

The Optimist Monthly

Friend of Youth
January 31, 2022



January Events

1/05: Delegate Patrick Hope – “Preview of events in Richmond”. Delegate Hope has been representing Arlington in the General Assembly since 2010. (See



internet photo, left). He spoke to us about the challenges facing the Virginia legislature under a Republican Governor. It should be mentioned that Patrick gave the General Assembly’s proclamation honoring our friend, Judge George Varoutsos, at his retirement ceremony on December 17. Again, thank you, Frank O’Leary, for arranging for Delegate Hope

to speak to our luncheon.

1/19: Darren Aversa, Edward Jones - Economic and financial outlook for 2022.

Before the luncheon began, President Brian Kellenberger gave the Club’s official “Thank You” to Past President Jeff Englander for his superior leadership of the Club during the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year. Jeff did a terrific job keeping the Club’s profile up during the Covid lockdowns, including personally delivering all of our awards to each of the sports clubs we support.



Darren Aversa is no stranger to giving talks to our luncheons. This was his third! Of course, thank you, Frank O'Leary (see photo below), for inviting Darren. This time, Darren focused on opportunities for the government to reduce



Inflation. He also addressed what investors should do in the current economic environment, in which many are concerned the stock market may drop substantially.



1/26: Meet & Greet Returned! Texas Jack's (2761 Washington Blvd) from 5:30 to 7:00. See photo, below, provided by Peter Wehmann:



Optimists together at Texas Jack's are (l to r): Peter Wehmann, JB Whitlow, Sandy Bushue, Eric Turner (guest of Brian Kellenberger), Erin Mendenhall, Jeff Englander, Sue Gartner, Lola Reinsch, and Brian Kellenberger,

February Events

2/02: Boss Shepherd. Local historian John Richardson will join us on February 2 to enlighten us on the life and times of "Boss Shepherd," the man who did so much to shape the city of Washington. Thank you, Frank O'Leary, for scheduling John. WGCC a5 12:15.

2/16: Martha Maurer, representing The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, will remind us that the world can be an extremely dangerous and hostile

place for children. Thank you again, Frank O'Leary, for scheduling Martha. WGCC at 12:15.

2/23: Meet & Greet! Texas Jack's (2761 Washington Blvd) from 5:30 to 7:00.

Hope to see you there!

Tree Lot Update by Sandy Bushue

Optimists,

Usually, the January newsletter is a "wrap up" of the tree lot. Not this year. The Optimists 2021 tree lot was a HUGE success with a very early sell out that I wrote about the "wrap up" in the December newsletter. A big thank you to those who worked and an even bigger thank you to the tree lot committee:

JB Whitlow, Bob Patton, Jeff Englander, Andreas Baltatzis, Brian Kellenberger, Erica Burson, Tricia O'Hara, Frank O'Leary, Richard Knight, Mark Zetlin and Gerry Marosek.

Below are a few stats for the reasons why the 2021 tree lot was such a success:

Shortest sell days - 11 (SOLD OUT in 11 days)

Number of trees sold - 2100 (Ordered 2496 but due to the tree shortage, the full order could not be completed.)

Credit Card purchases - 86%

Best Weekend and busiest weekend - December 4 - 5 (This has been the tradition for over 5 years.)

Unloading - Two very successful unloading party - trucks were on-time. One not as successful since the truck did not arrive until 2:00 p.m. However, Richard Knight rallied the volunteers and the truck was unloaded by 5:00 pm.

Volunteers - We had over 200 volunteers who were remarkable!!!!

Lowest Sale Day - Monday (Past two years, Monday has been the slowest. It usually is Tuesday.)

Highest Sale Day - Saturday (This has been the trend for five years.)

The Optimist Tree Lot has become a very important part of the Arlington County community. Let's keep it going and stay tuned for updates on the campaign to keep the lot where it is for a few more years.

Way to go Optimists!!! You make a difference!

Optimistically,

Sandra Bushue

sandy.bushue@gmail.com

President's Message by Brian Kellenberger

2022 has started out with a bang! We had our first lunch of the year at Texas Jack's with a great speaker and good food, followed by a Board Meeting, a second lunch and a Meet & Greet!

A small group of us, Gerry, JB, Richard, Sandy and myself met to discuss the tree lot in 2022. As you know, but if not, Wells Fargo has told us that we cannot use their lot this year. I still can't believe this, but we plan to fight this and convince them that they should let us use the lot. We have been using that same location for 75 years! We are looking at alternative lots just in case. Overlee Pool at 6030 Lee/Langston Highway in Arlington is one option. Their lot is big enough and empty in the winter. So, we are in the process of reaching out to them for approval as a backup.

During the Board Meeting we discussed a lot of items. Sandy gave us a final 2021 Tree Lot report. We set records this year for the number of days to sell out and money raised. Congrats again to everyone! The clubs we support are submitting their requests for grants and once we have all of them the board will meet to decide on allocation.

Frank O'Leary has done a fabulous job the past few years as Speaker Chair but has asked me to find a replacement for his position. Please let me know if you would be interested in filling this position. Thank you to Frank for a tremendous job in bringing interesting and dynamic speakers to our lunches!

Our new member pipeline is robust with three or four people currently in the process. Please don't let up on your recruiting efforts, they are paying off big time.

We have a busy February planned with two lunches and a Meet & Greet. I hope to see you at one of these events!

Optimistically,

Brian

Scholarship Update by Mark Whitenton

Four of our five scholarship winners from last summer have received their \$5,000 awards after successfully achieving GPA's for their first semesters at over the required C+. One scholarship recipient, Mekyah Dunbar (Wakefield), who has been accepted by Old Dominion University, has delayed her first semester until this month. Accordingly, her scholarship will be held open until she can provide her first transcript in May. Here are the responses from the other four 2021 winners:



Abdellah Mouslik (W-L) attending George Washington

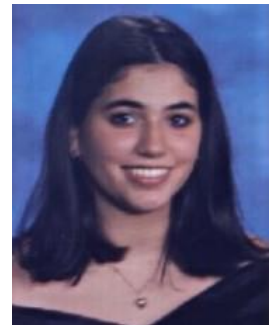
University: My first fall semester went fairly well. I found that my high school did a good job in preparing me for college and how to manage all of my responsibilities. It's interesting because as a result of the ongoing pandemic, this is the first

time the current sophomores are on campus as well, so it was nice knowing that a lot of other students were in the same boat as me with adjusting to getting around campus. I've really enjoyed the independence that comes with being a college student, in that we have the freedom of scheduling our classes to the best of our strengths and interests. I have been using this first year to explore as many different subjects as possible before declaring and setting my mind on a major. I've taken courses in a wide realm of subjects and plan on doing so in the upcoming semester. For example, I took courses in Sociology, Psychology, Government, and Statistics in my first semester. This upcoming semester, some of the courses I will be taking are in Writing, Biology, and Communication. I want to keep my options as varied as possible before deciding upon a major next year. Other than that, I feel my semester went pretty well.

Thank You and Happy New Year,

Abdellah Mouslik

Armita Dadvar (Yorktown) attending George Mason University: Thank you so much! I had a great first semester of college and enjoyed all my classes. I hope you and your family enjoyed the holidays, and have a happy New Year! I'm incredibly grateful as this scholarship is so helpful for my education. I truly love learning and I'm excited to be going into my 2nd semester of University.



Olivia Chiappetta (Bishop O'Connell) attending the University of Virginia: My first semester at the University of Virginia required both diligence and hard work, yet I found it quite enjoyable. I am currently studying psychology and take great interest in learning about the brain and human behavior. While psychology is my primary focus of study, I also took an art class this semester and

improved my art skills. In my free time I run with the club running team, attend football games, draw, and hang out with friends. Inspired by my younger brother with disabilities, I plan to attend graduate school to become an occupational therapist. In the future I hope to care for others and help strengthen their skills for daily life.

Eric Robles (Wakefield) attending Virginia Tech:

Eric tells us that his first semester went by in a flash: The next thing I knew I was picking my classes for spring. I learned a lot of important things during my first semester, most importantly, how to manage my time. I was not used to the amount of freedom you get when you go to college. It was very overwhelming at first and my work began to pile up because "I have all week to finish it". It was a very toxic mindset that held me back from doing better in my classes.

Looking forward I expect to manage my time better, but only after facing the hard truth for myself. But on the positive side, I have intensely enjoyed Virginia Tech and I look forward to spending the next three and a half years sharpening my skills and expanding my network. I recommend every incoming freshman to take advantage of school-planned events to socialize and make everlasting friends, some of my fondest memories were made at these events, such as football games, club registration (Gobblerfest), and resident hall activities. Overall, I highly recommend that everyone at least experience going to college. It is not something you want to miss out on.



mw: 132
Optimist Club of Arlington 16-005;
Mid-Atlantic Region 3;
Capital- Virginia District 16;
Northern Virginia Zone 4;
www.optimistclubofarlingtonva.org