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**OPTIMIST CLUB OF MONACO SOUTH
PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES**

The following describes the various youth, community service, and organizational projects that your Monaco South Optimist Club (a non-profit 501(c)4) sponsors and/or actively participates in running. This list is not all-inclusive, since we actively encourage our members to create or find new projects in which to get involved.

YOUTH PROJECTS--OUR PRIMARY MISSION

SUPER CITIZEN (Our Premier Service Project)

Our Club presents **Super Citizen Awards** for outstanding citizenship at McMeen, Samuels, Bradley, Holm, MPB, Hamilton MS, Lowry, Highline Academy and Slavens schools. At the elementary schools, at one or two assemblies during the school day, a Monaco South member presents each **SUPER CITIZEN** with a framed certificate signed by our Club President, Denver's Chief of Police and Mayor, and a T-shirt proclaiming them to be Super Citizens at that school, and a letter from the Governor. Photos are taken of each child with his/her parent and/or teacher. At Hamilton Middle School, Monaco South presents the awards during the evening at gathering of the award winners, their families, their teachers, and Hamilton's school administration

When: Monthly or Quarterly, as assigned
Where: assigned school
Who: One chairman and one or more assigned per school; Chair: Robert Wardlaw

BRAIN BOWL

The Brain Bowl is similar to the old GE College Bowl TV show (for those too young to remember, think Jeopardy with teams), but for middle school kids. Three competitions go on at the same time: one for 6th grade, one for 7th grade, and one for 8th grade. Teams take a written test and engage in verbal rounds against other teams which test their general knowledge. The teams surviving the preliminary rounds of competition then face head-to-head single elimination in verbal competition rounds until the championship matches at each grade level.

When: January at Fairview/Boulder and Feb. in Denver and Colo. Springs
Who: Karl Geil

In January and February, the Brain Bowl hosts over 160 competing teams in three tournaments located in Boulder, Denver/Aurora and Colorado Springs. Teams come from all around the state, and the assistance of 30 other Optimist Clubs throughout the Colorado-

Wyoming District is necessary to put on the event. This event will be holding a “Super Bowl Championship” tournament in March. Go to <http://www.optimistbrainbowl.org/> to learn more.

KNOW BRAINER COMPETITION

In the same format as the Brain Bowl, this competition is held by Monaco South and Tamarac clubs for 5th graders in the southeast Denver area.

When: Late April/early May Where: Hamilton Middle School Who: Pat Bush
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COLORADO HISTORY DAY

Middle school and high school students write papers, assemble displays, produce documentaries, or write and perform original live performances related to the year’s official theme. Monaco South members serve as judges (except for the papers) at the DPS History Day event and at Colorado History Day held at CU-Boulder. Training is provided. See:

When: April-May Where: Auraria Campus Who: Karl Geil
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<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/CLAS/Centers/ColoradoHistoryDay/Pages/ColoradoHistoryDay.aspx>

and www.nationalhistoryday.com for more information.

CHILDHOOD CANCER CAMPAIGN

Monaco South supports research into the causes and prevention of Childhood Cancer and assists children and their families who are undergoing treatment. Each year, one dollar from each Christmas tree sold is donated to a cause that aids the prevention of cancer or treatment of children with cancer. This can amount to \$1200 or more! In addition, we occasionally conduct “Happy Bucks” where members can brag on or report happy events in their life and put cash in the pot for the CCC. Often the District holds a casino night to also raise funds for CCC, and this is a lot of fun.

EAGLE SCOUT RECOGNITION DINNER

At the Denver Area Council’s annual Eagle Scout Dinner, Monaco South makes special awards for the outstanding Eagle Service Projects for the current class of Eagle Scouts in the Council. The awards are for each Scout District and the Council at large. The dinner is arranged by the Council and hundreds are in attendance, with a special keynote speaker and numerous other special awards made by the Council or the Eagle Scout Association.

When: Annually in Feb. Where: Local Hotel Who: Donlie Smith

ESSAY CONTEST

This event is sponsored by Optimist International, and it awards scholarships to high school students. Monaco South’s involvement is to solicit student entries and to find qualified people willing to read and grade the essays. The winning essay is then forwarded to the District contest where it is graded against essays from around Colorado/Wyoming with the top one winning a \$2500 scholarship.

When: February Where: TJ High School Who: Jack Kleinheksel/Wyatt McCallie

HUGH O’BRIAN YOUTH FOUNDATION

The club provides student scholarship support and donations to HOBY. Each year, we sponsor a high school student to attend the annual state conference at DU. On the Saturday afternoon of the state conference, a group of members attend the HOBY picnic to mentor the kids and encourage youth leaders that are participating.

When: Each June Where: School of Mines Who: Paul Bernard
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OPERATION STUDENT SUPPLIES

At the beginning of the school year, for our Super Citizen partner schools, Monaco South either purchases school supplies which the schools then distribute to students who need supplies, or some schools receive stipends to buy those items that they deem most needed for their school that year.

When: Each Fall
Where: 9 Elementary Schools
Who: school SC reps

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

Established in 1971, the Optimist International Foundation (OIF) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization. OIF works with Optimist Clubs located in over 3,800 communities in the United States, Canada, Europe and the Caribbean. A majority of support received by the Optimist International Foundation is unrestricted. These donations are applied to the annual campaign, and are used to support the Oratorical Contest, Communications Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH) and Essay Contest scholarships, as well as the Junior Optimist Octagon International program (JOOI). OIF is a major contributor to research at Johns Hopkins to help find cures for childhood cancer. In addition to the annual club donation of about \$5 per member, individual members are encouraged to give tax-deductible donations, either to OIF, especially through the Dime-A-Day program, or to the club through the OIF Passthrough program

When: Annual donations from the Club and individuals
Who: Perry Allen

TRI-STAR BASKETBALL

This activity is a key program from Optimist International. Volunteers from our club are needed to schedule this one-hour basketball skills competition, to recruit participants and to officiate at the events. We hold a club level event at the Boys and Girls Club and help with the Regional and District events. Top winners go to the District event at the Pepsi Center. Monaco South also provides assistance at all levels of this magnificent event for kids from 6-11 years of age. Other sports are also eligible for Tri-Star.

When: Feb/ March/April (finals)
Where: Finals at Pepsi Center
Who: Michael Chavez

BILL WALTERS MEMORIAL BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS THANKSGIVING DINNER

Run for many years by deceased member, Bill Walters, as it has for the past 35 years, Thanksgiving comes early for about 1000 boys and girls (and their families) at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver and at Girls, Inc of Metro Denver. Members of the Optimist Club of South Monaco serve turkey - about 800 pounds of it - and all the trimmings at two locations on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Kids are bused in from most of the metro area Boys and Girls Clubs to get to the location of the dinner, which for many would be the only Thanksgiving dinner they would have. Some bring their siblings and parents, and many take advantage of the "to go" boxes to take turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie to the folks back home who can't come. Monaco South purchases the food, which is prepared by a local hotel catering operation for free. As they have for over two decades, Monaco South club members have a wonderful time serving the food to the noisy crowd.

When: The Tuesday before Thanksgiving
Where: Boys and Girls Club and Girl's Inc.
Who: Michael Chavez, Donlie Smith

JUNIOR OPTIMIST CLUBS (JOI)

Junior Optimist clubs provide kids in our schools the opportunity to learn about being an Optimist while having fun and doing a community or school project for the betterment of their community. Currently we have a club at Bradley Elementary School, with plans for others in Southeast Denver.

When: Ongoing Where: Various Schools Who: Jon Wachter

CHRISTMAS BASKETS & GIFTS

The Christmas Baskets & Gifts Project is an offshoot of the Thanksgiving Basket Project which was started in the 1980's. This project was expanded in the 1990's to include furnishing fixings for a full Christmas Dinner and usually some toys to needy families with children in the elementary schools where we sponsor Super Citizen Programs.

When: Saturday before Christmas, 8-10 am Where: Legion Hall Who: Michael Chavez

The Committee Chairman for Monaco South starts a sign-up sheet about a month before the event (which is always the Saturday before Christmas). The Chairman makes arrangements with various food sources for the essential ingredients of a Christmas Dinner. The Club pays for these items, but we try to get grocery stores to give us a discount price on the food & foil pans that we buy.

Early in the morning on the Saturday that we deliver the food baskets, several members of the club will meet to pick up the food and take it to the designated spot for assembling the food boxes for each family. At a designated time, the rest of the members who have signed up to work this project will meet at the assembly area and box up the food for delivery.

The Christmas Gifts, for the children of six families in each school are purchased by Monaco South with budgeted funds and by other benefactors. The Social Services representative at the schools gives us a list of the names, gender and ages of each child. Club members will then deliver the food baskets and gifts to the designated families.

The total time of assembling and delivering the food baskets and gifts is about 2 hours.

THANKSGIVING BASKETS

This project is identical to the Christmas basket project, but without the toys. We usually deliver 40+ full meal food baskets.

When: Saturday before Thanksgiving Where: Legion Hall Who: Jim Easton and Allen Pierce
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T. J. CRAFT FAIR

Each year the Club members help the Thomas Jefferson High School control and monitor the traffic flow during the set up of the T. J. Craft fair, which is an event that supports the school.

When: Saturday before Thanksgiving Where: T.J. High School Who: Craig Eley
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ORATORICAL CONTEST

Monaco South participates, along with most of the other Optimist Clubs in the Colorado Wyoming District, in the Optimist International Oratorical Contest, which is a 3 level event. Each year students under the age of 16 years present a 4 to 5-minute speech on the official topic which is determined by Optimist International. The judging is done by 3 members or non-members and the competition is divided into Boys & Girls contests. Each club sends the boy and girl who win its contest to the next

When: March Where: TBD Who: Chair Open
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level, which is the Zone contest. The winners of the Zone contest move on to compete for the championship of the Colorado/Wyoming District, with the Boys & Girls winners each receiving a \$2,500 college scholarship provided by the Optimist International Foundation.

JUNIOR GOLF

As a major focus program of Optimist International, Monaco South members help with the two O.I. Colo/WY District Junior Golf Tournaments. We provide 15 or more people to help with scoreboards, set up, food, give directions, and help with fundraising. Many of the winners are sent to the O.I. International Tournament in Florida. Our club raises funds to help send 30+ kids to this tournament each year. Members are welcome to sponsor holes for these tournaments.

When: June/July Where: Various Courses Who: Joe Marci/Ron Cisco/Bob Meyer
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ROBERT SULLIVAN SCHOLARSHIPS

The Robert Sullivan Scholarship fund was established by Monaco South to honor Bob Sullivan who was an outstanding member of the club and president of the Thomas Jefferson High School booster club. This fund annually provides scholarships to deserving college-bound seniors from Thomas Jefferson High School. The fund accepts contributions and raises funds from selling Rockies baseball tickets and Entertainment Books to club members and others.

When: April 15th Who: Randy Marcove
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HAMILTON READING PROGRAM

Each student who scores at least 500 points on the Accelerated Reader program at Hamilton Middle School receives a \$100 Savings Bond from our club. This program encourages reading and literacy in our middle school students. Hamilton has many million-word readers and generally earns over 40 such awards each year.

When: April Where: Hamilton Middle School Who: Karl Geil

DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING CHILDREN

The club supports organizations with donations to help children with hearing impairments. We support the Optimist District oratorical contest for the deaf and hard of hearing. Like the regular Oratorical Contest above, District winners get a \$2500 scholarship from the OI Foundation.

When: April Who: Greg Young

JUVENILE DIABETES RESEARCH AND CAMPS

Monaco South is sponsor for the Type 1 Diabetes Optimist Club, and supports fund raising for research via JDRF (<http://jdrf.org>) and for partial scholarships to send kids to summer camp at the American Diabetes Association camp near Woodland Park (<http://www.diabetes.org/in-my-community/diabetes-camp/camps/colorado.html>). Members also help JDRF with manpower for their annual GALA setup and Walk for a Cure.

When: June Who: Ron Gustas

CHILDREN'S SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The club supports the Schlessman YMCA, STEM Academy, East High School Constitutional Scholars, T.J. High School Band and Robotics programs, and others with annual donations from funds raised by our Christmas Tree Lot fundraiser project.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

BIKE MS-REST STOP

This is the **Pat Sorensen Memorial Rest Stop** in memory of the wife of long time member Oscar Sorensen. Our members participate in this 150 mile bicycle ride two ways as a fund raiser for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. This race attracts thousands of riders each year in July. Monaco South members have raised over \$10,000 over the years as riders. Monaco South, along with the assistance of the Tamarac Optimist Club, also sets up and staffs the largest and best rest stop for this long, hot ride. Members direct traffic and we man the hydration station for dispensing ice, water and Gatorade to very thirsty and tired cyclists. Hundreds of riders take advantage of our rest stop each year. We also provide free photos of riders that are posted to our website for free download.

When: Last Sunday in June
Where: Johnstown
Who: Michael Chavez, John Oss and Craig Eley

RESPECT FOR LAW

Each year, around May 1, Optimist International encourages its member clubs to honor one or more individuals in a show of respect for the operation of law. Our club usually honors a Denver area law professional or helps promote respect for law among our youth.

When: April/May
Where: Legion Hall
Who: Randy Marcove

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Each year Monaco South honors an outstanding educator from our southeast Denver public schools. The educator is chosen for dedication and results in our schools.

When: May or August
Where: Legion Hall
Who: Tom Mauro

ALZHEIMER'S MEMORY WALK

Each year members support the Alzheimer's Association by providing early morning (7:00-9:00am) setup and pre-race coordinators. Rewards include a nice T-shirt and the satisfaction of helping a worthy cause. Many members also sign up to do the walk at 9:00 to help raise funds.

When: Mid-September
Where: City Park
Who: Cap Hermann

MARCH OF DIMES MUDD VOLLEYBALL

Similar to Alzheimer's, Monaco South members provide support to help set up, park cars and other lite duties. From 5:30am to 9:00. Members retire to breakfast after the event at a local restaurant.

When: August
Where: Aurora
Who: Pat Bush

ORGANIZATIONAL/FUND RAISING

NEW CLUB BUILDING:

We are always looking to find a community which is not currently being served by an Optimist Club and to build a new Optimist Club or JOI (Junior Optimist International) club to serve the youth of that community. By going door to door and business to business we solicit new members and hold meetings to establish the new club. Once the club is going, we work to help them build membership.

When: As needed
Where: open
Who: Anyone with desire

NEWSLETTER:

Monaco South publishes a weekly newsletter of meeting and other happenings. It is titled "*Grandiose Utterings of Monaco South*," "G.U.M.S." for short. Assistance in editing and mailing is always needed. We currently have four editors who rotate one each month preparing the newsletter, and five other members who do the weekly mailing of those copies not sent by email. We always welcome additional members who want to be editors of the month.

When: Weekly
Who: Chair, Bob Finkelmeier and multiple Editors

NEW PROJECTS:

Monaco South is always looking for new youth and community service projects and has a standing committee for the development of new projects.

When: open
Where: open
Who: Anyone with desire

SPEAKERS' BUREAU:

Finding and scheduling interesting speakers is essential to making our weekly breakfast meetings vibrant and interesting. Volunteers are needed to help our speaker chairs find and arrange speakers.

When: Weekly
Where: Meeting Site
Who: Paul Bernard

CHRISTMAS TREE LOT:

Each year, Monaco South establishes and runs a Christmas tree lot. This is the club's major fund raiser for the year and provides the funding foundation for most of our many youth and community projects. One dollar from each tree sale is donated to Childhood Cancer, an Optimist International supported project. We have maintained this lot for over 25 years. We sell up to 1500 trees, wreaths, and garland. ALL members are encouraged to put in a minimum of five 3-hour shifts (we run 9am to 9pm, seven days a week) over 3 weeks, and help with the set up and teardown of the lot. Often, we make a trek to the Evergreen area to cut trees from Ed Collins' land, and sell these trees as the ever popular "Charlie Brown Tree" –the only lot offering this unique tree. This is the most wonderful time of the year and a fun time to get to know your fellow Optimists. The annual club chili cook-off is held on the second Saturday of the month, at the lot trailer. We also get help from local high school youth groups (JROTC, Sports teams, etc.), and donate to those groups that participate.

When: Day after Thanksgiving until Dec 24th
Where: Monaco and Evans
Who: Joe Marci, Mike Miller

GROCERY/GAS CARD SALES

At each weekly meeting, gift cards usable at King Soopers or Safeway are available for sale to members. These are available in values of \$10.00 and are reloadable up to \$500 with your rewards credit card or cash. The member uses the card like a debit card for

When: Weekly meeting
Where: Meeting hall
Who: Greg Young

groceries and gasoline at dozens of stores associated with King Soopers (Kroger stores) or Safeway. The member gets **full** value for the card, but the club receives a rebate from the company, thereby earning 3-5% of the monthly reloaded amounts as a fund raiser for Monaco South. King Soopers and Safeway have some of the best discounted gasoline around, and everyone buys groceries each week, so it's a win-win proposition for the club and the members. Using these reloadable cards gives you a double win if you use your rewards credit card!!

ROCKIES HANDOUTS

Each year, for one or two games members and their families have the opportunity to support the Rockies baseball organization by handing out promotional items at a game. Usually t-shirts and free game tickets are provided to all who participate, and the club receives a contribution of \$250 to \$750 depending on the size of the promotion.

When: Summer
Where: Coors Field
Who: Michael Chavez

PEACH SALES

Each year a member takes orders for West Slope peaches from Palisades. Delivered fresh these peaches are a bargain and taste wonderful.

When: Summer
Where: Pickup
Who: Bob Finkelmeier

FUN TIMES

WIVES TO BREAKFAST:

Each year we try to have a special program for our wives at breakfast during Valentine's Day. Volunteers are needed to plan the entertainment for this meeting.

When: Around Valentine's Day
Where: varies
Who: Open for Chair

HONEYMOON or ODYSSEY WEEKEND:

Each year in the summer, many members and usually their wives/significant others gather in a fun Colorado vacation spot for a weekend of fun and sightseeing. Golf, shared fun at mealtimes and a wide range of activities, or just relaxing, make this a standout time and most enjoyable weekend to see *Colorful Colorado* or other fun places not too far afield.

When: June or July
Where: varies
Who: Craig Eley

YEAR END HOLIDAY PARTY:

Monaco South puts on a holiday party to celebrate the end of the year. This event is organized by the members as either pot-luck or catered and is a fun way to meet members and spouses, and have a wonderful time with music, dancing, and good food and libations. Sometimes we have a multi-club event.

When: Mid December
Where: Varies
Who: Frank Middleton

SUMMER PICNIC

In late summer Monaco South puts on a Summer Picnic for members and their families, often with other clubs. Usually, we try to coordinate this with a concert in the park sponsored by the City of Denver. The club provides a barbeque and drinks. Help is always welcome in planning this event.

When: August
Where: Local Park
Who: Chair Needed

ANNUAL *CELEBRATE YOUR OPTIMISM* BANQUET

The end of our fiscal year is September 30th. In the week or two prior to that, the club holds a year end celebration banquet to honor the outstanding club members of the year, the outgoing officers of that year, and to install the incoming officers for the following year. A fun evening of celebration and comradery is not to be missed!

When: September
Where: Local Restaurant
Who: Chair: Immediate Past President

QUARTERLY DISTRICT CONFERENCES AND ANNUAL CONVENTIONS

The Colorado/Wyoming District holds 3 quarterly conferences and an annual convention in August. Optimist International also holds an annual convention in a different city each July. These meetings are a wonderful way to meet Optimists from all over and get training in various areas of club operations and leadership. Check the District website for dates and information:

<https://www.optimistcowy.org/events-conferences/conferences/>