The Midday Messenger

June 26, 2026

Newsletter of the Davenport Noon Optimist Club

Club Luncheon Meetings

We gather at noon on Fridays to connect with members and guests, enjoy a delicious lunch, and hear from engaging speakers who share programs and initiatives shaping our local community. See our upcoming events.

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Location

River Center, North Building, Iowa/Illinois Rooms, 136 E 3rd St, Davenport, IA

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Board of Directors

Roland Lamantia
President

Brian Baxter
President-Elect

Mauricio Diaz
First Vice President

Karen Roebuck
Second Vice President

Tom Redington
Third Vice President

Joseph Obelton
Past President

Paul Neuharth
Secretary

Stan Mohr
Treasurer

Junior League of the QC

– By Paul Neuharth

Terry Hendershott and The Friendly House hosted our off-site meeting, with Jimmy John's sandwiches and chips served for lunch. President-Elect Brian Baxter led the meeting while our president was away celebrating his wife's birthday.

Our guest speaker was Betty Jo Versluis of the Junior League of the Quad Cities. JLQC is a women's organization dedicated to advancing women's leadership and creating meaningful community impact through volunteer service, collaboration, and training.

Serving the Quad Cities since 1921, JLQC began as the Junior Board of the Visiting Nurses Associations, later became the Junior Board of Davenport, and joined the Association of Junior Leagues International in 1981. Today, members use their diverse experience to address unmet needs and create positive change.

Betty Jo highlighted the JLQC Period Project and its impact across the Quad Cities. In the U.S., 1 in 4 teens and 1 in 3 adults struggle to afford period products. The project helps provide pads, tampons, underwear, and other hygiene items by purchasing, packaging, and distributing supplies to nurses at 16 local elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 4 high schools, and several local nonprofits. Betty Jo estimated that as much as 90% of the need comes from youth in area schools.

Betty Jo also shared her personal experience overcoming cancer and how she became involved with JLQC. Members asked many questions, and she noted what an engaging and enjoyable group we were. She was invited back as a future guest and even offered to join us!

President's Perspective

– By Roland Lamantia

Greetings fellow Optimists!

I'm back from vacation feeling refreshed, reenergized, and ready to get moving again. I hope the brief change of pace gave everyone a chance to recharge as well.

Keeping Our Momentum

As we move into the final quarter of the fiscal year, it is important that we keep our momentum strong. We still have plenty to accomplish before my year is complete, and I would like to see us continue building on the progress we have made together.

Membership Matters

Membership is the lifeblood of every organization, and our club is no different. Each year, we typically lose 15–18% of our members because of moves, job changes, other commitments, changing priorities, loss of interest, and, sadly, members passing on. To remain strong, we must continue welcoming new members who are eager to get involved in our events, programs, and committees.

Two Ways You Can Help

- **Find your place to serve.** Ask yourself where your interests and talents can best support the club, then step up and volunteer. There is plenty to do, and many opportunities can be handled even if you cannot attend every meeting.
- **Invite someone to join us.** Think about friends, neighbors, co-workers, family members, or others who would benefit from being part of our club. Invite them to be our guest at a meeting — lunch is on us! Share why you joined and help them see the opportunity to give back to our community.

When someone you invite joins, keep supporting them as their sponsor by helping them feel welcome, connect with others, and find a club activity, committee, or event that fits their interests.

I appreciate your support and commitment to helping our club be its best — now and into the future.

What a Difference Flags Make!

By Tom Redington, Flags Chair

Newer members may not know the story behind our club's largest fundraiser. The Avenue of Flags program began in 1995, when longtime member Bob Fowler shared an idea he had seen while visiting his brother in Texas over a holiday. His brother's street was lined with American flags, and Bob wondered whether that patriotic display could become a meaningful fundraiser for our club.

The board liked the idea, and the DNOC Avenue of Flags program was born. The early work included research, planning, purchasing materials, assembling flags, advertising, setting up routes, organizing installation teams, and arranging storage. By 1997, club members were installing and removing more than 200 flags on each of five holidays every year.

Growth and Community Impact

Since then, the program has continued to grow in routes, subscribers, and impact. Today, our club coordinates the installation of more than **3,100 flags** on each of the five holidays, raising more than **$140,000 every year!**

Because the program has grown beyond what our membership can handle alone, we now partner with local youth-related organizations to complete the holiday installations. These groups share in the proceeds to support their own programs, while the remaining funds help support our club's programs, grants, and community initiatives.

The Work Behind the Season

Although members no longer install and remove every flag themselves, there is still plenty of work to do. In

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Congratulations to **Roger Oliver** and **Jenny Schnauber**, winners of the "early birdies" drawing. Each received a pair of any-day passes to the John Deere Classic, generously donated by **Jim Matthys** and CBI Bank & Trust.

More drawings are still ahead, including **QC Symphony tickets** donated by **Brian Baxter**, a **$100 Duck City gift certificate** donated by **Kathleen Vondran**, and a pair of **Brooks & Dunn concert tickets** donated by Vibrant Arena. These drawings will take place at a regular club meeting after we receive the final donation list from Birdies for Charity.

We are **less than $200 from our goal**, and this is your **final chance** to make a Birdies pledge. All pledges must be received **by July 1st**. Please help us **reach the finish line** by making your pledge today!

There is still time to participate, and online pledging takes only a few minutes. Your support strengthens our club's foundation and scholarship program for years to come. Because only the earnings are used, your gift can continue growing as a lasting investment in local students.

Please also remember our Foundation when considering **planned giving** through your trust, will, or beneficiary designation. It is a meaningful way to continue your legacy while helping future generations pursue education after high school. Scan the barcode above, visit www.birdiesforcharity.com, or visit www.davenportnoonoptimists.com to donate today!

Mark Your Calendar — Dates to Remember

July 3rd
Independence Day (Observed) | **No Meeting Today**

July 4th
Independence Day | **Avenue of Flags** Delivery & Pickup

July 9th
Board Meeting | 4 PM | Rudy's Tacos | 2214 E 11th St | Davenport

July 10th
Club Luncheon | **Business Meeting** | River Center

See the **full calendar** of events, visit Davenport Noon Optimist Club - HOME

SUNSHINE NEWS

Congratulations to **Mauricio Diaz** on his recent wedding nuptials!

Congratulations to **Rex Hutchison** and his young bride, Jean celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary!

Brian Baxter just returned from a Portugal & Spain symphony trip and is now headed to the Optimist International Convention in Jacksonville, FL.

July 12th
Wishing **Jim King** a Very Happy Birthday!

July 15th
Happy Birthday Wishes to **Ed Winborn!**

We'd love to celebrate with you! Please send your **Sunshine** notifications, birthdays, and special announcements to Davenport.Noon.Optimist.Club@gmail.com.

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many ways, the program requires more coordination now than it did in the early years. Planning begins in January and continues throughout the season, with members and volunteers helping manage the numerous details that make each flag holiday successful.

Some of these tasks include: Updating the database and confirming subscriptions; Coordinating installation groups and tracking participation; Inventorying, repairing, and preparing flag components; Updating and mailing subscription materials; Recruiting new subscribers and processing new subscriptions; Handling deposits and related program records; Monitoring phone calls and emails on flag delivery days; Building new flags and training new flag team leaders.

How Members Can Help

Running the flag program takes a lot of effort. From January through Labor Day, there is always work to be done, and every member who steps up helps make the season stronger.

Thank You to Our Flag Program Volunteers

A special thank you goes to the following members for their time, effort, and continued support of the flag program: **Wayne Jochman, John Mouw, Doug Koester, Mauricio Diaz, Westina Burns, Karen Roebuck, Jenny Schnauber, Ron Gunnare, Charlie Urbain, Brian Monroe, and Jim King.**

Get Involved

If you would like to help with our flag program, **please contact Tom Redington** at thomasjredington@gmail.com or 563-676-1595. Your participation and support would be greatly appreciated!