

The Optimist Monthly

October 31, 2022



October

10/05: Respect for Law. Erin Mendenhall organized our annual Respect for Law luncheon again this year. Optimist awards were given to the Arlington Pretrial Staff of the Sherriff Department; to Joseph Jones III, Counselor of the Young Achievers Program in the Arlington Court; and the Community Engagement Division of Law Enforcement.



Photo provided by Andreas Baltatzis.

Thank you, Erin, for giving us this very important Optimist opportunity to thank Arlington's police, firemen and Court administration. Please see the Appendix for the Arlington County Board Resolution supporting our Club's Respect for Law Day, arranged for by Erin. Good job!

10/19: Charlie Clark, spoke to us about the Custis-Lee mansion, Arlington House. This was Charlie's third time speaking to our luncheons. Thank you, Charlie, for continuing to inform and entertain us.



10 /26: Meet & Greet. Once again held at Texas Jack's (2761 Washington Blvd).



This was the last Meet & Greet until January 25, so it was fortunate that several new members were able to attend. Left to right: **Sydney Kellenberger**, **Gavin Authier** and **Eric Turner**. Photo by **Peter Wehmann**.

November

11/02: Elizabeth Jones Valderrama, Executive Director of OAR. WGCC at 12:15.

11/16- ISCC Luncheon Man/Women of the Year. The Keynote speaker is Mark Schwartz, who was named County Manager by the Arlington County Board in January 2016. Members who attend will not be charged the extra cost for this meal – our Optimist Club will pay the difference from our normal luncheon price. Remember, our own **Sandy Bushue** is now the president of the ISCC! **If you are planning on attending, please RSVP to Debbie Whitenton at debd509@aol.com.** WGCC. Socializing begins at 11:30, lunch from 12:00 to 1:30.

President's Message by **Andreas Baltatzis**

Dear Optimists,

I am truly honored to lead this wonderful club for the next year. I want to extend my deepest gratitude and



congratulations to Brian Kellenberger for a job well-done. I am excited to work with an excellent incoming Board. To Jeff Englander and JB Whitlow, whose board terms have expired, thank you for your service to the club!

For those who could not attend the October 5th Respect for Law meeting, Erin Mendenhall put together a superb event. Great work Erin!

For our upcoming events in November, I would like to highlight the ISCC Lunch Man/Women of the year on November 16th. Also, please respond to Sandy's email requesting sign-ups for the Tree Lot at our new location at the Knights of Columbus parking lot at 5115 Little Falls Road.

As President this year, my priorities will be to work with the Tree Lot Committee to ensure a successful transition to our new location and to continue to grow the membership of the club. Please share the message about the Tree Lot move. As always, the club is welcome to any suggestions to bring in new members. You can reach out to me directly at: abaltatzis@gmail.com or 703-862-3452.

Optimistically yours,
Andreas

Christmas Tree Lot Update



by Sandy Bushue

Optimists,

The first draft of the tree lot schedule was sent last week. I know it is difficult to think of Christmas when Halloween awaits, however, we need to begin. Thank you to those who have already generously provided dates and times. The schedule will go out once a week with updates. Please remember to look at your calendar and let me know what works for you.

It is going to be an interesting season. Not only do we have a new location but trees are scarce this year. Trees that are 8' to 9' (white tag) are in very short supply. We are only getting 45 when we usually get 150. We usually order 2450 trees. This year we are only getting a little over 1700.

Why the low supply? According to our grower, 2008, many tree farms went

out of business due to the recession. Also, the older tree farmers retired and there was no one in the family who was interested in continuing. Many tree farms folded.

Then, in 2015, demand for trees increased due to studies citing that real trees were better for the environment. Fresh Christmas tree demand continues to increase every year, particularly for taller trees as home building includes more open spaces and taller ceilings. It takes about a year for a tree to grow a foot. Presently, tree farmers are having difficulties in finding saplings as they too are now in short supply. And, I understand that saplings these days are very expensive making a tree farm business model not as profitable. Growers have acquired more land but they have yet to plant. I hope you can see how this is all interconnected.

If demand for trees continues to increase, it will still take a few years to work out of this. It seems like a good/bad type of problem. I think this year is the ultimate bad problem, especially with the cost of diesel fuel ticking upward.

However, we are Optimists. We will have a good year!!! Actually, we are very fortunate! It was wonderful to have found a new location where we are wanted and welcomed. A big thank you to the Knights of Columbus who reached out to us!!!

Optimistically,

Sandy Bushue (202.352.4922)





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

Appendix

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Proclamation

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RESPECT FOR LAW DAY

WHEREAS, the work of law enforcement and public safety personnel are often called upon at a moment's notice to risk their own safety in order to ensure the well-being of their community and country; and

WHEREAS, we are committed to an era of transparency, accountability, and trust between our police department and our community; and

WHEREAS, we desire the common goal of a mutually respectful relationship with law enforcement that recognizes the importance of its role in preserving social order in a democracy; and

WHEREAS, the Optimists International Club of Arlington, VA is dedicated to community service and encourages all Arlingtonians to recognize our law enforcement officers and their work in the community;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Katie Cristol, Chair of the County Board of Arlington, Virginia, do hereby proclaim October 5, 2022, as

RESPECT FOR LAW DAY

as a time to thank our law enforcement officers throughout Arlington County, and to encourage all of our citizens to recognize our law enforcement officers for the significant impacts they have made and continue to make in keeping our community safe.



Katie Cristol
Chair