

The Optimist Monthly

Friend of Youth



September
2018

September 2018 Events

9/05: Respect for Law! This historic tribute to Arlington's law enforcement stand-outs returned this year thanks to the leadership of **Shandra Niswander**, with the assistance of Optimist veteran, Judge **Jim Almand**. Shandra congratulated Jim (see his photo, right) for having managed the annual Respect for Law luncheons from 1981 to 2015!! Thank you, Jim, for such an exemplary contribution to our Club.



Shandra, who not only did a terrific job with the program, also submits the following thorough report of the event:

The Respect for Law program and luncheon honoring three local law enforcement officers was held Wednesday, September 5, 2018 at the Washington Golf and Country Club by the Optimist Club of Arlington. Shandra began the award ceremony by reading aloud a County Board Proclamation by Board Chair, Katie Cristol declaring the week of September 3, 2018 as Respect for Law Week in Arlington County.

Deputy Daniel Hilsdorf was nominated by Sheriff Beth Arthur who attended the luncheon and gave the keynote address. Deputy Hilsdorf was also accompanied by girlfriend, Kristine Bieniek and his direct supervisor Lt. Robert Morrill along with Chief Deputy Kidwell. Deputy Hilsdorf began his career as a Deputy Sheriff with the Arlington County Sheriffs' Office in 2014 and has worked in numerous positions throughout the jail until his reassignment to the Warrant Section in March 2017. On June 8th of this

year, Deputy Hilsdorf was able to de-escalate an extremely volatile situation in Clarendon Central Park. Deputy Hilsdorf demonstrated the qualities expected from public safety employees, displaying empathy, restraint, and a high level of professionalism.

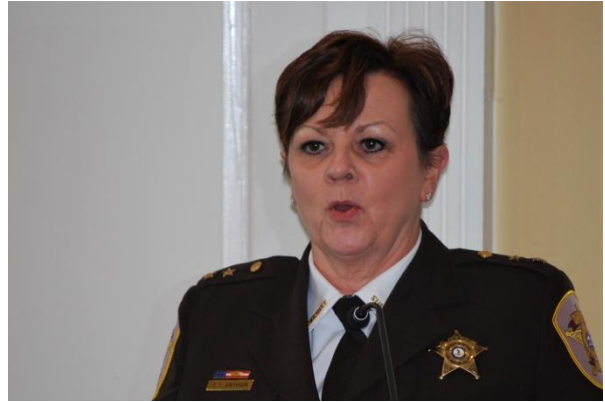
School Resource Office (SRO) Corporal Kevin Treakle was nominated by Chief Jay Farr who was in attendance. Also in attendance to witness Corporal Treakle's award presentation were Lieutenant Susan Noack and Captain Wayne Vincent. Corporal Treakle has been a member of the Arlington County Police Department for approximately 21 years. For the past 10 years, Corporal Treakle has been assigned to the School Resource Officer Unit (SRO), where he is currently the Field Training Officer for the Unit. Corporal Treakle is very passionate about working with youth of all ages from kindergarten through high school and was instrumental in developing a summer camp for at-risk youth. The focus of the camp is to provide positive experiences and mentorship to deter teens from engaging in behaviors that might result in disciplinary issues and hinder their progress to being productive members of our society.



From l to r: Shandra Niswander, Corporal Kevin Treakle, Police Chief Jay Farr, Sheriff Deputy Daniel Hilsdorf, and Deputy Director Rick Strobach.

Rick Strobach, Deputy Director of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Services Unit was nominated by Earl Conklin, Director of Court Services. His award was presented by The Honorable George D. Varoutsos who described how “countless youth have benefited from Strobach’s leadership in developing and managing community-based programs for court-involved youth, most recently with the addition of the Young Achievers after-school program for boys, and the Safe Havens Supervised Visitation Program, which is opening soon. Chris Edmonds was Deputy Director Strobach’s guest. Edmonds is a former Respect for Law Program awardee and is the current Group Home Manager at Argus House.

The closing remarks at the luncheon were provided by Arlington County Sheriff Beth Arthur. Sheriff Arthur emphasized the extraordinary degree of cooperation between Arlington's Police Department and its Sheriff's Department. She also described the Sheriff Department's recent initiative in developing a robust re-entry program to assist inmates in their transition from jail to leading successful lives in the real world.



Thank you, Shandra, for stepping up to manage this important and historic Optimist event. Great job!! Also, thank you, Tricia O'Hara for placing a great press release in the September 13 Sun Gazette and the Arlington Connection.

9/19: Why I Became an Optimist, led by Clayton Depue. Several Club members related how they joined the Arlington Optimists, filling in after a last-minute cancellation by the scheduled speaker on the Importance of Aerial Intelligence by CIA Historian Gerry Haines, It is hoped that Gerry Haines will be rescheduled for early next year.

9/21: Optimist Fall Gala!! Managed this year by Erin Mendenhall (photo left, by Tiffany Baird), this second annual gala was well-attended and great fun. This year's theme was the Roaring 20's. Among the 43 attendees were eight guests (not including spouses and dates of Optimist members). Almost all the attendees wore black tie and/or



1920's- inspired dress. Erin arranged for a live band, the Northern Lights Orchestra -- led by a very talented alto saxophone/vocalist -- to provide the musical entertainment for the evening. In addition to WGCC's dinner and an open bar, Erin arranged for a professional photographer, Tiffany Baird. A grand evening was had by all. Thank you, Erin for developing and managing this highly-valued social event and for encouraging our members to invite so many potential Optimists as guests. See photo below for arguably the best 20's-attired pair: Erin "Bee's Knees" Mendenhall and Clayton "The Don" Depue (photo by Tiffany Baird).



Erin informs us that we should feel free to download any of the many photos that Tiffany took that we would like to post, print, crop, use creatively and share! Go to <https://imagesbytiffany.pixieset.com/optimistclubgala/>. If you would like for Tiffany to print you an edited 5x7, she would be happy to do so! Just let her know the IMG number for example (IMG_9594OC2). If you print your own, Tiffany recommends downloading the highest resolution image. Again, thank you, Erin, for providing us with a FABULOUS evening.

9/26: Meet 'n' Greet. Meet 'n' Greets have resumed! At this month's gathering, which included Danielle Grant, a guest of Robert Roudik, Optimists were able to give their thanks to Clayton Depue for his leadership and service to our Club as president during the past year. See photo, below.



From l to r: Peter Wehmann, Debbie Whinton, Danielle Grant (guest of Robert Roudik), Sue Gartner, Jeff Englander, Erin Mendenhall, Clayton Depue, Mark Zetlin, Tricia O'Hara, Sandy Bushue, and Mark Whinton.

Upcoming Events

October

10/03: Keith David Reeves is Chair of the Virginia Society of Technology in Education. He will speak to us about revolutionary assessment design, school design and sustainability, the criticality of the arts, and student freedom.

Thank you, Gloria Mora, for inviting this speaker, and more importantly, for taking on the very important responsibility of scheduling upcoming speakers, a position that has become vacant with the departure of Leigh Hurley.

10/17: TBA. WGCC at 12:15.

10/20: Optimist-Acorns Invite Us to a Dinner: Our Club has been a long-time supporter of the Optimist-Acorn Junior Rifle Club. This year, the athletes, their parents, and fellow Optimists Stan Sitnik, Bill Terry, and Thrine Kane, have invited the membership of the Arlington Optimist Club to join them for a dinner and air rifle shoot at the Izaak Walton League air rifle range on Saturday, October 20 from 5:00 - 8:00 PM. The Acorns are providing dinner, equipment, and coaching by the athletes. All we have to do is show up and have fun! The range is located at 14708 Mount Olive Road, Centreville, VA 20120. Please RSVP online at <http://evite.me/Wbwh5r5eJv>.

10/24: Meet 'n' Greet. This is the last opportunity until January for you to bring a guest to join us for cocktails as a great way for potential members to learn about the Optimists and be encouraged to join our Club. Due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays, there will be no Meet 'n' Greets in November and December. Accordingly, please scour your address books and bring potential Optimists to this last Meet 'n' Greet of 2018. Westin Hotel on Glebe Road: 5:30 -7:00 PM.

President Depue's Column:

Dear Fellow Optimists,

It has been a good year!

We should all be proud of what the Optimist Club of Arlington has accomplished over the last twelve months! Among other things, the Club gained a few members and several new Friends of Optimists (FOOs). In addition, we had another outstanding Christmas tree season with record earnings for Optimist sponsored activities for the youth of Arlington. We had outstanding oratorical and essay contests. We recognized the amazing individuals who teach and coach students in the various activities sponsored by the Club. And we had the opportunity to hear from various community leaders who shared with us some of their challenges and accomplishments.

I am especially grateful to the outstanding team of people who supported me during my year as your President. The officers, board members and

chairpersons all worked seamlessly together to help meet the Club's goals for the year and to advance the Club's mission as a service organization. This is a challenging time for all service organizations and I believe that it is only through reaching out to others and trying new things that we can succeed in carrying forward the important mission of the Optimist Club.

In reflecting on the mission of the Optimist organization, I recall vividly the experience that cemented my relationship with the Optimist Clubs some 50 years ago. I encourage each of you to think back to why you are an Optimist and what you can do to ensure that the Optimist Club of Arlington remains a vibrant and important part of this community.

It was in the late 60's that I joined the Evening Optimist Club of Boulder (Colorado). In the early 70's we were building a new Optimist Club in Arvada, Colorado, a northwest suburb of Denver. We had about ten members and it was early December, when I got a call from one of the administrators at the Colorado Juvenile Detention Center in Golden, Colorado, where the inmates were all boys from 12 to 18 years old.

The caller said that the Center needed our help to make sure every boy there received a present on Christmas morning. I said "Yes" on the spot before I had thought to ask how many boys were there. He told me they needed about 160 presents to make sure every boy received a present. I was thinking this would be a great start-up project for the new, but uncharted, Arvada Optimist Club. The caller said there were a few caveats. The gifts could not include baseball bats, knives, slingshots, hammers, toy guns, or anything that could be used as a weapon. The presents had to be delivered unwrapped early Christmas Eve morning for inspection. If we could provide wrapping paper, his staff would wrap all the presents.

I called all the new Arvada members to let them know they had a first project for the kids, and it was accepted enthusiastically. Most of the members went from store to store asking for and receiving many donated toys. Some toys were also purchased by the members.

Early on Christmas Eve, we loaded up three cars with the toys and five or six of us drove to the detention facility in Golden. We were carefully checked at the guard gate that interrupted a tall chain link fence, topped with a continuous "V" of barbed wire, surrounding their several acre facility.

At the Administration building, we were met by the gentleman who had called me. He instructed us to follow him for a short drive to one of several multi-story

old red brick buildings that looked a lot like college dormitories, except for the bars on the windows. There were several athletic fields on the grounds and lots of large trees. We followed the administrator and parked at one of the lookalike buildings. We all got out and the administrator asked that we help bring the presents to a second floor as he searched a giant key ring for the correct key to the building.

We started carrying the presents up the stairs, stopping at the door to a room when he again searched for the correct key. As he was unlocking the door, he told us "...this is the room where we store the Christmas presents we have received from parents of the inmates." We were all carrying bags of the presents when we entered what looked like a small gym with a high ceiling, oak floors, but no windows. He pointed to a wall across the room and said, "...you can put the presents over there with the others." On Christmas Eve morning, there were only two Christmas presents from parents.

This is only one of the reasons why I am an Optimist.

Thank you all for your contributions to this worthy cause, Clayton Depue

Message from Santa: Sandy Bushue, Chair of the Christmas Tree

Committee, submits the following update:

Fellow Optimists: It is count down for the tree lot. Opening day is Friday, November 23 and closing day is when we "sale out", which is usually around the end of the third week in December.

The Committee is planning for a big year!!!! We will have our normal lot at Lee Highway and Glebe Road, and we hope to have a "Pop-up" lot working with the Ballston Improvement District (BID). The BID wants to work with us, but it appears they are having a few issues finding a location. Will keep all posted.

For our new members, every member is expected to work the lot at least two, three to four hour shifts. If you can work more, please sign up for more. The lot hours are as follows:

Monday - Thursday: 2:00 to 8:00 (Shifts are 2:00 to 5:00 and 5:00 to 8:00)

Friday - Noon to 8:00 (Shifts are noon to 5 and 5 to 8)

Saturday - 10:00 to 8:00 (10 to 2:00 and 2:00 to 6:00 and 6:00 to 8:00)

Sunday - 10:00 to 8:00 (10 to 2:00 and 2:00 to 6:00 and 6:00 to 8:00)

Also for our new members, you need to dress for the weather and be sure to invest in a good pair of work gloves. Expect gloves and clothes to be a bit ruined after your shift as the sap from the trees takes it toll on textiles. So, wear old clothing that you no longer care about getting destroyed.

Under Barbara Nicastro's leadership, we always have plenty of young volunteers. The Optimist's member main role is to manage the volunteers and direct the lot's operations.

Three cheers to Dick McHugh and Clayton Depue who have stepped up to "fill the shoes" of John Karinshak. They will be the "cashiers" and "daily lot managers" this season and will assist with opening and closing the lot. I think they are looking for another volunteer or two to assist. If you are interested, please let Dick and Clayton know. You will NOT be scheduled to work the lot in any other capacity.

In a separate email, I will be asking you to provide dates and shift time that works best for your schedule. I will be sending at least three emails requesting your help with this. If I do not hear from you, I will plug you into the schedule where you are needed. Thus, it is best that you provide your own dates.

Warning: For the next 90 days, your email box will be "flooded" with updates and requests and information about the lot. Our tree lot brings out the best in all of us and our Arlington neighbors and volunteers and kids. I am confident the 2018 season will be that and more.

Optimistically yours,

Sandy Bushue



MW # 94

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

www.optimistclubofarlingtonva.org