



# Platteville Optimist Club Monthly Highlights December 2023

Vision Statement: *"To Impact the lives of youth in a positive and encouraging manner"*

**2023-2024 Officers:** Alaina Reeves, President – Bob Hundhausen, Vice President – Melissa Palfrey, Past President – Duane Borgen, Treasurer – Becky Schambow, Secretary

**2023-2024 Board of Directors:** Amy Coffey, Terri Ellis, Mark Essex, Jordan Holthaus, Doreen Hlavaty, and Tom Nall

Published for Members December 31, 2023 by Becky Schambow, Secretary

## HIGHLIGHTS OF WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS HELD IN DECEMBER 2023

### **BUSINESS MEETING: - DECEMBER 1, 2023**

**ATTENDEES:** There were 25 members and 3 guests present including: Tim Boldt; Carley Borcharding; Chris and Paul Budden; Charlie Clark; Howard Crofoot; Hap Daus; Terri Ellis; Dan Engelke; Mark Essex; Beth Frieders; Kevin Haertzen; Doreen Hlavaty; Dianne Jentz; Maggie Kleisath; Lisa Kratz; Doug Martin; Tom Nall; Melissa Palfrey; Alaina Reeves; Becky Schambow; Jerry and Joy Schewe; Ernie Thalmann; Ron Weier; and guests Lisa Sanger; Ashlyn Moon; and Marcy Russell.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by President Alaina Reeves at 7:00 a.m. Members then joined together in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and the Optimist Creed.

#### **Guests to Welcome:**

- Marcia Russell (*Platteville Childrens' Choir*);
- Ashlyn Moon (*WI Badger Camp*);
- Lisa Sanger (*Grant County Volunteer Mentor Program*)

#### **Check Presentations:**

- **Platteville Childrens' Choir:** A check for \$350 was presented to Marcia Russell, representing the Childrens' Choir. Marcia thanked the Club for our donation and indicated she was pleased to report that "they are back to pre-covid status with three choirs". She noted that there is a Holiday Gala concert planned for tonight at 7:30 p.m. at UW-Platteville's Center for the Arts.
- **WI Badger:** A check for \$1000 was presented to Ashlyn Moon, Development Director for WI Badger Camp. Ashlyn extended her appreciation for our donation to the organization, noting that it helps their camping program for disabled individuals. She remarked that they are holding fundraising events including: the "Tubb Clubb" event tonight at 5:30 p.m. at Steve's Pizza; and their 1966 Annual Event at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at the Belmont Convention Center.
- **Grant County Volunteer Mentor Program:** A check for \$500 was presented to Lisa Sanger, Service Support Specialist for the Volunteer Mentor Program, previously known as "Big Buddy Program". She extended her appreciation for our donation, noting the program's name change. She reported they currently have 20 volunteers who spend time with children. She indicated they will be sponsoring a winter event at the Fennimore Roller Rink. She ended by commenting that our Optimist Creed "really touched her".

#### **Special Dates to Remember:**

- **Birthdays this Upcoming Week:**
  - Virgil Pufahl – December 1st;
  - Priscilla Hahn and Libby Sides – December 4th
- **Wedding Anniversaries this Upcoming Week:** Eileen and Terry McCartney – December 7<sup>th</sup>
- **Membership Anniversaries this Month:**
  - Kathy Kopp – December 9, 1993;

- Thomas Nall – December 9, 2000;
- Beth Frieders – December 13, 2006;
- Tim Boldt – December 10, 2012;
- Bob Weier – December 14, 2012;
- Becky Schambow – December 12, 2014.
- **Friend Of Optimist Membership Anniversaries this Upcoming Month:** Busch Insurance – December 15, 2015

#### Meeting Activities:

- **Mystery Greeter:** The Mystery Greeter was Paul Budden, and he greeted Carley Borcharding.
- **Breakfast Drawing:** Doreen Hlavaty and Tim Boldt were the two members present, and Greg Sieckman and Jeff White were the two members not present whose names were drawn to receive a free breakfast in December.
- **Joker Draw:** Dan Engelke's ticket was drawn, however he cut the eight of Clubs.

#### Announcements – Information Shared:

- Notes of Appreciation received and circulated included:
  - **Building Platteville** for our donation towards “Platteville Packs”. The packs ensure students who face food insecurities receive nourishment when not in school
  - **Natalie Jentz, Platteville High School Student** sent a letter noting appreciation for our donation that allowed her to attend the Wisconsin Leadership Program.
- **Need Volunteers for Santa Calling:** A sign-up sheet was circulated requesting volunteers to sign up to make Santa or Mrs. Santa calls to area children on Dec. 5, 6, and 7.
- **Need Volunteers to be Speaker Coordinators:** A sign-up sheet was circulated as there are still months needing “speaker recruiters”.
- **Sympathies to Terri Ellis:** On behalf of the Optimists, President Reeves extended our sympathies to Terri for the loss of her mother who passed away Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>
- **Shirts Given in Memory of Fern Nall:** Tom Nall had several Optimist shirts and a fleece jacket, most of which were Ferns that he was donating to interested Club members in remembrance of Fern. He suggested that if these items were not wanted/needed by Club members, he was willing to donate them to Grant County Social Services for kids in need. It was also suggested that if members taking shirts wanted to provide a donation to the Club, the donation could be made out to the Club, with memo/indication that it was to go to the “Books for Babies” account in Fern’s memory.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REPORT from NOVEMBER 27, 2023 MEETING:** President Reeves provided a summary of the Governing Board Meeting held on November 27, 2023.

**President Comments:** President Reeves commented that her goal will be to determine “how we can fine-tune our policies to determine how to proceed when donation requests pose questions amongst the group, how to keep members informed fairly, how to conduct anonymous polls, and how to maintain consistency in our grant responses.”

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** President Reeves provided information on the Treasurer’s Report for period ending November 30, 2023 submitted by Duane Borgen which included reports of Internal and Youth Account balances.

- **Grant Requests Paid in November included:**
  - Family Promise of Grant County \$ 250;
  - Platteville Holiday Project \$200;
  - Leo M. Kane American Legion (Badger Boys State) \$ 400;
  - Leo M. Kane American Legion (Badger Girls State Donation) \$ 400;
  - Westview Elementary School (Books for 1st Graders) \$ 320;
  - Blackhawk Area Scouts (Boy Scouts) \$ 300;
  - Platteville Girl Scouts) \$ 300;
  - City of Platteville Parks (for T-Ball Field Improvements) \$750.
- **Motion from Board for approval:** President Reeves indicated there was a motion from the Board to approve the Treasurer’s Report. This was seconded by Chris Budden. Motion carried.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **Finance Committee:** Duane Borgen reported the following to Board.

- **Report from Account Review for Fiscal Year Ending 9-30-23:** The written report for the annual review was shared with the Board. Duane noted his responses to the reviewers regarding questions and/or suggestions. This included:
    - An itemized accounting of “Cheese Curd Revenue and Expenses”;
    - A detailed accounting of the Joker Fund;
    - Notation of the Reviewer’s recommendation for purchase of “QuickBooks” software, which Borgen indicated would be an additional expense over and above the \$700+ deficit in the Internal Account. It was reported that Duane feels his record recording systems are simple for him and feels it is sufficient.
  - **Motion from Board for Approval:** President Reeves indicated there was a motion from the Board to approve the Annual Review of Accounts. This was seconded by Ron Weier.
    - **Discussion:** Jerry Schewe commented that he felt the purchase of a software program should be considered in the next budget.
  - **Vote on Motion:** Hearing no further discussion, the motion to approve the Annual Review passed.
- **Community Service:**
    - **Salvation Army Bell Ringers:** It was reported that an email was sent by Maxine Lane thanking the Optimists who volunteered to do bell ringing. President Reeves noted that Optimist volunteers are covering different shifts on 12 different days.
    - **Santa Calling:** There are still shifts open for volunteers and event occurs this upcoming week. It was noted information for parents to register their children for calls has been placed on our website.
    - **Building Platteville – Winter Wonderland Event:** Carley Borcharding reported today that books will be distributed to children attending the event at Katie’s Garden tonight and tomorrow.
- **Membership:**
    - **Membership Changes:**
      - Gene Weber – FOO: Gene’s FOO account was deleted by OI for non-pay 10-31-23, however, he reported to Secretary that he sent payment on 11-10-23. B. Schambow has attempted to contact OI three times to get this straightened out.
      - Garvey Service Station – FOO: Deleted by OI for non-pay 10-31-23;
      - Mike Olds’ membership dues is overdue and will be issued a letter of suspension. (*Noted – payment was received after the meeting on Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, so will not be suspended.*)
    - **New Committee Member:** Terri Ellis thanked Joy Schewe for joining the Membership Committee and noted they would like to have more committee members to help plan the Spring Fling event.
- **Publicity / Newsletter(s) / Website:**
    - **Board Updated on Website:** Melissa Palfrey reported today that the information regarding the 2023-2024 Governing Board has been updated on the website.
- **Cheese Curd:** No report
- **Fellowship:**
    - **Speakers for December:** Speakers listed as follows were coordinated by Charlie Clark.
      - December 8, 2023 – Emily Zachary, PHS English Teacher & Advisor to Diverse Student Alliance (DSA) group; *and two student members of DSA.*
      - December 15, 2023 – Molly Bohn – Currently a Field Representative for Congressman Derrick Van Orden, whose focus of presentation will be “Life and Duties as a Field Representative for Federal Politicians”;
      - *December 22, 2023 – No confirmed speaker yet;*
      - December 29, 2023 – no morning meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> Friday Social Meeting at noon at Los Amigos
    - **Speaker Coordinator Recruitment for 2024:** Still several months left needing volunteers to be speaker coordinators. Sign up was circulated at the meeting.
    - **Holiday Party Plan Update:** President Reeves reported today that our Holiday Party is scheduled for Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at the Platteville Country Club. A sign-up sheet was circulated. Cost per person is \$20 and members can bring spouses or guests. There will be the traditional “White Elephant Exchange”. Deadline for RSVP is December 31, 2023.

- **Request from Committee to Change Check Presentation / Photo-op Duties:** Duane Borgen has volunteered to contact the grant recipients and arrange for presentations and photo-ops. He will attempt to schedule the presentations at Monthly Business Meetings if this can be arranged with recipient representatives.
- **Youth Activities:**
  - **Bike and Pedestrian Safety Follow-up:** President Reeves reported that discussion is taking place regarding planning of this event, which was originally an Optimist Noon Club project. The event may be planned in collaboration with the City and our Community Service Committee.
  - **Essay and Oratorical Contests:** Amy Coffey, Chair of Youth Activities Committee is in process of sending letters to area schools to advise them of the upcoming Essay and Oratorical contests.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Committees for 2023-2024 Fiscal Year:** The Committee Membership List was provided to Board Chairs/Liaisons of each Committee who are to validate with the members listed.
- **Report on Attendance at Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> Informational Meeting:** It was reported that T. Ellis, nor M. Palfrey could attend the Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> noon meeting as facilitator, and only one member showed up. The noon meeting will, however, be offered/held again next week, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> at A & W.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Policies and Documents Review and Approval:** President Reeves reported that review of some policies/guidelines was tabled until the December Board Meeting including:
  - Committee Description Policy – Revised 11-2023;
  - Fellowship Committee Guidelines – Revised 11-2023;
    - Speaker Coordinator Guidelines Update 11-2023;
    - Speaker Guidelines Update 11-2023;
  - Committee Guidelines – Committees will be asked to review and make recommendations for changes.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING:** Scheduled for Tuesday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 a.m. via Zoom.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

- **Next Week – December 8<sup>th</sup>:**
  - **Speaker at Morning Meeting:** Emily Zachary, PHS English Teacher & Advisor to Diverse Student Alliance (DSA) group; *and two student members of DSA.*
  - **Noon Informational Meeting:** Will be held at A & W. Melissa Palfrey to facilitate.
- **January Informational Noon Meeting:** Kevin Haertzen volunteered to be the facilitator at next month's noon meeting which will be held January 12<sup>th</sup>.
- **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Waukesha Christmas Parade & Optimist March:** Jerry Schewe reported that Diane Matuszak, SWIS Governor has a goal to have 100 Optimist members walk in the parade scheduled for Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the parade.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Charlie Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 a.m. Seconded by Dan Engelke, motion carried.

**Respectfully submitted by:**  
Becky Schambow, Secretary

**WEEKLY MEETING – December 8, 2023**  
*(There were 24 members and 3 guests present.)*

- **Convene:** The meeting was called to order by President Alaina Reeves at 7:00 a.m.
- **Pledge of Allegiance and Optimist Creed:** The meeting began by members reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and the Optimist Creed.
- **Guests Welcomed:** Emily Zachary (*speaker*); Emelia Thelemann, and Lazo Camou, students at Platteville High School.
- **Mystery Greeter:** Dan Engelke was the Mystery Greeter, greeting Beth Frieders.

- **Special Dates to Remember:**
  - **Member Birthdays this Upcoming Week:** Mary Ann Shurson, December 9th
  - **Member Wedding Anniversaries this Upcoming Week:** None
- **Joker Draw:** Doug Martin's number was drawn, however he cut the 4 of Clubs.
- **Announcements / Items Discussed:**
  - **Collection for Christmas Gift for Country Kitchen Staff:** A collection was taken to be given to the Country Kitchen staff on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - **Sign Up for Holiday Party – Jan. 14<sup>th</sup> at Country Club at 5:00 p.m.:** A signup sheet was circulated for those wishing to attend our annual Holiday Party. This invitation with connection to signup will be sent via email to all members.
  - **Still need Speaker Recruiters for Months of July, August and Dec. 2024:** President Reeves announced that speaker recruiters are still needed.
  - **Card of Appreciation from Family Advocates:** A card extending appreciation for our donation to Family Advocates was circulated.
  - **Good News on Membership Renewals:** It was previously announced at our Business Meeting December 1<sup>st</sup> that Mike Olds', *Member*, and Gene Weber's, *FOO Member*, dues were overdue, however, payment had since then been received and their membership remains intact.
  - **Alone for Christmas:** Maggie Kleisath announced plans for the "Alone for Christmas" program which will be held at St. Mary's Church at noon on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>. The event will be dine-in only with deliveries to homebound individuals. There will be no carry outs.
  - **WI Badger Camp 1966 Event:** Ron Weier announced that due to our Club donation to WI Badger Camp, an "Optimist Table", with free entry for eight individuals will be assigned at this event upcoming on Saturday, December 9. The event will be held at Belmont Convention Center and doors will be open at 4:00 p.m.
  - **Dime-A-Day:** Jerry Schewe announced that members who are "snowbirds" choosing to donate to the 2024 "Dime-A-Day" campaign can do so by writing a check for \$36.50 made out to Optimist International Foundation and turning it in to him before they leave.
  - **Upcoming Local Holiday Events:**
    - **Santa and Mrs. Santa at Katie's Garden - Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>:** This event will occur from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. with opportunities for children to visit Santa and Mrs. Claus and see the holiday lights.
    - **Holiday Magic on Main – Friday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>:** Terri Ellis encouraged people to attend this event where carolers will be providing music on Main Street and businesses will be open with later hours (*from 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.*) on Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.
    - **Platteville Fire Department:** Paul Budden noted that in conjunction with the Main Street event on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, the Fire Department Steering Committee will be selling chili at 40 West Main to support plans for new department.
- **Speaker for Next Week – December 15<sup>th</sup>:** President Reeves announced that Monica Sella, Multicultural Outreach Program, MCOP, Southwestern Community Action Program, SWCAP will be our speaker on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>.
- **Today's Speakers:** Emily Zachary, PHS English Teacher & Advisor to Diverse Student Alliance (DSA) group, and Emelia Thelemann and Lazo Camou, two student leaders in the program were recruited and introduced by Charlie Clark

Charlie introduced Emily Zachary as one of the Platteville School District's Inclusion Advocates, which includes being the advisor for DSA, "Diverse Student Alliance" student group. Emily is also an English Educator at Platteville High School. She is the daughter of the late Dani Crase, a lifelong Platteville Educator, and Jeff Crase, an educator in the Belmont School District for over 45 years. Emily went to UW LaCrosse, and earned degrees in English and Teaching English as a Second Language and a Masters in literacy from UW Oshkosh.

Beyond the classroom, Emily is a driving force for inclusion as an advisor for the DSA, organizing mentorship programs and cultural events. As "Unity Director" for "We Are Many .... United Against Hate", she champions unity and awareness in districts all over the state.

Emelia Thelemann was noted to be a driven senior and representative on the DSA Leadership Team. With a passion for environmental studies, she's set to embark on her journey at UW Stevens Point this fall. Emelia's dedication extends beyond academics, noting her impactful work with "We Are United" earned her a speaking invitation at Columbia University in NYC this January. Emily is the group's "Social Media Manager". She is active with mentoring Westview and Middle School Students.

Lazo Camou was introduced as an integral part of the DSA Leadership Team and a strong advocate for student representation at school board and Platteville Public Library Board meetings. Lazo is planning on attending Columbia University, where he will pursue his interest in biochemistry. Lazo noted he moved here after living in both Virginia and New York City. His parents are immigrants from Lebanon and France. He spoke about partnerships DSA has with UW Platteville, Platteville Public Library and other groups.

Emily concluded by noting that DSA started in 2019 with about five students of color and now have about 70-80 students. Their focus is on Education, Advocacy, Mentorships, and Celebrations. The program has empowered students to report discrimination and bias, and these problems are addressed appropriately by teachers. Students state emphatically that "DSA has made a difference".

**Conclusion:** The meeting concluded at 8:00 a.m.  
**Respectfully submitted by:** Becky Schambow, Secretary

**WEEKLY MEETING – December 15, 2023**  
*(There were 23 members and 1 guest present.)*

- **Convene:** The meeting was called to order by President Alaina Reeves at 7:05 a.m.
- **Pledge of Allegiance and Optimist Creed:** The meeting began by members reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and the Optimist Creed.
- **Guests Welcomed:** Monica Sella (*speaker*) was welcomed as our guest.
- **Mystery Greeter:** Linda Thomas was the Mystery Greeter, greeting Paul Budden.
  
- **Special Dates to Remember:**
  - **Member Birthdays this Upcoming Week:**
    - Kevin Haertzen and Howard Crofoot – December 16<sup>th</sup>;
    - Eileen Engelke – December 19<sup>th</sup>
  - **Member Wedding Anniversaries this Upcoming Week:**
    - Duane and Amy Borgen – December 17<sup>th</sup>
    - Doreen Hlavaty and Dorothy Place – December 18<sup>th</sup>
  
- **Joker Draw:** Bob Hundhausen's ticket was drawn, however, he cut the seven of Spades.
  
- **Announcements / Items Discussed:**
  - **Collection for Christmas Gift to Country Kitchen Staff:** A collection basket was passed for those who wanted to contribute to a Christmas gift of cash to the Country Kitchen Staff. The gift will be presented on Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - **Sign up for Holiday Party – Jan. 14<sup>th</sup> at Country Club at 5:00 p.m.:** A sign-up sheet was circulated for those wishing to sign up for the Holiday Party. The invitation and sign-up is also posted on-line with due date by Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - **Appreciation from Tom Nall:** Tom noted his appreciation for the support he's had by Optimist Club members since his wife Fern's passing. He stated that he recites the Optimist Creed each morning as a reminder to take a deep breath and sense what it is like to be an Optimist. He ended wishing us all Happy Holidays and God's blessings.
  - **Main Street Holiday Event Tonight:** Terri Ellis encouraged members to attend the "Holiday Magic on Main Street Event" tonight from 4 to 8 p.m., noting that there will be groups singing and chili will be for sale by the Fire Department Steering Committee at 40 W Main.
  - **Family Advocates Raffle:** Melissa Palfrey reported she has raffle tickets for sale for Family Advocates benefit.

- **Alone for Christmas:** Maggie Kleisath shared information regarding the event to be held at St. Mary's Church at noon on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>. This will be a dine-in event with special arrangements for delivery to homebound and for transportation to the dinner.
- **Thank You from Girl Scouts:** A thank you card, with signatures from girl scouts, was circulated extending appreciation for Club's donation used for their "camp-in" event.
- **Speaker for Next Week – December 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Molly Bohn – Field Representative for Congressman Derrick Van Orden, whose focus of presentation will be "Life and Duties as a Field Representative for Federal Politicians".
- **Today's Speaker:** Monica Sella, MultiCultural Outreach Program, MCOP, Southwestern Community Action Program, SWCAP, *recruited by Charlie Clark and introduced by Becky Schambow*

Becky introduced Monica noting Monica lives in Wyoming Township just north of Dodgeville with her husband, two steers, 3 horses, and a blue heeler. They've lived in Wyoming Township for the past 25 years, and that is where they raised and homeschooled their three boys. Prior to that they lived in Tanzania, East Africa for two years in a Maasai village while her husband conducted his doctoral research in Anthropology, and in Mallorca Spain for another two years. Monica has a Master's Degree in Agricultural Economics, with a focus on Development Economics. She came to the Multicultural Outreach Program as a volunteer following work on local dairy farms as an interpreter. She loves working with the Latinx community, in large part because culturally they are very close to her own Italian background. Her parents came to the US as immigrants from Italy.

Monica submitted information relative to the Multicultural Outreach Program (MCOP), a program of SWCAP, and MCOP of Green County that aims to support the thousands of largely invisible immigrants from Latin America enriching our communities and keeping our dairy farms, cheese factories, construction sites, and restaurants operational. The estimate is that Wisconsin is the home to about 70,000 immigrants, mostly from Latin America. Even with all the challenges and obstacles they face daily, our Latinx neighbors contribute culturally, socially, and economically in very significant ways. At MCOP, they try to help individuals and families navigate the legal, medical, and social stumbling blocks they encounter along the way. Within their service area of Grant, Green, Lafayette, Iowa, and Richland Counties they host multicultural events; build bridges with law enforcement, schools, libraries, and social service agencies; assist with accessing financial help for medical bills; interpret as needed; connect individuals and families to free or low-cost legal help; and more.

Many of the people MCOP works with are largely undocumented immigrants and don't qualify for Federal programs. Often being undocumented creates barriers for them to obtain housing, get bank accounts, etc. Monica noted that they are very family oriented and support their families back home. She noted that they have an incredible communication network between those in the States and those back home with whom they relay knowledge on where jobs are available. The immigrants feel that Wisconsin is safe and treats them well and pays well.

She talked about the process of seeking asylum, noting if they've crossed illegally and seek asylum they are required to go back to their home country which is very dangerous for them to return to. The asylum process is very difficult, and MCOP provides assistance to the asylum seekers with help in communication with ICE.

*NOTE: After the meeting, Monica emailed Charlie Clark making this comment: "I very much enjoyed meeting everyone on Friday. What a wonderful, engaged group! It brings hope meeting so many caring people from our community."*

**Conclusion:** The meeting adjourned at 8:00 a.m.

**Respectfully submitted by:** Becky Schambow, Secretary

**WEEKLY MEETING – December 22, 2023**  
*(There were 24 members and 2 guests present.)*

- **Convene:** The meeting was called to order by President Alaina Reeves at 7:00 a.m.
- **Pledge of Allegiance and Optimist Creed:** The meeting began by members reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and Optimist Creed.
- **Guests to Welcome:** Molly Bohn (*speaker*) and her son Matthew were welcomed as our guests.

- **Mystery Greeter:** Eileen McCartney was our Mystery Greeter, greeting Bob Stephens.
- **Presentation of our Holiday Gift to Chad Holstein / Wait Staff:** A Christmas card with collected donations from individual Club Members was presented to Chad Holstein, owner of Country Kitchen (*also member and FOO*) and the morning staff in appreciation for their weekly service to us.
- **Special Dates to Remember:**
  - **Member Birthdays this Upcoming Week:** Phil Swift – December 23rd
  - **Member Wedding Anniversaries this Upcoming Week:** Mike & Priscilla Hahn–Dec. 28
- **Joker Draw:** Tom Nall's ticket was drawn, however, he cut the King of Hearts.
- **Announcements / Items Discussed:**
  - **Thank You Letter from Platteville Schools:** Letter of appreciation for the contribution of “Sassy’s Vacation” book to First Graders was circulated.
  - **Dime-a-Day:** Members who may be wintering in the south were reminded they can contribute \$36.50 to OI Foundation to the Dime-a-Day fund prior to leaving.
  - **Holiday Party – January 14<sup>th</sup> – at 5:00 p.m.:** Members were reminded that Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> is the last day for them to sign-up to attend the holiday party scheduled for Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - **Home Alone for the Holidays:** Maggie Kleisath noted that they are accepting donations of pies, salads, or cookies for this event that will be held at St. Mary’s on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - **Slide Show at Senior Center on Dec. 28<sup>th</sup>:** Doreen Hlavaty invited interested members to attend her slide show presentation of her recent trip to Galapagos Island & Ecuador that will be provided on Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 a.m. at the Senior Center.
- **Next Week – December 29<sup>th</sup>:** President Reeves reminded members that there will not be a morning meeting on Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, however, there will be a social meeting at noon at Los Amigos.
- **Today’s Speaker:** Molly Bohn, speaking on the topic of “Life and Duties as a Field Representative for Federal Politicians”, was recruited and introduced by Charlie Clark.

Charlie introduced Molly Bohn who is a Field Representative for Congressman Derrick Van Orden representing Wisconsin’s 3rd Congressional District. Molly graduated from UW-Platteville with a major in Political Science. After graduating, Molly was the Development Director at Clarity Clinic of SW Wisconsin. Following that, she was able to stay at home with her son, Matthew, and work part time as the campaign manager for former Lancaster Mayor, David Vanram. In 2022, she had the opportunity to work for Ron Johnson’s campaign as the Southwest Wisconsin Grassroots Coordinator. Molly started with Congressman Van Orden’s office in January this year. Her husband, Trevor, is a middle school teacher in Potosi and their son just turned 3.

Molly began her presentation by stating she grew up watching politics with her dad and has always loved politics. Her presentation provided information on what activities she’s involved with as a Field Representative including the various processes involved.

She noted that the congressional office can’t be set up until the newly elected Congressman officially takes office. Office set-up then takes about eight weeks. She noted that office furniture is owned by the Government so they have to get furniture from predecessor.

Information is not shared from office to office, so they do not have access to previous constituent’s work.

Once the new Congressman is given his committee assignments, he/she then hires staff with knowledge and/or expertise in those areas.

She spoke about the MRA (Member Representative Allowance), which is the budget given by the Federal Government for the office expenditures. Each office determines how their allotment is spent, but it is monitored by the Government’s Ethics Committee.



Various staff roles she noted included:

- Member of Congress;
  - Chief of Staff who oversees:
    - Finance Director;
    - Communications Director;
    - Legislative Director;
    - Director of Operations;
    - District Director.

As a “Field Representative”, she noted she is the “eyes and ears on the ground”. Her responsibilities include: keeping up to date on local issues, trends and major developments; meeting with community leaders, shareholders and constituents; setting up meetings for congressional member; coordinating mobile office hours for events such as art competition, competitions encouraging STEM, community projects, and academy accommodation nominations. She also reported that she helps with disasters that might occur in the district, and works with the DC team on legislation.

**CONCLUSION:** The meeting concluded at 7:55 a.m.  
**Respectfully submitted by:** Becky Schambow, Secretary

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MEMBERS’ SPECIAL DAYS in JANUARY 2024**

### **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:**

- Greg Sieckman – January 5<sup>th</sup>;
- Deanna Hinderman – January 7<sup>th</sup>;
- Duane Borgen – January 8<sup>th</sup>;
- Amy Coffey – January 11<sup>th</sup>;
- Alaina Reeves, January 13<sup>th</sup>;
- Lisa Kratz – January 27<sup>th</sup>;
- Charlie Clark – January 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **JANUARY – MEMBERS’ WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:**

- Dan and Emmily Dreessens – January 23, 2012;
- Penny and Steve Droessler – January 28, 1978.

### **JANUARY MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES:**

- Robert Stephens – January 1, 1987;
- Pat Moxness-Weier – January 6, 2018;
- Linda Foht, January 1, 2020.

### **JANUARY - FRIENDS OF OPTIMISTS MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES:**

- Dupaco Community Credit Union – January 12, 2016;
- Delta 3 – January 27, 2016;
- Thrivent Financial – January 24, 2019.