



Nebraska District Optimists



Sandra Allen, Governor
August 2021
OI 4th Quarter Theme
"Success"

Mark Your Calendars!

August 20-21, 2021
District Convention
Omaha

August 23, 2021
OI Webinar
"Tools for Communication"
7 p.m.

August 30, 2021
[Health and Wellness Grant Applications](#) due to OI Foundation

September 30, 2021
Last day of 2020-2021
Optimist Administrative Year

October 3, 2021
Nebraska District Tri-Star *
Football Punt, Pass & Kick
Competition
Nebraska Wesleyan University

*see details in this issue

**Is a WOW event in your club's future?
If not, start planning one NOW!**

Broken Bow has already qualified for 4 chances to win a vacation at a Holiday Inn Vacation Club Resort through the 4th Quarter Incentives. More information on the campaign in this issue



Sandra Coaxum Allen, Governor

"Working hard for something we don't care about is called stress. Working hard for something we love is called passion." - Author unknown

Passion. The Oxford dictionary defines passion as a strong and barely controllable emotion. According to the Urban Dictionary, "passion is when you put more energy into something than is required to do it. It is more than just enthusiasm or excitement, passion is ambition that is materialized into action to put as much heart, mind, body and soul into something as is possible."

I've been thinking about this a lot lately as we finalize plans for our upcoming Convention and strive to develop healthy clubs within our district. I have concluded that passion is what motivates Optimists to do what we do. Passion is why we get up every day and go to work – whether outside the

home or inside. Passion is why we show up at our Optimist club meeting to plan for the next youth event even though we suspect that there will only be the usual 3-5 members that are willing to plan, promote and execute the event. Passion is why we optimistically keep moving forward with our clubs in spite of a pandemic, in spite of what seems like lack of interest, and in spite of the fact that some of us no longer have the pep in our step that we once had.

It is our passionate desire to help bring out the best in our youth, in our communities, and in ourselves that keeps us energized, enthusiastic and excited. It is that passion for optimism that has led to what is already a remarkable year. Here are some of the highlights:

- * The Nebraska District is #7 among 45 districts in North America.
- * The Nebraska District is #1 in the Great Plains Region.
- * We have retained over 87% of our membership since October 1st.
- * Broken Bow gained a net, +13 during the month of July.
- * South Omaha, our newest club, now has 33 members after adding 10 more members since it was chartered.

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- ★ The Growth Team (Membership, Club Fitness, New Club Building) has initiated an awesome growth incentive program. (See the last page for more details.)
- ★ The ad hoc Strategic Planning Advisory Committee has completed a draft of the Nebraska District's first strategic planning document.
- ★ The zones were realigned to streamline the administration of our District.
- ★ With the hard work and support of the newly appointed Zoom Coordinator and the Marketing & Communications team, we virtually held the first three District conferences, countless District committee meetings, the monthly "Coffee With the Governor" and many local club meetings.
- ★ We successfully held our annual Essay, CCDHH, and Oratorical scholarship contests, as well as the OI Junior Golf Tournament.
- ★ Built and/or sponsored new Optimist clubs, both domestically and internationally, with more to come.
- ★ And we are having fun!

I look forward to **seeing** you all in Omaha on August 20 and 21 for the 60th Annual Nebraska District Convention where we will celebrate these achievements and passionately plan for the future. Not only will there be interesting guests and informative workshops, but there will be great fellowship, great food and great fun.

Sandra Allen, Governor



What Are you Waiting For?

It's hard to believe my year as Governor Elect is rapidly coming to an end, and that I have finally been asked to write an article for the District newsletter, something I have been waiting for all year. Some may feel I didn't need to wait to be asked or even that I shouldn't have waited to share my thoughts. Others might assume I didn't have anything to say; of course anyone who has ever met me knows that isn't true—I almost always have something to say.

As your Governor Elect (and as Governor), I am trying to listen more and consider what is best for the District before I speak. There could also be some who think I waited to be asked because I was afraid or lacked confidence, which again isn't true. While there have certainly been days when I doubted myself and wanted to quit, I found inspiration in The Optimist Creed and encouragement from other Optimists. I still must continuously "Choose Optimism," which does not mean that I don't have time for anyone or anything else in my life. Just like all of you, I have other obligations, activities, and interests that compete for my attention. Some days it feels like my life is the 3-ring circus that Jones Loflin and Todd Musig describe in their book, *Juggling Elephants*. Three of the important lessons they share are: 1) the ringmaster cannot be in all three rings at the same time, 2) there is no shortage of acts for the circus, and 3) the success of the circus depends upon having quality acts in all three rings. For our District to grow, thrive, and be wildly successful, we need more than a ringmaster. We need passionate performers willing to participate in creating awesome, exciting acts

in all three rings and are eager to ensure the show goes on.

Most importantly, we need a terrific team that works together across the entire District to engage our communities and members. There are still numerous leadership positions and supporting jobs just waiting to be filled. So "**What Are You Waiting For**" – consider yourself asked, or better yet, call me (402-518-0720) and ask how you can be a part of "The Greatest Show on Earth."

Cindy Von Fange
2021-2022 Governor
Nebraska District

The Power of Optimism

Recently, several of us were privileged to hear three powerful stories about how having optimism made a difference in the lives of new friends, their community's youth, and their own lives. Optimism is a life changer. Optimism brings joy, happiness and self-worth.

Eric Christian of Great Falls, Montana, came home from the OI Convention energized with optimism. He reached out to his friends and within 17 days formed a club within a club (15 new members). His wife, also an Optimist member, started a club within a club of school teachers. Eric's friends liked to have fun. They raised money for the teachers so they had money to give to their students of need.

Amy Giroux of Okotoks, Alberta was a stay-at-home mom living on a farm in a new community. She felt disconnected, depressed and had a feeling of no purpose. Amy learned of the Optimist Creed and Amy decided to take action and change her life by building relationships with fun, happy, positive people. Her goal
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was to bring people together, lift people up mentally, give more meaning and purpose to their lives, and give back to their community. Amy took it upon herself to build an Optimist Club.

Maureen Hunsberger, a member of the Broken Bow, Nebraska Optimist Club, saw her club dwindling in membership and optimism. Maureen concluded it was time to take action to save the club and save the activities for the youth. Maureen reached out to the community via radio and the local newspaper, informing the community that the Optimist Club needed members to keep their fabulous youth programs going. The community responded and the Club now has a net +13 members who have brought new energy, excitement and fun to the club. The Broken Bow Optimist club is planning to add more members in the near future as the new members are helping get more new members.

Three powerful stories of **Optimism In Action**. Each, Eric, Amy and Maureen used the simple three letter word "ASK." I challenge each of you to do likewise and share the "Power of Optimism."

Marvin Wastell
District Growth Chair

Setting the Example

You've probably heard, "When Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy; when Grandma ain't happy, run!"



If we were to, even loosely, apply that to our clubs, we could say if the leaders aren't happy, the members aren't happy. If the members aren't happy, they're apt to run. Even if they don't run, they aren't going to be good ambassadors for the organization, in which case the organization won't

grow and, more likely, will shrink.

There's an amazing *Time* magazine publication on the newsstands right now, "*The Power of Positive Thinking, Why Attitude Matters*." We can blame changing times for lack of club growth; but the truth is that most of us prefer to be around people who are upbeat and have a positive outlook. I have no doubt that anyone who purchases this publication and applies the principles found therein will have no problem being a positive influence in their club and attracting new people to the group.

Our presidents, secretary/treasurers, and club foundation representatives are reminded that the deadline to complete the OI Leadership Management System (LMS) course is September 30. Perhaps there's a tendency to say, "My year is almost over; no need to bother." Actually, there is a need, a requirement by OI in order to be named an Honor Club. Being an Honor Club ends this membership year on a positive note and jumpstarts next year toward continued success.

I mentioned in my previous article how my mentor, Al Ballard, created a team atmosphere, wherein everyone worked toward the personal growth of each other and the greater good of the organization. Each of us has a responsibility to strive for the greater good and growth of ourselves and others by maintaining and sharing a positive attitude and performing the duties required of our positions.

Mary Lou Anderson
District Leadership Chair

Optimist International Foundation (OIF)

Soaring with Donations!

The Nebraska District Optimists have goals yet to be met!!:

- ◆ Complete the Learning Management System training - 100%
- ◆ Members make personal donation to OIF - 10%
- ◆ Members Dime-A-Day program - 10%
- ◆ Improve the average club member and club contribution to OIF - 10%
- ◆ Clubs achieve Honor or Distinguished status with the \$365/\$500 program - 10%

Report Card: Here is what has been contributed to OIF so far by the Nebraska District:

- ◆ Dime-A-Day \$2,150 = \$50/member **Goal** 10% = \$6,365 (\$50 for the 50th Anniversary)
 - ◆ Unrestricted donations \$8,615 = \$6.78/member **Goal** \$10,500 = \$8.25/member
 - ◆ Presidents Club added 3, total 8 members
 - ◆ Women's Philanthropy Council added 1, total 3 members
 - ◆ Clubs \$2,250
- 5 of 44 clubs - WOW are these 5 Clubs Honor qualified!

The **Learning Management System** training is a requirement for member and club honor or distinguished recognition! The training is at LMS@optimist.org. Trained so far:

- Club Foundation Reps - 6 of 40
- Club Presidents - 11 of 44
- Club Sec/Treas - 13 of 44 clubs
- Lt. Governors - 4 of 8

MILLIONS of Optimist International Foundation funds have gone out to...

- ◆ Thousands of youth for scholarships, programs, events and services
 - ◆ Clubs via pass-through funds, grants, and support of community projects
 - ◆ JOI, serving community youth programs
 - ◆ Childhood Health and Well-
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ness programs

◆Oratorical, Essay, CCDHH and Jr. Golf scholarships.

A foundation fundraising project is needed to wrap up the Optimist year: a state wide Corn Hole contest. Each Club have a contest, a WOW community event; select a team to represent each club in the District Final at the Omaha District Convention's Friday evening cookout, August 20th. Example - The Broken Bow Optimist Club just completed a Corn Hole event which resulted in **increased club membership** and greater membership **involvement!** Sounds like FUN!

Nebraska District OIF Fundraising

More funds are needed from members, clubs, District...and friends! The Nebraska District should contribute much more than \$10,500: 1250+ members, 44+ clubs. 100% of the members Dime-A-Day and all clubs \$1-A-Day, \$365 is OVER \$60,000!!! Even 50%, half of Optimist members and clubs is over \$30,000....NOT much **MORE** to **GIVE!** NOW which is more reasonable for the KIDS, our community and ourselves!! Meet the Challenge - Let's Soar!

Beryle Lantz
OI Foundation Representative
402.578.3116
berylelantz@gmail.com

Believe It!!!

24 New Members in July!!

Omaha Breakfast

Scott Hahn

Angela Coleman, sponsor

South Omaha

Gwen Foxall

David Catalan, sponsor

Jose Munoz

David Catalan, sponsor

Jodi Pesek

David Catalan, sponsor

Tony Vargas

David Catalan, sponsor

Gino Vigil

David Catalan, sponsor

Norfolk Noon

Kenneth Ramsay

Kayla Ramsay, sponsor

Auburn

Taylor Usher

Connie Usher, sponsor

York

Nic McCarthy

Daniel Stork, sponsor

David City

William Reiter

Anna Nolan-Covault, sponsor

★Broken Bow

Erik Chancellor

Jason Sidel, sponsor

Jenna Chancellor

Kelli Sidel, sponsor

Stuart Fox

Chris Wickham, sponsor

Doug Grafel

Mike Hunsberger, sponsor

Stephanie Grafel

Mike Hunsberger, sponsor

Brian Johnson

Chris Smith, sponsor

Kaci Johnson

Maureen Hunsberger, sponsor

Greg Kaup

Keely Butler, sponsor

Jacob Meyer

Brent Custer, sponsor

Kirsten Scott

Maureen Hunsberger, sponsor

Jason Sidel

Janice Nozicka, sponsor

Kelli Sidel

Rebeka Anderson, sponsor

Kyle Stringham

Chris Smith, sponsor

Caleb Tenbenschel

Brian Johnson, sponsor

Mark Walters

Chris Smith, sponsor

Ashley Wolfe

Maureen Hunsberger, sponsor

*Welcome to the Nebraska
District Optimists!*

Time to Plan Tri-Star Football Punt, Pass, & Kick Contests

The Finals of the Nebraska District Tri-Star Football Punt, Pass, & Kick Contest will be held on **October 3** at Nebraska Wesleyan. The contest has 10 categories ages 6 – 15 in



both Boy and Girl Divisions. For just \$80, clubs may send the first place winner from each division to compete for one of five trophies. Warm-up begins at 11:15 am with the competition in all categories beginning at noon. **Local contests should be held no later than September 19th and results reported by the 21st.** Finals information, local score sheets, official rules, and local results forms can be obtained from Bob Grundman at (grundman@inetnebr.com)(402-489-9171).

This is a great club event because...

It's easy. All you need are score sheets, a couple of footballs, a kicking tee, a minimum 200' measuring tape, a string to calculate deviation from the straight line, and at least 5 volunteers.

It's economical. It costs only \$80 to advance your 1st place
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winners, up to 20 contestants, to the District Contest. Local costs may include ribbons or certificates for your local winners.

It's not exclusive. Prior to the NFL PPK demise, a participant could compete in only one local contest. Now, they can compete in a Jaycee or local school event AND your local Optimist Club contest. PLUS, the Optimist Contest may be the only one offering advancement to a state level of competition.

Bob Grundman
Tri-Star FB PPK Coordinator
402-489-9171

Things We Learned at the 103rd Optimist International Convention Atlanta, Georgia

Even though the attendance at the Atlanta OI Convention was smaller than usual; we still had a great time. We were able to visit, make new friends, and learn what is going on in other Optimist Clubs around the world.



The workshops were well attended. We learned the Leadership Committee's goal is to bring the membership into the 21st century using technology. The Learning Module System is being updated to provide training for Lt. Governors, Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers, and Club Foundation Representatives. There are programs using technology on concussion training and personal growth development.

A great deal of time was spent on creating an Optimistic atmosphere within club meetings and avoiding toxic behaviors, such as swearing and gossiping. Create a positive culture, open and inclusive, and valuing opinions. Start meetings with sharing an Optimistic thought or a discussion of a line from the OI Creed.

Members should be able to grow their skills and be recognized for their contributions to their club.

Michelle Gielan, keynote speaker, spoke on broadcasting happiness, igniting, and sustaining a positive change in your life and club. Research has shown that listening to three negative news items yields six hours of a BAD day. When your brain is bombarded by too much negativity (news, toxic people, financial issues), you can become emotionally fearful and become paralyzed. You must learn to expect that things will happen – realistic optimism – and see challenges as a way to seek solutions. Surround yourself with positive people.

We heard about a Kids Optimism Mental Health Program. Parents concerned about their child's mental health can reach out for a kit which leads them through discussions with their child and learn ways to express their concerns to their doctor or mental health provider. This program is for kids twelve and under. [Click here for more information.](#)

I enjoyed my time in Atlanta and was pleased to be asked to carry one of the Optimist International flags in the Opening Ceremony. I am looking forward to seeing everyone in Reno, Nevada for the 104th Optimist International Convention.

Linda Wheeler,
Ambassador for the OI Convention



Eight Nebraska Jr. Golfers traveled to Miami to compete with approximately 700 other Jr. Golfers in the Optimist International Tournament held at the Doral Golf Resort. They had qualified at our Nebraska Opti-

mist Junior Golf Qualifier held in York on May 27th.

Tye Treadwell, our 11 year old boy from Omaha placed seventh in his age category. Surprising to me, junior golfers from Ecuador, Columbia, Mexico, Montana, Florida, and North Carolina placed ahead of him, showing the broad International diversity of the event. Placing seventh was a remarkable achievement and experience for young Tye!

In the Boys 14-15 Age Category, Emmanuel Jensen of York placed 57th while Trey Ruge of Omaha just missed the cut.

In the Boys 16-18 Age Category, Coltrane Mittag of Ashland placed 24th. Remarkably, Coltrane is only 13 years old and played up two age groupings! I wonder where he would have placed in the 12-13 age group. Alex Schademann from Geneva placed 67th. Alex is a repeat performer, having qualified in previous years.

In the Girls Ages 13-14 Category, Madison Murnan from Omaha placed 50th. In the Girls Ages 15-18 group, sisters Julia and Emily Karmazin from Omaha placed 44th & 48th respectively. Here they are at the Doral.



The qualifier tournament and the funds helping to support the trip to Florida were made possible by the contributions by many Optimist Clubs in Nebraska, as well as the families of the contestants. *(continued on the following page)*

Thank you to all who participated this year.

- Specifically for the kids who traveled to "The Optimist": Omaha Miracle Hills, Omaha Breakfast, Lincoln, North Platte, Omaha, and Ralston
- Sponsors at the Qualifier Tournament were Omaha Breakfast, Omaha Miracle Hills, Papillion/La-Vista, Lincoln Evening, Lincoln Sunrise, Lincoln West, Omaha Southwest, Aurora, Hickman, Kearney, Paxton, York, and West Point.

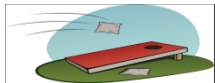
Again – Thank you! Thank you!!
Richard (Dick) Raasch
District OI Junior Golf Championship
Chair

Notice for Those Who Have Registered for the Convention...

Cindy Von Fange, 2020-21
Governor-Elect, will be
presenting an option to
replace the current district
website with a new district
website.

Clubs in the News!

Norfolk Noon Optimists participated in Norfolk's "National Night Out" on August 3rd with Corn



Hole games for the kids. Approximately 175 youth participated in the games. In addition to playing games, the Club honored Officer Pascal Vantilborgh of the Norfolk Police Division and Sgt. Scott Rutten of the Nebraska State Patrol as part of the club's Respect for Law program. (From Facebook)

The **Gretna Optimist** Kiddie Parade was a part of the annual

Gretna Days celebration on Saturday, July 31st. This event was certainly the cutest event of the weekend. (From Facebook)

Broken Bow Optimist Club held a very successful Corn Hole Tournament membership drive in July. Along with the tournament, the club made use of social media, radio, and the local newspaper to publicize their contribution to the community and that they needed additional members to continue their projects. They also changed their meeting time, and their efforts resulted in 16 new members added in July!



l to r: Kaci Johnson (new member), Chris Russell (guest), Mckway Scott (guest), Sarah Russell (guest)
(From Facebook)

The **Seward Optimist Club** hosted a Pitch, Hit & Run competition for area youth. Pitch, Hit & Run is the official skills competition of Major League Baseball. The program is designed to recognize individual excellence in the core baseball/softball skills. (From the Seward Optimist Club website)

The **Blair Optimist Club** has been a very busy club recently. With the help from Living Hope Assembly of God Church, Washington County Chamber of Commerce, Black Hills Energy, Carter Place, Two Rivers Bank, Washington County Bank, Blair Meat Market, North 40 Auto, Linda Wheeler and Pastor Amy, held their 5th Annual First Responder Appreciation Cookout. Also the club hosted their annual



fundraising Glow Ball Outing and Dinner at the River Wilds Golf Course. (From Facebook)

At least four Nebraska District Optimist Clubs had fireworks stands open for the 4th of July Holiday. The clubs were: **Fairbury, McCook, Ogallala, and Papillion/LaVista**. Two District Optimist Clubs hosted fun runs/walk on July 4th. The two clubs were the **Ralston Optimist Club** and the **Seward Optimist Club**. (From Facebook)

The **South Sioux City Club** conducted their annual Bike Rodeo as part of National Night out. After the young bikers rode their bikes through a bike safety course, some of the kids won helmets provided by Dairy Queen and Opportunities Unlimited. (From Facebook)

The **Hickman Optimist Club** kicked off Hickman ay Days by spon- soring a 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament on July 30, 2021. It was held at the Hickman Com-



munity Center and we had 2 courts going at all times. The tournament started at 4:00 pm and went to 10:00 pm. There were 35 teams and the age categories ranged from 7-18+. We had 140 participants. This was used as one of our fundraisers as we charged each team an entrance fee of \$20.00. We want to thank Ivan Wineglass for providing the referees from Peru State College. Besides the Hickman members, we were also blessed with members from Lincoln Evening, Miracle Hills, Blair, Southwest Omaha, Elkhorn, and Omaha Breakfast. It takes all of us working together, spreading the Optimist Creed. (Submitted by Linda Leatherman)



NEBRASKA DISTRICT OPTIMISTS SOARING WITH OPTIMISM 4th QUARTER INCENTIVES JULY 1 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

1. \$15 Optimist International new member fee waived

2. \$100 for any Club that adds net plus 5 or more members in the quarter



3. Chance to win 4 days, 3 nights in a 2-bedroom suite at a Holiday Inn Vacation Club Resort for someone in your Club or Community

- Net plus 5 Members = 1 Chance
- Net plus 8 Members = 2 Chances
- Net plus 10 Members = 3 Chances
- Net plus 12 or more Members = 4 Chances

4. Any Distinguished Club will have a chance to win a 7 day, 6-night stay at one of the 28 Holiday Inn Club Resorts.

5. Any Member who brings in 8 or more new members will receive a non-transferable, early bird registration to the Optimist International Convention in Reno, Nevada.

Check out all 28 resorts at

<https://holidayinnclub.com/explore-resorts>

Questions?? Marvin Wastell 402-203-3591/mcwboy@gmail.com

