

Optimistically Speaking

The On-the-Road Edition* December 2019



Calendar

Nov 30 – Dec 22	Christmas Tree Sales! M-F 2:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Sat-Sun 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Caboose Open!
Dec 2	Annual Vienna Holiday Stroll on Church Street 6:00-9:00 pm
Dec 4	Holiday Dinner & Celebration at Westwood Country Club 6:30-8:30 p.m. BY RSVP ONLY! (Tree Lot will close early)
Dec 11	NO BOARD MEETING
Dec 12	Ethics Day at Marshall High School. Volunteers still needed! Fourth Wednesday Dinner Culmore Teen Center
Dec 18 (or TBD)	Ad Hoc Holiday Team Contact Laurie Cole if you can help out.
Mark your Calendar NOW	January 12, 2020 2:00 p.m., Vienna Community Center CCDHH Competition! See note from Mike Fitzella on page 3

News and Notes

Editor's Note: We feel compelled—no, privileged—to lead with this email from Dick Gongaware (Blue Team Captain for tree sales), because it says so much about who we are as Optimists and colleagues in community service.

“I wanted to thank the amazing number of club members who volunteered their time over the first two shifts of the Christmas tree selling season on Saturday. **Mike Battaglia** was my only fellow Blue Team member who was scheduled (and stayed well into the second shift), but over the course of six hours the following members stepped up (most of whom aren't even on my team); **John Andrews, Rich Ordeman, Dan Mulville, Bruce Lauther, Tom Spengler, Tom Fraim, Michele Wright, Anna Ryjik, Roger Doughty.** If I missed anyone I sincerely apologize.

The good news is that we needed the help - we were extremely busy. I'm sure Mr. Lippert will provide us some sales figures shortly. And to **Ed Wonder**, an FYI that the **Oakton football team and Junior Optimist club kids were fabulous.**

Thanks for the display of holiday spirit.”
Dick Gongaware

ETHICS DAY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

George C. Marshall High School's annual **Senior Ethics Day** is Thursday, December 12. Organizers seek community members to work with the Class of 2020 as Table Leaders, helping them navigate some old and new ethical modules. Volunteers should arrive at 7:45 a.m. at the Westin Hotel at 7801 Leesburg Pike; the day concludes around 2:30 pm. Contact Heather Sondel at hbsondel@fcps.edu to volunteer.



*ONCE AGAIN, THIS MONTH'S EDITION OF *OPTIMISTICALLY SPEAKING* IS BEING PRODUCED ON THE ROAD, AWAY FROM NEWSLETTER HQ'S SOPHISTICATED ARRAY OF TEMPLATES AND GRAPHICS. PLEASE BEAR WITH US AS WE ROUGH IT TO BRING YOU THE LATEST NEWS FOR THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF GREATER VIENNA.

From thy President...

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

We have arrived in high gear, and are moving forward rapidly, into a marvelous new fiscal year, Wow, we're nearly through the first quarter of 2019-2020.

As we sail ahead, with following seas, what's in our wake? Our extended summer-long, truly incredible success, within the Farmers Market is now a lingering memory. Only one more evening embracing enthusiastic visitors to the Caboose remains. Our big fun- and fund- raiser, the Christmas Tree Lot is setup with a top game plan. We embrace Second Story with donations and monthly visits to the Culmore Teen Center in Bailey's Crossroads. A roast turkey with all the fixin's was provided in our November deliveries.

What a delightful dinner evening was enjoyed by all who attended our latest presentation of the **Carol Waite Brennan Scholarship Awards** honoring six incredibly gifted and dedicated teenagers from a trio of High Schools. Thank you for this marvelous program to our Youth team, VP [Mike Fitzella](#) and Director [Ed Wonder!](#)

New Member Sponsorship Pins were awarded to [Sally O'Connor](#) for 1st New Member and to President (Elect) [Tom Bauer](#) for 5th New Member. An Optimist International Life Membership was presented to Past President [Susan Bauer](#).

Your Board considered options for the design of a dedication plaque to [Jim Houston](#) for the Christmas Tree Lot Trailer. The unanimous selection, now on display in the trailer, was the contribution of our dedicated Editor, [Laurie Cole](#).

Behind the scenes, we hear approving rumors within the membership, for the great atmosphere experienced within the boundaries of Vienna, when hosting our dinner meetings at the Banquet Room of the Vienna Moose Lodge 1896. And only two months are behind us! Warm gentle pats of approval go out to every member who has brought these wonderful "making news items" to the fore.

A large gathering of family members, friends 'n' Optimist brothers and sisters assembled at Arlington National Cemetery early on November 18th to observe the full military honors for our beloved [Jim Houston](#). What a memorable occasion of observances were seen, ranging from the horse-drawn carriage, to the funeral procession, to the bugler, to the rifle squad, to the band, and through the grave-side traditions and remarks. Thank you one and all who were able to attend in our final salute to our departed Brother, [Jim Houston](#).

What's ahead? Don't miss our early Christmas Dinner Celebration at the Westwood Country Club, with special entertainment arranged, by Past President [Susan Bauer](#) on Wednesday Evening, December 4th.

Please do have 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 do to iMagine better ways to "making news" and to "bringing out the best in kids". And, don't forget to plan ahead and have a truly Happy New Year!

Your Bruce

A Reminder and Earnest Plea from Christmas Tree Honcho Dick Lippert

All the Trees we're offloaded the Tuesday evening before Thanksgiving thanks to the **Madison Baseball Team** and the following **Optimists: Dan Gropper, Jeff Johnson, Jim Wilson, Jim Hegel, Michele Wright, Tom Fraim** and others I didn't see on signup sheet. **Thanks to all.**

The Optimist Christmas Tree Lot should be the top priority for all Optimists this month. This is an all-hands evolution and requires help from everyone, especially on weekend shifts when we do the bulk of our sales. Please sign up often with the [online sign-up at our website](#) and/or your team captain--**and don't hesitate to fill in where you see gaps**, even if not with your team, especially if you have a conflict and cannot work your assigned team slot. This is a short sales period with only three weekends to sell most of our trees. Everyone can help and light duty folks can help take money and provide guidance for the many youth volunteers being coordinated by Ed Wonder. It looks to be a good turnout by most of the youth we support throughout the year.

The lot opened at 9AM Saturday November 30 and will stay open until all trees are sold or 22 December. We are open weekends 9am to 8pm and weekdays 2pm to 8pm. **Sign up for as many shifts as possible and feel free to have family members help out as well.** We should have 4-5 folks on prime Saturday and Sunday shifts to keep up with what we expect to be a busy season.

Remember this is our major fundraiser and critical to supporting all of our Youth activities for the coming year.

And speaking of activities we support...FOOI June Fraim forwarded photos and a note sharing how our funds work to bring out the best in local kids:

Here's just one of the photos "of a field trip a FCPS Interagency Alternative School (IAS) called Transitional Support and Resource Center Vienna (TSRC Vienna) took this month with funds from the Optimist Club. The four teachers in this particular program in Vienna are very appreciative of this opportunity to engage the students with the community. Last year students from this same program using Optimist funds went to a senior center and recited poetry to and danced with the seniors; it was a festive event."



Two Notes from VP for Youth, Mike Fitzella

1. Changes to CCDHH Coming in January 2020

This year's Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH) will be held on **Sunday, January 19, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.** in the auditorium of the Vienna Community Center. This change from a Wednesday night dinner meeting has been made after receiving input from our teachers at Canterbury Woods. Many of these elementary school students have a one-hour bus ride to/from school, and a Wednesday evening program keeps them out too late. This change will allow us to double our number of contestants from five to ten. **Please come out and support our students in this new format.**

2. Carol Waite Brennan Awards

Our annual Carol Waite Brennan Youth Appreciation Awards were presented at the November 20 dinner meeting. Seniors from Madison, Marshall, and Oakton high schools each received a \$1,500 scholarship. These young people all excel in the classroom and give back to the community through a variety of volunteer activities.

Pictured (left to right): Shonjoy Bhattacharyya, Ryann Kuhblank, Justin Hu, Quentin Scarborough, and Anne Leap (not pictured: Lucia Guo)



*In
Memory
of*

We are saddened to report the passing of fellow Optimist Courtney Sargent. Courtney served as Club President (1990-91) and famously hosted construction of many Halloween Parade floats in his home's garage. At this time we do not have information about services or memorials; that will be forwarded as it becomes available. Our heartfelt sympathies go to Courtney's family on their loss.