

## "Optimist OPTICS"

"Dare to Care"



## Optimist Club of Evansville - Downtown

**Rich Hawley - President** 

## **This Week's Program**

**Next Week's Program** 

Feb 24th - Jason Williams "Real Men Wear Pink"

Mar 10th - TBA



We were Zooming again for our Wednesday, February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. President Rich Hawley brought the meeting to order at 12:02pm. Our agenda has changed a little as we now let our speaker go first after the Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag, and Optimist Creed.













Ed Harrison Memorial Golf Scramble

Financial Support for



Our speaker, Matthew Rundle, is a teacher with a very inspirational story about how he started the Harwood Hockey Association. It all started when his son was about 5 years old in 2005 and brought home a flyer about ice skating. Matthew was looking for an after school activity at his Harwood School where he worked as band director. He took his son ice skating and saw the great joy he had while skating on the ice. His investigation found that hockey is an expensive sport. He found that it costs \$200 per hour to rent Swonder Ice Rink for one-hour in addition to all of the equipment needed. That did not deter Matthew as he continued and was able to enlist 10 kids into the program. The EVSC agreed to provide bus transportation and Swonder Ice Rink also has some equipment they donated to get the team going. He also had a large donor who gave money each year to support the team. They were learning every Tuesday from October to December and skating January through March. As the program grew he added Helfrich Park school. The team had grown to 15 players and he needed more funding. In 3 years, he had grown the number of skaters to 20. As the number grew so did the amount of equipment. He needed "skater's bags" for each skater and their equipment. For years he took the kids bags home with him but as the team size grew, he needed more space. Swonder Rink offered him a "cage" to store all of the equipment which was a godsend to him. By now, he had grown the program to 100 kids and 8 schools. As the program grew to 12 schools including Warrick County kids from the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to 12<sup>th</sup> grade were now participating. The program eventually moved to Cedar Hall school. Matthew explained how the Covid pandemic changed how the team could continue to operate. They lost \$7000 in funding from the EVSC and NHL due to the virus. Matthew also stated they needed an additional \$2000 by Mid-March for this year to keep the organization operating for the kids. Matthew also mentioned that the program includes girls who participate on the teams as skaters. It was a great story to hear and show how the determination of one person can grow an organization that helps kids. He also discussed about "falling down on the ice" as most skaters would do in learning to skate. He used it as a teaching moment and taught them how to "get up" not only in skating, but life too. He explained that it was a "good" thing" by falling as it helped teach the kids about life. If you fall, you must get up and continue.

Meetings: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 11:45am
Old National Bank Building, Downtown; Blue and Gold Room
Mail Club at: P.O. Box 15905, Evansville, Indiana 47716 - 0905
www.evansvilledowntownoptimist.org
Evansville Downtown Charitable Foundation, Inc.

## "Optimist OPTICS" - continued

















Financial Support fo



(Update: Our Foundation voted on Thursday, February 12<sup>th</sup> to give \$1000 to Harwood Hockey to help them reach that \$2000 goal)

After Matthew's inspirational story, President Rich tried to add a little humor to the program, very little, as I might add as he asked the question. What "T" is hard to take? The correct answer is "reality".

President Rich announced the Zoom board meeting is on February 16th.

Next meeting's speaker (Feb 24th) will be Jason Williams who works for Centerpointe will talk about "Real Men Wear Pink".

Rich also mentioned that our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration has been pushed back to the Fall.

He also thanked Mike Burk for getting the February speakers.

We will continue with Zoom meeting through March and might return to "live" meetings in April.

Nothing to report during the Sunshine report.

Rich adjourned the meeting at 12:55pm.

See you on your "screen" for the February 24th meeting.

Ron Eberhart, February Newsletter Writer.



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