



Opti - Topics

Bulletin of the Optimist Club of Huntsville

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Opening

Twenty Optimists assembled at the Downtown Holiday Inn today. We also had one guest, Bill Peters' wife Nita. Club Secretary/Treasurer Al Renz was back from Houston and passed around photos of his first great grandchild. President Tom Casteel asked Rev. Jim Berry to give the invocation and Milt Williams to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

President Tom reported that this has been a banner year in handing out our band instruments. At this time we have 6 clarinets, 6 flutes, 6 trombones, one trumpet and 4 cornets, in our band closet, quite a bit fewer than we had remaining last year.

President Tom and Fabiani Duarte reported on the progress of getting JOOI Clubs in all of the targeted schools. Tom said he had a chart showing all the schools and which Club member was responsible for contacting each school. Fabiani gave a status on what meetings have been set up, as follows:

- ✚ Grace Lutheran's JOOI Club will have their installation banquet next Wednesday, October 31, at 11:00 a. m.
- ✚ Davis Hills Middle School will have their information meeting next Monday at 11:00 a. m.
- ✚ University Place Elementary School will have an information meeting next Tuesday at 9:00 a. m.

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✚ Ed White Middle School has three meetings scheduled: An information meeting on November 6 at 9:00 a. m., JOOI Club officer elections on November 9, and an installation luncheon at 11:00 a. m. on November 16.

Program



Fabiani Duarte introduced our speaker for today, Mrs. Cathy Miller. Mrs. Miller is the part-time Education Coordinator for the United Way of Madison County. Mrs. Miller presented a PowerPoint presentation on the various programs supported by our local United Way. She stated that in 2011, over \$7,000,000 was provided by United Way (including disaster relief), and over 34,000 individuals were helped. There are three initiatives of the United Way: Education, Income, and Health. All three areas are needed to have a decent quality of life. Some highlights given for each initiative:



Education:

One emphasis is readiness to achieve in school, including the “Wonder Walk” program at the Huntsville/Madison County Public Library. This program familiarizes pre-kindergarten kids with numbers, letters, & colors. Other programs stress academic achievement and reducing the drop-out rate. The Unite Way is currently involved in a community book drive, and they hope to acquire over 8,000 books. [Several Optimists brought books to the meeting to support this effort]

Income:

The United Way programs funded are geared to increasing the financial stability of lower income families. In 2011, 75% of the families serviced by United Way were classified as living in poverty. Programs promote informing families of help that is available, including affordable day care and free income tax preparation, and promoting financial literacy.

Health

United Way supports CASA for senior citizens and HEALS clinics for children. They provide the 211 hot line for social services information, including child abuse. There is also a free prescription drug program for families that qualify. These cards are good at about 85 % of local pharmacies.

Upon the closure of the Volunteer Office, United Way became the clearing house for volunteers in the community. Opportunities for volunteering are given on their web site, www.uwhsv.org.

In summary, Mrs. Miller said anyone can become a partner in three different ways: COLLABORATE, VOLUNTEER, DONATE. “The key is to act: how can we together change this community one life at a time? She said the local United Way office is very efficient, and is now running about 20% below the national average on administrative expenses.

Closing

Alfred Adams, a good friend of Mrs. Miller, won the drawing for the attendance prize on the first try (hmmm?). Dr. Carl Winkler led those assembled in reciting the Optimist Creed to close the meeting.


Clyde Merino

Optimistic Quote of the Week

“I will speak to a youth which can accomplish everything, precisely because it accepts no past, obeys no present, and fears no future.”

~Rudyard Kipling

CALENDAR

- 11/1 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn
Bill McDowell - Second Mile Development
- 11/6 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank
Board Meeting
- 11/8 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn
TBD - Jim Roe
- 11/15 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting - Food – (Jim Roe)
- 11/22 Thursday - **NO MEETING**
A decorative graphic where the word "THANKSGIVING" is written in colorful, stylized letters. The 'T' is a turkey head, and the 'I' is a turkey tail. The letters are in various colors like yellow, green, orange, and red.
- 11/29 **5TH THURSDAY - NO MEETING**
- 12/4 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank
Board Meeting
- 12/6 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn
TBD - Bob Martin
- 12/13 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn
TBD - Bob Martin
- 12/20 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting - Food – (Bob Martin)