



THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF COLUMBIA (Downtown Optimist)

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Downtown Optimist Club Zoom Meeting Newsletter

May 7, 2021 at 12:01 pm

Members attended Rick McKernan, Mary Dewey, Nasdia Ryakmyathl, Scott Stager, Eva Vazquez, Steve Winter, Jerry Sullivan, John Jones, Red Leighton, Evan Schilling, and Jerry Sullivan. Guest Lister Florence. Guest Speaker: Jane Williams from Columbia Love Inc

Prayer/Pledge for May 7 Rick McKernan, Prayer and Mary Dewey, Pledge

Birthday/Anniversary: N/A

Tony read off the officers and board for 2021-2022 year (Committee member chair is Ed Musternan) **Voting will take place on next week,**

President: Tony Parisio for other year

1st Vice President: Jerry Sullivan

2nd Vice President: Nadia Ryakmayatullo

Treasurer: Jack Beard

Secretary: Phyllis Nichols

OI Foundation Rep: Mary Dewey

Board member: Deborah Swanegan

High School Scholarships Nadia Ryakmayatullo has been reading all the applications finally came up with 6 winners will receive 1 thousand scholarship each. The winners are: Jade Leighty from Hickman High School, Landon Viers and Morgan McBees from Battle High School, Xavier Forte and Jadehee from Rock Bridge High School, and Arlexus Cisneres Ochan from Douglass High School.

Board Meeting on Thursday, April 15 we had two funding request the Fun City Youth Academy, and Cornerstones of Care. Kristen from the Columbia office will come to the May 20 board meeting and talk about where the money will go for at the Columbia office and the youth and family here.

Evan Schilling and Rick McKernan talked about our upcoming Soapbox Derby on Sunday, June 13. They both said "All hands on deck for this event." They are still looking for more drivers 3 to 4 in each divisions. They will be looking for volunteers for this event. Mizzou Swim Team will not be with us this year. Because, half of the team will gone for the Olympic Trail and the other half will heading there for the next round. The volunteers will be able to help 6 to 8 hours and be able to lift the cars onto the trailers. Rick will be looking Optimist members

Bringing Out The Best In Kids Since 1936

to drive the trucks with the trailers on them up and down the hill to pick up the kids and their cars. John is going to check with the bank members to see if they want to volunteer for this event.

Mary Dewey talked about the Family Fun Fests that is a program that the Parks and Recreation host every summer for families to come out to the park and have fun. She has signed up the Optimist Clubs in Columbia for an information booth so we can talk about Optimist how we help the youth in the community. We have information for parents to take with them and game for the kids to play while we are talking the parents. The dates and theme for this event are on Wednesday from 5 to 8 pm. The first park on June 16 will be at Cosmo Park theme Bicentennial Birthday Bash. Next Park on July 21 will be at Clary-Shy (Farmer Market) theme Healthy Habits. Third Park on August 18 will be at Albert-Oakland theme Bookworms and Butterflies. The last park on September 15 will be at Cosmo-Bethel Park theme Creative Kids. C.O. Scheffer will send out the sign up Genius out this week for people to sign up and help with the Family Fun Fests.

Guest Speakers: Jane Williams email address is Janew@columbialoveinc.org and website: <https://lovecolumbiamo.org>

Our Mission

To connect community relationships and resources to love people forward.

Our Vision

To see individual lives and the community transformed through neighbors helping neighbors. We believe this is best done through a wholistic approach where we serve the whole person and engage the whole community. We are motivated and inspired by the extravagant love and selfless service of Jesus who sought out the most vulnerable and disadvantaged and lifted them up

Our Values

1. Every person is created in the image of God, has intrinsic worth, and should be treated with dignity and respect.
2. A community flourishes best when we love our neighbors as our selves.
3. People trying to improve their lives or escape poverty often face complex barriers and need an individualized, multi-faceted approach that addresses informational, relational, material, and spiritual poverty.
4. Change best occurs in the context of relationship. We need one another in order to grow and must have positive relationships in order to take significant steps forward.

5. People who offer help are enriched and changed just as much, if not more, than those who receive help.
6. We can accomplish more if we work together. We avoid duplication, and everyone's positive outcomes increase.
7. We have an abundance of time, talent, and resources in our community and, if they are well organized and engaged, everyone in the community will be lifted up.

Love Columbia opened its doors as Love INC of Columbia in 2008, to coordinate the efforts of churches and volunteers to help our neighbors in need. We established a clearinghouse to assess and verify needs and developed programs to respond with a relational, developmental approach that would promote self-sufficiency and flourishing.

Our founders are Jane Williams, a social worker and community organizer, and Pat McMurry, a local business owner who had worked for years with pastors and large scale multi-church events. They brought together key church and business leaders who were eager to respond strategically and collectively to identified community needs. Since 2008, Love INC has continually developed and grown this wholistic model of love and assistance in Columbia. Our response team has grown from a dozen churches and a few volunteers to a community network of over 80 churches, dozens of business partners, hundreds of volunteers and 20 staff.

In 2020, we responded to the pandemic by serving more people than ever before and finding ways to engage over 100 volunteers. We particularly responded to the families with children and individuals with disabilities who found themselves newly homeless due to the pandemic.

In 2021, we took several significant steps to plunge our roots deeper into our local community. We became Love Columbia and moved our core services into the Love Columbia Center at 1209 E Walnut. We also moved The Love Seat, our furniture bank and resale store to 2600 Range line. Both relocations greatly increased our accessibility and capacity to serve more people and engage more volunteers.

Our Response: The *Love Seat*

The beauty of the Love Seat is that it serves so many purposes. It provides free items for families in need, provides multiple levels of engagement for volunteers, provides opportunities for in-kind donations, produces an earned income stream to help support other programs, and serves as a face for our organization to the community. Many current volunteers and donors first experience with Love INC was at the Love Seat. It also serves a transitional employment function. Of the 100 persons hired in the last 10 years over 85 have had some barrier to employment?

In 2020 they help 884 households received services. Within those houses, hold they serviced 939 adults and 966 children. 289 Household experienced homeless, 101 individual obtained

permanent housing, and 84 individual secured jobs or better jobs. In April they started a new program called Bridge (103 Household Serviced) response to pandemic related need provides crisis intervention to prevent homelessness, or secure/maintain current housing- prioritizes families with children, elderly and disabled. Extra Mile Coaching (84 participants 1012 coaching) this session provides money management education and coaching for 16 weeks. Extra Mile Homes (14 families and 31 children) transitional housing for families with children experiencing or near homelessness for 4 to 6 month program includes high accountability coaching to reduce debt and save permanent housing. Transportation (63 car repairs, 10 donated cars for families who need them, and 180 fud fares and rides. Their total financial assistance for 2020 was \$289,396.62. Another program that they offer is Kids for beds program where they give beds for kids who are need of a bed. They have moved to 1209 E Walnut end of last year. The building is bigger which gives them more room to offer more classes. There is an area there where a playground there that needs to be cleaned and fixed up. After is all done the kids will have some place to play where their parents are in a meeting or in a class. John Jones led us with the closing of the Creed at 1:05 pm

Tony Parisio, President

