



**Optimist Club**  
of Greater Vienna



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

## *In This Issue*

*2024 Essay Contest*

*Farmer's Market*

*Essay Contest*

*Communications  
Contest for the Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing*

*Caboose Opening*

*Special Olympics*



The 2024 Essay Contest was a remarkable triumph. Leslie Payne from James Madison H.S. emerged victorious as the top wordsmith. The audience was enthralled by a trio of captivating essays presented by the high school finalists, each showcasing a distinct flair. A hearty round of applause goes out to Dan Irvine, Sherry Levitt, Bill Comerford, and Mike Fitzella, for orchestrating this literary showdown to great acclaim!

**Visit us at:**

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

[Facebook.com/ViennaOptimistClub](https://www.Facebook.com/ViennaOptimistClub)

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







# Farmer's Market

## 2024 VIENNA FARMER'S MARKET SCHEDULE

EVERY SATURDAY FROM 4TH MAY TO 26TH OCTOBER.

- PLEASE VOLUNTEER FOR A 2-HOUR SLOT:
- 7-9 AM: SET UP OPTIMIST TENTS, SIGNS, BARRIERS, AND TRASH BAGS.
  - 9-11 AM: ASSIST VENDORS AND GUESTS.
  - 11 AM - 1 PM: TAKE DOWN TENTS AND STORE EQUIPMENT.
  - POOCH PARKING AVAILABLE ALL DAY FOR DOG OWNERS.

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF FUN, FOOD, AND CAMARADERIE AT THE MARKET. DON'T MISS THE CHANCE TO MEET ALL THE ADORABLE DOGS IN POOCH PARKING! YOUR HELP IS TRULY VALUED IN MAKING THIS FARMER'S MARKET A SUCCESS!

FOR MORE DETAILS, REACH OUT TO MONICA GOMEZ ISAAC AT [MGI.VIENNAFM@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MGI.VIENNAFM@GMAIL.COM)

## SPECIAL OLYMPICS

WE'RE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO HELP AT THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS ON APRIL 20TH. THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF GREATER VIENNA PARTICIPATES EACH YEAR IN THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA SPECIAL OLYMPICS TRACK AND FIELD EVENT HOSTED BY EPISCOPAL H.S. IN ALEXANDRIA.

THE MISSION OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS (FOUNDED IN 1968) IS TO PROVIDE YEAR-ROUND SPORTS TRAINING AND ATHLETIC COMPETITION IN A VARIETY OF OLYMPIC-TYPE SPORTS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES, GIVING THEM CONTINUING OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP PHYSICAL FITNESS, DEMONSTRATE COURAGE AND EXPERIENCE JOY.

AREA 26 IS THE LOCAL ORGANIZATION MANAGING SPECIAL OLYMPICS TEAMS, ATHLETES AND EVENTS IN ALEXANDRIA, ARLINGTON, FAIRFAX, FALLS CHURCH, HERNDON, AND VIENNA. VOLUNTEERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN ONE OF THREE SHIFTS FOR THE EVENT.

PLEASE CONTACT: MIKE BATTAGLIA ([MIKEBATTAGLIA@COX.NET](mailto:MIKEBATTAGLIA@COX.NET)) FOR MORE INFORMATION

WE'RE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR VOLUNTEERS TO BE CONDUCTORS ON THE RED CABOOSE! MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR OUR CABOOSE DEBUT ON MARCH 16TH!

UPCOMING EVENTS



THIS YEAR'S COMMUNICATION CONTEST FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING (CCDHH) FOCUSED ON THE THEME: 'HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD WITH OPTIMISM.' THIS EVENT PROVIDES DEAF OR HARD-OF-HEARING YOUTH WITH THE PLATFORM TO ENHANCE THEIR SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE BY EXPRESSING THEIR IDEAS EITHER VERBALLY OR THROUGH SIGN LANGUAGE IN FRONT OF A LARGE AUDIENCE.

SIX REMARKABLE STUDENTS CAPTIVATED THE AUDIENCE WITH THEIR PRESENTATIONS. THE DESERVING 2024 WINNERS ARE:

- ADAM HAKIMI - SPOKEN LANGUAGE
- MADELYN PEREZ VIJILL - ASL

EACH WINNER WAS AWARDED A \$2500 SCHOLARSHIP.

THEIR PERFORMANCES LEFT EVERYONE TRULY IMPRESSED!



# From President Monica Isaac

Dear Fellow Optimists,

Frederick Douglas once said "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." I am proud to report that the Optimists' efforts and achievements during the month of February reflect the sentiments of this respected statesman and abolitionist. On February 22nd, Dan Irvine led the annual Essay Contest at the Vienna Community Center and presented first prize winner Leslie Payne from James Madison H.S. with a \$1,000 cash award. Club members and the families of the three high school finalists listened to three uniquely different, yet equally inspiring essays. Many thanks to Optimist members who directly supported this wonderful event with their time and energy by serving as judges and coordinators, including Dan Irvine, Sherry Levitt, Bill Comerford, and Mike Fitzella.

The Optimists' commitment to building strong children from all backgrounds in our community continued with the Community Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH), held on February 24th and at the Canterbury Woods Elementary School in Annandale. A total of six students competed and moved audience members to tears with their remarkable presentations by sharing "How to Change the World with Optimism." Judges Mark Lander, Joel Silverman, and Rich Ordeman chose a winner from two separate groups: students using sign language and others with cochlear implants. Many thanks to the judges, timekeeper Pat Solan, and Sherry Levitt, who did an amazing job working with the students' teachers and District level Optimists to host a nurturing event for these extraordinary youngsters.

The month of February also included an enjoyable gathering held on February 21st at Settle Down Easy Brewing Co. for our second social gathering of the year. Over 20 members came together for great conversation, tasty dishes, and live music. Many shared how happy they were to reconnect with fellow Optimists and meet new members. A big thanks to Tom Bauer for coordinating the event and setting a solid foundation for future socials we intend holding every month. Please keep an eye out for a SignUpGenius email with more details on a March get-together and to RSVP.

Finally, as we progress into Spring and look forward to milder temperatures, a quick update about the Farmers Market: The Vienna Town Council voted in favor of the 2024 MOU presented by our club and granted us permission to host the event for a 17th year. This 26-week event is already lined-up with new and returning vendors and musicians. The popularity of the market has become a fixture of the Vienna community from May to October and will only bring more awareness to the youth programs and scholarships we fund from this, and other fundraisers. If you haven't ever attended the market in the past, I strongly encourage you to consider participating this season. Food, fun, friends...need I say more?

Looking forward to seeing you all again soon.

Monica



*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, Vacant**



**WE ARE CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR A NEW NEWSLETTER EDITOR. ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT CREATING ENGAGING CONTENT AND HAVE A KEEN EYE FOR DETAIL?**

**AS THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO CRAFT COMPELLING STORIES, CURATE, AND CONNECT WITH OUR OPTIMIST COMMUNITY THROUGH YOUR WRITING. WHETHER YOU ARE A SEASONED EDITOR OR SOME WHO ENJOYS WRITING, WE WELCOME YOUR ENTHUSIASM AND CREATIVITY TO HELP DELIVER A TOP-NOTCH NEWSLETTER TO OUR MEMBERS. JOIN US IN SHARING VALUABLE INFORMATION WITH OUR MEMBERS. YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL BE HIGHLY VALUED AND APPRECIATED.**

## 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



### NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

**LET'S GIVE A WARM WELCOME TO ONE OF OUR NEWEST MEMBERS, STEVE MILLER. RESIDING IN VIENNA, STEVE IS A PROUD PARENT TO TWO YOUNG ADULT CHILDREN, CHRIS AND KELLY, WHO BOTH RESIDE IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA. STEVE MOVED TO VIENNA IN 1974 AND COMPLETED HIS STUDIES AT JAMES MADISON IN 1975. AFTER RETIRING IN 2019, HE IS EXCITED ABOUT TRAVELING MORE IN THE UPCOMING YEARS. HE LOOKS FORWARD TO COLLABORATING WITH THE OPTIMIST CLUB MEMBERS HERE IN VIENNA.**

**WELCOME STEVE!!**