



# Club President's Answer Book

# The Club President's Answer Book

## Preface

---

We hope you will find this a useful guide and resource as you serve your Optimist Club in a leadership role.

Enjoy your year and congratulations on assuming your leadership role!

Should you have any questions, call the Leadership Development Department at 800-500-8130, extension 242.

## Club Email Boxes

---

This e-mail box will allow Optimist International to communicate directly with you and, more importantly, will allow you immediate access to the leadership and staff of Optimist International. Your District Governor and Lieutenant Governor will also have their own e-mail boxes.

Accessing and using your Club's e-mail box is simple. Just follow the easy steps below to take full advantage of this new Club administration tool.

- 1 From any computer with Internet access, go to [www.optimistmail.org](http://www.optimistmail.org).
- 2 When the log-on screen appears, type in your official five-digit Club number (i.e., 12345).
- 3 For a password, please contact Optimist International at (800) 500-8130 or e-mail [support@optimistmail.org](mailto:support@optimistmail.org). After this initial log in you will be able to change the password. You control access to the e-mail box by controlling who in your Club knows the password.

4 The next screen to appear will show you how many messages you have and allows you to use the e-mail system. Take a few minutes to explore the options available to you and become familiar with this page.

5 You will be able to read new messages, save or delete old messages, and send messages.

6 When you are finished simply click the "Log Out" button.

If you experience trouble or have questions about the system contact the Information Services Department at the International Office by e-mail at [support@optimistmail.org](mailto:support@optimistmail.org) or call 1-800-500-8130.

## Fax-On-Demand Document Retrieval System

---

Optimist International now offers a Fax-On-Demand document retrieval system. Just dial 314-371-6009 or 800-678-8389 from the speaker phone or handset of your fax machine. When the operator answers, press 1 for a directory of documents. Follow the instructions to receive the documents you desire. Most of the more common documents, instructions, promotional literature, and reports are found on the Fax-On-Demand. We hope you will find it a very convenient way to get your document quickly; however, don't hesitate to call the appropriate department at the International Office if you have any questions or a document you need is not listed on the index.

## The Optimist International Web Site

---

By accessing <http://www.optimist.org> (English) or [www.optimiste.org](http://www.optimiste.org) (French) on the World Wide Web, you'll have available at your fingertips the latest information about what's going on in the world of Optimism as well as most forms and publications. You can also e-mail the International Office with your questions at [headquarters@optimist.org](mailto:headquarters@optimist.org).

## For Assistance:

---

### Optimist International

4494 Lindell Blvd.  
St. Louis MO 63108  
800-500-8130/314-371-6000  
Fax: 314-371-6006  
Voice Mail: 314-371-6009 or  
800-678-8389

E-mail: [headquarters@optimist.org](mailto:headquarters@optimist.org)  
Website: [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org)(English)  
[www.optimiste.org](http://www.optimiste.org)(French)

### Optimist International Service Centre (CANADA)

4559 boul. Métropolitain est  
St-Léonard Qc H1R 1Z4  
800-363-7151/514-593-4401  
Fax: 514-721-1104

E-mail:

[canadianservice@optimist.org](mailto:canadianservice@optimist.org)  
Website: [www.optimiste.org](http://www.optimiste.org)

### Shumsky

811 East Fourth Street  
Dayton OH 45402  
877-678-2582 or  
937-223-2203  
Caribbean: 937-496-1373  
Fax: 937-223-2252

E-mail: [optimist@shumsky.com](mailto:optimist@shumsky.com)  
Website: [www.optimiststuff.com](http://www.optimiststuff.com)



# Contents

Club Organization .....	2
Board of Directors .....	8
Club President .....	13
Club Vice President .....	16
Club Secretary-Treasurer .....	17
Club Meetings .....	21
Club Budget and Finances .....	23
Reports .....	39
Policies .....	41
Club Nominating Committee .....	46
Optimist International Structure and Services .....	49
Optimist International Foundations .....	52
Index .....	54



# Club Organization

**Club Organization Chart**  
**Job Outlines for Officers and Individual Appointees**  
**Activities of Club Committees**  
**Committee Procedures**  
**Committee Reports**

A clearly defined administrative organization is essential for efficiency and helps establish practical lines of authority and responsibility. The model organization chart (shown on page 3), is based upon the experience of thousands of Clubs. Most Clubs can use the chart as it is. The President should complete it and distribute it to every Club member.

## **Advantages of the Model Organization**

---

1. It can be adapted to a particular Club's needs without changing the basic concept.
2. It can be easily adapted to fit any size Club.
3. It provides an efficient chain of communication.
4. It provides sufficient back-up to insure all Club functions.
5. It allows for the involvement of every Club member.
6. It is complete. All necessary Club activities are represented.
7. It releases the President for Board administrative functions.
8. It utilizes the talent and ability of all officers and Directors.
9. It provides opportunities for training future Club leaders.

## **Adaptations for Various Size Clubs**

---

### **Small Clubs**

**(approximately 30 or fewer members):**

Each Vice President is liaison between a group of Committees and the Board. Each elected Director should be assigned to one Committee. In the small Club, the Past President and the six elected Directors may each be Chair of a Committee. If necessary, a Club member may serve on more than one Committee.

### **Medium Size Clubs**

**(approximately 30 to 75 members):**

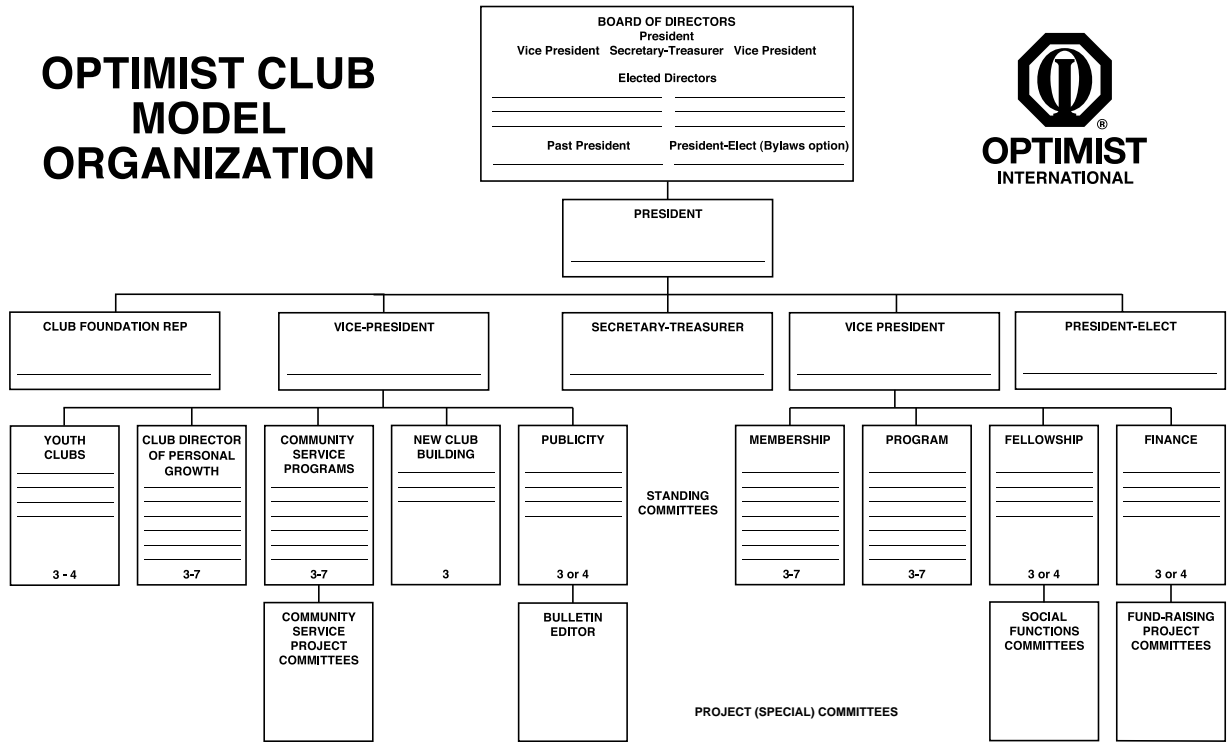
The structure of a medium size Club is the same as a small Club, except that in a Club this size the Director should not be a Committee Chair. Be sure every person has a Committee assignment before assigning a member to more than one Standing Committee.

### **Large Clubs**

**(approximately 75 or more members):**

The organization for the large Club is the same as for the medium Club (above) except the functions of most Committees may be divided between two or more Committees. For example, membership responsibilities may be split into a Membership Recruitment Committee and a Membership Education Committee. Clubs with a large number of Committees can improve the efficiency of the organization by assigning the elected Directors as liaison between two or three Committees and a Vice President.

# OPTIMIST CLUB MODEL ORGANIZATION



## Duties of Officers and Directors

### Board of Directors:

(The Board of Directors shall consist of the President; the President-Elect; the Vice Presidents; the Secretary-Treasurer, plus six elected Directors, each of whom shall have the right to vote.)

- determines policies
- makes long-term and short-term plans
- elects and deletes members
- supervises Club activities
- activates Club Committees
- provides for annual review of Club books
- fills vacant offices between elections
- determines causes for and initiates plans to correct excessive member loss and low attendance

### President: (elected)

Resource: *The Club President's Answer Book, Personal Growth and Involvement Program (PGI)*

- coordinates and encourages the implementation of Club programs and policies
- presides at Club and Board meetings
- represents the Club to the community and various levels of Optimist International
- makes necessary appointments
- serves on District Board of Directors
- works with the Club Director of Personal Growth to encourage personal/professional member growth

### President-Elect:

- serves on Board of Directors
- presides over meetings and acts in the capacity of the President when he/she is absent
- succeeds to the office of President automatically on the first day of the succeeding year

### Vice Presidents:

(Two elected; not numbered, not Committee Chairs)

- serve as liaison between the Board of Directors and a group of Committees
- preside at Club and Board meetings in President's absence
- serve on Board of Directors
- perform duties ordinarily incumbent upon Vice Presidents
- perform duties assigned by President

### Secretary-Treasurer:

(One office. Appointed by President, approved by Board.)

Resource: *The Club Secretary-Treasurer Answer Book, The Club President's Answer Book, Club Bylaws*

- maintains minutes of Club and Board meetings
- receives and disburses all Club funds
- keeps financial records
- handles Club correspondence
- prepares and files Club reports
- maintains membership, awards and attendance records

## Appointees' Duties

---

### Sergeant-At-Arms:

**(Appointed by President; a member and may be Chair of the Fellowship Committee.)**

- helps maintain order
- promotes fun and fellowship
- collects fines (if Club elects to fine members)

### Chaplain:

**(Optional; Appointed by the President.)**

- offers guidance that a community-serving organization should have
- arranges for prayers and invocations
- is a friend and pastor to all members

### Parliamentarian:

**(Optional; Appointed by President.)**

Resource: *Robert's Rules of Order*

- advises on matters of parliamentary procedure

### Club Foundation Representative

**(appointed by the President)**

- provides information on the Optimist International Foundation
- encourages Foundation contributions
- heads a Club fund raiser for Optimist International Foundation benefit (one-half of proceeds at least to OIF)
- sends contributions directly to Optimist International Foundation Office, or District Foundation Representative
- makes memorial or tribute gifts to honor members
- asks members about dollar matching programs at their companies
- asks business owners and decision makers for business gifts
- promotes bequests/wills naming the Optimist Foundation
- requests any necessary information from Foundation office

### Club Director of Personal Growth

**(Appointed by the President)**

- Promotes the Personal Growth and Involvement (PGI) Program
- Encourages members to utilize the Skills Development Modules.

### Club Services Coordinator

**(Appointed by President)**

- assists Club President in promoting attendance at District/Zone meetings
- coordinates/oversees new member inductions, orientation and involvement into the Club in a timely and memorable fashion
- tracks Club's march toward Honor Club
- liaison to District Club Services Chair/Committee
- assist Club Builders of Excellence in helping oversee and run New Club Follow-up and Follow Through Program
- manages/oversees farewell process procedures with members moving out of the Club
- this individual should be at least a Past President and if available, a Past Lieutenant Governor or even a Governor.

## Club Committees

---

Committees organize and direct the talent and energies of Optimists into meaningful activities. Committees are responsible to the Board and in turn the Board, through its annual election, is responsible to the membership. Committees must submit recommendations for approval to the Board or, in certain instances, to the Club membership.

In Optimist Clubs, there are two types of Committees, Standing and Special. Each has a definite type of responsibility, and both are essential for Club success. Standing Committees exist for a fiscal year; Special Committees function for the life of a project.

For example, the Finance Committee (a Standing Committee) researches and recommends fund raising projects. The President appoints a special Committee from the Club membership to plan and conduct an approved project. The same arrangement applies to other areas including the Club's program of service to youth and community.

### Committee Size

Ideally, each member should serve on a Standing Committee and at least one Special (project) Committee each year. However, appointments should not be made merely for the sake of an assignment. Ultimately, the size of any Committee should be determined by the Club's size and the requirements of the assigned activity. Effectiveness declines sharply with more than seven members. When a large number of members is required, the Committee's responsibility should be divided among subCommittees. When necessary, members may be appointed to more than one Committee. However, a member should not Chair more than one Committee.

## Committee Selection

Qualification for both Standing and Special Committee members are enthusiasm, ability, experience, leadership and interest in the assigned activity. Attitude, enthusiasm and dedication are 90 percent of the total; ability 10 percent.

When making Committee appointments, most Club Presidents consult the Chair and sometimes the Board or a former Committee Chair. However, appointments are the President's responsibility. The following questions provide good guidelines for Committee selection:

1. Does the Committee require special knowledge or talent?
2. What is the member's record on previous Committees?
3. Is the member a potential Chair, or a follower? Committees need both.
4. Will the member make time to serve on the Committee?
5. Can the member work with people, both on the Committee and with the public?
6. Will appointments create a group that will work together harmoniously?
7. Has the member shown interest in the Committee's activity rather than being appointed because of his/her vocational relationship to the activity?
8. Will appointments further the plan for involving all Club members in Committee activity?

The *Member Interest Finder* is designed to disclose each member's interests. New members should complete Interest Finders as soon as possible. Before a new fiscal year, members may complete an Interest Finder to indicate their preferences for the new year, and the President should attempt to respect these preferences. The *Member Interest Finder* can be obtained from [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org).

## Preparation For Committees

Before a Committee meets, the President or appropriate Vice President should counsel with the Committee:

1. Provide necessary materials issued by Optimist International and instruct the Chair to ask for any additional counsel desired.
2. Be sure the Committee's objective is understood.
3. Request the Chair strive to train a successor.
4. Be certain the Committee understands that its basic function is to translate ideas and plans into action.
5. Set a schedule for reports and accomplishments.

## Committee Finances

When an activity requires financing, the Board of Directors should allocate the approved funds from the budget. Only community service and youth activities projects may be financed with monies raised from the public. If costs are not determined when an activity is assigned, the Committee should prepare an estimate for Board approval. Every Committee must keep within the budget.

## Committee Action

Action and accomplishment are the purposes of every Committee. The Chair must, through tact and enthusiasm, ensure Committee action. Discussion must result in decisions, and decisions must result in action. Committee efforts have a single purpose – completion of the assigned program.

## Standing Committees

---

An Optimist Club operates under its Board of Directors (elected by the Club membership) with the chain of communication flowing through the President to the Vice Presidents and then to the Committees. The functions of the recommended Standing Committees are listed with suggested Committee size. The chief resources for each are in italics.

### Community Service:

**(Three to seven members including Chair)**

Resources: *International Programs Planning Guide*

- Determines needs in the community
- Plans and supervises community service projects; a Special Committee conducts each project.

### Fellowship:

**(Three or four members including Chair)**

Sergeant-at-Arms is a member and may be the Chair.

- Promotes Club meeting attendance
- Makes preparations for Club meetings
- Oversees greeting of members and guests
- Collects meal costs
- Stimulates fellowship at Club meetings
- Sends cards or flowers to members and their families on significant occasions
- Strives to extend fellowship beyond Club and community
- Plans a well-rounded program of social functions; a Special Committee conducts each social activity.
- Plans and promotes inter-Club visits

### Finance:

**(Three or four members including Chair)**

Resources: *Model Club Budget, Fund Raising section of the International Programs Planning Guide.*

- Plans and supervises the budget
- Researches and plans fund raising projects; a Special Committee conducts each project.

### Membership:

**(Three to seven members including Chair)**

Resources: *The Be An Optimist Today pamphlet, NOW kit, New Member Invitation pamphlet*

- Plans and executes a year-round program to constantly acquire new members
- Conducts a strong program of member education, involvement and retention

## **New Club Building:**

### **(Three members including Chair)**

Resources: *New Club Building Handbook*

- Plans and conducts all activities involved in the sponsorship of a new Club in order to ensure the future of Optimist service and fellowship

## **Program:**

### **(Three to seven members including Chair)**

- Researches and develops plans that will provide interesting, effective programs for each Club meeting
- Schedules program for each meeting

## **Public Relations:**

### **(Three or more members including Chair, Bulletin Editor and Publicity Coordinator)**

Resources: *Public Relations Training Manual*;  
*Bulletin Editor's Guide*

- Edits and publishes the Club Bulletin at least monthly
- Promotes news media coverage of Club activities
- Maintains active liaison with elected officials, government agencies, community organizations and other civic/service organizations
- Compiles Club scrapbook

## **JOOI Clubs:**

### **(Three to four members including a Chair)**

Resources: *JOOI Clubs Planning Guide*.

- Acts as the liaison between the sponsoring Optimist Club and the JOOI Club
- Assists JOOI Club with completion of all forms (including rosters and election reports) and applications for awards
- Helps plan joint activities between the JOOI Club and sponsoring Optimist Club
- Remains in frequent communication with the JOOI Club
- Assists with the collection and payment of International dues
- Orders supplies and materials for the JOOI Club
- Helps organize a Club delegation to attend the JOOI District and International Conventions
- Encourages and supports the JOOI Club in all its activities

## **Special Committees**

---

Clubs regularly require the services of Special (project) Committees. They may handle assignments unrelated to any Committee, or they may be Subcommittees working within the purview of Standing Committees and might be Chaired by a member of the Standing Committee. For example, the group conducting the Optimist Youth Safety Program is a Subcommittee of the Community Service Committee and may be Chaired by a member of that Committee.

A Committee may investigate and plan until the time of a project, then arrange for subcommittees and additional help from the Club membership. Obviously, most Special Committees are appointed for short-term activities. A Special Committee's membership generally changes after a year even if the particular project continues for a longer period of time.

## **Committee Procedures**

---

### **Before the Meeting**

1. Find the right place to meet. It should be centrally located and conducive to deliberation.
2. Decide upon a convenient meeting time.
3. Mail meeting announcement and agenda one week in advance. A well-planned agenda will help ensure a productive meeting.

### **At The Meeting**

1. Start the meeting on time.
2. Define the Committee's objectives. Every member must know the long-term objective of the assigned activity and the goals for the specific meeting.
3. Encourage every member to contribute.
4. Maintain a positive approach. Examine each suggestion with respect.
5. Do not rush. It takes time to consider all worthwhile alternatives.
6. Select the solution most nearly acceptable to all.
7. Set a schedule for accomplishing the project.
8. Make a reasonable division of responsibilities. The conduct of a project will likely require more staffing than the planning. Subcommittees and, on occasion, the entire Club may be involved in a project.
9. Adjourn the meeting on time.

### **After The Meeting**

1. Report progress to the Board. A suggested report format is included in this handbook. Copies of the report for Committee members will assure continuity.
2. Keep in touch. Use the Club Bulletin to inform Club members. When applicable, inform the community through the local news media.



## Concluding Committee Activity

Compile Committee records. At the conclusion of a project or Committee's term of office, collect and organize all materials for use by future Committees.

## Committee Reports

Monthly written reports contribute greatly to the effectiveness of the Committee and Club. Reports inform the Board of Committee progress and seek approval of specific requests. The Chair should read the report and present copies to the President and Secretary-Treasurer, and also may make a brief report to further discussion. Committee reports should state accomplishments and plans rather than details of discussion. If finances are involved, include reports on expenditures. Submit a more detailed report on a completed activity or responsibility.

 **Committee Report**

\_\_\_\_\_ Optimist Club of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Committee

Report of \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Meeting \_\_\_\_\_ Time Called \_\_\_\_\_ Time Adjourned \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date of next meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Members of Committee (check those present):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Others present:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Business transacted:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Committee recommendations:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Committee requests:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reported to Board by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

NCB 990 Printed in USA LTR-9553

# Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the governing body of an Optimist Club. A Club's success depends upon how well the Board functions and its leadership. Board members must be committed.

The Board guides the Club through discussion and decision making which should reflect the opinions of all Board members. This can be accomplished if each member will:

1. State opinions clearly and at the appropriate time
2. Consider the thoughts of all
3. Be willing to have opinions modified
4. Seek to keep the discussion moving on a productive level.

In addition, a Board member must be sensitive to community needs and participate in the Club's service and fund-raising projects.

Board members need the following:

1. History of the Club
2. Bylaws
3. Policies
4. Budget
5. Copy of previous year's annual report
6. Organization structure, including officers, Committees and other appointments.

Matters which do not require a vote of the membership are the responsibility of the Board. Article VII, Section 2 of the Standard Club Bylaws states: The Board of Directors shall have control and management of the Club's activities; determine all policies; elect, dismiss and discipline members; and generally supervise the affairs of the Club. The Standard Club Bylaws (available on request from the International Office) require a vote of the membership for:

1. Elections (the Board fills vacant offices between elections). See Article VII, Section 1 and Article VIII
2. Amendments to the Bylaws. See Article XIV
3. Fund raising methods. See Article X, Section 4

The Board is obligated to keep Club members informed. Non-Board members may attend Board meetings, make reports and speak on various issues. However, only Board members (the official representatives of the membership) may vote on Board matters. On occasion, particularly when a

project or activity is important or expensive, the Board may submit the question to the membership for nonbinding or binding input.

## Duties Of The Board

---

The duties of the Board include

1. Determining activities
2. Approving and supervising the budget
3. Providing for annual audit of Club books
4. Deciding on eligibility of proposed members
5. Making long-term and short-term plans for the Club
6. Formulating appropriate policies
7. Assigning appropriate action requiring detailed study to Committees
8. Receiving reports of Committees
9. Advising Club members of Board actions through the Club Bulletin, and when necessary, at Club meetings
10. Activating the work of Club Committees
11. Disciplining members for inappropriate conduct or non-payment of dues
12. Filling vacant offices between elections
13. Identifying causes for low attendance and unnecessary losses of members; initiating plans and procedures to correct these problems.

## Board Membership

---

Check your Club's Bylaws for Board membership. Using Standard Club Bylaws, the following constitute the Board:

1. Elected Directors (six, three elected each year for two-year terms)
2. President (elected)
3. Vice Presidents (two elected each year)
4. Secretary-Treasurer (appointed by the President, approved by the Board)
5. Past President (serves the year immediately following his/her year as President)
6. President-Elect (if Club Bylaws provide for this office).

## Board Meetings

The Club President conducts Board meetings; the Secretary-Treasurer helps the President keep the agenda moving. The President should understand parliamentary procedure as presented in *Robert's Rules of Order*. Except as provided in the Club's Bylaws, all Club and Board meetings are governed by *Robert's* procedures.

A typical Board meeting agenda includes:

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Reading of previous minutes
4. Remarks by President
5. Reports of Secretary-Treasurer (including Club reports, financial statements, presentation of bills for payment)
6. Reading of communications
7. Committee reports
8. Unfinished business
9. New business
10. Adjournment.

## Tips For A Good Board Meeting

1. The Board should meet at a fixed time at least once a month. Except in emergencies, Board meetings should not be held before Club meetings. They could be held after Club meetings.
2. Select a comfortable, well-lighted room. The meeting place should be centrally located and conducive to deliberation. It should be open to all non-Board Club members but isolated from interruption.
3. The President should plan the agenda well in advance, and should check with the Vice Presidents, the Secretary-Treasurer and Committee Chairs for required reports and business. The President may conduct a "Top Officers" Meeting (President, Vice Presidents and Secretary-Treasurer) to review important business and plan the agenda. Do not overload the agenda. It is better to postpone an item or two than to handle too many poorly.
4. The Secretary-Treasurer should provide the agenda to the Board members to acquaint them with the proposed business and remind them of the meeting. The agenda may be printed in the bulletin to inform members of the scheduled business.
5. Begin the meeting promptly and keep to the agenda. The President must be certain members adhere to the subject at hand; proper use of the parliamentary procedure will make this easier.
6. Gather necessary materials and equipment in advance.
7. Seek specific conclusions and objectives. Discussion must end in exact goals and clearly defined action.

## Board Minutes

The Secretary-Treasurer must keep accurate minutes. The President should restate the motion after it has been made and seconded. This will ensure that everyone understands what is being debated. The results of each vote must be noted, i.e., was the motion carried or lost? The following information is required for Board minutes:

1. Attendance, time, date and place of meeting
2. Regular or called meeting
3. Record of reports made and filed
4. Record of motions made, carried or lost
5. List of items referred to Committees or deferred
6. List of any Presidential appointments.

Forms for Board minutes are available from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.). The forms are punched to fit the Secretary-Treasurer's portfolio. Consult *Optimist International's Supply Catalog* for quantities and prices.

The President and Secretary-Treasurer should review the rough minutes immediately after the conclusion of the meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer should type the minutes and provide copies to all Board members. They can be sent one week before the next Board meeting as a reminder of the meeting.

The form is titled "OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING" and includes a logo for "OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL". It contains a checklist of items to be recorded in the minutes, such as "Meeting called to Order by President", "Roll Call", "Remarks by President", "Reading of Minutes of Previous Meeting (and Their Approval)", "Report of Secretary-Treasurer", "Reading of Communications", "Report of Committees", "Unfinished Business", "New Business", and "Adjournment". There are also fields for "OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL", "OPTIMIST CLUB of \_\_\_\_\_", "Hold its regular Board Meeting at \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_", "Meeting was called to order at \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_", and "who acted as chairperson, with the following Board Members present: \_\_\_\_\_". A line for "Secretary-Treasurer" is at the bottom right. The form is labeled "MINUTES OF MEETING" in the center.

# Membership Retention – The Ultimate Bottom Line

---

Because of major advances in communications and computer technology, the effects of world trends are now felt immediately by individuals as well as corporations that belong to membership organizations.

Members don't exist in a vacuum, but rather in a constantly changing world. You need to know what your members value about their membership and how their needs are changing to be able to respond in a meaningful way. It's simple: If you cannot respond, some other organization will be ready to fulfill those unmet needs.

An interesting paradox surrounds first-year members. While the first year of membership offers the best opportunity to lay the foundation for long-term loyalty to your Club, it's also the year that members are most likely to leave your Club.

Since the early 1990s, corporate America has shifted its emphasis from obtaining new customers to retaining current customers. This shift is not just for "warm fuzzy" reasons. They do it because it is good business.

Consider the frequent flyer programs and clubs introduced by every airline. Retention is the motivation behind the acquisition of customer loyalty, customer relations, and building customer relationships. Many of these types of programs use the term "member" or "membership" because it appears to have a significant amount of perceived loyalty from the individual customer. American Express has used the slogan "Membership has its privileges."

Is it a "privilege" to be a member of your Club? Some hints to retention of Club members:

- Retention starts with recruitment.
- When you lose a member, you must recruit two in order to show growth.
- Renewal is only the last step in the long process of retention.
- Members are neither identical nor interchangeable.
- Pay special attention to new members so they will convert to lifetime members.

Whether you are focusing on first- or second-year members, take the time to find out what each member wants from his or her Club. When new members feel they are getting a lot out of their Club, they will be more willing to dive deeper into their participation and commit to remaining a member for years to come.

## Raising Attendance

---

Poor attendance and excessive losses are symptoms of the same problems. Steps to improve one usually improve the other. The Membership Committee's method of enrolling and

involving new members, an active Fellowship Committee, and good meeting programs have a beneficial effect upon attendance and member tenure. Correcting the basic problems requires broad perspective and action not available to Club Committees. A Club's Board of Directors is uniquely suited to make necessary evaluations and initiate corrective actions. Correcting basic underlying problems is far more important than quick cures and simple answers.

There are many reasons for losing members. A small fraction of the losses is uncontrollable; that is, they can't be prevented. Most uncontrollable losses fall into one of the following categories:

1. death
2. economics
3. health
4. military service
5. business conflicts
6. moving from community

Historically, we lose 20% of our membership each year. This is especially significant when the high mobility of today's citizens is considered.

JUST ASK! The number one reason people become Optimist Members is someone asked them.

Controllable losses can be remedied once the reasons for them have been discovered. The effective Board will concentrate on dealing with controllable losses and will avoid wasting energy and time trying to solve uncontrollable losses.

A frank analysis of Club practices and procedures will reveal reasons that fall into a few broad categories. Depending upon the Board's willingness to take action and effect improvements, all categories are manageable.

## Controllable Losses

---

### Club Leadership

*Failure to assign responsibility*

*Old-timers usurp leadership*

*Internal politics*

*President operates one-person administration*

Club leadership problems are immediately corrected by applying the right remedial measures. An effective President will distribute responsibilities to give more members the opportunity for service and recognition. The President must understand the type of organization he or she leads and recognize the reasons individuals join, and must provide opportunities for all members to use their talents and leadership skills.

## Club Activity

*Service activities program too narrow; lacks variety*  
*Absence of service opportunities*  
*Too much time or work required*  
*Neglect of Club objectives*  
*Lack of social affairs*  
*No activities including spouses/families*

The Club activity category offers ample opportunity for corrective measures. The Club with a wide variety of activities will motivate a greater number of members than the Club with limited projects. Without activity a Club's membership will soon diminish to the few who joined simply to belong to something.

Most members will object to too much work, ticket selling or fund raising. Share assignments and responsibilities to prevent resentment and ill-feeling.

Overcoming inactivity will revitalize a Club and make it an integral part of a progressive community, give current members pride in membership and motivate other individuals in the community to join.

## Club Meeting

*No programs or poor programs*  
*Business at meetings*  
*Lack of punctuality in starting and adjourning*  
*Poor meals or service*  
*Less than desirable meeting place*

Problems in this category are easily corrected. Varied, interesting and meaningful meeting programs are the key. Experience and falling attendance figures prove that the absence of meeting programs is sufficient in itself to cause a Club's eventual downfall.

Another factor affecting attendance is meeting punctuality. A member may refuse to attend if meetings consistently start late and run overtime.

The meeting place, location and menu are also important factors affecting attendance and tenure. Optimist International's recommended policy on meeting places and use of alcoholic beverage was established to maintain a good public image for every Club.

## Education and Orientation

*Members not acquainted with Club objectives*  
*Lack of proper orientation for new members*  
*Lack of opportunity for participation*  
*Absence of, or poor, induction ceremony*  
*No assignments of new members to Committees*

Establish a routine for making each new member a part of Club activity. This will result in more members becoming active, interested and proud participants in the Club's operation. Too often the working, dedicated member acquired these qualities by accident. An annual indoctrination for all members is a good procedure with many benefits.

## Personal Objections

*Personal slight or embarrassment of members*  
*Dislike of Club officers*  
*Lack of recognition for efforts*  
*Lack of fellowship*

Various kinds of personal objections contribute to membership loss. They are seldom voiced; the very nature of the reason inhibits the individual. Members may excuse their resignations with a claim of lost interest, little time or business conflicts.

The Board should create policies and practices that will reduce, if not eliminate, the chance of insult or embarrassment of members. Even the most playful ridicule may cause the loss of a member. Club officers should constantly watch their relationships with members. The President should strive to seek the friendship and confidence of every member. Fellowship is the keystone of Optimist Club membership.

## Financial

*Objection to fining practice*  
*Fines too high*  
*Expensive meals*  
*Excessive demand for cash contributions from members*

Financial objections occasionally cause member losses. Excessive fining and frequent demands for cash contributions are the leading objections. They are best eliminated by an adequate dues structure and a successful fund raising project. Optimist International has established minimum dues and fees to provide adequate administrative funds. Club leaders should realize that costs are a factor in members' tenure and attempt to prevent unusual, unexpected financial demands.

## Board Action

If the disenchantment of members is to be checked, the Board must take remedial action. The only alternative is continued membership decline and eventual disintegration of the Club. There is no excuse for this! There are strong, active Clubs everywhere that set splendid examples of what can be accomplished with the proper approach to preventing controllable losses.

## New Member Induction

---

Club leaders have many responsibilities. One of the most heartwarming is the induction of new members. The proper induction of new members is not only a responsibility, but a real privilege.

The Club may want to order a supply of New Member Kits to keep on hand so new members can be inducted quickly after the Board has approved their membership. When the Club Roster Adjustment is processed at the International office, the New Member Kit(s) shipped to the Club can then be used to replace the ones that were used.

Each new member is entitled to a proper induction. It is the President's responsibility to schedule the induction as soon as possible after the new member has been accepted by the Board. The following procedure for the induction of new members has been developed by the Optimist International Membership Committee.

## **New Member Induction and Pledge**

---

1. President schedules meeting for induction and advises the Club Secretary-Treasurer who notifies all participants and gathers necessary supplies. Participants should include: the new member(s), the President, the sponsor(s), the Secretary-Treasurer, and the Membership Chair.
2. Sponsor(s) notifies new member(s) and reviews the procedure with the new member(s). Make sure each new member knows what to do, and when.
3. At the start of the ceremony the President introduces the new member(s).
4. Membership Chair introduces the sponsor(s).
5. Each sponsor introduces his/her new member. An introduction should include a brief (approx. 2 min.) biography.
6. The Membership Chair then responds:

"This occasion marks the beginning of your opportunity for participating through fellowship and friendship, in the activities of your Club on behalf of your community. Through your personal service as an Optimist you will have the opportunity to help repay, in various ways, the debt we all owe our community for the privilege of enjoying its many benefits. You will learn the Optimist Creed and its significance, a genuine challenge to the life of all men and women. You will be inspired by our slogan, "Friend of Youth."

In all these things we seek to make our indelible mark on the life, progress and welfare of our communities, our nation and our peoples. But only by your regular attendance at meetings, and active participation in your Club's activities, can you be rewarded with a fuller life and the self-satisfaction that comes to each of us as we serve our community and its youth.

We therefore ask, as we admit you to the fellowship of Optimism, if you too, will join our company, our friendship and our fellowship, in efforts to strive toward these objectives. If you do, please answer, "I DO."

7. The President invites the new member to pledge loyalty to the Club with the following pledge:

*"I \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby pledge/ that I will do my best/ at all times/ to live by the spirit of the Optimist Creed/ and I will also give of my time / and talents / as generously as possible / to support the activities / of my Club / my District / and Optimist International."*

8. The President affixes the lapel pin to the new member's lapel and declares:

"Now, being aware of the responsibilities, opportunities and privileges available to you as a member, on behalf of the officers and members of the Sponsor Club, the \_\_\_\_\_ District and Optimist International, I am happy to offer you my hand of Optimist Friendship. We are happy to have you as a member."

9. The sponsor presents the new member with a New Member (Welcome) Kit, explaining that the kit contains valuable information about Optimist International and the new Club.
10. The Secretary-Treasurer presents the new member with a membership card and certificate.
11. The President invites all members to welcome the new member warmly with a round of applause as the President shakes hands with the new member.

At the end of the meeting, the new member and the sponsor should position themselves at the door to greet Club members.

# 3 Club President

You will want to assume the most important office in your Optimist Club with enthusiasm and the desire to make your administrative year the best in Club history. You can, if you begin planning now.

1. Study this handbook carefully; it provides the procedures for successful Club operation.
2. Learn the rules under which your Club operates.
  - a. Review the Club's Bylaws to see if they are up-to-date and consistent with Optimist International Bylaws. Section XIV provides the method of amendment. A copy of your Club's last-known Bylaws can be obtained from the International Office. Also available on request from the International Office are copies of the Standard Club Bylaws and the Constitution and Bylaws of Optimist International.
  - b. Review Club policies to see if revisions should be made. Suggested policies are in this handbook.
3. Use an organization structure that will allow your Club to operate the most efficiently. This handbook contains a section on Club organization.
4. Ask each member of your Club to complete a *Member Interest Finder* to help you determine appointments for Committees and Club activities (available at [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org)).
5. Observe the operation of other Optimist Clubs. Good ideas can be used and poor practices avoided.
6. Meet with the outgoing Club President to receive important materials. The Past Club President will have valuable information and insights into Club operations.
7. Make general plans for a year's calendar of events. The Optimist International pocket calendar should be used as a basis. Include International and District dates as well as plans for your Club.
8. Conduct a meeting with outgoing Committee Chairs and new Committee Chairs. The Past Chair's files and records should be given to the new Chairs. Discuss Committee methods and the activities of each Committee.
9. Review parliamentary procedure. You will need to know the basics well enough to conduct business easily. *Robert's Rules of Order* is used except where Club Bylaws set other procedures.
10. Meet with the Club President-Elect, Vice Presidents and Secretary-Treasurer to be sure each understands their job, as well as Club organization and procedures.
11. Have the Secretary-Treasurer order any materials needed for officers and Committee Chairs.
12. Be prepared to have the Annual Club Planning Conference early in the year. Information on this Conference is on page 51 under the topic, "The Lieutenant Governor."

## Your Responsibilities

---

As your Club's Chief Executive Officer you have the following responsibilities:

1. Preside at Club meetings
2. Preside at meetings of the Board of Directors
3. Serve as a member of your District's Board of Directors and represent your Club at each District and Zone meeting.
4. Be sure Club reports are
  - a. Prepared by the Secretary-Treasurer
  - b. Presented at Board meetings (sending the copies to the Lieutenant Governor, District Secretary-Treasurer, Governor and Optimist International should not be delayed)
  - c. Submitted on time.
5. Appoint Standing Committees, project Committees and certain individuals.

## Office of Club President-Elect

---

The Club President-Elect serves on the Board of Directors and presides over meetings and acts in the capacity of the President when the President is absent.

## Your Appointments

---

Although others may make suggestions, the ultimate responsibility for appointments is yours.

When making appointments, sell the importance of the responsibility and the contribution that can be made. Be frank in stating that some time will be required. Stress the rewards of accomplishment, and tell the appointee that you made your selection because of your belief in this person's ability to handle the activity successfully.

As much as possible, try to avoid duality in making appointments. The Vice Presidents should not be Committee Chairs; they act as liaison between the Board and groups of Committees. You nor the Secretary-Treasurer should serve as a regular member of any Committee. Board members should be Committee Chairs only in the smallest Club or if the right person cannot be found among the other members.

At the beginning of your year make the following appointments:

1. Individuals
  - a. Secretary-Treasurer (Must be approved by the Board of Directors)
  - b. Sergeant-at-Arms (May serve as Fellowship Committee Chair)
  - c. Chaplain (Optional, need not be a clergyman)
  - d. Parliamentarian (Optional)
  - e. Club Foundation Representative
  - f. Club Director of Personal Growth
  - g. Club Services Coordinator
2. Standing Committees
  - a. Community Service
  - b. Fellowship
  - c. Finance
  - d. Membership
  - e. New Club Building
  - f. Program
  - g. Public Relations
  - h. JOOI Youth Clubs

Special (project) Committees may be appointed for such activities as Oratorical Contest, Essay Contest, Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH), Optimist Youth Safety Program, Respect for Law/Day of Non-Violence, Junior Golf Championships, Tri-Star Sports Skills Contest, and Youth Appreciation Week. Special Committees are appointed, and the projects are conducted after the Standing Committees have investigated and approved specific projects.

New members should be appointed to assist the Fellowship Committee in greeting members and guests. Acting as greeters for three or four meetings will help new members become active in the Club and get acquainted with fellow members much more quickly. New members should be appointed to Standing and Special (project) Committees as soon as possible.

## Your Relationship To:

---

### Club Members

Establishing a good relationship with Club members can be summed up in one sentence: "Show sincere interest, give each member your complete attention and let all members know that you value them as individuals."

### Guests And Prospective Members

Special attention should be given to the treatment of guests and prospective members who visit Club activities. Ensure that guests are greeted properly, given a warm welcome and made to feel "at home" with the group. Be certain that guests are introduced during the meeting (see Club Meeting Agenda outline in the Club Meetings section of this book.) Most Clubs give complimentary meals to first-time guests and prospective members. During the week following a guest's visit, the host should follow up with a note and a copy of the Club Bulletin. Make each guest's visit to your Club a pleasant and memorable one.

### Club Officers

Know the responsibilities of each of your fellow officers. They have their own responsibilities, but they function best as a part of your team.

### The District

As a member of your District's Board of Directors, you can provide strength and leadership to the District as well as your Club. You should also establish a close working relationship with your Lieutenant Governor. Since the Lieutenant Governor's primary responsibility is to provide aid and counsel to the Clubs in a particular Zone, you should not hesitate to ask for assistance or advice.

### The Community

Much of the community's attitude toward your Club will be determined by how well you represent the Club. Be sure the community knows your Club can be depended upon to serve.

Offer your cooperation to Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, charitable groups, and other civic and service organizations. Treat members of these groups with respect and courtesy. Make commitments only if you will follow through. The Club must be known as an organization that keeps its word.

Assume the functions of a Chamber of Commerce only if none exists in your community and only if the Club has the resources to do a completely professional job.



## Your Materials

---

Publications and minutes are the tools of your office.

Organize and keep the following:

1. This handbook
2. *The Optimist* magazine
3. *Optimist Leadership Hotline* (this monthly email publication from the International Office will furnish indispensable help with Club administration, leadership tips and organization news)
4. District publications
5. Club publications
6. Club Committee reports
7. Board meeting minutes
8. Rosters with names, addresses and phone numbers:
  - a. Club members
  - b. Board members
  - c. Committee members.
9. Club letterhead and envelopes
10. Your Club's Bylaws and Policies (standard form available from Optimist International)
11. *Robert's Rules of Order* (Available from Shumsky)
12. Club Foundation Representative Booklet (for CFR).

A Club President's Notebook to organize your materials is available from Shumsky.

## Materials

---

### Regularly Scheduled Publications

**Leadership Hotline** - Monthly issues to all Club Presidents and District leadership via email.

**The Torch** - Three issues a year to District JOOI officers, Club Sponsors, Advisors and District JOOI Club Chairs. It is also available on the Fax-on-Demand Document Retrieval System and the Optimist International website.

**The Optimist Magazine** - 4 issues per year to all members.

### Additional Mailings:

#### June

*President-Elect Packet*

*Secretary-Treasurer Envelope*

#### April

(Mailed to Club Secretary-Treasurers)

*Officer-Elect Report*

*Club Roster Adjustment Form*

You will also receive a Membership Roster semi-annually.

## Your Leadership Techniques

---

The pace you set will be the pace your Club acquires. Your fellow officers and Club members will follow you. Your own contagious enthusiasm will be a key to success. The following leadership techniques will aid in accomplishing your goals:

1. Be tactful; remember you are working with busy people
2. Follow up; members will appreciate your interest
3. Start with easily accomplished projects; victory inspires greater efforts
4. Help when needed, but do not take personal credit
5. Be pleasant and friendly; smile, shake hands and show sincere interest
6. Be prompt to all meetings; set the example
7. Develop team leadership; one person cannot do all that must be done
8. Reward good work; praise in public (criticize only when absolutely necessary and in private)
9. Give each person a job; people join to be involved
10. Do your best; no one will ask for more.

## Your First Club Meeting

---

The first Club meeting in October officially begins your year. In addition to the items on the regular agenda, include these points:

1. Make a brief report on the International and/or District Convention
2. Announce changes, if any, in policies set by the Board of Directors
3. Announce all appointments
4. Announce goals and programs for the year.

## Your First Board Meeting

---

In addition to regular business, include the following items at your first Board meeting:

1. Approve appointment of Secretary-Treasurer
2. Authorize signatures for checking account(s)
3. Review duties and responsibilities of Club Directors
4. Establish your objectives for the year
5. Review previous year's final statement of receipts and disbursements
6. Approve the budget for the coming year
7. Review Club policies
8. Consider referrals from previous Board.



# Club Vice President

In an Optimist Club, a Vice President is responsible for counseling the Committees assigned by the President. A Vice President has the responsibilities usually associated with the office of Vice President. Two Vice Presidents of equal rank (not numbered) are recommended. In order to effectively counsel the Committees and perform other duties, a Vice President should not be the Chair of a Committee.

Vice Presidents do not ascend automatically to the Presidency. The Nominating Committee will select nominees for each office and Directorship from among all Club members.

The Vice President serves his/her Club in the following capacities:

1. As a member of the Club's Board of Directors:
  - a. Understands the operation and responsibility of the Board
  - b. Functions in the same manner as any other voting Director.
2. As a counselor for a group of Committees:
  - a. Understands the Club organization structure and the responsibilities and procedures for each of the Committees
  - b. Ensures the Committees are staffed, have the necessary materials, are aware of pertinent information and function in the proper manner
  - c. Makes sure Committee Chairs are well prepared for Committee meetings
  - d. Provides behind-the-scenes guidance to the Committees
  - e. Assists Chairs with written reports for the Board
  - f. Meets with the Committees; when necessary, gives needed assistance
  - g. Notes ability of Committee members; recommends talented ones for future responsibilities.
3. As liaison, a Vice President should be aware of plans and actions and convey pertinent information among the Committees, the President and the Board.
4. A Vice President should:
  - a. Be familiar with agenda planning for Club and Board meetings as suggested in this handbook
  - b. Know basic parliamentary procedures.
5. As assistant to the President, the Vice President can:
  - a. Help plan the agenda for Board meetings, giving particular attention to plans and actions of a particular group of Committees
  - b. Learn the general duties of all Club officers and Committees in order to substitute as may be required
  - c. Act as a sounding board for the President, listen to ideas and plans, and advise when possible
  - d. Accept any special assignments presented by the President.

# 5 Club Secretary-Treasurer

**(This section and sections on Dues Collection, Club Budget and Finances, and Reports have been included in the Club Secretary-Treasurer Answer Book.)**

You have been selected to serve in one of the most important offices in your Club. Much of your Club's success will depend upon you. By planning carefully and by taking care of items of business as they occur, your duties will take a minimum of time. Doing the following before your term begins will help ensure your success:

1. Study this handbook
2. Meet with your predecessor, discuss and collect:
  - a. Minutes of Club and Board meetings
  - b. Rosters
  - c. Correspondence
  - d. Checkbooks
  - e. Financial records
  - f. Club reports
  - g. Club Bulletins
  - h. Club Bylaws and Policies
  - i. Club charter
  - j. Incorporation papers
  - k. Budget
3. Become familiar with your Club's financial status and procedures:
  - a. Optimist International fees and dues
  - b. District dues
  - c. Club membership fees and dues
  - d. Purchasing procedure
  - e. Petty cash fund (if any)
  - f. Outstanding debts
  - g. Audit of last year's books
  - h. Approved signatures on bank account(s)
4. Learn Club's attendance rules
5. Learn Optimist International and District reporting procedures
6. Confer with the President-Elect to plan the year's work.

## Your Responsibilities

---

1. Prepare Optimist International and District reports and mail as required
2. Collect reports of each month's activities from Committee Chairs
3. Keep records of Club meetings
4. When required, prepare and file, before February 15, "Form 990" (U.S. Clubs only, see page 37)
5. Participate in meetings of Club Board of Directors
6. Collect money due Club
7. Issue checks for bills approved by the Board
8. Order Club supplies
9. Maintain financial records
10. Maintain membership records
11. Maintain attendance and awards records
12. Handle Club correspondence
13. Attend Zone and District meetings
14. Advise Fellowship Committee of those absent from Club meetings
15. File annual renewal of the Club's incorporation.

## Your Materials

---

You are the custodian of all Club records and materials not otherwise provided for by action of the Board of Directors. You will need files for the following:

1. Optimist *Leadership Hotline* and other Optimist International publications
2. District publications
3. Correspondence
4. Club Bylaws and Policies
5. Club Bulletins
6. Club reports (completed and upcoming)
7. Unpaid invoices and statements
8. Paid bills, canceled checks and bank statements
9. Records of Club meetings
10. Minutes of Board meetings
11. Roster (including names, addresses, phone numbers, classifications, birthdays)
12. Committee assignments
13. Attendance records
14. Financial records.

Items 9 through 14 can be easily maintained in the Secretary-Treasurer's portfolio available from Shumsky. If your Club has not purchased this helpful portfolio, request purchase authorization from your Board of Directors.

## Separate Secretary and Treasurer

---

Some Clubs prefer to separate the duties of the Secretary and the Treasurer. The duties of these separate offices are as follows:

### Secretary:

The Secretary shall keep and maintain the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors, business meetings, and maintain all records of membership, attendance and service to the Club in the form and manner prescribed by the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall also prepare and file all reports required by Optimist International and the District administration and generally perform such duties as are ordinarily incumbent upon a Secretary.

### Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain all records of fees, dues and monies collected and disbursed and submit regular financial statements in the form, manner and frequency prescribed by the Board of Directors; prepare an annual statement for the annual meeting of the Club; and generally perform such duties as are ordinarily incumbent upon a Treasurer.

The Club Board of Directors can amend or expand these duties as needed, as long as they are within the guidelines of International and Standard Club Bylaws.

## Your Role in Relation To:

---

### Board Meetings

The President will value your help in preparing the agenda for each monthly Board meeting. The agenda should be sent to Board members as a meeting reminder and to inform them of the scheduled business. Include the agenda in the Bulletin published prior to the Board meeting. Before each Board meeting, gather bills, letters, Club reports, announcements, Committee reports and other information for presentation to the Board.

#### At the meeting you will:

1. Read minutes of last meeting
2. Keep minutes
3. Present bills for approval
4. Present complete financial report
5. Read names of prospective members for vote (after required screening)
6. Ask Board approval of members to be dropped.

### Club Meetings

You should be seated near the President at Club meetings. Be aware of the agenda, make required announcements and help the President keep the meeting moving smoothly.

The President will prepare an agenda for each Club meeting. After the meeting he/she should give the agenda to you for your record of Club meetings. Unless there is official business (motions made and voted upon), this agenda can suffice for Club meeting records. If business is transacted, exact minutes must be kept.

### New Members

All membership forms are to be submitted to you. Record the necessary information and give the form to the Chair of the Membership Committee for screening. When the proposed member has been screened, you are to identify him or her to the Club and read his or her name at a Board meeting for action. After a prospect has been approved and has accepted the invitation to join, be sure the membership form is completed and returned to you. You also collect the membership fee, the appropriate amount of dues and complete all of your records. **Report this new member to Optimist International immediately on the Club Roster Adjustment form. Be sure to include the processing fee.**

## Dues Collection

The collection of Club dues is not the sole responsibility of the Club Secretary-Treasurer, but the obligation of the Club's Board of Directors assisted by its Finance Chair.

The Club's Bylaws and Policies provide the ground rules for the scheduling of the dues billing. A discussion of the status of the dues collections must be an item on the agenda of the monthly meetings of the Board of Directors. As a general rule, a member's becoming delinquent in the payment of Club dues is preceded by absence from Club meetings, failure to accept invitations to social affairs and lack of participation in community-serving activities. Constant attention to the above indicators of the loss of interest by the member and taking prompt remedial action by offering involvement in the Club through an invitation to attend a Board meeting, assignment as Chair of a Committee, solicitation of delinquent members, or asking for an opinion of the Club's operation over a cup of coffee with the President may reduce the number of dues collection problems.

Along with the need for the Board of Directors to be aware of the status of each member's dues obligation is the inherent responsibility of the Secretary-Treasurer to promptly submit dues statements to the membership in accordance with the bylaws and policies of the Club.

Once the member's dues become past due, a three-letter collection plan is offered. The suggested letters should be "tailored" to the personality of those who are the authors.

The three-letter plan will never be as efficient as a personal contact by the President, Secretary-Treasurer, or Finance Chair through a phone call or personal visit. Consequently, if the letters fail to provide the desired results, a personal contact by the President several days after the third letter is a must.

Suggested letters appear on this page and the following one. The dates shown on the three samples indicate the sequence of the mailing of them.

### **Optimist Club Of Anytown** **Affiliated With Optimist International**

August 30,

Mr. John Doe, Member  
Optimist Club of Anytown  
123 Main Street  
Anytown, Anywhere

Dear John:

I have just come from our Club meeting and want you to know that we again missed you. Your friendly smile and your presence contributes something to the Club that no other member can replace. Your absence leaves a vacuum that your fellow members feel. Why not join us next Monday at noon?

By the way, did you misplace the dues statement that Secretary Ed sent you? If so, I am enclosing a duplicate copy, and for your convenience, there is a stamped, addressed envelope.

We will be looking for you on Monday. Please join us!

Optimistically Yours,

Harry Brown  
President

**Optimist Club Of Anytown**  
Affiliated With Optimist International

September 10,

Mr. John Doe, Member  
Optimist Club Of Anytown  
123 Main Street  
Anytown, Anywhere

Dear John:

As Finance Chair of our Club, I feel a great responsibility to the Club for its financial condition. There was an expression of confidence in me when I was selected, and among other things, I was given the duty of keeping the Club's finances strong and healthy.

As of today, your check for your dues has not been received. The Club counts on your friendship and support to accomplish its activities and projects.

As you know, it costs money to pay for meals for our speakers, the rental of the audio/visual equipment, the printing and mailing of our Bulletins, etc.

Your check will complete payment of your dues.

Since you may have lost your dues statement, I am enclosing another and an envelope for your reply. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours In Optimism,

Paul D. Brooks, Chair

**Optimist Club Of Anytown**  
Affiliated With Optimist International

September 20,

Mr. John Doe, Member  
Optimist Club of Anytown  
123 Main Street  
Anytown, Anywhere

Dear John:

At its meeting, the Board of Directors instructed me to notify those members who have not paid their past due Club dues that they will be deleted from the Club's membership if they have not paid their dues prior to September 30.

The Bylaws of the Club require that we follow the procedure of deleting current members who have not paid their dues.

Nearly every member of the Club has paid his/her dues, and we are striving for 100 percent participation. I vividly recall your many contributions to the Club and Anytown. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Ed Graves  
Secretary-Treasurer

# Club Meetings

## Attendance Records

## Club Meeting Minutes

## Club Meeting Agenda

A good Club meeting is the result of careful planning and enthusiastic leadership. In addition to providing fellowship and an interesting program, the Club meeting is the most effective means of promoting the Club's goals. The President, the Program Committee and the Fellowship Committee should work together to make each Club meeting successful.

Meetings will vary according to the nature of the program and the items covered on a specific day. In fact, some variety is desirable; it helps keep the meetings from becoming stereotyped.

A preplanned agenda helps keep the meeting moving. It assures members that the President has given thought to each meeting and prevents overlooking anything. The agenda should be given to the Secretary-Treasurer after each meeting to help with record keeping.

Every other month, the President should ask the Public Relations Chair to report on the new issue of *The Optimist*. This report should not be a résumé of the articles in the magazine. Rather, articles of interest to the general membership, Club officers, and Committees should be pointed out. This would include ideas for service and fund raising projects and information on the International Convention, International recognition and programs.

The President must seek to keep Club meetings at peak efficiency. The following should be used to evaluate each Club meeting:

1. Did the meeting begin and end on time?
2. Was there member participation in various facets of the meeting?
3. Was the program worthwhile?
4. Did the meeting evoke some fun and fellowship?
5. Did the various facets of the agenda move on time and with efficiency?

## Attendance

---

Attendance and guests can be determined easily by using Attendance Blanks available from Shumsky. The Fellowship Committee Chair might have the blanks completed as members and guests arrive, then give them to the President to use for introduction of guests.

## Club Meeting Minutes

---

Actual minutes of Club meetings are necessary only when official business is conducted (usually limited to election of officers, amendment of Bylaws or approval of fund raising methods). Ordinarily, the President's agenda (forms are available from Shumsky) can become an informal record of Club meetings.

## Model Club Meeting Agenda

	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Luncheon</u>	<u>Dinner</u>	
1	7:45	12:15	6:30	Call to order by presiding officer
2	7:46	12:16	6:31	Invocation and pledge of allegiance or toast to Canada, Jamaica, etc.
3	7:47	12:17	6:32	Meal Service
4	8:07	12:37	6:52	Introduction of guests
5	8:10	12:40	6:55	Induction and/or introduction of new members
6	8:13	12:43	6:58	Introduction of members with birthdays
7	8:15	12:45	7:00	Reading of new member proposals
8	8:20	12:50	7:05	Special Committee announcements
9	8:27	12:57	7:12	Introduction of guest speaker or program
10	8:28	12:58	7:13	Speaker
11	8:53	1:23	7:38	Thanks or response to speaker
12	8:55	1:25	7:40	Announcement of next week's program
13	8:56	1:26	7:41	Drawing for door prize
14	8:57	1:27	7:42	Unison reading of the Optimist Creed
15	9:00	1:30	7:45	Adjournment

### Consider the following when developing an agenda:

1. Call to Order. Start the meeting on time.
2. Invocation. Often given by a minister, but any member is equally appropriate. This is followed by the Pledge to the flag, singing of the National Anthem or toast to Optimists of all nations.
3. Meal Service. This time may also be used for free discussion and fellowship.
4. Introduction of Guests. Information for this should be obtained by the Fellowship Committee and furnished to the President. The President may call upon members to introduce their guests. Attendance blanks should be given to all members and visitors. Guests should be welcomed at the door and asked to sign the guest register.
5. Induction and/or Introduction of New Members. A new member enjoys being recognized at the first few meetings. This is also the time to induct new members. Induction ceremony is on page 12 of this handbook.
6. Introduction of Members with Birthdays. Everyone likes to be wished a happy birthday. Some Clubs sing a birthday greeting for their members. Once a month, members who have birthdays during that month could be assigned to a special table with a cake.
7. Reading of New Member Proposals. This acquaints all members with the names of those being considered for membership and complies with the procedure outlined in Article IV of the Standard Club Bylaws.
8. Committee Announcements. Announcements must be brief. Prior to the meeting, Chairs who desire to make announcements should ask the President for time. No business of any kind should be entertained by the Chair. If such occurs, it should immediately be referred to a Committee or the Board.
9. Introduction of Speaker or Program. This item is the responsibility of the Program Committee. Introductions are not speeches. Be brief and show familiarity with the speaker and the subject. Many Clubs rise to greet the speaker. It relaxes members of the audience, affords the opportunity for the rearrangement of Chairs and gives the speaker an opportunity to place his/her notes and collect his/her thoughts.
10. Speaker's Address or Program. Attentiveness and quiet should prevail throughout this portion of the meeting. All movement should be restrained. Nothing is more distracting to a speaker than having someone walking around the room or carrying on conversations while the speaker is speaking.
11. The Response. This portion of the program also should be brief and to the point. The Program Committee has an excellent opportunity to encourage personal participation by Club members. Arrange to have different members rise at each meeting and thank the speaker.
12. Announcement of Next Week's Program. The Program Committee member must be tactful in reference to comparative qualities of programs. He/she should never say, "Next week's program will be the best ever." Give time for any new member to go to the door before adjournment and be ready to greet members as they leave.
13. Drawing for Door Prize. Placing the drawing at this point on the agenda encourages members to remain for the program. Members could take turns bringing the door prize. Some item that is representative of the donor's business is especially appropriate. These should not be expensive items, nor should they come from individuals other than the Club members.
14. The Optimist Creed. Do not overlook the potential impact of the Creed.
15. Adjourn. On time.



# Club Budget and Finances

**Fees and Dues**

**Life Membership**

**International President's Award**

**Club Budget**

**Fund Raising**

**Financial Records**

**I.R.S. Form 990**

Adequate financial records are as important to an Optimist Club as to a business. The Secretary-Treasurer should establish financial records that are easily understood. All financial transactions are to be reported to the Board of Directors each month. Those Clubs using the Secretary-Treasurer's portfolio, recommended and stocked by Shumsky, have a readily available, adequate and efficient record system. Use of this portfolio will eliminate the need to purchase other bookkeeping forms.

## Club Fees And Dues

---

Clubs shall establish membership fees and annual dues in their Bylaws in accordance with minimum requirements as provided in Optimist International Bylaws. Individual Clubs may establish fees and dues higher than these minimum figures, but not less. The Model Club Budget (pages 26, 27 and 28) is based upon a membership fee of \$40 and dues of \$78. Clubs may elect to reduce the membership fee for former members, but not less than the minimum as provided in the Optimist International Bylaws.

A proposed member should be apprised of dues payment structure and procedures. Since the Club is required to pay District and International dues and fees in advance, Club dues should be advance payments. All members must understand the Club's financial obligations and policies. This will minimize collection problems, reduce deletions and create stability in Club finances.

A member's dues (or any portion of them) are not considered as a charitable deduction in the calculation of tax liability on federal or state personal income tax returns. Dues are **NOT** deductible under the 501(c)(4) exemption granted to Clubs and Districts on July 30, 1958.

As a general rule, if a Club maintains its youth work or community-service activities in a separate account and none of the funds are used for the regular activities of the Club, but only for exempt purposes, then application may be made by the Club to Optimist International to form a Club Foundation under section 501(c)(3) exemption. If the exemption is granted, donations made to this separate organization are considered to be charitable deductions of the donor for income tax purposes, subject to the percentage limitations under the Internal Revenue Code. For additional information call the International Office and ask for extension 276.

## District Dues

---

The amount of District dues is established by each District with approval by the Board of Directors of Optimist International. Details of District dues payments are available from the District Secretary-Treasurer or other District officers.

## International Fees And Dues

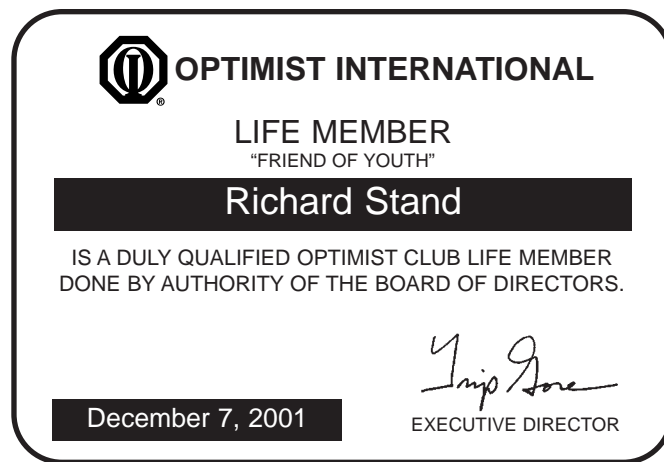
Optimist Clubs are required to pay annual dues and fees to Optimist International on a quarterly basis, based on the number of members on the Club's roster immediately prior to each billing date. Included in the payments are dues, magazine subscription, International Office Building Fund, the Club assessment for Comprehensive General Liability, currency exchange fee, and the Rose Bowl Float fee.

All Clubs shall pay their International and District financial obligations in U.S. currency, with the exception of those Clubs located in Districts wholly within national boundaries of Canada, who shall pay their District and International financial obligations in the currency of the country in which they are located.

It is imperative that each Club update its roster each time a membership change occurs (member addition, deletion, address change) using the Club Roster Adjustment form to notify Optimist International and the District.

All Optimist Clubs also are required to pay a \$15 processing fee for new members added to their rosters. The processing fee for adding transfer members is \$5. The Club Secretary-Treasurer needs to provide the member's prior Club and member number. The member must be deleted from the previous Club and added to the new Club within a year. Club Secretary-Treasurers, when submitting checks and Club Roster Adjustment forms to Optimist International for new members, should indicate that the check is for processing fees. If a new member previously became a Life Member, indicate this and the name of the Clubs in which the Life Member has held memberships.

When a Club becomes 60 days in arrears in the payment of dues and fees, a notice shall be sent by Optimist International to the Club President and the Secretary-Treasurer informing them that the Club is not in good standing. When the Club becomes 120 days in arrears, each member of the Club may be notified that the Club is not a member in good standing and revocation may be considered. After a Club becomes 150 days in arrears in the payment of dues and fees, notice of the impending revocation of the Club's charter will be sent to the President and Secretary-Treasurer of the Club.



## Life Membership

An Optimist can demonstrate his/her commitment to Optimist International and help sustain the growth and vitality of the organization by becoming a Life Member.

Any Optimist in good standing may subscribe to a Life Membership. A Club may purchase one as recognition for an Optimist. A Life Membership may be purchased as a gift for an Optimist by a friend or family member.

A letter from the member's Club may serve in place of the regular application form. Credit for the Club and District in the recognition program is granted at the time an application is accepted by Optimist International.

All applications for Life Membership must carry the name of the recipient. Upon notification, Optimist International will hold an application in confidence and direct correspondence concerning a Life Member to the person designated.

Full payment of the \$260 fee (U.S.) (10 times current annual International dues) at the time the application is sent to Optimist International will permit the entry of the member on the roster of fully paid Life Members. A Life Membership certificate and card are issued immediately. A fully paid Life Member may deduct Optimist International dues in payment of annual Club dues. Clubs are credited for each paid Life Member in the calculation of quarterly dues and fees invoice. Districts do not waive dues for Life Members. Upon notification, Optimist International will transfer a fully paid Life Membership to another Club. This applies even if the Life Member has been inactive for a length of time. The processing fee must be paid to re-enroll Life Members.

If a Life Member holds membership in more than one Club, the credit in the computation of the dues payable is restricted to only one Club by sub-section 3C of Article II of the Bylaws. Such members should pay full Club dues to all but one Club.

A minimum down payment of \$130 (U.S.) will permit the entry of the member on the roster of partially paid Life Memberships. The amount and frequency of payments are left to the discretion of the applicant or the Club, but the balance must be paid within two years. From time to time, Optimist International will notify all partially paid Life Membership subscribers of outstanding balances. This is a service, and notices should not be considered requests for payment. The Bylaws of Optimist International do not permit the refund of partial payments made toward purchases of Life Memberships. A partially paid Life Member who joins another Club may have a subscription transferred to a new Club if Optimist International is notified to that effect. The processing fee must be paid in such cases. The Life Membership certificate and card are not issued nor may dues be reduced until the subscription has been fully paid.

Replacement certificates and cards may be ordered by the Club Secretary-Treasurer from the Optimist International Membership Department.

## **Honor Club Recognition Requirement**

---

There are four options for Clubs to meet the Honor Club requirement of recognizing an outstanding Club member. The Club may choose any of the following options: 1) purchase a Life Membership, 2) purchase an International President's Recognition, 3) develop and present its own recognition or 4) purchase of Diplomat. These four options should enable a Club to meet its Honor Club requirements without causing undue financial hardship.

The Life Membership program is explained above.

The International President's Recognition materials consist of an engraved silver wallet card signed by the International President, a personalized certificate suitable for framing, and the International President's Recognition Acknowledgment. The International President's Recognition costs \$150 (US) and is payable at the time of the request. Applications are available from the Membership Department at the International Office or from the Canadian Service Centre. The purchase of this recognition fulfills the Club's Honor Club requirement for the year in which it is purchased.

The Club may also develop its own recognition. There are no limitations or stipulations on the type of recognition a Club can develop for their program. Clubs using this option are only required to have an Award Certification Document signed by an appropriate District officer, certifying that the recognition was given. Certification documents may be obtained from and returned to either the International Office or Canadian Service Centre.

The Optimist International Diplomat program was created in 1991 to help finance the expansion of Optimist Clubs worldwide. In order to become a Diplomat, members make a \$200 tax-deductible donation to the Optimist International Foundation. In return, these contributions are used expressly

and only for funding International expansion efforts. Diplomats receive a unique Diplomat number, an engraved lapel pin and a badge or a Diplomat cap. Diplomats also receive the satisfaction of helping to promote the international expansion of Optimist International around the world.

## **Club Budget**

---

Before the first meeting of the Board of Directors, a proposed, balanced budget for the coming year must be prepared. The President, Secretary-Treasurer, Finance Chair, members of the Board and the outgoing officers should meet for a planning session on the coming year's budget. The estimated needs of each Committee should be considered. The best guide for a reasonable estimate will be the final income and expense statement of the previous year. The Finance Committee is ultimately responsible for developing the budget and reviewing it during the year.

At best, a budget is a guidepost; it may be necessary to make adjustments during the year. Budget adjustments should have full Board approval and should not be made more frequently than once a quarter. When adjusted, the budget must remain in balance (i.e. bring projected expenses into line with the estimated income). Constant observation of budgeted amounts compared with actual expenses will keep the Club in good financial condition. Any variation from the adopted budget should immediately be called to the attention of the Board of Directors. Finances for administrative (non-service) activities must come only from member fees and dues and intra-Club fund raising.

When an activity requires finances, the Board should allocate the necessary funds at the same time the activity is assigned to a Committee. Finances for service projects may be taken from administrative funds or funds raised from the public. If, when an activity is assigned, the amount of finances is not determined, the Committee should prepare an estimate for Board approval. Committees must remain within the financial limitations determined by the Board.

## **Model Club Budget**

---

The collective experiences of Optimist Clubs over a period of many years are the basis for the model budget. Since the needs of Clubs vary, the budget should be adapted to fit the requirements of the individual Club. The model budget is based on a Club of 40 members with five Life Members which meets every week at noon. The figures can be easily adjusted to the size of any Club.



# Model Club Budget And Worksheet Receipts

## Model And Explanations

## Worksheet For Club Budget

1. Membership Fees (12 new members at \$40) .....\$480

Every Club should set a goal of not less than 12 new members per year.

The Club's Bylaws should be reviewed to find if fee provides sufficient income to sustain current costs. Fees may include dues for a period, such as \$40 includes dues for the month in which a new member is admitted to membership.

\_\_\_\_\_new members

at \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 1

2. Annual dues (40 members @ \$78) .....\$3,120

Less: (5 Life Members @ \$26 ) .....(\$ 130)

Annual dues of \$78 per member are a minimum for a healthy Club. Dues should be billed to the members in accordance with the Club's Bylaws, which should be studied to determine if the annual rate is realistic.

\_\_\_\_\_members

at \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 2

3. Prepaid Meals (if collected with dues) ..... \$\_\_\_\_\_

Because of varying methods of collecting for meals and the wide range of costs, no attempt has been made to make income from meals a part of the model budget. If budgeted, actual receipts become item 3.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3

4. Other Income (Describe) ..... \$110

Other income may be derived from interest, advertising in the Club Bulletin and funds raised within the Club for the benefit of the Club, such as fines, proceeds from raffles where legal, attendance prizes, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4

5. Fund Raising ..... \$\_\_\_\_\_

Most Clubs have fund-raising activities for youth and community-serving projects. These funds may be maintained in a separate budget and set of books. If a Club does not separate community-serving income and expenses, the actual income is recorded as item 5. Because of the wide range of these events and revenue, an attempt to budget this item has not been made.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5

**Total Receipts** ..... \$\_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_



# Model Club Budget And Worksheet Disbursements

## Model And Explanations

## Worksheet For Club Budget

1. A. International dues and fees (40 members @ \$33.30) . . . . . \$1332 Less: Five paid life members (5 members @ 26.00) . . . . . (\$130) Dues and fees include dues, magazine subscription, international office fund, liability insurance, currency exchange fee and Rose Bowl Float fee.	_____ members at \$ _____ = \$ _____ 1
B. Insurance per established premium (40 members @ \$6.00) . . . . . \$240	_____ members at \$ _____ = \$ _____
2. District Dues (40 members at \$10.00) . . . . . \$400 Check your own District and use the actual figure in setting the budget	_____ members at \$ _____ = \$ _____ 2
3. Processing Fees (12 new members at \$15.00) . . . . . \$180 The processing fee must accompany every enrollment. This pays for the cost of adding a name to the rolls. New member kits are sent to the Club President for all new members.	_____ new members at \$ _____ = \$ _____ 3
4. Supplies . . . . . \$125 Supply items from Shumsky or the Canadian Service Centre, including officer lapel pins, past officer plaques, attendance blanks, certificates, meeting badges, etc.	_____ 4
5. Printing and Stationery . . . . . \$100 This item includes letterhead, envelopes, promotional pieces, etc. When ordering printing, include the Club's number on letterhead and checks.	_____ 5
6. Petty Cash . . . . . \$50 Some Club Boards authorize a petty cash fund to be used by the Secretary-Treasurer. In this way, he/she will not have to write a check for or charge small items.	_____ 6
7. Optimist International Foundation Contribution at \$ _____ per member	_____ 7
8. (May be used as needed)	_____ 8
9. Postage . . . . . \$225 The high cost of postage justifies a separate item. This should include postage for Bulletins and all other mailings.	_____ 9



**OPTIMIST**  
INTERNATIONAL

# Model Club Budget And Worksheet Disbursements (continued)

Model And Explanations	Worksheet For Club Budget
10. Club Bulletin .....\$250 This amount depends upon method of production. Costs may be reduced by advertising. Postage for Bulletins is included in item #9	_____10
11. Meals .....\$200 If costs of meals are collected with dues, the total year's cost for members and guests is included. If meal costs are not collected with the dues, only complimentary meals for speakers (and special guests) should be in the item. The latter is used here.	_____11
12. Youth Activities and Community Service .....\$7,000 Most Clubs have fund raising projects to support these activities. Funds raised from the public must be used only for service projects. If a Club does not have a separate budget and set of books for these funds, they become item #12. An amount to provide only working funds is included here. The figure should be adjusted in accordance with the projects to be conducted and the funds raised.	_____12
13. Convention Delegate(s) .....\$450 Funds allocated for representation at District meetings and International Convention	_____13
14. Insurance .....\$25 Insurance over and above the comprehensive liability insurance that is provided by Optimist International for which the Club is already billed.	_____14
15. Fellowship and Hospitality .....\$75 Cards, letters or flowers on such occasions as weddings, hospitalizations, deaths, anniversaries and birthdays. Board should establish a policy. See the Policies section of Administrative Procedures.	_____15
16. Miscellaneous .....\$50 Registration as non-profit corporation, bank charges, annual audit of Club books and expenses not properly chargeable to other accounts.	_____16
17. Contingencies .....\$25	_____17
Total Disbursements .....\$	\$ _____

## Fund Raising

---

No Optimist Club can fulfill its reason for existence, service to the community, without adequate financial resources. The extent of financial requirements depends upon the nature of the Club's community-service activities. Community support can only occur if citizens are aware of the service performed by the Club.

Your Finance Committee researches and recommends fund raising projects. The selection of the right fund raising project is extremely important. With good leadership and at least 75 percent of the members behind a project, it can be successful. After a specific project has been approved, the President appoints a Committee from the Club's membership to conduct the project.

Income from fund raising projects is restricted to a Club's community serving projects, and must not be used for the Club's general expenses. Clubs are liable for admission taxes to sponsored shows, plays and similar events unless such activities are sponsored by a separate fund that has been granted an exemption by the Internal Revenue Service. Liability for state/province and local taxes should always be investigated prior to selling merchandise for fund raising purposes. All fund raising projects must comply with local, state/provincial and federal laws. Contact the Foundations regarding services that allow your Club to process these funds as a tax-deductible contribution using the Club Pass-Through Grant and Club Campaign Fund. In addition to these services, you can establish a 21st Century Endowment with the Foundations that will provide funding of your local projects for years into the future. Call the Foundations at (800) 500-8130, ext. 203 or 204 for more information.

Optimist International recommends that a Club sponsor one annual fund raising project that can attract interest year after year. The activity should have minimum financial risk and small expenses compared to the income. The *International Programs Planning Guide* should be studied before undertaking any fund raising project. This guide is available on the website.

Optimist International licenses several vendors of fund raising products to use the Optimist International logo and name on specific products. These firms and items have been reviewed by the International Finance Committee and approved by the International Board of Directors. Only these vendors have authorization to use the Optimist International logo and name on their products. Please call Optimist International for a current list of approved vendors.

If you have questions on or encounter problems with these vendors, please contact Optimist International, 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108, 800-500-8130, ext. 276.

Before becoming associated with any commercial fund raising organization, investigate thoroughly through the Better Business Bureau, the International Office, the Chamber of Commerce and police chief of the town where its last project was held. Have an attorney review all contracts before signing. Please note that the International Board of Directors has specifically prohibited the use of so called "boiler room" operations.

## Dues Billings

---

The Secretary-Treasurer bills Club members for dues. The Club's Bylaws determine the billing schedule. Although set by the Club Bylaws, this is a minimum schedule. Dues payments that cover longer periods of time are advantageous. Longer dues payment periods save time and reduce the cost of postage, statements, the number of delinquencies and collection problems. Club members are also less likely to feel they are constantly being asked for money. Members may be billed for annual dues with the understanding they may make smaller, more frequent payments set by the Club Bylaws if necessary.

Pads of statement forms are listed in the Supply Catalog and are available from Shumsky. Each statement should include the Secretary-Treasurer's name and mailing address.

Establishing the practice of never permitting members to become more than 60 days delinquent in their dues payment will benefit your Club in several ways:

1. Help establish a realistic budget
2. Provide reliable revenue
3. Encourage prompt dues payments
4. Eliminate an accumulation of uncollected dues
5. Stimulate attendance (financial investment in the Club creates the desire to participate)
6. Stabilize membership

Dues billing statements may be sent on the following schedule:

1. To all members, 15 days before dues are payable
2. To those who have not paid, 10 days after dues are payable
3. To those who still have not paid, 30 days after dues are payable.

Thirty days after dues are payable, the Secretary-Treasurer should report to the Board the number of delinquent members and give their names to the Club President and Finance Chair. The Board should decide upon and initiate appropriate action.

Sixty days after dues are payable, the Secretary-Treasurer should give the Board the names of those who still have not paid. The Standard Club Bylaws provide that members 60 days in arrears are to be suspended from membership and notified in writing. The delinquent members then have 30 days to pay their dues and request reinstatement.

# MEMBERSHIP DUES STATEMENT

## OPTIMIST CLUB

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Affiliated with Optimist International

Membership Fee ..... Dues For _____ Month Ending ..... Other: _____  Remit to: _____	          <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; width: 80px; text-align: center;">TOTAL</div>
--	---

NOT TAX DEDUCTIBLE

SUP2414(200) PRINTED IN USA

If delinquent members have not paid their dues after the 30-day grace period, the Secretary-Treasurer should ask the Board for authority to remove their names from the roster. The members being removed are to be notified. This orderly process will result in better membership retention because action is taken before a member becomes hopelessly behind with his/her dues.

Several factors should be considered when a member becomes delinquent:

- The names of delinquent members are not for publication
- The Finance Committee and the President may be given a detailed statement of delinquent members and amounts due.
- Circumstances contributing to delinquency should be considered in order to reach a fair and judicious decision.
- The Board may authorize appropriate action to collect delinquent dues.

## Member Records

Financial records for members can be easily maintained on the *Member Record Form*. These forms are punched to fit the Secretary-Treasurer's three-ring binder.

## Cash Receipts Form

This form is available for the Secretary-Treasurer's three-ring binder. See sample on page 31.



## CASH RECEIPTS

DATE	FROM WHOM	Memb. Fees	Dues	Meals	Misc.	Fund Raising	Other	New Yr. Inst.	Bank Depos.
200X		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10/5	Ralph T. Morgan (#1569)	40-	8-						48-
10/5	Ross M. Terry (cash)	40-	8-						48-
10/5	Fines (cash)				11 <sup>25</sup>				11 <sup>25</sup>
	<b>October Totals</b>	<b>80-</b>	<b>16-</b>		<b>11<sup>25</sup></b>				<b>107<sup>25</sup></b>
11/19	Patrick L. Quigley (p.151)	12-	4-						16-
11/19	Arthur Armstrong (p.432)		48-				5-	20-	73-
11/30	Paul W. Moore (cash)					235-			235-
	<b>November Totals</b>	<b>12-</b>	<b>52-</b>			<b>235-</b>	<b>5-</b>	<b>20-</b>	<b>324-</b>
12/23	Howard Parker (p.267)		60-						60-
12/23	Holiday Shop (#1156)						30-		30-
	<b>December Totals</b>		<b>60-</b>				<b>30-</b>		<b>90-</b>
	<b>Year-To-Date Totals</b>	<b>92-</b>	<b>128-</b>		<b>11<sup>25</sup></b>	<b>235-</b>	<b>35-</b>	<b>20-</b>	<b>521<sup>25</sup></b>

## Examples For Cash Receipts Form

Date Transaction

10/5 New member Morgan submits membership fee of \$40 and dues of \$4 per month for November and December. Payment by his firm's check.

10/5 Terry, a new member, pays his membership fee and dues in cash. Receipt must be prepared for all cash transactions.

10/5 Fines collected in cash

*October Totals*

11/19 Quigley, a former member in good standing of another Club, submits his personal check for the reduced membership fee and dues for one month.

11/19 Armstrong's personal check for \$73 covers a year's dues, \$5 for a purchase from Optimist International ordered by the Club Secretary-Treasurer and reservations for the installation dinner.

11/30 Moore, Chair of Fund Raising, turns in gross receipts from sale of turkey shoot through November 30. Cash receipt must be issued.

*November Totals*

12/23 Parker pays past due dues of \$12 and annual dues of \$48. His dues are paid through next September 30.

12/23 Holiday Sport Shop pays its annual billing for advertising in the Bulletin.

*December Totals**Quarter Totals*

## Cash Disbursements Form

---

All invoices and statements to be paid should be presented to the Board for approval. When checks are written, it is wise to write the check number on the appropriate invoice or statement. Identify the item being paid on the face of the check, such as invoice number, processing fees, etc. Entering the Club's number on checks sent to Optimist International facilitates handling and reduces costs.

A cash disbursements form is available for the Secretary-Treasurer's portfolio. Enter all payments under the proper budget item with the amount paid and the check number. Put paid bills in a Bills Paid section of the files. Petty cash items should be substantiated by a petty cash voucher. An example of the Cash Disbursements Form is on page 33.

## Examples For Cash Disbursements Journal

Line	Check	Transaction
1	101	Pays processing fees for Morgan and Terry
2	102	Dues and fees for October-November: 40 members, with five life.
3	103	Club stationery purchase
4	104	Shoes for indigent kids at Elmwood School
5	105	District dues for six months for 40 members, October-March
6		<i>October Totals</i>
7	106	Registration for first quarter Board meeting
8	107	Reimbursement for purchase of stamps
9	108	Void-made an error
10	109	Supplies bought for Youth Appreciation Week, Invoice #23349
11		<i>November Totals</i>
12	110	Pays for Bulletin paper
13	111	Pays balance on dues of \$4.25 for Parker, Club supplies and invoices for merchandise ordered for Armstrong.
14		<i>December Totals</i>
15		<i>Quarter Totals</i>

## Monthly Statement of Receipts and Disbursements

---

This form is also available for the Secretary-Treasurer's portfolio. It is an excellent form for the Secretary-Treasurer's report to the monthly meeting of the Club's Board. The Board must receive this statement monthly if it is to act responsibly. An example of this form is found on page 34.

CASH DISBURSEMENTS

	DATE	TO WHOM PAID	CHECK NO.	OI Dues	Dist. Dues	Process Fees	Supplies	Print. & Stat.	Petty Cash	Postage
	200X			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>BUDGET BALANCES</b> (AMOUNTS CARRIED FORWARD)										
1	10/12	Optimist International	101			30-				
2	10/12	Optimist International	102	360 <sup>50</sup>						
3	10/12	Ace Printing	103					27 <sup>40</sup>		
4	10/12	Elmwood School	104							
5	10/16	District Dues	105		320-					
6		<b>October Totals</b>		<b>258<sup>75</sup></b>	<b>320-</b>	<b>30-</b>		<b>27<sup>40</sup></b>		
7	11/15	John Doe, Secretary	106							
8	11/15	John Doe	107							29-
9	11/15	<del>John Doe</del> VOID ERROR	108							29-
10	11/20	Optimist International	109							
11		<b>November Totals</b>								<b>29-</b>
12	12/10	Ace Printing	110							
13	12/10	Optimist International	111	4 <sup>25</sup>			32 <sup>50</sup>			
14		<b>December Totals</b>		<b>4<sup>25</sup></b>			<b>32<sup>50</sup></b>			
15		<b>QTR • OCT-DEC TOTAL</b>		<b>263-</b>	<b>320-</b>	<b>30-</b>	<b>32<sup>50</sup></b>	<b>27<sup>40</sup></b>		<b>29-</b>

Bulletin	Meals	Youth & Comm.	Conv. Deleg.	Ins. & Bonds	Misc.	Contrib.	Fellowship				TOTAL	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17			
											30-	1
											258 <sup>75</sup>	2
											27 <sup>40</sup>	3
		100-									100-	4
											320-	5
		100-									736 <sup>15</sup>	6
			15-								15-	7
											29-	8
											--	9
		24 <sup>50</sup>									24 <sup>50</sup>	10
		24 <sup>50</sup>	15-								68 <sup>50</sup>	11
28-											28-	12
28-											36 <sup>75</sup>	13
											64 <sup>75</sup>	14
<b>28-</b>		<b>124<sup>50</sup></b>	<b>15-</b>								<b>869<sup>40</sup></b>	<b>15</b>



# Monthly Statement Of Receipts And Disbursements

For the month of December, 20 XX and cumulative from October 1, 20 XX

	Budget	Receipts Current Month	Receipts From Beginning Year to Date	Budget Balance
<b>Cash Receipts (Income)</b>				
1. Membership Fees .....	\$ 480.00	\$	\$ 92.00	\$ 388.00
2. Membership Dues .....	3,120.00	60.00	144.00	2,976.00
3. Meals .....				
4. Miscellaneous .....	110.00		11.25	98.75
<b>Fund Raising</b>				
5. Turkey Shoot .....	2,000.00		235.00	1,765.00
6. Fruit Cake Sales .....	1,300.00	30.00	35.00	1,265.00
7. New Year's Eve Party .....	2,700.00		20.00	2,680.00
8. Christmas Tree Lot .....	6,300.00		6,000.00	300.00
<b>Budget Total &amp; Budget</b>				
<b>Balance Total</b> .....	\$ 16,010.00			\$ 9,472.75
<b>Total Receipts (Income)</b> .....		\$ 90.00	\$ 6,537.25	

	Budget	Disbursements This Month	Disbursements Year to Date	Budget
<b>Cash Disbursements (Expenses)</b>				
1. A. International Dues .....	\$ 795.00	\$ 4.25	\$ 203.00	\$ 592.00
B. Insurance Premium .....	240.00		60.00	180.00
2. District Dues .....	640.00		320.00	320.00
3. Processing Fees .....	180.00		30.00	150.00
4. Supplies .....	125.00	32.50	32.50	92.50
5. Printing & Stationery .....	100.00		27.40	72.60
6. Petty Cash .....	50.00			50.00
7. ....				
8. ....				
9. Postage .....	225.00		29.00	196.00
10. Club Bulletin .....	250.00	28.00	28.00	222.00
11. Meals .....	200.00			200.00
12. Youth Activities & Community Service .....	7,000.00		124.50	6,875.50
13. Convention Delegates .....	450.00		15.00	435.00
14. Insurance & Bonds .....	25.00			25.00
15. Fellowship & Hospitality .....	75.00			75.00
16. Miscellaneous .....	50.00			50.00
17. Contingencies .....	25.00			25.00

<b>Budget Total &amp;</b>				
<b>Budget Balance Total</b> .....	\$ 10,430.00			\$ 9,560.60
<b>Total Disbursements</b> .....		\$ 64.75	\$ 869.40	
<b>Excess Receipts</b>				
<b>Over Disbursements</b> .....		\$ 25.25	\$ 5,667.85	
Bank and Cash Balance, Beginning of month .....		\$ 6,888.23		
Bank and Cash Balance, Beginning of year .....			\$ 1,245.63	
<b>Bank and Cash Balance Now</b> .....			\$ 6,913.48	
Dues Uncollected .....	\$			
Miscellaneous uncollected .....	\$			
<b>Total Uncollected</b> .....	\$			
		Bills Unpaid .....	\$ 137.68	

Submitted by John Smith, Secretary-Treasurer

# Tax Exemption For U.S. Clubs

Below and on the following page is a copy of the letter from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service stating tax exemption for Optimist International. This letter may be necessary in proving not-for-profit status to various authorities and organizations with which you deal.



## U. S. TREASURY DEPARTMENT WASHINGTON 25

OFFICE OF  
COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

AND REFER TO  
T:R:EO:5  
RMM

JUL 30 1958

Optimist International  
c/o Bernard B. Burford, Secretary-Treasurer  
Railway Exchange Building  
St. Louis 1, Missouri

Gentlemen:

Reference is made to the information which was recently transmitted to us for our use in reconsideration of your status for Federal income tax purposes under the provisions of section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

A review of our records discloses that in a ruling dated February 16, 1935, it was held that you were exempt from Federal income tax under section 101(9) of the Revenue Act of 1934. This ruling was affirmed on July 20, 1938, January 13, 1941, July 16, 1941 and October 29, 1941. Later, in a group ruling dated March 5, 1956 and a supplemental group ruling dated January 29, 1958, it was held that you and your subordinate clubs were exempt as social clubs under section 501(c)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

Based upon a careful review of the information which you recently submitted together with all other evidence of record, it is our opinion that you and your subordinate clubs are entitled to exemption from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(4) of the 1954 Code as "organizations not organized for profit but operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare", rather than as social clubs as described in section 501(c)(7) of the Code. Therefore, the above mentioned rulings dated February 16, 1935, July 20, 1938, January 13, 1941, July 16, 1941, October 29, 1941, March 5, 1956 and January 29, 1958, are modified accordingly.

In view of the above, therefore, you and your subordinate clubs are not required to file income tax returns so long as there is no change in the character, purposes or method of operation of your organization or such subordinate clubs. Any such changes should be reported immediately to the National Office of the Internal Revenue Service in Washington, D. C., in order that the effect of the changes upon your present exempt status or that of the subordinate clubs may be determined.

However, you and your subordinate units are required to file an

2 - Optimist International

information return, Form 990, annually, with the District Director of Internal Revenue for your district so long as this exemption remains in effect. This form may be obtained from your District Director and is required to be filed on or before the fifteenth day of the fifth month following the close of the respective annual accounting periods.

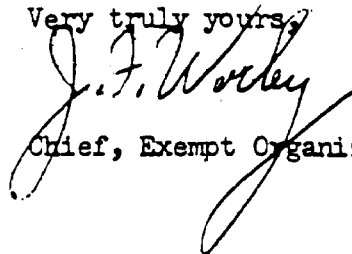
Failure by you or your subordinate units to file the required information return or to otherwise comply with the provisions of section 6033 of the Code and regulations applicable thereto may result in the termination of the exempt status of you or your subordinate units on the grounds that you or your subordinate units have not established that you are observing the conditions required for the continuation of an exempt status.

You should continue to furnish the National Office, annually, on the calendar year basis, lists, in duplicate, showing only the names, numbers and addresses of your new subordinate units and the names, numbers and addresses of any units which have ceased to exist. These lists should be submitted in alphabetical or numerical order and, if your subordinate units are located in more than one State, should be prepared separately by States. This information is necessary in order that we may advise the District Directors of Internal Revenue for the respective districts in which your new subordinate units are located of their exempt status as promptly as possible.

The annual lists should be accompanied by a statement signed by one of your principal officers stating whether the information previously submitted upon which your original ruling was based, is applicable in all respects to the new subordinate units. These lists and accompanying statements should be forwarded in time to reach the National Office not later than February 15 of each succeeding year.

The District Directors of Internal Revenue for the districts in which the subordinate units referred to herein are located are being advised of this action.

Very truly yours,



Chief, Exempt Organizations Branch

# Form 990 (U.S.Clubs)

In the exemption letter of July 30, 1958, and in subsequent rulings, the Internal Revenue Service has held that the member Clubs of Optimist International are exempt from the payment of income taxes under Section 501(c)(4) of the Code. However, in order to maintain the exemption, some Clubs are required to file a Form 990 with the IRS.

Whether a Club is required to file the return depends on the amount of its gross receipts. Current IRS regulations require only those Clubs with gross receipts in excess of \$25,000 to file the 990, which must be received by the IRS no later than February 15.

A Club's gross receipts are considered to be less than \$25,000, and it need not file if the Club is one of the following:

1. Up to one-year-old and has \$37,500 or less in gross receipts during its first year
2. Between one and three years old and averaged gross receipts of \$30,000 during each of its first two tax years
3. At least three years old and have average gross receipts of less than \$25,000 for the immediately preceding three tax years (including the year for which the return would be filed).

Basically, a Club's gross receipts will consist of income derived from:

1. Membership dues, fees and assessments
2. Interest, dividends and possibly capital gains received from investment transactions
3. Gross income from special fund raising events and activities such as dinners, dances, carnivals, raffles, bingo games, exhibitions, shows, etc.
4. Gross revenue through the sale of merchandise for fund raising such as Christmas trees, candy, fruit cakes, etc.

Other sources of income to be considered in computing the Club's gross receipts include:

1. Contributions, gifts and grants
2. Grants from governmental agencies
3. Revenue from rental of real property.

Normally, those Clubs that had gross income of more than \$25,000 and filed 990s in the past year will receive a pre-addressed 990 packet from the IRS. If a Club in the more than \$25,000 receipts category does not receive the packet, the Club has an obligation to secure the form and file the return.

All U.S. Clubs must file a Form 990 by February 15, with a copy to Optimist International. Instructions to complete Form 990 and Form 990EZ is as seen on right:

Box K: This box should be checked if your Club's gross receipts are not normally over \$25,000.

If your Club has over \$25,000 in gross receipts you are required to complete Part 1 of the Form 990.

# Club Foundations (501(c)3)

While the exemption that was established under 501(c)(4) on July 30, 1958, relieves the Clubs from the payment of federal income taxes, this exemption does not permit a member of a Club to deduct a donation, his/her Club dues, or any part of them, that the Club might allocate to the Club's youth work or community-service funds, as charitable contributions in calculation of the member's federal tax liability. If a member can justify his/her dues on the basis of ordinary and necessary expense in connection with his/her regular business activities, dues may be deducted as business expenses for federal income tax purposes.

At this point the difference between a 501(c)(4) and a 501(c)(3) exemption must be emphasized. The 501(c)(4) exemption, which all Clubs have by being members of Optimist International, provides only that the Clubs are not subject to the payment of federal income taxes on their operations. In contrast to this, Clubs may establish a separate entity as a foundation with a 501(c)(3) exemption, which permits the member to consider any donations and gifts paid to the Club's separate foundation (trust or corporation) as a charitable contribution on his/her individual tax return.

The Clubs holding a 501(c)(3) exemption for their separate fund or foundation must abide by the tax regulations concerning reporting to the IRS in compliance with current requirements. To avoid the cost and additional administration of a private foundation, you now have the opportunity to set one up through the Optimist International Foundation using the 21st Century Endowment. Call 800-500-8130, ext. 203 or 204 for further information. For information to set up a 501(c)(3) foundation outside of the Optimist International Foundations contact the International Office, ext. 276.

Form <b>990</b>		<b>Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax</b>		OMB No. 1545-0047
Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service		Under section 501(c), 527, or 4947(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (except black lung benefit trust or private foundation)		<b>2001</b> Open to Public Inspection
▶ The organization may have to use a copy of this return to satisfy state reporting requirements.				
A For the 2001 calendar year, or tax year beginning <b>October 1</b> , 2001, and ending <b>September 30</b> , 2002				
B Check if applicable:	Please use IRS label or print or type:	C Name of organization	D Employer identification number	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Address change	Number and street (or P.O. box, if mail is not delivered to street address)	<b>Optimist Club of Anywhere Town, USA</b>	xx-xxxxxxx	
<input type="checkbox"/> Name change	City or town, state or country, and ZIP + 4	<b>P. O. Box 13</b>	E Telephone number	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initial return	Specific instructions	<b>Anywhere Town, USA xxxxxx</b>	F Accounting method: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Accrual	
<input type="checkbox"/> Final return	Amended return		G Website: <b>www.anywheretown.com</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Application pending	K Section 501(c)(3) organizations and 4947(a)(1) nonexempt charitable trusts must attach a completed Schedule A (Form 990 or 990-EZ).			
J Organization type (check only one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 501(c)(4) <input type="checkbox"/> 4947(a)(1) or <input type="checkbox"/> 527		H and I are not applicable to section 527 organizations.		
K Check here <input type="checkbox"/> if the organization's gross receipts are normally not more than \$25,000. The organization need not file a return with the IRS; but if the organization received a Form 990 Package in the mail, it should file a return without financial data. Some states require a complete return.		H(a) Is this a group return for affiliates? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
		H(b) If "Yes," enter number of affiliates: _____		
		H(c) Are all affiliates included? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
		H(d) If "No," attach a list. See instructions.		
		H(d) Is this a separate return filed by an organization covered by a group ruling? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
		I Enter 4-digit GEN: <b>1334</b>		

Form <b>990-EZ</b>		<b>Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax</b>		OMB No. 1545-1150
Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service		Under section 501(c), 527, or 4947(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (except black lung benefit trust or private foundation)		<b>2001</b> Open to Public Inspection
▶ For organizations with gross receipts less than \$100,000 and total assets less than \$250,000 at the end of the year.				
▶ The organization may have to use a copy of this return to satisfy state reporting requirements.				
A For the 2001 calendar year, or tax year beginning <b>October 1</b> , 2001, and ending <b>September 30</b> , 2002				
B Check if applicable:	Please use IRS label or print or type:	C Name of organization	D Employer identification number	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Address change	Number and street (or P.O. box, if mail is not delivered to street address)	<b>Optimist Club of Anywhere Town, USA</b>	xx-xxxxxxx	
<input type="checkbox"/> Name change	City or town, state or country, and ZIP + 4	<b>P. O. Box 13</b>	E Telephone number	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initial return	Specific instructions	<b>Anywhere Town, USA xxxxxx</b>	F Enter 4-digit (GEN): <b>1334</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Final return	G Accounting method: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Accrual			
<input type="checkbox"/> Amended return	H Check <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> if the organization is not required to attach Schedule B (Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-PF).			
<input type="checkbox"/> Application pending	I Website: <b>www.anywheretown.com</b>			
J Organization type (check only one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 501(c)(4) <input type="checkbox"/> 4947(a)(1) or <input type="checkbox"/> 527		K Check <input type="checkbox"/> if the organization's gross receipts are normally not more than \$25,000. The organization need not file a return with the IRS; but if the organization received a Form 990 Package in the mail, it should file a return without financial data. Some states require a complete return.		

Newly affiliated Clubs are automatically granted the exemption and need not file for a specific 501(c)(4) exemption. Completing and submitting a Form SS-4, furnished by Optimist International, which all new Clubs are asked to do at their official organization, serves to notify the IRS of the Club being added to the roster of Optimist International.

Individual Clubs are liable for admission taxes to sponsored shows, plays and similar events unless such activities are sponsored by a separate fund that has sought and been granted an exemption by the IRS. Liability for state/province and local taxes should always be investigated. Particular attention should be given to state/province sales and use tax laws when selling items in fund raising activities.

## General

---

Under the 1969 revision of the Code, any Club or District that fails to submit a timely Form 990 may be subject to a penalty of \$10 per day after February 15 until the return is received. In addition to the penalty of \$10 per day to the Club or District, the officer responsible for the late reporting may be penalized \$10 per day. The possibility of the penalties makes the establishment of the responsibility for the filing and prompt submission of the 990 a "must."

IRS rulings have held that an incomplete return is treated as if it was never received. Consequently it is imperative that an entry be made on every line of the return. If an amount is to be entered and the Club's books show the amount to be zero, enter zero. If a question is asked that is not applicable to the Club, enter N/A.

The lack of the need for the annual filing of a 990 by those Clubs with gross receipts of less than \$25,000 does not diminish the requirement for accurate, current and complete financial records. The Internal Revenue Service may, at its discretion, conduct an examination of any Club's records.

## Federal Employer Identification Numbers

---

(i.e., FEIN, EIN)

Optimist International furnishes the Field Representative with an "SS-4" form in the field kit for all new U.S. Clubs. This form must be completed immediately and faxed or mailed to Optimist International. It must be sent to the attention of the Finance and Administration Department. Optimist International must submit the forms directly to one specific IRS office. Only applications received by the IRS directly from Optimist International will be recognized as a subordinate Club falling under the Optimist International umbrella. Clubs should **NEVER** contact the IRS directly and apply for a Federal Employer Identification Number. While you may get a number faster, the IRS will not recognize it as falling under the Optimist International umbrella. Further, it may place the Club in a situation where it will be considered a "**for profit**" organization.

Once a number is issued, it stays with the Club/organization for its entire life. There have been situations where Clubs have acquired multiple Federal Employer Identification Numbers causing confusion and situations where they could lose their not-for-profit status. This sometimes occurs with a change of administration when the new officers erroneously apply for a new Federal Employer Identification Number.

Optimist International maintains complete records of all Club Federal Employer Identification Numbers. Optimist International is required to complete a report each year, for the IRS, listing every Club and their Federal Employer Identification Number. **If you do not know your Club's Federal Employer Identification Number, please contact the Finance and Administration Department (800-500-8130 ext. 276) at the International Headquarters, and we can look it up for your Club.**

## General Legal Liability Insurance

---

Optimist International provides general liability insurance coverage for property damage, personal injury, advertising injury, and bodily injury to all Clubs and their members while acting on the behalf of the Club. A Summary of Insurance is sent to all Club Secretary-Treasurers and President-Elects in the summer. In addition, a copy can be found on the Optimist International website ([www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org)).

For more information on coverage, exclusions or to receive a Summary of Insurance that names someone as a co-insured, contact the Insurance Administrator, Marsh Affinity Group Services (A service of Seabury & Smith) at 800-503-9227 or by fax at 847-803-4649 (U.S. and English speaking Canadian Clubs) or contact Nelly Law-Gip at 514-899-5377/800-267-5377 or fax at 514-899-5378 (French speaking Clubs). There is no charge for this service.



# Reports

Districts and Optimist International require a minimal number of reports and provide the necessary forms. All reports must contain the complete official name of the Club and the Club number, and must also be properly signed and dated by the appropriate Club officers. When the date of receipt of a report is relevant to the District or International recognition program, it is the responsibility of the Club Secretary-Treasurer to mail that report in time to be received by the applicable deadline.

Accurate and timely reporting provides a vital link between Clubs, District and the International Office. Complete and “on-time” reports present a concise picture of Club progress and growth, and aid District officers in generating the most effective kind of assistance and guidance.

As Club reports must be signed by Club Presidents and/or Club Secretary-Treasurers, credit in the recognition program for submission of such reports will not be given if said reports are signed by persons other than the Club President and Secretary-Treasurer.

## Club Roster Adjustments

The Club Roster Adjustment form provides the Club an opportunity to make membership additions, deletions and address changes at any time during the administrative year. It also provides space for reporting changes in President, Secretary-Treasurer, and spelling corrections.

Additions and deletions must be **received** by Optimist International no later than the last day of the month in order to be processed for that month. According to International policy quarterly dues are based on a Club’s membership at the International Office on December 31, March 1, June 30 and September 30. Only reports submitted in September will be processed according to the postmark.

To ensure that roster adjustments are credited to the current administrative year, final Club Roster Adjustment forms must be postmarked by an official postal office no later than September 30. Clubs in Canada may submit the forms to the Service Centre in Montréal, Québec, postmarked no later than September 30. Reports postmarked later than September

30 will be credited to the succeeding administrative year. The report should be distributed as indicated in the lower right-hand corner of the form.

All new member kits are sent to the President one to two weeks after submitting Club Roster Adjustments.

## Club Reports

### Annual Activities Report/Activities Awards Application

Clubs must submit an Annual Activities Report and an Activities Awards Application to the District Secretary-Treasurer by October 10. When completed, the reports should accurately reflect all the activities sponsored by the Club or in which the Club participated for the year just completed. Forms will be mailed to the Clubs with the fourth quarter dues billing.

### Club Officer-Elect

Clubs must submit a Club Officer-Elect Report, on the official form provided by Optimist International, to the International Office no later than May 20 or immediately after a change occurs. The names and addresses of the President-Designate and Secretary-Treasurer designate are to be reported on this form.

### JOOI Club Reports and Awards

Clubs that sponsor Alpha, Junior Optimist and/or Octagon Clubs must file Officer-Elect Reports by May 30. Club rosters are due by October 1. Both reports are filed with the International Office.

Club awards are listed in the annual *Youth Clubs Planning Guide*. Deadlines vary from May 30 to September 30. One guide is mailed to each JOOI Club annually upon payment of renewal fees or upon chartering.

# Club Reporting Schedule To Optimist International\*

REPORT	PURPOSE	WHEN	DATE COMPLETED
Club Roster Adjustments	Report membership changes; additions, deletions and address changes	Immediately after change occurs; throughout year. (Use only when changes are to be reported; not required monthly) for accurate dues billing must be Received at Optimist International by December 31; March 31, June 30; and September 30	
Club Foundation Representative Appointment Form	Report appointment of Club Foundation Representative (CFR)	Submit form to Optimist International Foundations at the beginning of the Optimist year.	
Form 990 (U.S. Clubs only)	Report gross income to Internal Revenue Service	February 15	
Club Officer-Elect Report	Report election of Club officers for next administrative year	To Optimist International by May 20 (District deadline may be earlier) or immediately after a change occurs	
Community Projects Awards (CPA)	Entry of Youth or Community Service Projects in District competition	Postmarked by September 30 to District Activities Chair	
Annual Club Activities Report	Summary of Club's activities for the year	Sent to District Secretary-Treasurer by October 10	
Annual Activity Award Banner Patch	Qualify for the Friends of Youth, Partner in Education or Community Service Involvement Award patches or year dots.	Due to Programs Department of International Office October 10. Forms will be mailed to Clubs with the 4th quarter dues billing.	

**\*Consult actual forms for distribution directions**

# Policies

## Suggested Club Policies Club Supplies from Optimist International Incorporation Optimist International Policies Affecting Clubs

A policy is a pre-set plan of action designed to aid the organization or its Board in making future decisions. It serves as a guiding principle or procedure considered to be prudent or advantageous. In addition to its Bylaws, every Club should have a policy manual, with a comprehensive index, which sets down the Club's policies for implementing the regulations and procedures specified in the Bylaws.

The Club's Board of Directors establishes a set of policies that enables the Club to be administered efficiently and according to its members' wishes. The Board must have a thorough understanding of the Club's Bylaws in order to establish policies within its framework.

The Secretary-Treasurer should maintain the policy manual, keep it up-to-date, and bring it to each Board meeting. The President should also have a copy of the policies.

### Club Policies

---

The following suggestions are not necessarily complete, nor will all policies be required by every Club. However, each should be considered:

Alcohol: Clubs should adopt a policy prohibiting the sale, consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages at

1. regular Club meetings,
2. events involving youth, and
3. when public relations status of the Club would be adversely affected.

Authorized Signatures: The Board should select the officers to sign checks. Two-signature checks offer good financial control. Usually the President and Secretary-Treasurer sign checks authorized by the Board. The Finance Committee Chair or the Vice President could serve as an alternate.

Bank Named: Board should select the bank to be used as depository for Club funds. A second bank may be selected as depository for service activities funds.

Fund Raising: The Board should set a policy that all fund raising methods of the Club will always comply with national, state/provincial and local laws. Proceeds from such projects must be used only as provided in Article X, Section 5 of the Standard Club Bylaws. Legal advice should be sought before entering into any contractual agreement on behalf of the Club.

Fund Raising From Other Groups: In view of a Club's own fund raising efforts, most Clubs will not sell tickets or make fund raising efforts on behalf of any other group. It is always wise to prevent the sale of tickets or fund raising efforts from other groups during regular Club meetings. An Optimist International policy prohibits Optimist Clubs from selling tickets or conducting other fund raising programs at any other Optimist Club meeting or event.

Donations To Other Organizations: It is advisable for Clubs to develop a policy for dealing with requests for donations to other organizations and groups. Some Clubs require any request for donations to be in writing and consider each request on its individual merits.

Dues For New Members: Most Boards authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to collect dues from new members on a prorated basis to cover the balance of the billing period, which begins the first day of the month after a member is admitted to membership. In this manner, all members can be billed for dues on the same dates. Example: Club dues of \$72 per member per year, payable at \$36 on October 1 and April 1. New member joins December 10. Prorated dues for balance of dues period is \$18. This includes the months of January, February and March. After this, the new member is billed as is every other member.

Clubs may elect to reduce the membership fee for enrollment of a former member of any Optimist Club, but in no instance shall such fee be reduced to less than \$15.

Financial Obligations: The Board should set a routine for approving payments. Some Boards require the approval of all payments. Some Boards exempt from approval such items as:

new member processing fees, basic supplies, District and International dues. Some require approval of all bills above a certain amount. Occasionally a Board sets up a system of purchase orders.

**Basic Supplies:** Because some basic supplies are needed regularly and in order to save time, many Clubs authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to order them without Board approval. Ordinarily, the Secretary-Treasurer is authorized to spend up to a certain amount or is limited by the particular supplies which may be purchased without Board authorization. Usually the policy includes letterhead and envelopes from local sources. The supplies available from Optimist International are generally included: member pins, new member kits, membership cards, attendance blanks and meeting badges.

**Petty Cash Fund:** Some Clubs set up a petty cash fund to be used by the Secretary-Treasurer so it will not be necessary to write a check or have small items charged. The Board must authorize replenishing of the fund. The Secretary-Treasurer should have a petty cash voucher for each item.

**Fellowship And Hospitality:** Some Clubs send members and their immediate families cards, letters or flowers on such occasions as hospitalizations, deaths, weddings, anniversaries and birthdays. If a policy is established, it should specify type of remembrance (card, letter, flowers) for whom (Club members, spouses, children), and on which occasions (hospitalizations, deaths, weddings, anniversaries, birthdays). Clubs must be cautious about the cost. The Fellowship Committee should be responsible for this program.

**Politics:** A Club should affirm its role in civic affairs (community betterment) but must not, as a Club, take positions in matters of strictly partisan politics.

## Purchase Of Club Supplies

---

“Club supplies” means materials distributed to Clubs or members on a sales basis. This must be distinguished from those leadership materials provided as a service to Clubs free of charge. Your International Office is comprised of several departments, each dealing with a specific service to Clubs. The Club Services and Awards Departments will usually meet most Club needs. When ordering supplies from Shumsky or the Canadian Service Centre, use the standard Order Blank for Supplies provided by Optimist International or its distributors or a facsimile thereof which includes a full description from the *Optimist Supply Catalog*. An order for supplies must always show the complete official name of the Club and the Club number. Use a street address on all supply orders; many shippers cannot make deliveries to post office boxes. Please allow ample time for delivery when ordering supplies. Plan ahead!

Supplies are shipped from two major points of distribution.

To: *Clubs in the United States & Caribbean*  
From: Shumsky  
811 E. Fourth Street  
Dayton OH 45402  
Toll Free Phone: 877-678-2582  
Caribbean 937-496-1373  
FAX: 937-223-2252 or 800-414-8943  
E-mail: [optimist@shumsky.com](mailto:optimist@shumsky.com)  
Internet: [www.optimiststuff.com](http://www.optimiststuff.com)

To: *Clubs in Canada*  
From: Optimist Supply  
c/o Canadian Service Centre  
4559, boul. Métropolitain Est  
St-Léonard Québec H1R 1Z4  
Toll Free Phone: 800-363-7151  
FAX: 514-721-1104

Orders may be phoned in. Mailed orders should be sent directly to the supply locations as indicated above.

The Board of Directors of Optimist International has established a policy that only those orders submitted by the President or Secretary-Treasurer of a Club will be honored.

Consistent use of one of the following payment plans will lighten the Secretary-Treasurer's workload:

1. Prepaid plan: Include the Club's check with the order. Any overpayment will be credited to the Club's account. Underpayment will be reflected on the Club's monthly statement.
2. Payment by invoice: Pay each invoice as it is received. Checks received by the supply locations will be credited to the Club's account in the month they are received.
3. Payment by monthly statement: Pay upon receipt of the statement. Supply charges and credits received during the past month will appear on the statement. Checks mailed during the last days of the month may not be received in time to be credited to the monthly statement. When sending a check to the supply locations, identify the item(s) to be paid by making a notation on the face of the check.
4. Master Card-Visa: Your Club or personal card will be honored for any purchase from the catalog.
5. The Board should ensure that Optimist International's trademarks and emblems are protected, and approve no purchase that does not conform to the policies regarding the use of these properties.
6. Clubs sponsoring Alpha, Junior Optimist or Octagon Clubs should have an understanding with their JOOI Club that all supply orders are either prepaid or approved by their Chair. (The Optimist Club will be billed for all approved orders.)

# Incorporation Of Clubs

---

Optimist International Bylaws, Article III,A,12 requires every new Club to incorporate, and the Optimist International Board of Directors urges Optimist Clubs to incorporate under the laws or statutes of their respective states or provinces. There are others, but two principal reasons why Optimist Clubs should incorporate are: (1) the limited liability, or insulation of the individual Club members against Club debts and liabilities, and (2) the perpetual (or at least lengthy) existence of a corporation, providing continuity of purpose and direction and in most instances for easier operations.

Although each Club is covered under the comprehensive general liability insurance policy issued to Optimist International and its member Clubs, insurance does not provide the individual Club members with immunity from liability for the debts and obligations of an unincorporated Club.

The comprehensive liability policy now in effect has some of the usual exclusions found in all general liability policies, such as races and speed contests, auto liability and property damage for owned or leased automobiles and aircraft liability among others. Please refer to your Summary of Insurance for more information. After your Club has been incorporated, your lawyers can advise you concerning its need for special hazard insurance such as cited above and other types of insurance not covered under a general liability policy.

Most states and provinces provide for incorporation under "not-for-profit" statutes or laws (as opposed to business corporation statutes). Your Club should be incorporated under the not-for-profit statutes. While the services of an attorney will be required in the incorporation itself, normally the procedure is not too complicated, nor is it expensive.

While a lawyer in your Club, or one whom you engage, will know of the requirements for incorporation under the not-for-profit statutes in your state or province, in stating the purposes and objectives for which your corporation is organized, the following is applicable and should be of help:

*"To function as an Optimist Club affiliated with Optimist International; to conduct a civic and social welfare organization for the common benefit of the members and the community; to develop Optimism as a philosophy of life; to promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs; to inspire respect for law, to promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people; to aid and encourage the development of youth; and to take over, carry on and continue the affairs, property, obligations, business and objectives of the unincorporated Club known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Optimist Club of \_\_\_\_\_."*

While, your lawyer will advise you covering the provisions of your particular state or province law, provisions similar to the following will also no doubt be called for by the statutes under which your corporation is organized:

*"The corporation shall not engage in any business of a kind ordinarily carried on for profit, and nothing in the Articles of Incorporation or in the Constitution or Bylaws shall authorize the corporation to, and the corporation shall not enter any transaction, carry on any activity, or engage in any business for pecuniary profit, and any income received by the corporation shall be applied only to the non-profit purposes and objectives of the corporation set forth herein, and no part thereof during membership or upon termination of membership shall inure to the benefit of any private member or individual."*

*"Upon termination or dissolution of the corporation, the distribution of any surplus property and assets remaining after all of the debts and obligations of the corporation have been paid and satisfied shall be governed under the appropriate provisions granted to and vested in non-profit corporations organized and existing under the present statutes of state/province \_\_\_\_\_ of and any acts supplementary or amendatory thereof."*

Annual renewal of the Club's incorporation is a responsibility of the Club's Board of Directors, normally handled by the Secretary-Treasurer.

## International Policies

---

The following abridgements of International policies directly affect Clubs. The Board must understand them and prevent violation.

**Awards:** Any award presented by a Club must be clearly identified as such. Neither on the award nor in the presentation shall it be stated or implied to be on behalf of Optimist International. All awards to be presented on national radio or television must first be cleared through the International Executive Director.

**Candidates For Office - International And District:** Literature or material soliciting support of, or offering candidates for International or District office, is permissible providing it is in good taste and is small enough to be placed on tables or in the hands of delegates. Nothing may be fastened to walls or other locations. Activities in support of candidacy for International or District office shall be conducted in a responsible manner consistent with the importance and dignity of the office.

**Club Dues:** In the absence of any adjustment of the record of its members enrolled in the International Office as of December 31, March 31, June 30 and September 30 of each year, a Club's last recorded membership in the International Office shall be used in the computation of its financial obligations to Optimist International and its Districts.

**Club Membership Basis:** Any Club that accepts members on a basis other than active, fully paid and enrolled in the International Office is in violation of the International Constitution and is subject to the suspension or revocation of its charter.

**Club Names:** The official name of an Optimist Club shall include the words, "Optimist Club," plus the name of the city or cities from which the major portion of the Club's membership is drawn, and then the name of the state or province.

In certain cases, the Club may replace the city or cities designation with an accepted geographic designation which locates the Club.

Club names may include other identifying words such as:

1. Meal designation or time of day of Club meetings: Breakfast, Luncheon, Dinner, Evening (example: Breakfast Optimist Club of Anytown, Any State.)
2. Geographical sections of a city: North, Northside, West, Eastend, Central Mall, Greater Metropolitan, etc.
3. Locally known or historical sections of a city or a historical section within a city or county
4. Locally known identification of unincorporated areas, including all or parts of a county or parish, or larger geographic or political area.

The term "city" refers to any incorporated city, town, hamlet or village.

Official names of Clubs shall not specify any creed, race or nationality, reference to gender, names of individuals living or dead; and shall not duplicate or be confusingly similar to those of existing Clubs in the same state or province.

**Names And Locations:** In all matters relating to a Club's name or to its geographical area location, the following factors shall be recognized:

1. The city, section of a city, or area, in which a substantial majority of the members either reside, have community interests or conduct their business or professional pursuits
2. The geographical area in which a Club conducts its activities and maintains active community interests
3. The location of the Club's meeting place, though it shall not be essential or required that a Club meet within the defined territory.

**Name Changes:** The International Executive Director is empowered to grant the request of any Optimist Club seeking a change in its name provided that the name change is consistent with intent of the policy regarding the official names of member Clubs of Optimist International. District officials may be consulted as to the appropriateness of proposed names.

**Process For Name Change:** When a Club considers a name change, the following steps should be taken:

1. Advise the District Governor of the proposal to ensure that there is no confusion with other local Clubs in the District.
2. Confirm with the state or provincial administration that the desired name is available for a corporate name.
3. Contact Optimist International to ensure that the proposed name fits with the Name Policy stated above.

When a Club changes its name, it is important that these steps be included. Remember that other government units will need to be notified; a new banner may be needed (Club responsibility for purchase); Club materials bearing the Club name may need to be re-inscribed.

Changing the Club name requires a change in the Club Bylaws Article I, which states the Club name. See your Bylaws for amending process.

**Directory:** *The International Directory* is a record that must be held in trust; its use for commercial, political or solicitation purposes shall be denied to all; usage for purposes consistent with the objectives of Optimist International may be granted by the Board of Directors upon written request of the Governor.

**Meeting Places:** Regular meetings of Optimist Clubs shall be conducted in places of good repute, bearing public approval and of a type acceptable to speakers and guests from all walks of life.

**Solicitations - By Clubs:** The best use of the time and money of each Optimist Club is for its own programs and activities. Member Clubs shall not solicit each other (in any manner) for funds which are to be used for any project of the Club making such solicitations.

**Club Endorsements of Local Programs/Projects:** Local Clubs may participate in and lend their name to local programs. However, if the Optimist International logo or trademark is used, permission must be granted by Optimist International. The local Club name used without international marks may be used for endorsements without obtaining prior permission.

**Optimist International Trademarks and Service Marks:** International Constitution Article XVII:

*"The titles 'Optimist,' 'Optimist International,' or 'Optimist Club,' and the slogans, 'Friend of the Boy' and 'Friend of Youth,' The Optimist Creed, and any emblem, seal, insignia, or other adopted or registered trademarks or slogans of Optimist International shall not be used for purposes other than those authorized by the Board of Directors."*

Optimist International's name, emblem and slogans, and other insignia are registered with, or have a registration pending with, the patent office of the United States, Canada, Hungary, Japan, France, Germany, Jamaica, Mexico, Russia, Taiwan and the United Kingdom. Their purpose is to identify with Optimist International, an individual, a Club, a group of Clubs, a piece of printed matter, an object, an article, an activity, a program or a service. Under the law, the Optimist International Board of Directors must exercise complete authority over the use of the trademarks in order to protect the registered rights and to prevent the name and emblem from becoming public property.

Permission for use of the trademarks shall be granted only if the contemplated use is appropriate to the ideals, aims and purposes of Optimist International. Requests for the use of the Optimist name and/or logo other than as specifically designated in a Club name may be approved by the International President after adequate review and consultation with appropriate staff and/or the general counsel. Requests determined by the International President to be out of the ordinary shall be brought before the Board of Directors for approval. A written report, for information only, indicating requests that have been approved by the International President will be submitted by staff to the Board of Directors at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Clubs and Districts need not seek permission to use the name, emblem, or slogan on printed matter produced for their own use if such meets the standards and proper use, is not available from Optimist International and is individually identified. This shall cover such items as bulletins, letterheads, envelopes, announcements, checks, convention badges, advertisements, publications, programs, tickets, posters, publicity notices, other items of similar nature and on athletic uniforms (OI logo only).

Clubs may not use the name, logo, emblem or slogan on any product or materials related to fund raising. In accordance with Board Policy I-65, only Optimist International may license fund raising products to carry the Optimist logo.

Upon applications for use of the name or emblem of Optimist International on an object or article, certain standards indicating propriety of the proposed use will be used as a guide by the International President. The name and emblem shall only be used on an article or object that is in good taste; that is used as part of a charitable program; that is artistically and accurately reproduced; is used in a credible and proper manner; and which in its normal use will not be mutilated or defaced.

Club requests sent to the International Office for use of Optimist International's registered insignia shall be sent to the Finance and Administration Department at the International Office for processing. Requests shall include:

- nature of request
- a facsimile showing intended use of the name, emblem or slogan,
- method of distribution and whether the article is to be given away or sold.

Permission will not be granted if the article would be in competition with any item supplied by Optimist International's licensed United States supply vendor and its Canadian supply operation or listed in its official supply catalog.

If approval is granted the article must not be changed or altered from the facsimile. If deemed necessary, the Optimist International Board of Directors may, at any time, request submission of the actual article. Permission shall not be deemed to be permanent and may be revoked by the Optimist International Board of Directors upon 60-day notice. Violation of this policy shall result in revocation without advance notice.

Articles coming under the U.S. Food and Drug Act must bear the name of either the manufacturer or the distributor.

The manufacturer of the article must enter into a written contract with Optimist International, and among other things, shall agree that notice will be given to the public that these trademarks are registered by affixing thereon one of the following:

- a. Registered in the U. S. (or Canada) Patent Office, or
- b. Reg. U. S. (or appropriate country) Pat. Off., or
- c. ®

The name, emblem, slogans, or other insignia of Optimist International, or of any of its Clubs or Districts, shall not be used by any Club member as a trademark or for advertising merchandise or business, nor shall any corporation, foundation, group or organization organized by an Optimist Club or Clubs or the members or representatives thereof, use the name, emblem, slogans or other insignia of Optimist International in conjunction with or for the purpose of carrying on any activity or project of any nature without written consent and approval of the Optimist International President.

Upon outside group or organization applicants for use of its registered marks, the Optimist International Board of Directors and/or President shall consider whether the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of such group or organization reflect the philosophy of Optimist International and meet the standards stated in Policy I-36 for Partners and Endorsed Programs.

# 10 Club Nominating Committee

Selection of a balanced, effective Club Board of Directors is the responsibility of Club members who elect officers and Directors. The Nominating Committee must present the best possible nominees for consideration. The Committee must be aware of the difference between popularity and leadership ability. Nominees should be chosen on the basis of ability.

The following contains complete information on election procedures, dates, positions to be filled and selection of candidates. This material is based on the Optimist International Constitution and Bylaws and the Standard Form for Optimist Club Bylaws. Club Bylaws should be checked to be sure they conform.

## The Nominating Committee

---

Not later than April 1, the President shall, with the approval of the Board of Directors, appoint a nominating Committee of not less than five members. Since current Vice Presidents have worked with Club Committees for several months and know the interests and abilities of Committee members, they might be consulted by the nominating Committee for their recommendations.

## Offices To Be Filled

---

- a. President, elected for one year.
  - Coordinates and encourages implementation of Club programs and policies
  - Presides at Club and Board meetings
  - Represents the Club to the community and various levels of Optimist International
  - Makes necessary appointments
  - Serves on District Board of Directors.
- b. Club President-Elect, elected for one year.
  - Serves on Board of Directors
  - Presides over meetings and acts in capacity of President when absent
  - Succeeds to the office of President on the first day of succeeding year
- c. Vice Presidents, elected for one year.
  - Serve as liaison between the Board, the President and President-Elect and a group of Committees
  - Serve on the Board of Directors
  - Counsel a group of Committees assigned by the President
  - Perform duties ordinarily incumbent upon Vice Presidents
  - Perform other duties assigned by the President.
- d. Directors, half of the total number to be elected annually for a two-year term; the recommended total number of elected Directors is six. (At a new Club's organization meeting, three Directors will be elected for a one-year term and three for a two-year term.) The Board is composed of the President, the President-Elect, the Vice Presidents, the Secretary-Treasurer, the Past President and the elected Directors.
  - Determine policies
  - Make long-range and short-term plans
  - Elect and delete members
  - Supervise Club activities
  - Activate Club Committees
  - Supervise budget and provide for annual audit of Club books
  - Determine causes for and instigate plans to correct excessive member loss and low attendance
  - Fill offices that become vacant during the year. (Those appointed to fill vacancies serve for the duration of the term of the individual being replaced).



- e. The Secretary-Treasurer is not elected but appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors. There is no advantage in splitting the office.
- Maintains minutes of Club and Board meetings
  - Receives and disburses all Club funds
  - Keeps financial records
  - Makes monthly financial reports
  - Handles Club correspondence
  - Prepares and files Club reports
  - Maintains membership, awards and attendance records.

## Timing Of The Election Process

---

- a. The President shall announce the appointment of the Nominating Committee not later than April 1.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall deliver alphabetical lists of nominees for each office to the Secretary-Treasurer not later than 15 days after its appointment; at least one nominee shall be named per office.
- c. The Secretary-Treasurer shall send to the membership a notice of the date of the elections and the list of nominees not later than seven days after receiving the Committee's report. The Club Bulletin may be used for this notice.
- d. The election shall be conducted not later than April 30.
- e. Results of election must be reported to the International Office no later than May 20.

## Election Procedures

---

- a. The President shall read the notice as issued by the Secretary-Treasurer and conduct the election.
- b. Nominations may be made from the floor.
- c. Separate balloting shall be conducted for each office.
- d. When there is only one nominee per office, the President may request a unanimous vote.
- e. A majority of the votes cast is required to elect.
- f. If the number of nominees for the office of Director exceeds the number of vacancies, the number receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected.
- g. A President who has served a full term may not succeed him/herself.
- h. Only members in good standing shall be eligible to hold office and vote.
- i. Voting shall be by individuals, and no one may cast more than one vote.
- j. Proxies will not be recognized.
- k. All officers and Directors shall assume their offices on October 1 following their election.

## Candidate Selection

---

The Nominating Committee should study the skills required for each position and attempt to match them with the abilities of potential nominees. The following qualifications provide a measure for potential Presidential nominees. They are generally appropriate for other positions also.

**Ability To Delegate Authority:** One who delegates authority must demonstrate confidence in those to whom authority is delegated, be prepared to recognize those who have contributed and follow up to be sure a project is completed.

**Ability To Plan:** Many of the goals and responsibilities of an officer must be accomplished with careful planning. Ability to plan is a necessary attribute in a Club leader.

**Administrative Ability:** The ability to conduct Club affairs, administer policies, strive toward Club objectives, make decisions and exercise authority are essential.

**Character:** This includes an unimpeachable moral background, a friendly manner and a reputation beyond reproach.

**Experience:** The candidate must have a record of successful leadership, knowledge of Optimist procedures, effective Committee service and regular general participation.

**Initiative:** The initiative to stimulate and sustain action is essential.

**Inspiration:** A leader must have the ability to spark an idea, inspire enthusiasm and translate plans into successful group action.

**Integrity:** Honesty, sincerity and dependability mark the leader upon whom members can rely.

**Intelligence:** The potential leader must be able to conduct the office in the proper manner, exercise good judgment and be objective in decisions.

**Interest:** Club leaders must have a genuine, active interest in the success and objectives of the Club and the specific offices they will assume.

**Inventiveness:** An inventive person has the vision, creativity and imagination to awaken what might otherwise be a dull, uneventful administration.

**Leadership Ability:** A Club leader must possess and cultivate the ability to lead others, promote cooperation and accept criticism in good grace.

**Salesmanship:** This represents the ability to sell ideas and plans in a way that will gain the interest and participation of others.

**Service-Mindedness:** This is an essential quality in anyone charged with the leadership of an Optimist Club. Leaders must care about people and desire to serve their community.

**Speaking Ability:** Leaders should have the ability to preside at meetings in an assertive, effective manner and to present ideas in clear, concise terms.

**Tact:** Through tact, one may prevent embarrassment and gain objectives without belittling others.

## Candidate Interviews

---

The Committee should personally interview each person who is to be nominated. At such an interview the Committee should:

1. Challenge the potential candidate with the opportunities and responsibilities of the position. Even the busiest person will accept nomination if properly challenged
2. Fully explain the position for which the candidate is being considered
3. Determine the support the person will receive from family and employer
4. Determine the candidate's willingness to serve
5. Does this person have the necessary time
6. Explain the leadership training available, and ask if the candidate will attend. (The Club budget should include funds to help with expenses.)

## Leadership Training

---

Optimist International and its Districts provide many opportunities for leaders to become better acquainted with their positions and learn techniques that will help them perform more effectively.

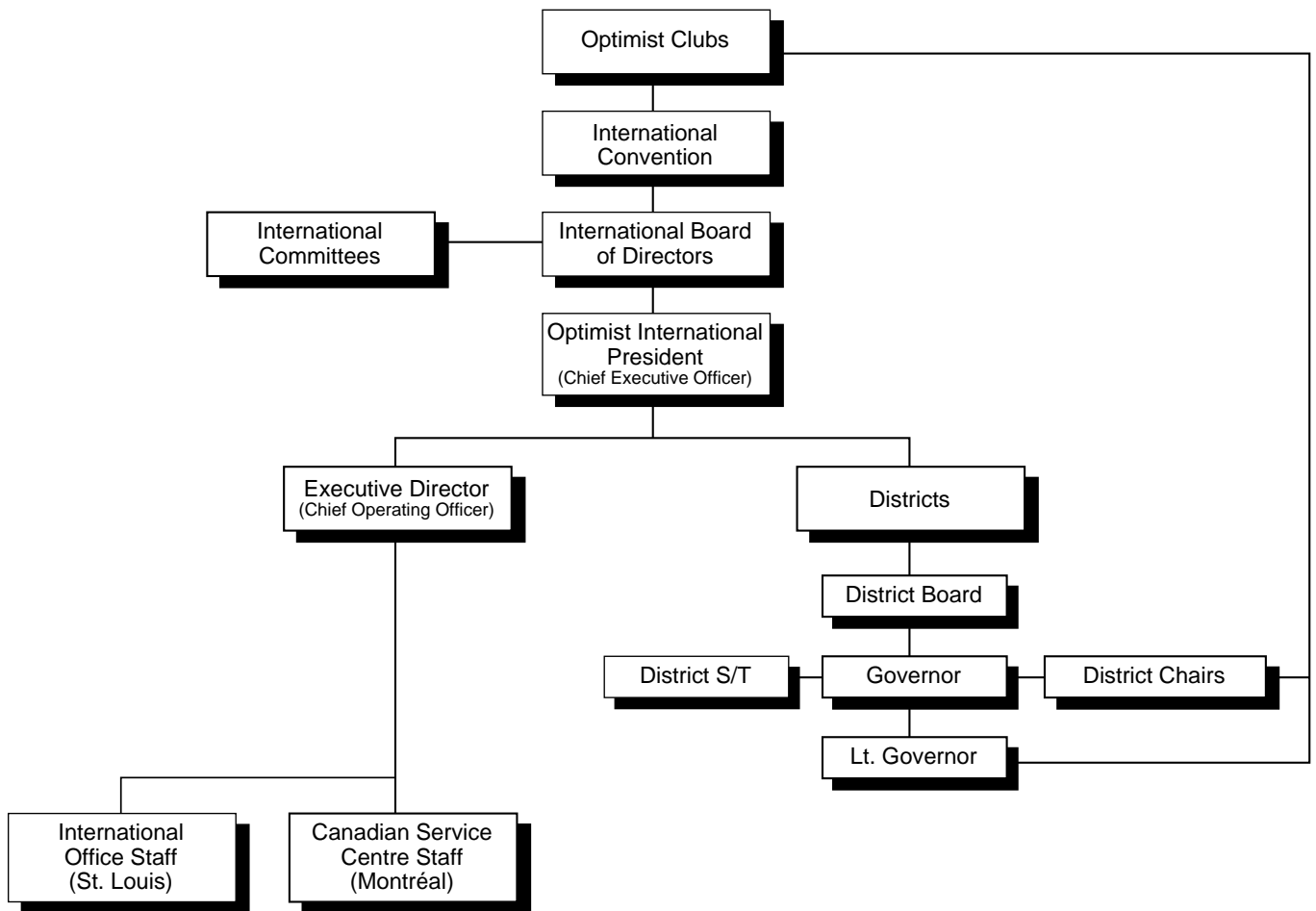
**International Convention:** The Optimist International Convention includes leadership sessions for the Club Presidents-Elect, Lieutenant Governors-Elect and other Club leaders.

**President-Elect Conference:** This conference is a leadership session for the new President-Elect conducted by District leaders during the fourth quarter.

**District Convention:** Leadership sessions for Club leaders are a major part of this convention. District Conventions are held in August or September.

**District Meetings:** Additional leadership sessions are available to Club leaders at each District and Zone meeting held during the year.

# Optimist International Structure and Services



Optimist International's Constitution states that "Optimist International is an association of member Clubs." Clubs comprise Optimist International's membership and guide its destiny through delegates to annual International Conventions. Individuals are members of Optimist Clubs. Optimist International is not the International Board of Directors, the International Office in St. Louis or a superimposed body.

The fundamental purpose of Optimist International is to help Clubs increase the effectiveness of their community-service activities. Each year Optimist Clubs conduct thousands of community-service projects, through which the annual, aggregate accomplishment of Optimist International is attained. Throughout its history, Optimist International has refrained from conducting activities or encroaching upon the purpose of member Clubs.

Optimist International operates under a well-integrated structure. At District meetings, Club delegates elect District officers. However, District officers do not represent Clubs to Optimist International; they represent Optimist International to Clubs. The Governor, Chief Executive Officer of the District, appoints the Chairs required to make the programs and purposes of Optimist International effective in the District.

At each International Convention, Club delegates elect 10 Vice Presidents-Elect and a President-Elect. The International President appoints the International Committees necessary to accomplish the purposes of the organization.

Optimist International serves its member Clubs by determining the need for new service activities and helping Clubs broaden their vision and expand their community service. From time to time certain programs are promulgated by Optimist International. These are often referred to as "International Programs." Usually they are activities that are nourished from isolated, local inception to widespread participation.

The International Office, located in St. Louis, Mo., serves as a clearinghouse of ideas for Club activities. Here a professional staff devotes full time to the organization's administration and provides services to Clubs. Aid and counsel on all phases of Club administration and community-serving activities are readily available. From the office, a planned flow of mail and email provides member Clubs, as well as District administrators, with new ideas and techniques geared to help make each Club more effective. The official magazine, *The Optimist*, is also published at the International Office.

## International Convention

---

Representation at the annual International Convention should be a must for every Club. The dividends of an International Convention are qualified leaders, effective Clubs and meaningful community service. Time after time, Clubs have gained new life and significance because their Presidents and other delegates have broadened their horizons and gained new ideas at a Convention.

Because Optimist International is a federation of member Clubs, it is essential that Clubs be represented in the business and decisions of an International Convention. Officers are elected and important decisions are reached through the vote of the delegates, who constitutionally control the affairs of the organization.

At Convention, Club delegates have the opportunity of meeting and exchanging ideas with other delegates as well as International officers and staff. They also participate in leadership conferences for Club officers and members. The Convention offers to delegates the opportunity of visualizing, perhaps for the first time, the size, influence and character of Optimist International.

Each Club should make some financial provision for the President-Elect to attend the International Convention. The Club should pay as much of the cost as possible. Transportation, registration, room and meals should be considered in that order. Some Clubs also assist with the expenses of the future Secretary-Treasurer.

## The District

---

A District is an administrative division of Optimist International within geographical boundaries established by Optimist International. All Clubs within its boundaries are members of that District. Districts do not have legislative powers or votes in International affairs.

District meetings include Conferences on effective Club administration. Optimist International frequently assigns an official International Representative to these meetings so his/her knowledge of Optimist activities will be available. Most District meetings and Conferences are held on Saturdays (occasionally extending into Sunday) and usually include a luncheon or dinner.

District Conventions feature the election of a Governor-Elect and a variety of training events. Clubs are represented by delegates (the number based on Club membership) who participate in the election and other District business. Every Club should provide an adequate delegation, equal to its voting strength, including President, President-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer. Conventions provide a high degree of fellowship for delegates. Many Districts also hold Conferences for their Junior Optimist and Octagon Clubs. During these meetings, workshops for Club officers and an election for JOOI Club Governor take place.

## The District Governor

---

The Governor is the Chief Administrative Officer of the District. With the large number of Clubs in each District, it is not possible for a Governor to visit each one. If, however, he/she can visit yours, your Club should assume the role of host and invite members and officers of surrounding Clubs.

When the Governor's visit is confirmed, promptly acknowledge the time and date. Offer him/her the opportunity of being the speaker for the meeting. Be sure to publicize the visit. Urge attendance by Club members. Make a list of questions to discuss with the officer. The Governor's years of experience will be of great value. The President should arrange to spend as much time as possible with the Governor. The Governor gives time to perform a service to Clubs and Optimist International; make the visit as pleasant and profitable as possible.

## Zone Meetings

---

A Zone is a geographical grouping of Clubs assigned to a Lieutenant Governor for the purpose of personal contact and service. It is not a tier in Optimist International's structure. Zone meetings, conducted by the Lieutenant Governor, are devoted entirely to training, counseling and motivating Club leaders. Zone meetings are occasionally conducted in conjunction with a District Meeting. In some Districts, Zone meetings may be held monthly or quarterly.

## The Lieutenant Governor

---

The Lieutenant Governor is the Optimist International officer responsible for direct contact with member Clubs, who can advise on Club methods, administrative techniques, youth and community-service activities. Call upon the Lieutenant Governor whenever your Club needs his/her special ability and experience.

Optimist International's Bylaws require a Lieutenant Governor to meet at least twice with each Club in the Zone. Information on these meetings follows:

**1. Annual Club Planning Conference.** This meeting will be conducted by the Lieutenant Governor at a regularly scheduled or special meeting of the Board of Directors. The purpose of the Conference is leadership education for the Board and discussion of Club administration. Necessary information will be gathered during the meeting. Completion of the ACPC form is required on or before November 15.

Tips for a successful Annual Club Planning Conference:

- a. Arrange a date with the Lieutenant Governor when all Board members can attend
- b. Inform Board members of the purpose and plans for the meeting.

If no other time is available, and as a last resort, the Planning Conference can be at the time of a regular Club meeting. However, the format should not be that of a regular Club meeting, and guests should not be invited to attend. The purpose of the Conference should be explained in the Club Bulletin.

**2. Club Meeting Visitation.** This visitation will be between April 1 and July 1 at a regular Club meeting. The Lieutenant Governor may be invited to be the speaker for the meeting. The following will help make the visit profitable for the Club and pleasant for the Lieutenant Governor:

- a. Arrange a date with the Lieutenant Governor early enough to promote the visit
- b. Let the Lieutenant Governor know, well in advance, if a speech is expected
- c. Extend a warm greeting
- d. Reserve a place at the head table
- e. Introductions should be made with courtesy and dignity
- f. If the Lieutenant Governor is not to be the speaker, allow time for a few brief remarks
- g. The Lieutenant Governor should not have to pay for the meal.

# Optimist International Foundations of the U.S. and Canada

The Optimist International Foundation, established in 1971, has been instrumental in providing significant funding for the charitable, literary and educational programs of Optimist International. The Optimist International Foundation of Canada was created in 1988 to provide official tax receipts to individuals making donations as provided by the Canadian law.

The Foundations provide a method by which members, friends and others may make a financial tax-deductible contribution to support Optimist International in providing programs that support "Bringing Out The Best In Kids."

Grants from the Foundations provide over half a million dollars a year for Optimist International programs. Those funded include the Oratorical, Essay and Communications Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Scholarship Contests, the Junior Optimist Octagon International (JOOI) Program, the Childhood Cancer Program and many others.

Services such as the Club Pass Through, Club Campaign Fund, Outsourcing Program and the 21st Century Endowment have been put into place by the Foundation to help individual Clubs raise money and provide future funding for their local communities. Honorariums and Memorials have been put into place to give an avenue for individuals and Club members to give donations in honor or in memory of another person.

The Foundations encourage each Optimist Club to appoint a Club Foundation Representative to promote support in each club. Presentations are made to new clubs as part of the new club follow-up program by a District Foundation Representative.

For additional information about the Foundations contact the District Foundation Representative in your district or contact the Optimist International Foundation Executive Director at 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108, 800-500-8130, or email: [foundation@optimist.org](mailto:foundation@optimist.org).

## **The Club Pass Through Program:**

---

This service is designed to assist U.S. Clubs in obtaining donations from local businesses and individuals for their local projects. Clubs benefit by having the ability to provide donors

with a 501(c)(3) letter, thus making their donations tax deductible without having to have their own private Foundation. To use this service you must complete the Pass Through Grant application and then forward the check from the individual or business made out to the Optimist International Foundation to the Foundation. The Foundation, upon receiving the donation, sends a check of the same amount to your Club.

## **The Club Campaign Fund:**

---

This service is designed to assist U.S. Clubs in a similar way as the Pass Through Grant Program. With the Club Campaign Fund, the Club keeps the money with the Optimist International Foundation for the duration of the Club's campaign. Your Club sets up a private account with the Optimist International Foundation, and receives interest of 4% once a year beginning with the first dollar deposited. A minimum fund balance of \$500 is required before a withdrawal can be made, and the funds must be held for at least three months. Because these funds are given to the Foundation and then placed in the Club's account within the Foundation, individual and business contributions are tax-deductible. To establish a Club Campaign Fund, contact the Optimist International Foundation.

## **The 21st Century Endowment:**

---

Available in the United States and Canada, this service is designed to assist Clubs and individuals that want to form their own foundation. Knowing that setting up a foundation is a long and expensive process, the 21st Century Endowment was established to help Clubs and individuals achieve the same results of a private foundation with no cost to them. By using the already existing, Optimist International Foundation, a layer of cost and administration fees is eliminated. Once the endowment reaches a total of \$10,000, the Club or individual will have the one-time option of deciding how interest is to be paid to them. You can choose between a flat 7% interest rate

or 90% of the percentage that Optimist International Foundation's receive on its investments, with a 5% guaranteed base. Unlike a private foundation, your principle is guaranteed which will guarantee that your Club projects will be funded FOREVER. The interest each year will allow you to continue to support the Optimist International slogan of "Bringing Out the Best in Kids".

## **The Outsourcing Program (Canada)**

---

This program was established to assist Canadian Clubs in a manner similar to the Pass Through Grant and Club Campaign Fund Programs. Clubs using this program act as agents for the Canadian Foundation and are able to solicit tax-deductible gifts to fund its community projects. While the Club seeks funds for these projects, the Canadian Foundation holds them aside. As the projects progress the Canadian Foundation distributes funds the Club has raised to the Club.

## **Honorariums:**

---

An honorarium is the perfect way to express your good wishes to fellow Optimists or to your family and friends celebrating a special event. When you make a gift to the Optimist International Foundations in honor of an individual, a notification card will be sent to the honoree informing them of your gift.

## **Pave the Way Scholarship Endowment Campaign:**

---

At the International convention in 1999, our first major campaign "Pave the Way" was kicked off. We will be raising \$10,000,000 (\$7,700,000 U.S. and \$2,300,000 Canadian) by September 30, 2005. This endowment will provide the funding to secure and increase the number and amount of scholarships available for winners of Optimist International's Oratorical, Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH) and Essay Programs. Funds currently earmarked for these programs can then be used to improve existing Optimist International programs, develop new programs and establish a grant program for local Clubs. 100% of your tax-deductible donation goes directly into this fund to be forever used for scholarships. Truly your gift will give forever!!!

## **Memorials:**

---

Making a memorial gift to the Optimist International Foundation is a loving tribute honoring the memory of a departing loved one or remembering someone on a special occasion. Giving a gift that will be perpetuated through the lives of young people is a wonderful way to remember someone special. A notification card will be sent to the family of the person being remembered, informing them of your memorial gift.

## **Donor Categories**

These life-to-date categories of donors have been established:

Benefactor	\$1,000
Honored Benefactor	\$2,500
Distinguished Benefactor	\$5,000
Eminent Benefactor	\$10,000
Bronze Benefactor	\$15,000
Silver Benefactor	\$25,000
Golden Benefactor	\$50,000
Diamond Benefactor	\$75,000

Contributions may be made by will, codicil or bequest with the aid of one's attorney. For your convenience, the Foundations can assist with these plans.

Names of all contributors will be permanently recorded on Foundation records. Contributors receive mementos symbolic of their gifts to the Foundation.

Friends, other organizations, corporations, foundations, trade associations and even governments may find that Optimist activities often parallel their objectives and interests and wish to offer their support through contributions to the Foundations.

For further information, please contact the Foundations at Optimist International, 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108, 800-500-8130; [www.oifoundation.org](http://www.oifoundation.org); or Optimist International Foundation of Canada, 4559 boul. Metropolitain, est., St. Leonard Québec H1R 1Z4, 800-363-7151.

# Index

Page No.		Page No.		Page No.	
	Agenda, Model Club Meetings . . . . .	22			
	Annual Activities Report . . . . .	39&40			
	Annual Club Planning Conference . . . . .	51			
	Appointments . . . . .	4&14			
	Attendance . . . . .	10&21			
	Board of Directors, Duties . . . . .	3&8			
	Board Meetings . . . . .	9&15			
	Board Minutes . . . . .	9			
	Budget & Finance, Club . . . . .	23&25			
	Cash Disbursements Form . . . . .	32&33			
	Cash Receipts Form . . . . .	31			
	Chaplain, Duties . . . . .	4			
	Club Campaign Fund . . . . .	52			
	Club Foundation . . . . .	37			
	Club Meeting Visitation . . . . .	51			
	Club Organization . . . . .	2			
	Club Pass Through Program . . . . .	52			
	Club Roster Adjustments				
	Form . . . . .	39&40			
	Club Services Coordinator . . . . .	4			
	Committees, Club . . . . .	4			
	Committee Procedures . . . . .	6			
	Committee Reports . . . . .	7			
	Committees, Special . . . . .	5			
	Committees, Standing . . . . .	5			
	Community Service . . . . .	5			
	Fellowship . . . . .	5			
	Finance . . . . .	5			
	JOOI Clubs . . . . .	5			
	Membership . . . . .	5			
	New Club Building . . . . .	5			
	Program . . . . .	5			
	Public Relations . . . . .	5			
	Community Projects Awards (CPA) . . . . .	40			
	Community Service Committee . . . . .	5			
	Convention, International . . . . .	50			
	Director of Personal Growth . . . . .	4			
	Directors, Duties . . . . .	3			
	District . . . . .	50			
	Club . . . . .	23			
	Conferences . . . . .	50			
	Governor . . . . .	51			
	Lieutenant Governor . . . . .	51			
	Dues Billings . . . . .	29			
	Dues Collection . . . . .	19			
	Club . . . . .	23			
	District Dues . . . . .	23			
	International Fees & Dues . . . . .	24			
	Sample Letters . . . . .	19&20			
	Dues Statement . . . . .	30			
	Duties				
	Appointees . . . . .	4			
	Board of Directors . . . . .	3&8			
	Chaplain . . . . .	4			
	Club Services Coordinator . . . . .	4			
	Director of Personal Growth . . . . .	4			
	Directors . . . . .	3			
	Foundation Rep, Club . . . . .	4			
	Lieutenant Governor . . . . .	51			
	Officers . . . . .	3			
	Parliamentarian . . . . .	4			
	President . . . . .	3&13			
	President-Elect . . . . .	3&13			
	Secretary-Treasurer . . . . .	3&17			
	Sergeant-At-Arms . . . . .	4			
	Vice President . . . . .	3&16			
	Elections . . . . .	47			
	Federal Employer ID # . . . . .	38			
	Fees & Dues . . . . .	23			
	District Dues . . . . .	23			
	International . . . . .	24			
	Fellowship Committee . . . . .	5			
	Finance Committee . . . . .	5			
	Form 990 (U.S. Clubs) . . . . .	37&40			
	Foundation				
	Club . . . . .	37			
	International . . . . .	52			
	Fundraising . . . . .	29			
	Governor, District . . . . .	51			
	Incorporation of Clubs . . . . .	43			
	Induction, New Member . . . . .	11&12			
	Insurance, General Legal Liability . . . . .	38			
	JOOI Clubs Committee . . . . .	6			
	JOOI Club Reports & Awards . . . . .	39			
	Leadership Training . . . . .	48			
	Lieutenant Governor . . . . .	51			
	Life Membership . . . . .	24			
	Meetings, Board . . . . .	9&15			
	Club . . . . .	15&21			
	Model Club Agenda . . . . .	22			
	Membership Committee . . . . .	6			
	Minutes, Board . . . . .	9			
	Minutes, Club Meeting . . . . .	21			
	Model Club				
	Agenda . . . . .	22			
	Budget . . . . .	25			
	Budget & Worksheet				
	Disbursements . . . . .	27&28			
	Chart . . . . .	3			
	Organization . . . . .	2&3			
	Worksheet Budget & Receipts . . . . .	26			
	Monthly Statement of Receipts				
	& Disbursements . . . . .	34			
	New Club Building Committee . . . . .	6			
	New Member Induction . . . . .	11&12			
	Nominating Committee, Club . . . . .	46			
	Officer-Elect Report, Club . . . . .	39&40			
	Officers Duties . . . . .	3			
	Offices to be Filled . . . . .	46			
	OI Foundations of U.S. & Canada,				
	Optimist International . . . . .	52			
	Club Foundation Rep . . . . .	4			
	Optimist International Structure &				
	Services . . . . .	49			
	Organization				
	Club . . . . .	2			
	Model Club . . . . .	2&3			
	Outsourcing Program . . . . .	53			
	Parliamentarian, Duties . . . . .	4			
	Pave The Way Scholarship . . . . .	53			
	Policies				
	Club . . . . .	41			
	International . . . . .	43			
	President, Club . . . . .	3&13			
	Materials Needed . . . . .	15			
	President-Elect, Club . . . . .	3&13			
	Program Committee . . . . .	6			
	Public Relations Committee . . . . .	6			
	Reporting Schedule to Optimist				
	International . . . . .	40			
	Reports, Club . . . . .	39&40			
	Annual Activities . . . . .	39&40			
	Club Foundation Rep . . . . .	40			
	Club Officer Elect . . . . .	39&40			
	Club Roster Adjustments . . . . .	39&40			
	Committee . . . . .	7			
	Community Projects Awards . . . . .	40			
	Form 990 . . . . .	37&40			
	JOOI Clubs . . . . .	39			
	Schedule . . . . .	40			
	Secretary-Treasurer, Club . . . . .	3&17			
	Materials Needed . . . . .	18			
	Sergeant-At-Arms, Duties . . . . .	4			
	Supplies, Purchase of . . . . .	42			
	Tax Exemption Letter . . . . .	35&36			
	Trade Marks & Service Marks . . . . .	44			
	21st Century Endowment . . . . .	52			
	Vice President, Club . . . . .	3&16			
	Zone Meetings . . . . .	51			





**Published by: Leadership Development  
Optimist International  
4494 Lindell Blvd. • St. Louis MO 63108  
800-500-8130/314-371-6000  
Fax: 314-371-6006  
Voice Mail: 800-678-8389 or 314-371-6009  
[www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org) (English)  
[www.optimiste.org](http://www.optimiste.org) (French)**