

Westbank Optimist Club Summer 2020 News

COVID-19 Update

Our club continues to look for ways to interact with each other and members of our community while following safety protocols recommended during this COVID-19 Pandemic.

- (1) **3rd Quarter Louisiana District Convention held at the Optimist Camp in Lafayette** -Four members of our club recently attended the Convention. It was good to be able to gather with our fellow Optimist friends from all parts of the state while holding a very productive meeting for our District. All attendees were required to wear masks and social distance during the meeting for everyone's well-being.



- (2) **Summer Zoom Meetings** - Our Westbank Optimist members have continued to stay in contact with each other during the pandemic by holding Zoom Board Meetings and Virtual General Meetings throughout the Spring and Summer months. Our President, Les Lowery, has been diligent in keeping our club tech savvy by assisting and encouraging everyone to complete the Zoom training offered by Optimist International. It is important to have members familiar with participating in Zoom meetings so that we can continue to work together to assist the children in our community. Our Club even held a fun event where all who attended the scheduled Zoom event were asked to join in a Virtual Scavenger Hunt. All were given a list of items to gather in your home and display to the participants on the call. Once all items were gathered, Les announced to everyone that they had the ingredients to make a Mug Cake, which we all did in celebration of Joe Falcone's Birthday. We sang Happy Birthday and danced to some music in honor of Joe.

- (3) **September In-Person Board Meeting and In-Person General Meeting** - We held our first In-Person Board Meeting since COVID began at Café Hope. Attendees wore masks and we followed social distancing protocols. We reviewed and proposed the budget for 2020-2021. The proposed budget and slate of Club Officers will be presented this week to the general membership at our first In-Person General Meeting since February. Election of 2020-2021 Club Officers will be held at that time. Out-going President Les Lowery led the meeting, finishing up his term as President with a “Toast of Thanks” to all the members for allowing him to serve as President the past two years and leading the club in service to the community.



- (4) **Service to Hurricane Evacuees** - During this COVID pandemic, we also had to deal with major damage to communities due to the landfall of Hurricane Laura in the western part of our state. Approximately 12,000 people from the affected areas were evacuated here to New Orleans hotels for several weeks. To aid the evacuees, NOLA Ready (a NOLA Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Group) organized a group of local volunteers to provide support and supplies to the evacuees. President Les Lowery and a group from our club volunteered their time to assist in handing out supplies to the evacuees on several occasions. Our club put together 150 Optimist Donation bags loaded with goodies and essentials for the children. The bags were distributed at the New Orleans Convention Center as part of the NOLA Ready effort.



- (5) **Rewarding our Teachers** -Westbank Optimists along with the Dawn Busters Kiwanis Group (our partners in the Rewards for Reading Program) treated local teachers and librarians at three of our sponsored Westbank schools with special pastries to start the school year off right by showing our appreciation of their hard work and efforts to support the children in their schools by getting the classrooms back up and running. We hope this will boost morale and let the teachers know how much they are valued and appreciated.

