

QUARTERLY E-NEWSLETTER



Governor Shirley Bratton
STXDGovernor@gmail.com

2nd Quarter, JAN - MAR 2026 Vol.2

The Optimist Creed

Promise Yourself

- To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.
- To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.
- To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.
- To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.
- To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.
- To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.
- To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
- To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.
- To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.
- To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

Congrats Club Netherlands

Congratulations Netherlands Mid Club with 60 members...the highest number of members in the STXD!!!

- Followed by Fredericksburg Club with 58 members & Austin Club with 47 Members as of 1 Jan 2026!!! Great Job Team! Keep up the good work. Looking forward to seeing our numbers 1 Apr 2026.

Verify your contact information

Members, please take time and log in to the optimist international website: www.optimist.org and ensure your contact information is correct. We don't want you to miss the latest information from OI or STXD!

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

Optimist Members,

As Governor, I would like to personally extend my sincere appreciation for the dedication, professionalism, and hard work you have consistently demonstrated throughout the district. Your efforts have made a meaningful impact on our organization and the communities we serve. We had a fabulous 1st quarter from working ball fields to hosting children's parties and everything in between. STXD members have made a difference in the lives of youths, others, and ourselves. Because of your contributions, we continue to grow stronger and move confidently toward our mission and goals. Thank you for your continued passion and service. It is truly an honor to work alongside such a dedicated group. Let's keep pressing and continuing To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

I look forward to seeing each of you at the 3rd Quarter Meeting/Oratorical & Deaf & Hard of Hearing Contest May 2, 2026 in Baytown, Texas Registration information can be found on the STXD Website (STXD.org) after March 1, 2026.

Sincerely,

Shirley Bratton, South Texas Governor

Vision 2025-2026 : Spread Hope, Positive Vision & Optimism

2ND QUARTER DISTRICT MEETING IS MAY 2ND, BAYTOWN, TX

OUR DISTRICT IN NUMBERS

10 ZONES

34 CLUBS

559 MEMBERS



MISSION: OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL WILL BE RECOGNIZED WORLDWIDE AS THE PREMIER VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION THAT VALUES ALL CHILDREN AND HELPS THEM DEVELOP TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

OPTIMIST MOMENT:

Create An Optimistic Community: During 2nd Quarter STXD Meeting Former OI President Marc Weinsoff presented "Create An Optimistic Community." We were given A Call To Action...Try The 8 Minute Phone Call. The Secret Power of the 8-Minute Phone Call. Even a brief chat has measurable effects on our well-being. See instructions below on the 8 minute call.

- Choose a member of your club you have not seen or spoken with for too long, perhaps someone who has left your club or someone who is going through a difficult time.
- Send that person a quick text asking if they can chat on the phone for eight minutes – ideally today, but if not, schedule it for some time this week. You can even copy and paste the following: "Hi! I read this in The New York Times and it made me think of you. Want to schedule an eight-minute phone call this week?"
- After the eight minutes are up, decide together when your next such catch-up will be – and then honor your time commitment and sign off promptly. (Unless your friend is having some sort of crisis, in which case it's good that you got in touch anyway.) Hang up and enjoy that little glow of well-being.

Let's all pick up the phone and reach out to a member of your club you have not seen/spoken to in a long time. Make all your friends feel that there is something of value in them. I challenge each club member to make an 8 minute call.

CLUB SPOTLIGHT: FORT SAM HOUSTON

FSH Club was founded May 1, 1971. Thanks for all you have done for 55 years!!!



WORDS FROM STXD GOVERNOR ELECT

Fellow Optimists,

As we look ahead to an exciting and promising 2026, we begin the second quarter of Governor Shirley's year with renewed energy, purpose, and commitment to our mission.

As Optimists, our dedication to empowering youth remains at the heart of everything we do. In the coming months, we will focus on preparing our communities for the upcoming Essay and Oratorical Contests—opportunities that inspire young leaders, amplify their voices, and shape their futures. We are hopeful and confident that the South Texas District will advance to Nationals, and why not even the World Contest?

After all, we are Optimists, and we believe in reaching for the best possible outcomes.

We will continue working closely with our Lieutenant Governors to ensure club rosters remain updated, allowing us to maintain current information for dues, communications, and upcoming events. Staying organized and connected strengthens our ability to serve effectively.

As your Incoming Governor, I am honored to support our clubs and collaborate with each of you in strengthening our impact across the district.

Thank you for your commitment, your passion, and your unwavering dedication to our shared mission. Together, let's make this a year defined by optimism, growth, and meaningful

Best Regards

Servando Maldonado
STXD Governor-Elect

www.stxd.org
[stxd facebook](#)

OI & STXD
Social Media Links

optimist.org
[international facebook](#)

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

Be Part of the Dime-A-Day Contributors!

Dime-A-Day Link:
<https://www.oifoundation.org/individuals/dime-a-day-form.pdf>

Carlos Perez Lt Governor Zone 4

"It's not about how many awards or what club is better, I think we get away from what we are, what is important is what we do to help our youth and families, it's about the kids, that's what is important. Our focus on our kids and families."

Bobby Melia Lt Governor Zone 6 & 7

"There is no guarantee in life, except you are going to die, so whatever life throws at you, lost loved one, health, you still can make a difference in someone's life. DO IT."



OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

Dime-A-Day

Optimist International and Optimist International Foundation coexist as two separate organizations that support each other. Optimist International Foundation is the fundraising arm of Optimist International, and works to develop funds to support the endeavors of Optimist International and its mission.

When Members and Clubs make a contribution to support Optimist International Foundation, they are, with that gift, supporting Optimist International itself and themselves as a Club as well.

With just one dime a day, you can become part of the movement of "Helping Optimists Help Kids" and become part of a large group of Foundation supporters who realize what a difference they make every day in the lives of children. Would you consider making a gift of just a dime a day to assist the charitable work of Optimist International?

The Dime-A-Day level is reached by a contribution of \$36.50 to the Foundation within one Optimist Year, and is recognized by the presentation of a pin.

Building a future where every kid counts
 Can you spare a **dime a day**?

Sign me up! Please accept my \$ _____ donation. (Enclose check, payable to Optimist International Foundation, referencing "Dime-A-Day" in the memo section.)

Sign me up! Please accept my \$ _____ donation. Charge my M/C Visa Discover American Express

Account # _____ Exp. ____/____/____ Signature: _____ Security Code _____

Sign me up! Please deduct \$3.05 per month from my checking account.

Checking account number: _____ (Please include a copy of a voided check)

Name _____ Email _____

Club Number _____ Member Number _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Please return to: Optimist International Foundation • Dime-A-Day Campaign • P.O. Box 952126 • St. Louis, MO 63195



OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONTESTS 2025-2026



Topic
 "The Moment I Realized I Belonged
 —My Definition of Community"

ORATORICAL CONTEST

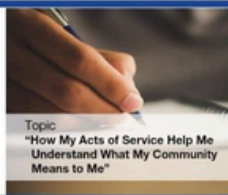
Beginning in 1928, the Oratorical Contest has become the longest-running program of Optimist International. The contest is designed for young people to gain experience in public speaking and provide them with an opportunity to compete for multiple college scholarships with a pre-assigned topic.

District Scholarships:
 First Place: \$2,500 • Second Place: \$1,500 • Third Place: \$1,000
 with a chance to win up to \$22,500 at the World Championships level

ESSAY CONTEST

The Essay Contest is sponsored by Optimist International to give young people the opportunity to write about their own opinions regarding the world in which they live. The approach can encompass a young person's personal experience, the experience of their country or a more historical perspective. In addition to developing skills for written expression, participants also have the opportunity to win a college scholarship!

One District Scholarship of \$2,500



Topic
 "How My Acts of Service Help Me Understand What My Community Means to Me"

COMMUNICATION CONTEST FOR THE DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

This contest offers an opportunity for students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing to present their thoughts in the community, gaining skills which can only come from signing or speaking to a large audience. Patterned after the Optimist Oratorical Contest, the contest offers youth the chance to compete in speech or sign language with the chance to win a college scholarship.

One District Scholarship of \$2,500



Topic
 "The Moment I Realized I Belonged
 —My Definition of Community"

KIDS SPEAK OUT! SPEECH CONTEST

All young people can compete in the Optimist Oratorical Contest. The "Kids Speak Out" contest is a "pre-Oratorical" program that provides a more equitable competition for younger speakers.



Follow complete Official Rules posted on www.optimist.org

Optimist International Essay Contest

Topic: How My Acts of Service Help Me Understand What My Community Means to Me

Who: The contest is open to contestants under the age of 19 as of October 1st of the current Optimist International contest year (October 1 - September 30) and who have not yet completed secondary school or its equivalent, including CEGEP students in Québec, Canada.

There is no minimum age. Essays are due to STXD Essay Chairperson Gary Lester, galester@sbcglobal.net by **Feb 28, 2026**.

Optimist International Oratorical/Deaf & Hard of Hearing Contest

Topic: The Moment I Realized I Belonged — My Definition of Community

The contest is open to contestants under the age of 19 as of October 1st of the current Optimist International contest year (**October 1 – September 30**) and who have not yet completed secondary school or its equivalent, including CEGEP students in Québec, Canada.

There is no minimum age. STXD Oratorical Chairperson is Judy Karonika, jrkarol@aol.com. STXD Deaf & Hard of Hearing Chairperson is Stan White, swwhitehouse@verizon.net.

More info to follow.

STXD Oratorical/Deaf & Hard of Hearing Contest will be held **May 2, 2026**, Baytown, Texas in conjunction with the 3rd Quarter District Meeting.

Presidential Incentive Program:

**Submit Your Club For Merit Club.
We don't do it for the recognition...but you
earned it. Please submit!**



2025-2026 PRESIDENTIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM

CLUB RECOGNITION

Merit Club

- Grow Club by Net +0 members (Maintain beginning October 1 membership count)
- Make a non-restricted contribution to the OIF or CCOF of at least \$100
- Be current on District and International dues and fees

Honor Club

- Meet Merit Club Requirements plus Grow Club by Net +3 members

Distinguished Club

- Meet Honor Club Requirements plus one of the following:
 - Grow Club by Net +15 (inclusive of 3 Honor Club members)
 - Charter a one or more new Clubs

DISTRICT RECOGNITION

Merit District

- Grow District by Net +10 members
- Raise \$7,500 in non-restricted contributions to the OIF or CCOF
- All District reports filed with Optimist International as required

Honor District

- Grow District by:
 - Net+10 members and Build 1 new Club or
 - Grow District by Net +25 (inclusive of 10 members from Merit District)
- Raise \$7,500 in non-restricted contributions to the OIF or CCOF
- All District reports filed with Optimist International as required

Distinguished District

- Grow District by:
 - Net +25 members and Build 3 new Clubs or
 - Grow District by Net +70 (inclusive of 25 members from Honor District)
- Raise \$10,000 in non-restricted contributions to the OIF or CCOF
- All District reports filed with Optimist International as required

Club & District Incentives will be fulfilled through the Optimist Merch Store.

ADDITIONAL AWARDS

Governor Pacesetter Award

- Grow District by Net+15 in membership by June 30. And Charter two or more new adult clubs by June 30.

Builder of Excellence

- Up to 4 Builders of Excellence can be named for each new adult Club, regardless of the number of Sponsor Clubs. Up to two Builders of Excellence can be named for a Club within a Club. (Medallion for first BOE with a Ribbon Star thereafter)

HOWDY FROM SOUTH TEXAS OPTIMIST MEMBERS!

