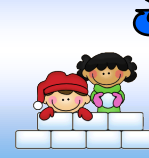




Official Newsletter of the Superior Optimist Club



January 2018

PRESIDENT - Carolyn Nelson-Kavajecz

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To me, the interesting thing about the New Year is listening to people talk about their resolutions. Of course, when people talk about their own resolutions, the question that typically follows is, "What are your resolutions?" To be honest, I never make resolutions because I realized decades ago that I never follow through with them. Don't get me wrong, I would like to lose 25 pounds, and I would like to run a marathon like my husband has done several times. The truth is, the month of January this year, is not going to turn me into a "raw-foodist runner" any more than the month of June did in 2017, or the month of November did in 2007 for all that matters. Several years ago, I came to the realization that I needed to stop beating myself up for not being all of the things that I was not; and, I needed to start giving myself credit for all of the things that I was.

I was at a dance convention in Southern Wisconsin about 10 years ago. I was 35, and feeling very old, because in the dance world, I was "getting up there". In addition to being much older than many of the others in the room, my son who was 2 at the time, and my daughter who was 1; were rolling around in the hallway of the convention center under my mom's watch and occasionally running into the conference room to visit mommy. Oh yeah, and if that was not enough to have "crazy lady" written all over it, I was pregnant with twins. Talk about a square peg!

Part of the convention included a teacher discussion group, where we all went around the room and told the group about our greatest challenge as a dance teacher and/or studio owner. Everyone had valid concerns, which I understood first hand, because as a young studio owner, I had experienced many of the same issues. It made me feel good about myself to be able to offer advice or share stories with these younger business owners and provide them with inspiration for building their businesses and their future. When it was my turn to reveal my greatest challenge in the dance world, I explained that I was having a hard time keeping up with all of the younger dancers and all of the changes taking place. I felt like I was losing my competitive edge with all of the hip-hop, Zumba, and modern dance studios opening in my area. I was running 2 businesses, I was a mom of soon-to-be 4 children, and I was having a hard time keeping up with offering the same classes that everyone else in our area was offering.

The convention director, Debbie Roberts, asked me what I taught. I humbly told her that I taught baton twirling. She asked me how many baton twirlers I had at my studio, and I replied, "About 250". The room fell silent, and she asked me, "Carolyn, if you have 250 baton twirling students, why do you think that you need to change anything?" She went on to tell me, "You have something different than anyone else has. Focus on what is different about your studio and market that, don't try to be like everyone else."

Ever since that day, whenever I second-guess myself, I think about that day, and I remember that I might not always fit in, but that does not mean that there is anything wrong with what I am doing. I also think of Dr. Maya Angelou's story of her grandmother telling her, "Now Sister, you know what's right. Just do right. You don't really have to ask anybody. The truth is, "right" may not be expedient, it may not be profitable, but it will satisfy your soul."

This January, I might not be able to commit to losing 25 pounds (even though I probably should), but I do know that I will be able to follow through with doing what is right... Right for myself, right for my family, and right for my community. This year, I will commit to, and follow through with all that satisfies my soul. I wish for you, the same.

Carolyn Nelson-Kavajecz

Reflections - By Dave Cochrane

The article I wrote about this time last year in this newsletter talked about my retirement in January 2017 and my goals for the year. I thought folks might be interested in an update because many people I ran into in the last year would ask, **how is retirement going?** I never had a short answer and I knew no one wanted a long response. Last December, I talked about change and now a year later I would update the word “change” to “transition” which is defined as “a passage from one state to another” which to me would be a better way to describe moving into retirement. I only changed my daily activities. I didn’t change. My secret thoughts about having time to do all the things I never had time for didn’t pan out as expected. I saw early in retirement that my life really evolved around my job and the job gave structure to my life and now I needed to create a new structure and what would that be? I was armed with what I thought I wanted to do and what I needed to do. The list got long. The problem became time management, a term that I thought belonged to the work world.

Just the act of daily living took a lot more time, than I expected. Activities like household repairs, shopping, mowing grass, shoveling snow, transportation, and doing the unexpected family errands. Now, I found that I had the time to read the instructions, make several trips to the hardware store and you know that does make things easier. I was doing what I always did but added more quality to the tasks because I had more time to do them. I also had the time to say hello and chat with people as I ran into them on the street or at the supermarket or on other errands. When I worked I always felt that I was rushing on the week-ends so that I could get to “relaxing” to get ready for another work week. I suggest there is a big difference between those who are working and those who are retired. Its a mindset difference, I suggest. I also did get involved in an exercise program at the “Y” and joined a cribbage club at the Senior Center and spent a lot of time on the Ancestry site where I did confirm my Irish/Scottish ancestry. (There is also 19% Scandinavian DNA in there as well.) I did a little golfing but my shoulder limited the days at the golf course. And I did add a few afternoon naps. And of course, I did all the grandchildren academic and sport events. The latter is the best part of retirement.

I secretly thought that retirement would give me time to re-examine what was most passionate to me. At least that what many of the retirement books suggested. I reaffirmed that **poverty** and **equality** were the areas that I was most passionate about and that was a little comforting because I had worked in those areas all of my life. In hindsight, I was very fortunate to have my work, education and passions united. Poverty and Equality both arose in the nation’s spotlight in January of last year when the new President took office. As a lifelong liberal, I vividly experienced and reacted with alarm to the daily barrage of proposals and tweets that hit the CNN airwaves.

In order to maintain my sanity and maintain a perspective, I turned to the humor of Will Rogers, an American humorist (1879-1935) He is quoted as saying *“We have been staggering along now for about 155 years (now 242 years) under every conceivable horse thief that could get into office, and yet here we are still going strong..... Yet as bad as they are they can’t spoil it , and as good as they are they can’t help it.....A good man can’t do nothing in office because the system is against him, and a bad one can’t do anything for the same reason. So, bad as we are, we are better off than any other nation, so what’s the use to worry?”* I optimistically do believe we will right size ourselves, I just hope that Will Rogers was right. I also believe that as a Country we need to develop some method of compromise so we don’t have to move so far to the left or to the right every four or eight years. It’s just too exhausting. I do hope that we right size while I am still around. We need balance in all things.

And finally, a comment on New Year Resolutions. I reviewed the goals I set last year and can report that I did make some progress but did not fully reach them which is typical for me and I am comfortable with that. My plan last year was to live one day at a time, try to be useful and stay involved in advocacy of some type. I have decided to keep the same goals for this year and add time management as a goal. I never thought I would bring time management into retirement but I have so many things that I want to do so this I am thinking this will give me both structure and balance in my life.

In summary, retirement has been enjoyable and challenging at the same time. Enjoyable because I am able to set my own pace, carry less responsibility and challenging from having to decide from the array of activities and possibilities that are available.

I wish you all a Happy New Year and a great 2018!

PROGRAMS FOR January

January 3

Girl Scout Gold Award Project – Kate Lisak

January 10

Travel Superior – Taylor Pedersen

January 17

UWS Men's Basketball – Coach Greg Polkowski

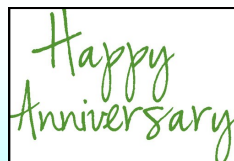
January 24

Learning Banjo – Alan Copenhaver

January 31

Energy and utility highlights – SWL&P

Membership Anniversaries



Al Kurtz, 30 years

Kim Pearson, 11 years

Barb Certa-Werner, 2 years



In Our Thoughts/Prayers



**Chris Jarmin
& his family**

YOUTH OPTIMISTS - Jaylynn Glaus & Maddy Myer



Jaylynn Glaus and Maddy Myer were Youth Optimists for December. They are both Juniors at Superior High School. They joined the Optimist Club for lunch every Wednesday during the month.

Jaylynn is involved in FBLA, DECA, Interact Club, Archery team, Cross Country, Track, Student Council. She is a Board Member for Pledgemakers and is also involved in Youth Leadership and Youth Superior Delegate Days. She is the daughter of Marissa and Jason Glaus. she has a younger brother, Cole. Her dreams are to become a Psychiatrist and live in Homer, Alaska.

Maddy is involved in DECA, Interact Club, Central Assembly, Basketball and Youth Leadership. She is the daughter of Jeanne and Dale Myer. she has an older brother, Brandon, who plays basketball for UMD. Her plans are to continue her education as a business major. At some point in her life, she would like to live in Colorado.

*"Few things in the world are more powerful than a positive push. A smile. A world of optimism and hope. A "you can do it" when things are tough." -- **Richard M. DeVos***

*"The things you think are the disasters in your life are not the disasters really. Almost anything can be turned around: out of every ditch, a path, if you can only see it." -- **Hilary Mantel***

*"Believe it is possible to solve your problem. Tremendous things happen to the believer. So believe the answer will come. It will." -- **Norman Vincent Peale***

*"What day is it?" asked Pooh
"It's today," squeaked Piglet.
"My favourite day," said Pooh." -- **AA Milne (Alan Alexander Milne)***

*"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence." -- **Helen Keller***

*"An optimist is someone who goes after Moby Dick in a rowboat and takes the tartar sauce with him." -- **Zig Ziglar***

*"Optimism is essential to achievement and it is also the foundation of courage and true progress." -- **Nicholas M. Butler***



Assistant Editor Judy Carlson

**In Loving Memory of
Merrill Thompson & Bill Downs, Jr.**

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

JANUARY



positive thoughts
generate
positive feelings
and attract
positive life
experiences

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

Mission Statement

**Superior Optimist Club
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