Optimist International
Optimist Club of West Bend

Club # 09-208 | P.O Box 1076, West Bend, WI 53095 | SWIS District (#09)
facebook.com/optimistclubofwb | http://www.optimistclubofwestbend.org/ | optimistclubofwestbend@gmail.com

OPTIMISTICALLY SPEAKING

March 2026

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
(Subject to change)

Mar 5	Club Lunch Meeting ***Police Cadet Award*** ***Girl Scouts*** AT NEW PERSPECTIVE IN SENIOR LIVING CENTER
Mar 9	happy birthday — Cassie Moran
Mar 14	happy birthday — Geri O'Brien
Mar 17	Happy ST. PATRICK'S DAY
Mar 19	Club Lunch Meeting ***Student of the Month*** ***St. Frances Cabrini*** AT NEW PERSPECTIVE IN SENIOR LIVING CENTER
Mar 20	***Fish Fry Fundraiser*** *At West Bend Moose Lodge* 4pm – 8pm Volunteers Needed – Watch for sign-up
Apr 2 Special Time 4pm	Special Club Meeting 4 pm At "Top of the Ridge" Restaurant New Optimists Welcome Event & Fran Wajer Scholarship Winners No Lunch Meeting This Day - Watch for Details
Apr 16	Club Lunch Meeting ***Student of the Month*** ***St. John's Lutheran*** AT NEW PERSPECTIVE IN SENIOR LIVING CENTER

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 of 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.*

Our Club's Facebook Page

https://www.facebook.com/optimistclubofwb

Club Calendar is now available online.
Click this link:

2025-2026 Optimist Club Calendar

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Big Brothers Big Sisters OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

At our February 5th Club Luncheon, we heard from Heidi Sternig, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Washington County (BBBS). Their "mission is to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth."

Big Brothers Big Sisters Washington County

Optimist Club Vice-President, Mike Hartwell presented a $250 donation to Heidi Sternig, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters Washington County

Heidi started by sharing that BBBS has recently made improvements to the facade of their downtown West Bend office and are still working on an interior remodel. One goal is to maintain a "mentor" space in their office where Bigs and Littles can meet several times every month. Heidi also shared that BBBSWC is partnering with local businesses to mentor some kids. The kids will visit the business several times a month for a mentoring session. She stated that she is excited about developing more of these business partnerships.

Currently, many Big and Little mentoring relationships last for four or more years. However, BBBSWC has a goal to have them last for at least one year. Heidi ended by say BBBSWC is always looking for new Bigs (Mentors). If anyone is interested in becoming a Big, a good place to start is to attend a 30-minute BBBS Mentor Info Session to learn more about becoming a "Big" to a Washington County "Little." BBBS Mentor Info sessions are open to the public and take place the third Wednesday at 4:00 pm and the third Thursday at noon every month. For more info about attending a session, please email Caitlin Elftman, Outreach and Development Coordinator, at caitline@bbbswashco.org.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

February 2026

Xavier Krueger

Silverbrook Intermediate School

At our February 19th Club Luncheon, we honored *Xavier Krueger* from Silverbrook Intermediate School as our ***February 2026 Student of the Month.***

The school said this about Xavier:

Dear West Bend Optimist Club, It is a pleasure for Silverbrook Intermediate School to nominate Xavier Krueger as its Student of the Month. Xavier is a kind, humble, and silly sixth grader. He loves making people laugh and having a good time. At school, Xavier truly enjoys learning and does his best to focus and learn all topics. He participates in class discussions and volunteers to share answers and background knowledge that add to group discussions. He has made huge academic gains this year because of his willingness to do what it takes to be a great student. He can be counted on to help without asking, often bringing in the recess balls that have been left on the curb. Xavier is also a DJ at his church. For his birthday, Xavier bought the entire house of students a birthday treat with money he earned from DJ'ing. He is always thinking about others and how to make the world a better place for them. Similarly, Xavier provides care for his siblings and helps them without being asked to do so. He is a natural caregiver. Xavier finds joy and gratefulness in everything. He smiles and does not give up when things get challenging, helps others without question, and quietly leads others to be kind through his actions. He is a true optimist, and we are honored to have him at our school. *Sincerely,*

The 6 Yellow House Teachers and Silverbrook Intermediate School

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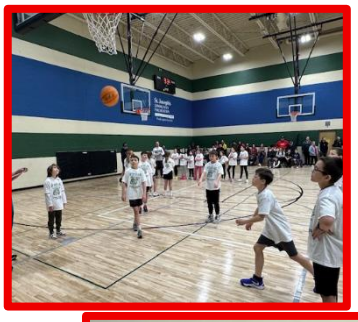
Club President, Lance Roell, presents the Optimist Club of West Bend's *Student of the Month Award* for February 2026 to Xavier Krueger from Silverbrook Intermediate School

2026 Free Throw Contest

FEBRUARY 14, 2026

The *Optimist Club of West Bend* again sponsored a youth free-throw contest along with the Village of Jackson's Park and Recreation Department. Kids in grades 3-6 from area schools participated. It is always heartwarming to see good kids displaying good sportsmanship skills in this competition! The youth come from all around Washington County to participate - from both public and parochial schools. A special thank you to Matt Muehlbauer for coordinating this event. Also, thanks go out to fellow Club members Lance, Maria, and Mike for their help with the basic operations and scoring.



March is NATIONAL RED CROSS MONTH

March is National Red Cross Month to honor the people who dedicate their lives to the American Red Cross. For the entire month, we will celebrate those who make lifesaving missions possible in times of crisis.

Red Cross Month was first celebrated in 1943 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared March as Red Cross Month to raise awareness about the mission of the American Red Cross during the height of WWII. Through the proclamation, President Roosevelt was asking the American public to help with the efforts of the Red Cross during the "hour of the greatest need" for military fighting in Europe and their families at home.

The humanitarian effort of the American Red Cross is a symbolism for the hope and relief they promote around the world. They are known to provide humanitarian services during armed conflicts, natural disasters, and other emergencies. In fact, the Red Cross aims to alleviate human suffering to people who are vulnerable during crisis. By providing basic human needs, the Red Cross helps keep the dignity of the people they are serving regardless of their economic, ethnic, or social status.

SWIS District Conferences

Our Club's Board of Directors has deemed it important that all our Club members get the necessary information and are encouraged to attend the Quarterly Conferences of the SWIS District. Our Club will help offset some of the costs.

https://www.swisdistrict.org/conferences/default.asp

Business Buddies

Our Club has a membership category specifically for businesses. We have named this Business Membership category: ***Business Buddies.*** Mike Hartwell, is coordinating this initiative, and he will gladly answer any questions. Check out *Business Buddies* on our Site: https://www.optimistclubofwestbend.org/business-buddy-membership.html

Our Current Business Buddies

westbury bank
welcome to what if.
https://www.westburybankwi.com/

West Bend Moose Lodge 1398
MOOSE
Moose1398@yahoo.com

MORRIE'S
West Bend Honda
https://www.morrieswestbendhonda.com/

Optimist Club of West Bend 2025-2026 Board of Directors

President	Lance Roell
VP / President Elect	Mike Hartwell
Past-President	Heidi Sternig
Secretary	Mike Hartwell
Treasurer	Hannah Langhoff
Director	Matt Muehlbauer
Director	Greg Harding
Director	Maria Gutierrez Gurrola

Optimist Club of West Bend
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2026 OPTIMIST VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION!

The Optimist Club of West Bend and the West Bend Community Memorial Library recently hosted the 2026 Visual Arts Competition for youth aged 11 years or younger. This program is designed to encourage and celebrate youth visual art skills in two categories – *painting* and *drawing*. This year's theme was "***Be Bold: Be the change.***"

Entries were displayed for public viewing at the West Bend Library in early February, and the public had the chance to vote for their favorites. The winners were determined based on the results of that voting process.

West Bend Area Chamber of Commerce gift certificates were awarded to our Club's first, second, and third place finishers. The first-place winners in each category are submitted to the Optimist International competition. At the International level, 12 of the world-wide youth artists will be selected to receive a $150 monetary award.

The Optimist Club of West Bend's 2026 winners:

Drawing category
1st place: Preston Koch, age 11
2nd place: Kinsley Jensen, age 9
3rd place: Natalie Allen, age 8

Painting category
1st place: Elsie Strassburg, age 7
2nd place: Addison Kohn, age 8
3rd place: Chloe Millard, age 5

VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION

Painting Category

1st Place Painting

Elsie Strassburg

Elsie Strassburg, age 7
Awarded $25 WBACC Gift Certificate

VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION

Painting Category

2nd Place Painting

Addison Kohn

Addison Kohn, age 8
Awarded $15 WBACC Gift Certificate

VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION

Painting Category

3rd Place Painting

Chloe Millard

Chloe Millard, age 5
Awarded $10 WBACC Gift Certificate

VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION

Drawing Category

2nd Place Drawing

Kinsley Jensen

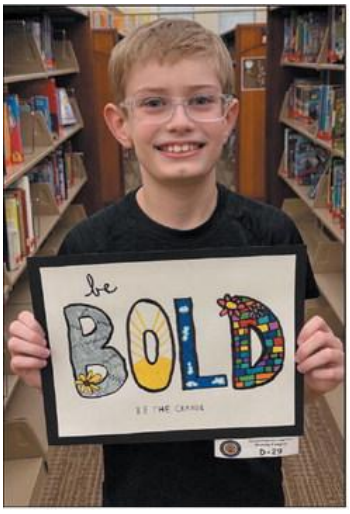
Kinsley Jensen, age 9
Awarded $15 WBACC Gift Certificate

VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION

Drawing Category

1st Place Drawing

Preston Koch



Preston Koch, age 11
Awarded $25 WBACC Gift Certificate

VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION

Drawing Category

3rd Place Drawing

Natalie Allen

Natalie Allen, age 8
Awarded $10 WBACC Gift Certificate

Mark Your Calendars

Special Club Events & Fundraisers

FRAN WAJER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

RAFFLE TICKETS SALES

BUY – BUY – BUY – SELL – SELL – SELL

Drawing on June 7 at Brat Fry Fundraiser

This raffle supports two $1000 scholarships!

Friday, March 20

Fish Fry Fundraiser

At West Bend Moose Lodge 4pm – 8:30pm

Volunteers Needed – Watch for sign-up

Thursday, April 2

N.O.W. Event

New Optimists Welcome

Special Club Meeting

4 pm

At "Top of the Ridge" Restaurant

No Lunch Meeting This Day - Watch for Details

Sunday, April 26

Brat Fry Fundraiser

West Bend Moose Lodge

8am – 3 pm

Volunteers Needed – Watch for sign-up

Sunday, June 7

Brat Fry Fundraiser

West Bend Moose Lodge

8am – 3 pm

Volunteers Needed – Watch for sign-up

Sunday, June 7

Raffle Drawing

West Bend Moose Lodge 2 pm

Fish Fry Fundraiser

West Bend Moose Lodge on March 20

Please help our Club prepare for and manage our upcoming major fundraiser: the Fish Fry at the West Bend Moose Lodge on March 20 from approximately 4pm until 8:30pm. We will need many helpers to facilitate this event. Along with helping staff the Fish Fry, we will also need donations of *"Raffle Baskets"* as well as *"Desserts"* to sell to help raise more money. Last year, the *"Raffle Basket"* raffle and the sale of *"Desserts"* were both very successful money raisers. Please let Mike Hartwell know how you will be supporting this fundraiser. Watch for a sign-up.

New Optimists Welcome NOW Event

Thursday, April 2 at 4p.m.

A message from our Club President:

The board has been actively discussing ways to engage current and prospective members. One action step has been the scheduling of a New Optimists Welcome, NOW, event.

We are switching our April 2nd lunch meeting to a 4PM meeting at the Top of the Ridge restaurant at Cedar Ridge in West Bend. The board is asking that everyone ask at least one friend/prospective member to come to the event with them. The club will provide heavy appetizers and soft drinks. There is a cash bar available, too. A sign up genius will be coming out a little closer to the event.

We will be joined by former SWISS governor Diane Matuszak, who will speak about involvement.

Please plan on attending if you can. We are looking forward to a fun and engaging event!

Lance

The Writers' Corner

IRISH SAYINGS

- "Legend says that each leaf of the clover has a meaning: the first is for hope, the second for faith, the third for love and, if you can find a 4-leaf clover, the fourth leaf represents luck."
- "There are only two kinds of people in the world: the Irish and those who wish they were."
- "Be sure to wear green on March Seventeen, or else Irish leprechauns will pinch your bones clean!"
- "When Irish hearts are happy, all the world seems bright and gay. And when Irish eyes are smiling, sure, they steal your heart away."
- "I see the world through Irish eyes, and they are smiling."
- "A good friend is like a four-leaf clover, hard to find and lucky to have."

IRISH BLESSINGS

- "May misfortune follow you all the days of your life. And never catch up."
- "May your troubles be less, and your blessings be more, and nothing but happiness come through your door."
- "May your heart be light and happy, may your smile be big and wide, and may your pockets always have a coin or two inside!"
- "May you have all the happiness and luck that life can hold—and at the end of your rainbows may you find a pot of gold."
- "May the mist of Irish magic shorten every road and may your friends remember the favors you are owed."

IRISH BLESSINGS

- "May the winds of fortune sail you, may you sail a gentle sea, may it always be the other guy who says, 'this drink's on me.'"
- "May you live as long as you want but never want as long as you live."
- "May the best day of your past be the worst day of your future."
- "May love and laughter light your days and warm your hearth and home."
- "May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back."
- "May the lilt of Irish laughter lighten every load."
- "May your blessings outnumber the shamrocks that grow. And may trouble avoid you wherever you go."
- "May luck be your friend in whatever you do and may trouble be always a stranger to you."
- "May your troubles be less. And your blessings be more. And nothing but happiness come through your door."
- "For each petal on the shamrock, this brings a wish your way: Good health, good luck, and happiness for today and every day."
- "May your pockets be heavy and your heart be light, may good luck pursue you each morning and night."
- "Wishing you a pot o' gold and all the joy your heart can hold."
- "Wherever you go and whatever you do, may the luck of the Irish be there with you."