

December
2019



**Official Newsletter of the
Superior Optimist Club**



PRESIDENT - Brian Hakanson

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Merry Christmas Optimists,



Every week during the school year we are joined by 2 high school students who want to learn about what we do, and hopefully they gain a sense of optimism and caring about the wellbeing of others through our example. These young people also get the opportunity to listen to our outstanding speakers that we bring in who present to our group on a wide range of topics to inform and inspire us. By belonging to the Optimist Club, we gain by contributing to our communities, but we also gain in friendship and knowledge, so it is very important that we continue inviting people from our community to speak at our meetings.

Lately it has been a challenge finding members to sign up as a monthly program chair. This challenge was brought up at our November board meeting. As a solution to this problem, the board proposed and voted that we form a "Program Committee". The committee will be responsible for scheduling speakers each and every week. If any of you have people in mind or if someone approaches you who would like to present at one of our meetings, you will be able to refer them to the committee. The Program Committee will schedule speakers starting in June of 2020 as we have Speaker Chairs signed up through May.

I would like to say "Thank you", to our board members for listening, discussing, and coming up with solutions and necessary changes that ensure our club continues to function as it should.

I also want to thank everyone of you for blessing our club and the youth in our community with your gifts of time, expertise, and resources. Please know how special and impactful your involvement is with the Superior Optimist Club. You are all "Bringing Out The Best In Kids", by providing them with the guidance, example, and support that they need to grow and live better lives.

I wish you all a blessed, happy, smiley and Optimistic Christmas!

**November Attendance
Prize Winners:**

- 11/06 – Barb Certa-Werner
- 11/13 – Gary Dunning
- 11/20 – Jan Jago

**This month's
Prize Sponsor
Shelly Bergstrom**



Thoughts and Prayers

Leola Keskinen (Dick's wife)

Optimist Anniversaries

- Richard Keskinen - 39 yrs
- Mark Hubbard - 37 yrs

WELCOME

New Member
Kara Proctor

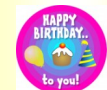


SAVE THE DATE

February 7-8
2nd Quarter WINUM District
Convention, Marshfield, WI



**Margaret
Ciccone**



ANNOUNCEMENTS

BOARD MEETING - December 11th
immediately following the weekly meeting



PROGRAMS FOR DECEMBER

Speaker Chair: Kaye Tenerelli

December 4th

Linda Cadotte
Superior Parks & Recreation Director
Overview of Superior Winter Festival

December 11th

Megan Meyer, Superior Public Museums
What's Happening at our Superior Museums

December 18th

Gary Banker
Annual Optimist Christmas Sing-a-Long

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NO MEETING

On December 25th or January 1st

**OFFICERS
2018-19**

- President**
Brian Hakanson
- Vice President**
Open Seat
- Treasurer**
Kim Pearson
- Secretary**
Jan Jago
- Past President (2017-2018)**
Carolyn Nelson-Kavajecz



Youth Optimists for November - Hope Certa-Werner & Alex Hughes

Hope Certa-Werner and Alex Hughes were Youth Optimists for the month of November. Both are Juniors at Superior High School.

Hope is involved in National Honor Society and Podcast Club. She frequently volunteers at Faith United Methodist Church. Hope also works at Hardees and Harbor House Crisis Shelter. Hope is the daughter of Barb and Joel Certa-Werner. She has 3 older siblings, one brother-Thanael, and two sisters, Julianna and Hannah. After high school, Hope plans on attending college in LaCrosse. She would like to pursue a career in Neuropsychology.

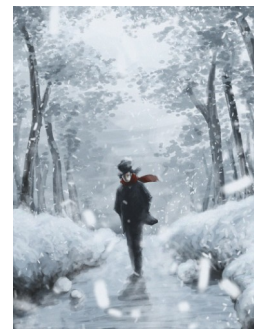
Alex is involved in Youth Leadership. He also plays soccer, wrestles, and plays the saxophone in the SHS band. He also serves at his church and is very active in it as well. He is the son of Dee and Allen Hughes. He has an older sister, Hannah. Alex would like to attend a 4 year college. He may follow in his parent's footsteps, who are both PA's. Or he might want to become a police officer.

Both students have the opportunity to apply for the Youth Optimist Scholarship and Service Award.

******December Youth Optimist Lunches are sponsored by Four Star Construction.******

LISTENING TO CHRISTMAS by Alan Harris

*Have you ever heard snow? Not the howling wind of a blizzard,
not the crackling of snow underfoot, but the actual falling of snow?
We heard it one night in Wisconsin quite unexpectedly while walking
up a hill toward our cabin in the woods, a soft whisper between footsteps.*



We stopped, switched off our flashlights, and just listened.

All around us in the darkness we heard the gentle fall of snow on snow.

*No wind, no sound but the snow. Have you ever heard Christmas?
Not the traffic noises in the city, not the bells and hymns and carols,
beautiful as they are, not even the laughter of your children as they
open their presents—but Christmas itself? Have you been by yourself
and just sat and listened to the silence within, patiently, without letting
the mind race to the next Christmas chore?*



*Perhaps if you have, you felt the pulse of all humanity beating in your own heart.
Perhaps you noticed an outflowing of love for all your brothers and sisters on the
earth, a soft sense of Oneness with all that lives. In the silence of a snowy night,
listen intently, holding your breath, and you may hear snow on snow. Serene,
alone, undisturbed by thought, listen to the silence in your heart, and you may hear Christmas.*



*Assistant Editor Judy Carlson
In Loving Memory of Merrill Thompson & Bill Downs, Jr.*

REFLECTIONS FLASHBACK FROM 2006 (The Cab Ride) submitted by Dave Minor

Last month I had the opportunity to be in Las Vegas for a conference and anybody who has ever been in Vegas knows that one of the best ways to get around town is to take a cab. One night on the way back to my hotel I asked the driver he must have some wonderful stories being a cab driver in Las Vegas. He said he could spend his whole shift telling me stories but the best one never happened in Vegas but when he was driving a cab back on the east coast about 20 years ago. After listening to a wonderful story I asked him if I could share his story and he said he would be happy to have it shared.

"When he arrived at 2:30 am, the building was dark except for a single light in a ground floor window. Under these circumstances he said many drivers would just honk once or twice, wait a minute, and then drive away. But, he had seen too many impoverished people who depended on taxis as their only means of transportation. Unless a situation smelled of danger, he always went to the door. This passenger might be someone who needs his assistance, he reasoned to himself. So he walked to the door and knocked. "Just a minute", answered a frail, elderly voice. He could hear something being dragged across the floor. After a long pause, the door opened. A small woman in her 80's stood before him. She was wearing a print dress and a pillbox hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940s movie. By her side was a small nylon suitcase. He noticed the apartment looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets. There were no clocks on the walls, no knickknacks or utensils on the counters. In the corner was a cardboard box filled with photos and glassware. "Would you carry my bag out to the car?" she said. He took the suitcase to the cab, and returned to assist the woman. She took his arm and they walked slowly toward the curb. She kept thanking him for his kindness. "It's nothing" he told her. "He just tried to treat his passengers the way he would want someone to treat his mother". "Oh, you're such a good boy", she said. When they got in the cab, she gave him an address, and then asked, "Could you drive through downtown?" "It's not the shortest way," he answered quickly. "Oh, I don't mind," she said. "I'm in no hurry. I'm on my way to a hospice". He looked in the rear-view mirror. Her eyes were glistening. "I don't have any family left," she continued. "The doctor says I don't have very long." He quietly reached over and shut off the meter. "What route would you like me to take?" He asked. For the next two hours, they drove through the city. She showed him the building where she had once worked as an elevator operator. They drove through the neighborhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds. She had him pull up in front of a furniture warehouse that had once been a ballroom where she had gone dancing as a girl. Sometimes she'd ask him to slow in front of a particular building or corner and would sit staring into the darkness, saying nothing. As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, "I'm tired. Let's go now." They drove in silence to the address she had given him. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico. Two orderlies came out to the cab as soon as they pulled up. They were solicitous and intent, watching her every move. He opened the trunk and took the small suitcase to the door. The woman was already seated in a wheelchair. "How much do I owe you?" she asked, reaching into her purse. "Nothing," he said. "You have to make a living," she answered. "There are other passengers," he responded. Almost without thinking, he bent and gave her a hug. She held onto him tightly. "You gave an old woman a little moment of joy," she said. "Thank you." He squeezed her hand, and then walked into the dim morning light. Behind him, a door shut. It was the sound of the closing of a life. He didn't pick up any more passengers that shift. He drove aimlessly lost in thought. For the rest of the day he could hardly talk. What if that woman had gotten an angry driver, or one who was impatient to end his shift? What if he had refused to take the run, or had honked once, then driven away? On a quick review, he didn't think that he had done anything more important in his life".

We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments. But great moments often catch us unaware – beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a small one. People may not remember exactly what you did, or what you said, ~but~ they will always remember how you made them feel. Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we are here we might as well enjoy the music and dance. Every day, every minute, every breath truly is a gift from God.

Optimist Creed

Promise Yourself

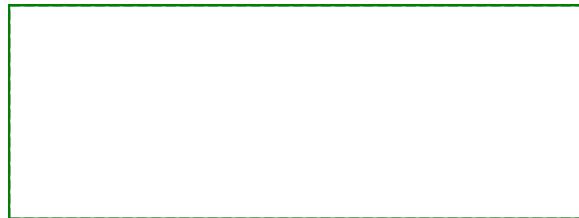
- To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.
- To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.
- To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.
- To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.
- To think only of the best, 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.

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Our website: www.superioroptimist.org

CHECK US OUT



The Superior Optimist Club fosters positive fellowship and community awareness to inspire and support youth.

Mission Statement

**Superior Optimist Club
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