

# OPTIMISTICALLY SPEAKING

The Newsletter of the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna

October 2014

## Calendar

**October 1 — Regular Meeting  
Induction of 2014-15 Officers and Board  
OI Governor Ramona Fulwider**  
6:45—Social Time; 7:30 p.m.—Dinner  
Marco Polo Restaurant

**October 4 — Farmers Market**  
8:00 a.m. to noon—301 Center Street, South

**October 8 — Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.**

**October 11 — Farmers Market**  
8:00 a.m. to noon—301 Center Street, South

**October 15 — Regular Meeting  
Speaker: Shirley Clark, The Women's Center**  
6:45—Social Time; 7:30 p.m.—Dinner  
Marco Polo Restaurant

**October 18— Farmers Market**  
8:00 a.m. to noon—301 Center Street, South

**October 18—Caboose Open**  
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**October 18—Vienna Halloween Party**  
2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Vienna Community Center

**October 22—Fourth Wednesday**  
"Team D" Delivers Dinner to Culmore Teen Center

**October 25 — Farmers Market**  
**Last Market of the Season!**  
8:00 a.m. to noon—301 Center Street, South

**October 29— Vienna Halloween Parade**  
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. March with us!

## Spotlight on Upcoming Events

Start the new Optimist year off right and welcome our **2014-15 Officers and Board of Directors** as they are inducted at our **October 1** meeting! **Optimist International Governor Ramona Fulwider** will conduct the installation ceremony for our Club. Our new President Dick Gongaware has already notified the membership that we have several important topics to tackle this year, and urges us to attend the October 1 meeting ready to take them on. Be there!

Our community engagement doesn't let up in October! We need Optimists for two special events:

First, we co-sponsor the **Vienna Halloween Party on Saturday, October 18** from 2:00-3:00 p.m. at the Vienna Community Center. We always provide volunteers to help the kids with crafts and games. Our JOOI Clubs come to help, too—so this is a great opportunity to work directly with local kids of all ages. And when was the last time you got to paint a pumpkin? Contact [Laurie Cole](#) or [Michele Wright](#) to volunteer.



Next, we are once again entering a float in the annual **Vienna Halloween Parade**. Last year we won Best in Parade! Help us defend our title **on Wednesday, October 29, from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m.** We need Optimists to walk with the float and carry our banner. To carry out the theme of our float, it would be great if you could dress as an umpire—black and white striped shirt, black pants and a whistle! Contact Michele Wright for more information. And Michele will be sending out a call for float building help, so stay tuned!



The **Farmers Market** is entering the home stretch. We have four more market Saturdays this season. If you haven't helped out yet, there is still time! Sign up on-line to be part of this important fundraiser for the Club and premier community event. While you are at it, please give a huge "thank you" to retiring **Market Manager Sarah Jane Brady** for all her outstanding work over the past several years.

*Left: Farmer SJ at the Market. Thank you, Sarah Jane!*



Serving the Youth of Greater Vienna  
for Almost 60 Years

Visit us at [www.OptimistClubofGreaterVienna.org](http://www.OptimistClubofGreaterVienna.org)  
We're on Facebook! [Facebook.com/ViennaOptimistClub](https://www.facebook.com/ViennaOptimistClub)



## From the President—

Fellow Vienna Optimists,

Today was an exceptional day to be an Optimist. I write this after we closed out a long day, our annual Growing Hope Family Fun Day, with a backyard barbecue hosted by our outgoing president, Tom Spengler and his lovely wife, Michelle and daughter, Kaitlyn. We also hosted the Farmers' Market again today. So in one day, we touched hundreds of lives in the Vienna community. Their day was arguably better because of our efforts. That's pretty special.

We're planning for a vibrant future, with the help of members old and new. We have reason to be truly optimistic. So with momentum on our side, built from the contributions of many over the past few years, I'm fortunate to step into the president's slot with a board of directors that is active, committed, and forward-thinking. **During the October 1 meeting, the board will be installed by District Governor Ramona Fulwider. We have some very important issues to address, and I urge you to attend the meeting to discuss them. I'm going to ask for your input on three important issues;** the prospect that our meeting location may change, whether it is forced upon us or not; the opportunity to celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary next spring; and perhaps related to that, identifying a new fund-raising event in the spring. I'm going to ask you to actively participate in some round-table discussions to address these issues. Maybe join a working committee. We need everyone's opinion, whether we all agree or not.

We'll also have an update on the conclusion of this year's Growing Hope activities. We won't have final numbers, but Anna Ryjik and Michele Wright will provide us with an informal recap.

On Wednesday, November 15, Shirley Clark, the CEO and Director of the Women's Center, will introduce us to her organization, now celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. What's the connection to local youth? Therapists from the Women's Center conduct teen workshops at our three target high schools, Madison, Marshall, and Oakton. The Center is seeking our support in expanding this important work. Please plan to attend both meetings this month, and every month!

*President Dick Gongaware*



### September Birthday Wishes to:

Jack Barbee – October 2  
 Sara Goldberg – October 9  
 Jim Stevens - October 22  
 Richard Plocica – October 25  
 Tom Bauer – October 31  
 Walt Petersen – October 31

### Optimist Anniversaries in October

Dave Frost – 28 years  
 Jim Radja – 28 years  
 Jim Houston - 21 years  
 George Mills – 15 years  
 Ed Moore – 15 years



## OPTIMISTS IN ACTION!

Our "Fourth Wednesday" program at the Culmore Teen Center, run by Alternative House, provides dinner and volunteer support to middle and high school students.

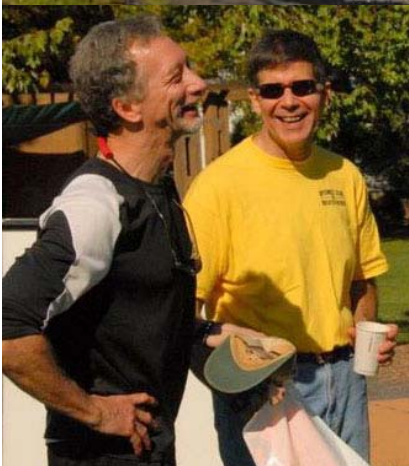


Here **Angelique Ayala**, right, of "Team B" serves dinner with Center Director Taylor Thornton, center, and teen center staff. Team Captain **Tom Bauer** and **Joe Miller** also helped provide,

deliver and serve the meal. If you are interested in being part of a Fourth Wednesday team, contact [Laurie Cole](#).



# When we say "Family Fun Day", we mean it! Here are some scenes from the 2014 Family Fun Day and 5K in support of Growing Hope...



*Thank you to our sponsors and volunteers!*





# Welcome to Our Newest Optimists!

## Lydia Russo

I am a lifetime resident of Vienna, VA and consider myself incredibly lucky to live in a such a beautiful town.

I was inspired to join the Vienna Optimist Club as a tribute to the late Mayor Jane Seeman, who was my pre-school teacher, and taught me the importance of giving back to the community.

During my youth, I attended Louise Archer Elementary School, Thoreau Middle School, and Flint Hill School. I then graduated from Marymount University with a Bachelor's of Arts in Fashion Merchandising and a minor in Fashion Design.

This year, I joined my family's real estate company (Lydia Real Estate, LLC) as a realtor. I have a deep love for Northern Virginia, and find no greater pleasure than helping others find a place to call home in this area. It is also an honor to work alongside my brother who is the Principal Broker, and my grandfather who is the Associate Broker.

I love making friends everywhere I go, learning about new cultures,



and enjoying the arts. I have been to over a dozen countries and annually attend many events such as Comic Con San Diego, South by Southwest, and New York Fashion Week.

Through this club, I hope to get involved and make a positive impact on the lives of others.

*Lydia's sponsor is Kathy Cutri and her mentor is Tom Fraim.*

## Brian Davenport



I grew up in Fairfax County, graduating from Anandale High School in 1968, and from the

College of William and Mary in 1972. I am a retired Army Colonel, having completed a 28 year career working in Army logistics and acquisition programs.

Following retirement from the Army, I worked four years in government service as an acquisition Program Manager and another eight years for a defense contractor on logistics efforts and business development. I have lived in the Vienna area for the past fourteen years with my wife, Fran. We have two grown sons, who in their High School years attended Paul VI and Robinson High Schools.

Having moved our household goods 17 times in 28 years with the Army, Fran and I are delighted with living in Vienna and being able to stay put in the same community. We are active volunteers at our church, Our Lady of Good Counsel, and I look forward to assisting the Optimist Club of Vienna in many of our club's worthwhile programs and initiatives.

*Brian's sponsor is Joe Miller and his mentor is Laurie Cole.*

## “CREATING AN OPTIMISTIC FUTURE FOR OUR KIDS”

VP for Membership Joe Miller has created an excellent presentation to introduce potential members to Optimism and our Club. Entitled “Creating an Optimistic Future for Our Kids”, the slide-style document concisely states our mission, our programs, and our shared commitment.

You can view the document on our Facebook page or at <https://onedrive.live.com/redir?resid=B63F64DC47AD5181%21918>. Here's a sample:



### Creating an Optimistic Future for Our Kids



### What does it mean to be an Optimist?

- ✦ Develop Optimism as a philosophy of life
- ✦ Promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs
- ✦ Inspire respect for law and order
- ✦ Promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship
- ✦ Aid and encourage development of youth



### Why be an Optimist?

- ✦ Fellowship - Join a group of men and women who truly enjoy working together to get things done
- ✦ Be Informed - Stay in touch with the community through informative presentations from business and civic leaders
- ✦ Serve Youth - We are dedicated to responding to the special needs of youth in our community



### September 2014 Board Highlights

The Board of Directors met on September 9. Highlights of the meeting are as follows:

- Appointed a committee to plan for future operation of the Farmers Market: Michele Wright, Jim Houston, Jim Stivison, Gary Moonan and Joe Miller.
- The NOW function on Sept. 8 was well-received and we have several new members and FOOs. We welcomed 15 new members in 2013-14 which give us OI "Honor Club" status.
- Laurie Cole will take over the Essay Contest in 2015.
- Volunteers are needed for the Halloween Party and Halloween Parade.

Items voted on by email subsequent to the Board Meeting:

- Approved a Life Membership for Tom Spengler to recognize his leadership and hard work during his term as President.
- Approved Marnie Fienberg to serve as Director, Media Relations for the 2014-2015 Optimist Year.

### JOE MILLER, 2014-15 OPTIMIST OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Joe Miller, who was named Optimist of the Year by outgoing President Tom Spengler. Among his many activities—Farmers Market, Fourth Wednesday, Christmas Tree Sales, etc.—Joe served as VP for Membership in 2013-14. During that year we reached our goal of 15 new members! And Joe isn't just about the numbers. He wants to keep those members and get them involved right away, so he instituted a Mentor program, matching new members with longer-term (we won't say "old") club members to help this process.



Thank you, Joe, for your active service and Optimism!

#### Website Updates—

Our Club [website](http://viennaoptimistclub.org), which you can reach at [viennaoptimistclub.org](http://viennaoptimistclub.org), has information about upcoming programs, event dates, and will soon be rolling out an enhanced volunteer sign-up capacity. It is a great resource to members and those wanting to learn more about us! Thanks to our Club's Webmaster Gary Moonan for constantly improving our on-line presence.

And check out Optimist International's revamped website, [optimist.org](http://optimist.org).

*New for 2014-15!*

### OPTIMIST CLUB OF GREATER VIENNA

#### Board of Directors 2014 – 15

President	Dick Gongaware
Secretary	Jim Houston
Treasurer	Tom Fraim
Immediate Past President	Tom Spengler
President Elect	Joe Miller
Vice President of Community	Michele Wright
Vice President of Finance	Dick Lippert
Vice President of Media Relations	Tom Bauer
Vice President of Membership	Joe Miller
Vice President of Youth	Mike Fitzella
Director of Community	Anna Ryjik
Director of Media Relations	Marnie Fienberg
Director of Membership	AK Mohamed Yaseen
Director of Youth	Jim Stivison
Webmaster	Gary Moonan

### 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*