

The Optimist Monthly

Friend of Youth

July 31, 2021



July Events

7/07: Escape from Communist Vietnam. Sonia Johnston, now a regional president of John Marshall Bank, told us the exciting tale of her escape from Communist Vietnam and her subsequent success in Arlington. She also recounted her family's eventual – and harrowing – final escape to the United States. Thank you, Frank O'Leary, for inviting her and for securing a terrific article in the July 12 Sun Gazette about her talk (see link below).

<https://sungazette.news/banker-details-family-odyssey-from-vietnam-to-u-s/>



Photo of Sonia Johnston (r) and her niece, Monique To.

7/21: Arlington's Ball Sellers Mansion. Annette Benbow, docent at the Ball



Sellers Mansion, informed us all about the oldest existing building in Arlington and the importance of the Ball family in the history of Arlington [such as Ball's Crossroads, now "Ballston"]. Thank you, once again, **Frank O'Leary**, for continuing to provide interesting speakers for our luncheons.

The Will be No Optimist Events in August

There will be no luncheons nor a Meet & Greet during August.

Upcoming in September

9/01: September 1: *Twenty Years Later, Remembering 9/11 and the First Responders* - Cathy Hix, President of the Arlington Historical Society and Reede Bush, a First Responder, who rushed to the Pentagon when the attack occurred, recount the events of that fateful day and how AHS is honoring those who so honorably and bravely served. WGCC at 12:15. As always, we are indebted to **Frank O'Leary** for our luncheon speakers.

9/15: Respect for Law Luncheon returns! **Brian Kellenberger** and **Erin Mendenhall** have partnered to ensure that we are able to continue our historic Respect for Law luncheon this year. PLEASE make every effort to attend this luncheon to honor the Arlington Police and Sheriff's Offices and their awardees. WGCC at 12:15.

9/22: Meet & Greets resume at Texas Jack's, 5:30 to 7:00. These events are key to increasing our membership, so PLEASE bring a prospective member to enjoy the fellowship of other members.

Oratorical Contest Results! by Richard Knight

With optimism and enthusiasm over 37 Swanson Middle School contestants prepared video presentations for this year's 2021 Oratorical Contest. The topic, "Healing the World with Optimism," inspired the contestants to render 5-minute speeches with their own individual themes. The teacher coordinators from Swanson Middle School selected the top 20 contestants from the group. Then, Tricia O'Hara and Richard E. Knight, as the contest judges, proceeded to listen to the 20 video speeches and to select the winner and the four runners-up.

The winning speech was delivered by Bolor Amarbayar, who received the first-place scholarship award. The second-place contestant was Anthony Haron; the third-place contestant was Paula Lopez-Landeo, the fourth-place contestant was Alaina Desautels, and the fifth-place contestant was Pariasr Blackburn (who did not submit a photograph). Their photos, below, were provided by Richard Knight.



Bolar Amarbayar Anthony Haron Paula Lopez-Landeo Alaina Desautels

As was the case last year, this was the only contest being held by OI, as the Zone Contest and the District Contest were not scheduled.

President's Message by Jeff Englander

The numbers are in and we are on a roll!

2500 The number of trees the Tree Committee will be ordering - a hundred more than last year. We are expected to sell out. Please mark your calendars for November 26th as we begin the tree sales for 2021. Tell your friends and neighbors to come out early to buy their tree. Last year, we sold out in 14 days. Thanks to our sales volume, the tree growers tell us we are the largest Christmas Tree lot in Northern Virginia. Thank you, Sandy Bushue, for your leadership!

10 This number represents the successful luncheons our Club has sponsored since the Virginia Governor's orders allowed us to meet again. One presentation landed us on the cover of the Sun Gazette. There are many more to come beginning September 1st as our Club remembers that fateful day, 9/11, twenty years ago. Please mark your calendar to hear a firsthand account of the rescue efforts by a first responder. September 15th, we honor our law enforcement with the return of the Respect for Law Day celebration. Our thanks go out to Frank O'Leary for recruiting our speakers. Kudos go out to Erin Mendenhall and Brian Kellenberger for leading the Respect for Law Day event.

9 is the number of new member prospects we have in our pipeline. Let's do all that we can to bring these kind folks to our Club and find additional people who believe in our mission.

12/12/2021 is the 75th birthday for our Club, which was first chartered on this date in 1946. Several members of the Washington Golf and Country Club began a fabulous tradition that we enjoy today and we thank them for the WGCC support then and now.

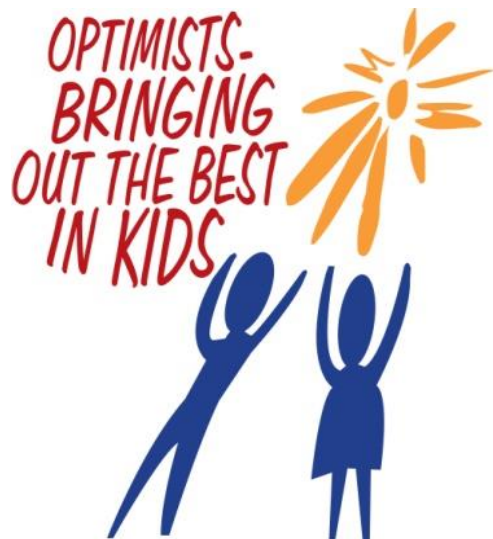
Wishing you a wonderful summer!

Jeff Englander

Please send your summer photos for the August newsletter.

Every year, the Optimist newsletter has used the August edition to showcase our members' favorite summer vacation moments. This year, since there are no Optimist events during August, it is especially important that you send in your favorite photos from this summer to mark.whitenton@gmail.com.

We are recovering from some 16 months of "Groundhog Day," which has made some cautious about resuming your own vacation plans or even attending social events, such as our Optimist luncheons. This makes those of you who will send in your photos an important way to share your summer experiences and encourage your fellow Optimist members to get out and about – and consider attending our luncheons going forward.



mw: 126
Optimist Club of Arlington 16-005;
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Capital- Virginia District 16;
Northern Virginia Zone 4;
www.optimistclubofarlingtonva.org