

## Recollections and Factoids

When asked by Cynthia to speak, she suggested that since today is the first day of a new Optimist year, that I talk a bit about our Club's history. I agreed with one caveat. Since the preponderance of our informal, written history can be found in the "Club Milestones" section of the Handbook and Directory (which I commend to your reading), we agreed that I should speak from memory of my recollections and experiences, recreating what I could of our history, and presenting everything mostly as a series of facts.

A lot of our history can also be found in annual scrapbooks. But, more about the scrapbooks later.

And so, here we go!

→ Fact #1: The Optimist Club was 45 years old last Monday. It was chartered on September 28, 1970. Forty-five years and counting! That's older than some of our younger members! Right, Ricky?

The Club was chartered with 27 members by the sponsoring club, the Optimist Club of San Diego, now known as San Diego-Downtown.

Question: Of the 27 charter members, how many are still active members in the club today?

One—Glenn English.

→ Fact #2: Dave Nash, our Founding Father, was the first to be asked to form a new club here in Coronado. He was President of the chartering group and our fourth President. And he was also our first Optimist of the Year. Dave has said that it took over a year to get the minimum 25 guys together to pay the \$30 charter fee and agree to be chartered.

I want to talk about Dave for a minute. He was involved in so many ways. For years, he compiled an annual scrapbook and won every scrapbook contest at the District level. His garage was lined with plaques from his winnings. The scrapbooks were in the custody of that year's presidents until most were turned over by their custodians to the Coronado Historical Association for safekeeping.

A member for over 37 years, Dave's hobby, among other things, was calligraphy. He made our name badges for years and if you look carefully at some of the old timers badges, you will see where he always added a small icon or cartoon depicting some characteristic of the member. He was also something of an artist and designed one of the nicer, four-color Sports Fiesta logos in my year, 1986-87.

He was also our go-to substitute program speaker whenever we had a no-show speaker. Dave was a true World War II hero and he could regale us with his superb stories in a unique serial style when called upon. I have a comment I wish to make at this juncture: If the Club were to sponsor anyone for recognition and inclusion in Coronado's "Avenue of the Heroes," it should be our own Dave Nash!

→ Continuing, who was our first President? And, I don't mean George Washington.

Tom Meadows.

→ An aside, Mike Napolitano's father, Mike, Sr. was a charter member.

→ Now for an interesting fact: Over the years, how many souls have crossed our threshold to become Optimist members? Can anyone guess? Not you, Don Crawford. The answer is 612! Since its inception, 612 people have, at one time or another, been a member of the Coronado Club.

→ Our current membership stands at 139, just 13 shy of our highest year-end total of 152.

→ I think Cynthia thought I was the oldest or most senior Optimist member when she asked me to speak. Not so. Though I have been a member for 34 years, 8 of you are more senior to me. They include:

Glenn English

Ed Behm

Buck Rogers

Jim Cooper

Jim Rodgers

K. C. Reynolds

Jack Couture

Ed Crow

If you include broken service, three others would join the list: Mark Blumenthal, Dennis Dorman, and Jim Cartwright.

**Our oldest member is Tom Golden who is 95 years old tomorrow.**

**→ Who was our first female member?**

**Jan Sheffer. Jan came in in Casey's Reynolds year. She was a nurse and served as our go-to medic patching scrapes and bruises at many of our Sports Fiestas.**

**→ Who was our first female President?**

**Linda Stanton in 1998-99.**

**→ Let's talk about Fund Raisers:**

**First Year: The club netted \$8.22 selling bottles of Coca Cola at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade.**

**Yes We Can. Who remembers? Eric Raiter would, having run it for awhile. It started as a combined service club endeavor in 1971. We assumed full responsibility in 1972. Once a month we set up a Dempsey Dumpster down near the Little League field and started collecting aluminum cans. One day in 1981, the club collected a record 3,825 pounds of aluminum cans. At about 5 cents a pound, you can see we only added about \$191 to the club treasury. Not very productive! It was a very manpower intensive endeavor with little in return for our effort.**

**Spring Concerts. Started in 1982 in Buck Rogers year. Two members, Howard Medici and Larry Bunce started it all. They played in the Tifereth Israel Community Orchestra and arranged for the orchestra to perform here in Coronado each year for the next 25 years or so. We raised money by selling tickets to the community. Not much profit for our effort. B. J. Adelson will remember this one!**

**Sports Fiesta. I will come back to this if we have time.**

**→ Our involvement in District Affairs:**

**Several of our members have served at the CalSouth District and Optimist International level over the years. They are listed in your Handbook and Directory. The club got serious about taking over and running the District in about 1986 when the District was suffering. Wynn Foster thought we could do a better job by applying some his acquired military skills to the job. He became the first**

**Governor of the District, followed by Buck Rogers, Jake Sloan, and Joe Adkins. Wynn and Joe went on to serve at the OI level as International Vice President. A number of others of us participated as District Lt. Governors and District Secretary-Treasurers. The point of this is that your club decidedly provided the leaders and leadership skills to make a profound difference at the highest levels within Optimist International.**

**→ Club Building:**

**One of the most challenging endeavors asked of all Clubs is to build a new Club. We did it three times. We built three other Optimist Clubs in the District:**

- The Optimist Club of Imperial Beach—Still going strong.**
- The Optimist Club of National City—Now under a new name, I think. Al Aegerter would know.**
- The Optimist Club of La Jolla—Folded after a couple of years.**

**Buck Rogers and team built the club in Imperial Beach in my year 1986-87. This fulfilled the needed requirement to allow me to become a Distinguished President that year. For that OI awarded me this gold watch! Three repairs later and it still doesn't run!**

**→ Sports Fiesta:**

**The first Sports Fiesta occurred in our second year, 1971-72, under Don Parkinson and netted \$1,460. It has obviously grown in size and profitability ever since. In addition to the Big-Three, those early Sports Fiestas included such events as:**

- Two-Person Volleyball**
- Over-The-Line Softball Tournament**
- Sailing Regatta**
- Junior Tennis Tournament**
- Springboard Diving**
- Skateboard Skills**
- Youngster Fun Games (Uncle Larry Resek)**
- Chuck Wagon**

Here is a fact that has gone unrecognized. We tout ourselves as having the longest, continuous running Triathlon in history. This is not quite true. In 1986, Joe Adkin's year, security considerations precluded us from having access NAS North Island. We had nowhere to conduct the bicycle portion of the Triathlon. And so, we had a Biathlon instead consisting of a run-swim-run-swim-run. It was less than satisfactory and so the following year, my year, coincidentally, we moved from Sunset Park to Glorietta Bay Park and resurrected the Triathlon. Sorry about that, guys, it's all contained in the "Club Milestones"!

If I had time, I could give you the history of the Hardrock trophy, but will forego that for now in favor of questions.