

OPTIMIST CLUB OF AUSABLE PORT FRANKS

1-9997 Port Franks Rd., Port Franks, Ontario, N0M 2L0

NEWSLETTER

March 2009

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Editor Eva Rutledge

Spring is just around the corner! We all need a little sunshine, so come on out to the Dinner Tuesday night and enjoy some camaraderie, a few laughs, and a great meal.

WHAT HAPPENED IN FEBRUARY

3rd Pot Luck Dinner - Delicious food! Yummy meat balls, delicious stew, and fudge for dessert.

Shirley Preszcator won the prestigious Frying Pan for her famous Fudge.

8th Zone Meeting - Kimball Hall, Forest - pajamas galore

14th Coffee/Customer Appreciation Day at MacPherson's

15th Our new members, Jason and Theresa Kimmerly hosted our Breakfast Meeting

Great job Jason and Theresa

21st Grog's Meat Raffle - Hosted by Sherry, brought in about \$188.00

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARCH

3RD Dinner Meeting

15th Breakfast Meeting

17th Board of Directors Meeting

21st Grog's Meat Raffle

27th Much Music Video Dance Party, Thomas Hall, Thedford Arena

I'm sure you will be hearing from Tracy and Gordon regarding the assistance they will need for the Dance.

[Come on out and support your club.](#)

I have been working on the Nevada books this week, and I need to rectify a note from a previous newsletter. I noted that we had taken in \$9,116.00 for the last licence, which ran from November 2007 to November 2008. This should be corrected to say the profit for that licence was \$5,732.40.

The \$9,116.00 is the total amount of the cheques we received from MacPhersons.

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL FEBRUARY, AND MARCH BABIES."

Feb. 3, Janet Waite,

6, Ron Huxley

7, Len Belton

21, Bob Rutledge,

Mar. 5, Jim Waite

Tracy Huxley

Deb Huxley

The rest of you know who are. It would be nice if we could recognize everyone on their special day.

PRESIDENTS INTERVIEW

INTERVIEW WITH RON HUXLEY

February 23, 2009

Ron and I started out our interview with his describing the NEW campaign that is being undertaken by Western Ontario Children's Hospital and SWONT District Optimists.

Ron explained, "Children with Life Threatening Cancers are being given a bead necklace with their name on it when they are first diagnosed with a serious cancer. This program is called the ***Bravery Bead Program***. In the beginning and on the anniversary of their diagnosis each year the children in treatment will be given a bead with an Optimist logo on it for their necklace and each time they undergo a treatment or procedure they are given another bead. The beads are different colours or made with different symbols to represent such things as a blood transfusion or and x-ray or a bone marrow transplant. " Ron's natural enthusiasm and excitement was evident in his voice when he told me that some children have collected numerous necklaces so far with hundreds of beads representing the pain or suffering they have endured at every step in their struggle to over come their terrible disease. Ron said, "The bravery bead necklaces allow them to find the courage and motivation to accept the treatments and discomforts and ill effects of their visits and their journey to a hopeful and positive outcome." Statistics show that over 80% of children with cancer have a positive outcome.

To expand this program to include other childhood diseases will cost \$26,000.00 each year and the hope is that Optimists Clubs within the District will either do a new fundraiser or reach deep into their budget and give a \$500.00 donation and add it to the budget for the next year. Ron feels with the 83 clubs in our District that if only 50 donate 500.00 we will basically fulfil the need for the year. Ron will be speaking at our dinner meeting about this in more depth.

What made you become an Optimist, Ron? Ron replied, "I was reluctant at first to become involved with an organization. I had been running small programs around the neighbourhood for the kids." Ron said, "I had two young daughters to look out for and decided that I wanted to have them involved and decided to start helping more kids."

The year was 1983 and Ron became a chartered member along with the other gentlemen that joined. Optimism at this point was an all mans club and although the meetings were men only, the events and programs had all the wife's and children involved and attending. There was talk during that time to form a female club called then the Optimis's Club but the better half's were already active with their partners and didn't see the need to form their own club.

Where there outside partnerships like clubs form now? Ron said, "Back then they basically had a partnership with the Municipality to help get land for the club." The same land that our building was erected on.

Is it common to have problems in clubs, Ron replied, "Yes, it is common. The first 3 years of a new club are spent in building up the club identity and its' activities. After that, the new feeling wears off and some of the original members for numerous reasons leave and the club is left with a nucleus of diehards. The diehards continue doing the work. Successful Club's soon learn that they need to bring in new members. This is the key to a club's survival. Keeping a fresh bloodline in membership, allows new current ideas and these new ideas come with a fresh force of volunteer's to help get the work done." The key is not to chase the new members away by over working them or with comments like we don't do it that way here or we tried that once and it didn't work. A new members' self esteem is very fragile. The value in membership comes from nurtured development not criticized attempts. Personal growth is the one thing that we rarely realize has happened until we look back and see how far we have come.

Ron told me the story of an Optimist, who had been a paper member for 8 years before he got involved in his clubs' annual Bicycle Rodeo. The Optimist member was so amazed to see the children's excited faces and the results of the event that he became active and at that point he began to climb up the Optimist ladder and eventually became a District Governor. From Ron's international exposure he says,

"If you want to see a successful club, then look at the involvement of its' members. If they are personally satisfied and enjoy doing things for the community and the kids then you will see a successful club that will flourish." If there is resentment or criticism from within than the atmosphere it creates, drives its' members away. Ron's advise "Think twice and speak once".

Ron's Optimist career started in March of 1983 as a charter member on the Ausable Port Franks Optimist Club. The following year he took on the role of a Vice President under Doug Wilson, shortly into Doug's term Ron was asked to take over as the Interim President while Doug was away working on a northern pipeline. He became the official President in the clubs 3rd full year. This was the year the land was acquired, and the original quantset hut building that Len talked about in his interview was sold. It was the same year the club members began to build the hall and upstairs meeting room. They received Government Funding, an insurance cheque for the damage of the quantset hut and money from the sale of the damaged hut and than made a deal with the Town to use the land, leaving the ownership of the land and building in the hands of the town. It was our plan and the town supported us in our Optimist endeavours. In Ron's 4th year as an Optimist he became the Zone's Lt. Governor and did two years back to back. While serving his second year as Lt. Governor he also became the District Youth Club Chair which back then meant he was district chair overseeing JOOI clubs.

In 1988-89 he took on the Club Services Chair at the District Level and became the Gov Elect in 1989-90. This was the largest year of growth in Optimist International's history. Starting in 1988-89 the District experienced 5 years of distinguished status with Ron's year as Governor right smack in the middle.

After serving as our District Governor Ron was asked by Don Mills, President of Optimist International to be on the International Youth Club Committee. Ron continued to receive appointments and has served for 18 consecutive years. Following his service on the Youth Club Committee he accepted a position to serve on the International Programs Committee and was involved in setting up new programs that are still running today. Programs like "The Day of Non Violence" the "Optimist International Junior Golf Championship". Ron has been appointed to serve as a member of 12 International Committee's. He has also served in the position as the International Chairman of seven additional various committees, and over the last eighteen years Ron has served as a member of the International Board of Directors as either a VP under the old structure or a BOD under the new structure for three of those years. Starting in 1990 Ron made his first trip to St. Louis as our District's Governor-elect. Ron estimates that he has taken about 45 different trips to St. Louis to the Optimist International Head Quarters and approximately 65 additional trips to districts around Optimist International as a representative of the international body.

Ron estimates that he has visited with 28 different Districts to date some more than once. Ron has attended 18 International Conventions and about 23 different District Convention's as the International President's Representative. The Life Lessons that Ron has learned by becoming an Optimist have helped develop and grow his knowledge and skills. He states that, "I will never be able to repay this organization for all that it has done for me. "

One very important thing Ron wanted to say was, "When you become an Optimist, it's because you want to deal with young people, encourage their personal growth and objectives. The rewards are when you see the results on the faces of the children you help. Optimism sneaks up on you and becomes a part of your life. You cherish the opportunity of meeting other Optimists, becoming involved in projects, you will grow as a person and you help your club reach new levels."

Ron reaches out to everyone with his smiles, his silly behaviour, and the enjoyment of watching the reactions of other Optimists. His goal is to help bring them back to more meetings, more events, and more Optimist activities. He wants to always leave them thinking, what will he do next. The bottom line is Ron is an Optimist by choice. Ron says, "A lot of clubs fall into a level of complacency, doing things the same way they have always been done, it's simply that they don't look into the future. If you want a successful club you need to recruit young members to add new energy and skill's to the mix. Clubs who are succeeding are doing this and creating a new vitality for their clubs. It is a renewal of the original enthusiasm the clubs had in its' early years.

I found talking to Ron, amazing because his dedication to his Family, his Business, his Fire Department and Optimism all had similar roles in his life and was important to him. Each facet of these encouraged him to grow, to be on a learning curve, and to reach out for adventures. These have all added to a life that he continues to enjoy. When Ron stands up to speak about issues that are important to him, take the time to listen, you will learn something new and take home the knowledge that creates inspirations and the success and the ability to feel good about who you are and what you do.

Submitted by

Lorie Scott

If you read the interviews Lorie has done over the last few months, you will see how our club came to be. The interviews are telling the story.
Another good one!

An explanation, our newsletter has another look, this month. My computer is down, haven't been able to get it to Jason. Bob's computer does not like me, it will not co-operate.
Do you think it knows I prefer a newer model?

DON'T FORGET YOUR DONATIONS FOR "THE MADAGASCAR 2009 PROJECT"

Tracy is selling tickets for the **Italian Night**, and they are requesting each family donate 1 or 2 gifts for the auction tables.

SHUT IN UPDATES:

Sam Bell -

Sam suffered a heart attack last August and after arriving at the hospital, he suffered a second one.

They did an angiogram and angioplasty, there was 100% blockage.

They succeeded in inserting one stint; however, he suffered a stroke through the night. They then found he had a brain tumour. Sam was scheduled for surgery Dec. 18th, but it was cancelled an hour prior to the time and rescheduled for Jan. 19th. He came through his surgery okay; however, three days later he started taking seizures. He has overcome the problems and is home (at his daughter's house, where Fran looks after their grand children).

He is able to print again and reading briefly. (Enjoying our Newsletters)

Sam must have two more surgeries on his heart; with two more stints being inserted. We wish both Sam and Fran the very best.

Barb Howard - has been undergoing chemo and radiation for cancer over the last 15 to 16 months, but is in very good spirits as always.

She enjoys her life with hubby John, and visits with the grand children and great grand son. She also loves "tea parties" with neighbours.

Barb is a true optimist; she looks at the best side of everything.

Barry and Liz Place -

Barry has been undergoing cancer treatments for the last 15 to 16 months, and feels better the longer he is away from chemo. He's out walking again with company, enjoying his news and sports; and lively discussions with friends.

Barry is scheduled for an MRI on March 21st; with a follow-up doctor's appointment on March 23 - at which time they will get the results of the test and if any - future plan for his treatment.

Liz and Barry continue to be optimistic for the future. He does require a lot of rest at this point.

Liz is in good health; but having blood pressure issues. She is waiting for a CT scan of her heart; so she must be cautious of her activities until they figure out the problem.

Aside from health problems Liz and Barry are very happy to announce - they have three new additions to their family in the last month. Two in Delaware and one in B.C. Barry and Liz also have a daughter in New Jersey.

We want to wish Liz and Barry the very best also.

We must also give our condolences to Liz on the loss of her mother in January.

Mickey and Ron Weir -

Mickey has been undergoing cancer treatments for some time now, but is in very good spirits, and now has a very large job looking after Ron. She may have to have a transfusion next week because her hemoglobin is down.

Ron took a very bad fall last year. After surgery, he took a heart attack, and a stroke.

His left side has feeling, but is not back 100% yet.

He has done well, mending from the stroke, walking a bit; his memory and speech are excellent. He is able to help Mickey by getting out of bed and into bed, but spends most of his day in a wheel chair.

Ron will be having by pass heart surgery before long.

We wish them all the very best.

Moe Everaert, is not an optimist club member, but his wife Rebecca is.

Moe took a very bad fall at work, in Sarnia, and broke his pelvis. The good news is he fell into mud, which means the bones did not move out of place.

Hopefully, he will be home within a couple of weeks, but still has a long recovery period to look forward to.

We sincerely wish him well.