

District Governor Dave Phillips - Program Year 2015-2016

OI President - Dave Bruns

Great Plains Region Vice-President - Mark Claussen

District Secretary - Gerri Barnett

International Theme: "Optimists-Bringing out THE BEST in Youth, in our Communities, and in Ourselves: RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW"

My Theme - "Opportunity Knocks"



After rejecting, for several years, encouragement from a number of previous District Governors to place my name "in the hat" to be considered for filling the District Governor position (due to my involvement in a Garden Ministry), I relented after being involved in an automobile accident; I truly believe it was God's way to nudge me to consider serving as Governor.

Choosing my District Theme, Opportunity Knocks, was easy. I believe that every human being has an innate need for his/her life to have a meaningful purpose. Getting involved in a service organization such as our Optimist organization is an opportunity to satisfy this need. Opportunity is Knocking- open the door and avail yourself to the opportunity to enhance the lives of kids.

I set specific goals for my year as Governor; i.e., membership growth; leading the Iowa District to Distinguished Status; and to charter an Optimist Club in my hometown of Bettendorf, Iowa. With the support of my fellow Optimists throughout the District, all of these goals were attained. Our District ended the year with a net growth of 140 members; such growth provided more labor resources throughout our District to undertake more youth-serving projects/activities and provided sources for new ideas to better serve the youth in communities across our District. Our District ranked 7th among Optimist International's 49 Districts in membership growth and was recognized as a Distinguished District.

During my year, two new clubs were chartered- the Siouxland Optimist Club and the Bettendorf Optimist Club (truly one of the highlights of my year).

I had the pleasure of serving under the leadership of OI President Dave Bruns and Great Plains Region Vice-President Mark Claussen. Under the leadership of Mark, the Great Plains Region had an Awesome year. Five of the six Districts in the Region attained membership growth; as a Region, we had net membership growth of over 520 members. Four of the six Districts attained Distinguished status. One of my fellow District Governors, Edie Harris of the AMS&NW Region, had net membership growth of over 240 members, the highest membership growth of the 49 OI Districts.

Also, I had the pleasure of having the following Lt. Governors serve during my year: Zone 1: E. Ted and Kathy Baker; Zone 2: Sue Enewold; Zone 3: George Volz; Zone 4: Cyndi Barber; Zone 5: JoAnn Collins; Zone 6: Jay Reyhons; Zone 7: Bing McHone; Zone 8: Leslie Mason; Zone 9: Richard Bice; Zone 10: Dr. Jim King and Assistant Cathy Schlickman; Zone 11: Robert McLachlan; and Zone 12: Bob Miller. Zone 10 Lt. Governor Dr. Jim King was recognized as a

Distinguished Lt. Governor and I selected JoAnn Collins as the District's Outstanding Lt. Governor.

I broke tradition by naming two Optimists of the Year - Austin Adams, President of the Hawkeye College Club (he personally recruited over 50 new members) and my Membership Chair Carl McCarthy who was integral to the success our District experienced in membership growth (i.e., hand-turning Optimist pens as an incentive for members to recruit new Optimists).

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the initiative of my Childhood Cancer Campaign (CCC) Program Chair Kelly Hansen. Kelly organized a Shave to Save fund raiser. At our 3rd Quarter Conference, twenty-nine District Optimists had their heads shaved to raise funds to fight childhood cancer. Over \$50,000 was raised and provided to the Medical Center in Omaha, Blank Hospital in Des Moines, and the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital in Iowa City. After the Awesome success of the fund raiser, I asked Craig Boring, Executive Director of the Optimist International Foundation, if he could recall any single event raising more money for the CCC Program; he responded that he was not aware of any. :-)

This synopsis is getting very wordy, (no surprise to my fellow District Optimists) so I better wrap it up. Just a "few" closing remarks.

I owe so much gratitude to my wife Sharon for supporting my decision to be considered to serve as the 2015-2016 Iowa District Governor. The assistance and encouragement she provided during my Governor-Elect, Governor, and Past Immediate Governor (PIG) program years were invaluable. One prime example was her involvement with my District webmaster, John Kessler, in designing our District website. They devoted many hours to develop a website that was informative, up-to-date, and user friendly. Having such a website was an integral factor in our District's success.

I want to thank all of my fellow Optimists for their support during my year as Governor; especially, those individuals who encouraged me to serve as District Governor. It was such a rewarding and serotonin-building experience visiting clubs throughout our Great District which provided me the opportunity to learn of the many projects/activities being undertaken to serve youth in their respective communities.

Last, but definitely not least, I want to sincerely thank my District Secretary Gerri Barnett. Without her exemplary commitment, support, expertise, and assistance, our District would not have had the outstanding success that we had; truly a God-send. :-)

I close with my favorite quote: "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness that I can show any fellow human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again". -- Missionary Steve Grellet

Yours in Optimism,

Dave Phillips
2015-2016 Iowa District Governor