“Our artificial turf project is complete and our kids now have the opportunity to play on a quality athletic field like most other high school students.”

-Sil Orlando, OYHFS Executive Director
OYHFS Annual Report 2013-2014

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It has been an active few months for OYHFS.

There were several holiday activities for our clients ranging from holiday parties to outings at Universal Studios and the Rose Parade, among others. Thanks to our generous donors and volunteers, the season was a joyous one for our youth.

Our artificial turf project is complete and our kids now have the opportunity to play on a quality athletic field like most other high school students. While many gave me the credit for coming up with this idea, I must admit it was my late brother, Murray, a former football star and coach, who pushed me to initiate the project; so, the unofficial dedication of the field is in his name.

Optimist recently entered into a partnership with Aviva Family and Children’s Services to educate their girls in our Charter School. Twelve girls began attending in December; we are now up to 24 and will reach the goal of 30 very soon. This makes our school more of a normalizing experience for both girls and boys as the population begins to equalize.

A new supervisor of our Foster Family and Adoptions Agency, Danielle Lovelady-Ryan, joined our agency in December. Danielle comes to us with many years of experience with the Department of Children and Family Services and has already made her presence known by helping to fill our training classes for new foster parents.

Our recently formed support group, the Optimist Professionals, is working hard to make this year’s Walkathon bigger and better. We encourage our supporters to sign up and form teams as this is a great way to help us raise money and introduce more people to our agency. The date of this year’s event is Sunday, April 26.

Over the past few months we have had the pleasure of being contacted and/or visited by several past residents from the 1950’s. All have done very well and attribute much of their success to their stay at Optimist. One of those past residents, a retired Alaska Airlines pilot, even gave a generous donation of $50,000! Sometimes it takes quite a while for graduates to realize what they gained from our program and it is a joy to see them acknowledge that after so many years.

The executive committee of our board and the co-chair of our advisory board joined me in a private meeting with newly elected county supervisor Hilda Solis and her deputy Benjamin Polk, both of whom appeared genuinely impressed with our history and services.

In the coming months we will be creating a plan for a capital campaign to improve our aging facilities. We will be looking at installing energy efficiency windows, replacing some of the roofs and air conditioning units, installing energy efficient LED lighting, among other things. Not only will this green initiative upgrade our facility, we’ll also save on future operating costs by becoming more energy efficient.

Thank you, once again, to all of our staff, volunteers, donors, and board members for their continued support.
Ellie Laks

Ellie Laks is the founder of The Gentle Barn, an organization that works with children from the inner-city, group homes, mental health care facilities, foster homes, and schools to teach them that even though we are all different on the outside, on the inside we are all the same and are deserving of the same rights, respect and freedom. As the children interact with various animals, the therapeutic process is born.

Ellie has been working with the girls from our Van Nuys Group Home once a month. Her workshops teach kindness, compassion and empathy for all living beings and the girls have learned so much and have truly enjoyed their time with the animals.

Thank you, Ellie, for your commitment to kids and animals. We are grateful to have you on our side.

Martha Mendel-De La Cruz

Martha Mendel-De La Cruz is volunteering as an intern in our Residentially Based Services department through our Field Experience Intern Program.

Martha’s goal was to gain professional experience while strengthening her community so she reached out to Optimist. She was assigned to C-Dorm and her professional, passionate and committed attitude helped her quickly become part of the team and she has added a ton of value. Thank you, Martha!

Evan McCrary

In 2013, I was a recent college graduate with my B.S in psychology seeking an opportunity to mentor and volunteer in a capacity to serve youth. Having had my own mentor, Ms. Diane Lewis, support me for several years, I understood the importance of mentoring and how she helped guide me towards my goals. She informed me of the Mentor/Volunteer program at Optimist and I applied hoping that I could make an impact on someone’s life the way she did for me.

Ms. Brenda Watts-Bell gave me the opportunity to do that and aligned me with wonderful mentees.

For a year and a half I had the amazing opportunity to serve and learn in various positions at Optimist. During my time there, I interacted with young men and women whose resiliency, intelligence, drive and wise words inspired changes within me.

I am very thankful for the supervisors, therapists, staff and especially Ms. Brenda Watts-Bell for giving a recent college graduate (and others) a chance to get a hands-on opportunity to learn about the social service field and even more for mentoring me and supporting my goals. Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services will always be a place that I speak of with fondness and appreciation and hopefully will be able to return to and support in a bigger way.

Benjamin Segura

Benjamin Segura is one of our newer mentors. He came to Optimist to challenge himself and to learn the skills necessary to make a positive impact in someone’s life. He is responsible, detail oriented, compassionate, professional, and dedicated. He is currently mentoring one of our residential clients and we are incredibly grateful for his service. Thank you, Benjamin!
Brenda Watts-Bell has been with Optimist since 2009. She came to us with several years of experience working in child welfare as well as a BA degree from California State University, Northridge.

Brenda began as a youth care counselor in our Valley Group Home and two years later became the Family Finding and Mentor Recruitment Specialist, a new position at the agency. Volunteer recruitment was added to her role a year later.

Brenda has done a superb job and today we have 37 clients with active mentors. As of last year, we had a dedicated cadre of 51 diversified volunteers and 18 clients were involved in the Family Finding program with the goal of locating family members and helping secure lasting relationships for youth who have no known relatives. All three of the above focus areas are vital to our organization and the young people we serve and Brenda’s dedication to her role and our clients makes her worthy of this edition’s Staff Hero designation.

SpongeBob at Optimist?

Storyboard director and writer for the animated series “SpongeBob Square Pants”, Luke Brookshire, was a special guest for an animated workshop led by Optimist volunteer Eileen Galindo.

The workshop highlighted the ins and outs of storyboard directing and how to transform what you enjoy doing into a career.

Thanks, Luke!

Wells Fargo Gives Back

One of our new volunteers, Clayton Therrien, and the Eagle Rock Wells Fargo Branch welcomed Optimist to the grand opening of their new branch and their Community Connections program. Thank you Wells Fargo Works for inviting Optimist to the Eagle Rock Branch grand opening and for the generous donation.
Welcome To Our Home

Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services has come a long way since our humble beginnings on the Strickland’s chicken ranch 109 years ago. Optimist’s programs have grown tremendously while staying true to our original purpose of providing high-risk children with not just a home, but hope. Since our inception, Optimist has continued its mission to provide culturally sensitive, comprehensive treatment, specialized education and support services to abused, neglected or at-risk children, youth and their families, to establish stability within families and communities. Now entering its second century, Optimist has become one of the largest residential treatment programs serving high-risk youth in California. A multi-service organization, it provides a broad array of services and programs supporting the well-being of youth and families from throughout Southern California. A non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, we provide the following programs for at-risk children: Residential and Behavioral Care, Independent Living, Community Group Homes, Non-Public High School, Charter School, Youth Vocational Center & Cultural Arts, Community & Residential Mental Health Services, Mentoring, Family Finding, Foster Care & Adoption Services, and Aftercare Services. Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services continues to stay at the forefront of youth and family service agencies. Our biggest accomplishment is the difference we make in the lives of the high-risk youth we serve. We can proudly say that 70% of youth emancipating from Optimist make a successful transition to life in the community during the first year following their 18th birthday. Approximately 20% of our youth go on to attend classes at a college or vocational training school upon their graduation from high school. Optimist is a beacon of hope and opportunity, providing high-risk youth with services, resources and tools to regain and rebuild their lives. We are proud to share our low administrative costs that are consistently 10% or less.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS OF JUNE 30, 2014

Assets
Cash & Bank Deposits $ 689,854
Receivables (Net) $ 4,188,244
Pledges Receivables $ 69,957
Investments (Securities & Bonds) $ 996,203
Prepaids & Other Assets $ 157,440
Real Estate & Equipment (Net) $9,733,392
Total Assets $15,835,090

Liabilities
Accounts Payable $ 480,448
Accrued Liabilities $ 1,432,459
Accrued Unemployment Liability $ 25,555
Lines of credit $ 400,000
Notes Payable $ —
Total Liabilities $ 2,338,462
Net Assets $ 13,496,628
Total Liabilities & Net Assets $15,835,090

ETHNICITY STATISTICS AGENCY WIDE

HISPANIC 58.5%
AFRICAN AMERICAN 28.5%
CAUCASIAN 5.8%
MULTI-RACIAL 4.3%
ASIAN 0.6%
AMERICAN INDIAN 0.4%
PACIFIC ISLANDER 0.0%
OTHER/UNKNOWN 1.9%

OPTIMIST BOY’S HOME AND RANCH, INC. REVENUE BY SOURCE

PROGRAM SERVICES
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES 34.5%
SCHOOL FEES 8.1%
FOSTER CARE 4.1%
NUTRITION PROGRAM 0.7%
ADOPTION 0.1%

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES EXPENSES

OPERATING BUDGET

REVENUE: 22,073,928
EXPENSES: 21,732,894
Residential Programs
The main campus houses up to 85 boys between the ages of 12 and 18, referred by county probation departments throughout California. Residents and their families are actively involved in individual, group and family therapies to address the issues that brought them to placement. Additionally, ancillary therapies are available including, but not limited to, Art, Movement, Pet and Music Therapy. Therapists, youth care counselors and educators are assigned to each boy and their families to craft individualized treatment plans. Our Independent Living Program provides on-campus apartment living for 12 boys while they learn self-sufficiency, life and job skills to further prepare for emancipation.

Recreation and Leisure Activities
The Optimist Recreation Department provides a variety of on and off-grounds activities for the residents in an effort to help teach them the meaning of healthy, pro-social, leisure time activity.

Four Community Group Homes
Four community group homes throughout Southern California (two of the homes are for girls) offer residents an alternative approach to the main campus. Some residents are graduates of our campus programs who no longer need its more formal structure thereby enabling a quick transition into mainstream community living.

Foster Care & Adoption Services
Our Foster Family & Adoption Agency (FFA) was established to find loving, safe, temporary and permanent homes for infants, children and teens in order to avoid institutional placement. Professional social workers and staff recruit, train and help certify foster and adoptive parents and provide regular follow-up care.

Family Finding
Foster children often feel completely alone without parents or extended family for support or a sense of belonging. This service is intended to locate, connect and establish relationships between foster children and family members who have been lost and may be able to provide new direction and stability to a child.

Mentoring
A caring, trusting relationship between a youngster and adult mentor can provide enlightenment, incentive and encouragement in all areas of a youth’s life, including educational attainments, professional aspirations and an appropriate model of healthy adult living. Mentors provide tutoring and educational assistance, guidance and support of higher educational, vocational and career goals while becoming a supportive, caring adult figure.

Project Fatherhood
This is a program designed to help fathers become more involved in their children’s lives. Residents who are fathers meet in this support group to develop strong paternal skills, and the fathers, or male role-models, of our residents are also encouraged to attend a support group to improve their relationships with their sons. Additionally, there is a “Significant Others” group for relatives (aunts/uncles, grandparents, older siblings, etc.) to meet in a supportive setting and foster improved relationships with the residents.

Education
In our state certified non-public school, we provide special education services to students residing in our campus dorms, community group homes and community students referred by local school districts. Students benefit from a one to four teacher/student ration and receive a comprehensive academic and physical education program.

Optimist Charter School opened in September 2013 to serve public high school education to probation and foster youth. OYHFS is now the only agency in California with both a charter school and a non-public school on the same campus in a residential treatment facility.

Mental Health Services
In partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, we offer individual and family counseling sessions for our residential and foster family placed children and their families, as well as community based services for children and families in need. The goal is to improve self-esteem while assisting with adjustment issues and family relations. Program graduates and their families who reside in Los Angeles County receive follow-up care through our Aftercare services.

Community Mental Health Programs
Optimist’s Community Mental Health Programs are in place to stabilize families and avoid institutional placement of their children. The clinics are located in Los Angeles and Palmdale and we also offer treatment services to those incarcerated in L.A. County Juvenile Halls and probation camps. Evidence Based Practice & Full Service Partnerships are offered.
Today’s Children
Tomorrow’s Promise...

Below are some quotes from our
2014 Community Mental Health Survey

97% found the therapist was good at being active and interested in participants in sessions

93% agreed that in general the level of care and treatment received was good

“I feel very grateful and satisfied with this program”

“Shannon is very easy to talk to and is very beneficial to my daughter. I was nervous about my daughter receiving services but Shannon has made it a pleasant experience.”

“We are very happy for all the help, my son has improved very much”

“I am completely happy and 100% satisfied with your services”

“We are very content with the therapy my son has received and he is very happy”

“You’re an amazing person to talk to and very understanding. I never thought I’d be able to open up to anyone like I have to you. Thank you for everything. I appreciate it.”
HONOR ROLL OF DONORS
NOVEMBER 1, 2014 - JANUARY 31, 2015

Benefactor
$25,000 - $99,999 (cumulative)
Bruce Bond
Rose Hills Foundation

Mentor
$10,000 - $24,999 (cumulative)
Elks of Los Angeles Foundation
Len Grantham
Los Angeles Optimist Youth Foundation
Morgan Stanley Foundation
Doris & Greg Morton
Pacific Palisades Optimist Club
Candice and Tom Spiehl

Guardian
$5,000 - $9,999 (cumulative)
Anonymous
Lloyd Don Hopf
Hugh & Hazel Darling Foundation
Gladys & Al Landegger
Los Angeles Lakers Youth Foundation

Sponsor
$1,000 - $4,999 (cumulative)
Howard Anderson
Megan & Colin Barr
Change A Life Foundation
Garbaldina M.B. Society
Frank Hunter
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
Mary Kaye
Los Angeles Water & Power Employees' Association
Mrs. Denise McCain-Thanstrom
& Mr. Charles Thanstrom
David Marquez
Valerie Tesaro & Jeff Moscariel
Northrop Grumman
Olympic Painting Company
Orbach Huff Suarez & Henderson LLP
Adriana & Sil Orlando
Susie & Harold Parker
Pasadena Optimist Club
Kathleen & Bill Snyder
Jennifer Parker-Stanton & Sandy Stanton
Union Bank Foundation
Virtual IT Shop, LLC
Wells Fargo Bank
Ona & Phil Wexler
William H. Hannon Foundation
Betty Zonker

Friends
$250 - $999 (cumulative)
Alan Eskot
Megan Barr
Tiffany Boone
Brigade Pest Management
Don Brockway
Doug Brattick
Danny Cruz
Jennifer D'Alvarez
Cheryl Lynn De Young
Stephanie Ferguson
Ana & Jesse Fox
Cecilia Gibson
James Gibson
Ronald Goode
Jim Gruenert
Bob Guzman
Carole Henry-Signor & Rob Signor

Friends - Continued
$250 - $999 (cumulative)
Lilly & Beaumont Hall
John E. Hallin
Lisa & Mark Henzel
Paul Hutchins
Gina Leggio
Sheldon D. Liber, A.L.A.
Cathy McCutcheon
Malibu Optimist Club
Randall Mehl
Adrienne Morea
Kenneth Mueller
Sonia Quinlan
Nancy Ramos
Mary G. Russell
SCV of Newhall O.C.
Christine Taylor
Phyllis G. Thomas
Shari Underwood
Ron Villachica
Jeffrey Whitman
Mark Winter

Honoraryroom
In Honor of:
Dennis Andolshek
Mary Conkright
David Dickson
Patsy & Albert Wong
William Armstrong
Malibu Optimist Club
Della & Bill Bertrand
William Bertrand
Susan & Jim Rondou
Larry & Linda Brooks
Ona & Phil Wexler
Dori Brown
Ona & Phil Wexler
Terry Chapman
Kenneth Mueller
Lois & David Friedland
Ona & Phil Wexler
Judith Gostessian
Ona & Phil Wexler
Carl L. Lambert
Doris & Richard Flores
AL Landegger
Mark Winter
Lolly Levy
Ona & Phil Wexler
George Murphy
M.B. Moss Inc.
Kathy Rand
Ona & Phil Wexler
Sally Selznick
Frank Binner
Rose & Bud Shaffer
Ona & Phil Wexler
Larry Smith
M.B. Moss Inc.

Memorials
In Memory of:
Chris Anderson
C.S. Stetler
Judy Becker
Lambertus Becker
Gordon Cory
Howard Hopper
Alan Elflent
Florence Elflent
Olaf Feely
Norris Jernigan
Hal Fulkerson
Norma Fulkerson
Mike Gadbury
Dee Gadbury
Karen Gruettner
Jim Gruettner
Irene Hellinger
Samantha Lee
Sile Orlando
Mary Jeffe
Nancy Mansfield-Staudt & John Staudt
Al Levine
Harriet & Richard Chase
Peggy McDonald
Shirley & Jack Ricketts
Mary Jo Mehl
Randall Mehl
Howard Nariman
Garrett Nariman
George Raycraft
Antonette Raycraft
James W. Rogers
Victoria Ann Rogers
Marty Salzman
Phoebe Patterson
William R. Seaver
Shirley Seaver
Henry Suto
Miyeko Suto
Betsy Vasquez
Rosaann Lee
John Watts
Jean Sharp

In-Kind - Continued
Mrs. Aguirre
Liz Avalos
Lillie Barer
Lorra-Lea Bartlett
Paula Beachie
Savannah & Landen Beattie
Bella Vista O.C. of Montebello
Daniel Berk
Maria Bhattachan

In-Kind - Continued
John Biondolillo
BIR Public Relations
Rachel & David Bloom
Sukart Blount
Lydia & Henry Boland
BOMA Greater L.A.
Sarah Snider Bonham
Jeff Boyson
Lauree Bradley
Ronna & Larry Brown
Robert C. Brown
BSI Construction & Management
Barbunk-Magnolia Park O.C.
Heather Camden
Tyler Carney
Laney & Elias Castillo
Central City Optimist Club
Cerritos Optimist Club Foundation
Paul Chambers
Austen Chandra
Paulette & Terry Chapman
Lynn Chen
Children's Trust Fund
Kazue Childs
City National Bank
Coast Family
Coast Motor Supply
Sumako Cohn
Will Colyer
Lauren Craft
Chad Crono
Crow City O.C. of Pasadena
Jennifer & David D'Alvarez
Christine Kellogg-Darwin
Elizabeth Daumaldier
Jordan Davis
Kyla Deaver
Mari Devon
Durham Family
Doreen Emiken
Encino-Sherman Oaks O.C.
Jance Enslin
Esplin Family
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Evans
First Bank
First City Credit Union
Michael Fitzgerald
Alex Floyd
Nancy Footo
Ana & Jesse Fox
Carleen Frants
Brenda Galloway
Gardenia Evening O.C.
Jesse Gavins
Ivy George
Cecilia Gibson
Mariel Greene
Ashleigh Hairson
Resse & Ryan Hartwig
Amara Hastings
Charlie Hewson
Meagan Holder
Olivia & Gavin Holmes
Edward J. Hunt
Wini Jackson
Japanese American O.C.
DeAndey & Daniella Jones
JOOL Club
Jennifer Katell
Linda Katell

In-Kind - Continued
Steve Kato
Logan Kishi
Peter Klyman
Ratan Laklchandani
Darren Lanning
Leland Lau
Andrew Lee
Carol Letoffy
Gina Leggio
Anne Leighton
Hope Levy
Brooke Lloyd
Marie Lopez
Los Amigos School
Loving Hands of Glendale
Quilt Guild
Robert Mackay
Cole Massie
Linda & Terry McWeeny
Monster Fitness
Douglas Moreland
Jameson Moss
Sadiaa Muhammad
Linnie Murphy
Neurogroup Corporation
Richard Niederberg
Walter Nibike
Brad Norman
W. Osterbeek
O.C. of Antelope Valley
Optimus Construction, Inc
Osbrink Agency
Peggy Paiton
Palm Tree Elementary
Jennifer Parker-Stanton
Stacy Pascetta
Michaela Pereira
Eddie Perino
Ryan Pratt
Primus Building Solutions
Jenna & Ken Puffer
Rose Renee Rails
Jodi Rappport
Rosa Restivo
Rosie Rivas
Carolyn Rodriguez
Kayleigh Ruller
Burgundy Ruth
Jill Saunders
Shaolin American Self Defense Academy
Shelter Partnership
Brooklyn Silver
Lariee Slawson
Reina Suauoka
Mike Sweet
Romy Teh
Rosemary Thomas
Max Thompson
Andrea Toth
Clyt Tull
Kirti Tumblum
Nathan Turner
Van Nuys Group Home
Gillian Vigman
Leila & Ronald Villacinha
Ron Villacinha
Edward Waldheim
Alex Walsh
Warner Center O.C
Lenna Welling
Westside O.C.
Andy Wexler
Branden Win
Susan Wong
Yak & Yeti Handicrafts
Crown City Optimist Club Deserves a Round of Applause

The Crown City Optimist Club visited us in December to deliver generous donations from their members including cash, Target gift cards, backpacks and a sports jacket. We appreciate Crown City for including us in their holiday gift giving!

The Fruits of Pet Therapy

During 2014, several of our youth visited the beautiful ONE GUN RANCH in Malibu for animal interaction sessions with ELSA, a nonprofit that serves children, teens, young adults, families, and groups with special needs through the benefits of human-animal interaction in the ranch setting with horses and ranch animals. Our clients worked with horses, sheep, goats, a llama, a pig and dogs, and they even planted some items in the garden! The therapeutic benefits of these interactions are undeniable and we are extremely grateful to ELSA and the Pacific Palisades Optimist Club for making this possible.

Stocking Stuffing Project Lifts Christmas Spirits

Once again the members of the Advisory Board provided an enormous boost in Christmas spirit to campus and group home residents with giant hand-made stockings stuffed with holiday presents.

The volunteers crafted 109 huge stockings loaded with gifts any teenager would treasure.

Advisory Board members Cindy Osbrink, Jennifer Parker-Stanton, Carolyn Rodriguez, Barbara Moore, Cheri and Larry Smith and Susie Parker headed up the project. Each of the stockings was packed with $25 gift cards, scarves, gloves, wallets, journals, handheld games, toiletries, batteries and plenty of candy and other sweets.
On December 8, Optimist hosted the 7th annual Michael E. Curry Football Banquet for the football team. Held at a Los Angeles restaurant, the players were encouraged to invite their families to celebrate their achievements. Each player was given an award, a bag of goodies, their team jersey, and the coaches gave a nice summary of each player’s best plays of the season. Former Michigan State football player Cameron Allen was the special guest speaker. Mike Curry’s brother-in-law, Tom Ryan, presented the coveted Michael E. Curry Leadership Award, given to the player who best exemplified growth in athleticism, appropriate behavior and scholastic excellence. The award and banquet were created in the memory of Mike Curry, a passionate supporter of the Home and the past Chair of the Advisory Board.

Giving Thanks To Our Major Donors…

Our 2014 holiday appeal was incredibly successful, bringing in close to $78,000, and we are grateful to all of our loyal supporters for including us in their year-end allocations. We’re aware of how many organizations there are to choose from and we were fortunate to have several donors fall under our Major Donor Category ($2,500+) during 2014. They are as follows:


We are extending heartfelt thanks to all of our donors for believing so strongly in our mission so that we may continue helping as many at-risk youth and families as possible. Thank you!
In December, we received this wonderfully heartfelt letter from a former resident. We are proud of the man he is and are grateful he chose to share his journey with us. As an added bonus, he included a $50,000 check with the letter! Enjoy.

To Whom It May Concern:

MY NAME IS BRUCE L BOND AND I WAS FORTUNATE TO ATTEND YOUR OPTIMIST BOYS HOME IN 1952-1953 INCLUDING TWO SUMMERS. I WAS 13 YEARS OLD AND WAS CONSTANTLY IN TROUBLE. I HAD BEEN ON PROBATION AND GOT INTO TROUBLE AGAIN. MY PROBATION OFFICER THOUGHT THE OPTIMIST HOME WOULD BE A GOOD FIT FOR ME.

Living there was the first time I had consistency in my life, plus rewards for good behavior, lots of structure, and a real vacation. It was also the beginning of a truly rewarding life.

I graduated from High School without further trouble and thought I had the world by the tail. I had a job and a girlfriend. It was not too many months later that I realized how dim my prospects looked. I could not make enough money to buy a home and support a family on the low wages that I was earning. Having not prepared for college it looked like my best option was to go to a trade school.

First I checked into diesel mechanics. Then I visited an airplane mechanics school. The tuition for two years was $1,600.

My stepfather would not allow me to live at home without paying rent and told me to leave. Without family support and being an impatient person, I turned to the Optimist Boys Home for advice.

Mr. Brawley arranged for me to attend two luncheons, one at the Los Angeles Optimist Club and one at the Pasadena Optimist Club. Each club offered to loan me half of the tuition with no interest contract. The monies would be paid within 5 years. Mr. Brawley offered me a job at the home as a counselor and I was able to live there about 4 months until school started. I helped the younger boys with homework, supervised after school activities, drove the school bus, was the supervisor of the senior dorm at night and had my own room.

When school started I lived in a small house trailer and I got a job as a dish washer. I received one meal with my shift and the fry cook fixed me a sandwich to take to school the next day. After graduating the course in two years, I began to save for the loan payback. I was able to pay back both Optimist Clubs within one year. I wanted others to have the same opportunity. Words cannot express my gratitude.

I found an airplane mechanics job in San Francisco within a year. After two and a half years of working, I decided to become a flight engineer. I worked two jobs and saved enough money to attend Spartan Aeronautical Institute in Tulsa, Oklahoma. While at school in Oklahoma, there was a big strike over the "flight engineer problem". What "flight engineer problem"? I thought they were messing with my career before I even finished my schooling. After getting over the shock, I saw the writing on the wall. It had never occurred to me to be a pilot. But, when the dust settled, all flight engineers needed to become commercial pilots.

I was fortunate the school I attended contracted Alaska Airlines to do the engineer flight training. Alaska Airlines hired me right after I passed the engineer's written and flight tests and gave me one year to get my professional pilots licenses. Alaska Airlines was small at that time and I was furloughed twice in the beginning and then rehired.

My two adult children are well established in their careers and have given me a great deal of joy including 5 grandchildren.

I flew for Alaska Airlines 37½ years and ended my career as the Number 1 pilot (in seniority). I have flown all over the world.

Thank You Again.
Bruce L Bond
WAYS TO HELP!

DONATE TO OPTIMIST THROUGH AMAZONSMILE

If you shop on Amazon.com, you can benefit Optimist Youth Homes through their program, AmazonSmile.

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support.

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device.

On your first visit to AmazonSmile, you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases. We are listed under our official name: Optimist Boys Home & Ranch.

GET A PERSONALIZED TILE!

Put your name or someone else’s name on a personalized tile in the Youth Learning Center building on our main campus and memorialize your commitment to Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services forever. Large tiles (12” by 12”) are available for $500 and small tiles (6” by 6”) for $250. Tiles can be inscribed with up to 30 letters or characters on two lines.

If you are interested, please contact Silvia Velasco at (323) 443-3022 or by email at svelasco@oyhfs.org by April 3, 2015. Tiles will be inscribed on April 11th. Due to the labor and expenses involved in the tile inscription and installation, we only submit one order per year.

Your tax-deductible support will be remembered for decades to come by thousands of children who come here for help.

2015 CAREER DAY

Our 13th Annual Career Day will be Thursday, May 14, 2015 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. This is a great opportunity to expose our students to the many career options available and to motivate them to continue with their education. If you would like to participate or know someone who would be willing to share knowledge about their field of employment, please contact Silvia Velasco at (323) 443-3022 or svelasco@oyhfs.org.
Sign Up Now!

OPTIMIST YOUTH HOMES & FAMILY SERVICES
WALK 4 YOUTH 2015 WALKATHON
WWW.OYHFS.ORG

Register Online:
http://oyhfs.donorpages.com/walkathon2015

SAVE THE DATE
APRIL 26, 2015
Location
6957 North Figueroa St.
Los Angeles, CA 90042

Registration & Continental Breakfast
8:30 am - 9:15 am
Walk Starts
9:30 am
Tours offered
11:00 am

For more than 109 years, Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services has walked alongside at-risk children rebuilding their precious lives and now it’s your turn to help make a difference. Please join us in support of our 4TH Annual Walk-4-Youth WALKATHON. Every step you take is a commitment towards helping disadvantaged kids from the City of Los Angeles.

WALKATHON INFORMATION

Registration: $25
Suggested Individual Minimum Pledge Goal: $100
Organizational Fundraising Goal: $20,000
Course Distance: 5k (approximately 3 miles) and can be completed in 1 hour 9 minutes. Please arrive early for convenient parking.
Course Description: The WALKATHON begins at Optimist Youth Homes’ main campus and through the Historic Route 66 on Figueroa Street. (1) Go south on Figueroa, (2) make a right on York, (3) circle around Burger King and make a right on Hamlet, (4) then a Left on Figueroa to return to Optimist.
T-Shirts & Goodies: Registered participants will receive a quality short sleeve event t-shirt.
Food & Beverage: Continental Breakfast to start you off and Water station at mid-point of walk.
Live Music and Entertainment Provided by: www.SoCalMobileDJ.com
Fun Stuff to do at the Event: There will be games for the kids and tours of Optimist’s main campus will be offered to all registered participants at the conclusion of the walk.
Form a TEAM for your company or group this year: Name it, fundraise together and have fun!

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