

# The Optimist Monthly

Friend of Youth  
December 24, 2021



## December Events

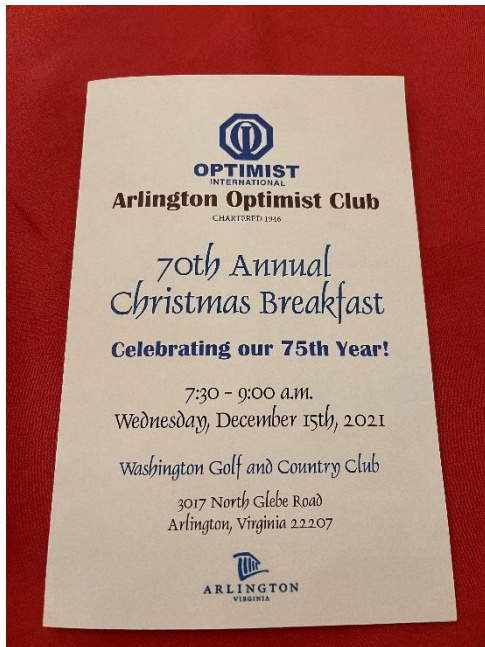
**12/01: A tour of Arlington's most famous bordellos and gambling houses (back in the day). Noted historian, George Axiotis, told us the facts about Jackson City, the well-meaning, early-development project that went awry and the notorious kingpins who ran the place. Thank you, Frank O'Leary, for arranging for him.**



Also at the luncheon, President Brian Kellenberger inducted Parker Rist, our third inductee in 2021! See photo below, by Mark Whitenton.



**12/15: Christmas Breakfast.** Once again, Brian Kellenberger organized our annual Christmas breakfast. It was also the occasion to celebrate our Optimist Club's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (December 12, 1946)! Brian provides the following recap: We had the Arlington Police Honor Guard present colors; the invocation was by Major Mark Woodcock with the Salvation Army. We were entertained by the Bishop O'Connell Madrigals and String Quartet, led by Tim LaCrosse. Drew Hill, Pastor of Memorial Baptist Church was our guest speaker. The harp music was provided by Melissa Tardiff Dvorak. Not only did Brian produce his usually spectacular Christmas Breakfast program, but we were also treated with a slide show provided by Mark Whitenton of photos of the Club's activities over the past decade as a celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Arlington Optimist Club's founding in December 1946!! See these photos of the breakfast, below:



**Program** (Photo by Erin Mendenhall)



**Pastor Drew Hill** from 2019 breakfast



**Optimists at the Christmas Breakfast.** (Photo by Erin Mendenhall)



## **January Events**

**1/05: Delegate Patrick Hope** – “Preview of events in Richmond”. Again, thank you, **Frank O’Leary**, for arranging for Delegate Hope. Please note there is a different venue, since WGCC is closed this week. Accordingly, it will be at Texas Jack’s (2761 Washington Blvd) at 12:15.

**1/19: Darren Aversa, Edward Jones** - Economic and financial outlook for 2022. Back to WGCC at 12:15. Of course, thank you, **Frank O’Leary**, for inviting Darren.

**1/26: Meet & Greet Returns!** Texas Jack’s (2761 Washington Blvd) from 5:30 to 7:00.

## **Tree Lot Summary by Sandy Bushue**

Optimists,

What a tree lot season! By now, you are all aware of the great success of the 2021 season. As I write this, the Wells Fargo parking lot is spotless. You would never know that 2100 Christmas trees occupied space for a few weeks.

The tree lot committee has even met for its post meeting where there were few topics to discuss as everything worked out so well. And, I am happy to report that all Committee members agreed to work another year! Great Committee!

A big thanks to JB, Michal, Brian, Jeff and Clayton for leading the effort to take down the lot.

Of course, we do need to focus on 2022 and either take on the Bank or find a new location. Personally speaking, I would like to explore and campaign aggressively with Wells Fargo. However, that is an option the Board of Directors needs to consider and make the ultimate decision.

If we do need to relocate, I am confident that our loyal customers will find us. It is just sad to end a longtime tradition without a real or good justification or reason.

Congratulations to everyone for a great job this year. Wishing you and yours a healthy and blessed new year and may our outstanding Club grow and thrive in 2022.

Optimistically,  
Sandy Bushue

### **President's Message by Brian Kellenberger**

Wow, what a year! It is a great time to be an Arlington Optimist. I'm so proud of this club, the members and what we do here in Arlington. We kicked off the club's 75th Anniversary at the 70th Annual Christmas Breakfast. So glad we could hold this event this year to honor all the great work our elected officials, judges and dignitaries do for our community. The atmosphere is always uplifting and Drew Hill, Pastor of Memorial Baptist delivered a wonderful holiday message. We were entertained by the Bishop O'Connell Madrigals and String Quartet who sang a medley of Christmas favorites. I always leave the breakfast in great spirits and in a happy holiday mood.

We have a lot to be thankful for when looking back over the past year. We had a record year on the tree lot thanks to Sandy and JB's leadership. In 11 days, we sold 2004 trees, 400 wreaths, 185 rolls of Garland and around 180 White House ornaments! Unbelievable!! Thanks to all of you and especially thanks to all the volunteers that continue to step up to help and amaze me with their commitment to making the tree lot a success from setup to take down.

We honored our very own JB as the ISCC Man of the Year, a well-deserved honor as JB has done so much for the club over the years. I also wanted to thank Jeff Englander for leading our club through the pandemic last year. As our fearless leader he kept us moving forward during very challenging times, he was the glue that kept us together and we are a stronger club today due to his efforts. Thank you, Jeff!

We continue to grow as a club. We recently inducted Parker Rist. Please help welcome Parker to the club. Parker jumped right in and worked three shifts on the lot. Thanks, Parker! We have four or five prospective members in the pipeline. People continue to see the energy, the optimism and all the great things we do as a club and they want to join. They are attracted to this energy and want to be part of a winning team that keeps winning.

Let's make 2022 our best year ever! Thank you for all you do for the club.

Brian,

Wishing you and your families a very



*And a*



mw: 131  
Optimist Club of Arlington 16-005;  
Mid-Atlantic Region 3;  
Capital- Virginia District 16;  
Northern Virginia Zone 4;  
[www.optimistclubofarlingtonva.org](http://www.optimistclubofarlingtonva.org)

## **Appendix: December Christmas Tree Lot Photos**



Photo by JB Whitlow



Photo by Mark Whitenton



Photo by Sandy Bushue



Photo by Debbie Whitenton



Almost the end (12/7) by Richard Knight



Debbie Whitenton & Mark Zetlin by Mark W.





**BRBB at work by Mark Whitenton**



**Volunteer fatigue by Mark Whitenton**



**Andrew Nicastro family by Sandy Bushue**



**Frank O'Leary by Mark Whitenton**





Photo by Michal Semik of the final take down on December 19.



Photo by Michal Semik of the take down, ending as construction began on November 20, with JB Whitlow directing.