



Nebraska District Optimists

Sandra Allen, Governor
October, 2020
OI 1st Quarter Theme
“Resilience”



Mark Your Calendars!

October 19, 2020
OI Webinar 7 pm
“Virtual Fundraising”

November 13-14, 2020
1st Quarter Conference
Zoom event

November 16, 2020
OI Webinar
“Planning Online Events”

December 12, 2020
Coffee with the Governor
Zoom Event 9:30 am

December 21, 2020
OI Webinar
“Getting Started with Instagram
for Your Club”

January 9, 2021
Coffee with the Governor
Zoom Event 9:30 am

January 18, 2021
OI Webinar
“Effective & Fun Meetings –
Online, In Person or Hybrid”

February 15, 2021
Deadline to file Form 990-N for
clubs

OI Webinar
“Club Facebook Basics”

February 26-27, 2021
2nd Quarter Conference
Norfolk
(More calendar dates on pg 5)



Sandra Coaxum Allen, Governor

Governor’s Message

“The moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease forever to be able to do it.”

— J. M. Barrie, Peter Pan

Happy New Year! In the midst of a pandemic, and in spite of economic and social challenges never faced before, we have crossed into a new Optimist year. Your 2020-21 Leadership Team has already begun to work toward making it a successful one.

Our theme this year is “Soaring With Optimism” and I have chosen the soaring eagle as our symbol. Why the eagle? The obvious answer is that it is a beautiful, majestic bird. That is true, but the eagle also has several characteristics that have been closely associated with good leadership. One of those characteristics is that eagles have strong, clear vision. When an eagle sees something it wants, it

narrows its focus and does not lose sight of its goal. We all know that we still have some obstacles to overcome as we continue to serve our youth in the midst of a pandemic. That’s why we have to have a clear vision for our district, as well as for our local clubs.

My vision is that we develop members who are engaged, equipped and empowered to take on leadership roles on the district, as well as local levels. This will help ensure that the Nebraska District Optimists continue to serve children throughout Nebraska and help them reach their full potential for many, many years to come.

To realize this vision, we must remain focused no matter what the obstacles may be. Does your club want to be an Honor Club this year? Then let’s stay focused and get it done. Let’s not get distracted by the obstacles. Let’s not be afraid of the challenge. Instead, let’s “choose optimism” as we discover new ways to impact our communities. After all, we’ve promised ourselves “to be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.”

Another characteristic of eagles is that eagles invest in training others. As I understand it, the mother and father eagle join in
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partnership, never giving up until they are sure that the eaglet can soar on its own. I am fascinated by that kind of partnering. That is why your 2020-2021 Leadership Team is committed to developing a leadership succession plan for our district.

If we are to continue as a thriving organization, we **must** invest into the development of our younger members, as well as in our newer members. We must fully integrate them into our planning and decision-making processes. We must teach them to fly and empower them to soar.

Immediate Past Governor Linda Wheeler successfully led us through a somewhat tumultuous year. Many of our clubs struggled as they tried to figure out how to meet and fellowship with one another and how to continue to meet the needs of the youth in our communities. Yes, definitely stormy times. But we made it! I'm not surprised. After all, eagles love storms. That's when they soar the highest.

We are still trying to figure out the "new normal" so our district can soar. Your District Leadership Team wants to help you discover new ways to bring out the best in our youth, in our communities and in ourselves. During this first quarter of the new Optimist year, we will share district goals, share ideas on how to retain and add members to your club and help you understand the roles our district committees play in your club's success.

Our first quarter conference is scheduled for November 14, 2020. Because of the continued uncertainties concerning large gatherings, the conference will be held via Zoom. Stay tuned to the district's website and Facebook page as conference plans take shape. In the meantime, promise

yourself "to think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best." We are eagles! We are built to soar!

Please join with your Nebraska District Optimists Leadership Team and start the new year *Soaring With Optimism!*

Sandra Allen, Governor

New for 2020-2021 Guest Editorials

Do you have something you want to say about Optimism, Optimist Service, the Creed, or how you have benefited from your Optimist Club? Write it down in **425 words or less**, and submit your editorial to neoptimists@gmail.com. In the subject line, type *Guest Editorial*.

The decision to publish any submitted editorial will be determined by District Governor, the District Newsletter Editor, and the Marketing and Communications Chair. Due to space limitations, there will be a limit of one editorial in each issue.

Guidelines

- >The topic must be Optimistic in nature.
- >The writer must agree to having his or her name published with the editorial, as well as the name of his or her Optimist Club.
- >If the writer wishes to submit a picture relating to the topic of the editorial, it will be used if space permits.
- >The editorial is limited to 425 words or less.
- >To be considered for publication, it must be received on or before the 1st of each month. Otherwise it will be carried over to the following month.

Betty Totten
District Newsletter Editor

Meet Governor-Elect Cynthia R. Von Fange

If you are or have been involved at the District level, you are aware of who Cynthia "Cindy" Von Fange is, her accomplishments, and her dedication to the Optimist International. For those of you who are not familiar with Cindy, there may never have been anyone who has been better prepared to become Governor of our District than Cindy.

Cindy is a 20 year member of the Wayne Club and has been club president five times, two of those were Honor Club President. She has been a Lt. Governor twice, and one of those times she was a Distinguished and Outstanding Lt. Governor.

The Governor-Elect has been on ten different District Committees, often times serving as the committee Chair. In addition, she was the District Secretary-Treasurer during the 2007-08 year.

She has received multiple Optimist awards and recognitions, including the Richard V. Showers District Award, which she has been awarded twice. Cindy has sponsored 25 new members. She is an Optimist Certified Trainer and has been a trainer at the OI Convention as well as at our District Conventions.

Cindy is a graduate of Kansas State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Interior Architecture. She is an active member of her church. Her other interests, beside Optimists, are genealogy and geocaching.

Cindy is the daughter of the late Past Governor, Robert Wriedt 2006-07. When she is installed as the 2021-2022 Governor, she will be prepared!

Governor Sandra's 2020-21 Team

District Secretary

Linda Leatherman

Optimist Club of Hickman

District Treasurer

Curtis Huston

Optimist Club of Omaha – Miracle
Hills

Immediate Past Governor

Linda Wheeler

Optimist Club of Blair

Governor-Elect

Cynthia R. Von Fange

Optimist Club of Wayne

OI Foundation Rep

Beryle Lantz

Optimist Club of Southwest Omaha

Assistant to Governor

Carla Gries

Optimist Club of Omaha – Miracle
Hills

Paul Keller

Optimist Club of Omaha – Miracle
Hills

Lieutenant Governors

Zone 1

Wendy Townley

Optimist Club of Omaha

Zone 2

Carla Gries

Optimist Club of Southwest Omaha

Zone 3

Robert Karcher

Breakfast Optimist Club of Omaha

Zone 4

Diana Rizzo

Noon Optimist Club of Norfolk

Zone 5

Marvin Shimmel

Optimist Club of Auburn

Zone 6

Margaret Reynolds

Optimist Club of West Lincoln

Zone 7

Judith Kluge

David City Optimist Club

Zone 9

David Thelen

Optimist Club of North Platte

Committees

Achievement & Awards

Judith Winkler

Optimist Club of West Lincoln

Bulletin Editor

Betty Totten

Optimist Club of Lincoln Evening

Chaplain

Kenneth Allen

North Omaha Optimist Club

Childhood Health & Wellness

David Catalan

Optimist Club of Omaha – Miracle
Hills

Club Fitness Advisor

Linda Wheeler

Optimist Club of Blair

Communication Contest for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

Mark Claussen

Noon Optimist Club of Norfolk

District Conference & Convention

Ardis Moody

Optimist Club of West Lincoln

District Director of Personal Growth & Involvement and Professional Development Program (PGI and PDP)

Tamara Bailey

North Omaha Optimist Club

Essay Contest

Lana Urban

Optimist Club of Seward

International Convention Ambassador

Linda Wheeler

Optimist Club of Blair

Junior Golf

Richard Raasch

Breakfast Optimist Club of Omaha

Junior Optimist Clubs (JOI)

Mark Claussen

Noon Optimist Club of Norfolk

Leadership Development

Chyrel Kritikos

Optimist Club of Lincoln

Marketing & Communications

Diane Siefkes

Optimist Club of Lincoln – Sunrise

Membership

Marvin Wastell

Optimist Club of Omaha – Miracle
Hills

Tri-Star Sports

Bob Grundman

Optimist Club of Lincoln - Sunrise

Webmaster

Nels Sorensen, Jr

Optimist Club of Fairbury

Zoom Coordinator

Jessica Von Fange

Optimist Club of Wayne

VACANCIES

Lt. Governor Zone 8

Academic Decathlon

Activities

Finance

Hospitality/Supplies

Internet Safety Program

New Club Building

Optimist of the Year

Oratorical Contest

Parliamentarian

If you are interested in being a member of 2020-2021 Team contact Governor Sandra at sancoax@yahoo.com!

Hand in Hand Marketing & Communications

Supporting the Nebraska District through Marketing and Communications are the following individuals: Diane Siefkes, Social Media (and Chair); Nels Sorensen, Webmaster; Betty Totten, Newsletter; and Jessica VonFange, Zoom Coordinator.

Social media, website and newsletter all probably sound familiar, but new this year is a district professional Zoom account! If your club wants to hold a virtual meeting or just a virtual gathering, please email the date/time and topic to neoptimists@gmail.com and Jessica will work with you to get it scheduled.

This committee's job is to help you and your club thrive. Towards that end, we want to include your club events, fundraisers and meeting information in the district marketing (newsletter, social media and website). Please add neoptimists@gmail.com to your email list so we can keep up-to-date and help you get the word out.

As chair, I'm interested in getting your feedback – what's working and what could be improved. Or if you have any marketing questions, email me directly at dsiefkes@yahoo.com. In an effort to help your club get the most from your Facebook page, I am planning on offering a virtual best practices session. Please email me if you're interested in getting more information.

We are excited to partner with you to help your club and District thrive! Together we will continue to bring out the best in kids, our community and our selves.
Diane Siefkes
Marketing & Communications Chair

“Choose Optimism”

OI President Mark Weinssoff has chosen “**Choose Optimism**” as his theme for 2020-21. He has divided “Choose Optimism” into quarterly subthemes:

1st Quarter: Resilience

We need to be **Resilient** in these trying times of social and political unrest and the pandemic.

2nd Quarter: Happiness

The International Day of Happiness is March 20, 2021 and President Mark wants Optimists to celebrate **Happiness** this quarter.

3rd Quarter: Rally

Spring is time to **Rally** ourselves and our clubs to get moving and being active in our communities.

4th Quarter: Success

We need to strive for and expect **Success** for ourselves and our clubs.

As we work through the 1st Quarter, continue showing the **Resilience** that has gotten us through the pandemic challenges thus far.

Scholarship Contest Topics for 2020-21

Essay

“Reaching Your Dreams by
Choosing Optimism”

Oratorical & CCDHH

“Healing the World with
Optimism”

The time to start promoting the Scholarship Contests is NOW! Start with the schools, home schools, post the contest on your Facebook page, or let your friends and neighbors know about it if they have school-age children or grandchildren. This is a great opportunity for students to earn scholarships! If they don't know about the contests, they can't win!

From Immediate Past Governor Linda

Thank you to all Nebraska District Optimists for supporting and encouraging me through this past challenging year. Even though this was not what we all envisioned for ourselves, you all have done a great job during challenging circumstances. It is my hope that you will continue to provide wisdom, optimism and leadership in your clubs and communities by continuing to reImagine your club activities for your youth. Let us support Governor Sandra Allen and her team as they lead us optimistically to new heights.

Linda Wheeler
Immediate Past Governor

Tune in to Zoom For the 1st Quarter Conference

Due to the continuing pandemic issues, the 1st Quarter Conference will be a Zoom event on Saturday, November 14th. When the details are completed, the information will be on the District website at nebraskaoptimists.org.

Everyone agrees, Zoom isn't as good as actually seeing our Optimist friends at an in-person setting, but the District leadership sees the importance of following the COVID guidelines. The safety and health of our members is most important. With Zoom, we may not be in-person, but we will be face-to-face.

Please mark your calendars and plan to be a part of the 1st Quarter Conference.



Can YOU bring in
a **new member**
by 1st Quarter
Conference?

“The Magnificent 7” September’s New Members

Broken Bow

Rebeka Anderson

Sponsor, Maureen Hunsberger

Ariene Grafe

Sponsor, Maureen Hunsberger

Breanna Kaup

Sponsor, Keely Butler

Lincoln Friends

Paige Higgins

Sponsor, Taylor Woods

Norfolk Noon

Gary Groenenthal

Sponsor, Lynn Gronenthal Reynolds

Papillion-LaVista

Adam Boehmer

Sponsor, Matt Smith

Ginger Unverzagt

Sponsor, Bob Barrientos

Sponsors Who Attained a Significant Milestone

New members are very important to any organization. Without growth, clubs stagnate and eventually disappear. When a club disbands youth are affected. Immediate Past Gov. Linda is recognizing sponsors who have reached a significant milestone during the past quarter.

Members Who Have Sponsored 5 New Members

Lacie Miller, O’Neill Optimist Club

Angie Birkett, Lincoln West
Optimist Club

Angela Tintori, Lincoln Evening
Optimist Club

Member who Has Sponsored 15 New Members

Troy Cooney, Lincoln West
Optimist Club

Nebraska District Optimists Zoom Policy

1) All scheduled Zoom events must allow time for District and/or OI announcements.

2) The District Governor is the only one given preference when using the Zoom account for District business or committee meetings. **All other usage is scheduled on a first come, first served basis.**

3) Include the following information in your email request:

a. Name of Club/Zone/Committee

b. Type/Purpose of use (e.g. Club Meeting, Club Board Meeting, Club Committee Meeting, District Committee Meeting, Zone Meeting, District Executive Meeting, NOW Meeting, Social/Coffee, etc.)

c. Contact name, phone number and email

d. Host contact information, if not same person

e. Day/date and time of Zoom event

f. Length of event (if longer than 1 hour)

g. Recurring Meeting Yes/No

4) Non-recurring meetings may be scheduled up to 3 months in advance.

5) Meetings **must** be scheduled at least 2 weeks in advance. This allows the Marketing & Communications Committee to assign a

host (in the case the Zoom Coordinator is not available).

6) It is recommended but not required for the host to complete the Zoom User Guide on the Optimist International Learning Management System (LMS) to become familiar with Zoom capabilities.

For additional questions or support contact the Zoom Coordinator, Jessica Von Fange at neoptimists@gmail.com. It is suggested you add “Zoom Request” in the subject line.

Mark Your Calendars!

(Continued from page 1)

February 28, 2021

Essays Due to Lana Urban.
District Chair

March 15, 2021

OI Webinar
“What is your Club Marketing Strategy”

April 19, 2021

OI Webinar
“Take Me to Your
‘Next’ Leader”

April 30-May 1, 2021

3rd Quarter Conference
Columbus

May 1, 2021

Respect for Law Day

May 17, 2021

OI Webinar
“Creating Content for
Social Media”

May 20, 2021

Club Officer Election Report
(COER) due to OI

September 19th Optimist Day in the Nebraska District??

Not really, but there was a lot of Optimism at work in Nebraska on September 19th. **Norfolk Noon** had a completion and thanks to a change of heart from the Big10, they now have an “anticipation!” On **September 19th**, Norfolk Noon and the **JOI clubs** were among the co-sponsors of “STOMP Out Epilepsy,” a 5K Run/Walk. Both the adult club and JOI clubs contributed to the event with donations as well as “people power.” Now the Noon Club is anticipating their annual fundraiser, “Husker Football Pools.” With a football schedule finally set, members are ready to raise \$\$ for the club. GBR!!

The 34th Annual Ogallala Indian Summer Rendezvous was held on **September 17, 18, and 19th**. The Rendezvous was filled with activities and was a huge success with the help of the **Ogallala Optimists** and other community organizations. The Optimists served breakfast, took part in the parade, and helped judge the Bloody Mary Contest.



I to r: Brian Wilson, Doug Davis, and Mike Apple

North Platte Optimists hosted their annual Fishing Derby on **September 19th**. They had 39 “fisherkids” join them. Dave

Thelen reported they went through 10 dozen worms. Dave said he worked with six kids all morning and they caught close to 30 fish and one turtle! The Club marketed the event with articles in the paper, radio interviews and TV ads before and after the event. They also used their Facebook page to publicize the event.



Marketing Chair Diane Siefkes is giving the Club a “Thumbs Up!” for their marketing efforts!

The **Holdrege Optimist Club** held a fundraiser lunch of Pulled Pork sandwiches, chips, and drink for a free-will donation, on **September 19th**. The funds raised will help fund their scholarship programs as well as their youth sports programs.



I to r: Alisha Melroy, Janelle Pfeifer, not pictured Marge Melroy (who took the picture)

One of the Holdrege Club’s sports programs is the girls volleyball program for grades 3-6. The girls are divided into two groups by grade. Following the COVID guidelines, the girls are required to wear masks.



The **Lexington Optimist Club** and Heartland Chevy Buick sponsored a 4-Man Golf Scramble on **September 19th**. This was the 23rd annual tournament. The proceeds will benefit Lexington area youth.



(from Facebook)

Lincoln Friends Year End Celebration occurred on **September 19th** at Tierra Park. It was the first time they have met in-person since February. The celebration honored Scott Young the Executive Director of the Food Bank of Lincoln, with the Community Service Award. The past year’s officers and the new members were also honored. The Club honored Angela Tintori who worked to create LFOC in the spring of 2018. (from Facebook)

North Bend Optimists are getting ready for their youth basketball program. The youth program is for youth in grades 3 – 6. (from Facebook)

Minden Optimist youth football has had to make some changes due to the pandemic, one being the requirement of masks. The football program has two divisions: grades 3 & 4 will play flag football, and grades 5 & 6 will play football. This year the program will be for Minden only. (from Facebook)

The **Broken Bow Optimist Club** made the difficult decision to cancel Optimist Flag Football this fall due to the difficulty to implement proper safety procedures as mandated by the CDC. The decision was based on the ages of the youth involved and that participants come from all over the county and the size of their club. (from Facebook)

Please add
neoptimists@gmail.com
to your club’s mailing list!

Guest Editorial*

“Optimism in Chaotic Times”

By David Catalán

Omaha Miracle Hills Optimist Club

As Optimists, we live for the best. The best childhood. The best basic education. The best career and job. The best neighborhood. The best family. The best future. These qualities are indivisible elements of what define our humanity. A humanity that strives for growth in charitable outreach once our basic need of a stable life is achieved. Then we look beyond to helping others who are in need.

Optimists are grounded in an ideology of service. Service to friends and family. Service to our community. Service to schools. Service to the growth of our individual clubs. Most importantly, service to the young people in our sphere of influence. We recognize that a good future belongs to the skills and talents of today's youth. They constitute America's national treasure. For over 100 years, Optimists have successfully nourished and protected that mandate.

Today, we live in uncertainty. Each day's beginning is a gamble. The expectations of daily cycles have been turned upside down. Some decisions must be made outside our control. The routine of morning awakening to familiar activities of grooming, dressing, and traveling to jobs and meetings has been cancelled by the fear of a foreign contagion. Actions to secure essentials such as food, medicine, or the warm greeting of a neighbor have become strategic considerations. The need for human contact has been hijacked by political edicts. To be human is to be a virus target.

Results are predictable. Depression. Loneliness. Self-esteem. Erosion of self. They set in like a bowl of jello becoming firm over time and coldness. The more this experience becomes “normal” the more of our humanity disappears.

Fight it. Recite the Optimist Creed daily and believe in it. Look for alternatives to the pre-virus activities which made us fulfilled and joyous. Use social media to stay in touch with friends and families. Make a daily phone call to a person who is important in your life. If you are alone, start a journal of each day's passing. If you are fortunate to have family surrounding you, create activities which bind you as an inseparable group.

Believe in the future. Begin the planning for a bright future once this chaos dissipates. This, too, will pass. The Optimist Creed and the mission of service to everyone in our field of experience can propel us as a unifying force for success.

Stay safe. Stay healthy. Stay optimistic.

* The views expressed in the Guest Editorials are the writer's views and do not necessarily reflect the views of Optimist International , the Nebraska District, or the Omaha Miracle Hills Optimist Club.