



THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF COLUMBIA (Downtown Optimist)

Mailing address: P. O. Box 1959 * Columbia, MO 65205-1959

Web: www.downtownoptimistclub.org

The Weekly Bulletin

February 11, 2019

Call to order: President Dewey at 12:05 p.m.

Invocation: Rick Mckernan

Pledge: Ken Oster

Introduction of Guests and New and Old Members (who have been gone):

Jerry Sullivan and Gary Uppinghouse are new Downtown Optimist Club (D.O. Club) members and present at the meeting today. Each gave a brief description of their interest in joining the D.O. Club. Jerry is from Farmington, MO. He moved to Southwest Columbia, MO recently. In his employment he had worked with teenagers throughout his career, and wishes to continue supporting youth in the community in his retirement as part of the D.O. Club. Gary is retired from Department of Corrections. He too wants to support youth programs through the D.O. Club in his retirement. Welcome Jerry and Gary.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

None reported.

Mystery Person

President Mary Dewey awarded the mystery person to Larry Fick for all the work he has done with the D.O. Club such as making room arrangements for our meetings.

Announcements

Bonnie Langreder has recently been admitted to the hospital for surgery. She is doing better and will be returning home soon. We passed a Get Well card for everyone to sign for her and Mary will mail the card to her today.

- **Sign In or Pay the Pig:**
 - Carl Scott paid \$0.25 to the pig in honor of last Thursday being Optimist Day.
 - Carl Scott paid another \$0.25 to the pig in appreciation for the success of the MU womens' basketball team.
 - Carl Scott paid another \$0.25 to the pig in appreciation for the success of the Columbia Cougars womens' basketball team. The team is currently ranked first in the nation.
 - He encourages D.O. Club members to go see the teams play excellent basketball.

- **Welcome any new or returning members:** None reported.

- **Food Bank:** Jim Murphy stated last Monday they arranged containers of apple sauce and containers of Mandarin oranges to be placed into Buddy Packs. Larry Fick reminded members that Kelly Schilling sent out an email recently about the upcoming evening D.O. Club meeting will consist of an assisting at Food Bank. This event to be held on 2/25/19. Please review the email and sign up for the event.

- **President Announcements:**

- Tri-District Optimist (West Missouri, East Missouri and Kansas 2nd Quarter Conference): On Friday, 2/15/19 and Saturday, 2/16/19 at the Adam's Mark Hotel (9103 East 39th Street, Kansas City, MO).
- **CYBA basketball:** D.O. Club is sponsoring a first and second grade team and a boys' fourth grade team. First and second grade teams are coached by Shannon Bahadori and Wendell Coonce; and the fourth grade boys' team coached by Kevin Pistole. The first and second grade team is playing at 8:00 a.m. this coming Saturday at Beulah Ralph Elementary School. The fourth grade team is playing this Saturday at 11:00 a.m. at Jefferson Middle School. If you have time this Saturday please go out and support our teams.
- **Boys and Girls Club of Columbia Annual Rootin' Tootin' Chili Cook-off:** President Dewey asked Scott Stager to provide an update on planning. The Chili Cook-off is scheduled for 2/15/19 and 2/16/19. D.O. Club has a double both reserved for the event. Scott indicated they still need at least one more person for the morning and afternoon shifts this coming Saturday.
- **Homes for Computers - Computer Give-Away at the D.O. Clubhouse:** President Dewey asked Rick Mckernan to provide an update on the Homes for Computers event. He encouraged members to continue to sign up to help out with the event. Computer set-up is the same date (Thursday, 2/21/19) and location as the Board meeting, so Board members are encouraged to arrive early at 4:00 p.m. before the meeting to help with the computers. The computers will be distributed on Saturday, 2/23/19.
- **Soap Box Derby:** President Dewey asked Rick Mckernan to provide an update on Soap Box Derby planning. Rick stated the D.O. Club 2019 Mid Missouri Soap Box Derby is Sunday, 6/9/19. Rick added this has been a good planning week for the Soap Box Derby. Flat Branch Mortgage has recently signed up for the \$1,000 silver sponsorship. All major sponsors have been determined with the exception of one silver sponsor slot. Rick also noted that the MU Swim team will help again with the Soap Box Derby day this year. They have been an excellent support to help with the success of the event.
- **Scholarships:** President Dewey indicated Cyrilla Galbreath has taken the D.O. Club scholarship applications over to the Columbia high schools.
- **Upcoming Events:** President Dewey asked Larry Fick to give an update on the Dos De Mayo event. Larry reported it is to be held Thursday, 5/2/19 at the D.O. Club house and provided a summary of meal items.
- **Awesome 80's Trivia Night:** President Dewey reminded members about the 3/2/19 there is an "Awesome 80's Trivia Night" and Chili Cook-off at the American Legion Post 202. Doors open at 5:45 p.m., with Chili at 6:00 p.m.
- **Black History Month:** President Dewey asked members to join the Columbia Parks and Recreation for its celebration of diversity during this important month. All are welcome and all events are free. Contact Jay Bradley at 874-6379 or email Jay.Bradley@como.gov for more information about these events.
- **D.O. Club Board Meeting Reminder:** President Dewey reminded members there is an upcoming Board meeting on Thursday, 2/21/19 at the D.O. Clubhouse. There are a lot of items on the agenda to cover at this important meeting.

- **Announcements from the floor:** No additional announcements.

Today's Speaker

Today's speaker is Jennifer Perkins, Program Director, of the Central Missouri Foster Care Adoption Association (CMFCAA). According to their website, "Central Missouri Foster Care and Adoption Association is a not for profit agency that educates, supports, and advocates for foster and adoptive children, youth and families in central Missouri by offering services and partnering with community and governmental agencies to develop healthy and self-sufficient individuals and families."

Jennifer indicated she was in the banking field, and had gotten interested in foster care supports through her own personal experience of being asked to foster a seven-year-old child in need of foster care. The foster care agency working with the child and Jennifer was very helpful. This resulted in Jennifer becoming interested in volunteering with foster care and adoption services, and later led to her becoming employed with her current employer, CMFCAA. Jennifer has been with her agency for six months.

CMFCAA have an office in Jefferson City and recently obtained an office here in Columbia, MO. CMFCAA serves 13 counties in Mid-Missouri.

Jennifer reports they have eight full time employees. They coordinate also with AmeriCorps Vista program for staff assistance. An individual works at CMFCAA through AmeriCorps Vista – offering individuals an opportunity to gain valuable job experience. They also receive an hourly wage through this federal program.

Jennifer provided a summary of some of the supports and services offered through CMFCAA. Programs and services include, but are not limited to, Begin Again Backpacks, Training for new foster and adoption parents/families, Odyssey Respite events, Transitions, 30 Days to Family, Extreme Recruitment, etc. (These programs are also detailed on the CMFCAA website).

Examples of some services/programs discussed included, but not limited to:

- **Begin Again Backpack:** These are new backpacks given to eligible children entering foster care that include needed items such as clean clothes, gift cards for purchasing needed items, new book bag, hand-made quilts, Salvation Army clothing vouchers, haircare vouchers, gift cards to the Farmers' Market, and other school and personal items. All items included in the backpack are listed on the website. When asked if there are particular items needed to be donated, Jennifer stated such items as new clothes, especially sizes for kid's ages 8-15 years; nail clippers; and baby/toddler shampoos and soaps would be appreciated.
- **Odyssey Respite events:** These are respite opportunities arranged and planned through CMFCAA, such as play dates, where kids who are in foster care or adopted can get together to talk, read together, and play sports activities. As per the website, these are four-hour monthly events provided by foster, adoptive and kinship care parents, to give primary care-givers a short period of time to rest and recharge.
- **Transition:** For high-school seniors who are in foster care, adoption, kinship, guardianship. "The program is designed to help youth complete high school, improve life skills, and pursue milestones with the help of a one-on-one mentor. The program makes for a successful transition into adulthood", per the website. Jennifer added the individual works with a community volunteer who serves as a mentor.
- **Training opportunities** offered to assist interested persons/families in getting certified to become foster and adoption parents. Training also on such topics as helping with the child's Individual Education Planning process, behavioral supports, etc.

- Jennifer explained many more excellent services, programs, other resources and training opportunities. Please refer to CMFCAA website for a description.

When asked how CMFCAA is funded, Jennifer indicated they receive state funding, United Way grants, donations, and volunteers. They also have an annual community event to get support. Jennifer mentioned they are getting ready to apply for a grant that may result in attaining more staff to help with the multiple programs and services offered.

How can we help? They can use mentors and volunteers to help with, for example, the Begin Again Backpack program, volunteer at Odyssey respite events, etc. Jennifer added that all volunteers must complete thorough background screenings before working directly with the youth served by CMFCAA.

For additional information you can go to the website - mofosteradopt.com. And/or you can contact Jennifer at Jennifer@mofosteradopt.com. Jennifer's office number is 573.298.0258, and her cell number is 573.616.6405.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

- 2/18/19 - Valerie Zumwalt from Show Me Leaders
- 3/4/19 - Christina Torbet from Girls on the Run
- 3/11/19 - Nikki McGruder from Inclusive Impact Institute
- 3/18/19 - Annelle Whitt from CPS MAC Scholars
- 3/25/19 - Steve Smith from Job Point
- 4/1/19 - Aaro Froese from Boy Scouts of America
- 4/8/19 - Susan Shaffer from the Special Olympics
- 4/22/19 - Tim Haller from Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge

Adjourn with the Creed: 12:55 p.m.

Optimistically Yours,

Ron Berg, Secretary

