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Pipeline Newsletter



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My Hero Is...

As our annual labor of love, the Oratorical begins, our committee of erstwhile members will have to not only help our youth to learn the fine art of elocution, but to also get their “minds around” a very challenging topic. As often time happens, with a very practiced “knee jerk” reaction, we ask ourselves, “Who in the world thinks up these topics?”

Well, we know that it is some OI chairperson or committee that does this each year. But we usually find that as we work with the topic, it is not such a bad choice after all.

In order to be of assistance, the committee, both collectively and individually, has to have some type of idea as to how to direct the efforts of the students for the next several weeks. The first suggestion would be to tell them to not tell their audience right away who their hero is. If a young orator were to do that, the next 4-5 minutes could be very long ones.

No, we are suggesting that they begin by defining exactly what they think makes up a hero. Now this is where it gets interesting, at least for this editor. Because now I am not only anticipating their response, but am beginning to formulate my own idea as to what the criteria are for heroism.

Before I continue, I must also tell the reader that the suggestion has been made that our youth consider not only historical or sports figures, but also “common, everyday people” that they know and admire. So, with all of that said and done, let’s examine the issue

of heroism.

Any hero that I can think of has an abundance of qualities that are admirable, qualities that you may want, or wish that you could emulate. In the case of sports figures, it is that extra quantity of speed, agility, strength, endurance, etc., that enables them to excel in their sport to a level that perhaps makes their performance legendary.

In the case of present and past historical figures, we can admire similar characteristics. Rather than physical attributes, we value their character, energy and work ethic, as well as the end product that results from all of these traits. Many times these may be leaders who have a charismatic ability to inspire those they lead, enabling them to reach levels of achievement to which they might not otherwise have been able.

Already, as a result of writing this article, this topic has inspired contemplation and conjecture, and I hope it has caused the same for our readers. As for me, my list of heroes, depending upon the situation, is endless. I so admire sports figures who are able to excel, with ease, and also leaders who exhibit bravery and fortitude of spirit and conviction.

But most of all, I admire you, our club members. I admire you for who you are and how you care for our youth. All of us, who aspire to be a “Friend of Youth,” are heroic, in so many ways. I hope that you are able to attend some of our Oratorical sessions to see how our youth declaim their perception of heroism.

Meetings

Meetings in January were held back the friendly confines of the Elk's Club. Now, don't get me wrong, the trailer is neat and all, but give me a break!

Our first meeting of the month enjoyed the jubilation and celebration of a job-well-done at the Tree Lot. Ray Kopecky, one of our Tree Lot Co-Chairs and Treasurer for the club reported that we surpassed last year's profit and that we will be able to fund, and then some, all of our programs that we have in the past.

Our meeting was begun with a resonance that has not been heard of in many months, if not years. We all know that our club bell has been missing for so long, it was difficult to remember when last we saw it, let alone heard it. There was a time when we thought we were close to finding it, but to no avail.

Well, Prez Chris actually gave up all hope of it ever being returned. In an effort to once again have the dulcet tones of an Optimist Bell beginning and ending our meetings, he resorted to eBay, that internet supply house of just about anything that you might want to find and can't in your local K-Mart, even if Don Moran does work there.

Just as he was about to ding the new dinger, the old dinger appeared, magically, out of nowhere. So now we have the distinction of having two bells. Any rumors that Chris has been sleeping with both of these bells have been dispelled by his wife, Judy.

Our second meeting of the month was highlighted by a presentation by Army Colonel, Jill Morgenthaler. She had been stationed in Iraq and presented a speech and slide show about how this mission has been progressing. Unfortunately, the news media does not always present the entire story of the mission in Iraq.

I doubt that there is a member that does not support our troops over there, but it was so good to here that there are many good things that are happening that have not made it into the news stories. We thank Colonel Morgenthaler for letting us know about these

good things.

Did you know that there is an Optimist Club in Baghdad? It was formed by members of various clubs in Canada and the US who are stationed there. And yes, there is one Iraqi member, as well. They are working with a Boy Scout Troop over there, and doing projects to help the youth. They and our troops should be remembered, in prayer, each day. They have a difficult mission to insure democracy in an area of the world which is surrounded by countries who do not have, or know, the blessings of freedom.

Our February meetings hope to have you all in attendance. We will be discussing the suggestion that was made by the Board to move back our dinner time to 6:30 PM, so that meetings will be over a little sooner.

We also hope that you will bring your special someone to our second meeting of the month, which will be a "Spouses/Significant Other" meeting. We hope to have special entertainment for this evening.

February Birthdays



Several of our members are older this month. They are:

Al Cote
Ray Fiddelke
Don Moran
John Tomasello
Norm Voss
and
Mary Alice Wenzl

We wish them the very best!

PIZZA, PIZZA, PIZZA!

You may recall that last year we were asked to participate with the Journal and Topics' Annual Pizza Tasting & Expo. The newspaper arranged for all of the publicity, facilities, etc., and all we had to do was show up and help with the set-up and running of the event.

We all had a lot of fun and the club received the benefit of sharing 50% of the profits. This year's event has been scheduled for March 6th, so mark your calendar and plan to help out. Set-up will be at 10:30 AM at the Leisure Center, north of Iroquois School. We should be done and out the door by 2:30 PM.

Further details will be announced in the next issue.



We don't seem to have any anniversaries this month. Please let us know if you tied the knot in February so that we can recognize your anniversary and correct our records.



Prez Chris and Colonel Morgenthaler

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

Food Fight

Our club, along with other organizations in Des Plaines, will be participating in the 2005 February "Food Fight." Please bring your items to donate to a meeting in February. Some guidelines and special needs are as follows: generic brands are acceptable and regular sized packages are preferred; "most needed" items are peanut butter, jelly, cereal, macaroni & cheese, plain white rice, tuna, canned fruit, pastas, pasta sauce, sugar-free or low sugar items for diabetes.

Evidently, they will keep track of how many items are donated by various service organizations, and the Kiwanis Club has been first the last two years. Let's show them that our club can rise to the occasion as well by contributing to this worthwhile effort for those in need in our community.

Most of these needy families have hungry kids, so make a special trip to the store for this cause.

Friend of Youth



Coming Events

Feb. 3 - **Meeting** - Elk's Club, 7 PM

Feb. 6 - **Budget Committee** - at the Ladner's, 197 N. Warrington, 1:00 PM

Feb. 11 - **Oratorical** - Room A of the Library, 6:30 PM

Feb. 17 - **Meeting** - Elk's Club, 7 PM

Feb. 24 - **Board Meeting** - St. Martin's Parish House, 7 PM

Feb. 25 - **Oratorical** - Room A of the Library, 6:30 PM

Please note: The above listed Oratorical sessions are when students will be presenting their speeches.



Prez Sez

February is the time for Groundhogs, Valentines, celebrating the birthdays of Presidents number one and 16, and... budget committees. With that in mind, the budget committee will meet at my home at 197 N Warrington on Sunday, February 6th at 1:00 PM. If you aren't on the committee but would still like to attend, please feel free. This is a terribly important committee since it determines which youth we will be able to serve in the coming fiscal year.

Could you be somebody's hero? The subject of this year's Oratorical contest is sure to present some surprising results. Our elimination round will be on March 11th, with the contest to be held March 18th. It's the Optimist Club of Des Plaines version of March madness.

By the way, did you know that in Greek mythology Hero was a woman? She was a priestess of Aphrodite who threw herself into the sea when her lover, Leander drowned. Somehow over the years the word hero became synonymous with a male, especially for bravery during war, while female heroes became "heroines." And now you know the rest of the story, as Paul Harvey would say.

A big thanks to all who are participating in the "food fight" to benefit the Des Plaines Self Help pantry. This may not be as obvious a service to youth as our kite flies, fishing derbies and other events are, but you can bet the families that patronize the pantry are grateful.

I'll be going to the District convention at the end of this month in Decatur and will report back to the membership all that was accomplished.

"Do you know what it means, to miss New Orleans, to miss it each night and day?"

These lyrics from the old standard remind us that this year's OI International in the Big Easy will be an opportunity to mix International Optimism with Creole cuisine and good-old dixieland. So, plan to optimize your lifestyle by attending. The dates are July 6-9 and hotel reservation and registration material are in your latest edition of *the Optimist*, which should have been in your mailboxes at home this past week.

Some of us are planning to take the train down. Talk to Prez Chris about this. More information, as it becomes available, will be communicated to all.



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