

The Optimist Monthly

Friend of Youth

May 31, 2023



May

05/03: Save Our History! by Tom Dickinson. Photographs of a forgotten



Arlington. See photo, taken by John Kelly of The Washington Post.

Thank you, Frank O'Leary, for inviting him. In addition to a trip down memory lane, this luncheon served as an opportunity to have two of

the sports clubs that we support join us for lunch and say a few words. At this luncheon were (photo, left) Dave Schryver and Rob Andreeu to receive our contribution to Arlington Hockey, presented by Brian Kellenberger; and Kendra Riggs and Jenny Miller to receive our check for YULA from Andreas Baltatzis.

Photos by Sandy Bushue.





Also at this luncheon, Andreas was pleased to induct Andrew Almand, the son of retired Judge Jim Almand (see photo, below provided by Sandy Bushue). Andrew is also a lawyer and is the grandson of one of the charter members of the Arlington Optimist Club, Iverson H. Almand. Note that Judge Jim

Almand has been handling or assisting in handling the Respect for Law program in our Club since the 1980's! Accordingly, we are hoping for great things from our Club's only double-legacy member!

05/17: Tales of the Treasurer's Office by Kevin Appel. Thank you, Frank O'Leary, for letting us hear to hearing some interesting stories about the Arlington Treasurer's Office inviting him.

05/24: Meet & Greet at Texas Jack's. It was held, but had low attendance. Please remember that these Meet & Greet events are held in order to interest new potential members in our Club. Please take advantage of them.

June & July Schedule

06/07: Optimist Scholarships and Oratorical Contest Winners!! Be sure to attend as Erica Burson and Richard Knight present the winners of these two key Optimist Club programs.

06/21: Paralyzed Veterans: The price they pay for their service by Susan Prokop.

06/28: Meet & Greet at Texas Jack's. 5:30 to 7:00.

07/ 05: No luncheon due to the July 4 Holiday.

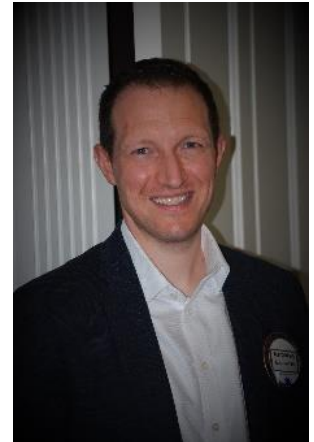
07/19: Missing Middle by Libby Garvey.

07/26: Meet & Greet at Texas Jack's. 5:30 to 7:00.

President's Message by **Andreas Baltatzis**

Dear Optimists,

We had a very busy month of May. We completed awarding grants to the sports leagues for 2023. I was just listening to a podcast about the decline in youth sports throughout the country. I am proud to see how our support continues to provide opportunities to play sports for Arlington's Youth.



We also welcomed a new member to the club, Andrew Almand. Andrew is a third generation Arlington Optimist. If you haven't had the chance yet, please make sure to introduce yourself at the next meeting.

I hope you all enjoyed your long weekend celebrating Memorial Day and took some time to reflect on those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country. Their service should inspire all of us to serve our community.

Please do your best to attend our first meeting in June on the 7th. We will welcome our oratorical contest and scholarship winners. These students are wonderful representatives of Arlington youth, and I hope you can come and celebrate their success. As always, don't forget to invite a guest to our meetings so we can spread our message of optimism.

Optimistically ours,

Andreas

2023 Optimist Scholarship Winners!

Erica Burson, chair of the Optimist Club's Scholarship Committee, announces the winners of the Club's 2023 College Scholarships. Again, this year, the Optimist Club is proud to offer five \$5,000 scholarships to worth high school seniors bound for a four-year college. The scholarships are awarded on the basis of scholastic achievement, financial need and civic or school involvement.

These deserving winners have been invited to the June 7 Luncheon at the WGCC to say a few words about themselves. Please join us at the luncheon to meet them. See their photos on the next page. They are:

- Lina Aniss of Washington-Liberty High School. She will be attending UVA this fall. Interestingly, she plays on the YULA (frisbee) team that the Optimist Club supports.
- Mary Anay Gonzalez of Wakefield High School. She will be attending Virginia Tech this fall.
- Warnakulasuriya Lowe of Yorktown High School. He will be attending Fordham University this fall.
- Michael Newman of Washington-Liberty High School. He will be attending Virginia Tech this fall.
- Sora Spencer of Wakefield High School. She will be attending Marymount University this fall.
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2023 Optimist Oratorical Contest Winners!

Richard Knight, Optimist Club Vice President and chair of the Oratorical Contest Committee again this year, is proud to announce the winners of this year's Optimist Oratorical Contest. Here is Richard's report:

Oratorical Contest 2023- "Discovering the Optimism Within Me"

"Returning to in-person appearances after 3 years of video presentations, the contestants from the new Arlington Community High School shone with optimism and enthusiasm delivering their speeches on the 2023 oratorical topic, "Discovering Optimist Within Me." The Arlington Community High School is rather unique in that the students are selected by a lottery and its curriculum is focused on STEM classes and individual and class projects rather than the usual curriculum. Again, this year Leah McFarlane, the English teacher, performed an outstanding role as the school coordinator when she began with 50 contestants from which she selected 18 middle school students for the final contest.

At the final contest, judges Tricia O'Hara and Bob Patton scored the speeches and selected the winner and 4 runner-ups.

"The winning speech was delivered by Cody Finnegan, who received the first-place scholarship award. The second place contestant was Anna Litwiller; the third place contestant was Luisa Velasquez; the fourth place contestant was Shangwen Cheng; and the fifth place contestant was Maggie Odar.



"The return to the traditional in person format continued this year to the in-person Zone Contest, which was attended by the first place and second place winners and Richard Knight and Andreas Baltatzis. The winner of the Zone contest was an experienced senior from the Fairfax Club, who represent the Zone at the District Contest in Richmond. [Photo, left, by Andreas Baltatzis, is of Arlington Optimist Club winners Cody Finnegan and Anna Litwiller, who took second and third place at the Zone contest]."

Optimist-Acorns Continue to Excel!

Steve Tinter, who received the Optimist donation from JB Whitlow at last month's Meet & Greet, informs us that WTOP has done a story on one of the Optimist-Acorn Rifle Club members, Teresa Hines. She was named as a WTOP "Athlete of the Week". The WTOP story stated:

"Each week, WTOP is picking one student athlete to be featured on air and online as our Player of the Week. This week's WTOP Player of the Week is Teresa Hines of West Springfield High School in Virginia.

"Tess is a precision rifle athlete at West Springfield High School and on a travel rifle team called the Arlington Optimist Acorns. A senior now, she started shooting in her freshman year using both a precision air rifle as well as a smallbore rifle.

“She is nationally ranked and has participated three times in Junior Olympic competitions, while also shooting regularly at national level competition.

“This past January, she won the Virginia State Championship in smallbore (women) and air rifle (men and women).

“Tess won the individual regional championship in the Potomac High School League, breaking the range record in the process.”

[The story can be found at: https://wtop.com/player-of-the-week/2023/05/player-of-the-week-west-springfields-teresa-hines/?fbclid=IwAR05Kk9zPjFvkDQVE2f3BTjwg45ERpogfjMGFwKT-lvfZGfbu0Qp_OsKvyM.]

Steve Tinter has again thanked the Optimist Club for our support of the Acorns. Sandy Bushue commented: “Way to go Teresa!!! We (Optimists) appreciate the ‘shout out’ also!! Great publicity and Teresa sounds like the type of young adult that you, the Acorn’ coaches, nurture and train. Thank you, Steve, and your coaches!!!” Photo, below, by WTOP.





It is worth noting that Tess Hines is from the same high school as Olympian and ex-Optimist-Acorn Ginny Thrasher, shown left in January 2017 with then-Optimist President Mark Zetlin. Ginny won the first gold medal of the 2012 Rio de Janeiro Olympics for air rifle. In 2019, she graduated from West Virginia University with a biomedical engineering degree. Photo by Mark Whitenton

Another Optimist Is Recognized!

Speaking of Mark Zetlin, on May 16, he and Mercedes Benz of Arlington were recognized by the Arlington Chamber of Commerce with the Chamber's 2023 Best Business Award for Retail Small Business of the Year. Congratulations, Mark! Also, at the same luncheon the Arlington Chamber inducted Lola Reinsch into its Arlington Business Hall of Fame. Congratulations, Lola!



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Capital- Virginia District 16;
Northern Virginia Zone 4;
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