

# NEWSLETTER OF THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF GREATER VIENNA FEBRUARY 2024



## Optimist Club of Greater Vienna



*"Friends of Youth, Bringing Out the Best in Kids"*

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scholarship*

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**Visit us at:**

**[OptimistClubofGreaterVienna.org](https://OptimistClubofGreaterVienna.org)**

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**[optimistclubofgreatervienna.org/  
events/default.asp](https://optimistclubofgreatervienna.org/events/default.asp)**



From left: Mike Fitzella, Meredith Rainhart, Colby Pham, Alinah Sheikh, Marqula Khetan, Eujin Lee, and Connor Tadlock. Photo credit: Gary Moonan

**The efforts of the Optimist Club  
unquestionably have a profound impact on  
the lives of children.**

Recently, The Club received a heartwarming letter from Conner Tadlock, one of the shining stars who won the 2022-2023 Carol Waite Brennan scholarship and is a proud Marshall High School graduate. In his note, he overflowed with his gratitude.

He and Dan Mulville had a great conversation at our awards event in November of 2022 about Dan's career at NASA and their shared interest in the aerospace industry. Conner wants to follow up with Dan for a career discussion. This shows the impact that our club members can have when interacting with students at club functions.

His message ended with: "Thank you so much for everything the Optimist Club of Vienna has done to support and recognize my academic career. I am truly grateful for your support."

Bravo! 🌟

**OPTIMISTICALLY SPEAKING**

**The Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH)**

**This year's topic: 'How to Change the World with Optimism'**

**This contest offers deaf or hard-of-hearing young people the opportunity to develop skills and confidence by presenting their thoughts, either orally or in sign language, to a large audience. Contestants make a 4-5 minute presentation responding to the 2024 topic: How to Change the World with Optimism. Finalists from Canterbury Woods Elementary School (a center for FCPS' Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program), will compete on Saturday, February 24th at 1:00 in the school auditorium.**

**This year, two \$2500 scholarships will be awarded, one to the winner speaking with cochlear implants and one to the winner using sign language.**

**CCDHH IS GRABBING THE ATTENTION OF THE MEDIA! READ THE NEWS:**

**[HTTPS://PATCH.COM/VIRGINIA/VIENNA/DEAF-HARD-HEARING-STUDENTS-GAIN-CONFIDENCE-VIENNA-GROUPS-CONTEST](https://patch.com/virginia/vienna/deaf-hard-hearing-students-gain-confidence-vienna-groups-contest)**

# Farmer's Market

**LISTEN UP, FELLOW FOODIES! IT'S TIME TO GEAR UP FOR THE 2024 FARMER'S MARKET, AND WE WANT YOU TO BE PART OF THE FUN! WHETHER YOU'RE A SEASONED VOLUNTEER OR A FRESH FACE, EVERYONE'S WELCOME TO LEND A HAND AND MAKE IT AN EVENT TO REMEMBER. DON'T WAIT, HOP ON BOARD NOW!**

**WE NEED ONE MORE MEMBER FOR THE FARMERS MARKET COMMITTEE AND WOULD LIKE ALL INTERESTED PARTIES WITH MARKETING AND COMPUTER SKILLS!**

**PLEASE EMAIL MICHELE AND MONICA AT:**

**[MICHELEWRIGHTOPTIMIST@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MICHELEWRIGHTOPTIMIST@GMAIL.COM) AND [MGI.VIENNAFM@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MGI.VIENNAFM@GMAIL.COM)**

**AS WE HEAD INTO OUR BUSY SEASON OF YOUTH EVENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL CLUB MEMBERS TO ATTEND AS MANY MEETINGS AS POSSIBLE. THERE ARE TWO OPPORTUNITIES IN FEBRUARY.**

**THE ESSAY CONTEST WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22 IN THE SOUTHSIDE MEETING ROOM AT THE VIENNA COMMUNITY CENTER. THE PROGRAM WILL START AT 7:30. MEMBERS SHOULD PLAN TO ARRIVE SHORTLY AFTER 7:00 TO MEET OUR TOP THREE STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

**OUR COMMUNICATIONS CONTEST FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24. THIS IS ALWAYS A SPECIAL EVENT, AND WILL BE EVEN MORE SO THIS YEAR. SEE ABOVE'S ARTICLE FOR MORE DETAILS.**



**From President Monica Isaac**

**Dear Fellow Optimists,**

**“It takes a village to raise a child.” This important proverb cannot emphasize enough the impact of an entire community’s active and positive engagement on children and their well-being. In 2024, the Vienna Optimists maintain their commitment to encourage, nurture, and support youth within our community by continuing to raise funds for local student scholarships, sponsoring sports and robotics teams, fostering student mentoring opportunities at the farmer’s market and tree lot, and interacting with the Fairfax County Public School System on many levels.**

**Without a doubt, the COVID-19 Pandemic certainly tested the community’s strength to remain focused on this important objective. At the same time, it taught us resilience, adaptation, and gave us reason to remain hopeful. Thanks to the strong leadership by past-President Tom Bauer and the other Optimist board members, we weathered the worst of COVID and came out stronger. We had a record turnout at our annual farmers market with many new and fascinating vendors, a great music schedule put together by Dick Gongaware from North Carolina, and the Optimist roadies made it easy for the musicians to sound great each week. We increased Christmas tree sales and welcomed new members to our club.**

**As we embark into 2024, we remain adaptable and innovative to improve our club functions so that our commitment to youth remains strong and sustainable. You may have already noticed some of these changes. We are now using SignUpGenius to ask for volunteers for all of our meetings and manage RSVPs to social events. Additionally, we are using Farmspread, a modern software tool to manage vendor applications while also promoting our market to prospective visitors online. Our social gatherings are in full swing, with the most recent involving the Volunteer Tree Lot Thank You Brunch held at IHOP on January 13th and attended by over 20 members and friends. We plan to host similar social gatherings in the near future.**

**Our trajectory looks great for another exciting and rewarding year. I look forward to working with you and the rest of the board to continue to bring out the best in ourselves and in our community.**

**Optimistically speaking,**

**Monica**



**UPCOMING  
EVENTS**

**FEBRUARY SOCIAL GATHERING**

**WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST (TIME TBD, BUT LIKELY IN THE AFTERNOON/EARLY EVENING) AT SETTLE DOWN EASY BREWING COMPANY (2952 CHAIN BRIDGE ROAD, OAKTON). FOOD WILL BE FEATURED BY FERMENTED PIG AND THERE WILL ALSO BE LIVE MUSIC.**

**A SIGN-UP GENIUS RSVP WILL GO OUT TO ALL MEMBERS CLOSER TO THE TIME OF THE DATE. KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON YOUR EMAIL FOR MORE DETAILS.**

*OPTIMISTICALLY SPEAKING*

## Board of Directors 2023-2024

- **President Monica Isaac**
- **Immediate Past President Tom Bauer**
- **Secretary, Acting Susan Bauer**
- **Treasurer Michele Wright**
- **VP, Community Susan Bauer**
- **Director, Community Bill Comerford**
- **VP, Media Relations/Webmaster Brian Isaac**
- **VP, Membership Roger Doughty**
- **Director, Membership Dan Woltman**
- **VP, Youth Mike Fitzella**
- **Director, Youth Ed Wonder**
- **Newsletter Editor JonMarc Buffa**

UPDATE

During the January Board Meeting, our very own Brian Isaac raised his hand to take on the role of VP of Media Relations on top of his webmaster duties. With a unanimous vote, he snagged the new title and will now work his magic in spreading the club's message far and wide through the website, social media, and local news.

Let the communication extravaganza begin!

## The Optimist Creed

Promise Yourself

- To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.
- To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.
- To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.
- To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.
- To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and expect only the best.
- To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.
- To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
- To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.
- To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.
- To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

Christian D. Larsen

*ON JANUARY 13, 2024 OPTIMIST VOLUNTEERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN CHRISTMAS TREE SALES AND DECORATED THE VIENNA CABOOSE IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2023, GATHERED TO ENJOY COFFEE AND PANCAKES SPONSORED BY THE CLUB AT THE IHOP IN FAIRFAX. TWENTY PEOPLE JOINED AND TOOK PART IN THE 'THANK YOU' EVENT RECOGNIZING ALL THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF VOLUNTEERS WHO HELPED RAISE SUBSTANTIAL FUNDS FOR FUTURE SCHOLARSHIPS AND YOUTH PROGRAMS.*



OPTIMISTICALLY SPEAKING