



THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF COLUMBIA (Downtown Optimist)

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

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Downtown Optimist Club Zoom Meeting Newsletter

February 15, 2021

Members attended:

On February 15 meeting:, Rick McKernan, Mary Dewey, Ed Musterman, Scott Stager, Max Miller, Brian Haberberger, and Deb Swanegan Guest Richie Vanskike (Rainbow House)

Prayer/Pledge for February 1: Rick McKernan Prayer and Max Miller Pledge

Birthday: Happy President Day

Board Meeting Thursday February 18: We have 2 funding request: Greg Gilmore from the Daniel Boone Baseball and Softball League \$700. Julie Dorn from the Central and Northeast Missouri Food Bank \$5000.

Rick McKernan talked about the Geocaching/Scavenger Hunt

This event will get the kids out of the house with their parents. They will going to 10 of the City Parks and Recreation Parks in town looking for the geocaching object that will the Optimist Creed inside. Each Creed will have a line that is bold that they will have to read and take a selfies of themselves with Creed in their hand. Creed will have a number on them letting us know which park they are coming from.

They will text their selfies picture to a central phone. They will have to find all 10 geocaching to be enter into the prizes. The prizes will be going to the first 10 kids who found all 10 geocaching Creeds and sent their pictures in to use will win \$50.00 gift cards. We will need 10 volunteer to make sure that all the Creeds are still where we put them in the park and check to see who have been there. There will be a small notebook inside where the kids will sign their name saying they were there and what that line of the Creed met to them in one sentence. We would like to put this event on for 4 days, which will be Wednesday, February 24 through Saturday, February 27.

We will get the word out for this event through Peach Jar (CPS), Facebook page, and maybe the radio or newspaper. We will be filling out a grant from OI for this event (mental wellness or club project).

Rick McKernan also talked about the upcoming Oratorical and Essay Contest. He sent us all the flyers for these events on Wednesday. The oratorical will take place on Tuesday, February 23 at 7:00 pm at the Sunrise Optimist Club. There will \$200 for 1st place, \$150 for 2nd place and \$100

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for 3th place. Deadline will be Monday, February 15. The Essay deadline is Friday, February 12 and mailed to the Downtown Optimist Club PO Box 1959 Columbia, MO 65201. We need volunteers to help judge the Essay contest writing and we will also to help need help to run the Oratorical contest (timer keeper and make sure everyone is quiet while speak is going on). We have 3 for the Oratorical Contest (needing help on Tuesday will last 1 hour), and we have 40 essays to read this year.

Rick Mckernan also talked about the Computer Giveaway that will take place in February. Rick and Deb will be meeting the City of Columbia on Tuesday about how many they have for us to giveaway this year. Volunteer Action is now taking applications for families who would like a computer for their house until the end of the month. If you know any families who need a computer please have them call Volunteer Action to get sign up. Computers will be coming to clubhouse on Wednesday, February 24, set up will on Thursday, February 25 from 6 to 10 pm and February 26 from 6:30 until ?? and Give Away will be by drive thru on Saturday, February 27. (not sure the time). Rick will be send out a signup email out soon for helping with this event. There will a be a short video that they will get with each computer. We have 40 to 50 monitor that came from BBL and 40 to 50 keyboards, hard diver and rest of the computer coming from the City of Columbia.

Laura Dell talked to us about our upcoming 2nd Qtr. Conference that will take place by zoom on Friday, February 26 and Saturday, February 27. Here is the line for the conference: This is FREE

Friday, February 26

6:30 pm Gathering

7:00 pm Executive Committee meeting

7:30 pm Catch a Rising Star- Part 1

8:30 pm Fun and Fellowship

Saturday, February 27

8:30 am Coffee

9:00 am Board of Directors Meeting

9:30 am JOI Around the World

10:00 am Break

10:15 am Oratorical Contest - Karl Tyminski

10:45 am What NOT to Post to Engage Others- Mary Hatfield

11:15 am Essay Contest- Angelia Dixon

11:45 am Lunch Break

12:00 Sleep in Heavenly Peace Presentation- Steve McLean

12:30 pm Learning Management System- Liz Christman

1:00 pm Optimist Curling- Al Kersey

1:30 pm Ben's Blue Bags Presentation

2:00 pm Attendance Prizes

Be sure to REGISTER as soon as possible. There is a limited amount of Happiness Bags being sent out to the first people that register, provided by the Zone 2 Optimists. The link to register is on the East Missouri Optimist website- <https://oi-emo.org/>

Richie Vanskike

Rick joined Rainbow house in October 2019. Before he joined Rainbow House was in Radio in Moberly and 2 years with KBIA Radio here in Columbia.

**Now he is the Director of Development at Rainbow House
573-474-6600 x2114**

History



Rainbow House began in November, 1986 in an old farmhouse with room for up to twelve children. Kathy Hughes, founder, had been a foster parent for many years. She had the vision to provide a safe, home-like environment where sibling groups would be kept together and children would continue in their home school. Her compassion for children, sincere dedication and ability to mobilize the community resulted in the founding of the only children's emergency shelter in Mid-Missouri. The agency has historically provided placement for children age birth to eighteen years.

Bringing Out The Best In Kids Since 1936

In 1992, services were expanded to include crisis care. This program provides for children whose parents are in crisis and need a safe place to house their children while they attempt to stabilize their own lives. Crisis Care is truly a prevention program in that it provides a respite placement that can be accessed by a parent without involvement of any other agencies. Parents may face a major crisis including homelessness, unemployment, temporary mental instability, or other issues that can cause major stress in one's life. Crisis Care can relieve the parent of the added stress of parenting at the same time they are trying to solve their crisis. It is our belief that children are protected from abuse because parents choose to utilize this Rainbow House service.

Many years later, ICAN (Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect) and the Rainbow House Board of Directors recognized the need for a child advocacy center. In August of 1998, the Rainbow House Regional Child Advocacy Center (CAC) began conducting forensic interviews, remaining true to the Rainbow House mission of keeping children safe and supporting families in crisis. The CAC offers a child-friendly environment where abused and neglected children are interviewed. Utilizing a multi-disciplinary team approach, the CAC works with the investigative personnel from law enforcement, children's division, juvenile office and prosecuting attorney's offices to coordinate the best and most effective response to allegations of sexual and severe physical abuse of a child. Every effort is made to interview a child only one time.

Rainbow House has progressively provided services to greater numbers of children over the years. In 2018, more than 546 children received services in the Rainbow House programs.

Rainbow House is staffed by trained, qualified individuals, experienced in working with children in crisis situations. Staff and volunteers undergo background checks and training to provide the highest level of care.

The Children's Emergency Shelter

Rainbow House Children's Emergency Shelter works to:

- Provide a safe, stable, loving home for children in crisis
- Keep sibling groups together
- Keep children in their home schools
- Work with families to address the crisis situation and strengthen parenting skills
- Provide counseling services to children and families
- Assist with children's clothing and other physical needs

Be a support system and advocate for families and children in crisis.

When children need a safe place to live during a family crisis or after experiencing abuse or neglect in the home, the Children's Emergency Shelter can provide a safe haven for children from birth to 18 years of age.

Children's Division may admit children because they have been removed from their home and will stay at Rainbow House until a foster placement can be found, or they may be admitted through our Crisis Care program. Crisis Care is truly a "prevention" service in that it gives the parent time to establish stability in their lives, possibly preventing abuse or neglect to the child. The Children's Emergency Shelter also offers hourly respite care services to families experiencing overwhelming stress. Much like Crisis Care, this service allows parents to establish stability in their lives, while knowing their children are safe.

It is the goal of the Shelter to reduce the emotional trauma suffered by children who have experienced abuse, neglect, or family crisis, in a safe and loving place. Through home-cooked meals, recreational outings and activities, and loving, nurturing Youth Specialists, we hope to return the feelings of family and stability to each child at the shelter.

Rainbow House – Regional Child Advocacy Center

The Child Advocacy Center serves children and families in eleven counties in the state of Missouri.

Rainbow House’s CAC is one of 15 in the state and has been serving children since 1998.

The Rainbow House CAC serves children and families in the following counties:

Adair, Audrain, Boone, Callaway, Cole, Cooper, Howard, Macon, Monroe, Randolph, Shelby

The CAC works to make children and families comfortable and safe during their visit to Rainbow House.

A child is brought to the CAC when it is believed that abuse has occurred. Rainbow House is a safe, child-focused environment where a child talks with a trained interviewer who knows the right questions to ask during a forensic interview. A Multi-Disciplinary Team that includes law enforcement, Children’s Division, medical and mental health professionals, prosecutors and other professionals work together to made decisions about how to help the child. The child and family also work with a specially trained advocate who will link the family to necessary services that begin the healing process when abuse has occurred.

Other Services that Rainbow House:

Clinical Programs

This is the duty of our generation as we enter the twenty-first century—solidarity with the weak, the persecuted, the lonely, the sick, and those in despair. It is expressed by the desire to give a noble and humanizing meaning to a community in which all members will define themselves not by their own identity but by that of others. –Elie Wiesel

The Clinical Program at Rainbow House encompasses the therapy services and outreach programs that we provide to the families and children we serve.

Children and families can utilize our expertise and dedication to ending child maltreatment and healing its wounds. Use of our family advocacy program and numerous therapeutic services are available to all children and families in crisis, preference given to children and families who are clients of Rainbow House.

Therapy Services

Rainbow House provides therapy to children through the Children’s Emergency Shelter and Regional

Child Advocacy Center.

The Emergency Children’s Shelter offers therapy and resource assistance both while the child is in residence and after they leave our doorstep.

The CAC provides therapy services and referrals to children and families post-forensic interview.

Outpatient therapy for victims of sexual abuse (who have not had interviews at the CAC) is available on a limited and short-term basis for both individuals and families. Therapy is focused on abuse and trauma and can include court preparation support when needed. Play therapy and other approaches are used to assist a child or family in managing the disruption, and pain associated with sexual abuse. We also assist families in connecting with other qualified therapists for long-term and out-of-county counseling needs. For more information about therapy services at Rainbow House, please call Tracy Johnson at 573.474.6600 x2118 or The Child Advocacy Center at 573.474.6600 x2123

Rainbow House provides all mental health services free of charge.

Rainbow House Support Groups

Family Advocate Program serves the child and non-offending caregiver who have been victimized through child abuse and neglect. The Advocate focuses on the needs of the family, offers support to the

family, and assistance in connecting them with appropriate community resources. The Advocate works in concert with other agencies to ensure that the child receives the best services available and that the family is empowered to move forward.

At the beginning of COVID-19 the Rainbow house had FREE daycare for the all the 1st Responders. This is their way to give back to community by a having a place to parents to bring their kids when they had to go to work to help saves lives.

Ways to help Rainbow House are:

Volunteer are time when we go back to normal

Check out their wish list on their website or Face book pages to see what they really for donations. We can buy the items and drop them off at their building, which is located at 1611 Towne Drive, Columbia, MO 65202, or have them mailed to them. You can also have drives for items that they are need of like Clorox/Lysol Wipes to any other items from the wish list.

Tony Parisio, President



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