

# Clinton Township Optimist Club hosts Youth Appreciation Breakfast



The Clinton Township Optimist Club gave an Achievement in Education Award to Jerry Evanski, principal of Erie Elementary School in the Chippewa Valley Schools District.

Photos submitted by Carl “Doc” Durlock

**By Linda May , For The Macomb Daily**

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The Clinton Township Optimist Club recently gave out Youth Appreciation Awards and honored their essay and oratorical contest winners. Students received cash prizes, medallions and framed certificates. Photos submitted by Carl “Doc” Durlock

The Clinton Township Area Optimist Club honored students at its recent 24th annual Youth Appreciation Breakfast. Optimists gave out Youth Appreciation Awards and recognized essay and oratorical contest winners.

Students were chosen by their school leaders for their optimistic attitude for the Youth Appreciation Awards.

They were: Olivia Livernois and Jacob Chludzinski, Chippewa Valley High School; Andrea Wilbourn and Francois Thomas-Sims, Clintondale High School; Marina Hyndman and Robert Gracin, Dakota High School; Angela Fiordilino and Kyle McGorman, Fraser High School.

Also chosen were: Francesca Ortisi and David Andrix, L'Anse Creuse High School; Laurel Neitling and Logan Palm, L'Anse Creuse North High School; Sara Femminino and Tyler Prisby, Lutheran High School North; Sionei Miller and Matt King, Mount Clemens High School.

Club member Macomb County Sheriff Anthony Wickersham helped Kim Meltzer, Youth Appreciation co-chair, read the nominations.

“It is amazing to learn the great amount of student involvement and charitable activities the students participate in each year,” said Meltzer, the Clinton Township clerk.

The club holds an annual essay contest for students up to to age 18 in conjunction with Optimist International. This year's topic was “Optimism Should be a Priority.” Essay contest chair Doris Modrak and Optimist photographer “Doc” Durlock presented the winners with cash prizes, medallions and framed certificates.

The essay contest winners were: first place, Taylor Trueblood; second place, Kayla Rusch; and third place, Hannah Watkins. All attend L'Anse Creuse High School North as students of Kathleen Reifert.

Optimist International's Oratorical Contest was held in March. The topic this year was: “How My Optimism Will Help Me Press On to Greater Achievements of the Future.”

The female winners of that contest who were honored were: first place, Maria Fields, Grosse Pointe Academy; second place, Kaitlyn Schroeder, Dakota High School; and third place, Victoria Bickley, Seneca Middle School.

The two male winners were: first place, Austin Rieck, Dakota High School; second place, Tyler Hunt. Rieck has won the contest four times and he graduates this year. He and Kaitlyn Schroeder presented their speeches at the breakfast.

Karen Tucker, oratorical contest chair, and club member Ken Pearl presented the medallions and certificates.

A highlight of the breakfast was the presentation of the Achievement in Education Award to Jerry Evanski principal of Erie Elementary School, Chippewa Valley Schools. He was honored for his many accomplishments as an educator, speaker, and author.

Evanski was the first to bring the “Leader in Me” program to Macomb County. The program has increased student leadership and personal development. His award was presented by charter club member and retired educator Lou Moss.

To learn more about the Clinton Township Area Optimist Club, call Moss at 586-566-7277 or visit [optimist.org](http://optimist.org).

Bicycle safety fair is June 7

About 1,000 people are expected to attend the Kiwanis Club of Utica-Shelby Township's 27th Bill Hoehn Memorial Bicycle Safety Rodeo and Family Safety Fair, which takes place 11 a.m.-2 p.m. June 7.

Bicycle helmets will be given away at the free event at Whispering Woods Kiwanis Park, 11000 21 Mile Road, Shelby Township.

There are prizes for the best-decorated bicycle, a bicycle safety course, bike inspection and bike raffles. Children can enjoy bounce houses, a magic show, balloons and face painting. Shelby Township police personnel will make ID cards for children.

Rob Peterson coordinates the event.

“Every year we have 400 to 500 children who attend,” Peterson said. “The idea is to promote bicycle safety and give back to the community. We give out 300 to 400 helmets and we make sure they are properly fitted.”

Fitters and fitter trainers come from the Detroit Medical Center.

“Shelby Fire Department has a Smoke House so that kids know how to get out of a burning structure. They bring their big rigs. Kids love that. Then we have our safety course to make sure they know how to use their bikes. It all goes back to Kiwanis serving children of the community,” he said.

For more information about the bike rodeo, contact Peterson at 586-731-5556 or [UticaKiwanis@gmail.com](mailto:UticaKiwanis@gmail.com)

The club is participating in the Playground Structure Legacy of Play Contest to try to win \$25,000 in playground equipment for Whispering Woods. People can help by going to <http://bit.ly/1cLrgxg> and “voting” by Monday, or contact Linda-Ann Heldt at 586-491-0720.

“Kiwanis recognizes the need in our community to serve our families with safe and educational play areas in an outdoor learning environment,” Heldt said.

She said Whispering Woods has an “inclusive playground designed to be accessible for physically challenged, special-needs and able-bodied children alike, allowing kids to play together and benefit from interaction with their peers.”

The park is used by older children involved in tournaments and summer sports camps.

“Having a play area for their younger siblings helps the children play safely and close to their family members and creates a safe, clean and spacious playground for children 5-12 years of age,” Heldt said.

The group has helped provide a tot lot and pavilion, dugouts and playground equipment.

June 12 golf outing supports projects

Heldt said her club has been providing services to the community since 1957. Kiwanians participate in prayer breakfasts, roadside cleanups and blood drives, and supports Kids On the Go, a nonprofit that provides physical, occupational and speech therapy in a summer camp setting for children with special needs.

To raise money for its programs and projects, the club holds the Kiwanis Annual Fred Wilt Memorial Golf Outing on June 12. It is at Sycamore Hills Golf Course, 48787 North Avenue, Macomb. Registration is 9 a.m.-10:45 a.m.; shotgun start is at 11 a.m.; and dinner is at 5 p.m. Donation is \$150 per golfer, and sponsorships start at \$300. Contact John Bergmann at [FredWiltMemorial@gmail.com](mailto:FredWiltMemorial@gmail.com) or 586-883-2647.

The adult club sponsors numerous youth clubs. High school Key club projects include a Blanket Brigade creating fleece blankets for children’s hospitals, and making dog and cat toys for animal shelters. Students volunteered recently with the Special Dreams Farm 5K and 10K run. Key clubs from Eisenhower and Henry Ford II High Schools sent students to the Kiwanis Key Club Service Leadership Conference.

Heldt said Eisenhower Key Club members were among 180 volunteers who worked with the Kids Against Hunger Utica Michigan Satellite to package 50,000 meals in the “Race To Feed Hungry Children.” KAH is a nonprofit humanitarian food relief organization that mobilizes food assembly lines. Some of the food went to the Hope Center in Macomb.

Other sponsors of that event were the Kiwanis clubs of Sterling Heights High Noon, Shelby Macomb Daybreakers, and Warren.

Kiwanis duckies swim in June 6

The Michigan Kiwanis Wild Duck Derby on June 6 benefits several charities such as KAH and Hope Center. It takes place on the Clinton River in downtown Mount Clemens. Raffle tickets are \$5 for one duck and \$20 for five ducks. Sponsorships and advertising are also available. Contact Heldt for additional information, or see [WildDuckDerby.com](http://WildDuckDerby.com).

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