



# Optimistically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna - January 2025

## News and Notes

### Calendar

#### This Month

##### Board Meeting

8 January 2025  
7 PM (virtual)

##### Club Social

19 January 2025  
IHOP (Blake Lane)  
RSVP Required  
3 PM

##### Special Board Meeting

22 January 2025  
7 PM (virtual)

#### Coming in February

##### Board Meeting

TBA  
7 PM (virtual)

### Holiday Fun and Success

Our biggest fundraiser of the year, the sale of trees, wreaths, ropes, and tree stands, was the epitome of fun and success. Club members came together to sell over 740 trees and other items. The profits will fund many of our events and charitable donations through the next year.

A few of our trees were donated to local Ukrainian refugees. They loved the trees and decorated them with traditional Ukrainian ornaments. Pictures of two of the trees are shown below.



Below top row: the talented quartet from James Madison High School (left) play at the club Holiday Party held at Westwood Country Club and student volunteers (right) get the tree lot ready for sales. Take a look for more pictures from the tree lot set up and sale days on page 3.



Serving the youth of greater Vienna for more than 65 years!

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## **Carol Waite Brennan Youth Appreciation Awards**

This year's Carol Waite Brennan Youth Appreciation awards were presented on November 20 at the Vienna Community Center. These awards are given in memory of Carol, a former president of our club who passed away from ALS in 2001, to seniors from Madison, Marshall, and Oakton high schools. Carol's daughter Kelly, now a college graduate and working for the Arlington County Sheriff's Office, joined us in the presentation. These students will each receive a \$2,500 scholarship paid directly to their college next summer.

Pictured (left to right): Sherry Zhang, Rumaisha Abudureheman, Annabelle Hallworth, Grace O'Connor, Kelly Brennan, Jack Hodge, Mike Fitzella, and Viraj Kamath.



## **Did You Know?**

In 1978, Optimist International began sponsorship of one of the most prestigious junior golf events in the world, the Junior World Golf Championships. Today, Optimist International has its own tournament, independent from Junior World, known as the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships. More than 5,000 junior golfers ages 10 to 18 compete in qualifying tournaments at the club and district level in hopes of making it to the international tournament.

In 1997, ESPN covered the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships, making Optimist International the first service club organization to ever have a worldwide event televised.

## Holiday Fun and Success (continued from page 1)

Below are a few pictures from the setup of our tree lot and sales days.

Clockwise from left are: Steve Shannon and Tom Bauer with Madison HS baseball coach Pudge Gjormand unloading trees; Mairead Holly prepping trees; youth volunteers enjoying donuts and hot chocolate during the setup (they are all awesome volunteers!); Dick Lippert receiving consistent and clear direction from other volunteers; Club members donning holiday smiles (Wendi Carroll, Tom Spengler, Frank Torre, John Andrews, Kara Ariail, and Mickey Williams); and Tim Buckley and Pat Solan hard at work and having fun.



## From President Monica Isaac

*Dear Optimists,*

*What a remarkable year for the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna, with our most recent 2024 achievement being another profitable Christmas Tree sale. Many volunteers, returning and new, helped to make this fundraiser a great success. You braved the cold, rain, and darkness. You gave up your weekends to unload, organize, and prepare trees for sale. You transported the trailer and set-up our command center with heating and power. You made sure supplies and tools were in good working order, for efficiency and ease. You balanced the time between your busy work schedules and family priorities to raise funds on weekdays. You set up the infrastructure to handle financial transactions. You advertised in local news outlets. You helped welcome patrons to the lot with hospitality and kindness. You worked alongside student volunteers, setting a model of what it means to give back to one's community and doing so in a cooperative, friendly, and safe manner. You securely loaded trees onto vehicles. You kept the space tidy and festive. You processed hundreds of sales and donations. You spoke to patrons about the club and shared our mission. You encouraged patrons to join our club and volunteered to be their sponsors. You trimmed and prepped trees for their best appearance. You donated the last few trees and brought hope to refugees. You quickly disassembled and cleaned up the lot at the end of the sale. You addressed and took care of many other details for seamless operations. You donated your time and generosity. You gave of yourselves. You secured funds for future scholarships and youth programs. For this, I share my sincerest thanks to all who contributed to this collective effort.*

*To express our deepest thanks to volunteers and kick off the new year, the club will be hosting a Club social and appreciation gathering at the IHOP (2490 Blake Lane, Fairfax) on Sunday, January 19th at 3pm. Please RSVP no later than Friday, January 17th within Signup Genius. The link will come via email soon.*

*As we look forward to another year of service, I encourage everyone to ask themselves "What does community service mean to me?" Reflection on this question will be the guiding theme for the club in 2025, as we try to reinvigorate more of our existing members to participate in, and volunteer at, our events and activities. Membership participation is crucial, as it serves as the very basis for which we exist as a club. Prioritization of serving our youth in the community will continue as our number one goal but cannot succeed without each and every member. For this reason, I ask you to make a commitment to volunteering for the many different kinds of activities we sponsor throughout the year. Both the club and community are counting on you.*

*Wishing you good health and happiness in the New Year,*

*Monica*

## **Board of Directors 2024-2025 Optimist Club of Greater Vienna**

President	Monica Gomez Isaac
Secretary (acting)	Susan Bauer
Treasurer	Michele Wright
Immediate Past President	VACANT
VP, Community	Susan Bauer
Director, Community	Bill Comerford
VP, Digital Communications	Brian Isaac
Director, Digital Communications	Jacque Brewer
VP, Membership	Dan Woltman
Director, Membership	VACANT
VP, Youth	Mike Fitzella
Director, Youth	Ed Wonder

## **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*