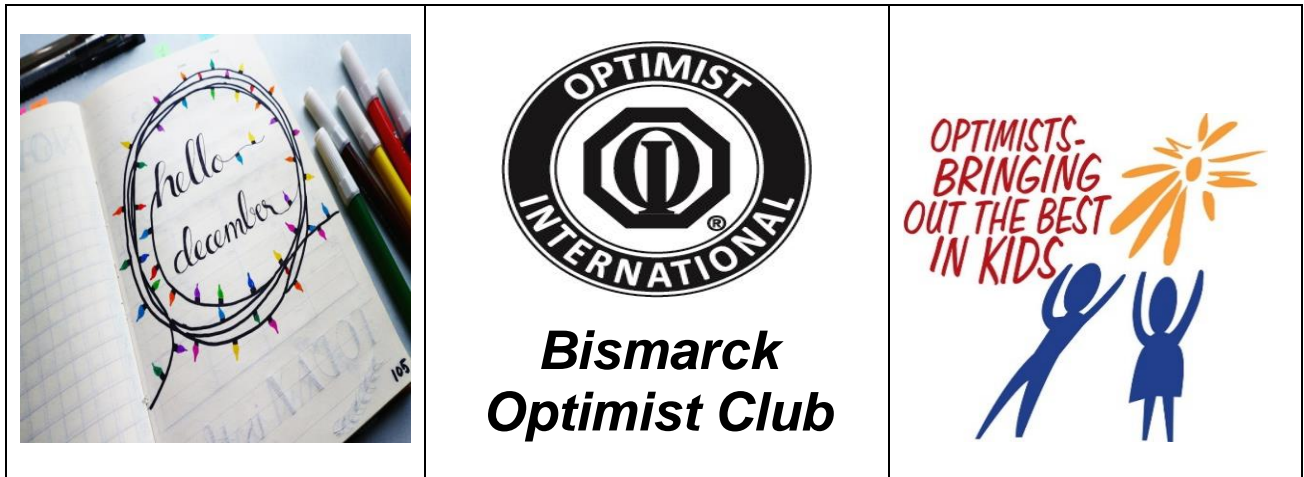


The Optimist Outlook – December 2024



A Look Ahead to...

December Programs, Jillian Lagasse, Program Chair

December 2nd – Fill Caring for Kids Backpacks

December 3rd – Ben Sand from Capital Curling Club

December 5th – Board of Directors meeting

December 5th – Gift Wrapping begins

December 10th – Dr. Mike Bitz and Ryan Lagasse, update on new Mandan High School

December 17th – Matt Schanandore from Mandan Holiday Lights on Main

December 24th – Gift Wrapping ends – NO noon meeting - Merry Christmas!

December 31st – NO noon meeting – Happy New Year!

Recap of November Programs, Laurie Hatzenbuhler, Chair:

November 4th – Filled 35 Caring for Kids Backpacks

November 5th – Mary Dunn, We Honor Veterans Program, CHI Health at Home

November 7th – Board of Directors meeting

November 11th – Veterans Day Avenue of Flags

November 12th – Gift Wrap Committee presentation by Alica Vollmers and Sarah Miller, Co-Chairs

November 19th – Brent Kleinjan, Executive Director of Ronald McDonald House

November 26th – Katie Oakland, Executive Director of TR 4 Heart and Soul

Upcoming Program Chairs:

January: Rob Koppinger

February: Kent Belland

March: Kyle Debertin

April: Brooks Grotte

May: Jerry Haas

Contact Julie jjeske@bravera.bank for more information

Welcome New Members

Ron Walters

Tana Sukauskas

Morgan Bruhn

Jean Ball

Member Anniversaries

Kent Belland – 2 years

Sara Pic – 2 years

Ashley Farthing – 5 years

Rhonda Krueger – 5 years

Sophie Morgan – 7 years

Rob Meltzer – 16 years

Kathy Torske – 20 years

Committee Feature – Toy Drive

The 6th annual Optimist Toy Drive is taking place through December 12th. The donated toys will be delivered to Abused Adult Resource Center for distribution to children served by the agency. Such a great way for us to give back to kids during the Christmas season!

See the flier at the end of the newsletter for details.

Committee Chair: Lacey Fercho

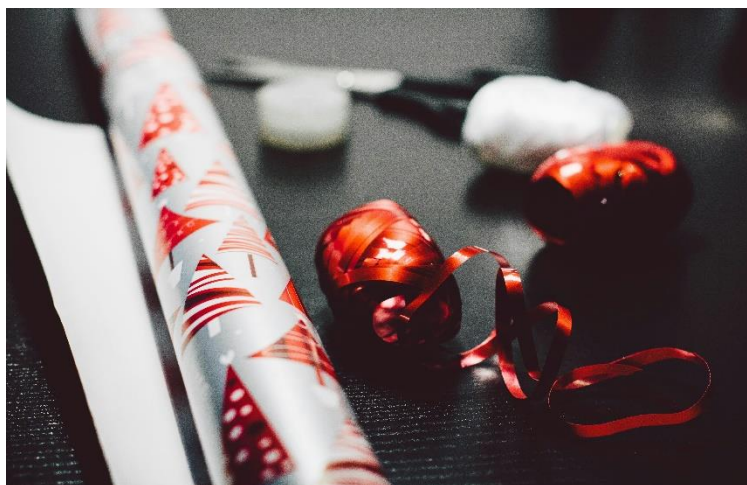


Committee Feature – Gift Wrap

Jolliest Time of the Year!!

Gift Wrap season is right around the corner! We are gearing up for our LARGEST fundraiser of the year for our club and we can't do it without all of you!! I know this is a busy time of year for everyone and we really appreciate each and every one of you taking time out of your busy schedules to help wrap presents.

Watch for social media posts promoting gift wrap at the Kirkwood Mall, and please share the posts on your Facebook page to help promote this event!



The online sign up for volunteers is now open. Copy this link in your browser to sign up:

<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/3115908260103/false#/invitation>

We have 20 days of gift wrapping and we are looking for volunteers to fill the 2- or 3-hour time slots. Feel free to reach out to any of our gift wrap committee members - Sarah Miller, Alicia Vollmers, Jerry Haas, Shelly Lockard, Tami Emter, Roger Anderson, or Brooks Grotte would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thanks in advance for helping the Optimist Club with our biggest fundraiser of the year!

Flashback to the 1980's!! Remember when this one rock band from Ireland named U2 came out with their hit "Still haven't found what I'm looking for?" Well, that is the theme for this month with the **Energize your Optimism**, because we still haven't found what we are looking for- we are still looking for more new members from around Bismarck-Mandan to join our Bismarck Optimist Club!

Our membership goal is to get 4 new members to join our club before the Energize your Optimism campaign wraps up January 31. I know we can hit this goal as there are several people out there that might be interested- we just need to seek them out!



Last month, we awarded some Crumbl Cookies for the white elephant prize that started with "C". This month, the mysterious white elephant prize starts with the letter "L". Hmm...what could it be? Maybe a lion? A box of Lucky Charms? Or perhaps a bag of lemons? Stayed tuned as this will be awarded on Dec. 3rd to one of the members that brought a guest in the month of November. If you recruit a new member to join, we will have a \$25 VISA gift card for you, an added bonus for your Christmas shopping!

Thank you all for your support of this membership drive as we are getting close to the finish line!



Ron Walters of the Hunkpapa-Lakota people

He is known as Ronald Walters Jr. in the Christian world and Gray Spotted Horse among his family, tribal relatives, and ancestors from the Standing Rock Reservation. Ron is a current resident of Mandan but calls the Standing Rock Reservation home. Born in Lubbock, Texas, Ron grew up in all the states between Texas and Nebraska until graduating high school in Neligh, Nebraska in 1982. Ron completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in American Indian Studies at the University of South Dakota, with an emphasis on media and journalism. Before his university studies, Ron successfully held various positions in restaurant startups and management, retail, Information Technology (technical support, consulting), and package/mail deliveries (FedEx). During and after his university studies, Ron focused his career on Journalism in the radio and newspaper industry, leading to an executive director position for a national non-profit organization recruiting, training, and advancing the careers of hundreds of Native Americans pursuing a career in the media. After mentoring Native American journalists, Ron relocated to the Standing Rock Reservation in 2005 to take care of his elderly parents, as they began enjoying the final years of their 57 year-marriage. While caring for his elderly parents in Fort Yates, Ron successfully held the position of Director of Development at Sitting Bull College for eight years (2005-2013) before moving to his current position as Major Gifts Officer at the Great Plains Food Bank in 2013. When not working Ron enjoys researching and studying Native American history, public speaking on tribal culture, and spending time with family and friends on the Standing Rock Reservation. Ron has one adult son, Tyler, living in Sioux City, Iowa, along with two of Ron's grandchildren (Bentley & Charlotte).

My favorite thing about the Optimist Club: The positive motto towards life that anyone can commit to in their own way.

Ron's favorite quotes:

"Inside of me, there are two dogs. One is mean and evil, and the other is good, and they fight each other all the time. When asked which one wins, I answer, the one I feed the most."

- Sitting Bull / Tatanka Iyotake

"Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children."

- Sitting Bull / Tatanka Iyotake

Veterans Day Avenue of Flags



Half of the set-up crew: Julie & Charlie Jeske, Kyle Debertin and Kaitlin Diede



Take down crew: Jackson Lofgren, Jerry Haas, Kent Belland, Christa Schwartzenberger, Ashley Backsen and Brent Helm
(not pictured: Rob Koppinger, Committee Chair)

Committee Feature – Super Bowl Squares

Watch your emails for the Optimist Super Bowl Square Raffle coming in early January - 100 squares will be sold for \$20 each for big payouts! What a fun fundraiser for our Optimist Club!

Committee Chair: Wes Engbrecht

Monthly Caring for Kids Backpacks Committee

Committee members, Ashley Farthing and Sylvia Burgess packed them in November. Recipients are United Way affiliated agencies that support at-least-temporarily-homeless kids, which currently include: The United Way Center for Opportunity, Salvation Army, Abused Adult Resource Center and 31:8 Project.



The Shoes of Hope representative received proceeds from the 10th Annual Optimists Bowling Tournament.
(L to R) Cindy Clairmont, Board member; Rhonda Krueger, Jerry Haas and Wes Engbrecht, Bowling Committee members



6th Annual Bismarck Optimist Club Christmas Toy and Gift Drive

New Unwrapped Items Accepted Through December 12

Most Needed- Teen gifts and baby toys and books (newborn to 18 months)

Suggested Donations:

- **All Ages:** *Toys, Games, Arts & Crafts, Puzzles, Legos, STEM & Building Sets *Playdoh, Kinetic sand, Slime Kits, Stuffed animals, learning toys, Legos, Footballs, Basketballs, Baby Dolls, Barbies, Cars, Trucks
- **Teen Boys and Girls Gifts:** Hygiene sets, Sports bags, Backpacks, Duffle bags, Headphones/Ear Buds, Haircut Gift cards, Movie Passes, Walmart Gift cards, Journals, Adult Coloring Books, Markers, Make-up, Perfume, Body Spray.

**We request that no toy guns/weapons be donated*

All Toys will be
donated locally to
The Adult Abused
Resource Center



2024-25 Board of Directors:

President: Julie Jeske, email: jjeske@bravera.bank

Vice-President: Jillian Lagasse, email: jillian.lagasse@hotmail.com

Secretary: Sylvia Burgess, email: sylvia.burgess@bis.midco.net

Treasurer: Tami Emter, email: tamiemter@hotmail.com

Past President: Brooks Grotte, email: b.grotte@bankwithchoice.com

Director: Cindy Clairmont (1 year remaining) email: c_clairmont@hotmail.com

Director: Laurie Hatzenbuhler (1 year remaining) email: laurieh@bis.midco.net

Director: Kristin Oban, (1 year remaining) email: koban@c21morrison.com

Director: Rob Koppinger (2 years remaining), email: robk@kirkwoodbank.com

Director: Maddie Berger (2 years remaining), email: mberger@bravera.bank

Director: Jerry Haas (2 years remaining) email: jerry_r_haas@yahoo.com

Optimist Resources:

Email: bis.optimist@gmail.com

Website: www.bismarckoptimist.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/optimistclubofbismarck

Twitter Handle: @optimistbis; <https://twitter.com/OptimistBis>

DMM: www.optimist-dmm.org

Optimist Creed

Promise Yourself...

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.

To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much 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 & too happy to permit the presence of trouble.