



# Pathways

Sauk Trails Optimist Club  
July / August / Sept 2023 News



<https://sauktrailsmadisonoptimist.org>



Sauk Trails Optimists:

We didn't know. How could we? There's no way to find out beforehand and even if you could the question would still be the same and the answer would still be yes or no.

- We said yes.
- Would you be willing to adopt two abandoned dogs?
- We said yes.
- We had no idea.

I had seen them once before, roaming the confines of a sun-drenched hog wire enclosure, barking and frantic, but I didn't pay too much attention. I had other things on my mind and I like dogs, but like I said I had other things on my mind. Weeks passed before we said yes and returned. The dogs were starving the first time I saw them.

We didn't know.

When we got there the male dog who should have weighted eighty to one hundred pounds for his age weighed forty-five. The female weighted only sixty-four for the same age and breed. They had no food apparent, scum covered water in a small bowl, no toys, no shade. There was nothing to eat but the grass and weeds in the yard and their own excrement. They were never walked, never petted, never loved. Two big dogs dying in the presence of adults living in the house overlooking the dogs, listening to them bark, listening to them whine. Listening to them starve to death.

We didn't know, what those people did. That made it all the more difficult to believe and impossible to forgive. We named the dogs Ole and Lena. Through a sequence of miracles we got them onto leashes, led them into our motor home, which was converted into a kennel on wheels. We transported them over two hundred miles to our home in Madison where they now have the run of the garage and our fenced yard. They will eventually be introduced into our home inside these peaceful walls which will involve our three cats and another series of miracles.

Ole and Lena are receiving three essentials: food, water and love. They are learning how to be puppies for the first time in their respective eighteen months of life and with nutrition comes energy and with energy comes play and exuberance. They are happy and they make us happy, although they have demolished the decorations we once carefully placed in the yard, dug holes to excavate every chipmunk burrow, devastated a potted plant on the picnic table this morning and completely pulverized two plastic automotive funnels and one curtain rod they found high on shelves in the garage.

They are Bernese Mountain Dogs.

We love them and we have talked more about them and been talked to more about them than any other subject in our lives in recent memory. What is it about dogs? What is it about rescuing helpless animals?

What is it indeed?

We've spent a lot of money on veterinary bills, food and collars. If you want to be squeamish, it's a lot of trouble to pick up after them with those little plastic bags and be slobbered all over each and every time we enter the garage or the yard that once held sanctuary in a well ordered life, but we love them. And in saying so there is another revelatory confession. **We love life.**

So any correspondence between this story about two dogs and Optimism is based upon the identical twin truth.

Life and Optimism go together, surrounded by a healthy dose of ignorance, but held together and kept together by the most important common denominator of all which is Love.

You don't have to know much, but you do have to Love. In service to Life with Optimism the rewards of Love far outweigh and excel the complications and calamities of life left to starve while others look on and do nothing.

**So here's to Ole and Lena.**

You don't have to know everything. You may not know anything at all, but if there's a need and somebody asks you or you ask yourself, the Answer is Yes.

**John Fons, Sauk Trails Optimist Club**

### **. NEWSLETTER BULLETIN: BOARD MEETINGS RECORDED**

Meetings of the Sauk Trails Board of Directors and Youth & Community Foundation which occur regularly on the third Tuesday of each month at 5pm are now recorded for your convenience to view firsthand the important work of your Board members.

#### **August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Board Meeting 'Recording' LINK:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/7c5DNVbVGvZmuL60bYR311\\_hvkqiz9KeOEsMyV6MtxGgJwwLX\\_N8fX9iRMVdJBSZ\\_R8iRVqKcb8KTE6-6](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/7c5DNVbVGvZmuL60bYR311_hvkqiz9KeOEsMyV6MtxGgJwwLX_N8fX9iRMVdJBSZ_R8iRVqKcb8KTE6-6)

Passcode: pdbZg7^?

#### **Sauk Trails Madison Optimist Club FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Candidates sought for Club officers**

**Raise your hand. Stand up. Be counted.**

**Club President;**

**Vice-President;**

**Secretary;**

**Treasurer**

**Board Members (3)**

**Terms begins October 1, 2023.**

#### **Optimist International Dues Increase:**

***Beginning January, 2023 Sauk Trails members will see a slight increase in their dues statement. It will cost you \$5 more per quarter to be an Optimist in 2023.***

***That's 5 ½ cents more per day and that's a bargain. The dues increase comes as a result of decisions made in St. Louis at the Optimist International Headquarters and you'll see it reflected on your quarterly statement from our own Sauk Trails treasurer.***

***After 13 years as STOC Club Treasurer, he has retired from that position. Please consider taking that position and you will be provided some training and initial coordination.***

## STOC Bulletin Board

### Sauk Trails Club Officers 2022/2023

**President:** John Fons

**Vice President:**

**Secretary:**

**Treasurer:** Rick Thomas (temp)

**Past President:** Rick Thomas

#### **Board of Directors**

Steve Bailey 20-23

Rick Conne 20-23

Jane Meyer 21-23

Ted See 20-23

Mark Kraemer 21-23

Mary Wykle 22-24

### July Birthdays

Julie Thomas 5

John Fons 12

Patti Levenson 15

Kathie Newman 22

### August Birthdays

Bob Wortinger 4

BJ Bailey 7

Mary Wykle 22

Steve Bailey 28



**Newsletter Editor:**

[Bonnie Spindler](#)

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### SWIS 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Convention

Franklin, WI

**Fri/Sat, Aug 25- 26,  
2023**

Conference Saturday,

9:00am-3pm

### Spartan Youth JOI Group:

I had an excellent conversation with the Spartan Youth faculty advisor two different times. Wonderfully enough, she served as President of the Spartan Youth in 2006 and is now a teacher at Memorial High. She remembers exactly the golden days of Spartan participation with Sauk Trails and the District and we agree completely in an effort to re-awaken and rebuild the cooperation and involvement of the clubs together and Spartan Youth at the District level.

**John Fons, Club President**

### Sauk Trails Board Meeting

-- Mon, July 17, 2023 5:00 PM  
(Minutes Not Available)

--Tues, Aug, 2023, 5:00 PM, See  
Recording Link and Minutes in  
this Newsletter.

--Tues, Sept 19, 2023, 5:00 PM  
Future Meeting.

### Share Night at Culver's

Thanks to the optimists who volunteered to work Share Night at Culver's in July:

John Fons; Liv Sandberg; Patti Levenson;  
Trisha Lucas; Steve Bailey; Rick Conne;  
Mary Breunig. (\$631.29 was earned for  
the STOC Foundation.)

Our next Share Night is scheduled for  
September 5<sup>th</sup>. If your available please  
volunteer for either or both shifts: 4-6m;  
and 6-8pm. Please respond to leaders.

### ADDITIONAL FUND RAISING OPTIONS

Let's do some fundraising so that we can give more  
scholarships!

PLEASE take a look at the schedule and see if there are  
any events that you want to participate in to have fun while  
fundraising! There are soccer games and concerts at  
Breese Stevens Field. It would be a good time to socialize  
and fundraise for the club! (Food and Beer/Wine  
Concessions)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0f4dada72aa5fac34-2023#/>

**Kathie Newman**, Lt. Governor Zone 6

Sauk Trails Optimist Club “Pathways” July / August 2023

<b>SCHEDULE of MEETINGS, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES</b>	
Tuesday, July 18, 2023	Culver’s Volunteering, 4 – 6, 6 – 8 PM
Wednesday July 19, 2023	Vintage, Scholarship Winners Awarded at Lunch, 11:45
Wednesday, August 2, 2023	<b>VINTAGE SPEAKER:</b> Rob Zaleski. former columnist. See picture and article in newsletter.
Saturday, August 5, 2023	Mustard Museum Volunteering, 9 – 4 PM. See pictures and article in newsletter.
Tuesday, August 15, 2023	ZOOM BOARD Meeting, 5:00 PM
<b>Wednesday, August 16, 2023</b>	Vintage, Scholarship Winners Awarded at Lunch, 11:45. See pictures and article in Newsletter.
<b>Saturday, August 26, 2023</b>	<b>SWIS 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr Convention 22-23, Milwaukee Area.</b>
<b>Wednesday, August 30, 2023</b>	<b>VINTAGE SPEAKER: Pat Zeitlow Miller</b> , children's book author. Her first book, "Sophie's Squash," is one of Paul Johnson's favorites. Pat is a true optimist. Her extraordinary persistence and determination got her past numerous early rejections and she is now able to pursue her dream of writing children's books full time.
<b>Tuesday, September 5, 2023</b>	4 Volunteer’s needed for each shift at <b>Culver’s</b> , 4-6 pm and 6-8 pm for Share Night. Thanks to All Volunteers previously.
<b>Wednesday, September 6, 2023</b> <i>(Mary Schwartz coordinate meeting)</i>	<b>Vintage Speaker: Optimist, Mary Schwartz</b> sharing about her trips in Western United States.
<b>Wednesday September 13, 2023</b> <i>(Paul Johnson coordinated speaker)</i>	<b>Vintage Speaker: Ben Stanger</b> , founder and CEO of Green Box Compost, a service that picks up residential food waste, composts it, and returns compost to subscribers.
<b>Tuesday, September 19, 2023</b>	ZOOM BOARD Meeting, 5:00 PM.
<b>Wednesday September 20, 2023</b>	<b>Vintage Speaker: Charles Payne</b> , a Madison transplant, accredited teacher and self-described social artist. I read an essay of his a few months back in Isthmus about the power of one and how a teacher's kindness transformed his life, Awards Also Given.
<b>Sunday, September 24, 2023</b>	<b>SAUK TRAILS OPTIMIST CLUB BANQUET</b> Get Together at Mary Schwartz’s Home in Darlington,
<b>Wednesday September 27, 2023</b>	<b>NO LUNCH MEETING.</b>
<b>Wednesday, October 4, 2023</b> <i>(Paul Johnson coordinated speaker)</i>	<b>Vintage Speaker: Fran Puleo</b> , associate director of outreach programs at UW-Madison. She will discuss three programs that bring the Wisconsin Idea to the state: Badger Talks, Bucky's Classroom and Badger Ambassadors.
<b>Saturday, October 7, 2023</b>	<b>SWIS 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Conference, 23-24 Year, Sun Prairie</b>
<b>Wednesday, Oct. 11 or 18, 2023</b>	<b>TBD: Board decision: 2 or 4 meetings/month.</b>

Dear Sauk Trails Optimists:

There is a folder on my desk containing the names of those Optimists currently serving as officers or board members in our Sauk Trails Optimist Club. The list is not accurate, since two officers have resigned in recent weeks and another has indicated recently an intention to leave the club September 30 at the end of our organizational year.

Sauk Trails Optimist Club must have officers and board members to exist and function as an energetic and committed group, dedicated to activities and programs that benefit the youth of our community and the community as a whole.

Positions for the 2023-2024 year are:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Board of Directors.

As President of the Sauk Trails Optimist Club, I am now entering the final weeks of my second term in that office, consecutive with my responsibilities last year as SWIS District Governor. At this time, I call for volunteers to fill each of the positions listed above, those volunteers to then be considered as candidates for the respective offices for which they have volunteered and subsequently voted upon by the Sauk Trails membership. In the case of more than one person volunteering as a candidate for any particular office, the vote count determines the outcome by simple majority. Unfilled offices will remain unfilled until filled by a subsequent volunteer, all to be duly approved by the board of directors in accordance with our by-laws.

This process encourages, I hope, the Optimism and devotion to Optimism within each and every member of Sauk Trails Optimists, rather than a process of persuasion and cajoling to obtain officers and board members which often results in the same people performing the same tasks for the same reason and others to abide the result or observe the outcome.

If you have never served as an Officer or Board Member in Sauk Trails Optimists, now is your chance by your own initiative and determination to do so. If you have served and are more than willing to do so again, please make that commitment to continue the good work this club has accomplished

The Sauk Trails Board of Directors will then give due deliberation to the finalization of officers and board members for 2023-2024 at future meetings.

**John Fons, President, Sauk Trails Optimist Club**

### **Some President Duties for Vintage Scheduled 11:45 Meetings:**

1. Sending out message for attendance response.
2. Responding to Vintage on Count for lunch;
3. Coming early, setting up banners from JohnF;
4. Coordinating with Optimist who acquired speaker for introduction;
5. Open and run Optimist lunch meeting with: Pledge, Happy Dollars, Announcements, etc.
6. Give out 'pledge gift' to speaker,
7. Lead closing of Creed;
8. Coordinate with Vintage on billing. (Work with Treasurer on bill signing).

**Wednesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> , at Vintage Brewing,**

Guest speaker was Paul Johnson's friend : Rob Zaleski. former columnist for the Capital Times and author of "David Couper Beyond the Badge: Reflections of an Ex-Cop." Couper is the former police chief in Madison who retired in 1993 to become an Episcopal priest. Rob also has published a book about Ed Garvey, first executive director of the NFL players' union and colorful activist and politician in Wisconsin. Rob also has published a novel.

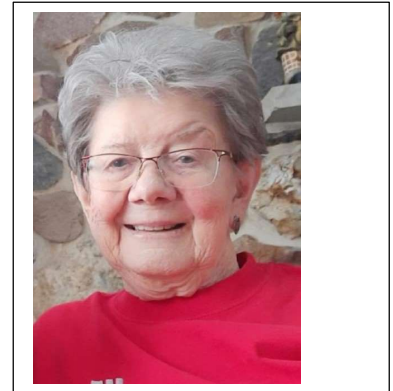


**Mary Louise Poole**

**Passed Away on July 9, 2023**

Mary worked for over 35 years for the State of Wisconsin Employee Trust Fund. While working, Mary and Doug enjoyed spending time in Florida. Once retired, they spent 30 years wintering in Arizona. Mary enjoyed gardening, but most of all she loved watching Wisconsin Badger and Packer Football. She was a proud member of the Wisconsin Optimist Clubs. Mary joined in 1987, when the Optimist Club let woman join for the very first time. She was a member of the West Madison Optimist Club until they dissolved, where she then transferred to Sauk Trails Optimist Club. There is more information at this link:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/madison/name/mary-poole-obituary?id=52471426>



Sauk Trails Optimist Club Meets at the Vintage currently Wednesday at 11:45 AM

1. Options Available in Future Continue to Meet every Wednesday at 11:45,
2. Meet 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 11:45 and 5<sup>th</sup> (or last) Wed (if exists), at 4:30 PM.
3. Other Options of Information of Clubs in Zone 6 and their meeting times:

- Cross Plains -7AM at The Vessel Cafe in Mount Horeb starting Sept 13th (2nd Wednesday)
- Mazo-Wisconsin Heights - Noon at the Old Feed Mill 1st & 3rd Friday of each Month
- Middleton - Club meeting - 7AM at Sofra Family Restaurant 2nd and 3rd Wed
  - Board Meeting - 7AM at Sofra Family Restaurant 1st Wed of the month
  - General club Lunch Meeting - 11:30 at Paul's Bar last Wed of month
- Mt Horeb - 7PM at Mount Horeb Public Library 3rd Monday of each month
- Verona - 6:30 at Verona Senior Center 2nd & 4th Thursday

**There is a Need to have a speaker or Activity Coordinated for many of the scheduled meetings. Input on these options and Optimist support will continue to strengthen our Sauk Trails Madison Optimist Club.**



**Dear Fellow Sauk Trails Optimists and Friends,**

Once again you all have been the power volunteers in helping us make National Mustard Day a great success. It's always great working with you on the many STOC projects, and Barry and I especially appreciate you joining us in support of the nonprofit National Mustard Museum.

- Thank you to Mary Wyckle, who helped me with prep work the day before the event. I was happy that I drew your name for one of the Raffle prizes!
- Thank you to the crew that helped staff the very busy Hot Dog & Brat grilling tent:
- Mark and Cathy Kraemer, Steve Bailey, and Diane Hoebel and Mary Breunig who again brought along their friends Theresa and Penny.
- Thank you to Rick Thomas for bringing his Holy Cow food cart to National Mustard Day to make grilled cheese sandwiches all day, and also to Bonnie Spindler and Liv Sandberg for scooping Mustard ice cream until it sold out at 2:45!
- Thank you to, Rick Conne, Memorial High School student Jonathan Buescher, Kathie Newman and Trish Lucas for working at the game and activity tents. Trish, my friend Miriam said she loved working with you at Feed the Curator.

I hope you agree that this year was really fun. A lot of national and local publicity during the week prior to National Mustard Day helped with attendance, as did the beautiful weather. Some of you may have been interviewed by the local TV stations and newspapers that were present on the big day. Destination Madison also sent a film crew to record the happenings so that Mustard Day can be included in their materials about what Madison has to offer visitors.

National Mustard Day 2023 was a success in raising funds and more awareness for the Museum. And, it was definitely a financial success for the 1st prize winner of our 50/50 raffle, who walked away with \$877.50 in cash!

We look forward to working together with you again.

Patti and Barry Levenson, National Mustard Museum



**Optimists: Rick, Trish, & Liv  
at Mustard Dav**



**Patti Levenson presenting \$500  
check to STOC Optimist Club at  
August 16<sup>th</sup> Lunch Meeting.**

### Sauk Trails Scholarship Awards

Four members of Spartan Youth Service attending Vel Phillips Memorial High School have been selected to receive \$1,000 scholarships from the Sauk Trails Youth & Community Foundation, following a meeting of the Foundation board April 18. Those graduating students are:

**Emily Cai**

**Shreepriya Sengupta**

**Yangtze Phintso**

**Elfin Wiriyan**

Accepting with gratitude the recommendations of advisors Annie Wilcox Panzer and Rick Thomas in determination of this year's scholarship recipients, the Foundation board will continue to develop the Sauk Trails scholarship application process to include members of Sauk Trails in the selection process. This will strengthen ties between Sauk Trails and Spartan Youth and allow members of each organization to recognize one another as valued partners in Optimism.

In this year's selection process, applicants were asked to answer two queries in order to help advisors determine financial need in addition to considerations involving academic achievement and community involvement. Those questions were:

**In 500 words or less tell us about the most meaningful experience you have had as a member of Spartan Youth Service;**

**In 500 words or less tell us about your post high school plans and what this money would mean to you.**

The answers the students gave are important and provided here anonymously in part and in no particular order to admire and support as Friends of Youth.

Thank you to all who gave time and consideration to this year's scholarship awards which will be announced at the Memorial High School Honor Convocation May 15. It is hoped in the future Sauk Trails Youth & Community Foundation will be enabled to give much more to many more as we seek to strengthen our ties with the community we serve.



The students, with a parent, will be attending either July 19<sup>th</sup> or August 16<sup>th</sup> to share and present their future plans, and accept the scholarships. Thanks to Rick Thomas for coordinating the dates.

**John Fons, STOC Club President**





***SAUK TRAILS OPTIMIST CLUB***

Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, August 15, 2023; 5pm  
Via Zoom Agenda

1. Welcome
2. June Sauk Trails Board meeting cancelled due to lack of quorum.
3. Board Secretary Kathy Johnson announced withdrawal of her Sauk Trails membership and that of husband Dennis Norton at Board meeting July 17. Subsequently informed President Fons she has lost/inadvertently deleted July Board minutes. She is currently out of town and unable to attend this meeting. Waive July minutes.
4. By consent via email transmitted August 10 Kathy Johnson confirmed to John Fons her intention to withdraw from Sauk Trails Optimists effective October 1. Motion by President Fons to that affect to include Dennis Norton now before the Board.
5. Financial report as available by interim Treasurer Rick Thomas. Check received from July 16 Culver's Share Night for \$631.29 to be deposited.
6. Thanks to Paul Johnson, Mary Schwartz – Programs; Diana Johnson – Silent auction donations.
7. Candidacy of John Fons for Sauk Trails President 2023-2024 respectfully submitted on the following platform:
  - a. Bi-weekly luncheon meetings at Vintage Brewing to be augmented by once a month Thursday evening meeting at 7pm, ostensibly at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.
  - b. In person Board meetings beginning October 17, 2023 at the Madison Police Department West District Headquarters Conference Room, 1710 McKenna Blvd., Madison, now reserved free of charge 5-6pm third Tuesday of each month 2023-2024.
  - c. Continued and expanded collaboration of Sauk Trails Optimists and Spartan Youth Service.
  - d. Establishment of Scholarship Award process to include application and interview before members of Sauk Trails Optimists open to applicants without regard for membership in Spartan Youth Service.
  - e. Establishment two Vice-President positions; Vice-Presidents in charge of programs and guest speakers.
  - f. Sauk Trails Membership Application brochure updated and reprinted.
8. Adjourn – Tuesday, September 18, 2023; Annual Banquet – Sunday, September 24, 2023.

**The Optimist Creed**

*Promise yourself...*

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.  
To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.  
To make all you friends feel that there is something in them.  
To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.  
To think only of the best, to work only for the best and expect only the best.  
To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.  
To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.  
To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.  
To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.  
To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.