



CO/WY - The Connection



Governor's Corner

Mary Grace is on vacation this month, so Barb Dank JOI co-chair, has an uplifting story to share.

MY JOI Journey—Last summer, I was determined to start a JOI club at a Boulder Valley Public School and started looking at potential options. I knew about Justice High and the great work they did so I reached out to the Honorable Tijani Cole; Judge, Teacher, and Principal of Justice High. I was incredibly nervous as I wasn't really sure what I could do there – but I knew there was incredible potential in the kids and I could feel TJ's enthusiasm about Optimism and working with the kids. In one of our Boulder Luncheon Club meetings I mentioned my idea – it was met with great support and encouragement from my fellow club members. **There was one voice that offered to help me with this project – Sara Tanner** – and our journey began at Boulder Justice High in August. Little did we know how much this project would change our heart, minds, and life.

Justice High focuses on getting at-risk youth back on track and providing a family atmosphere for our youth. Amazing mission and staff. TJ wasn't too clear about what his expectations were from us – but was so thankful to have us be a part of the class. Our first week we were tasked with helping the Seniors apply to colleges, financial aid, and whatever else was needed at the moment. The class was a little suspicious of us as they couldn't grasp that we were there just to help them navigate through life. After about a month, the kids really opened up to us and we were able to focus on projects, fundraising, and the message of Optimism.

Sara and I tried to attend after-school activities to show that we were committed to them and their future goals. We both made sure the class knew how to contact us outside of school so that they felt extra support. We met parents, siblings, staff, and students of the school and made sure they knew of our message of hope, healing, kindness, and importance of community.

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District Officers

- Governor: Mary Grace Wake, Windsor Gardens OC
- Governor— Elect: Bill Ashbee, Boulder Luncheon OC
- Secretary: Earleen Oswalt, Fort Morgan Sunrise OC
- Treasurer: Pearl Meulemans, Tamarac & University Hills OC
- Immediate Past Gov: Tony Carpenter Wheat Ridge OC

Lt. Governors

- Zone 1: Linda Chasson, Cheyenne
- Zone 2: Gary Banninga, Windsor OC
- Zone 3: Burke Kaiser, Buena Vista
- Zone 4: Tom Mehl, Gateway OC
- Zone 5: Linda Williams, Tamarac OC
- Zone 6: Jon Wachter, MSOC
- Zone 7: Tom Overton, MSOC
- Zone 8: Kathy Greb, Arvada Lake Arbor

Important Websites

Optimist International:
www.optimist.org

OI Foundation: oifoundation.org/

CO/WY District:
www.optimistcowy.org/

My JOI JOURNEY Continued from page 1.....

We completed two big projects – Holiday bags for kids in the hospital; Toys for Tots. The students showed amazing compassion and care in creating projects that were close to their hearts and worked hard to make everything a success. Before we knew it, their graduation date quickly approached. As Sara and I reflected on the year, **we realized how connected and important we had become in their lives** – and how they impacted our lives as well. I couldn't believe that these kids were told by mainstream schools that they weren't enough, they could never overcome their past mistakes, and they shouldn't dream big about their future goals/profession. They proved all their critics wrong.

Ten of our JOI Club seniors will be attending college in the Fall and have full scholarships. They also graduated with college credit so they will start the next phase of their journey ahead of many others. We closed the graduation ceremony by reading the Optimist Creed and focused on the message of kindness and hope. Good thing Sara and I had a full box of Kleenex as we were overwhelmed by the love and feedback we received from the students and staff. These strong, brave, kind, and loving young individuals taught me more about life, laughter, and love. All eleven kids that I had the honor of working with have written their names on my soul. **Not only have the kids changed my view on life, but an extra bonus of this work has brought me closer to Sara Tanner – an amazing woman whom I adore and feel blessed every day to have her be a part of my life.**

JOI is an amazing opportunity to work with children/young adults and know that you are making a difference. **We must invest in our future and never let the message of Optimism and children be lost.** I am committed to seeing our JOI Clubs grow and ensuring a safe and positive environment for our young people and advisors. I am positive that Optimism and our Creed are important to share – and we do make a difference.

Through JOI, I finally found my purpose in life and discovered a level of happiness and joy that I never knew was possible. I invite everyone to join me on working with kids, changing their lives, and I guarantee every minute is worth the effort.

Children are our future. Show them and let them lead the way to an amazing life and an appreciation of their family, friends, and community. Much love to everyone.

Continue to make a difference. Barb Dank



Place Bridge Academy Junior Optimist Club Jennifer Powers



Place Bridge Academy Junior Optimist Club is the JOI club sponsored by the Optimist Club of Windsor Gardens.

We started this JOI club last year with 8, 5th graders. This year we have 33, 4th graders. We meet twice per month, and instill the Optimist Creed in all our activities that we did this year. Such as; notes of appreciation, painted rocks with positive sayings, chain of acts of kindness for their hall ways. They read a book to a kindergarten student, and that child got to keep the book. For community they helped the gym teachers by cleaning out and organizing the equipment closet.

Place Bridge Academy is a very special school. The children come from different countries, and the students speak different languages. There are 46 different languages spoken at this school.

This year they had an **International Night**. It was a celebration of different cultures. The children and their parents dressed in their cultural dress and cooked and shared their cultural food with everyone. **They also shared music and dance also shared. They had dance and drums of Mali, Napal, West Africa, Venezuela folk dance, and a band and dance of Brazil. It was a positive celebration.**

Our children from our JOI club drew chalk drawing of their country's flags and welcome pictures and greetings to welcome all the visitors coming to the International Night that evening.



It was a wonderful time. With the world the way it is lately, this night was an Optimistic Celebration.



Hidden Lake JOI Club Graduation Kiki McGough

On June 4 we celebrated the graduation of the 6 seniors from the Hidden Lake JOI Club. These students have overcome many challenges to graduate and yet have contributed to the school and the community through the JOI Club while working and addressing personal challenges. This year they organized a Valentine event at a nursing home, delivering a card and rose to each resident and they did a Mother's Day activity at an elementary school where they helped children make cards thanking their family for their kindness. **The former principal, James Steward, who started the JOI Club with Kathy Greb spoke as did Obi Eazadi, Westminster City Council. Special thank to the Kathy's: Kathy Greb and Kathy Billings who met with the students all year.**



3rd Qtr Conference Recap from Chairperson, Charlie Neumann

The 3rd Quarter CO/Y District Conference was held April 27, 2024 at the Family Resource Pavilion. The Oratorical Contest Championship, CCDH contest finals and the Essay Winner presentation were the programs. This special event showcases the talent of our youth and the determination and effort they give to participate in these amazing contests. Great Contest! Thank you, **Chairperson Steve Gorrell & Kris Gresl.** Pictures on following page.

There were 65 members registered and about 30+ friends and families supporting their kids. The Cheyenne Club had a great turnout for their contestants. Way to go!

Chairperson Joe Priester always does a great job in keeping this contest going. We are amazed by the caliber of students he has. Great Job!

The Family Resource Pavilion is a wonderful facility. They have a new Events Coordinator, **Ms. Katie Conley** who very accommodating and provided a nice breakfast & lunch. Job Well Done! A special thank you to her and to her assistant Misha for keeping us well fed.

Linda Williams & Sue Morgan created a board game geared for the JOI clubs that our members enjoyed playing and the district is looking at having the game played again in the future.

Book Drive: Kudos to our clubs and members for the books and puzzles donated to Shiloh House for the different homes. Great books to keep them reading and engaged. Thank you to all that donated.

Save the date August 9 & 10, 2024 CO/WY Optimist Convention. We look forward to seeing you in Golden. Details to follow when we finalize the convention.

CO/WY District 3rd Quarter Conference Pics



Tony Carpenter-
Conference Emcee



Gov Mary Grace
Wake welcomes
attendees



Bill Cassel and Kiki McGough shared updates on the
NOAHs Ark project.

Winners of the District/OI Competitions

The District Oratorical Finalists pictured are Josh Thomson sponsored by Cheyenne OC, Emma Troxell sponsored by Westminster-Broomfield OC, and Fred Zordrager sponsored by Westminster-Broomfield OC

3rd Place Zcherina Villegas sponsored by the Cheyenne OC
2nd Place Hana Ahmednur sponsored by the Tamarac OC
1st Place winner Saahithi Kasa sponsored by the Littleton OC

(L-R: Saahithi, Hana, Emma, Gov Mary Grace, Zcherina, Fred & Josh)



Judges for the Oratorical Contest
pictured L-R:

Shavon Forte, Michelle Krawchik,
Kathy Mattenklodt, Dr. Chris
Linares



The Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH) had the
finals at the conference. Pictured L-R: winner of the \$2,500
Scholarship Micah James Kistan, winner of the \$1,500
Scholarship Alejandro Martinez, and winner of the \$1,000
Scholarship was Ainsley Habecker



Cheyenne OC sponsored the winning
Essay Contest winner again this year.
Nicholas Thornell is pictured by
District Essay chair, Jeff Gartz.



****Note:** In the last quarter newsletter
editor erroneously reported the winners
name, also from Cheyenne OC. It was
Rosie Dubrod. Editor apologizes for the
error!

Gateway's Cynthia Latimer Receives Optimist of Quarter

Karen Gold

Wednesday, March 27, 2024 the culmination of the Gateway Oly Torch JOI Charter Club completed with the **Gateway Optimist Club Advisor Cynthia Latimer** standing smiling among her thirteen charter student members. The installation of five officers and members, the final step, completed the process along with the attendance from the Gateway High School JOI Advisor, a school counselor, a teacher and six subsequent students wishing be included into the club. Cynthia created an agenda for the installation ceremony allowing for the officers to present their previous, current and planned activities demonstrating the realm of Optimist International.



Over the months of Cynthia first approaching, describing, defining and integrating the students and faculty for formal formation of their JOI club, the group simultaneously 'brought out the best of themselves' demonstrating community support. Even before acquiring the club's charter, the students sponsored a Christmas shopping excursion with elementary students, participated in the school's cultural event and created plans for creating 'Healing Baskets' for hospitalized children. As proven, time was not of the essence as the students found good to do before completion of their charter!

Cynthia's long term Optimist Club membership truly shined via her new found passion – The creation and management of the Gateway OLY Torch JOI club recognizing, "Oh, the Places they will go!" (Dr Seuss). This club is on the move and likewise, energizes the sponsoring club, Gateway Optimists. Cynthia, thank you for your infectious student leadership! **Pictured above: Cynthia and District Award Chair, Jeanette Thompson.**

Gateway OC and Sweet Dream in a Bag Pack New Bedding for Kids



From back left, **Sue Mehl, Hal Martens, Karen Gold, Deborah Martens, Jane Montgomery, Sheila Woolfolk, Marvin Montgomery, Fran and Bob Krech, Ruth and Bill Reilley, and Tom Mehl.**

Gateway 2024 Oratorical Contest

Held at Prairie Middle School on March 13 at 5:30pm. There were 16 contestants and 3 were chosen 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. These 3 received medals and will receive gift cards once they present to the club at one of our meetings. The winners are pictures L-R:

- 1st place—Edome Tadese**
- 2nd place—Ayla Snyder**
- 3rd place—Caleb Assefa**

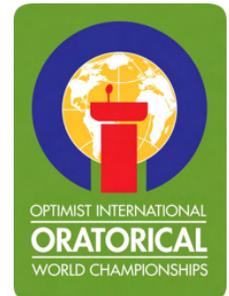


Pueblo Optimists Happening Tricia Cordova

The Pueblo Optimist Club has been busy this quarter! We hosted our **Tri-Star tournament** and had a great group of kids attend. We were honored to be able to award all participants and 2 members of their family with a ticket to the **Harlem Globetrotters game**! The kids were all smiles getting to meet their favorite players and get autographs after the game. **A big thank you to our committee chair, Kevin Keilbach, for organizing this amazing event.**



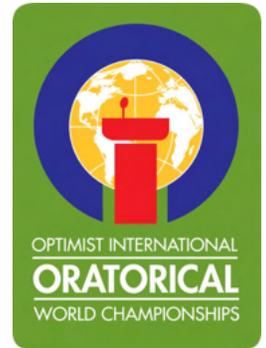
We also held our **Oratorical Speech Contest**. We heard from 10 inspiring middle schoolers and they all had great ideas on How to Change the World With Optimism. It was great to see so many repeat faces from youth who had participated last year as well. We had 5 volunteer judges from the community speak to the kiddos after the contest express how impressed they were with all of them. **Special thank you to our long time committee chair Eileen Dennis (pictured below) for always making this happen in Pueblo!**



District Oratorical 2023-2024 Contest Steve Gorrell, District Chairman

This year's Oratorical Contest topic was "How to Change the World with Optimism". This year there were 14 Clubs that held an Oratorical Contest. These 14 Clubs reached 105 contestants.

A BIG thank you to those 14 Clubs who took the time to hold an Oratorical Contest. Each Club was able to send up to 2 contestants to the District's Super Regionals. The Regionals were held on April 13th. The top 3 Contestants from the 2 Regionals then advanced to the District Finals. The District Finals were held live on April 27th. The 2 Regional contests were done via Zoom. The District Finals were held live at the 3rd Quarter Gathering.



The District Finalist's were Josh Thomson sponsored by Cheyenne OC, Emma Troxell sponsored by Westminster-Broomfield OC, and Fred Zordrager sponsored by Westminster-Broomfield OC

3rd Place winner of a \$1,000.00 Scholarship Zcherina Villegas sponsored by the Cheyenne OC

2nd Place winner of a \$1,500.00 Scholarship Hana Ahmednur sponsored by the Tamarac OC

1st Place winner of a \$2,500.00 Scholarship Saahithi Kasa sponsored by the Littleton OC

Saahithi will not compete in the World Contest July 17-19 2024 at Saint Louis University located in Saint Louis, MO. Due to the fact she will be out of the country on that date. So, Hana our 2nd place winner will compete in the World Contest. She will compete on July 18th at 2:30 pm CDT. If Hana wins the Southwest Region, she will win a \$5,000.00 scholarship and then compete the next day in the World Championship at 9:30 AM CDT. The 1st place winner will win a \$15,000 scholarship. The 2nd place winner will win a \$10,000 scholarship. The 3rd place winner will win a \$5,000 scholarship.

Contest on both days will be streamed. So tune in to watch Hana compete in the Oratorical World Championships. GOOD LUCK to Hana!

If any of your Clubs contestants did not graduate from High School or reach the age of 19 before October 1, 2024, or win the World Regional contest, then they come back next year to compete. Club Chairpersons, make sure that your contestants come back to compete next year. So Clubs start planning to do the Oratorical Contest next year. Hopefully by the District Convention, we will have the topic and you can start planning for next year's contest to be held in 2024.

I would like to thank **Kris Gresl, Michael Chavez, Charlie and Gunar Neumann** for their help on putting on the Regionals and the District Finals. Without the help of these Optimists, there would not have been a District Oratorical contest. THANK YOU for your help! **(Pictures on page 5)**

Steve Gorrell, Colorado-Wyoming District Oratorical Chairperson 2023-2024
Sgorrell1@yahoo.com 303-920-2366

CO/WY DISTRICT OPTIMIST JUNIOR GOLF PROGRAM **Bob Meyer**

The Optimist International **Junior Golf Championships (commonly referred to as THE OPTIMIST)** is one of Optimist International's major youth programs for boys and girls ages 10 – 18 and is one of the largest and best-known junior golf events in the world. More than 3,000 boys and girls across the United States, Canada, Mexico, and several dozen other foreign countries compete in official Optimist qualifying tournaments. The best of these junior golfers, along with additional international junior golfers from around the globe, advance to THE OPTIMIST.



Each year, **THE OPTIMIST is held at Trump National Doral Resort - Miami FL and fields over 600 of the world's best junior golfers from more than 28 countries around the globe.** In addition to top-level tournament golf, junior golfers have the opportunity to make new friends and to have a great deal of fun. What makes THE OPTIMIST unique from other tournaments, junior golfers and their guests are housed, play golf, enjoy group meals, special events, entertainment, and fun all at a world-class resort. College coaches come from all over the U.S. to scout some of the best junior players in the world.

Past age group winners at THE OPTIMIST (and its predecessor, the Optimist Junior World Golf Championships) include Denver's own Mark Hubbard, Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, Ernie Els, Davis Love III, Lorena Ochoa, Beth Bauer, Nancy Lopez, Brittany Lincicome, Lexi Thompson, Brooke Henderson, Jason Day, and Akshay Bhatia, among dozens of prominent PGA and LPGA golfers.

Other Denver area golfers that have played in THE OPTIMIST include PGA and LPGA stars Wyndham Clark and Jennifer Kupcho.

The Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Junior Golf Program is recognized as the best Junior Golf Program in all of Optimist International and serves about 400 junior golfers each year. The best of these golfers will qualify for THE 2024 OPTIMIST.

Dates for the 2024 District qualifying tournaments were Thursday, May 30, at South Suburban Golf Course in Centennial (Girls ages 10–12, 13–14, and 15–18); Thursday, June 13, at Overland Golf Course in Denver (Boys ages 10–11, 12– 3, and 14– 5); and Thursday, June 13 at Meadow Hills in Aurora (Boys ages 16–18).

The 2023 District qualifying tournaments were held Friday, June 9, at Flatirons Golf Course in Boulder (Boys ages 10–11, 12– 3, and 14– 5); Thursday, June 15, at Meadow Hills Golf Course in Aurora (Girls ages 10– 12, 13–4, and 15–18); and Monday, June 19 at Flatirons Golf Course in Boulder (Boys ages 16–18). Almost 300 golfers teed off in those three events, competing for 73 spots at THE 2023 OPTIMIST. Dozens of local Optimists and their friends volunteered at the three events, acting as forecaddies (ball spotters) and marshals, maintaining pace of play and ensuring that the junior golf competitors played in professionally run District qualifiers.

In October 2023, we held the 8th Annual 36-hole Optimist Junior Golf Tour event at Green Valley Ranch Golf Club in Northeast Denver. This was a new event for us starting in 2016 and, because of its success, has become an annual event, welcoming golfers from around the country and from several foreign countries. A total of 60 golfers teed off, competing for an additional 18 spots at THE 2024 OPTIMIST. Again, dozens of local Optimists and their friends volunteered to ensure a professionally run tournament.

The Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Junior Golf Program is totally self-funded. We sent 55 junior golfers to THE 2023 OPTIMIST and raised over \$ 45,000 for that purpose.

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Jr Golf Continued....

We were able to give THE 2023 OPTIMIST registration fee of \$ 670 to each of the seven age group winners and \$500 to the 48 other qualifiers from the 2023 District qualifying events. If we are to send 59 junior golfers to THE 2024 OPTIMIST, we need to raise another \$ 45,000.

As part of our fund-raising activities in 2024, we will hold an adult scramble fundraising tournament and silent auction on Wednesday, May 22, at Meadow Hills Golf Course in Aurora.

We will also solicit title, hole, banner, and player sponsors for the qualifying tournaments at Flatirons and Meadow Hills from many Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Clubs, individual Optimists and their friends and businesses.

In addition, we solicit cash and in-kind donations from local golf courses, parents of our junior golfers, and the general public.

The Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Junior Golf Program website is <https://sites.google.com/site/cowyoptimistgolf/>.

Please continue to help support the Colorado-Wyoming District Optimist Junior Golf Program to “Bring Out the Best in Kids”.

For further information, please contact:

Bob Meyer, Junior Golf Co-Chairman, meyerrob@comcast.net, 303-919-4532

Joe Marci, Junior Golf Co-Chairman, jmarci8999@gmail.com, 303-771-3748

Get Connected on July 9, 2024 Linda Williams

Please join us the second Tuesday of each month for our Connections Forum, which meets over Zoom from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. Enjoy important topics and follow-up discussions. The topic for July is Spreading Optimism to New Communities, speaker Jim Boyd from OI.

If you can't reorganize your schedule to be part of the original meeting, you can always watch the recording of the event by going to the District website <https://www.optimistcowy.org/>. The Connections Forum previous events can be found in the MEMBERS section of the website. Our previous topics have been Membership Engagement, Strategic Planning, Tips and Traps of Club Leadership, and Identifying and Growing Leaders. Check out these topics and bring the information to your club to further the conversations. Connect your club to other clubs' ideas in these forums.

Does Super Citizen Program Make a Difference?

A Parent's Perspective

submitted by Monaco South OC

To: My daughter's teacher Ms. Ellie Lucy: Teacher: A multitasking educational rockstar who lives to inspire and loves to encourage.

To: The Optimist Club of Monaco South Optimist: From his belief in teleology he/she is not deterred by the enigma of pain. In the hard days when we were just trying to survive. The days when we were exiled from all our friends and loved ones and our motherland and lived in helplessness, hardship, and despair, another spark shone in our lives and informed our hope and happiness.

My daughter Yagana Danesh (My bundle of joy) was selected as a super citizen in her school (Holm Elementary School) on May 17, 2024, and won an award and became a source of pride for our immigrant family. Because of the forced migration of our family from Afghanistan, **Yagana was deprived of school for more than a year and a half and did not know a word of English.** At the beginning of the academic year 2023- 2024, every morning when her mother and I woke up Yagana and wanted her to get ready and go to school, she started crying and said I don't go to school because I don't know anyone's language and I don't have any friends, and I can't talk to anyone. It was very difficult and painful and sometimes it brought us to tears, but we sent her to school anyway. Until a month passed and she addressed the first words of mom and dad to me and her mother at home, or she practiced the alphabet and numbers. These moments were hopeful and joyful for us. It got better and better as time passed.

And on Friday, May 17, 2024, she was elected a super citizen. Yagana is my "English teacher" now! Indescribable joy filled our family. Tears of joy flowed over her mother and me and we were proud of our daughter. Therefore, **I sincerely congratulate this success to her dear teacher Mrs. Lucy** in particular, and other teachers and colleagues at Holm, Ms. April, the principal of the school, the administrative, and teaching team of this school, and I express my gratitude and appreciation to you. **You lit the light of hope, life, and education in the life of our daughter Yagana.** May God give you health, blessings, and happiness.

Meanwhile, on December 6, 2023, my son Ehsan Danesh was selected as a super citizen at Hamilton Middle School and gave us the first surprise of our life in the USA and became a source of pride, hope and joy. I would like to express my special **thanks to the Optimists Club of Monaco South** for supporting and managing the super citizen project in Hamilton and Holm, and **I am also proud to be a member of this club** after my son's super-citizen program at Holm.

Special thanks to these gentlemen **Karl Geil, Tom Mauro, Mark Metevia, Robert Wardlaw, Andrew K. Towt,** and other people in this club. **You bring hope, motivation and talents to life in the hearts of children and teenagers, and you are real servants.** Just like every time you take your creed and promise yourself and put your optimism into practice and say: To talk health, happiness, and prosperity to every person you meet, To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only of the best, I wish you health, happiness, and success, and may God grant you the best.

And of course, I pray for all the women and girls who have been banned from studying and living in Afghanistan by the extremist and terrorist regime of the Taliban, that they will be saved one day soon and that they will be given light, hope and life. Amen

Zabihullah Danesh, Denver, CO, USA May 19, 2024

Power of Optimism Changed My Life Laura Wells—Windsor Gardens OC

Letter to the Editor

I moved to Windsor Gardens during a dark time in my life. I had just lost my father, my health was poor, I was on oxygen and my stamina was non-existent. I had double vision and driving was a problem. Also, it was during the end of the Covid lockdown. **I chose Windsor Gardens because my aunt has a condominium here and I had patients who had lived here.** I knew the amenities offered and wanted to be where I could participate in activities without having to drive.

When I moved in, I met with my building representative, Carol, who encouraged me to examine our information board and explore activities that would interest me. She encouraged me to attend the committee meetings and told me about the **Optimist Club**. At the time, I just wanted to settle in and just get better. By the time Covid lockdowns were over and as activities opened, I was feeling better. The first thing I did was respond to advertisement for volunteers at the library. Then I went to one of the first movies and responded to a request to help as a volunteer. **Bob, who was the movie tech, was also an Optimist, and he encouraged me to join.**

But was I an optimist? Certainly not at this time. Between Bob and Carol, I was invited to join at least once a month. I finally went to a meeting and was impressed by the speaker and the friendliness of the membership. I was not a highly active member the first year. It was more of a social event that included an interesting speaker.

Did you know that the Optimist Club is a worldwide organization? Their emphasis is on encouraging young people to be optimistic, kind, helpful, and a contribution to their family and community. **Our club has chosen to serve Place Bridge Academy**, a DPS school that serves our immigrant children from around the world.

This year I decided to step up and volunteer to be a greeter. It was a way for me to meet the members and learn their names. I started attending some of the Optimist Board meetings to learn more about the operations of the club. There is a lot of discussion that goes on in a monthly meeting!

I would never have called myself an optimist. I am a realist, a people person, give me a job and I will get it done, and not particularly creative. But as a nurse who had to teach patients to change their lifelong habits, I have learned you must often hear something several times, you must repeat your new action multiple times before you see the benefits and change your habits.

This is the same when you look to change your own attitudes. Sometimes you must be with the very people who exhibit the attitude you hope to emulate. You FAKE it until you MAKE it. Birds of a feather...

I will not say I am optimistic, but I am a happier person who is an Optimist!

Laura Wells

The Dash of an Optimist By Bob Hamblin, District Foundation Representative

Some time ago I attended a memorial service at which a short poem was read. It was written in 1996 by **Linda Ellis** and is simply titled “*The Dash*”. It reads in part as follows:

*“I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend.
He referred to the dates on the tombstone, from the beginning to the end.
He noted that first came the date of birth, and spoke the following date with tears.
But said what mattered most of all was the dash between the years.
For that dash represents all the time they spent alive on earth.
And knew only those who loved them know what that little line is worth.
For it matters not how much we own, the cars, the house, the cash.
What matters is how we lived and loved, and how we spent our dash.”*

That short little poem is a reminder that for an Optimist, every day is filled with opportunities to actively live out and demonstrate the words of our Optimist Creed, not merely recite them. It’s a reminder that every day we have the chance, if only for a moment, to make someone’s life a little brighter, a little happier, a little easier. Whether it’s offering to drive them to an appointment, run an errand, or lend a hand with a small project, there is always an opportunity. Perhaps they’re just lonely and would love some company. Or they’ve had a really rough day and only want someone to listen quietly and without judgment while they complain about their pain and frustrations. Maybe just a friendly smile and a wave would mean the world to them.

Being an Optimist means so much more than just showing up for a meeting, then going home. Maybe it’s sharing part of your time at a fundraising event or a special club project. Perhaps it’s sharing your years of experience and wisdom by serving on a committee or board of directors. Or sharing some of your hard earned treasure with the Optimist International Foundation, and supporting its many wonderful programs and scholarships.

You just might make a real difference in the life of a young person in a way you will never know. But they will know. And you will be blessed by their prayers and their gratitude always.

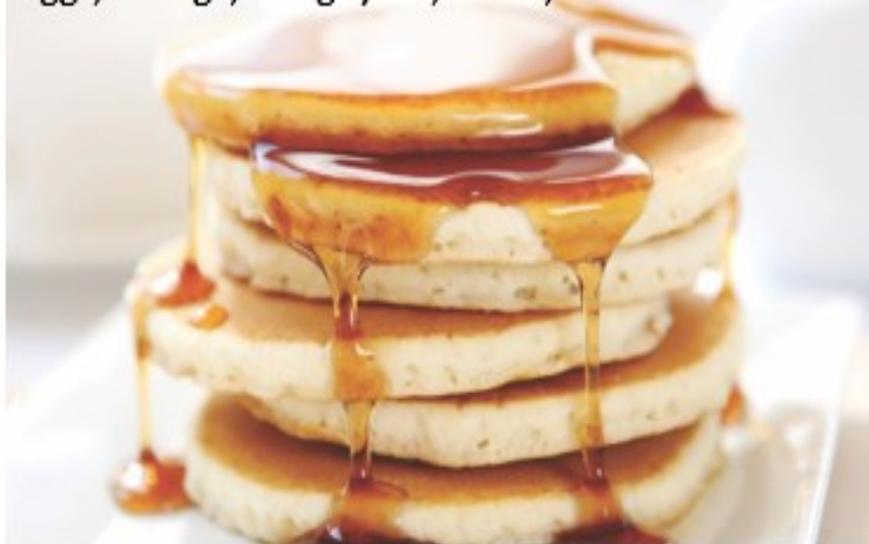
The poem concludes with these words:

*“So when your eulogy is being read, with your life’s actions to rehash,
Would you be proud of the things they say about how you spent YOUR dash?”*

Dear friends, may your dash one day reflect, for all who remember it, a life filled with love, a life filled with giving, and a life filled with Optimism.

SHORT STACKS FOR A TALL CAUSE

Breakfast includes pancakes, syrup, butter, scrambled eggs, sausage, orange juice, coffee, and fountain drinks



We, at Gateway Optimist Club support the kids at Denver Children's Home with this fundraiser. Traumatized, abused, and neglected kids receive restorative hope and health at DCH through an array of therapeutic, educational, and community-based services. DCH offers prevention, intervention, and treatment programs for these troubled children and their families



TICKETS: \$10.00
DATE: Saturday, 6/29/24
14091 E. Iliff Ave., Aurora
TIME: 07:30am - 09:30am

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Message Gateway Optimist Club on Facebook and Instagram, call 303-906-5569 or email gatewayoptimistaurora@yahoo.com to buy tickets.

THE 40TH MOUNTAIN MANIA

Car Show



BUENA VISTA, COLORADO

July 6, 2024 9am to 3pm

LIVE MUSIC by

BLUE ROOSTER

9 TROPHIES

2024 Grand Champion featured on
2025 t-shirt

- ◆ Grand Champion
- ◆ Runner Up
- ◆ Best Truck
- ◆ Best Paint
- ◆ Best Interior
- ◆ Best Engine
- ◆ Most Unique
- ◆ Police Chief's Award
- ◆ Fire Chief's Award



\$40 ONLINE REGISTRATION
(**\$50 Day of Registration**)
includes dash plaque,
t-shirt & more!

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Questions?
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