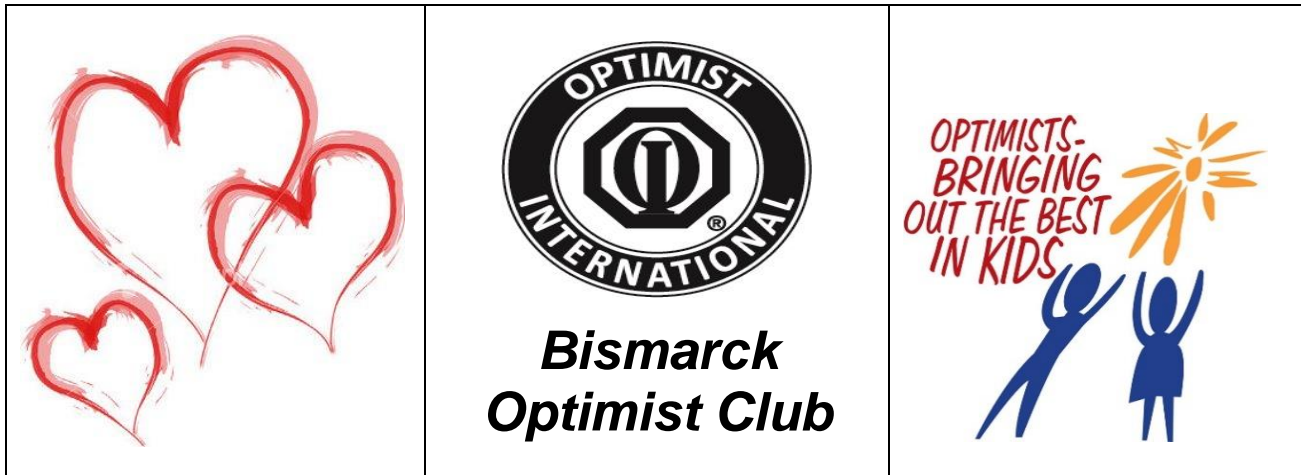


# The Optimist Outlook – February 2025



## ***A Look Ahead to...***

### **February Programs, Kent Belland, Chair**

**February 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Fill Caring for Kids Backpacks

**February 4<sup>th</sup>** – Kelly Thomas, Mandan Parks & Recreation Foundation

Raising funds to cover recreational fees incurred by financially disadvantaged youth

**February 6<sup>th</sup>** - Board of Directors meeting

**February 11<sup>th</sup>** - Cody Sletten, Sources of Strength

Youth focused suicide prevention program efforts

**February 18<sup>th</sup>** - Gary Gorosky, Spirit of Life Food Pantry

Food Pantry efforts to service the Mandan Community

**February 25<sup>th</sup>** – New Member Induction at noon meeting

**February 25<sup>th</sup>** - Madison Milbrath, State Historical Society of North Dakota

Historical Society's Junior Historians Program

### **Recap of January Programs, Rob Koppinger, Program Chair**

**January 6<sup>th</sup>** – Filled 35 Caring for Kids backpacks

**January 7<sup>th</sup>** – Judy Daniels, Sanford Home Health & Hospice

**January 9<sup>th</sup>** – Board of Directors meeting

**January 14<sup>th</sup>** – Joan Klein, North Dakota Asian-American Arts & Cultural Initiative

**January 21<sup>st</sup>** – Club social at Laughing Sun beginning at 4:00

**January 28<sup>th</sup>** – Kari Knudson, Bismarck State College Foundation

## Upcoming Program Chairs:

March: Kyle Debertin  
April: Brooks Grotte  
May: Jerry Haas  
June: Think about volunteering!

Contact Julie [jjeske@bravera.bank](mailto:jjeske@bravera.bank) for more information

## Welcome New Member

Keith Pic

## Member Anniversaries

|                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Jennifer Odell – 1 year | Laurie Hatzenbuhler – 2 years |
| Kyle Debertin – 6 years | Julie Jeske - 16 years        |

Our **Energize your Optimism** membership campaign has officially wrapped up! Over the past year, we have had a lot of fun with celebrity spokesmen in our newsletter such as Clint Eastwood, MC Hammer, Beavis & Buttthead, Oscar the Grouch and many more! Also, who could forget the wacky white elephant prizes that ranged with items such as prune juice, a mini wind turbine, and a toy train to name a few. Now, the most important part, we would like to welcome the 9 new members that have joined our Optimist Club since February 2024:

- Jennifer Odell
- Shelly Lockard
- Kaitlyn Diede
- Ron Walters
- Tana Sukauskas
- Jean Ball
- Morgan Bruhn
- Ryan Lagasse
- Keith Pic

It is awesome to have you all on board as members of our Optimist Club and we look forward to welcoming you as new members at our official new member induction at our Optimist meeting on February 25th.

Also, a big shout out to our recruiters who helped make this all possible- Julie Jeske, Daryl Kerzman, Brooks Grotte, Jerry Haas, Jillian Lagasse, Tami Emter, Laurie Hatzenbuehler and Sara Pic. We appreciate all of your efforts to recruit new members to our Bismarck Optimist Club!

Keep on recruiting as we continue to grow our club and stay tuned as we will launch a new incentive-based membership drive later on this spring!



**Tana Sukaukas** was born and raised here in Bismarck, ND. She received her undergraduate degree in Secondary English Education at MSUM in Moorhead, MN, where she also played tennis for four years and was captain of her team. After graduation, she moved to Bloomington, Indiana, where she attended graduate School at Indiana University and received her Masters of Science degree in School Counseling. After college, life brought her back to North Dakota, where she met her husband, Travis. Together, they have one eleven year old daughter, May and one incredible dog, Rocky. May is a fifth grader who loves to laugh, play volleyball and tennis, and keep her room organized, and Rocky loves to chase sticks and run like the wind on sandbars and in our ND prairies.



Tana spent seventeen years working in Bismarck Public Schools, fifteen of which were spent at Bismarck High School as an English Teacher and as an AVID Elective Teacher/Coordinator. She slowly transitioned into a full-time position as AVID District Director for Bismarck Public Schools before taking a leap of faith to pursue a career working outside the local school district as an Implementation Strategist for AVID Center's Upper Midwest area, where she currently works and supports schools across ND, SD, NE, and MN.

Tana joined the Optimist Club because she values being an integral part of the fabric of one's community and she is a long-time believer in the importance of service. She first learned about the Optimist Club when volunteering for some of their events with students when she was an AVID Elective teacher at BHS, and so reached out to stay connected now that she is working in a different capacity which includes regular travel.

In her free time, Tana travels with her family to watch May play volleyball, travels with her friends to learn about our world, and she reads, attends concerts, Wordles, loves a good pick-up game of ANY kind, and loves any conversation around music and laughter.

One of her favorite quotes is by musician Mason Jennings: "Life has no limit if you're not afraid to get in it." It inspires her to acknowledge our finite time on Earth and to embrace every day we have, in any capacity we can.

**Submission deadline is February 10, 2025!**

**Committee Feature – Optimist Essay Contest**

Press release from Committee Chair, Kathy Torske



BISMARCK OPTIMIST CLUB

CONTACT  
Kathy Torske,  
Committee Chair  
701-226-6285  
[ktorske@bravera.bank](mailto:ktorske@bravera.bank)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 19, 2024

**Local Optimist Club to Sponsor Essay Contest for Students**

BISMARCK, ND – The Optimist Club of Bismarck is encouraging area students to contemplate the phrase "**How Optimism Has Paved My Road to Success**" as part of the Optimist International Essay Contest for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Optimist Club will judge the local students' essays based on the theme of "**How Optimism Has Paved My Road to Success**" and determine the winners. The top winner will receive \$500 and the winning essay will be sent to the district level where a \$2,500 college scholarship will be awarded to the winner.

Students wishing to participate in the essay contest can find out more about the contest by contacting the club at 701-226-6285 or [ktorske@bravera.bank](mailto:ktorske@bravera.bank). Essay submission deadline is February 10, 2025.

Optimist International is one of the world's largest service club organization with 80,000 adult and youth members in 2,500 clubs in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, Mexico, and throughout the world. Carrying the motto "Friend of Youth," Optimists conduct positive service projects that reach more than six million young people each year. To learn more about Optimist International, please visit the organization's website at [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org).

###

**Clarification: Artwork dos NOT have to be submitted through schools – any eligible child can participate.**

## Second Annual Visual Arts Contest



**The topic for 2025 is “Bringing Out the Best”.** Artwork should reflect **this topic**. The contest will be held at the Club level and then at the International level.

The project for the Visual Arts Competition shall be the creation of 12 Optimist notecards with envelopes. The notecards will be for sale after June 30, 2025.

Artists must be **age eleven or lower as of October 1, 2024.**

There are two age divisions: up to 7 years of age and 8-11 years of age. Art for six of the note cards will be selected from each age division. The art for the cover will be selected from either age division.

Each local artist will receive a personalized participation certificate.

There will be a monetary award for 13 Optimist International winners, one for the image selected to go on the cover and one image selected for each of the 12 notecards. At the International level, **the 12 winners** will receive **\$150**; **the winner of the cover** will receive an additional **\$100**.

**Deadline for submissions is February 14, 2025.** Selection(s) locally will be made by February 25, 2025, and by Optimist international in late March, 2025.

This information, along with necessary submission forms, will be emailed to Bismarck-Mandan elementary school secretaries the first week in January and they will share with classroom teachers.

Committee Chair: Sylvia Burgess

## Why Do Optimists Do That?

Optimist Fun Facts in our Newsletter

### **Buddy Call**

Each week, members are asked to contact the person below their name on the Buddy Call List, even if not able to attend the meeting. The purpose of this activity is to **stay in touch** with one another and **encourage club participation**. It takes less than a minute! Every month, the most current List is sent out to all members along with the newsletter.

After the meeting is called to order, each member in turn has the floor, stands to state their name and whether or not they made or received a call, text or email, along with their Buddy’s name. Occasionally, a bit of news is shared as well. This allows members to **connect names to faces** and helps members to **get to know one another**. Traditionally, everyone pays 25 cents, and if you didn’t reach out to your Buddy, an additional 25-cent fine is paid. Many members don’t deal with coins and pay with dollars instead!

Annually, the funds collected are donated to a charity chosen by the most recent Optimist of the Year – another wonderful benefit of doing Buddy Call.

**Details coming soon!**

## **Optimist International Oratorical Contest**

“How Optimism Has Guided Me Through Trying Times”

Committee Chair: Kyle Debertin

### **2024-25 Board of Directors:**

**President:** Julie Jeske, email: [jjeske@bravera.bank](mailto:jjeske@bravera.bank)

**Vice-President:** Jillian Lagasse, email: [jillian.lagasse@hotmail.com](mailto:jillian.lagasse@hotmail.com)

**Secretary:** Sylvia Burgess, email: [sylvia.burgess@bis.midco.net](mailto:sylvia.burgess@bis.midco.net)

**Treasurer:** Tami Emter, email: [tamiemter@hotmail.com](mailto:tamiemter@hotmail.com)

**Past President:** Brooks Grotte, email: [b.grotte@bankwithchoice.com](mailto:b.grotte@bankwithchoice.com)

**Director:** Cindy Clairmont (1 year remaining) email: [c\\_clairmont@hotmail.com](mailto:c_clairmont@hotmail.com)

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

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

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

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

**Director:** Jerry Haas (2 years remaining) email: [jerry\\_r\\_haas@yahoo.com](mailto:jerry_r_haas@yahoo.com)



(L-R) Rob, Julie, Laurie, Jerry, Jillian, Brooks, Tami, Cindy Maddie and Sylvia (not pictured Kristin)

## **Optimist Resources:**

Email: [bis.optimist@gmail.com](mailto:bis.optimist@gmail.com)

Website: [www.bismarckoptimist.com](http://www.bismarckoptimist.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/optimistclubofbismarck](http://www.facebook.com/optimistclubofbismarck)

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

DMM: [www.optimist-dmm.org](http://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.