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**SECRETARY TREASURER**

Al Renz  
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**Club meets**  
**1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays**  
**At 11:45 am**  
**Downtown Holiday Inn**  
**Huntsville, AL**

# Opti - Topics

Seventeen Optimists and two guests assembled in the Optimist Recreation Center's meeting room for the monthly business meeting. Our two guests, and prospective new members, were Jim and Peggy Otto. Our caterer today was Bob Martin, and our menu consisted of pizzas, Christmas cookies and drinks. Buddy Beck made a pot of coffee which hit the spot on a blustery day.

Jim Berry gave the invocation which included a moment of silence for the parents of the school children killed in Newtown, CT. Clyde Nevins led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Opening

President Tom Casteel opened the meeting by reading a poem by Edgar Guest entitled "At Christmas." The gist of the poem is that at Christmas time people are most like what God would have them be all year round.

Alberto asked permission to make two short announcements. First he thanked all those in the Club who had attended one of the Living Christmas Tree performances. Then he announced that yesterday was the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of your editor, and "Happy Birthday" was sung for him.

## **DIRECTORS**

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## **Sick Call**

There were several faithful members absent from today's meeting due to illness. These were reported as follows:

Milt Williams has been in the hospital for treatment of two blood clots, one of which was in his lung and affected his breathing. The clots came as an aftereffect of his recent surgery for varicose veins. He is due out of the hospital today (Thursday).

George McDonough has been suffering from "the crud" and has been homebound for a few days.

Zack Thompson has his right arm in a sling, the result of a shoulder injury that required surgery. It was reported that Zack's injury was a result of falling out of a tree stand during one of his hunts.

Fabiani Duarte reported his head is doing fine, and he will have the 5 staples holding his scalp together removed today.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Al Renz walked the club through the various line items of the Income and Expense Statement for the first two month's of this fiscal year. The only expenditures thus far have been for our youth programs, the Band Instrument Program and the JOOI Club Program. The largest expenses were for our monthly band repair contract with Robbins Music, and for purchasing 750 JOOI Club pins. Al reported there is now less than \$200 due for delinquent memberships.

Al briefly recapped the situation with Jeff Klimek. The Club has been asked to prepare an "Impact Statement" for the court, as we are his principal victim. Should Jeff seek a plea bargain to reduce any imposed prison sentence, this statement would guide the court on what, if any reduction in payment to the club could be exchanged for a reduced sentence. Jeff's arraignment is still scheduled for February 28, 2013.

Al said he has 10 Optimist Club shirts, with all sizes still available, for sale at \$15 each. All funds received for the shirts go to the Club treasury. Tom Casteel added that he has two Optimist aprons for sale at \$13 each, as well.

President Tom Casteel proposed that the Club send out a majority of the dues bills by e-mail, with essentially the same distribution as now get their Opti-Topics digitally. This would save the Club a few bucks over the course of a year. The only discussion was a suggestion that the subject line of such an e-mail clearly state the subject as "Optimist Club Dues." There being no negative comments or opposition, Tom said the e-mail dues statements would begin starting with the upcoming quarter.

## **JOOI Clubs**

Committee Chairman Fabiani Duarte reported that December has been a very busy month for installing JOOI Club officers. Six Clubs, Randolph HS, Ed White MS, Davis Hills MS, Chapman MS, Whitesburg MS, and Morris Elementary School all held installations. He thanked all the Optimist members who had participated in the various events.

Combined with the two installations in November (University Place Elementary School and Hazel Green HS), the Hampton Cove MS installation scheduled in January, and Sparkman HS Club looking like it will reactivate, the Club's commitment to youth in our community and county are becoming well known. Lee High School is the next school targeted for a JOOI Club, and the principal there is supportive.

President Tom said that there is a national contest among all Optimist Clubs for starting JOOI Clubs, and he opined that our Club could be leading.

There is potential for our Club partnering with Semper Fi in providing liaison with our JOOI Clubs. Semper Fi has available manpower and interest in youth activities, but have had difficulties getting into schools. Tom and Fabiani will pursue this potential and report back to the Club.

## **Tri-Star Basketball**

Committee Chairman Jesse Lang reported that everything is set for the contest to be held on Saturday, January 19, except for ordering the trophies. He asked Al Renz if he would take care of this again this year, and Al agreed to do so. Optimists are asked to be at the ORC at 9:00 a. m. on the day of the contest. Tom had printed up flyers, and these are being distributed to our JOOI Clubs and to schools. The flyer includes an application form for contestants.

## **Essay Contest,**

Committee Chairman Al Renz reported that he has either e-mailed or sent letters to all past contestants who are still eligible advising them of this year's contest. George McDonough and he are contacting schools and JOOI Clubs to spread the word about entering the contest. The deadline for entries is January 31, 2013.

## **Oratorical Contest,**

Committee Chairman Alberto Duarte reported that at least two options for the location of the contest are being considered: The Cooper House, and a new facility at the First Baptist Church. March 9, 2013 is the latest date for holding the contest. He next proposed that the prize money for the winning speeches be increased to \$300 (now \$200) for first, \$200 (now \$100) for second, and \$100 (now \$50) for third. He stated that the effort in preparing and delivering a speech is much greater than preparing an essay, and the prize money should reflect this difference.

Tom asked if his proposal was a motion, and Alberto said yes. Jim Berry seconded the motion. The discussion centered around where the money would come from, especially whether the additional money needed would come from other programs such as our Community Outreach. Tom said that if the motion passed, the Board would consider how to revamp the budget to make the money available. The Board's decision would be reported back to the membership for approval.

## **Other New Business**

Buddy Beck asked if there has been any move for our Club to join with the Noon Optimist Club which has suffered a severe decline in membership. Tom said he knows the president well, and he will initiate discussions.

## Closing

Before closing, a round of applause was given to Gay Pepper and Jim Berry for putting on an outstanding Christmas party—one of the best ones in recent memory. A round of applause was also given for Jim and Peggy Otto for providing the entertainment at the party.

Carl Winkler led in reciting the Optimist Creed to close the meeting.

*Clyde Nevins*

## Optimistic Quote of the Week

I'd rather see a sermon  
than hear one any day;  
I'd rather one should walk with me  
than merely tell the way.

The eye's a better pupil and  
more willing than the ear,  
Fine counsel is confusing,  
but example's always clear;

And the best of all the preachers  
are the men who live their creeds,  
For to see good put in action  
is what everybody needs.

*.~ Edgar Guest*

## CALENDAR

12/27 Thursday - **NO MEETING**

*Merry Christmas*

1/3 Thursday - **NO MEETING**

*Happy New Year*

1/8 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank

**Board Meeting**

1/10 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

**Mr. Burr Ingram - VP for Communications and Marketing,  
Huntsville Hospital**

1/17 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center

**Business Meeting - Food - (Milt Williams)**

1/19 Thursday 9:30 - 11:30 am Optimist Recreation Center

**Tri-Star Basketball Competition**

1/24 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

**Doreen Forsythe - NASA Solar System Ambassador**

1/31 **5TH THURSDAY - NO MEETING**

**POEM READ BY TOM**

**AT CHRISTMAS**

By Edgar Guest

"A man is at his finest  
towards the finish of the year;  
He is almost what he should be  
when the Christmas season is here;

Then he's thinking more of others  
than he's thought the months before,  
And the laughter of his children  
is a joy worth toiling for.

He is less a selfish creature than  
at any other time;  
When the Christmas spirit rules him  
he comes close to the sublime.

When it's Christmas man is bigger  
and is better in his part;  
He is keener for the service  
that is prompted by the heart.

All the petty thoughts and narrow  
seem to vanish for awhile  
And the true reward he's seeking  
is the glory of a smile.

Then for others he is toiling and  
somehow it seems to me  
That at Christmas he is almost  
what God wanted him to be.

Man is ever in a struggle  
and he's oft misunderstood;  
There are days the worst that's in him  
is the master of the good,

But at Christmas kindness rules him  
and he puts himself aside  
And his petty hates are vanquished  
and his heart is opened wide.

Oh, I don't know how to say it,  
but somehow it seems to me  
That at Christmas man is almost  
what God sent him here to be."



# THE OPTIMIST CLUB of HUNTSVILLE FREE



## TRI-STAR BASKETBALL CONTEST Passing, Dribbling, and Shooting Contests

Calling all Hoopsters...The Huntsville Optimist Club is sponsoring its annual Tri-Star Basketball Contest on Saturday, January 19, 2013. It's open to boys and girls between ages 8 and 13. Whether you are an experienced player or just want to come have some fun, this day is for you. Test your skills in a friendly age-level competition, with trophies up for grabs. It's all at the Optimist Recreation Center beginning at 9:30 a.m.

**Place: Optimist Recreation Center**  
703 Oakwood Ave  
East of Andrew Jackson  
(256) 427-5775



**Date: Saturday, January 19, 2013**  
**Time: 9:30 – 10:10 a.m. 8 - 9 year olds**  
**10:10 - 10:50 a.m. 10 - 11 year olds**  
**10:50 - 11:30 a.m. 12 - 13 year olds**



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Tear off, complete and have your parent or guardian sign and turn in when you arrive at the Optimist Recreation Center

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ School Attending \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## THE OPTIMIST CREED

Promise Yourself -

**T**o be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

**T**o talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.

**T**o make all your friends feel that there is something in them.

**T**o look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true

**T**o think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best.

**T**o be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

**T**o forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

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

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

**T**o 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:**