



**Optimist
International
WINUM
DISTRICT
2024-25**

**LEADERSHIP
DIRECTORY**



Optimists
are just ducky!



2024-25 Leadership Team Directory

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Name: Angie Riemer
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Governor
Website Advisor
Email Address: angiecolfax@aol.com
Phone Number: 715-456-5150



What is your job/your goal in this position: Lead the District to a successful year
What is your home club: Chippewa Falls
How long have you been an Optimist: 18 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: To be a better person

Name: Vanessa Rueth
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Governor Elect
Email Address: ruethv87@gmail.com
Phone Number: 715-218-8608



What is your job/your goal in this position: To help make a difference in the lives of children and to assist others with their positions
What is your home club: Merrill Noon
How long have you been an Optimist: 10 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: To be able to make a difference in the lives of the children of our community and other communities by volunteering whenever possible

Name: Chuck Erickson
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Immediate Past Governor & OI Convention Chair
Email Address: chuck@collegeconnectors.com
Phone Number: 920-585-4300



What is your job/your goal(s) in this position: My role is to support Governor Angie in her year and promote the Optimist International (OI) Convention to WINUM members
What is your home club: Appleton Noon
How long have you been an Optimist: 6 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Governor, Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I am an Optimist Club member because I believe in making a difference for the youth in our community. Every child should feel supported, loved, and cared for. We should celebrate and support our youth with every chance we get.

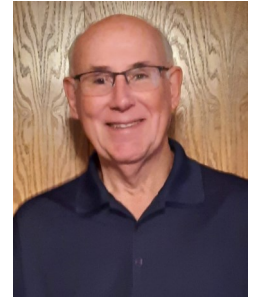
Name: Tammy Koehler
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Past Governor, Finance Chair
Email Address: tammy@theitdeptllc.com
Phone Number: 920-418-2298



What is your job/your goal in this position: Make sure we utilize funds to the goals of the district. To make good choices with WINUM funds.
What is your home club: Brillion
I am also the president of the Hilbert/Potter Optimist Club.
How long have you been an Optimist: 18 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Governor, OI Convention Chair, International Marketing

Committee, Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: Bringing out the Best in Youth, Ourselves and our Communities

Name: Mark Sprangers
2024-25 District Leadership Office: District Treasurer
Email Address: mkspr@outlook.com
Phone Number: 920-980-8091



What is your home club: Sheboygan
How long have you been an Optimist: 38 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Governor, OI Foundation Rep, Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I was asked. Enjoy working with and for the benefit of the kids of the area. Continue to be a member for that reason and the relationships developed with other members of the club and beyond. Enjoy being part of a great district with great people.

Name: Deb Braden
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: District Secretary, Hospitality
Email Address: bradendm1@gmail.com
Phone Number: 715-579-0298



What is your job/your goal in this position: Maintain minutes of District meetings and submit to OI in a timely manner.
What is your home club: Chippewa Falls
How long have you been an Optimist: 26 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: District Treasurer, Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: When I graduated from Lakeland College, my good family friend, Ray Helgersen,

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asked me to check out the Optimist Club. I was planning on joining a service club, so I went, and joined that day.

Name: Romey Wagner
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Governor's Assistant
Email Address: romey.wagner@gmail.com
Phone Number: 715-571-2901



What is your job/your goal in this position: Keep the ship sailing.
What is your home club: Wausau Noon
How long have you been an Optimist: 32 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: All of them.
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I was asked.

LT. GOVERNORS

Name: Louise Bentley
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Zone 1 Lt. Governor
Communications-Internal/Newsletter
Email Address: winumnews22@gmail.com
Phone Number: 715-379-8363



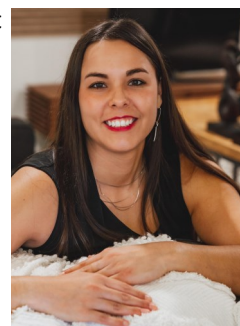
What is your job/your goal(s) in this position: To improve communication within our District and to assist clubs in Zone 1 as needed.
What is your home club: Chippewa Falls
How long have you been an Optimist: 29 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor and District Publicity Chair, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I joined because someone asked me, and I stay to connect with other optimistic people.

Name: Shannon Dalton
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Zone 2 Lt. Governor
Essay Chair
Email Address: shannon@wicker-shamjewelry.com
Phone Number: 715-573-1238



What is your job/your goal(s) in this position: Reporting to District about clubs and judging District essays
What is your home club: Everest Area
How long have you been an Optimist: 15 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, Club President, Oratorical and Essay Chair
Why are you an Optimist Club member: It's a great way to help the community.

Name: Anna Flahaut
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Zone 3 Lt. Governor
Email Address: aflahaut@bankfirststate.com
Phone Number: 425-495-1746



What is your job/your goal in this position: To meet other clubs and share the information that is given to me with those clubs, keep them engaged, and offer guidance to grow and maintain members
What is your home club: Stevens Point
How long have you been an Optimist: 3 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Club Treasurer
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I believe in the power of positivity, and believe my purpose in life is to help others. This organization has both opportunities for me to serve out my purpose and create positivity in others' lives.

Name: Ben Elsner
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Zone 4 Lt. Governor
Email Address: winum.ben.elsner@gmail.com
Phone Number: 920-660-0035



What is your job/your goal in this position: To support the clubs in my zone in events and growth
What is your home club: Shawano
How long have you been an Optimist: 2.5 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor Zone 8, Club President - Appleton Noon
Why are you an Optimist Club member: Carry on my father's legacy, bring out the best in myself and my community, and leave an imprint for the future.

Name: Brenda Wolff
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Zone 5 Lt. Governor
Junior Golf Chair
Email Address: brenda_wolff@yahoo.com
Phone Number: 920-707-3431



What is your job/your goal in this position: To support and grow the clubs in my zone
What is your home club: Green Bay
How long have you been an Optimist: 8 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I am an Optimist to support the youth in our community and help them thrive.

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Name: Colleen Sheahan
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Zone 6 Lt. Governor
Email Address: colleen.sheahan@icloud.com
Phone Number: 920-629-7693



What is your job/your goal in this position: To assist the seven clubs in my zone with any questions or problems. Report to the governor any information they or OI wants.
What is your home club: Two Rivers
How long have you been an Optimist: 16 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: To help in my community and meet more people as well as be with my brother Gary and his family.

Zone 7 Lt. Governor position is open. If anyone is interested in this opportunity, contact [Governor Angie Riemer](#)

Name: Ann Sheahan
2024-25 District Leadership Offices: Zone 8 Lt. Governor Membership Chair
Email Address: gsheahan@charter.net
Phone Number: 920-901-6352



What is your job/your goal in this position: As Membership Chair, I welcome new members and work towards educating the District on how to recruit and retain members.
What is your home club: Two Rivers
How long have you been an Optimist: 21 years

What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, Leadership Chair, JOI, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I grew up volunteering/watching my parents as role models. I love the feeling I get when a child smiles and enjoys the events we do. My heart is happy!

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Name: Laurel Schirmer
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Conferences & Convention Chair
Email Address: schirmerlaurel@gmail.com
Phone Number: 920-946-7246



What is your job/your goal in this position: To contract convenient, safe, clean, economical properties for District meetings and take that responsibility off of the governor's plate.
What is your home club: Sheboygan
How long have you been an Optimist: 32 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I joined because I enjoy contributing to my community and its kids -- I stayed because of the leadership opportunities offered within the club and District that my job didn't offer.

Name: Lori VanNatta
2024-25 District Leadership Office: First Timers
Email Address: lavannatta@yahoo.com
Phone Number: 608-214-3993



What is your job/your goal in this position: To welcome First Time conference attendees, give them information about Optimists, help

them to meet and mingle with other attendees who have been coming to conferences for years.
What are your home clubs: Fond du Lac Noon and Fond du Lac Evening
How long have you been an Optimist: 11 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: To give back to my community

Name: Greg Goodchild
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Growth Chair
Email Address: gltgoodchild@gmail.com
Phone Number: 920-946-8906



What is your job/your goal in this position: To restructure our approach to New Club Building
What is your home club: Two Rivers
How long have you been an Optimist: 14 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Governor, Lt. Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: To be a better person and help the world be a more caring/loving place to be.

Name: Judy Goodchild
2024-25 District Leadership Office: JOI Clubs
Email Address: goodchildmom@gmail.com
Phone Number: 920-794-4787



What is your job/your goal in this position: To increase energy, interest, and grow our youth clubs
What is your home club: Two Rivers
How long have you been an Optimist: 25 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Governor, Lt.

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Governor, Leadership Chair, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member:
The Optimist Creed is amazing, it keeps me focused. The Octagon Club keeps me young.

Name: Bonnie Ciesielski
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Leadership Chair
Email Address: bonjane66@gmail.com
Phone Number: 715-496-7527



What is your home club: Stevens Point
How long have you been an Optimist: 17 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Lt. Governor, District Leadership Co-chair, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: To help the kids in my community

Name: Lisa Thelen
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Communications-External
Email Address: optimistlisa@gmail.com
Phone Number: 715-563-2369



What is your job/your goal in this position: I am committed to doing my best to ensure clear and consistent communication with those who are not involved within the WINUM District. Guided by the Optimist Creed, my goal is to bring out the best in myself and others by encouraging a spirit of optimism and representing our District with integrity and positivity.
What is your home club: Chippewa Falls
How long have you been an Optimist: It depends on when you consider my starting date. I was first sponsored by Ralph Cushman in 2018, and I've been a member on and off since then.
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Newsletter Chair

and club board member
Why are you an Optimist Club member:
By being an Optimist Club member, I get unlimited opportunities to BE that human who brings out the best in kids, my community, and ultimately, myself.

Name: Mary Sue Edens Kuss
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Oratorical Chair
Email Address: mkuss158@gmail.com
Phone Number: 715-370-2010



What is your job/your goal in this position: To afford youth to gain experience in public speaking, perfect self-expression, gain self-assurance, improve communication skills, and provide a chance to compete for a college scholarship.
What is your home club: Wausau Noon
How long have you been an Optimist: 26 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Essay Chair, Club President and Oratorical Chair
Why are you an Optimist Club member: Being an Optimist gives me a chance to help the youth of our community, and hopefully make a positive impact on a student's life.

Name: Troy Dostal
2024-25 District Leadership Office: OI Foundation Rep
Email Address: dostalt@live.com
Phone Number: 715-531-5085



What is your job/your goal in this position: Let clubs and members know what OI Foundation can do for their clubs and how to use it
What is your home club: Chippewa Falls
How long have you been an Optimist: 10 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Governor, Lt.

Governor, Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member:
To help the youth in our community and to see my amazing Optimist family.

Name: Mary Joan O'Leary
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Photographer
Email Address: mjoleary2020@gmail.com
Phone Number: 920-819-2767



What is your home club: Howard-Suamico
How long have you been an Optimist: 30 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: First Timers Chair
Why are you an Optimist Club member: I love children and want to help to make a positive difference in their lives.

Name: Gary Sheahan
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Technology
Email Address: gsheahan@charter.net
Phone Number: 920-901-6351



What is your job/your goal in this position: Run computer programs during conferences
What is your home club: Two Rivers
How long have you been an Optimist: 15 years
What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: None
Why are you an Optimist Club member: To help our community and socialize with good people

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Name: Peggy Olevson
2024-25 District Leadership Office: Welcome/Greeter
Email Address: peggy63olevson@gmail.com



Phone Number: 715-379-7252
What is your job/your goal in this position: Welcome members to conferences
What is your home club: Hallie
How long have you been an Optimist: 3 years

What other offices have you held in your club and in the District: Club President
Why are you an Optimist Club member: Because I love helping children and families, thus creating a better world.

Special Note from Governor Angie

Please read the following from Optimist Institute. Congratulations, Ben!

I'm so excited to let you know that Ben Elsner, from WINUM District, has been confirmed as a member of the 2024-2025 Optimist Leadership Academy (OLA)! OLA began October 1 and ends just prior to our International Convention in St. Louis. Being selected for OLA is a huge honor. We ask that you please be sure to encourage and support Ben throughout the year.

The Optimist Leadership Academy (OLA) is focused on identifying and developing members that have the potential to be good leaders at the District and International levels of our organization. OLA is a nine-month program that consists of sessions that center on primary leadership skills with a new skill set being focused on monthly. Each month, October- May, will focus on a different set of skills necessary to be a successful leader. In June, the entire group will come together in-person for the final session.

OLA participants will have online discussions with their fellow cohort members, exclusive Optimist Institute courses, and readings. Additionally, the first Tuesday of each month will feature a live webinar via Zoom that all participants must attend. The culmination of the program will end with an in-person, one-day, hands-on workshop prior to the Annual OI Convention.

Completion of all activities, courses, and discussions, as well as attendance at all monthly webinars and the in-person day prior to Convention are required in order to successfully complete OLA.

Heather Myers, Optimist Institute Director, Optimist International
Heather.Myers@optimist.org

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.



Save the Date

2024 - 2025 Conferences & Conventions

WINUM DISTRICT Optimists are just ducky!

Bringing Out The Best

November 1 - 2, 2024

The Inn on Maritime Bay
 101 Maritime Dr, Manitowoc, WI 54220

Newsletter Due Date:
 September 15, 2024

April 25 - 26, 2025

Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Center
 1001 Amber Ave, Stevens Point, WI 54482

Newsletter Due Date:
 March 9, 2025

August 15 - 16, 2025

Hampton Inn & Suites Menomonie
 2017 Stout St, Menomonie, WI 54751

Newsletter Due Date:
 June 29, 2025