

Winter 2018

The OPTIMIST

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Spread Relief



Is your Club looking for ideas to Spread Relief in your community in 2018? Here are some great projects from Canadian Optimist Clubs that could help you to foster your creativity and launch a new, wonderful, health related project!

The Kids Mental Health Optimist Club of Canada developed a grant program to assist teachers from elementary schools working directly with children experiencing mental health challenges. Last year, the Helping Hands Grant for London Elementary School supported two schools in the area. This year, they expect to expand to more schools. We applaud their exceptional work on raising awareness on mental health issues!

For the fifth year, the Optimist Club of Newmarket has been raising money to support children with cancer. Their Motorcycle Poker Ride has raised more than \$30,000. All of this edition's proceeds have been donated to the Southlake Hospital Paediatric Oncology Clinic. This Clinic aims to provide care closer to home for children who have cancer, relieving patients and their families from the burden of repeated trips to Toronto, or having to live separately while the child is receiving treatment.

For many years, the Vanier Optimist Club has been raising funds for the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. This year, they are continuing their good work and broadening their horizons. They are aiming to raise \$25,270 to buy an EOS x-ray imaging system. What is that? It is a low-dose x-ray system decreasing the radiation dose by 50% and captures full body images in a single scan as a child stands inside the machine. It is used to diagnose, plan treatment, and assess post-operative condition. The Club approached the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario about their needs. This system will be used in many departments and help many children in Eastern Ontario.

These are only a few of the great ideas supported by the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation in the past year. It is now time for Clubs and Members to submit new projects. The Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation is ready to Spread Relief from coast to coast. Are you?

Visit www.ccof-foec.org for more information about the Spread Relief program.



CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING AT THE RIVIÈRE-DU-LOUP OPTIMIST CLUB

In December 2000, the Rivière-du-Loup Optimist Club was in its thirtieth year. Club President, Denis Moisan, decided to introduce a new humanitarian based activity, Sharing Christmas. As a businessperson, he was aware that many of the town's youth would not be receiving Christmas presents. It would be very difficult to bring out the best in youth when their family is going through hard times.

Elementary schools and local support organizations identified around 50 children under the age of 12. The children attended a Christmas brunch at the hotel where the Club holds its weekly dinners. Club Members provided entertainment activities and each child received a generous brunch, a visit from Santa Claus and the Ice Fairy, candy, a stuffed animal and a voucher, sponsored in part by local merchants, which allows them to purchase clothes or shoes.

Over 50 children benefited from this Christmas project, where for the first time they too were able to experience the enchantment of the holiday season. In 2016, the activity's 17th year, the participating 226 preschool and elementary school age children's eyes sparkled at receiving this act of generosity.

Members of the Club would not have completed the following without the project:

- **Over 200 children** benefitting from this act of sharing
- Raise **over \$20,000** to contribute to local youth's well-being
- Optimists committing to making financial contributions of **up to \$1,000 year after year**
- Donors benefitting from tax receipts thanks to the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation
- Repeat sponsors remaining loyal for many years for all children in Rivière-du-Loup to have a Christmas celebration
- Nettoyeur Magique (local dry cleaning business) **giving new life** to thousands of stuffed animals to become a confidant to children during difficult moments
- **Sense of pride** of providing less fortunate children with a real Christmas and experiencing their genuine smiles



The 80 Members of the Rivière-du-Loup Optimist Club believe it is possible and rewarding to generate wonderment and well-being in children.