

Opti - Topics

Bulletin of the Optimist Club of Huntsville

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We had a good turnout today (I think about 30) to hear the annual words of wisdom of our speaker, Charles Wiley – and they weren't disappointed. Charles has spoken to us on at least two other occasions, and his ideas are always timely and meaningful. Visitors today included Dr. Ron Miller, guest of Jim Roe, and Darrell McCoglan's wife (Al's daughter). It was also good to have Friend of Optimists, Alicia Lindsey; and member Jerry Shoemaker, who now resides at Orange Beach. Jerry said the beaches are clean. Y'all come down.

Sidney Sandridge led us in prayer and the pledge of allegiance. Since the club's minimum guaranteed meal count was exceeded today some members had to resort to the buffet line. Perhaps we should consider raising our minimum, and at the same time put further emphasis on the inviting of guests. Our programs have been excellent and this promises to continue in November with programs arranged by the Peppers. Pres. Jim Roe announced that the next Board Meeting is scheduled for November 9.



Charles Wiley was in town to address several high schools on the status of things from his world-wide perspective. We're glad that he is always agreeable to include meeting with our club as part of his agenda when in the vicinity. He sees the media, especially TV, as being almost omnipotent, but hardly unbiased. The media thrives on fear of one form or another, therefore, to filter out advocated positions; objectivity is only possible, e.g., by balancing Fox viewing with CNN. He uses the internet to get foreign coverage, which is always available in English, although admittedly slanted toward the country of origin; in order to get additional views of world news. He cited the current election as an event to be extremely grateful for. Only in very few countries is voting not accompanied with military alerts and the presence of tanks to ensure no eruptions.

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Another subject Charles expounded upon is the danger of cliques, most prevalent in teen age years. The tendency is for a group of kids with common interests to work together at school, then talk and text with each other on the way home from school, and then continue from home with further computer interaction – at the exclusion of any other broadening experiences. One gets the impression that their world began with their first memories; anything before that is irrelevant; and it's cool to shut out adults. This is a challenge to service clubs such as ours. The Optimist Club seeks to combat this by keeping communication channels open between teens and adults through personal participation in our various youth-oriented activities: Youth Appreciation Week, Oratorical Contest, Essay Contest, our Middle School Band Instrument Program, Tri-Star Basketball, our Internet Risk Training Program, etc. Not every student is going down this clique road, but high school dropouts are on the increase. Mr. Wiley has courageously met and talked with some of our worst gang-related young people and he senses an Optimistic light emerging.

Byrom won the money today. I hope someone collected it for him since he had to leave before the meeting ended.

CALENDAR

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|-------|--------------|---|
| 11/04 | Thurs. 11:45 | Downtown Holiday Inn
Madison County ARC - Linda Gilmor |
| 11/09 | Tues. 4:00pm | 1 st Commercial Bank
Board Meeting |
| 11/11 | Thurs. 11:45 | Downtown Holiday Inn
Medal of Honor - Jay Town, Pam Gothart |
| 11/18 | Thurs. 11:45 | Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting |