

**Sixty
Years of
Optimism
in Evansville
1921 © 1981**

**THE OPTIMIST CLUB
OF EVANSVILLE, INDIANA
(DOWNTOWN)**

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 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.

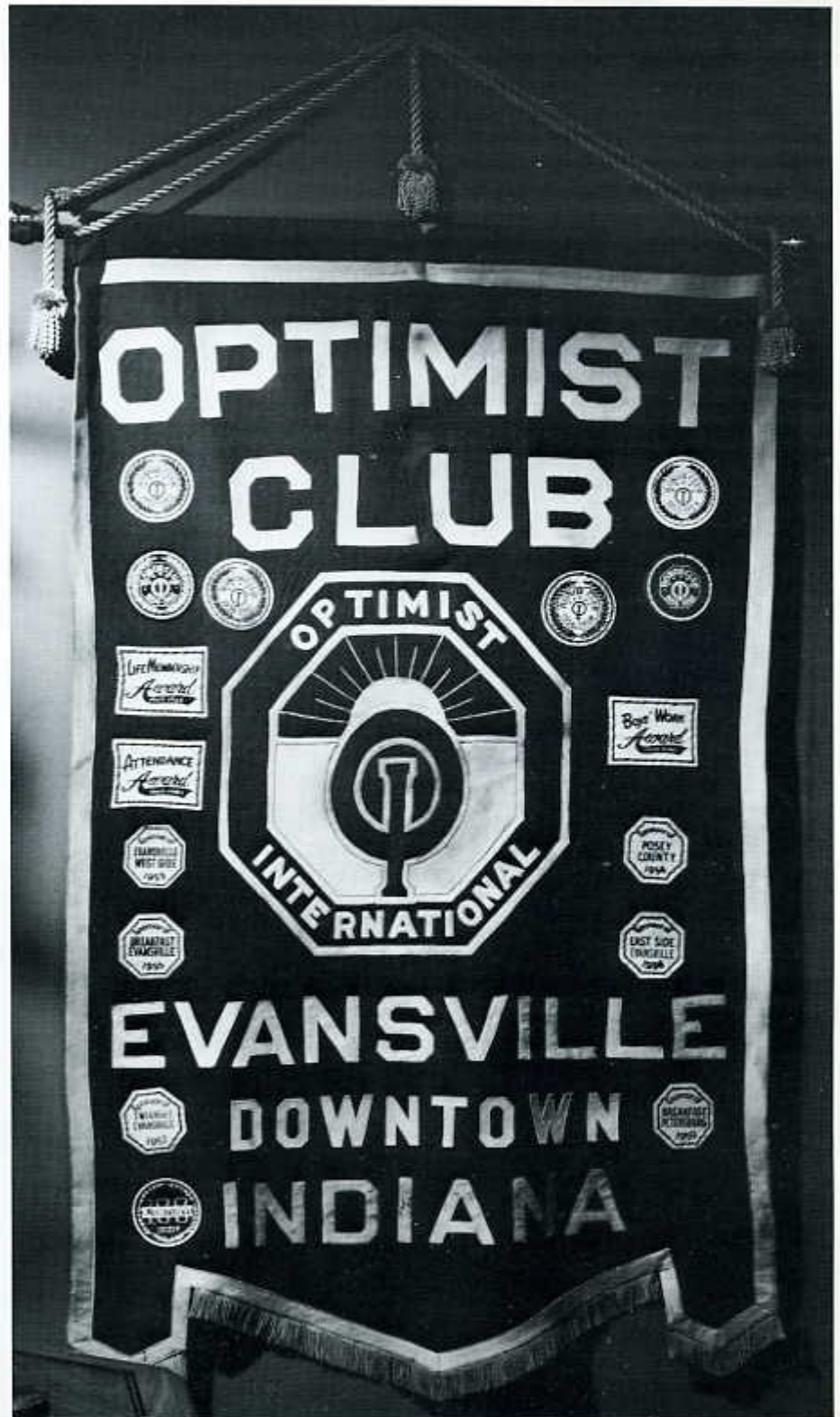
To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

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.



Bell of past presidents.



Banner of The Downtown Optimist Club of Evansville, Indiana

Welcome

We're proud to be Optimists in The Optimist Club of Downtown Evansville. As members of an organization founded sixty years ago, we have a rich heritage to protect and build upon. We have the fellowship of friends. We have the satisfaction of working together in community service. We have our dreams and our future to share.

We're proud of Evansville. It is a privilege to be part of this fine city and its people. And, as members of The Optimist Club of Downtown Evansville, we are especially proud to say we have faithfully served our community for sixty years.

That's why, tonight we are here to

celebrate a very special occasion — the sixtieth birthday of The Optimist Club of Downtown Evansville. In honor of this event, we've planned a big birthday party filled with fun, laughter, surprises, and reminiscing. We hope this evening will be one you'll remember from a past we'll never forget.



The Optimist Club of Downtown Evansville — serving our community for sixty years

Sixtieth Party Program

Saturday Evening, May 9, 1981, 7:00 P.M.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

J. Henry Ballman
Sergeant-at-Arms

DINNER PRAYER

Dr. William W. Simmons
Past President 1976-77

BUFFET DINNER

(You may proceed with dinner upon being seated.)

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
TO OUR NATION'S FLAG**

Donald E. Bruce
First Vice President

HAPPY BIRTHDAY OPTIMISTS

Mayor Michael D. Vandever

FRIVOLITY, LEVITY AND JOCULARITY

**Mildred and
J. Henry Ballman**

**RECOGNITION OF YEARS
OF MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICE**

Charles T. Taylor
Past President 1971-72

PRESIDENTIAL COMMENTS

Jerry Garrett
President 1980-81

RECITATION OF OPTIMIST CREED

William F. Hassee
Dean of the Club Membership
(50 year member)

Sixtieth Party Committees

GENERAL CO-CHAIRMEN

Gene Robinson
Dr. William W. Simmons

GENERAL PLANNING

J. Henry Ballman
Don Bruce
Vic Funke
Jerry Garrett
Paul Ritchel
George Sansom
Dr. William Simmons

PROGRAM ARRANGEMENTS

J. Henry Ballman, Chairman
Jerry Garrett
George Sansom
Dr. William Simmons
Charles T. Taylor

PARTY DECORATIONS

Vic Funke, Chairman
Robert Bromm
Michael Doris
William Hussmann
Durbin Woodson

SOUVENIR PROGRAM BOOKLET

Paul Ritchel, Chairman
Byron Allis
Eddie Edwards
Jerry Garrett
George Sansom

TICKET SALES AND PARTY RESERVATIONS

Don Bruce, Chairman
Ron Eberhart
Vic Funke
Robert Suhrheinrich
Lindel Whicker

Acknowledgments

The Evansville Downtown Optimist Club wishes to extend a very special thanks to longtime member Paul Ritchel, President of Creative Press, Inc., along with the staff, for their un-

tiring efforts expended in the assimilation, compiling, editing, art design, and printing of this souvenir booklet and other items incident to this 60th birthday party.

We are also grateful to the University of Evansville for the use of Harper Dining Center and the Gladioux Food Service for catering at our birthday party.

Optimist International

Beginning

The service club idea, of which an Optimist club is a direct descendant, is as old as the culture of ancient Greece. Ever since Homer, who brought tales of the Trojan wars to community leaders of ancient Hellas, man has solved his community problems on a well-lined stomach with congenial companions.

King Arthur and his exclusive group of community leaders organized what he called the "Knights of the Round Table" for banqueting, discussion and action on worthy projects of the day. In Queen Elizabeth's time William Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher gathered regularly for lunch and talk

with other men of ambition under the leadership of Sir Walter Raleigh. The Dutch of early New Amsterdam gathered for lunch and talk in the coffee houses of early America, thus establishing the club idea in the New World.

Optimist clubs have existed since 1911, but the idea did not attain national or international significance until June, 1919, in Louisville, Kentucky, when representatives of eleven Optimist clubs gathered for the first time for discussion of mutual objectives and activities. This was the beginning of Optimist International and the start toward the establishment of Optimist clubs throughout North America.



Could this be "Optimists of the Square Table"?

Purpose

An Optimist club is an active vehicle for building constructive civic achievement through fellowship, friendship and harmonious cooperation.

Optimist clubs traditionally seek to do those things which almost everybody agrees need doing, unhampered by religion, partisan politics or legislative pressure. Community service is their byword, objective and creed. More often than not they accomplish a multitude of things ignored by government and tolerated by the indifferent. Almost no problem or challenge is too great to daunt the thousands of clubs which annually execute more thousands of community service projects to the benefit of the needy, the unfortunate, youth and entire communities.

The aggregate result of their expression of interest and action in humanity's problems is staggering almost beyond belief . . . a record of contribution to the public welfare unsurpassed by any other type of organization.



Suiting up to spread optimism

Someone once described Optimism as "A cheerful frame of mind that enables a teakettle to sing though up to its nose in hot water." But there is more to Optimism. It is a hopeful and helpful attitude that has brought thousands of business and professional men together.



Ho-Ho-Ho for Optimists

Optimist Members are Special

An Optimist club's membership is made up of self-less men, drawn from a cross-section of business, industry and the professions, who, recognizing their civic responsibilities, have banded together in the democratic tradition for progressive, constructive thought and action in community service. The very existence of Optimist clubs testifies to the fact that voluntarism supplements and reinforces the political structure of

a democratic republic, giving members opportunity for collective action, to the benefit of their communities, unrestrained by community prejudice or partisan politics.

A key tenet of Optimist clubs is the belief that the creation of a better world begins in simple friendliness for one's fellow man and dedication to the elimination of man's age old inhumanity to man.

The typical Optimist believes that civic participation contributes to the happiness and well-being of himself and family, recognizing the inequity of consuming the benefits of community life without contributing to those benefits. He believes in the things of the spirit, the dignity, sovereignty, rights and freedoms of the individual; he knows that self-interest cannot be separated from the general interest.

Officers, Directors, and Members 1980-1981

Albrecht, Andrew H., Jr.	Eggleston, Ron	Klausmeier, Harold	Sansom, George, Secretary
Alexander, Kenneth G.	Engle, Edward	Kleymeyer, Clifford	Schroeder, Otto
Allis, G. Byron	Erwin, Ralph	Koch, Walter G., II	Searls, James
Ballman, J. Henry, Sergeant-At-Arms	Espenlaub, Arthur	Korb, Daniel	Simmons, Dr. William W., Director
Banks, Paul	Ewing, Joseph	Latham, Eugene G.	Smith, Jerry
Beck, Clinton, Jr.	Fletcher, Norman	Levi, Robert	Snepp, Daniel W.
Becker, Robert	Flittner, Raymond C.	Logsdon, Hiram L.	Snyder, William
Bierbaum, Rev. Ruben J.	Freund, Dr. David	Lurie, Ben	Sonnemaker, Fred
Bippus, Benoni	Friedman, Bruce A.	Lyles, Carl C.	Spindler, Gus
Blythe, Elston	Funke, Anthony	Madden, Ernest	Springer, Irvin
Brashears, Edward R.	Funke, Raymond	Martin, James E.	Stippler, Walter
Brennan, Richard H.	Funke, Victor, Director, Immediate Past President	Marver, Sherman	Suhrheinrich, Jerry
Bromm, Oscar G.	Garrett, Jerry, President	Mastin, Lloyd	Suhrheinrich, Robert, Second Vice President
Bromm, Robert	Gossman, Richard	Miller, Bobby J.	Swaim, C. Manson
Bruce, Donald E., First Vice President	Groben, John	Miller, Lawrence E.	Taylor, Charles
Campbell, John H.	Hamburg, Al	Moon, Dr. Leland	Thuman, Charles H.
Clark, W. Branch	Harrell, Wilburn R.	Nunn, Dorris	Trimble, Thomas
Clerk, John	Hassee, William F.	Nunn, Robert	Veach, Darrell A.
Cliff, Homer L.	Hironimus, John	O'Leary, John	Wasson, Marion
Couch, William	Hollman, Robert	O'Rourke, P. Michael	Watson, Lester E.
Davoust, Richard	Hussmann, William	Parrish, William G.	Whicker, Lindel C., Director
Deeg, Clarence W.	Ingle, Thomas H.	Plane, Edward	Williams, Francis L.
Doris, Michael A., Treasurer	Jennings, Paul	Purdie, Allen	Williams, Starlin
Dwyer, Jack W.	Julian, Donald R.	Raben, Thomas	Woodson, Durbin
Dye, Robert	Karges, John M.	Riggs, James	
Eberhart, Ron, Director	Keck, David M.	Ritchel, Paul	
Edwards, Eddie	Kingston, C. Richard	Robinson, Bernard	
	Kirsch, Ron	Robinson, Eugene C.	
		Rohrer, Basil	
		Rust, Marvin	

50 Year Club

Otto C. Schroeder David F. Freund Ben J. Lurie
William F. Hassee Clifford A. Kleymeyer

35 Year Club

G. Byron Allis
Clarence Deeg
Arthur L. Espenlaub
Wilburn R. Harrell

Dorris Nunn
William G. Parrish
Edward C. Plane

Paul K. Ritchel
Marvin J. Rust
Daniel W. Snapp

Fred C. Sonnemaker
Gus Spindler
Walter Stippler

25 Year Club

Kenneth G. Alexander
Ruben J. Bierbaum
Benoni J. Bippus
Edward R. Brashears
Oscar G. Bromm

Homer L. Clift
John S. Groben
Al Hamburg
John Hironimus

Paul Jennings
John M. Karges
Hiram L. Logsdon
Lawrence E. Miller

Eugene C. Robinson
Basil E. Rohrer
George R. Sansom
Lester E. Watson

Optimist International Life Members

Kenneth G. Alexander
G. Byron Allis
Benoni J. Bippus
Oscar G. Bromm
Homer L. Clift
Clarence Deeg

Arthur L. Espenlaub
Wilburn R. Harrell
William F. Hassee
William G. Hussmann
John M. Karges

Clifford A. Kleymeyer
Lawrence E. Miller
Dorris J. Nunn
Edward L. Plane
Paul K. Ritchel

Eugene C. Robinson
Marvin J. Rust
George R. Sansom
William W. Simmons
Fred Sonnemaker

Highlights of our Club History

1921-1930

May 13, 1921 — Dr. Charles Hartloff and thirteen others met at the Vendome Hotel and organized the Evansville Optimist Club. The names of the charter members are as follows:

Alfred Neucks
Sylvan Haas
R. L. Brown
Jacob Paul
Herman Steinhilber
R. E. Sampson
Henry Kolker
Thomas Dickman
Thomas Liddell
C. W. Dickman
Isadore Kahn
M. A. Wepfer
C. L. Neidnagel
W. Lee Smith
Jed Pearson
Dr. Herman Baker
Dr. Chas. W. Hartloff
Walter Wunderlich
Edgar Kerth
Earl Conover
H. F. Reichman
B. H. Diehl
Louis Levi
Herbert Woods
J. C. Vaught
Charles Bock
Ed Wieland
Dr. Stephen French
A. C. Richardt
John W. Spencer, Jr.
Wm. Muensterman
C. F. Dickmann
Dr. Wm. E. Barnes
Dr. W. G. French

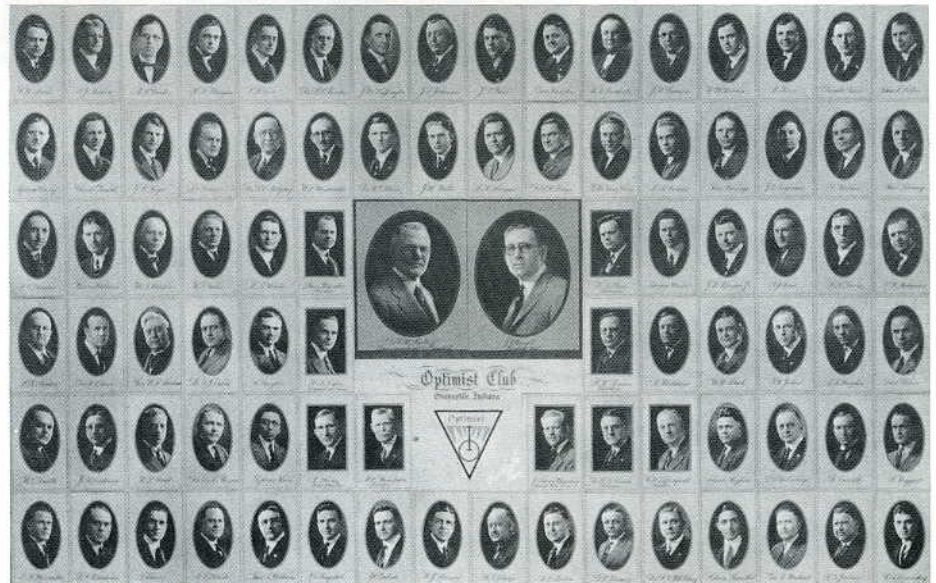
The original meeting place was at the Vendome Hotel on Thursdays. About two years later this was moved to the Shrine Mosque.

Summer, 1923 — At the Chattanooga International Convention Dr. Charles Hartloff made the motion, which was passed, that the slogan of Optimism be "Friend of the Delinquent Boy." At the Milwaukee Convention, the following year, this was changed to "Friend of the boy".

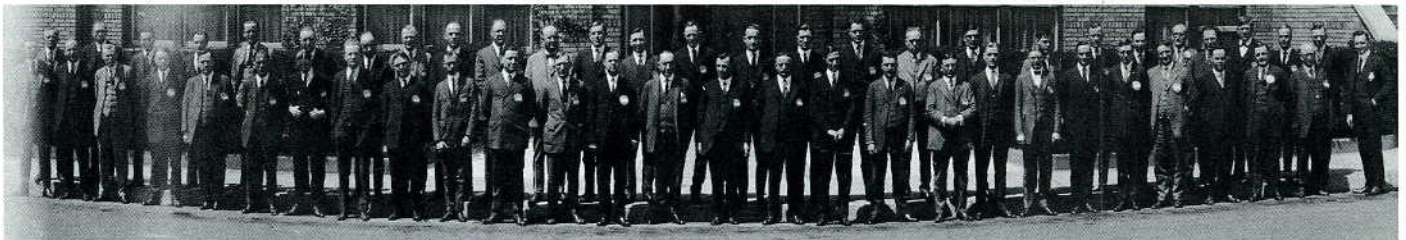
April, 1930 — Meeting place was moved to Vendome Hotel.

May, 1930 — Memorial Day Services at the graves of our departed Optimist members were started. At this date five members had died: Rev. W. R. Plumber, Ray Geupel, Floyd Ragland, John Daniels and Dr. George Ridgeway. From this date these Services have been conducted annually under the leadership of Rev. Addison Chapin as long as he lived. The tradition is still being continued.

October, 1930 — Began the sponsorship of four Friendly Indian Junior Optimist Clubs with membership not to exceed 80 boys.



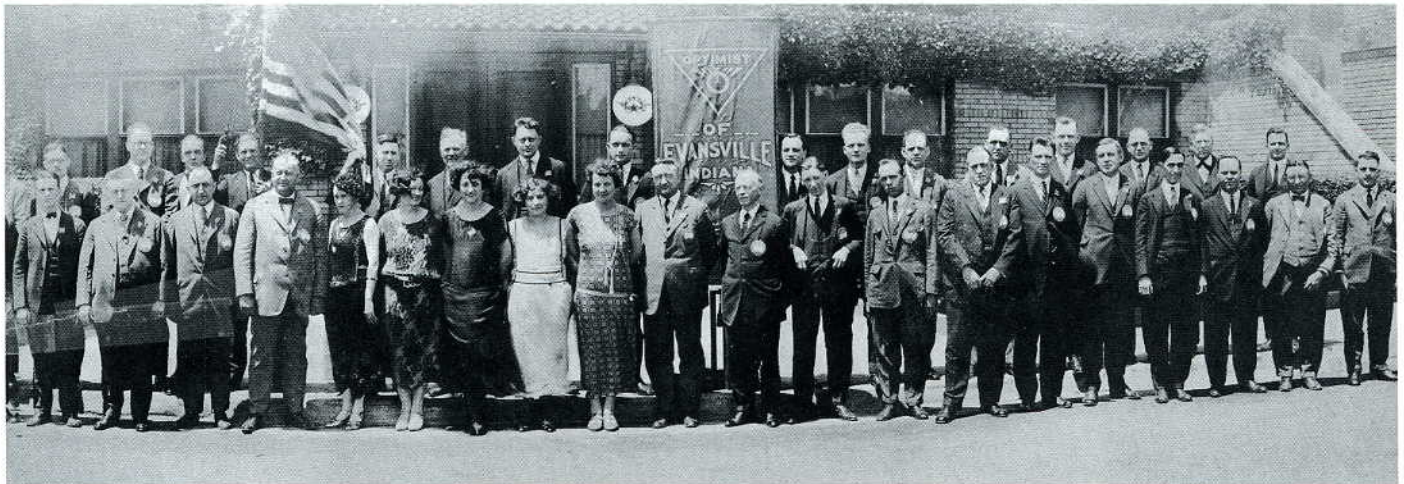
Charter Members — 1921



The front of the Shrine Mosque may need to be expanded for next year's picture!



Installation of new officers is serious business . . . in some clubs! Vendome Hotel. Left to right: Ted Straub, Royston Victor, Iral Mundy, G. Eugene Johnson, "Slick" Greise, George Krauss "Your duds in our suds", Elmer Graf, Howard Saberton, Rudolph Schnakenburg, William "Bill" Wootton, and Walter J. Stumpf.



Downtown Optimists of the 1920's

1931-1940

October, 1933 — Decided to operate Camp Optimist and make it available to groups under proper supervision.

October, 1934 — Meeting place was moved back to Shrine Mosque.

January, 1935 — Meeting place was changed to the McCurdy Hotel at 12:15 P.M. on Wednesdays.

July, 1936 — Life Membership Plan in Optimist International was opened up and the following year, George Krauss became our first life member.

August, 1937 — An additional room was built at Camp Optimist at a cost of \$385, the labor was done by the members.

Summer, 1940 — Searched for a new camp site, but was informed later in the year by the City Park Board they would extend the lease indefinitely so long as the Camp was used for youth work.

Camp Optimist



Remember the fun times and good food?



Those cotton-pickin' chicken pluckin' fryers!



The Bartender



Clowning around — a never-ending pastime



Over \$40,000 has been contributed by Optimist Club members to send Jr. Optimists and other deserving youth to camp.

1941-1950

May, 1941 — Spent \$400 for the construction and furnishing of a cabin at the Y.M.C.A. (Carson) Camp.

Summer, 1947 — Camp Optimist was remodeled and enlarged.

August, 1949 — Additional funds were spent at the Camp to make the

necessary changes and provide equipment for use by the crippled children during the Summer months.

Camp Carson



Sailboating and canoeing on Lake Seminole.



Camp Carson is special moments for all ages.



A full-blooded Indian visits with a camper.



Wonder who told the biggest fish story after this fishing expedition? April 1956.



Good leaders are the foundation for a great Camp — 1949.



Optimist Week at Camp Carson — 1949.

1951-1960

Sponsored and established the following Optimist Clubs:

March, 1953 — Evansville Westside Club

April, 1954 — Posey County Club

January, 1955 — Evansville Breakfast Club

February, 1956 — Evansville East Side Club

June, 1959 — Petersburg Breakfast Club

May, 1956 — Host to the Fifth District Optimist Convention.

Summer, 1959 — \$5,200 spent to modernize and renovate Camp Optimist.



A distinguished (?) welcome for the Optimist International President, Maurey Perkins — 1954

1961-1970

May, 1962 — Host to the Fifth District Optimist.

December, 1962 — New set of Bylaws for the Club was adopted.

1962 — Sponsored appearance of St. Olaf Choir in Evansville.

1967 — Purchased diorama for permanent installation at Evansville Museum of Arts and Sciences.

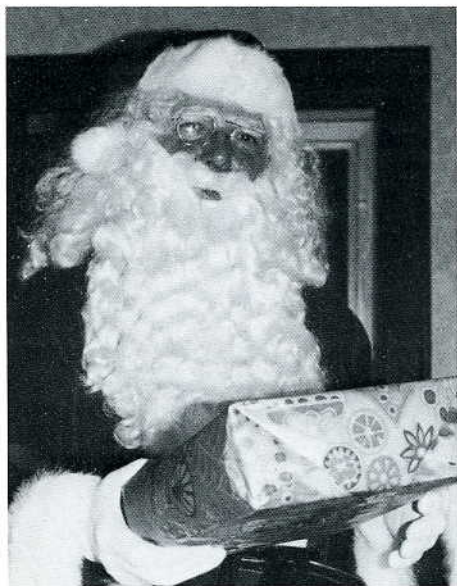
1968 — Paved play area in Wheeler school area for youth recreation purposes.

1968 — Returned Camp Optimist to the City of Evansville Parks Dept.

1969 — Meeting place moved from Hotel McCurdy to Hadi Shrine. Participated in purchase of materials including films for Evansville Police Department "Respect for Law" Program. Formed Junior Optimist Outdoor Club.

1970 — Formed outdoor Jr. Optimist Club.

1970 — Sponsored Pass, Shoot and Dribble Basketball Contest, taking our local winner to Rushville, Indiana, for state competition. Purchased tape recorder cassettes for Evansville Police Department. Contributed to bring stage presentation "Concept" to Evansville in a cooperating effort with Junior Service League's work against drug abuse.



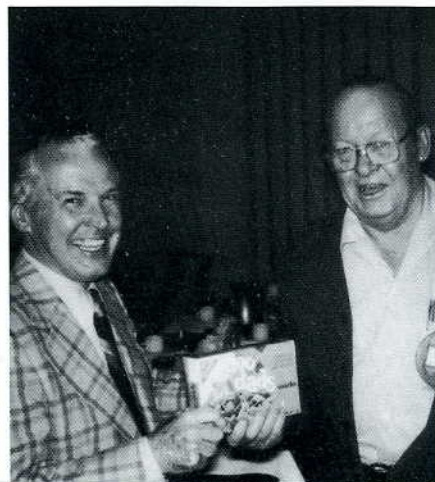
Santa is a surprise visitor at the Jr. Optimist Christmas party — 1974.



Musical chairs? No, it's the annual Christmas party for Jr. Optimists. 1974



So where's all the fun at these conventions?

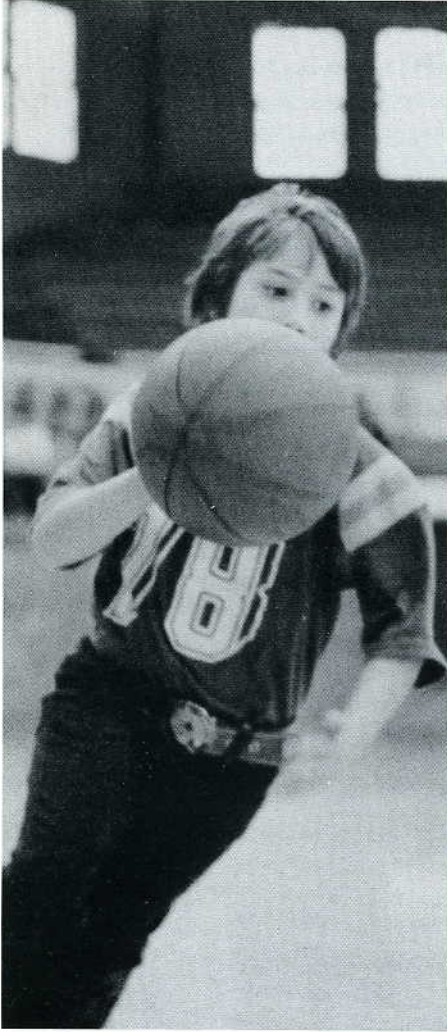


Bish wills his box of Doo-dads to Paul.



Christmas party for Jr. Optimists. Y.M.C.A. 1974

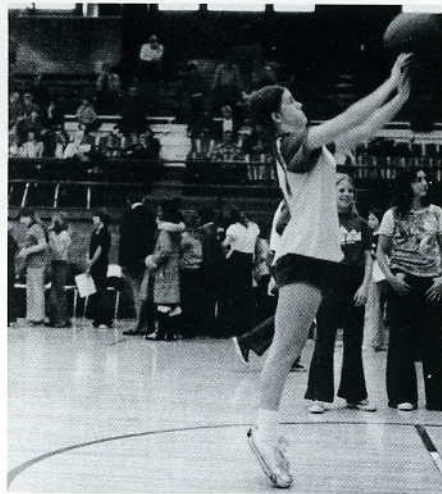
Pass, Shoot and Dribble Basketball Contest



A contest of skill, speed, and concentration.



Next year's contestants watch with interest.



Girls get in on the action, too.



Thanks, Coach!



Preparing to pass that basketball.



The Old Central gym Downtown (Indiana State University Evansville) was the contest site — 1977.

1971-1980

1971 — New records set in sending youth to Camp Carson.

1972 — Gave up the idea to have Rubinoff and his violin for a concert at the Coliseum.

1976 — Contributed to the Evansville Four Freedoms Monument fund.

1979 — Established Scholarship Fund.

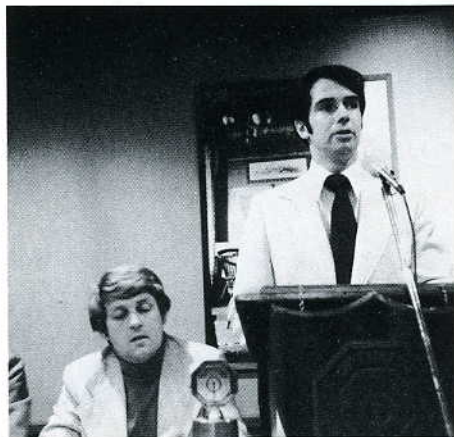
1979 — Contributed to the fund for Evansville's first Drum and Bugle Corp. — The Imperial Guard.

1980 — Recognition of Heroism to Robert Ashworth for aiding in the apprehension of a felon.

1980 — Didn't have "Chicken Jerry's" chicken dinner at the 4-H Center.



Servers for 4-H Dinner — not a one received a tip for good service!



Late Mayor Russell G. Lloyd and Mike Blake at Youth Appreciation Breakfast — 1972.



A dear friend, Art Herrmann.



Departed friends of the Optimist Club are remembered on Memorial Day weekend — a tradition since 1930.

Past Presidents

The Downtown Optimist Club of Evansville, Indiana

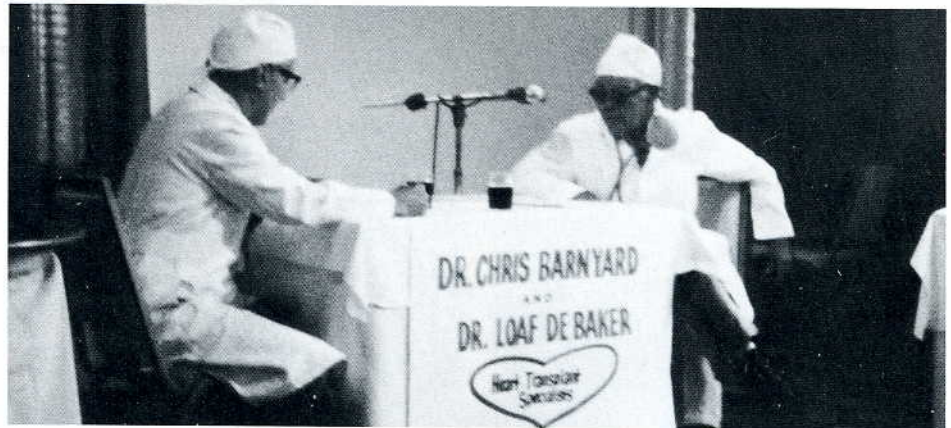
Dr. Charles Hartloff 1921-1922
 J. Chester Vaught 1922-1923
 Horace Sharp 1923-1924
 Thomas Williams 1924-1925
 Edgar Durre 1925-1926
 Walter Stumpf 1926-1927
 Walter Stumpf 1927-1928
 Caroll Bingaman 1928-1929
 Julius Ritter 1929-1930
 Norman Gatsch 1930-1931
 William Wootton 1931-1932
 George Krauss 1932-1933
 G. Eugene Johnson 1933-1934
 Robert Taylor 1934-1935
 Paul Miller 1935-1936
 Clinton Graham 1936-1937
 Louis Hoople 1937-1938
 Ollie Reeves 1938-1939
 Alex Jardine 1939-1940
 Theodore Straub 1940-1941

Iral Mundy 1941-1942
 Jewett Davidson 1942-1943
 Louis Levi 1943-1944
 Thomas Cusack 1944-1945
 Hans Aabel 1945-1946
 Dr. Elvin Fitzsimmons 1946-1947
 Charles Perkins 1947-1948
 Sam Medicott 1948-1949
 Carl Harmeyer 1949-1950
 Don Menke 1950-1951
 Henry Bohnsack 1951-1952
 Glen Bretz 1952-1953
 Marvin Rust 1953-1954
 Byron Allis 1954-1955
 Clifford Kleymeyer 1955-1956
 Gordon "Bish" Thompson 1956-1957
 Al Steinhauer 1957-1958
 Basil Rohrer 1958-1959
 Gregory Brill 1959-1960

Harold Miller 1960-1961
 Fred Sonnemaker 1961-1962
 Daniel W. Snapp 1962-1963
 Homer L. Clifft 1963-1964
 Lawrence E. Miller 1964-1965
 James R. Pearson 1965-1966
 Clarence W. Deeg 1966-1967
 Father Robert A. Deig 1967-1968
 John R. Schuck 1968-1969
 Edward L. Plane 1969-1970
 Ernest D. Madden 1970-1971
 Charles T. Taylor 1971-1972
 Paul K. Ritchel 1972-1973
 Durbin Woodson 1973-1974
 Eugene C. Robinson 1974-1975
 William G. Hussmann 1975-1976
 Dr. William W. Simmons 1976-1977
 Daniel F. Korb 1977-1978
 Robert C. Bromm 1978-1979
 Victor L. Funke 1979-1980



Another sucker!



Heart transplants for worn-out Optimist Club Presidents — 1969.



A tribute to the unfortunate



An unusual guest shares "inside" information.

Bits o' Optimist Humor

Have you heard about the Optimist club member who has a collie at home that eats cantaloupes. They think of him as a melon collie.

Bulletin
Flint, Michigan

An optimist is a guy who marries his secretary and expects to continue dictating.

Bulletin
A. M., Gastonia
North Carolina

An Optimist has such perfect thoughts and expectations in life that if he were married to Racquel Welch, he would still expect her to cook breakfast.

— **News, Mid-City St. Louis, Mo.**

Confucius say: "Optimist is man who get treed by lion but enjoy the scenery."

Uptown Lo-Down
Uptown Los Angeles, CA

Words o' Optimist Wisdom

We understand that the IRS loves poor people. That's why it creates so many of them.

Opti-Views
Grand Island, NE

There are usually two sides to an argument, and they are often married to each other.

Opti-Knight
Knightstown Home
Knightstown, Indiana

Always tell the truth — you may make a hole in one when you're alone on the golf course some day.

Optigram
Royal Oak, MI

Home is the place you can say whatever you want to. No one will be listening to you anyway.

S. E. Review
Southeast Tacoma, WA

Grey hair is inherited. You get it from your kids.

Po-Opts
Pomona, CA

Sign near a gas tank: "Don't smoke around the gasoline tank. If your life isn't worth anything, gasoline is."

Bulletin
Winfield, KS

Exerpts from Optimist Club Bulletins in the U.S. and Canada and *The Optimist Magazine*.