



HISTORY

Complied By Ron Hare

The association of clubs that is known today as Optimist International was formed on June 19, 1919, when representatives of 11 clubs held a convention in Louisville, Kentucky, and adopted the name International Optimist Club. During the convention, William Henry Harrison, a descendent of the ninth president of the United States bearing the same name, was elected the first International President of Optimist international. In 1941 the Asheville Optimist Club was the first club formed in North Carolina.

We Were Known As The North Carolina & South Carolina District (until 1954)

- 1953-54 Hugh H. Cranford -Charlotte -Governor - Julius A. Doar -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1952-53 Dr. L. G. Harrison -High Point-Governor - J. E. Little -High Point -Sec/Treas.
- 1951-52 Harry Haigler- Florence, SC -Governor - Robert S. Reese- Florence, SC -Sec/Treas.
- 1950-51 E. F. Gallagher, Jr. -Gastonia -Governor - James P. Cherry -Gastonia -Sec/Treas.
- 1949-50 P. E. Rogers -Hickory -Governor - William H. Chamblee -Hickory -Sec/Treas.
- 1948-49 George J. Felia- Charlotte -Governor - P. E. Rogers -Hickory -
- 1947-48 George J. Felia-Charlotte-Governor - Roger L. Knight- Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1946-47 James J. Reid -Greenville, SC -Governor - W. L. McDaniel- Greenville SC -Sec/Treas.
- 1945-46 John G. Frazier, Jr. -Charlotte -Governor - W. Arnold Wood -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1944-45 Leslie T. New -Asheville -Governor - Walter A. Ward -Asheville -Sec/Treas.
- 1943-44 R. E. Fullmer- Columbia, SC -Governor - Gus Raney -Columbia, SC -Sec/Treas.
- 1942-43 James A. White -Charlotte -Governor - Carl Boggs -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1941-42 Dr. J. B. Anderson -Asheville -Governor - Walter Ward -Asheville -Sec/Treas.

In October of 1954 We Became the North Carolina District (until 1983)

- 1982-83 James O. Williams -Wilson -Governor - Horace Goff -Wilson -Sec/Treas.
- 1981-82 Dr. J. C. Boone, Jr. -Albemarle -Governor - Bob Brewer -Albemarle -Sec/Treas.
- 1980-81 James B. Rivenbark -Greensboro -Governor - John Kirkman -Greensboro -Sec/Treas.
- 1979-80 Bill Fowler -Charlotte -Governor - Joe Pool -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1978-79 R. M. Williams -Wilmington -Governor - Don Lofting -Wilmington -Sec/Treas.
- 1977-78 Walter Armentrout -Wilmington -Governor - James B. Bullard -Wilmington -Sec/Treas.
- 1976-77 W.F. "Cran" Cranfill- Raleigh -Governor - Richard W. Pinkerton -Asheville -Sec/Treas.
- 1975-76 Gerald Milner -Enka -Governor - Richard S. Pinkerton -Asheville -Sec/Treas.
- 1974-75 Vincent J. Cardinal -Charlotte -Governor - C. Lin Adams, Jr. -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1973-74 C. Jeff McArver- Gastonia- Governor - Donald C. Howe -Gastonia -Sec/Treas.
- 1972-73 Harold A. Smoak -Charlotte -Governor - C. Lin Adams, Jr. -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1971-72 Robert (Bobby) Rogers -Shelby -Governor - Wayne Hamrick -Shelby -Sec/Treas.
- 1970-71 William C. Taylor- Wilmington -Governor - Harold Becker -Wilmington -Sec/Treas.
- 1969-70 Robert Howe -Gastonia -Governor - Jeff McArver -Gastonia -Sec/Treas.
- 1968-69 H. B. Stroup, Jr. -Asheville -Governor - Phil N. Sales -Asheville -Sec/Treas.
- 1967-68 Grover Ritchie -Charlotte -Governor - Vincent Cardinal -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1966-67 Dr. C. M. Johnston -Charlotte -Governor - Hilton L. Borthen -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1965-66 Robert E. Goodwin -Raleigh -Governor - Ervin M. Moore- Raleigh -Sec/Treas.
- 1964-65 James C. Barker -Hickory -Governor - Foy C. Hefner, Sr. -Hickory- Sec/Treas.
- 1963-64 Roland E. Bradley -Gastonia -Governor - Robert S. Howe- Sec/Treas.
- 1962-63 Dr. David R. Stroud -Rocky Mount -Governor - Phillip F. Shirley- Rocky Mount -Sec/Treas.

- 1969-70 Robert Howe -Gastonia -Governor - Jeff McArver -Gastonia -Sec/Treas.
- 1968-69 H. B. Stroup, Jr. -Asheville -Governor - Phil N. Sales -Asheville -Sec/Treas.
- 1967-68 Grover Ritchie -Charlotte -Governor - Vincent Cardinal -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1966-67 Dr. C. M. Johnston -Charlotte -Governor - Hilton L. Borthen -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1965-66 Robert E. Goodwin -Raleigh -Governor - Ervin M. Moore- Raleigh -Sec/Treas.
- 1964-65 James C. Barker -Hickory -Governor - Foy C. Hefner. Sr. -Hickory- Sec/Treas.
- 1963-64 Roland E. Bradley -Gastonia -Governor - Robert S. Howe- Sec/Treas.
- 1962-63 Dr. David R. Stroud -Rocky Mount -Governor - Phillip F. Shirley- Rocky Mount -Sec/Treas.
- 1961-62 T. Earl Yarborough -Charlotte -Governor - Frank Matthews -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1960-61 Gar1and B. Murray -Greensboro -Governor - Clyde E. Tesh -Greensboro -Sec/Treas.
- 1959-ro R .R. (Reggie) Brown -Raleigh -Governor - W. B. Cope -Raleigh -Sec/Treas.
- 1958-59 Dr. Carl L. Bowen -Albemarle -Governor - Cecil D. Duckworth -Albemarle -Sec/Treas.
- 1957-58 C.W. (Chip) Kissiah -Charlotte -Governor - Julius A. Doar -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1956-57 Frank L. Smith, Jr. -Lenoir -Governor - Jack Spainhour -Lenoir -Sec/Treas.
- 1955-56 Frederick G. Frick -Hickory -Governor - Herman Vestal- Hickory -Sec/Treas.
- 1954-55 Thompson Greenwood -Raleigh -Governor - Hugh M. Raper- Raleigh -Sec/Treas.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ⇒ Youth Appreciation Week was created by late Optimist T. Earl Yarborough, who developed the program after recognizing the fact that youngsters are almost never publicly praised and commended. With the help of two fellow Optimists, Yarborough worked to promote the idea of a Youth Appreciation Day. His efforts paid off and his home state of North Carolina observed the very first Youth Appreciation Day on May 22, 1955.
- ⇒ A long-distance conference call from Omaha, Nebraska, became a highlight of the organization when an Optimist Club in Longview, NC in October of 1961 became the 2,000th club to join Optimist International.
- ⇒ In January of 1967 the BOD reached into the ranks of its fellow volunteers to choose Hugh Cranford of Charlotte, NC as the new Executive Secretary of Optimist International. At 46, he had behind him a record of outstanding leadership as president of the Optimist Club of Charlotte, Governor of the North and South Carolina District, a member of the OI Board of Directors and seven years of service as chair of three International committees. On October 1, 1986 Hugh Cranford retired after 19 years as Executive Secretary.

In October of 1983 the North Carolina District was divided into three Districts. The NC East District, NC Central District, and the NC West District (until 1994). We were the NC Central District

- 1993-94 H. B. Keen -Salisbury -Governor - V. B. Ennis -Salisbury -Sed/Treas.
- 1992-93 Richard Davenport -Sanford -Governor - Tom Watson -Sanford -Sec/Treas.
- 1991-92 Ronald Hare -Charlotte -Governor - Everett L. Adams -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1990-91 James Chrismon -Asheboro -Governor - J. C. Smith -Asheboro -Sec/Treas..
- 1989-90 Edward Palmer -Concord -Governor - John Luther -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1988-89 James Mayer -Charlotte -Governor - Jack Gully -Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1987-88 Tom Watson -Sanford -Governor - Richard Davenport -Sanford -Sec/Treas.
- 1986-87 Walt Bullington -Charlotte -Governor - Alton N. Arnold -Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 1985-86 Charles Allen -New London -Governor - Bennie L. Washington -New London -Sec/Treas.
- 1984-85 C. Lin Adams, Jr. -Charlotte -Governor - James G. Mayer- Charlotte -Sec/Treas.
- 1983-84 Ralph Dougherty -Charlotte - C. Lin Adams, Jr. -Charlotte - Sec/Treas.

HIGHLIGHTS:

⇒ In 1986 , at the International Convention in Charlotte, NC a 61% favorable vote was received to admit women. The Optimist International Board of Directors, Chaired by 1986-87 President Lester Craft of North Carolina , determined that the men-only provision could no longer be enforced.

In October of 1994 We Became the North Carolina West District

- 2022-23 Bobbi Hague - Kannapolis - Governor - Gerenda Davis - Charlotte - Sec/Odell Witherspoon - Charlotte - Treas..
- 2021-22 Bobbi Hague - Kannapolis - Peggy Lide - Charlotte - Sec/Odell Witherspoon - Charlotte - Treas.
- 2020-21 Betty Parker - Rock Hill, SC - Governor - Peggy Lide - Charlotte - Sec/Odell Witherspoon - Charlotte - Treas..
- 2019-20 Betty Parker - Rock Hill, SC - Governor - .Bobbi Hague - Kannapolis - Sec/Everett Adams - Charlotte - Treas
- 2018-19 Daniel Mallard - Charlotte - Governor - Amanda Pembroke - Concord - Sec/Treas.
- 2017-18 Daniel Mallard - Charlotte - Governor - Amanda Pembroke - Concord - Sec/Treas.
- 2016-17 John Laurents - Charlotte - Governor - Gardner Bridges - Leicester - Sec/Treas.
- 2015-16 Diane Mallard - Charlotte - Governor - Ginny Fowler - Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 2014-15 Gerenda Davis-Charlotte - Governor - Mary Jones - Sec/Treas
- 2013-14 Sandy Middleton Charlotte - Governor - Diane Mallard - Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 2012-13 Stewart Mallard- Charlotte- Governor - Ginny Fowler - Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 2011-12 Kathy Howard-New London - Governor - Kathy Allen- Salisbury-Sec/Treas.
- 2010-11 Lawrence Kelly - Lenoir -Governor - Sandy Middleton--Charlotte-Sec/Treas.
- 2009-10 Odell Witherspoon - Charlotte - Governor - Mary Jones - Sec/Treas.
- 2008-09 Clement Hahn - Asheville-Gardner Bridges Asheville
- 2007-08 Ginny Fowler-Governor-Charlotte - Diane Mallard - Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 2006-07 Gene Swift - Boone - Governor - Ron Kanoy - Boone - Sec/Treas.
- 2005-06 Richard Highland - Charlotte - Governor - Everett Adams - Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 2004-05 Patrick Grieves - Gastonia - Governor - Renee Crumbley - Gastonia - Sec/Treas.
- 2003-04 Bob Freeman - Salisbury - Governor - Ulice Graham - Fayetteville - Sec/Treas.
- 2002-03 Ron Lackey - Lenoir - Governor - Dave Brown - Morganton - Sec/Treas.
- 2001-02 Keith Middleton - Charlotte - Governor - Glenda Thomas - Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 2000-01 Ron Jones - Salisbury - Governor - Ginny Fowler - Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 1999-'00 Wayne Higgins - Asheville - Governor - Clement Hahn - Asheville - Sec/Treas.
- 1998-99 Edward R. Strait - Winston-Salem-Governor - George Wolff -Winston-Salem -Sec/Treas.
- 1997-98 Douglas Brooks - Gastonia - Governor - Pat Grieves - Gastonia - Sec/Treas.
- 1996-97 Howard Bridges - Asheville - Governor - William H. Teague - Leicester - Sec/Treas.
- 1995-96 Paul G. Wilson - Salisbury - Governor - Janet E. Smith - Charlotte - Sec/Treas.
- 1994-95 W. Chris Jernigan - Morganton - Governor - David Brown - Morganton - Sec/Treas.

HIGHLIGHTS:

⇒ The North Carolina West District Hall of Fame was established August 26, 2000, as a reward for good and effective leadership and to motivate excellent North Carolina West Optimists to continue as leaders of the North Carolina West Optimist District. There were (25) Charter members of the Hall of Fame.

MEMBERS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA WEST DISTRICT HALL OF FAME

Yr. Joined

Charter Members Inducted August, 2000

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1923 | J. B. Anderson *(PG) | Asheville |
| 1935 | James A. White *(PG) | Charlotte |
| 1947 | Hugh H. Cranford* (PG) | Charlotte |
| 1947 | Frank G. Smith *(PG) | Lenoir |
| 1948 | Roland E. Bradley *(PG)(PIVP) | Gastonia |
| 1948 | T. Earl Yarborough *(PG) | Charlotte |
| 1948 | Clarence Crouch* (PG) | Morganton |
| 1950 | James C Barker* (PG) | Hickory |
| 1951 | H.B. Stroup (PG)(PIVP) | Asheville |
| 1953 | Clifford W. Kissiah *(PG) | Charlotte |
| 1953 | Robert H. Rogers (PG)(PIVP) | Shelby |
| 1954 | Carl Bowen* (PG)(PIVP)(PIP) | Albemarle |
| 1963 | John "Red"* Painter (PG) | Belmont |
| 1964 | Robert F. McNeill | West Jefferson |
| 1964 | Henry P. Hancock * | Concord |
| 1966 | Robert M. Hauss* (PG) | Lenoir |
| 1967 | Walter Bullington *(PG) | Charlotte |
| 1969 | William M. Fowler* (PG)(PIVP) | Charlotte |
| 1969 | H. B. Keen* (PG)(PIVP) | Salisbury |
| 1974 | Alfred T. Watson *(PG) | Sanford |
| 1975 | J. C. Boone* (PG)(PIVP)(PIP) | Albemarle |
| 1976 | William H. Teague (PG)(PIVP)(PIP) | Leicester |
| 1978 | Richard Davenport* (PG) | Sanford |
| 1978 | Chris Jernigan (PG) | Morganton |
| 1980 | Charles Allen* (PG)(PIVP) | New London |



Members Inducted August, 2001

| | | |
|------|-------------------------|-----------|
| 1980 | Howard G. Bridges (PG) | Asheville |
| 1987 | Patrick R. Grieves (PG) | Gastonia |
| 1988 | David W. Brown | Morganton |

Members Inducted August, 2002

| | | |
|------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1980 | James Chrismon* (PG) | Asheboro |
| 1987 | Ronald Hare (PG) | Charlotte |
| 1978 | Wayne Higgins (PG) | Weaverville |
| 1967 | Keith Middleton* (PG) (PIVP) | Charlotte |

Members Inducted August, 2003

| | | |
|------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1979 | Edward Strait (PG) | Winston Salem |
| | Clay E. Boyd, Jr. | TN |
| | Bill J. Stewart | TN |
| | Delmas Wallen, Sr. | TN |

Members Inducted August, 2004

| | | |
|------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1982 | Ron Lackey (PG) | Lenoir |
| 1988 | Sandy Middleton* | Charlotte |
| 1979 | Odell Witherspoon | Charlotte |
| | O. W. Furgerson | TN |

Members Inducted August, 2005

| | | |
|------|----------------------|-----------|
| 1992 | Ron Jones (PG) | Pinehurst |
| 1967 | Paul G. Wilson *(PG) | Salisbury |

Members Inducted August, 2006

| | | |
|------|----------------------|-----------|
| 1983 | Ginny Fowler | Charlotte |
| 1966 | L. Clement Hahn, Jr. | Asheville |
| 1979 | Lawrence Kelley, Jr. | Lenoir |
| | John Hurt | TN |

Member Inducted August, 2007

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1985 | Richard Highland (PG) | Charlotte |
|------|-----------------------|-----------|

Members Inducted August, 2008

| | | |
|------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1979 | Everett Adams* | Charlotte |
| 1977 | Gene Swift (PG) | Boone |
| 1946 | Bob Freeman* (PG) | Salisbury |

Member Inducted August, 2009

| | | |
|------|-------------|--------------------|
| 1978 | Ken Norton* | Landis-South Rowan |
|------|-------------|--------------------|

Members Inducted August, 2011

| | | |
|------|-------------------|-----------|
| 2001 | Gladys Highland | Charlotte |
| 1998 | Kathy Howard (PG) | Albemarle |

MEMBERS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA WEST DISTRICT HALL OF FAME

Yr. Joined

2000 Stewart Mallard (PG)
 2000 Dianne Mallard (PG)
 1968 John Laurents

Members Inducted August, 2012

Charlotte
 Charlotte
 Charlotte

Members Inducted August, 2013

1976 Ralph Daugherty
 1996 Gerenda Davis

Charlotte
 Charlotte

Members Inducted August, 2016

1998 Mary Martin-Jones
 John C. Johnson
 Robert S. Howe

Charlotte
 Bristol, TN
 TN

Members Inducted August, 2018

2007 Betty Wilkins
 1979 Thomas Wilkins

Charlotte
 Charlotte

Members Inducted August, 2021

Mike Skidmore
 Jasper D. Forbes

Charlotte
 Charlotte

Members Inducted August, 2022

Members Inducted August, 2023



PG = Past Governor ▪ PIVP = Past International Vice President ▪ PIP = Past International President ▪ * = Deceased

Members of the District to Serve as Optimist International Officers

- 1948-49 George J. Fella, Executive Committee - Charlotte
- 1958-59 Hugh Cranford, Board of Directors - Charlotte
- 1960-61 Frank L. Smith, Vice-President - Lenoir
- 1962-63 Carl Bowen, Vice-President - Albemarle
- 1964-65 Carl Bowen, President - Albemarle
- 1967 Hugh Cranford, Executive Secretary - Charlotte
- 1968-69 Roland Bradley, Vice-President - Gastonia
- 1974-75 Robert Rodgers, Vice-President - Shelby
- 1976-77 Lester Craft, Vice-President - Lake Waccamaw
- 1979-80 H.B. Stroup, Vice President - Asheville
- 1983-84 William Fowler, Vice-President - Charlotte
- 1985-86 J.C. Boone, Vice-President, Albemarle
- 1986-87 Lester Craft, President - Lake Waccamaw
- 1987-88 Ralph Dougherty, Vice-President - Charlotte
- 1988-89 Ralph Dougherty, Vice-President - Charlotte
- 1993-94 Charles Allen, Vice-President - New London
- 1995-96 J.C. Boone, President - Albemarle
- 2002-03 William Teague, President - Leicester
- 2006-06 Keith Middleton, Vice-President - Charlotte
- 2007-08 Chris Jernigan, Vice-President - Morganton
- 2008-09 Ronald Lackey, Vice-President - Lenoir
- 2012-13 Richard Highland, Vice-President -Charlotte

Historical Events:

- ◆ In 1928, an organization-wide [Oratorical Contest](#) was started. Through the years, its purpose has been to provide a valuable self-improvement activity and scholarship program for youth. Today, this remains the oldest and most well-known program of Optimist International.
- ◆ **Optimist Clubs were becoming increasingly well-known for their efforts and youth service. Many new programs were born.**
- ◆ In April 1953, the first international Bike Safety Week took place, with its purpose being to inform youngsters of the safe operation of bikes and inspire safety habits.
- ◆ In 1957, Optimist International celebrated the first observance of Youth Appreciation Week on an international basis to recognize and commend children and teenagers who are too often given a bad rap.
- ◆ Youth Appreciation Week was created by late Optimist T. Earl Yarborough, who developed the program after recognizing the fact that youngsters are almost never publicly praised and commended. With the help of two fellow Optimists, Yarborough worked to promote the idea of a Youth Appreciation Day. His efforts paid off and his home state of North Carolina observed the very first Youth Appreciation Day on May 22, 1955.
- ◆ In 1965, a new program was undertaken in an effort to combat apathy toward crime and the dispensation of justice. With the cooperation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Optimist International began [Respect For Law](#) Week. One of the more visual aspects of this program is the Optimist International Respect For Law Citation, which recognizes citizens for outstanding service at a crime scene by aiding police.
- ◆ At the 1971 convention, it was announced that the International Board had approved the [Optimist International Foundation](#) and that all necessary legal steps had been taken to put it into business. The purpose of the Foundation is to operate exclusively for the charitable, literary or educational purposes of Optimist International.
- ◆ During the 1971 convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the International Board approved the Tri-Star Basketball Program for boys, known today as the [Tri-Star Sports Program](#). The first year of the Tri-Star competition saw more than 300 clubs and 75,000 young participants.
- ◆ In 1972, Optimist International's motto was changed from "Friend of the Boy" to "Friend of Youth" to reflect service to both girls and boys.
- ◆ In 1978, the International Board of Directors voted to sponsor one the most prestigious junior golf events in the world, now known as the Junior World Golf Championships. Today, Optimist International sponsors its own tournament, independent from Junior World, known as the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships. More than 5,000 junior golfers ages 10 to 18 compete in qualifying tournaments at the club and district level in hopes of making it to the international tournament.
- ◆ In 1983, a new and special Optimist program for high school students was created – the [Essay Contest](#). With this program, students are asked to write a 400- to 500-word essay on a specific subject. After club and district competitions, winners advance to the international contest. After 1988, scholarships were awarded to the top three international winners.
- ◆ In 1987, concerns had grown about possible legal challenges to men-only provisions in the organization and the Optimist International Board of Directors responded by voting to admit women to the membership

- ◆ In 1988, the organization recognized the rapid growth of Optimist Youth Clubs, which had grown to 30,000 members in 1,000 Junior Optimist and Octagon Clubs, and formed its own international organization – [Junior Optimist Octagon International](#).
- ◆ In 1997 ESPN covered the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships, making Optimist International the first service club organization to ever have a worldwide event televised.
- ◆ In 1998, Optimist International’s float won the “National Trophy” in the Tournament of Roses Parade for best depicting the overall theme of “Hav’n’ Fun.”
- ◆ In July 2001, Optimists found themselves seated in the White House, pledging to support U.S. President George W. Bush’s goal to mentor one million children. Optimist International President Bob Garner called the meeting “yet another sterling example of ‘Optimists Bringing Out the Best in Kids.’”
- ◆ Also in 2001, Optimist International introduced the [Childhood Cancer Campaign](#) to provide awareness and support of children battling cancer and the challenges their families face. In 2004, the organization made a \$1 million commitment to Johns Hopkins to underwrite a research focus.
- ◆ Optimist International signed up the first Friend of Optimists in 2005. This class of membership allows individuals to show their support of the organization’s mission if they are unable to commit as a traditional club member.
- ◆ Less than two decades after Optimist International welcomed women as members in the organization, Ronnie Dunn became the first female International President in October 2006. Her year in office was followed by Theo W. Golding of Kingston, Jamaica, who became the first International President from outside Canada and the United States.
- ◆ With children being introduced to the internet at earlier and earlier ages, the organization began an [Internet Safety](#) program in 2008 to keep children educated and safe from online predators.
- ◆ In an effort to expand and further promote Optimist International’s most well-known program, the first [Optimist Oratorical World Championships](#) took place at Saint Louis University in 2016.

Optimist International adopted this creed in 1922. It was originally published in 1912 by Christian D. Larson, a prolific writer. Larsen believed that people have tremendous latent powers, which could be harnessed for success with the proper attitude

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.

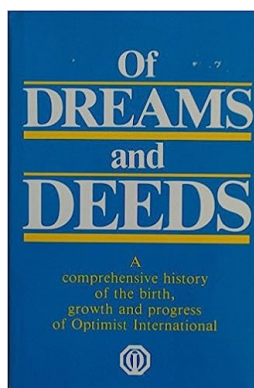
To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

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.

From the beginnings of its youth service, the organization has held onto its Optimistic philosophy – to think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best.



Much of the historical information contained in this compilation was gleaned from “Of DREAMS and DEEDS” a comprehensive history of the birth, growth, and progress of Optimist International.