



# **OPTIMIST CLUB OF KOMOKA KILWORTH**

## **Welcome to the Optimist Club of Komoka-Kilworth**

Becoming a member of the Optimist Club of Komoka-Kilworth means choosing to volunteer your time and talents to support the youth of our community.

### **1. Introduction**

For more than 50 years, our Club has proudly served the youth of the Komoka–Kilworth community. As a new member, we invite you to learn about our history, structure, and purpose, and to understand how we raise funds and support local groups and initiatives. Our members work collaboratively as a team, continually evaluating our goals and performance to ensure we meet the evolving needs of both our community and our membership. Your active participation and input are essential as we continue to build on our long-standing success in Komoka–Kilworth.

Membership is fulfilled through active involvement in Club projects and activities. This includes attending meetings and social events, serving on committees or boards, and inviting others to join us in pursuing our mission. What truly sets Optimist Clubs apart from other volunteer organizations is our shared commitment to creating a more optimistic future for our youth.

As a member, you will have opportunities to develop and demonstrate leadership skills at the local, regional, national, and even international levels—while experiencing the personal satisfaction that comes from making a positive difference in your community. Whether you are seeking a meaningful way to give back, opportunities for personal growth, or the camaraderie of like-minded individuals, you will find it all within the Komoka–Kilworth Optimist Club.

### **2. Our Mission**

By providing hope and positive vision, our Optimist Club strives to “Bring Out the Best in Our Youth, Our Communities and Ourselves”. We are committed to building a better future for the youth of our community through guidance, support and example.

### **3. History of Our Club**

After considerable effort by several dedicated community members and an “all-out” recruitment campaign, the first regular meeting of the Optimist Club of Komoka was held on Monday, June 28, 1972, in Komoka. The meeting was attended by 26 charter members and 6 guests, with the London Southeast Optimist Club serving as our sponsoring club.



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In 1986–87, to better reflect the area served by the Club, we formally adopted the name **The Optimist Club of Komoka-Kilworth**. As part of this change, all members were issued new name badges featuring the updated name and logo.

During 1990–91, revisions were made to the Club's constitution and by-laws to create a more inclusive membership structure. This important step allowed the Club to induct its first female member.

In 2022–23, the Club had 46 active members and proudly celebrated its 50th year of service to the community. Most recently, in 2023–24, the Club updated its logo colours and design to align with those of Optimist International.

## 4. Communication

Effective communication is vital to the success of our Club. The primary methods of communication within the Club include:

- **Email:**  
Club-wide emails are sent primarily by the **Secretary** and include information on upcoming Club activities. The **Secretary** also distributes meeting agendas and minutes from our monthly General Members Meetings. General inquiries can be sent to the Club's email address at [KKOptimists@gmail.com](mailto:KKOptimists@gmail.com).
- **Club Meetings (open to all members):**
  - **General Members Business Meeting:** Held on the first Tuesday of each month
  - **Dinner Social Meeting:** Held on the third Tuesday of each month  
Meetings are not held in June, July, or August. (See the Meetings section for more details.)
- **Website:**  
[www.komokakilworthoptimistclub.ca](http://www.komokakilworthoptimistclub.ca)
- **Facebook:**  
Komoka Kilworth Optimists
- **Club Roster:**  
A list of all members and their contact information, updated annually or as needed.
- **Optimist International:**  
Monthly emails and a quarterly magazine providing Optimist news and updates from clubs across North America.



# OPTIMIST CLUB OF KOMOKA KILWORTH

## 5. Club Structure

### (A) Board of Directors

Our Club is governed by a **Board of Directors** consisting of the **President, Past-President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer**, and six **Directors** (three serving two-year terms and three serving one-year terms). All positions are elected annually, with elections completed by April 30. Newly elected **Board** members assume their responsibilities on October 1 following the election.

The **Board of Directors** is responsible for establishing and overseeing Club policies, ensuring compliance with our bylaws and procedures, guiding both short- and long-term planning, addressing membership matters, supporting and monitoring Club committees, and managing financial matters, including setting the annual budget.

Board members are required to attend the General Members Business Meeting held on the first Tuesday of each month, except in June, July, and August.

- **President**

The **President** co-ordinates and encourages participation of Club members, facilitates the implementation of Club policies and programs, presides at dinner and general meetings and represents our Club and through the Optimist Zone, District, Region and International.

- **Vice-President**

The **Vice-President** presides at Club activities during the absence of the **President**, serves on the **Board of Directors** and assists the **President** in fulfilling their obligations.

- **Secretary**

The **Secretary** is responsible for recording and maintaining minutes of General Members meetings, maintaining official records, handling correspondence and sending thank-you cards. In addition, each September the **Secretary** corresponds with local youth groups to request donation applications for the upcoming fiscal year.

- **Treasurer**

The **Treasurer** maintains the Club's financial records, including downloading and recording all receipts and invoices in QuickBooks, managing all bank accounts and investments, publishing a monthly financial summary and budget report, disbursing funds as required, preparing the annual budget, and handling all other monetary matters of the Club.



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- **Foundation Representative**

Informs the Club about the Optimist International Foundations.

- **Directors**

The six **Directors** must attend all General Members meetings for voting purposes, approve the annual budget, assist in filling committee needs, make monthly calls to members regarding dinner meetings and upcoming events, and strive to identify and develop candidates for future **Board** positions.

## (B) Committees

- **Committee Chairs**

Each year, Club members sign up to serve on committees that oversee the Club's various activities. One member serves as Chair of each committee. The Chair is responsible for directing the committee to ensure projects are completed and for maintaining all invoices and receipts related to committee expenses, which are to be submitted to the Treasurer.

- **Current Committees**

Fundraising

- ✓ Barbecuing
- ✓ Halloween Haunted Cabins
- ✓ Turkey Bingo
- ✓ Yard Sales (Komoka & Kilworth)
- ✓ Wellness Centre Concessions
- ✓ Wellness Centre Bar
- ✓ Wellness Centre Vending
- ✓ Delaware Speedway 50/50
- ✓ Komoka Kings 50/50

Community Events

- ✓ Breakfast With Santa
- ✓ Easter Egg Hunt
- ✓ Movie Nights
- ✓ Holiday Hoopla
- ✓ Bike Rodeo
- ✓ Junior Golf
- ✓ Oratorical Contest
- ✓ NOW (New Optimists Welcome)
- ✓ Del-Ko-Brydges Canada Day
- ✓ Dinner Meetings

## (C) Finance Committee

This committee is responsible for preparing the annual budget each October and presenting it to the **Board of Directors** for approval. The committee is chaired by the **Treasurer** and includes the **President**, **Secretary**, the two most recent **Past Presidents**, and any other **Board** member who wish to participate.



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## 6. Fiscal Year

The Club's fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30 of the following year, aligning with the fiscal year of Optimist International.

## 7. Supporting Our Local Youth

In early October, the **Finance Committee** meets to review and decide on funding requests from youth community groups. In addition, the Club has ongoing financial commitments to youth groups locally, regionally, nationally, and within Optimist International. The **Finance Committee** prepares a budget with these obligations in mind, which is then reviewed, discussed, and approved by the Board of Directors along with other operating expenses.

### Local Level

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ✓ Camp Kee-Mo-Kee  | ✓ Komoka-Kilworth Scouts                                       |
| ✓ Camp Woodeden (Easter Seals                              | ✓ Komoka Library   |
| ✓ Del-Ko-Brydges Canada Day                                | ✓ Medway High School (various clubs & teams)                   |
| ✓ Del-Ko-Brydges Soccer                                    | ✓ Middlesex-Elgin Canucks Hockey                               |
| ✓ DKMB Baseball  | ✓ Mt. Brydges Cougars Hockey                                   |
| ✓ Free Family Skate at the Wellness Centre (various dates) | ✓ Parkview School  |
| ✓ Junior Achievement                                       | ✓ SARI (Special Abilities Riding Institute) Therapeutic Riding |
| ✓ Komoka Kings   | ✓ YMCA Middlesex   |

### Zone/District Level

- ✓ Conductive Education (cerebral palsy)
- ✓ HOBY (Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership)
- ✓ London Children's Hospital (Bravery Bead program)
- ✓ Strathroy Hospital (Teddy Bear program)

### National/International Level

- ✓ Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation
- ✓ Junior Golf
- ✓ Oratorical Contest



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## 8. Investing in Our Community

A key part of our Club's legacy is its commitment to funding capital projects that leave lasting benefits in our community.

- ✓ Komoka Community Centre
- ✓ Komoka Park
  - Playground
  - Pavillion
  - Tennis Courts
  - Walking Trail
  - Baseball Diamond Upgrades
- ✓ Komoka Wellness Centre
- ✓ Komoka Optimist Park (Stephen Moore)
- ✓ Westbrook Park
  - Splash Pad
  - Brick Pathway
- ✓ Medway High School Track
- ✓ London Children's Hospital Oncology Unit
- ✓ Parkview School
  - Outdoor Classroom
  - Buddy Benches
  - Whiteboards
- ✓ Camp Woodeden (Easter Seals)
  - Shade Canopy
  - Sledge Hockey Rink
  - Various Capital Projects
- ✓ Camp Kee-Mo-Kee
  - Swimming Pool Deck
  - Various Capital Projects
- ✓ SARI Therapeutic Riding
  - Picnic Tables
  - Helmets

## 9. Who Supports Us

We are very fortunate to have many businesses and business owners in our community who partner with us through donations, sponsorships, and recognition at our events. The Club actively seeks partnerships with local businesses that can support our various activities and sincerely appreciates all assistance provided.

## 10. Meetings

### General Members Meetings

All Club members are encouraged to attend these meetings, which are held on the first Tuesday of each month (except June, July, and August) at the Komoka Community Centre, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Attendance is mandatory for all **Board** members.

Meeting discussions include committee reports, financial reviews, correspondence, new ideas for community events and fundraising opportunities, funding requests and approvals, and other general business. Minutes of each meeting are recorded by the **Secretary** and distributed to all Club members.



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## Dinner Meetings

Our Club holds dinner meetings on the third Tuesday of each month (except for June, July, and August). These meetings are usually held at the Komoka Community Centre, though they may occasionally take place at other locations. The committee chair will advise members of the meeting location and details by email. For organizational purposes, it is important that you RSVP by email or text.

Dinner meetings begin at 6:30 PM with a social time, and the meal is served at 7:00 PM. Meetings may include special speakers, guests, awards presentations, club announcements, new member and executive inductions, committee reports, and other club activities.

These meetings are a great opportunity to get to know fellow Optimist members and are an ideal occasion to invite a prospective new member. Any new or prospective member will receive their first meal free of charge.

In addition, the Club hosts a Christmas Family Social in early December. This event features a potluck meal, with the organizers providing the turkey and ham. Members and their families are encouraged to attend and enjoy this fun and festive evening together.

## **11. Membership Dues**

Optimist International charges our Club membership fees that are due at the beginning of each fiscal year (October 1). These membership fees are entirely remitted to Optimist International to cover essential services, including comprehensive liability insurance coverage for all members and club activities. Our Club does not retain any portion of these specific fees; the value is delivered through the benefits provided by the international organization.

For the 2025-26 fiscal year, the fees are \$126.10 for each regular member and \$63.05 for each lifetime member.

However, our Club's **Board of Directors** has decided to implement a different system for the collection and payment of membership fees.

## Why?

Our Club delivers nearly 75 events each year and depends on member involvement to succeed. To broaden participation, reduce burnout, and address concerns about membership fees, we are introducing a revised membership model that better aligns fees with opportunities for involvement and supports a sustainable, inclusive future for the Club.



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## **How It Works**

Our Club membership fees follow a volunteer-based model. The Club will initially cover the annual membership fee for members who commit to volunteering at a minimum of five of our nearly 75 activities throughout the year. This upfront payment is conditional. Members who do not fulfill the five-event volunteer commitment will be invoiced for the full membership fee at the end of the fiscal year in September.

Club members who serve as Committee Chair of an eligible Fundraising or Community Event will be awarded five (5) volunteer credits.

New members who join mid-year will have their required credits and fees prorated based on their join date.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteer opportunities range from hands-on support at community and youth events to active involvement in fundraising initiatives. Current opportunities include:

- Bike Rodeo (May)
- Breakfast With Santa (2 credits including setup day) (December)
- Canada Day (July)
- Club Dinner Meetings - Organization and/or setup (up to 9 dates)
- Delaware Speedway 50/50 (4 dates) (July-September)
- Easter Egg Hunt (March or April)
- Haunted Cabins at Camp Kee-Mo-Kee (3 credits including setup and clean up days) (October)
- Holiday Hoopla (December)
- Kilworth Garage Sale (June)
- Komoka Garage Sale (June)
- Movie Night (2 dates)
- Oratorical (multiple nights)
- Turkey Bingo (2 dates) April and September)
- Wellness Centre Bar (28 dates) (September to April)
- Wellness Centre Concessions (28 dates) (September to April)

## **Tracking Participation**

Each eligible volunteer event Committee Chair will record and submit Club member participation data to the Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for accurate tracking and reporting for the fiscal year.





# OPTIMIST CLUB OF KOMOKA KILWORTH

## 12. The Hierarchy of Optimists

Club Member ➡ Club ➡ Zone ➡ District ➡ Region ➡ Optimist International

### Club Member

- Individual volunteers who carry out club activities
- Participates in events, meetings, committees, and leadership roles

### Optimist Club of Komoka-Kilworth (#45117)

- Local community-based organization
- Plans and delivers community service, youth programs, and fundraising
- Led by a **Club President**, **Board of Directors**, and committee chairs

### Zone (#7)

- Our Club is one of six clubs in Zone #7, which includes Alvinston, Kerwood, Komoka-Kilworth, Mt. Brydges, Strathroy-Caradoc, and Watford. Zone #7 is overseen by a Lieutenant Governor.
- Each club is required to host one Zone meeting annually. These meetings are attended by the Club President and any other Club members who wish to participate.
- The Optimist Club of Komoka-Kilworth hosts the Zone meeting each March, which is held in conjunction with our regular dinner meeting.

### District (#45)

- Our Zone is one of nine Zones in the **Southwestern Ontario District #45**, which is comprised of 78 clubs, and is overseen by a Governor
- The District hosts three annual meetings, called Quarterboards, open to all Club members in order to network, share ideas, receive training, and get updates on Optimist initiatives.
- The District also hosts an annual SWONT Convention each summer for learning, networking, and recognition.
- Overall, Optimist International is organized into 43 Districts across North America, supporting Clubs at the local, Zone, and District levels.
- More information can be found at [www.swontoptimist.org](http://www.swontoptimist.org)

### Region (Northeast - Great Lakes)

- The Southwestern Ontario District #45 is one of 6 Districts in the **Northeast - Great Lakes Region**, that are each overseen by an OI Vice President
- There are a total of 7 Regions in North America

### Optimist International

- The global governing body led by a President and President-Elect
- Manages insurance, branding, programs, administrative support, and compliance
- There is an annual OI Conference in the summer
- Founded in 1919, Optimist International has grown to over 90,000 members in over 30 countries who belong to over 2,500 individual Clubs
- Optimists conduct 65,000 service projects each year, serving six million young people. Optimists also spend \$78 million on their communities annually.
- More info can be found at [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org)



# OPTIMIST CLUB OF KOMOKA KILWORTH

## 13. Summary

As you get to know our Club members, our purpose, and the day-to-day activities of our Club, we hope you will see the passion and dedication we bring to Optimism and community service. We look forward to welcoming you and having you involved with the Optimist Club of Komoka-Kilworth.