



OPTIMIST
INTERNATIONAL

Friend of Youth

Opti - Topics

Bulletin of the Optimist Club of Huntsville

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Opening

Today's meeting brought out a sparse turnout of only 14 Optimists and no guests at the regular meeting of the Optimist Club of Huntsville. Clyde Nevins gave the invocation, and Milt Williams led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Reports & Announcements

Jim Rowe reported that Dr. Sidney Sandridge is in Huntsville Hospital, but due to be released today (Thursday). He said Sidney has had a couple of episodes causing him to pass out, the most recent one being at church last Sunday. The apparent cause is fluctuating blood pressure when rising, and his medication is being adjusted.

Tom Casteel reminded the attendees (and you readers, too) that he has some new Club brochures itching to be placed in the hands of prospective new members. Call Tom and get a handful.

Fabiani Duarte reported on the Grace Lutheran JOOI Club officer installation on Wednesday. Only 2 Optimists turned out for the event, but there were a number of parents in attendance. Fabiani urged a better representation at future JOOI Club events. Attendees enjoyed a lunch of pizza and deserts. There are 15 members in the Grace Lutheran JOOI Club.

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Fabiani also reported he visited University Place Elementary School and Davis Hills Middle School this week, and these clubs are well on the way to being chartered.

Fabiani said he expects about 150 JOOI Club members to march in the Veterans Day Parade on Nov. 12. He expects to have 5 vehicles for our Club members to ride in. Don't forget to wear blue—get your Optimist Club shirt in the laundry in time.

Alberto reported that today was Zack Thompson's 81st birthday. Also, he announced that Fabiani had one the "Wings Award" for being the best actor for his role in *Lend Me a Tenor*. This play was also awarded a Wings Award for being the best production in Huntsville last year.

Tom Casteel asked anyone who has photos of the recent banquet with Dr. Wardynski to send them to him for posting on our web site.

Program

Program Chairman Jim Rowe introduced our speaker for today, Bill McDowell, Director of Second Mile Development. Second Mile is a non-profit, faith-based organization working in the Terry Heights area of Huntsville.



In 1994, Bill became the full-time executive of Second Mile. Second Mile started in 1985 when the Terry Heights area had the highest poverty rate, the highest crime rate, the highest prostitution rate, the highest drug activity, and the second highest unemployment rate in Huntsville. Since then significant strides have been made in addressing the chronic problems in the area. As examples, there are now more owners than renters, education test scores are up, and the crime rate is down.

Bill gave a very informative talk on the difference between *chronic* problems and *crisis* problems. As an example, although there are people who go to bed hungry in Huntsville, this is generally a crisis problem. There are no known cases of actual malnutrition in Huntsville, which would be a chronic problem. Another example is toys at Christmastime.



This is not a crisis problem. Although while we get a lot of heart-rending appeals to support giving toys to kids who might miss out on them, this pales in comparison to having an effective mom and dad.

Why are people in poverty? Bill gave a list of the "Top Ten Things that Cause Poverty" that was developed by the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism in 1881:

1. Ignorance
2. Idleness
3. Intemperance [alcohol, drugs]
4. Want of economy [opportunity]
5. Imprudent and hasty marriages
6. Lotteries
7. Pawn brokers
8. Brothels
9. Gambling houses
10. Charities that give money away too freely

Bill said that things that cause poverty haven't changed much in well over a century.

The process developed and used by Second Mile to address the community problems has been:

1. Ask residents what they see as the needs of the community. Don't assume the needs.
2. Don't give anything away free. This kills ambition.
3. Promote community involvement—don't do for them what they can do themselves.

4. Don't promote the organization or its work in the community.
5. Listen to those who have been helped and use their feedback to improve the process.
6. Above all, do no harm.

Second Mile has a full-day preschool that charges tuition to parents, albeit well below actual cost. Parents who cannot afford the tuition can work it out in Second Mile's thrift store (on University Drive). Another program sells Christmas toys to parents, but well below cost. Again, parents who cannot pay cash can work out the amount in the thrift store. Paying for what they get preserves the self-respect of parents. In closing, Bill said it's been fun to see the progress in Terry Heights.

In response to a question, he said a big need of the organization is scholarship money for its pre-school.

Another questioner asked if the Second Mile Development had any relation to Jerry Sandusky's infamous Second Mile in Pennsylvania. Bill responded saying there were hundreds of "second mile" organizations in the U. S. His organization incorporated in Alabama had absolutely no relationship with the Second Mile organization in Pennsylvania.

Closing

Zack Thompson won the attendance prize on the first drawing (Happy Birthday!). Dr. Carl Winkler led the recitation of the Optimist Creed to close the meeting.

Clyde Merino

There will be an election of a Club Director to our Foundation at the November business meeting. This election will be for the seat currently held by Gay Pepper. Gay has agreed to stay on until the election, and has also agreed to accept nomination for another term. Additional nominations will be accepted at the time of the election.

Optimistic Quote of the Week

"The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him his own."

~Benjamin Disraeli

CALENDAR

- 11/6 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank
Board Meeting
- 11/8 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn
Bobby Bradley - Village of Promise
- 11/15 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting - Food - (Jim Roe)
- 11/22 Thursday - **NO MEETING**
THANKSGIVING
- 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)
- 12/27 Thursday - **NO MEETING**
Merry Christmas

THE OPTIMIST CREED

Promise Yourself -

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.

To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true

To think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

Optimist International



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TO: