

The Optimist Monthly

Friend of Youth



July 2018

July 2018 Events

7/18: Annual Coaches Appreciation Night. This year, new member **Michal Simek** headed up this important dinner to thank the many coaches helping our Club support Arlington youth sports. He did a terrific job -- what a great evening!

First, the location for this year's dinner was arranged by **Clayton Depue**, who selected the Holiday Inn as an appropriate venue -- and it was a great choice. For once, we had our own room that in which all could actually hear the speakers.



It was a big evening. Before we heard from the coaches who make Arlington youth sports so successful, President Clayton inducted **Chanda Choun** as our newest Friend of Optimist (FOO). Chanda came to us, initially through the Meet 'n' Greet, because he was interested in the Optimists philosophy. He was encouraged to join and sponsored by **Tricia O'Hara**.

Michal presided over the evening with outstanding poise in introducing the five coaches to explain how their various clubs are doing and how the Optimist's

support is helping. His landing Adam Brick to be the keynote speaker was also outstanding. See photos, below.



JP Cooney, Babe Ruth Baseball



Jeremy Ferrer, Arlington Youth Hockey



Adam Brick, Exec Director, Arlington Soccer Ass'n



Doug Soles, YULA



Doug Lamb & Thrine Kane, Optimist Acorns

JP Cooney, speaking for Babe Ruth Baseball commented that when he was younger and played, "the hottest thing in town was having a jacket that said 'Arlington Optimists.'" There are currently about 1200 kids in Babe Ruth and there is now a traveling team. A team of eight-year-olds won the Virginia State championship this year.

Jeremy Ferrer, representing Arlington Youth Hockey, told us he has been volunteering as a coach for seven years. He said that our financial help is very much needed because ice time at Kettler arena is now over \$500 per hour. Arlington Nights Middle School Hockey, about 50 kids, has lost only two games in the past two years!

Doug Soles, representing YULA (Youth Ultimate League of Arlington -- the name "Frisbee" is still under copyright), was very proud of the growth in participation in this fast-growing sport. There are teams at all the Arlington high schools -- 500 kids ! These Arlington teams came in First, Third, and Fourth in the Virginia State Championships. However, what he called "low density" of teams geographically has resulted in significant travel costs -- currently about \$30,000 in bus fees each year.

Thrine Kane, head coach for the Arlington Optimist Acorns Junior Rifle Club, introduced the club's president, Doug Lamb. Doug observed that although the NRA donates practice time at its range for the program and the club can use the Izaak Walton range at low cost, the costs of travel to and entry fees for the various meets across the country really add up. For example, this year, the club sent nine athletes to the Junior Olympic Championships in Colorado Springs. Also, the Acorns came in Second Place at the Army Marksmanship Unit Junior Air Rifle Championships at Ft. Benning, GA. and First Place at the Civilian Marksmanship Program National Championships at Camp Perry, OH. Doug congratulated Arlingtonian Aron Tinter, a graduating senior from Washington Lee High School, for being selected by the Arlington Better Sports Club as the Arlington Rifle Sportsman of the Year. Of the 15 member team, six athletes --

including Aron -- are going off to college, four of whom will be shooting on college teams. Accordingly, the Acorns are scouting for new talent.

Adam Brick, the keynote speaker, is currently the Executive Director of the Arlington Soccer Association, which currently includes 9,000 kids in the county. Adam explained that the soccer program is more than just organizing teams and finding coaches, it also is focused on helping the many kids in Arlington who need financial assistance to even be able to play the sport. Adam estimates that the ASA spends \$200,000 a year on various grants to 1,800 kids who otherwise could not play -- including totally free programs to 350 kids. Adam has a long and distinguished career as a coach and brings his years of experience, primarily in basketball, to guide the ASA with his coaching philosophy. He believes in keeping it fun for the players, teaching them the game and sportsmanship, letting them know that he personally cares about them as individuals and as a team, so that they are motivated to come back and play the next season. His Golden Rule is that if his team wins, he asks them to celebrate after lining up and shaking hands with the members of the losing team. At the end of his talk, Michal Simek and Clayton Depue presented Adam with the AOC's grant to the ASA, below:



The evening finished with door prizes and an auction. The six door prizes were donated / arranged for by Mark Zetlin, JB Whitlow, Thrine Kane, and Tricia O'Hara. In addition, Adam Brick asked five obscure sports trivia questions, the prize for answering correctly was a sports cap. Three of the questions were answered by the same person, Bill Foster (a hockey coach), causing JB Whitlow to yell out that he had won a Hat Trick! The auction of the hockey puck signed by TJ Oshie #77, obtained by Tricia O'Hara, was conducted by JB Whitlow. After spirited bidding, the extremely generous bid of \$400 was made by no other than Bill Foster! Thank you, Bill. See photo below.



Michal Simek and JB Whitlow present the grand auction prize -- a hockey puck signed by TJ Oshie #77 -- to hockey coach Bill Foster.

The 50/50 prize -- one of the AOC's largest in recent memory -- went to Mike Pallsen, a baseball coach, which he handed over as his gift to the Babe Ruth Baseball representative. For more details concerning this event, please see Tricia O'Hara's press release printed in Appendix 2, below.

7/25: Meet 'n' Greet. This is the last one until September 26, so we were pleased to see such great attendance. Several of the guests indicated a that they may join the AOC. Photo below:



Meet 'n' Greet participants, left to right: Mark Whitenton, Chanda Choun, Debbie Whitenton, Keshawn Clark (guest of Sue Gartner), Sandy Bushue, Tricia O'Hara, Jeff Englander, Sue Crow, Sue Gartner, Peter Wehmann, Robin Robertson (guest of Sue Gartner), and Mark Zetlin. Not pictured are late arrivals Erin Mendenhall, John Victoria (guest of Chanda Choun), Ken Williams (who spoke to the AOC on January 3) and Ken's wife, Marti (guests of Tricia O'Hara).

Upcoming Events

August

8/01: History of Alexandria County. Optimist Frank O'Leary will talk about Arlington when it was a rural part of Alexandria in the 1700 and 1800's. WGCC at 12:15 PM.

8/15: No luncheon. Please come to the next one on September 5.

8/22: No Meet 'n' Greet. They will resume September 26.

September

9/05: Respect for Law! This historic tribute to Arlington's law enforcement stand-outs returns this year thanks to the leadership of Shandra Niswander and Optimist veteran, Judge Jim Almand. WGCC at 12:15 PM.

9/19: The Importance of Aerial Intelligence by CIA Historian Gerry Haines. Thank you, Frank O'Leary, for inviting him. WGCC at 12:15 PM.

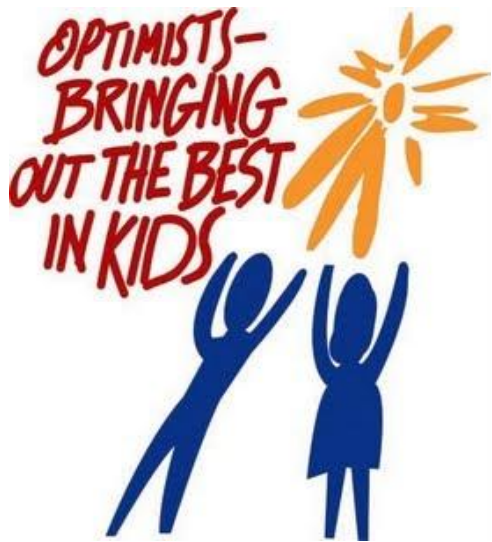
9/21: Optimist Fall Gala!! Reserve a place on your calendar for the annual Optimist gala, Friday Sept 21, 2018 this year again at the WGCC! This year's theme is going to be a tribute to our founding members, including celebrating our longest members. This year's theme is the "The Roaring 1920's" Come dressed in your best Black Tie 1920's inspired dress. This year we will have a professional photo booth and the amazing Northern Lights Orchestra will be performing. Thank you, Erin



Mendenhall for developing and managing this highly valued social event, which was revitalized last year by Mark Zetlin. Please consider bringing couples that might want to join the Optimist Club! \$50 per person, \$100 per couple.

WGCC: 6:00-10:30 PM. If you have not already done so, kindly RSVP to erin@mendenhallproperties.com by Aug 1, 2018, or respond to her Evite invitation sent to you on July 3.

9/26: Meet 'n' Greet. Meet 'n' Greets resume! Please come over and bring a prospective member! Westin Hotel on Glebe Road: 5:30 to 7:00 PM.



Long-time AOC member Stan Sitnik has recently lost his wife, Judith "Dee" Sitnik, who passed away on July 8 at the age of 77 years young. Stan has our deepest sympathies. We hope he will be able to attend a luncheon soon, so that we might share our feelings with him personally.

MW # 92

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

Appendix 1. Provided by Clayton Depue [from the Archives].

The following unsolicited letter from a new member of the Optimist Club of Arlington is an excellent example of how a new member is treated when they join our club:

What it's Like To Be New Optimist Member

My first exposure to the Optimists unknowingly occurred last August while I was looking for office space in Northern Virginia. At that time, I was answering an ad placed by a gentleman (and Optimist) named Andy Barr.

After shaking hands on a lease agreement, Andy invited me to an Optimist luncheon, where John Youngblood, Athletic Director of Washington-Lee High School for twenty-seven years, was scheduled to speak. Being new to the area and a small business owner, I thought it would be a good opportunity to develop a few new contacts. Plus, I had been wanting to get involved in the community – something I never made the time to do in Boston.

When I enter the Washington Golf and Country Club (where the Arlington Optimist Club has a luncheon meeting every Wednesday). I saw Andy there with a big smile. He immediately held out his right arm to shake my hand, and proceeded to introduce me to dozens of Optimist members.

The atmosphere was filled with camaraderie. And although these men had come from varied backgrounds, it was obvious they were genuinely good friends. They made me feel right at home, as they exchanged stories and handed out some good-natured ribbing. I knew right away that I wanted to be a part of this group.

But my reasons for joining the Optimist were deeper than the fun and friendship.

Until recently, my life was consumed by the constant pursuit of money and career advancement.

I moved to Boston in 1986, following graduation from the University of Vermont. I engaged the corporate world, where I was surrounded by people who, like me, worked long hours in hopes of the next promotion and pay raise. There was no time left for anything else.

When the recession hit Boston, it hit hard. Dozens of my friend were laid off, and suddenly had nothing to show for their long hours of work. At that point, I realized there was more to life than working for the next paycheck. I needed to do something fulfilling – something that would help others instead of just myself.

That's what I found when I joined the Optimist Club. And, the men who surrounded me were a true inspiration. Take Andy, for example. He is a millionaire from his highly successful Real Estate business. And still, he spends tens of thousands of Dollars buying sleeping bags and clothing, and personally handing them out to homeless people on the streets of D.C.

Then there's Jeff Steger, our current President. Jeff is a retired Police Officer, who spent his career developing drug programs in schools throughout America. What an impact he had made! Both Jeff and Andy have received the "Man of the Year Award" from the Inter-Service Club of Arlington.

And then there is Bill Davies. Bill is a young eighty-three-year old, who told me of his 8-1 victory last year, when he pitched for his son's fast-pitch softball team. He shared the story with me as he sawed tree trunks at the annual Optimist Christmas Tree Sale.

In my eyes, these men, along with the other Optimists are successful – not just because of where they stand professionally and financially – but because they have found a way to gain fulfillment from serving others.

I wasn't the only one impressed by the Optimists! On September 9th, I was one of eight new members signed up by Andy Barr. It was the most men inducted by a single Optimist at one Luncheon in the Club's forty-six-year history.

Now that a few months have passed, the Wednesday luncheons have become one of the highlights of my week. The speakers are always great – former Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt; former CIA Director Admiral Stansfield Turner; former Washington Redskin Pat Fischer; and a lively debate between two Congressional

candidates, just to name a few. And, I already had the fortune of winning one of our weekly 50/50 raffles.

Aside from the good times, it's nice to know so many youngsters in the community are benefitting from our programs. A few weeks ago, while working at the Optimist Christmas tree lot, I was approached by a lady who praised and thanked us for everything the Optimists have done for her children – sports teams, essay and Oratorical contests, and drug programs and scholarships. For me, that's what makes Optimism so worthwhile!

Mike Spencer
January 6, 1993

Appendix 2. Press Release provided by Tricia O'Hara.

Press Release- AOC Coaches Appreciation Dinner
Wednesday, 18 July 2018
Contact: Tricia O'Hara, 703/303-8753

ARLINGTON OPTIMIST CLUB HONORS THE “ARLINGTON YOUTH SPORTS COACHES”

The Arlington Optimist Club (AOC) held its annual Coaches Appreciation Dinner on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 at the Holiday Inn in Ballston. AOC's featured guest speaker was Adam Brick, Executive Director, Arlington Soccer Association (ASA)

Coaches:

Jeremy Ferrara; Hockey

JP Cooney; Arlington Babe Ruth Baseball-Cal Ripkin Division

Doug Lamb; Arlington “Acorns” Combined Junior Rifle Team

Doug Soles; Youth Ultimate League of Arlington, Arlington Ultimate Frisbee

The Arlington youth sports coaches expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the continued support received over the years from the Arlington Optimist Club.

Jeremy Ferrara with Arlington Youth Hockey (AYH) AOC's funding also helps allow players who don't have the resources to play the game. Getting to play games at the place where the Caps practice is great experience for the players.

JB Cooney with Arlington Babe Ruth (ABR) thanked the Optimist Club for their continued long-standing support. The boys 8U Storm were Virginia State Champs and they made it to the

Regional tournament in Ocala FL.

Doug Lamb, Arlington “Acorns” Combined Junior Rifle Team. Six of their team members are graduating and going off to college. They are seeking new members.

Doug Soles, Youth Ultimate League of Arlington (YULA) and Ultimate Frisbee thanked the Optimist Club for their support.

Brick’s personal philosophy of making it fun for the kids; teach them the sport and sportsmanship, let them know that he cares about them so that they will want to come back the next year, and reminded us that all sports are about the kids!

The evening ended with a 50/50 raffle; door prizes , and a live auction item; a Puck signed by TJ Oshie #77 donated by the Washington Capitals.

[See photo below]:



Photo caption left to right: Adam Brick, representing soccer, accepting a generous check from AOC President Clayton Depue, while Michal Simek, Chairman of Coaches Night looks on.

[Photo by Mark Whitenton]

---END---