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,,The Optimist Club of Treynor, Treynor, IA
Iowa District, Zone 2 Club Number 40-109
Iowa District Governor: Joleen Jorgensen

Lt Governor: George Volz

NEWSLETTER

Treynor Optimist Club President:
Kirk Vorthmann

Oct. 24, 2026 Vol. 42, No.42

Getting to Know John Klein



Fellow Optimist John Klein’s story highlighted a lifetime devoted to conservation, public service, and community improvement. John and his wife of 51 years are the proud parents of two children, Holly Leaders and Hans. They also enjoy three grandchildren.

Growing up on a farm near Grand River and Kellerton, Iowa, John was inspired by visits from a traveling Iowa Conservation Commission wildlife exhibit, family trips to Iowa state parks, outdoor stories shared by relatives, and popular nature programs such as *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom* plus hunting and fishing himself.

A defining moment came during the first Earth Day celebration when he spent time collecting trash along the roads near his family's farm. To his surprise, much of the litter originated from his own family. He learned: meaningful change starts with personal responsibility.

John’s college summer experiences included fisheries work at Big Creek Lake and park technician positions with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Minnesota and at Rathbun Reservoir.

After earning a degree in Conservation from Iowa State University, over nearly 40 years, John held all conservation-related positions. First, he served as a **Park Ranger at Rock Creek State Park** for three years. Then as the first full-time **Director of the Clarke County Conservation Board**, he secured grants that funded park improvements, playgrounds, camping programs, an overlook tower, and a music festival in small Hopeville, Iowa, that continues today. Later, as **Director of the Pottawattamie County Conservation Board,** he helped establish the Hitchcock Nature Area and expanded conservation lands through successful grant initiatives.

His career also included service as a **Civil Engineering Technician with Natural Resources Conservation Service** in Atlantic, where he did soil conservation flood damage repairs from the devastating 1993 floods. When this job ended, he became the **Soil Conservationist & Project Manager for a Grazing Demonstration Farm** at Corning. He later was the **Resource Conservation & Development Coordinator** in Carroll, where his job was alternative agriculture and rural development in the area. He planned bike trails, tourism on Lincoln Hwy and conservation videos. Before retiring in 2014, John served as a **Wetlands Biologist**, leading efforts to identify and protect wetland resources across 13 Iowa counties.

Since returning full-time to Treynor, John has continued to strengthen the community through volunteer leadership and grant writing. He has supported projects such as Arbor Day and Mulch Madness, the Can Kennel, the Flags Project, community block parties, and the Treynor Community Gardens. He also remains actively involved in improving his family's farm in Decatur County through conservation planning and managed grazing practices.

John’s lifelong goal is to conserve natural resources. His philosophy, “Leave it better than before,” reflects his commitment to improving the environment and the communities he has called home. He reminded members that we are temporary stewards and that “it is the future that matters.”

Next week's speaker:
Judy Guttau, Personal Story

Positive Quote:
"Keep your face always toward the sunshine and shadows will fall behind you."

Walt Whitman

Meeting Minutes

President Kirk Vorthmann called the meeting to order at the Treynor Community Center. Seventeen members were present and one guest, Michael Holton.

Prayer: Dennis White

Jokes: Keith Denton, Kathy Luedke, Kirk Vorthmann

50/50: Bill Vorthmann

Attendance: Kevin Underwood

Football Contest: Bill Vorthmann

Thanks to Kevin Underwood for coordinating this.

Birthdays/Anniversaries: We celebrated Bill Vorthmann's 79th birthday which is Oct. 29.

Bragging Rights: (Dollars are contributed to benefit local youth programs.)

- Judy Guttau: Her little sister was "sneaky" and nominated Mick for America 250 'Our American Story', unbeknownst to him,and he was selected for an interview in Lincoln NE yesterday. All interviews will be archived and some will be selected to be in the Library of Congress.
- Judy Guttau: She praised all the Optimists for their help last Sunday with the "Treynor Through the Years Celebration."
- Dennis White: He bragged on the cross country team going to state!
- John Klein: He bragged on Treynor Marching Band at Lewis Central last Saturday! They got a "1" rating at their State Contest. They won their Class 2A division in the first annual Lewis Central Marching Band festival. They also won against 10 bands in all classes at the inaugural "Esprit de Corp" trophy as the band easiest to work with by the organizers.
  He reported Julia Funkhouser is back home and Bev Green took her to the band festival.
- John Klein: The Marching Band, through the Treynor Music Booster organization, is in need of a used refrigerator and a used microwave oven before spring for use in the Concession Stands for track and soccer. Please contact Band Director Meghan Powell at the High School.
- Mike Holton: In August, a phone call was received regarding an award of a complimentary Destination Iowa grant of $95,600 which would allow the Vision Treynor Group to include landscaping on their grounds, in addition to sidewalks and a pickleball court. Originally, only the pickleball courts were planned but with the addition of the Destination Iowa grant, VTG was able to move up the landscaping plan from 2027 or 2028 to this fall. The cost of the landscaping is estimate at $61,650. The trees have been planted in "The T". It's a must see. Cement has been poured too.
- Chad Guttau: He bragged on the big win of Treynor over West Central Valley in the first playoff football game last night. Gary Guttau also contributed.
- Kirk Vorthmann: He contributed to Mike Holton's announcement above.
- John Klein: His brother is 76 and just completed a 62 mile bike ride in Missouri in one day (regular bike).
- Keith Denton: He and Georgia went to Door Co., WI and went to Lambeau Field at Green Bay, WI. They were able to tour the stadium. He noted the artificial grass is ¼" shorter than grass, but real grass is mixed in and is to be as safe as soccer fields in Europe.
  Keith announced people can come get some pumpkins at their place.
- Dick Fox: He and Sherry went to Gothenburg to watch their granddaughter play volleyball. Eight schools were involved. The team came in second and beat an Ogalala team which had never been beaten. They also traveled to Park Rapids in upper MN and had ice cream, including on Sunday for breakfast!
- Gary Guttau: He had surgery on his bladder Monday and is now cancer free. The doctors also figured out going off some meds would help him walk better. He's feeling back in shape.
- Mike Holton: Last night Blair, NE's football team beat Crete soundly in their last regular season game. During the week, the seniors on the team chose an educator who has made a difference in their lives and Mike's daughter, Heather Hayduck, was picked to be honored at the game by one of the senior football players. She found out during class when one of the seniors presented her with

a football and asked if she would attend the game! Pretty cool!

- Mike Holton: He praised Sunday's 'Treynor Through the Years Celebration' as being a touch of history about Treynor. He referred to the project as a legacy to the community. The state AARP director was here. AARP was the primary funder of the mural. There is a QR code on a sign to scan to learn more about the history of the icons on the mural. It's also on the city's website.
- Dale Willenborg: He told about a BYU freshman Carter Smith, originally from Underwood, who kicked a 33 yd field goal in a contest and won $3MM. He had never kicked a football before and was wearing a Spider-Man costume.
- Gary Guttau: He bragged on the Jr. High football team for being undefeated. They beat Underwood and St. Albert in their last games.
- Kathy Luedke: She reported on the usage of virgin olive oil as suggested by Keith Denton last week. She's tried it five days and noticed a difference one night. She'll report next week.

Business:

- The undefeated 8th grade football team helped the St. Paul Preschool with Can Kennel sorting. There were 10 FB players and 6-7 adults from St. Paul. Thank you.
- The group by concensus agreed to not have a meeting on Saturday, Dec. 26 and Jan. 2.
- Dale reported he has received six responses to the survey he sent out to all members about flags. There is still time to complete the survey. We will discuss it at our next board meeting in mid-November.
- TS Speech will be the next group to have the Can Kennel.

Community and Community Events:

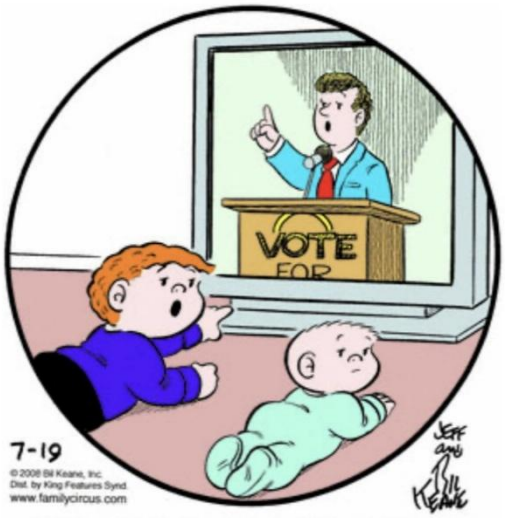
School Events in Treynor + Big Events

- **Mon. Oct. 26:** School out at 2 PM – P/T conf.
- **Tues. Oct. 27:** School out at 2 PM – P/T conf.
- **Tues. Oct. 27:** Treynor VB Regional Final vs Western Christian @ Hull IA @ 7 PM
- **Wed. Oct. 28:** School out at 2 PM.
- **Thur. Oct. 29**: No School- Staff Development
- **Fri.**, **Oct. 30**: No School – PT Conf, Comp Day
- **Fri**., **Oct. 30**: 2nd FB Playoff vs. West Marshall @ Treynor 7 PM
- **Fri**. **Oct. 30:** Treynor Girls Cross Country @ State Championship meet at 2 PM at Ft. Dodge

Auction: Dick Fox donated 3 bags of tomatoes. Judy Guttau and Dennis White purchased them.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Bill Vorthmann.

HUMOR



"What happened to the cartoons we always watch?"

OPTIMIST CALENDAR

Events:

Oct. 31	Meeting 8-9 AM, Treynor Community Center

Birthdays:

Oct. 29	Bill Vorthmann

Anniversaries:

Programs:

October	Judy Guttau
November	Jerry Hempel (1st, 2nd Sat)
	Josh Guttau (3rd, 4th Sat)
December	Mick & Judy Guttau

Speakers:

Oct. 31	Judy Guttau, personal story
Nov. 7	Chaley Hempel, Cross Country Coach
Nov. 14	Jeff Casey, Football Coach
Nov. 21	Ashleigh Croushorn, Chief Technology Officer, TS Bank – topic: learn about AI
Nov. 28	Joel Beyenhof, Treynor Superintendent, (school related topic)
Dec. 5	Cody Forbush – A tale of an airplane owned by a local group
Dec. 12	Bob Andersen – His story
Dec. 19	Emmersen Fox – Horticulture (her major) trip to the Netherlands
Dec. 26	No Meeting.

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Dues/Donations/Flag Money: Mail to Optimist Club of Treynor, PO Box 354, Treynor