The Midday Messenger

July 31, 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
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Mauricio Diaz
First Vice President

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Joseph Obelton
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Paul Neuharth
Secretary

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Treasurer

Pictured l to r, Kristen Meyer & Jessica Sheridan, Davenport Junior Theatre

Expanding Performing Arts Opportunities

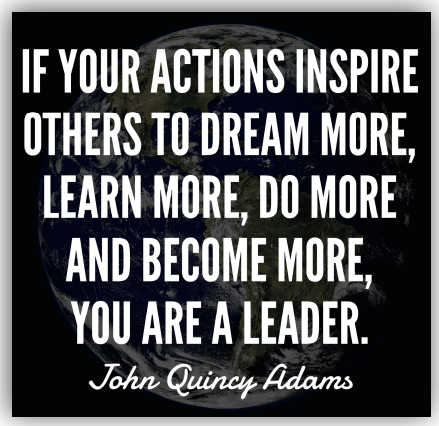
– By Paul Neuharth

Davenport Junior Theatre (JTI) is proudly the second-oldest children's theatre in America and has been helping young people shine since 1951! Serving students ages 3 to 18, JTI offers theatre, dance, and tumbling programs created "for kids, by kids." Through year-round classes, summer camps, and full mainstage productions, students build confidence, creativity, and communication skills both onstage and behind the scenes. This season, JTI is celebrating an exciting milestone: its 75th season!

We enjoyed hearing from Kristin Meyer, Instructor, and Jessica Sheridan, Managing Artistic Director for the theatre. Kristin has been part of the JTI family for an amazing 50 years. Together, they shared how JTI enriches the lives of Quad Cities youth through performing-arts education while making the arts accessible to everyone. By removing financial, social, and accessibility barriers, JTI welcomes underserved and marginalized students into a safe, supportive place where they can learn, create, and belong. Last year, our club was proud to help fund interpreters for deaf and hearing-impaired participants.

From acting and improvisation to musical theatre, playwriting, puppetry, and lighting, there is something for every aspiring performer and creative thinker. Students can also enjoy weekly classes in ballet, tap, jazz, hip-hop, contemporary dance, and tumbling. Summer camps give young artists the chance to create original scripts together before sharing their work in a final showcase for family and friends. For students ages 10 and up, the Mainstage Company produces three to four high-quality public performances each year.

JTI's primary facility includes six theatre classrooms, two dance studios, and a dedicated tumbling studio. The historic, 350-seat Mary Fluhrer-Nighswander Theatre remains the home for JTI's fully produced mainstage performances. JTI is truly a Quad Cities treasure—giving young people a place to discover their talents, find their voice, and have a whole lot of fun along the way.



President's Perspective

– By Roland Lamantia

Our club is strongest when we lead with optimism, serve with purpose, and encourage one another to make a difference. Every project we support, every young person we sponsor, and every kind word we share helps create a brighter future for our community.

I am grateful for the time, energy, and heart each of you brings to this organization. Your commitment turns good intentions into meaningful action. Together, we prove that optimism is not simply a positive outlook—it is a choice to step forward, solve problems, and inspire hope.

As we look ahead, I encourage each member to stay engaged, invite others to join our mission, and continue looking for opportunities to serve. Small acts of kindness can have a lasting impact, especially when we work together.

Let us continue to lead by example, support one another, and remind our community that a hopeful spirit can accomplish great things. I am proud to serve alongside you and excited for all we have and will achieve together.

With appreciation and optimism,

Roland

As we begin planning for the 2026–27 fiscal year, which starts October 1st, 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 need volunteers for:

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 other 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!

Aug 5th
Board Meeting | 2:30PM | Virtual Meeting via Teams

Aug 5th
Foundation Board Meeting | 4PM | The Filling Station | 305 E 35th St | Davenport

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

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

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

Aug 28th
Club Luncheon | **Community Action of Eastern Iowa** | River Center

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

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

Aug 10th
Wishing **Kathy Cox** a very special Happy Birthday!!!

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

More Meeting Moments…

…Optimists Just Having Fun

Optimist Fantasy Football is Back!

Ready to talk a little friendly trash, celebrate a huge win, and stay Optimistic that your favorite player will score big this week? Then the DNOC Fantasy Football League is calling your name!

Join fellow club members for a season of football fun, bragging rights, and a chance to win some cash. No experience? No problem—it's easy to learn. The entry fee is $50, and spots are limited, so it's first come, first served.

Want in? Contact your super FANtastic FANtasy football commish, Paul at psnia@msn.com to join the fun!

Respect for Law RSVP

Our signature event is coming up on Friday, Aug 21st, 11:30 AM at the River Center. This is a highly attended event, so we will need your **RSVP no later than Friday, Aug 14th**.

RSVP on our website, www.davenportnoonoptimists.com. Scroll down to the calendar, find and click on the Respect for Law event on Aug 21st. Hit the RSVP button at the top of the page, enter your name, contact info, and number attending. Hit "Send RSVP." You're all set!

NOW is the Time

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.