



CENON

Polar Express News

Edition 4706 - January February March 2025

Central Ontario District

Governor

Bonnie Sheer-Porteous

Immediate Past Governor

Ralph Brunton

Governor Elect

Larry Harper

Secretary/Treasurer

Brian Wick

Governors Advisory

Jim Lynge

Audit & Finance

Gord Holly

Membership & Engagement

Don Zynomirski

Growth

Olaf Krahmer

Conference/Convention

Barb Holly

Personal Growth

Jennifer Krizel

Peter Krizel

Leadership Development

Tony Edge

World Oratorical

Gabriella Van Hooydonk

Essay

Anna Hill

Marketing

Michelle Stokes

Junior World Golf

Dennis Kwasnicki

District Foundation

Sheril Thomson

Paul Thomson



From the Desk of
GOVERNOR

Bonnie Sheer-Porteous
2024-2025



Hello CENON Optimists,

Wishing you and your families a happy, healthy, prosperous, exciting and optimistic new year!

As we embark on 2025 and second quarter, we understand that there are several challenges facing individuals, families and clubs. Let us use the tenants of the creed and be ever mindful of the tribulations that we all face in these changing times. Use your optimism, creativity and resiliency to face challenges head on with a positive mental attitude.

Remember that you are likely doing better than you realize, you've handled tougher challenges in the past and together we can get through this and weather any storm by working together even if you can not see it in the moment.

I challenge all members to invite a friend to join an event or meeting to spread the word of Optimism. We also want to take the time to acknowledge all the hard work our present members are doing to help foster retention.

I look forward to seeing you at the second quarter conference at Rama to celebrate Past Governor Ralphs successful 2023/2024 Optimist year, engage in meaningful workshops, learn new things and to share in fun and fellowship.

Congratulations to al the clubs that signed up for the SS Optimism cruise! Our region had the highest number of clubs participating and it is not too late too sign-up if you have not already done so.

see page 2.....

"Dogs come when they're called; cats take a message and get back to you later." —Mary Bly

"In ancient times cats were worshiped as gods; they have not forgotten this." —Terry Pratchett

Central Ontario District Team

Hospitality

Diane Laframboise

George Clarke

Sgt. At Arms

Ted Simmonds

Candidate Qualifications

Ralph Brunton

CCDHH

Ted Simmonds

Historian

Brenda McDonald

Parliamentarian

Alex Ansell

Achievement & Awards

Lauralee Reily

International Convention

Colleen Purcell

Webmaster

Brian Wick

Michelle Stokes

Communications

Michelle Stokes

Bulletin Editor

Al Wood

Junior Optimist Clubs (JOI)

Vicki Mains

Scholarships

Jim Lynge

Club Services

Adrian Maes

Lt. Governors

Zone 1 - Don Devreede

Zone 2 - Christine Smith

Zone 3 -

Zone 5 - Robert Gaby

Zone 6 - Alex Hilson

Zone 8 - Jan Wilson

Zone 10 - Terry Muir

Supply

Gillian Martin

Ansell s Awards

C E N O N

Polar Express News

.....from page 1

Reminders to please complete you're A & A reports and training for all officers is due by March 31, 2025 in order to qualify for district and OI level awards.

Also please ensure you are taking lots of photos of your events and adventurers so that you can participate in our scrapbooking contest which is due at Convention and can be presented in a hard copy or on-line format.

Also, for bonus points remember if anyone in your club participates in a polar bear plunge activity that could score you some point too!

I look forward to working with you throughout the year, please ensure you are keeping your lieutenant governors informed of upcoming event and if there is anything we can do to help or participate with we are only an email or phone call away.

Congratulations on all you have accomplished so far this year and keep up your excellent work and enthusiasm!

Yours in Optimism,

Governor Bonnie

Editor's Note: Thanks to all the clubs submitting information for the bulletin.

I try to include everything you send me with very little editing. A total of twelve clubs sent information for this edition, some content covering more than one page.

One request.....if possible, just send the raw material as jpg photos and word documents. It's easier for me to format in the bulletin.....thanks again.....Al

Mark Twain Stuff

As you know, Mark Twain wasn't his real name. He was born Samuel Langhorne Clemens in the town of Florida, Missouri. A young Samuel Clemens had a series of failed pen names before he settled on Mark Twain in 1863. Among these were W. Epaminondas Adrastus Blab and Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass.



**2nd Quarter District Conference
February 8-9, 2025
Casino Rama Resort, 5899 Rama Rd., Orillia**



Book Your Room:

Room rate: Deluxe Suite: 1 King Bed or 2 Double Beds \$179.00
Prices offered from Friday Feb 7 to Sun Feb 9, 2025 (consider staying the weekend)
Use the booking link or Call 1-800-832-7529

For registration and the full agenda please visit cenon.org.

SATURDAY, February 8th, 2025

- 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Registration Desk Open**
- 12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m. Welcome, Introductions, Moment of Reflection and Land Acknowledgement**
- 12:45 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Ice Breaker**
- 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. I Own it Campaign – Optimist Denise Maybee**
- 2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Ask the Expert – JOI, Essay, Oratorical, LG, Presidents, Secretary/Treasurer, A & A**
- 2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Aging with Grace – Break with Optimist Iris Krahmer**
- 2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Owls Presentation – Past Optimist International President – Bob McFayden**
- 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Break out sessions – A & A awards and Ontario Not-for Profit**
- 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. CENON Amazing Race**
- 5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Reception**
- 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Dinner & Awards Banquet**
- 8:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Guest Speaker**
- 8:30 p.m. – 12:00 a.m. Hospitality Room**

SUNDAY, February 9th, 2025

- 9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Sunday Kick off**
- 9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Community Project**
- 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting, voting by District executive, Club Presidents**
- 12:00 p.m. Closing Remarks & Optimist Creed**



Meet you in St Louis

With the holidays over, now is the time to plan your summer vacation.

Your starting point is the

107th Optimist International Convention June 29 - July 2, 2025

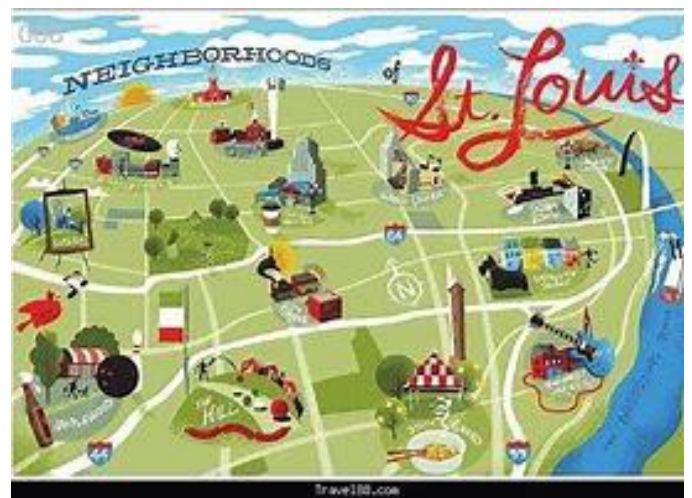
Registration opens February 1, 2025

The Convention is in St Louis, MO not only home to Optimist International Headquarters but a city brimming with **free, world-class attractions**.

Check out convention location & **Book your room now** at Optimist International Rates

https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/stlcuqg-st-louis-union-station-hotel/?SEO_id=GMB-AMER-QQ-STLCUQQ&y_source=1_MTM3MjYxMy03MTUtbG9jYXRpb24ud2Vic2l0ZQ%3D%3D

You do not want to miss this, **don't delay - plan now!** <https://explorestlouis.com/>



Some famous people born in St. Louis: Chuck Berry, John Goodman, Yogi Berra, Kevin Kline, Harry Carey, T.S. Eliot, Joe Buck, Betty Grable, Vincent Price, Redd Foxx



Optimist
INTERNATIONAL

Optimist Club of
Keswick, Ontario

TRUNK OR TREAT

On October 26th our club hosted our annual Trunk or Treat event. This is a great community event that gets local organizations and businesses together for an awesome day. This year we had 32 trunks on display and over 500 children with their families join in on the fun. The kids dressed up in their Halloween costumes paraded through the parking lot and received treats along the way. This was our 4th year of hosting the event at our local car dealership and every year it gets bigger!

From a resource standpoint it can be done with minimal volunteers as each trunk is decorated by the business. We include a pay what you can BBQ and collect non-perishable food for the local pantry.



**Most lipstick contains fish scales.
There are more than 10 million bricks in the Empire State Building.
Camels have three eyelids to protect themselves from blowing sand.**



Optimist
INTERNATIONAL

Optimist Club of
Keswick, Ontario

PORTUGAL RIVER CRUISE

In November we took a group of 20 people from the community on a Riverboat Cruise along the Douro River in Portugal. This was 18 months of planning through Indus Travel. It was a fundraising program with \$200 coming to the club for each participant. There were 5 members who joined in and the other 15 people were from the community. It was a great experience! The entire trip was planned by a representative from Indus who came out to promote the trip at the conference and provided all the information. If you are looking for a unique fundraising opportunity in your community email Keswickoptimist@gmail.com for all the information. We are working on our second trip for May of 2026 with a Riverboat Cruise along the Seine River out of Paris...we invite you to come sail with us...





Optimist INTERNATIONAL

Optimist Club of Keswick, Ontario

We have a very active Junior Optimist Club in Keswick with 25 members aged 10 to 17. We visit with local seniors at a cooking class and visit a retirement home. We work on various community projects and host events or assist the adult club with events. The group made 20 blankets that were delivered to the local animal shelter. They have been working on a pollinator garden with the town for 2 years and were presented with a Healthy Community Award in October. The schedule is always very busy with this amazing group!



A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.



Optimist
INTERNATIONAL

Optimist Club of
Keswick, Ontario

Christmas Toy Drive

For 10 years The Optimist Club of Keswick has been the lead organization for the community toy drive. We collaborated with the Georgina Fire Department, York Regional Police, The Salvation Army and Town of Georgina to ensure children in Georgina have toys on Christmas Morning. Donations are collected through several toy drives throughout the community, families are registered through the food pantry, schools and churches to ensure those that need support are reached. The second week of December we set up at The Keswick Christian Church and schedule families to come and select gifts for their children 16 and under. Every year the demand increases and this year gifts were provided for over 800 local youth.

This project is huge and takes a lot of community volunteers along with our club members to make this happen. We know this event is making a difference in the lives of so many in our community.

Merry Christmas.



Pinocchio is Italian for "pine head."



Optimist INTERNATIONAL

Optimist Club of Ancaster Township



Ancaster - Catch the Ace - we're currently at week #14 with the progressive Jackpot of \$3864 and growing! Grab your ticket at www.ancastercta.com

The Optimist Club of Ancaster



presents:

CATCH the ACE



**Community Fundraiser Raffle:
Weekly Draw and Progressive Jackpot**

Play on-line at ancastercta.com or in person at Marshall Memorial Hall Mondays from 7:00pm-8:30pm weekly until the Ace of Spades is "caught"!

Optimist INTERNATIONAL
Optimist Club of Stoney Creek

December 14 - the Optimist Club's annual Kids Breakfast with Santa with over 20 kids and 40 adults on hand for a pancake breakfast and to have some fun with Santa!





Optimist
INTERNATIONAL

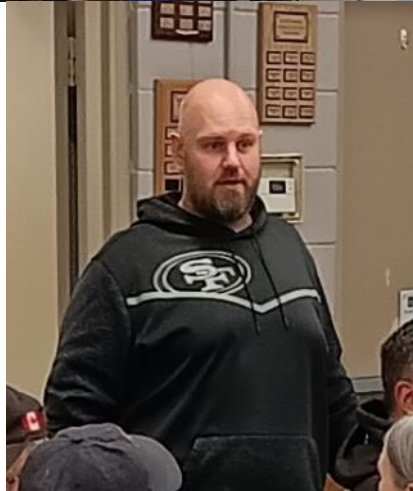
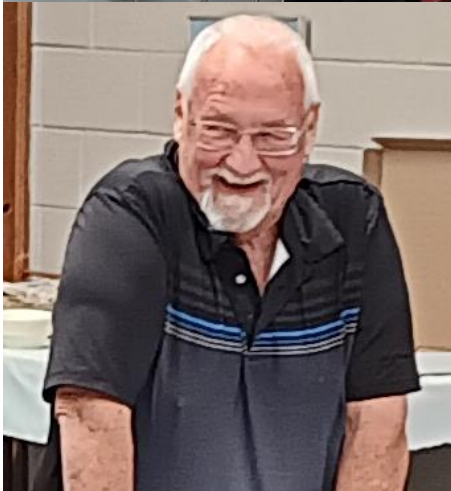
Optimist Club of
Stoney Creek

Interclub Meeting

November 27, 2024 - The Optimist Club of Stoney Creek hosted a Stoney Creek community Interclub meeting. In addition to our own members, members of clubs from Battlefield Optimists, Stoney Creek Lions, Stoney Creek Kiwanis, Stoney Creek Rotary, Stoney Creek Kinsmen and our Stoney Creek Optimist Little League.

It was an informal meeting where members shared information about their community activities and concerns regarding membership.

This was the first gathering of community service clubs in many years and there was unanimous consent that it should be continued. Hats off to Optimist President Ian Carter for pulling this event together.



**The Optimist Club of Stoney Creek
Annual Sno Golf Tournament
Sunday February 2, 2025**

The Caledon Optimist club has been busy this 1st quarter first with our 31 annual Pumpkin carving event at the end of October. Then we got down to business in December with Shop with a First Responder, Caledon Village Tree Lighting and presenting a cheque for \$1,000.00 to Caledon Central PS for sports equipment. Here are some of our pictures.



"The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read."

— Mark Twain

"Never put off till tomorrow what may be done day after tomorrow just as well."

— Mark Twain

"'Classic' - a book which people praise and don't read."

— Mark Twain

"I have never let my schooling interfere with my education."

— Mark Twain



The Optimist Club of Aurora’s “Kids In Need Delivered” program, or KIND, evolved in early 2022 from our connection with the elementary schools in our community where we provide funding for healthy snacks.

Upon identifying a child in need, the school would connect with our Club with the request. Items would be purchased and delivered to the school.

Over the years, we have seen an increase in the number of requests that come our way. During the month of December, we were able to provide the following items to kids in need:

- Snow suits, jackets or snow pants – 12; Winter boots – 9
- Running shoes – 4 ; Warm hoodies or sweat pants – 11
- Mittens, gloves, hats or scarves – 31; Warm thermal socks – 22
- Other items including: Toiletries, Blankets
- School supplies: binders, paper, calculator, pens and pencils, books, games and craft items

We have received many notes of thanks from both teachers and parents.

We built our Santa Claus Parade float. It was one of the best floats - of course. Thanks to Optimist Judy for leading the way, we held our annual Christmas Party at a local trivia night and had 2 winning teams, and presented a cheque to the Erin Basketball association to help youth in Erin play basketball.





CENON Growth Banner

CENON has developed and produced a new aid for Clubs to display information about Optimist Clubs and what they do.

The banner can be placed at all Club events and gives info to non-members attending. It sums up exactly what we do.

We have 3 Banners currently and they can be borrowed for Club events.

With the feedback we have received we believe that this is an excellent tool for attracting new members. If you would like to join the Clubs that have ordered one for their own use, Contact Past Governor Brian Wick

bwick@brooklinsigns.com

A great investment for your Club !



Optimist INTERNATIONAL

Central Ontario District

Benefits of an Optimist Club in Your Community

- Mission, Vision and Purpose:**
By providing hope and positive vision, Optimists bring out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves.
- Offer Free/Low-cost programs and sponsorship to youth.
- Local Optimist Clubs support their local school programs and activities.
- Junior Optimist Program provides youth leadership programs, public speaking, and essay competitions where youth can compete to win scholarship money.
- Community events held by Optimist Clubs provide youth local volunteer opportunities to meet required community service hours.
- Communities see the value in the support and involvement an Optimist Club provides.
- We are looking for volunteers who have the desire to affect positive change in their community and youth.
- Volunteers 18+ years can learn the benefits of joining as Optimist members to an existing club, or to start a new club in their community.

Contact a member of a local club or:
Central Ontario Optimist Clubs
membership@cenon.org
www.cenon.org

www.optimist.org
**Bringing Out
The Best**

Optimist Club of Newmarket Q2 2024/2025



Q1 Nov Events

75th Club Anniversary dinner held Nov 8th

Presented a cheque of \$5000.00 to Southlake Foundation proceeds from our annual Poker Ride in June

Entered a float in the Newmarket Santa parade morning of Nov 16th.

We also volunteered to deliver lunch to parade organizers

Improv Night in partnership with Bent Fork Productions held on evening of Nov 16th -raised just under \$900

Annual Breakfast with Santa reached 114 kids and we had close to 200 in attendance



What a month!



Q2 2025 (Dec to Feb)

Dec donation to Newmarket Food Pantry \$1160

Dec collected food donations from Club members for the Newmarket Community Fridge

Dec donation to Jackie Playter Community Christmas fund \$500

Feb 9th Essay Contest Club Deadline

Feb 19th Chess Tournament





Optimist Club of Barrie

A few highlights from our year so far most of which were shared in our Zone newsletter earlier:

December is one of our busier months in terms of support to our community. We have a lot of groups we support financially and December is when we issue cheques to help out with various projects. We have made donations to the following groups this month: Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions (formerly Children's Aid) - in the past we would shop a hamper for a family but the organization has switched to a more or less monetary program that we and some of our members support; we also made a \$20K donation to Youth Haven which is a youth shelter for teens who cannot stay with their families - Youth Haven has demolished its former building and is in the process of building a new shelter with a 3-fold increase in beds; we also donated to the Seasons Centre for Grieving Children, Samaritan House, Gilda's, Empower Simcoe, the First Forester Scouts and to Barrie Youth Curling (formerly know as Little Rocks).

One of our longer term members can no longer attend and has lost interest so while we removed her from the roster, we have also added a new member who has joined to assist us with our annual Antiques Market at Kempenfest. We are also in the works and having discussions with a former member who is interested in re-jigging to assist with our Beginner Golf program which is our own unique program initiated some years ago by a deceased member Bob Caswell. We are hoping to expand our program and perhaps integrate with district golf.

We've been very busy with bingo volunteering that actually funded all of the projects mentioned above. Finally, on December 11th, 9 of our 12 members and one guest gathered at the home of Past President John Ritchie and Optimist Marie for a traditional turkey dinner prepared by Optimist Marie and Past Governor George Clarke, we discussed a bit of business, reminisced about past activities, told a few jokes, shared a few seasonal beverages and departed into a snowy evening with best wishes for a wonderful holiday season for our members, families and friends!

We expect to have a small contingent at the 2nd Quarter Conference at Rama and may be hosting a Zone Meeting, the first in many years for us, later in January.

Thats about it for the Optimist Club of Barrie so far in 2024-2025.





Photo 1 – Opt. Louis Savard in the sorting area
Photo 2 – Optimist Toy Drive Committee members with the donations from Giant Tiger Cornwall's round-up campaign.
Photo 3 – Opt. President Kathryn Brunton surrounded by members of the Cornwall Fire Service/Sparky's Toy Drive!



Optimist INTERNATIONAL

Optimist Club of Orangeville

December is always a very busy month for the Orangeville Optimist Club with our huge Christmas in The Park event.

This December, we also inducted three new members - Josh, Linda & Hazel - who will be terrific additions to our group.

We had Pam Mauti from Westminster United Church come and collect a cheque from us to go towards their milk program, a much needed program for children in our community.

Our 32nd Christmas in The Park event went very well. We opened December 1 and it will continue every evening until and including December 31. We will have choirs and bands, ukulele and hand bell players and all sorts of entertainment, including a Santa Claus and a mixed race couple, Father Christmas and Ms Abigail Holly who delighted our patrons last year.

Plus the Dufferin fire venturers and the girl guide pathfinders providing hot chocolate on many an evening.

We installed a Square POS terminal to provide additional means to donate to our free, month-long festival of lights and displays.



Optimist INTERNATIONAL

Optimist Club of Grantham – St. Catharines

The Grantham Optimist Presents

TRIVIA NIGHT

SAVE THE DATE

March 1, 2025
\$160/table of 8

Prizes | Pizza | Trivia | Fun





Thank you for supporting our youth programs!

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US CELEBRATE 70 YEARS!

The Grantham Optimist Club celebrated 70 years as a Friend of Youth on December 7th. Our heartfelt gratitude extends to who joined for the evening, supported our events throughout the year, and sent us warm messages of congratulations!






17

THE FUNNIES

**My wife said:
"That's the 4th time
you've gone back
for dessert! Doesn't
it embarrass you?" I
said: "No, I keep
telling them it's for
you."**



Guy who invented the clock: there will be 12 numbers on it
Friend: so the day will be divided into 12 segments?
Inventor: no, 24
Friend: so will the day start at 1
Inventor: the day will start at the 12, which is at night
Friend:
Inventor: the 6 means 30

So I saw an old dude with a fishing rod outside my local bar fishing in a puddle. He looked so cold! I said to him: "Come in for a drink and get warm". As we sipped our double whiskeys, I thought I would humour him. I asked him: "How many have you caught today?" He replied: "You are the 8th!"

Therapist: Your wife says you never buy her flowers is that true?

Him: To be honest, I never knew she sold flowers.



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 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.