

Central Fairfax Optimist

By providing hope and positive vision, Optimists bring out the best in youth, our communities, and ourselves.



July-August 2023

<https://fairfaxoptimist.org>

“Just 3 Things”

Central Fairfax Optimist Club P.O. Box 1271 Fairfax City, VA 22038 Email us at fairfaxoptimists@gmail.com Board meeting 2nd Tuesday each month at the VFW 8469 5703 Vogue Road 730P.M. and Club dinner meetings April-July on 4th Wednesday @ Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd.



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Erica Pflugrath - Educator of the Year

Erika Pflugrath is this year's Excellence in Education Award Awards. Named Educator of the Year, Erica was instrumental to the success of our Club's Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. See more information and pictures on page 4.



Michele Hanson is Volunteer of the Year!

Michele Hanson received an award as the Central Fairfax Optimist Club's Volunteer of the Year for 2023. Michele was recognized at the annual Inter-Service Club Council's Award Ceremony on August 2nd at the Sherwood Community Center in Fairfax City. See more on page 6.



Hot News

Maxwell Osei Anokye, Vanessa Leader, and Joan White are new members!

The 2023-2024 Optimist year begins October 1st. The August Board meeting will include planning for that year. The meeting has moved to August 15th.

The club social is Saturday, August 26th.

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JULY

- 2-5 July**— Optimist International Convention @ Hyatt Regency Crystal City
- 4** — Fairfax City July 4th parade
- 11** — Club Board meeting 7:30 pm @ VFW 8469, 5703 Vogue Road, Fairfax Station
- 26**— Club Pot Luck picnic 7pm for social time; dinner served at 7:30 @ VFW 8469, 5703 Vogue Road, Fairfax Station
- 28**— ~~Fairfax City Rock the Block fundraiser~~

AUGUST

- 2** — ISCC Volunteer of the Year 7:30pm @ Sherwood Community Center
- 15** — Club Board meeting and Annual Club Planning Conference (**ACPC**) 7:30 pm @ VFW 8469, 5703 Vogue Road, Fairfax Station
- 26**— Club social at Anne’s house

SEPTEMBER 2023

- 6**— Inter-Service Club Council 12-1 pm @ the Moose Lodge 3529 Chain Bridge Rd. Fairfax
- 10-16** — Celebrate Community project with a Kiwanis, Lions and/or Rotary club
- 12** — Club Board meeting 7:30 pm @ VFW 8469, 5703 Vogue Road, Fairfax Station
- 27**— Club dinner meeting 7pm for social time; dinner served at 7:30 @ Elks Lodge 8421 Arlington Blvd. Fairfax Induction of 2023-2024 Officers and Board of Directors

BIRTHDAYS

JULY

- 12th Vanessa Leader
- 17th Peter Conklin
- 25th Jeff Johnson
- 26th Brooke Johnson
- 31st Diana Dawa

AUGUST

- 10th Ann Scott
- 12th Anne Grabowski
- 30th Douglas Harden

ANNIVERSARIES

JULY

- 2nd Dave and Jo Ann Gundry
- 5th Bob and Carol Devery
- 10th Susan and Edward Bond
- 30th Fred and Marty Kaiser

AUGUST

- 8th Maxwell and Pearl Anokye

FINANCE SUMMARY

(8/7/23)

- Operating Account \$1,260.25
- Community Service \$256.54
- Youth Fund (6/30/2023) \$4,148.96



Club News

NOW — New Optimists Welcome



Our Club members are welcoming three new members: Maxwell Osei Anokye, Vanessa Leader, and Joan White. Each bring their unique talents, experience, and optimistic enthusiasm that will enhance our Club's experience and will be greatly beneficial for our service to the children of our community.

We will feature each of these wonderful people in future newsletters.



Club News (continued)

Educator of the Year by Anne Grabowski

Each year the Optimist Club of Central Fairfax selects a person in the educational field to receive the Excellence in Education Award and this year's awardee is Erika Pflugrath from Frost Intermediate School. A Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is held every other year at Frost. Erika has been a part of this program for the past several years and personifies what the Excellence in Education Award represents. I have observed Erika's devotion to her students and how much she gives of herself to help these students to not only learn but to be an active part of their school and their community. Her encouragement and support for her students to participate in this contest is commendable.



It is not always easy to write a speech on a subject that may be new to you and then to stand up in front of an audience and give a speech is something that takes you out of your comfort zone. She has done a wonderful job helping and encouraging her students to participate in this program.

When I contacted Erika to let her know that she had received this award I also asked her for some information on her background. She wrote: "I have a BS in Deaf Education and a Master's Degree in Reading Education. I started teaching at Camelot Elementary School where I taught in the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Center for 7 years (grades 1, 5, and 6). I transferred to Loudoun County where I was an elementary Reading Specialist for 3 years. After my first son was born I decided to become a stay at home mom. In 2015, I was ready to come back to teach and was hired at Frost Middle School in the Deaf/Hard of Hearing program. I absolutely love my job as an English and Reading teacher because it combines two of my passions: working with Deaf students . . . and LITERACY! I have been a part of the Optimist communication contest since the 90s and fall more in love with the opportunity each year. It is such an amazing experience for our DHH students and it gives them a huge boost of confidence and a realistic view of what perseverance and hard work look like."



Thank you, Erika, for your devotion to your students and your profession. I am delighted to present the 2022-2023 Excellence in Education award to you.



Club News (continued)

Youth Appreciation

The recipients of the Central Fairfax Optimist Club Youth Appreciation Award are: Jefri Sanchez De La O, and Maheteme Boncampi. Jefri has hemophilia. This condition requires that Jefri make daily visits to the hospital to check his blood work. Jefri is doing much better in school than he has in the past. Aside from school he also has two jobs. Jefri is always positive, and he has hopes of having a career in the medical field where he can help others like himself who are dealing with chronic medical issues. Thank you for your continued positive attitude Jefri.



The second Youth Appreciation Award goes to Mehateme Bocampi. He exemplifies the first line in the Optimist Club Creed "Promise Yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind." Maheteme does just that. When he enrolled at Mountain View in 2021, he had just moved from Ethiopia and was very excited. All he could talk about was how much he loves to learn. He has demonstrated this love every day at Mountain View. It was only later that we found out the tremendous hardships that Mehateme had been dealing with, but you would have never known this based on his smile and positive attitude, Mr Todd his counselor, wrote, " Maheteme is a great citizen at our school and a good friend to all. We will miss him next year."



Congratulations to both of these two very deserving students and we wish them continued success in all their future endeavors.



Club News (continued)

Michele Hanson: ISSC Volunteer of the Year by Kim Moden

Our club is a member of the Inter-Service Club Council (ISSC), a group of organizations that serve the Fairfax community. Every year, the ISSC asks each member organization to select its Volunteer of the Year. At the Volunteer of the Year program at the Sherwood Community Center on August 2, Michele Hanson was honored as the Central Fairfax Optimist Club's Volunteer of the Year.

Born in Philadelphia, PA, Michele grew up in the city of Brotherly Love in a large, close-knit family, the third of nine children. She moved to Northern Virginia while in high school, graduating from Bishop O'Connell High School, and later from George Mason College of the University of Virginia, as part of the school's second graduating class. Michele met her husband Dave while students at George Mason. Last September, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.



With a BS in Biology, Michele worked at Flow Laboratories, a cancer research lab and for NIH. Later she returned to her alma mater George Mason University and had her "dream job" as coordinator of the graduate master's programs for the MBA and MSA degrees, traveling internationally with the students as they studied company business practices in other countries, including trips to Dubai, Singapore, Japan, Thailand, Prague, Germany, South America and India. In retirement, she loves to focus on and spend time with her 4 children and 5 grandchildren. She is not only dedicated to volunteering for our club, but is also very active at her church, St. Mary of Sorrows where she is a member of the church choir and also President of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Michele has been a member of our club for 20 years and loves helping serve the community and our children. She has shown her Optimist spirit in so many ways and so many times by serving in leadership positions, including as a Director on the Board of Directors, as Optimist International Foundation Representative, and as an excellent club secretary. She has been very involved in many aspects of the club, including judging for the Communications Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and for the Limburg Scholarship for high school seniors. She has been very active in the club's fundraising events, especially Trivia Nights. As a skilled and energetic organizer, she has coordinated all the staffing and support for the club's participation in Fairfax City's Rock the Block concert and bell ringing for the Salvation Army. In our club, Michele is also known for her generous hospitality. Each December, Michele, and her husband Dave open their home for a club holiday social. It is a top priority for Michele, and the club looks forward to this annual special gathering.

Michele's personal involvement, her selfless devotion to the children, families, and community, and the way she lives in the spirit of the Optimist Creed make us proud to recognize Michele Hanson as our Optimist Club Volunteer of the Year.



Club News (continued)

Michele Hanson: ISSC Volunteer of the Year



Above: the ISSC Volunteers of the Year

Below: the members of the Inter-Service Club Council.





Optimist International News

OI Convention Was Great!

by Dee Rushforth

Highlights: Old friends. New Friends. Great speakers. Outstanding training. Leadership recognition. Efficient business session. JOI kids. Social and touring activities. Canadian hospitality room.

Text and pictures can't convey the excitement and experience of an Optimist International Convention. I encourage you to go to the next one in June 2024. It will be in Niagara Falls, Ontario Canada. Get your passport now!



OI President Bob McFayen and wife Penny are really doing a great job and are long-time friends. Our Optimist friends are life-long friends and come from all over the Optimist world. Our Capital Virginia District was the host district, and we had dedicated volunteers that helped things run smoothly. The Hyatt Regency Crystal City was a great venue, and the staff was exceptional.

The Keynote Speakers were excellent and had inspiringly optimistic stories to tell. Amy Downs is a survivor of the Oklahoma City bombing and fell nearly three floors as the building collapsed around her. Kelly Schaefer is the author of the Amazon Bestseller "Fractured not Broken." She was a cheerleader and a drunk driver left her a quadriplegic in 1999. Her experience and determination are inspiring. And our 2021 Oratorical Contest World Champion, Nayana Xavier, made a surprise (to us) appearance and gave a fantastic speech and commentary.

Besides the people, the training is one of the best reasons for coming to an OI convention. There are always a variety to attend and impossible to go to all of them. I chose How to Have Effective Meetings, Marketing Tips, Tools and Resources, Mastering Social Media, and Maximizing Grants for Your Club.

Anne Grabowski, Kim Moden, Michele Hanson, Maxwell Anokye, Trinket Troy, Barbara and I volunteered to help at the Welcome Desk. Maxwell's dream for a school renovation in Ghana drew a lot of interest.



There were vendors with Optimist supplies displayed for purchase, and a curling demo as well. The Canadians had a great hospitality room and celebrated Canada Day. The President's Ball offers a chance to dress up, eat and dance. The DJ was great! Formal wear is optional but fun.

Optimist International News (continued)



OI Convention Was Great!



OI President Bob McFadyen



Nepal District in foreground



Optimist Nation Flags



Guac and Roll



Choir from Baltimore



Canadian Hospitality Room



Optimist International News (continued)

Optimist International Convention Schedule

FRIDAY, JUNE 30

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM..... OI Board Meeting

SATURDAY, JULY 1

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM..... Vice Presidents/Governors Training

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM..... Vice Presidents-Elect and Governors-Elect Training

3:55 PM Ribbon Cutting

4:00 – 6:30 PM Registration Open

4:30 – 5:30 PM First Timers Program

7:30 – 10:00 PM Evening of Entertainment Featuring the Baltimore Children's Choir and DJ, Jon Boesche

SUNDAY, JULY 2 BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN OURSELVES

8-9 a.m. Workshop: How to Have Effective Meetings

8:00 – 9:45 AM District Chair Training Sessions

1. Growth
2. Member Engagement & Retention
3. Marketing
4. Leadership Development
5. District Secretary-Treasurer Training

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM..... Optimism Information Center Registration

9-9:45 a.m. Workshop: Optimist Institute: A Member Benefit for all!

10:00 – 11:30 AM Heritage of Optimism Brunch: Honor our Past Int'l Presidents and their Spouses

NOON – 2:00 PM Opening Ceremony and Keynote Speaker Amy Downs

2:30 – 3:45 PM Workshops

4:30 – 6:00 PM Optimist International Foundation Donor Appreciation Reception (By invitation only)

6:00 – 8:30 PM District Night Out/Dinners

9:00 – 11:30 PM Trivia Night



Optimist International News (continued)

Optimist International Convention Schedule

MONDAY, JULY 3 BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN OUR COMMUNITIES

- 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM..... Optimism Information Center Banquet Coupon Exchange
- 9:00 – 11:00 AM General Session with Keynote Speaker Frank Henderson
- 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM.....Town Hall
- 12:00 – 4:30 PM Service Projects
- 1:30 – 2:30 PM Workshops
- 3:00 – 4:00 PM Member Feedback Sessions: Future Focus
- 6:30 – 7:30 PM Pre-Banquet Reception
- 7:30 – 9:30 PM Presidents Banquet/Gala
- 9:30 – 11:30 PM President’s Gala/Dance Featuring the band Rock X

TUESDAY, JULY 4 BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN YOUTH

- 7:30 – 9:00 AM Optimist International Foundation Past Presidents Breakfast by invitation only
 - 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM..... Optimism Information Center
 - 7:45-8:45 a.m.Credentials
 - 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM.....General Session with Keynote Speaker Kelly Schaefer
 - 11:30 AM– 12:30 PM.....Workshops
 - 12:45-1:45 p.m.Credentials
 - 2:00 – 4:00 PM Annual Business Meeting
 - 5:00 – 6:30 PM Wm. H Harrison Reception by invitation only
- ENJOY FIREWORKS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5 FUN DAY

- 8:00 – 9:00 AM Club Presidents-Elect & Lt. Governors-Elect Breakfast Hosted by President Designate Tracy Huxley
- 9:30 AM Load Buses
- 10 AM Leave Hyatt Regency Crystal City for Ford's Theater and then George Washington’s Mount Vernon; Lunch at Mount Vernon

THURSDAY, JULY 6

Extended stays / Departures



The Puzzle!

How savvy are you with social media? Do you know what an app is? Most words for this month's puzzle relate to social media sites. Can you identify the few that aren't?

R E F K V U M S P I L L F G B
E Y L W O Y T A E O D M W M L
T R F Z S O K H S B I B M F U
S K T P Z V B P R T U X C U E
D F A S O U I E M E O T S U S
N C H G B N P A C R A D U E K
E M C P C M R B D A C D O O Y
I E P C X G C V A X F C S N Y
R D A D A H E S U O H B U L C
F I N T O T I D D E R Z I L T
N A S I L I N K E D I N A U I
U N C R R E T T I W T I M A K
I E W Z R K P I O C C B J G T
S O U D D D S C P O L L K F O
U D Y W H A U M S R R O B F K

Print this page and circle the words or just go down the list and find them.

Words can go in any direction.
Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

BLUESKY
CLUBHOUSE
FRIENDSTER
LINKEDIN
MEDIA
REDDIT
SNAPCHAT
SPILL
TIKTOK
TWITTER

CHOICES
FACEBOOK
INSTAGRAM
MASTODON
MYSPACE
PUZZLE
SOCIAL
THREADS
TUMBLR
YOUTUBE

What words would you like to see in September's puzzle?
Send them to:
fairfaxoptimists@gmail.com



And in conclusion!!

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 to 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. Larson

Mission

By providing hope and positive vision, Optimists bring out the best in youth, our communities and ourselves.

Vision

Optimist International will be recognized worldwide as the premier volunteer organization that values all children and helps them develop to their full potential.

Purposes

1. To develop optimism as a philosophy of life utilizing the tenets of the Optimist Creed;
2. to promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs;
3. to inspire respect for the law;
4. to promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people;
5. to aid and encourage the development of youth, in the belief that the giving of one's self in service to others will advance the well-being of humankind, community life and the world.

FVCbank
Success has a bank.

Member FDIC

Thanks so much for
your continued
support!



Contact our own Bob Devery to plan your travel.
Thanks for your support Bob!
bdevery@cruiseshipcenters.com

**Prestige Dental
Specialists**

Thanks so much for
your support!

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