 2, New Holstein will host a Chili Luncheon followed by Bingo at the Community Center beginning at 11:30 a.m. with bingo at 1:00 p.m. All are welcome.

**Two Rivers Optimist Club:** Two Rivers Optimist Club continues to offer opportunities to members and their communities. The Octagon Club is heading into a busy new year, with a Valentines dance, reading at the Day Care centers and leaving each child with a book and a stuffed monster encouraging reading at home. The adult club remains active with the upcoming Meat Raffle, and a new project placing luminaires in the city cemeteries. More information to come on that in the future, as they are still working on all the logistics.

## **ZONE 7 Lt. Governor: OPEN For 2024-25**

**Contact Gov. Angie** if interested.

## **ZONE 8 Lt. Governor:**

**Ann Sheahan**

**The Fond du Lac Noon Optimist Club** took part in the Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership's Monster March on Saturday, October 28. Through the event, youth can march up one side of Main Street, through Farmer's Market, and down the other side of Main Street. Businesses and groups are encouraged to set up booths or tables and hand out candy or other goodies to the children.



*Lt. Gov. Ann Sheahan*

The Optimist Club handed out Halloween safety sticker/coloring books, as well as candy to the costumed children. The perfect weather helped participation at the event, about 500 children marched. *Pictured are members Nicole Skelton, Lori VanNatta, and John Leonhard who staffed the booth.*



The Fond du Lac Noon Club annually holds a Youth Appreciation event through which teachers at three Fond du Lac High Schools may nominate students for recognition for service to their fellow

students, school and/or community. The youth, parents, guardians, and the nominating teachers are



invited to attend a dinner at South Hills Country Club. Following the dinner, the letters nominating the youth are read and each student receives a plaque. *Pictured above are the 2024 Youth Appreciation Recipients, as well as others attending the event.*

This club made two donations to community organizations in the first quarter. The first was \$2,000 to the North Fond du Lac High School Business Incubator. Through the Business Incubator, high school students work in groups to develop products to be manufactured, marketed, and sold. Groups work hands-on with an advisor from the Fond du Lac County business community to take their ideas and create businesses. The process includes, but is not limited to, developing business plans, budgets, manufacturing processes and marketing. At least one group also applied for and received funding from a local bank. Many of the products are sold in local businesses. *Pictured are Marcia Snyder, Club Treasurer, Business Incubator Faculty Advisor Kurt Wismer, and Club President Jason Porter.*



The Fond du Lac Noon Optimist Club also donated \$2,000 to Broken Bread, an organization, which provides food and other necessities to families and individuals in the Fond du Lac community. Each week 700-900 people are served by Broken Bread. On average, about one third of those served are youth.

**North Fond du Lac Optimist Club** had a great first quarter. North Fond du Lac club held their first major event on November 9, which was their 53rd annual Pancake Breakfast. The club set a club record for revenue earned for the day and served over 1,800 people.

November 29 was their annual Light Up the Park event with Santa being the MC and powering up the lights that evening for the holiday season.

*Cont. on Page 13*

## 2024-2025

### **OI Leadership Team**

OI President: [Jan Oord Graves](#)  
OI Vice President-Great Plains,  
[Jodi Arriola](#)

### **WINUM Executive Team:**

Governor: [Angie Riemer](#)  
Immediate Past Governor:  
[Chuck Erickson](#)  
Past Governor: [Tammy Koehler](#)  
Governor Elect: [Vanessa Rueth](#)  
Treasurer: [Mark Sprangers](#)  
Secretary: [Deb Braden](#)  
Gov. Advisor: [Romey Wagner](#)

### **Committee Chairs:**

Communications/Newsletter:  
[Louise Bentley](#)  
District Conferences &  
Convention: [Laurel Schirmer](#)  
Essay Contest: [Shannon Dalton](#)  
Finance Chair: [Tammy Koehler](#)  
First Timers: [Lori VanNatta](#)  
Growth Chair: [Greg Goodchild](#)  
Hospitality: [Deb Braden](#)  
Int'l Convention Ambassador:  
[Chuck Erickson](#)  
JOI & College Clubs:  
[Judy Goodchild](#)  
Jr. Golf: [Brenda Wolff](#)  
Leadership Development:  
[Bonnie Ciesielski](#)  
Marketing: [Lisa Thelen](#)  
Membership Engagement:  
[Ann Sheahan](#)  
OI Foundation Rep:  
[Troy Dostal](#)  
Oratorical Contest:  
[Chuck Erickson](#)  
Photography:  
[Mary Joan O'Leary](#)  
Technology: [Gary Sheahan](#)  
Website Advisor: [Angie Riemer](#)

### **Lt. Governors:**

Zone 1: [Louise Bentley](#)  
Zone 2: [Shannon Dalton](#)  
Zone 3: [Anna Flahaut](#)  
Zone 4: [Ben Elsner](#)  
Zone 5: [Brenda Wolff](#)  
Zone 6: [Colleen Sheahan](#)  
Zone 7: OPEN  
Zone 8: [Ann Sheahan](#)

## Zone Reports *Cont. from Page 12*

North Fond du Lac also co-hosted with their local library a Meet and Greet with Santa at the elementary school where over 250 kids participated in various activities while waiting to visit Santa. Most importantly the NFDL Optimist donated \$8,100 to eight different organizations supporting youth activities and community needs.

The [Optimist Club of Sheboygan](#) has had a busy first quarter. The 100 children's coats purchased in February in honor of the club's 100th anniversary were donated to the Coats for Kids campaign and the Boys and Girls Clubs in Sheboygan.

Club members also helped distribute the coats to families at the Salvation Army giveaway on November 7, as shown in the photo on the right.

The club continues to work with the City of Sheboygan to purchase new playground equipment valued at \$25,000 at Optimist Park, with installation scheduled for spring.

Amid the holiday bustle, members rang bells for the Salvation Army, and were Santa's elves at Longfellow Elementary School's holiday party. Sheboygan club even managed to enjoy some holiday cheer at a club social on December 30.



### **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



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