



OPTIMISTICALLY SPEAKING

The Newsletter of the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna

January 2020

Calendar

January 1
New Year's Day
NO MEETING



January 8—Dinner Meeting
Speaker: Jade Leedham of Second Story
Vienna Moose Lodge
9616 Courthouse Road, Vienna 22181
6:45 pm—Social Time; 7:30—Dinner

January 15— Board Meeting

January 19—**CCDHH Special Meeting!**
Vienna Community Center Auditorium
2:00 p.m.

January 20— Martin Luther
King, Jr. Holiday



January 22 — **NO Dinner Meeting**

January 22— "Fourth Wednesday"
Dinner delivery, Culmore Teen Center;
Team A (Cole, Captain)

News and Notes

Happy New Year! If ever there was a time to "forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future," surely it is the start of a new year.

Look at all the open space on this month's calendar! We are in that "sweet spot" between the end of Christmas Tree sales and the start of the Farmers Market. Our meetings for the next few months will focus on annual programs for kids that are staples in our community, including the **Communications Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing** (see below) and the upcoming **Essay Contest**. This is also a good time to relax and get to know some new Optimist Club members and re-acquaint yourself with long-time colleagues.



Our first meeting of the year will feature our friend **Jade Leedham**, VP for Development at Second Story (formerly Alternative House). Jade will bring us up to date on Second Story's activities on behalf of youth in Fairfax

County. Our Club has been an active and valued supporter of Second Story/Alternative House since 2014. Please show our continued commitment to Second Story by attending the meeting on **Wednesday, January 8, at the Vienna Moose Lodge**.

We are sure this is already on your calendar but just in case: This year's **Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH)** will be held on **Sunday, January 19 at 2:00** in the **auditorium of the Vienna Community Center**. This is being done in lieu of a dinner meeting, in consideration of our young contestants, their families, and their teachers. **Please come out and support our students in this new format.**



Thinking
of you

A reminder that you might want to put on your New Year's Resolution list: long-time member **Joe Bosco** is no longer able to attend our meetings. Please keep Joe in your thoughts and maybe send the occasional card his way, to let him know his Optimist friends are with him in spirit.



Serving the Youth of Greater Vienna
for over 60 Years!

Visit us at www.OptimistClubofGreaterVienna.org
We're on Facebook! [Facebook.com/ViennaOptimistClub](https://www.facebook.com/ViennaOptimistClub)



From thy President...

Salutes and smiles are sent to you and yours—our Gal 'n' Pal Optimists

A new decade is at hand; break out the band; through our new focus, iImagine, we embark on adding a whole new area of services, celebrations and awards to bring out the best of youth, of all ages, and throughout our community. Our International President **Adrian Elcock** announced and has established the following new initiatives:

Optimist Visual Arts Competition

Students age 11 and younger can participate in painting or drawing with the theme "iImagine Being an Optimist." Competition will take place at both the Club and International levels with International winners receiving scholarships of \$250, \$150 and \$100.

Optimist Photography Competition

Students will submit photos that best exemplify the Optimist Creed. This competition will be based at the Club level, and will be open to all students who have not yet started post-secondary education.

Kids Speak Out--This is an old favorite with fresh, new energy. Students age 11 and younger can practice for the Optimist Oratorical competition while Clubs can foster a pool of future Oratorical participants. This year's theme is "iImagine Being an Optimist."

iImagine--A Kaleidoscope of the Performing Arts

Create your own performing arts showcase to highlight the talent in your community! Our new guide to help you make your event a success from auditions to encore!

Optimists Spark Fun in the Park--Work with JOI, College Optimist Clubs and other adult Optimists to create a fun day in a local park for children of all ability levels. A new guide by OI will offer activity ideas, promotion ideas, practical advice and more.

Thank you's go out to our truly special **VP Mike Fitzella** and **Director Ed Wonder** who are already well underway into incorporating some of these new initiatives within our endeavors across 2020!

A delightful intrusion across the past six weeks was experienced by our members. What a pure, true joy to review the daily whispers of excitement by emails from among our wonderful team members engaged in the successful sale of a thousand Christmas Trees, in just over three weeks, as our annual fundraiser. Cheers and salutes go out to our Project Coordinators: **Dick Lippert** and **Al Dunkerley**; our Finance & Media Coordinators: **Dick Lippert**, **Michele Wright** and our **Gary Moonan**; our Youth Coordinator: **Dr. Ed Wonder, PhD**; and our Trailer Mover: **John Andrews**. No, I'm not stopping here...hear?

Further, what an amazing success was achieved by our five Team Captains and their Crews: **Rich Ordeman**—Sunshine Team; **Al Dunkerley**—Red Team; **Dick Gongaware**—Blue Team; **Jeff Johnson**—Green Team; and **Tom Spengler**—Orange Team. Space does remain within our hearts—not here--to acknowledge the superior work of so-o-o many of our other members. Most amazing: this was all done with volunteer replacements while several of our primary participants went down with serious involvements of holiday illnesses. Thank you, dear Lord, for ER's. All: please do take another bow. What a truly remarkable success!

Yet more. How very, very special to see so many of our young beneficiaries come to help us with the internal rigors of our Christmas Tree Lot: Oakton Football (27); Madison Track (1); Oakton HS Octagon (21); Thoreau JOI (21); and Club Phoenix (2). Our junior Optimist Clubs sponsorship report reveals the following numbers of members: Archer (70); JMHS (19); GCM HS (118); Oakton HS (29); Flint Hill Prep (29); Thoreau MS (21); Wolf Trap ES (Inactive this year); and JMHS JOE (19).

Thank you Director **Ed Wonder**.

A gathering of family members, friends 'n' optimist brothers and sisters assembled at Arlington National Cemetery early on December 18th, was a beautiful day, for observing the final honors to our own and very special **Carol Waite Brennan**.

What a wonderful experience, the 2019 Candlelighters Pediatric Oncology Holiday Party provided on Sunday, December 15th, at INOVA Fairfax Hospital's Surgeon's Center. Everything was decorated to sensationalize one's feelings and to tempt culinary cravings about this wonderful holiday season. Many families—each with at least one recovering cancer patient—were busily receiving their presents. Our club is one of the seventeen sponsors of this annual event. Thank you, Madame Past President **Susan Bauer** for arranging our visit. Our heart was touched.

Second Story's Culmore Teen Center was again favored with a complete Christmas Dinner by our Editor **Laurie Cole** and other team players on December 18. Alert! Second Story will bring our club members up to date on their programs at our next meeting on Wednesday, January 8th, 2020, at the Vienna Moose Banquet Hall. Thank you, **Laurie**, for arranging this evening.

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season, now broad on our bow, filled with joy, blessings 'n' smiles. Please accept our humble and sincere gratitude for all each of you who are now doing "to iImagine" better ways of "making positive news" and for "bringing out the best in kids". And, don't forget to plan ahead, be well and be safe, and have a truly Happy New Year!

Your Bruce





A Successful Season Wraps up Early

VP for Finance Dick Lippert Reports on the 2019 Christmas Tree Sales

The Christmas Tree Fundraiser came to a close on Friday, December 20 with the final move of stands to the Vienna Town lot today. We can celebrate another season that was both a financial success and an organizational success for our Optimist Club. It was a team effort for which **everyone** deserves thanks. Here are a few special mentions of folks who went the extra distance on our behalf:

The final clean-up crew included **Tom Fraim, Gary Moonan, John Andrews, Dan Mulville, Dan Gropper, Al Dunkerley, Tom Spengler, Roger Doughty, and Dick Lippert**. We made record time concluding this final phase in under 45 minutes. Special thanks also go to **John Andrews** and his truck for moving the trailer to and from the lot.

Optimist staffing at the lot was **coordinated by Al Dunkerley** and the **team captains Rich Ordeman (Sunshine), Al Dunkerley (Red), Dick Gongaware (Blue), Jeff Johnson (Green) and Tom Spengler (Orange)**. **Ed Wonder** did a masterful job in coordinating the **great youth support**. Thanks to Ed we had outstanding youth support for all shifts, especially the busy weekend shifts. **Gary Moonan** also set up our online signup system which worked out quite well, managing and making visible both member and youth shift signups.



Thanks to **Ashleigh Strackbein** for making her dad's (**Jim Houston**) red pickup available for tree delivery which was used on numerous occasions to deliver mostly the large trees to nearby residences. We also installed a plaque **dedicating the trailer in Jim's honor** since Jim was primarily responsible

for getting the trailer, a much needed upgrade of our operations center for the tree sales. Thanks as well to **Dick Gongaware** for providing the sound system and to **Michele Wright** for the Keurig coffee machine.

This was one of our shortest selling seasons made even shorter when we sold out and closed the lot Sunday night, December 15, with just four trees left. They were gone by the time we moved the trailer on Friday, December 20.

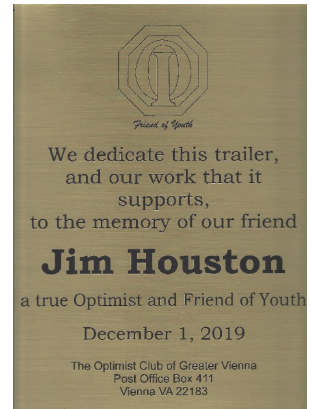
We also once again **thank PNC for providing the power and banking support** for our annual effort.

This was a year of firsts as we accepted credit cards for the first time ever and they amounted to over 40% of sales. There were a few glitches, but nothing that can't be remedied with improved user training. Thank you to **Gary Moonan** for helping to setup the credit card system.

We sold out earlier than ever with the shortest season ever, had the highest gross ever and had both weekday and weekend sales records. We also had many sales on the Friday we we're setting up the lot well in advance of our planned opening. Prices were higher due to higher costs and sales taxes were added to credit card sales. We had a few rainy days which slowed sales, but generally weather was good.

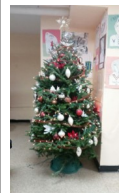
Another successful Christmas Tree Fundraiser is now in the books, which will provide the majority of the budget needed to fund this year's support to the Youth of the Greater Vienna Community.

Many thanks again to all who made this a great season!



Celebrations of the Season!

President Bruce and Past President Susan represented our Optimist Club at the DC Candlelighters Holiday Party at INOVA. We support this group as part of our participation in OI's Childhood Cancer Campaign.



Through an outpouring of volunteer support, we didn't miss a beat (or a birthday) in our year-round program to deliver a meal and a birthday party to the Culmore Teen Center in December. While we have a regular roster of teams who cover the months January-November, December is an *ad hoc* effort by available volunteers. Thank you to: Pat Hackerson, Bruce Lauther, Pat Solan, Greta & Joe Miller, and Sherry Levitt who provided food and gifts for the December birthday teens. And thank you to the many Optimists whose offers to help we had to decline: Jim Wilson, Rob Ruth, Susan Bauer, Tom & Michele Spengler, and Michele Wright (and if there are others we missed, thank you, too!). The Club also donated a tree to make the Teen Center festive for the season!

November 2019 Board Meeting Highlights

The Board of Directors of the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna met on November 13, 2019, with eleven members present (plus one by proxy). Business conducted included the following:

- Approved budgeted items for Cedar Lane School programs; Vienna Volunteer Fire Department; Cunningham Park Elementary; and Alternative School Graduation Ceremony (plus \$200 beyond the budgeted amount);
- Noted with thanks the generous donations from Sheryl Friedley to the scholarship in her name (\$3,000), plus the Jim Houston Memorial Project (\$2,000);
- Noted with thanks the generous donation from a beneficiary of a client of Michele Wright, giving \$5,000 to the Farmers Market and \$12,000 to our Foundation;
- Received a report on plans for the 2020 Farmers Market season, including: request to the Town for permanent signage; return of all market vendors and possible

new contracts; and underwriting of reusable shopping bags;

- Received a report on upcoming Youth events, including Carol Waite Brennan Scholarship presentation, new structure for the CCDHH competition; and plans for the Oratorical Contest;
- Received a report from Webmaster Gary Moonan's activities preparing for credit card sales at the Christmas Tree lot as well as staffing sign-ups on the website and other website/social media updates;
- Discussed possible uses of budgeted funds to support activities at the Town's Club Phoenix;
- Welcomed Donna Wohlscheid as Director of Community and discussed the need to fill remaining vacancies; and
- Appointed a committee to review Director duties, by-laws and club policies.

There was no December Board meeting.



The next Board meeting is Wednesday, January 15, 7:00 p.m., at the Community Room in The Enclave, 9450 Silver King Court, Fairfax.

OPTIMIST CLUB OF GREATER VIENNA Board of Directors 2019-20

President	Bruce Lauther
Secretary	Kathy Cutri
Treasurer	Michele Wright
Immediate Past President	Susan Bauer
President Elect	Tom Bauer
Vice President of Community	Susan Bauer
Vice President of Finance	Dick Lippert
Vice President of Media Relations/Webmaster	Gary Moonan
Vice President of Membership	Joe Miller
Vice President of Youth	Mike Fitzella
Director of Community	Donna Wohlscheid
Director of Social Media	<i>open</i>
Director of Print Media/Community	<i>open</i>
Director of Membership	<i>open</i>
Director of Youth	Ed Wonder
Director of Finance	Al Dunkerley

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 your 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.**

Christian D. Larsen