The Midday Messenger

July 24, 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

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First Vice President

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Second Vice President

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Paul Neuharth
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Pictured, Emma Folland and some of the Kids for Vets kids.

Empowering Young Hearts

– By Paul Neuharth

Kids for Vets is a local Quad Cities nonprofit that teaches kids the values of service and gratitude toward veterans. The organization encourages young people to raise awareness, volunteer, and fundraise in support of veterans and their families, particularly families who have lost a loved one in service.

Kids for Vets empowers children through education, fundraising, and community involvement. Its activities include lemonade stands at neighborhood and local business locations during the spring and summer, as well as quarterly service projects. These projects may include serving lunch to veterans, participating in parades, and partnering with local veteran outreach centers.

Emma Folland, founder of Kids for Vets, spoke to the club about the organization's beginnings and its efforts to support local veterans and their families. The kids also participated in the presentation, sharing that they hold 50 to 100 lemonade stand fundraisers each year. Rather than setting a fixed price, they ask customers for donations. In the organization's six years of operation, Kids for Vets has raised more than $120,000! The organization is a meaningful example of the impact young people can have on their community.

A highlight of the year is Never Forget Night, when the kids are recognized for their service and the year's fundraising total is celebrated. Families are also acknowledged for the support they provide in helping children participate.

Kids for Vets works closely with organizations such as the QC Veterans Outreach Center to help ensure that funds and volunteer efforts directly benefit local veterans and their families. Kids for Vets has supported causes including the QC Veterans Outreach Center, SEAL Family Legacy, Honor Flight, and Gold Star families.

Growing Youth Sailing Program

– By Paul Neuharth

Our club was honored to welcome two presentations this week. One of our newest members, **Kelly Airey**, introduced her guest, Commodore Don Allenbach of the Lake Davenport Sailing Club.

Located on the banks of the Mississippi River in Davenport, the Lake Davenport Sailing Club is a historic nonprofit organization established in 1935. It serves as a hub for sailing instruction, competitive racing, and social gatherings for its members.

Commodore Allenbach explained that the club offers a sailing school for both children and adults, with U.S. Sailing-certified courses for every experience level. Instruction ranges from beginner lessons to keelboat certification. The club also offers Tiller Time, which is open-water practice sessions where students and members can strengthen their boat-handling skills.

In addition, the club hosts several competitive racing series during the summer and fall. Its signature event is the Polar Bear Regatta, held each October since 1960 attracts sailors from across the region.

The Lake Davenport Sailing Club is working to expand its youth sailing school and is seeking community partners to support, volunteer with, and participate in the program. The club is interested in discussing how the Davenport Noon Optimist Club might become a partner in this effort.

As we begin planning for the 2026–27 fiscal year, which starts October 1, we're looking for members to fill important club leadership and support roles. Volunteering is a wonderful way to contribute, build connections, and learn more about the opportunities within our club. We are in need of the following:

Club Secretary | Junior Golf Chair | Newsletter Committee Chair | Avenue of Flags Support | Christmas Tree Sales Support | Essay Contest Chair | Oratorical Contest Chair | Member Social Events Chairs | Tri-Star Sports Chairs | Support on any club activity or event!

To volunteer or learn more, please contact **Brian Baxter** at btbaxt@gmail.com or 630-677-0332. Your time and support would be greatly appreciated!

Mark Your Calendar — Dates to Remember

July 27th
Charter Meeting | **DeWitt Optimist Club** | DeWitt Community Library

July 31st
Club Luncheon | **Davenport Junior Theatre** | River Center

Aug 6th
Board Meeting | 4 PM | Rudy's Tacos | 2214 E 11th St | Davenport

Aug 7th
Club Luncheon | **Business Meeting** | River Center

Aug 12th
Foundation Board Meeting | The Filling Station | 305 E 35th St | Davenport

Aug 14th
Club Luncheon | **ASWAS** | River Center

Aug 21st
Club Luncheon | **Respect for Law Program** | 11:30 AM | River Center | **RSVP** online at Davenport Noon Optimist Club - HOME

Aug 28th-30th
Iowa District Convention | Grand Harbor Resort | Dubuque

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

SUNSHINE NEWS

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

More from Our Meeting

More Members Please!

Know someone who shares your commitment to Optimism and making a positive impact on the youth in our community?

Most of us became Optimists because someone invited us to a meeting. A simple invitation can help others discover our club, our mission, and the positive impact we make together.

Make sure to invite your friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family to join us as our guests next Friday for a delicious lunch and enlightening program.

Have you got something to say?

Say it in The Midday Messenger

Send your notes, articles, announcements, activities, and other items of interest to Davenport.Noon.Optimist.Club@gmail.com.

Submissions are due by Friday evening for each weekly issue.

Just Saying Thanks!

See below the thoughtful notes we received recently.

Dear Gary Blinkinsop of Optimist Club,

Hello! My name is Henrick Senne. I am one of the people you helped pay for to attend the Iowa HOBY convention. I am glad that you were able to donate for me to go, because I have done many things, and learned many things worth your donation. When I first got here though, I was a little skeptical about it, but as the days went on I got to hear from amazing people with awesome ideas and thoughts. I got to see what other peoples beliefs in the inclusivity circle, and I got to show off my talents while having fun with the lip sink battle, Shark Tank, and the all group dance. It has been a fun experience I will always remember, and I am glad that you were able to make it possible for me.

Sincerely, Henrick Senne.

LEADERS BUILT HERE

HOBY IOWA YOUTH LEADERSHIP

THANK YOU

FOR YOUR SUPPORT

TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO THINK, NOT WHAT TO THINK. SINCE 1958

Dear Optimist Club,

I'm Will Cox from Davenport Central High School located in (shockingly) Davenport, Iowa.

Thank you so much for paying for me to have this wonderful opportunity! I have been able to meet so many people and have learned so much! My favorite part of this weekend was practicing for our lip sync battle. I was able to bond a lot with my group while we worked on choreography to our chosen song "Bent It" by Michael Jackson. Thank you again for supporting me in my journey and supporting Iowa HOBY!

Sincerely,

William Cox

Davenport Central High School

QUAD CITIES PEARLS FOUNDATION, INC.

Quad Cities Pearls Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 32
Moline, IL 61266

14 July 2026

Dear Mr. Brian Monroe,

I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the generous support received from the Davenport Noon Optimist Club and its members. The $500 grant allowed the Quad Cities Pearls Foundation, in partnership with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Xi Eta Omega Chapter, to provide 40+ books for 20 children. These children were participants in the Childhood Hunger Initiative Power Pack (CHIPP) program at Jefferson Elementary School. The program ran from January to May 2026.

We'll continue to focus on endeavors which improve education, health, economic development, social well-being and equity in underserved and other communities. Thank you for investing in our future.

Quad Cities Pearls Foundation is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and community service purposes and is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (Tax ID: 33-1937734). Donations are tax deductible.

Sincerely,

Tina Y. Thomas

Tina Y. Thomas
President
QC Pearls Foundation
qcpearls@gmail.com
563.508.6387

QUAD CITY ARTS

Davenport Noon Optimists,

Thank you for your generous gift to Quad City Arts. We are very appreciative of your support of our organization. As Board President, I wish to express my gratitude to your organization and the support it gives to us and the arts in our community! Thank you,

Jesse Swanson

Quad City Arts Board President