

The Optimist Monthly

Friend of Youth



June 2018

June 2018 Events

6/06: Ending Homelessness in Arlington.

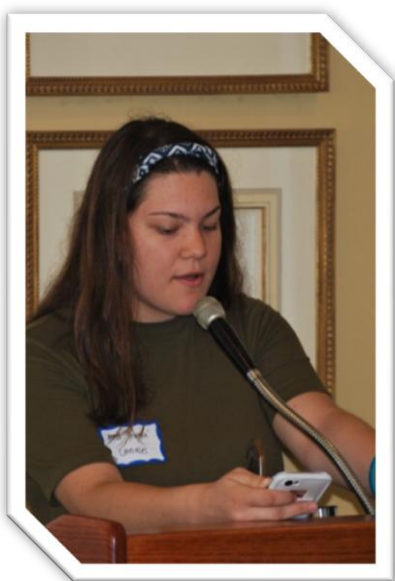
Scott Miller, Senior Director of Development at A-Span, gave us a thorough presentation on what his organization has been doing to help with this problem.

Scott informed us that they have expanded their traditional meal and housing services to include helping missing persons find their history and providing a job bank. Scott announced that all these services are now under one roof at the Arlington Homeless Service Center. Sadly, we learned that Arlington is the number two county in the United States for homeless veterans. Thank you, Leigh Hurley, for inviting him.



In addition, our luncheon heard from four previous Optimist Scholarship recipients. Our Treasurer, Gerry Marosek, was able to track down and contact a number of our "legacy" winners and ask them to attend our luncheon to share

their experiences. Note that Sean Coleman, a 2015 scholarship winner from Yorktown (and on the cover of our current Optimist Club brochure). was among the legacy speakers. See their photos, below:



Anna Canales, Washington & Lee '17
Attending Christopher Newport University



Sean Coleman, Yorktown '15
Attending University of Virginia



Caroline Jones, Bishop O'Connell '17
Attending William & Mary



Khin Kyaw, Yorktown '18
Attending University of Virginia

6/20: Animal Welfare in Arlington. Jennifer Toussaint, Arlington Animal Control Chief and Samuel Wolbert, president and CEO of the Animal Welfare League of Arlington (photo below), gave us a status report on their respective activities. Sam informed us that his organization (AWLA) has expanded from the care and shelter of needy animals to include pet adoption, humane education programs, and community services. The AWLA has grown to over 300 volunteers and finally has all of its many services under a single roof. He added that the AWLA is one of the only animal shelters that accepts rescues from other jurisdictions.



Jennifer , who was recently recognized as the Top Animal Control Officer in the Commonwealth of Virginia, told us that her small team has performed rescues of both pets and Arlington wildlife, providing medical care and neutering to over 1,250 pets last year alone. She lamented that the increasingly small bat population in Arlington is especially sad because bats eat as many as 1,000 mosquitoes each night. Thank you, Leigh Hurley for inviting them, and for having worked so hard to fill our speakers calendar so far in advance!

Also at the luncheon President Depue inducted new member Eric Morales. See photo, left. Eric is a Commercial Banking Officer with United Bank. Thank you, Gerry Marosek, for sponsoring Eric.



6/27: June Meet 'n' Greet. Tricia O'Hara provides the following photo and caption. The photo captures Sandy Bushue and the gang handing an AOC check to Ramon Montes, President of the Reintegrating Foundation, who spoke to the AOC at our March 7, 2018 luncheon at the invitation of Clayton Depue.



From left to right: Chandra Choun (guest of Tricia O'Hara), Clayton Depue, Sue Gartner, Ramon Montes, Shandra Niswander, Sandy Bushue, Richard Knight, Tricia O'Hara, Robert Roundik, and Peter Wehmann. Photo taken by Shelley Bennett.

Scholarship Winners for 2018

At the June 6 luncheon, two of our 2018 Optimist Scholarship winners were present to receive their \$5,000 scholarship awards. They are Nicolette Lounberg of Washington-Lee High School and Syeda Shamsuddin of Wakefield High School. Nicolette (left) will be attending the University of Virginia this fall and was accompanied by her father, Daniel Lounberg. Syeda (right) will be attending James Madison University this fall and was accompanied by her father, Syed Shamsuddin, and one of her teachers, Lisa Labella.



At our June 20 luncheon, the other two 2018 Optimist Scholarship winners were present to receive their awards. They are Soha Qureshi of Yorktown High School and Christopher "Bart" Whelan of Bishop O'Connell High School. Soha will be attending George

Mason University and was accompanied by her parents, Sabahat and Nasir Mahmood, and Yorktown Counselor Rafael Espinoza. Bart was accompanied by his mother, Kim Whelan, and our dear friend, Counselor Mary Lou Wentzel. Bart will be attending Virginia Tech this fall. Thank you, Mark Whitenton, for managing this year's Optimist Scholarship program.

President's Report by Clayton Depue

Leigh Hurley – It is with great disappointment that I announce that Leigh



Hurley, AOC member since 2015 and AOC Board Member since 2016, will soon be resigning from the Club. She and her husband Matt are moving to Charlotte, NC, where he has already started with his new position.

Leigh was recently elected to the office of AOC President-Elect, to become President October 1, 2019. She has served as our Program Chairperson, doing an outstanding job arranging and booking informative and engaging programs for our luncheon meetings. In the two years she has served on the Board of Directors, she has brought a new and helpful perspective to the Board. The Nominating Committee has been reactivated to nominate a replacement for Leigh as President-Elect.

We will miss you, Leigh. Thank you for the awesome help you have been to me and to the Optimist Club of Arlington. We wish you and Matt all the best on your move to Charlotte! More photos of Leigh below in Appendix 1.

New Program Chairperson Needed – With Leigh leaving, we have an important opening for a Program Chairperson to find and book our luncheon speakers.

Arlington Soccer Association – The Board approved \$7,500 funding for the Arlington Soccer Association.

Regratifying Foundation (Helping Arlington's Foster Kids) The Board voted to provide \$4,000 in funding for assisting Arlington foster kids graduate from High School. The check was presented to Regratifying Foundation President

Ramon Montes at the June 27 Meet 'n' Greet (photo on page 4, above) . Please see the Press Release in Appendix 3 of this newsletter.

Upcoming Events

July

7/04: July 4th Holiday. No luncheon. However, Clayton Depue has uncovered an appropriate "liturgy masterpiece" written by former AOC member Mel Janssen in 1989. It is provided in full in Appendix 2, below.

7/18: Annual Coaches Appreciation Night. This year, new member Michal Simek will head up this important dinner to thank the many coaches helping our Club support Arlington youth sports. If you have not submitted your RSVP, please assist Michal by responding to his Evite or contacting him directly at michal.simek72@gmail.com. Holiday Inn, 4610 N. Fairfax Dr. at 5:30 PM.

7/25: Meet 'n' Greet. This is the last one until September 26, so please come down and bring a prospective member! Westin Hotel on Glebe Road: 5:30 PM.

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; and 8/22: No Meet 'n' Greet.

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 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. Kindly RSVP to erin@mendenhallproperties.com by Aug 1, 2018. An Evite invitation will follow in July.

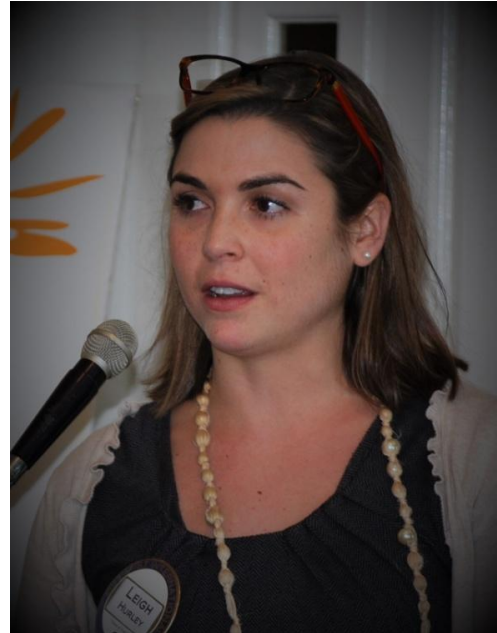
9/26: Meet 'n' Greet. Meet 'n' Greet resume! Please come over and bring a prospective member! Westin Hotel on Glebe Road: 5:30 to 7:00 PM.

MW # 91

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



Appendix 1. Photos of Leigh Hurley over the years provided by Mark Whitenton.



Appendix 2. Provided by Clayton Depue.

The Following liturgy masterpiece was written by Optimist Club of Arlington member Mel Janssen, and read at our July fifth 1989 luncheon meeting. He read the story, written in the first person, as part of our celebration of the Fourth of July.

The Declaration of Independence

I am the declaration of Independence, on display since 1952 in the Archives of the United States. My origins as a document are little known to my citizens, but I assure you that they are interesting. The first step was a resolution submitted by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia June 11, 1776 that “these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be free.” Three days later a committee was appointed – John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston and Roger Sherman – my fathers. Jefferson accepted the task of preparing a draft of the declaration that expressed the views of the several delegates. It was on July 2 that Congress approved Lee’s resolutions so technically that date is the birth of our country.

But on July 4 Congress adopted the final draft by Jefferson in what is now called Independence Hall in Philadelphia. How many persons signed the draft? Only 2 – John Hancock “by the order and in behalf of the Congress”, and Charles Thompson, Secretary of the Congress attested to Hancock’s signature. While this version was called unanimous, the New York delegation did not vote, finally reporting favorably July 19. There was no celebration on July 4, because my approval was not publicly announced until July 8.

When you see me in the archives today please remember that I was not engrossed and made ready for signature of 50 delegates until August 2, 1776. It was then that each asked for support of me “with firm reliance on the protection of Divine Guidance and mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor”. Many think that I was completed that day. One signature was affixed August 18, with another added in September. Four members signed in November, and I reached my present form in 1781, when Thomas McKean of Delaware finally signed.

Many persons are surprised that there are few new ideas that I express. One noteworthy departure concerns the ideas of life, liberty and property, which I proclaim as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That expresses the thought that many immigrants came to this nation with little except the opportunity for a better life.

Each year, I see thousands of school children who could scarcely know the trials and tribulations of those who pledged their lives and sacred honor—or there could not read the words, but fully understood freedom from the Crown and the king’s ways.

From my present location I did not see those who stood firm at Ticonderoga, Princeton, Trenton and sealed the victory at Yorktown. I doubt if anyone from the Bon Homme Richard or fought at Ft. McHenry or New Orleans ever saw me, especially when I was hidden at Leesburg. The volunteers at Palo Alto and Vera Cruz upheld the traditions set years before. I was troubled when brothers battled at Manassas, Gettysburg, Fredricksburg, and even Ft. Stevens, but each was expressing a desire to be free from certain limitations. A few of those who were with Dewey at Manila Bay and with Teddy Roosevelt at San Juan Hill saw me and expressed their desire to help others gain the freedom they cherished. I have seen the pride of my viewers from Belleau Wood, Chateau Thiery, and Cantigny. And those who had flown over Europe, held in the Ardennes, lost buddies at Midway and Battled over places like Wadke Island that I had never heard of and most forgotten, have looked at me and with tearful eye remembered comrades they wished could share the experience, but were unable to do so. I also saw with pride the men who held the Pusan Pocket, were on the Yalau, at Wonsan or Pork Chop Hill. They too had helped other people to retain their independence. I was sad when I say the camouflage suits worn by those who by the grace of God were able to leave Khe San, Cam Rahn Bay, and other jungle spots that few remember. They felt that the rest of us didn't care, but we did. Perhaps we didn't express ourselves very well. Some say that the people of S. Viet Nam did not have a yearning for freedom to continue on their own. Our young men and women did their task as we gave it to them.

Today, I look to the future. I earnestly pray that those aboard the Nimitz, the Iowa, the Vincennes and the Fairfax will be prepared to defend what the Constitution and I stand for, but will not need to retaliate against aggressors. That the 7th Army will be able to continue its peaceful ways, and the Strategic Air Command will not be called on to deliver its deadly weapons, or that the 1st Marine Division will not need to be deployed in combat.

Our nation depends on some who wear civilian garb most of the time with whom you rub shoulders at work or play, You think of them as executives, salesmen, technicians, mechanics, computer operators, and teachers. They are the members of Virginia' 29th Division and Air National Guard; 310th Theater Army Area Command; the 80th Training Division; the 352nd Civil Affairs Command; the 11th Special Forces; the 459th Tactical Airlift Wing; and the active Naval Reserve. It is my desire that they will be able to continue their civilian occupations without interruption, but they too are ready to defend all of us from enemies, domestic and foreign

May [sic] beginnings may have been unusual, but I look forward to the future generations with an expectation that I will be viewed by many millions who appreciate what those who pledged their lives and sacred honor did, and vow to

follow in their footsteps to do likewise when needed. Yes, I am the Declaration of Independence. Long live the United States of America, the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Mel Janssen
Member, Optimist Club of Arlington
Wednesday, July 5, 1989

Appendix 3. Press Release provided by Tricia O'Hara.

Press Release
Thursday 28 June 2018
POC: Tricia O'Hara – 703/303-8753

ARLINGTON OPTIMIST CLUB SUPPORTS ARLINGTON'S FOSTER CARE YOUTH

Wednesday 27 June 2018. During the Arlington Optimist Club's (AOC) Meet and Greet gathering, Vice President Sandy Bushue presented a check to Mr. Ramon Montes, CEO & President, of the RegratiFying Foundation (RF) to support foster care youth in our community.

AOC has changed many lives for the better. And, today the club continues to "Bring Out the Best in Kids by supporting a range of programs and activities that help our young people succeed.

RF's mission is to inspire foster care youth to identify their personal potential which will allow them to thrive now, and after foster care. Their signature program NOW (Navigate, Opportunity, Worth) launched in March 2018, is designed to encourage foster care youth to continue their education, explore different professional careers, and set future personal and career goals before they age out or emancipate from foster care.

In Northern Virginia, there are over 1,300 children and youth in the foster care system. To date, seventy-eight are in Arlington ranging from newborns to 19 years of age.

“The success rate for youth after foster care is not promising, states Montes, 45% will graduate high school by 19, more than 1 out of 5 will become homeless after 18, and only 46% will be employed by the age 26.”

The Regratifying Foundation’s goal is to help prepare Arlington's foster youth for their future by making sure they have a career path before they leave foster care.

Montes states “too many youth around the country leave foster care without completing high school, obtaining a college degree, or having a career that allows them to live prosperous lives. We want foster care youth to be successful too!”

AOC along with RF would like to help disrupt the cycle of poverty, homelessness and incarceration that disproportionately impacts foster care youth.

To learn more about the Regratifying Foundation email:
ramon@regratifyingfoundation.org

To learn more about the Arlington Optimist Club visit our website:
www.optimistclubofarlingtonva.org

Interested in joining AOC contact::
Tricia_ohara@verizon.net

END # #