



PRESIDENT

Tom Casteel
256-882-9380
tom@leetsac.net

VICE PRESIDENTS

George McDonough
256-534-2591
gfmcdonough@yahoo.com

Fabiani Duarte
256-468-9848
fabiani.a.duarte@gmail.com

SECRETARY TREASURER

Al Renz
256-772-7929
optimist3480@aol.com

Club meets

**1st, 2nd, & 4th Thursdays
At 11:45 am
Downtown Holiday Inn
Huntsville, AL**

Opti - Topics

A surprisingly large number of eighteen Optimists and one guest braved the impending winter weather, and assembled at the Optimist Recreation Center today for our monthly business meeting. Our guest, who has applied for membership, was John Inman, the Community Blueprint, Education, & Housing Coordinator with the Still Serving Veterans organization in Huntsville. Milt Williams was our chef today, and he brought honey-baked ham sandwiches, coleslaw, potato salad, and assorted cookies and drinks. Everyone enjoyed the meal and Al was pleased that he came in under budget.

Rev. Jim Berry gave the invocation, and Al Renz led in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Opening

President Tom Casteel called the meeting to order, and welcomed our guest and prospective new member to our gathering.

Tom passed around a sheet showing the final version of the banner he has ordered for the Whitesburg MS JOOI Club. The banner is to be 5 ft. by 2 ft., will have a blue background, and will not say "Lions" on it. The vinyl banner comes with a fold-up stand and a carrying bag.

The cost is around \$70, including shipping, which compares to about \$200 if purchased locally. Tom said he is investigating magnetic signs to be used when the Club participates in parades.

**Our business meeting
is held on the 3rd
Thursday of the
month at the Optimist
Recreation Center on
Oakwood Avenue**

DIRECTORS

Connie Gipson
256-534-1384
cfgipson@yahoo.com

Matt Hancock
256-990-0077
wmhancock@wolfejones.com

Jim Roe
256-883-8950
j_m_roe@yahoo.com

Alfred G. Adams
502-541-6469
alfredg.adams@gmail.com

Byrom Goodwin
256-881-3113

Bob Martin
bmartin12@bellsouth.net
256-722-8062

President Tom provided each attendee with three Club brochures, and asked that each member give them to three good prospects, be they neighbors, friends or coworkers. He commented that with our increasing activities, especially in the JOOI Clubs, we sorely need more bodies.

Treasurer's Report



Club Treasurer Al Renz went through his report for the first quarter of our fiscal year (October 1 through December 31, 2012). Our only expenses during this period were for Youth Activities projects, \$1,795.23 for the Band Instrument project, and \$5,139.10 for the JOOI Club project. At the end of the quarter we were \$72.81 in the hole pending receipt of \$278.20 due from guest meals, primarily those from our memorable Christmas banquet.

Al briefly updated the Jeff Klimek situation, and passed around a folder containing several of the legal documents pertinent to the upcoming trial. We are currently owed \$67,545.13 from Jeff, who has pleaded guilty to the charges against him. On Feb. 28, 2013, his sentencing trial is scheduled, and unless a plea bargain is agreed to, which must include money for our club, Jeff is facing 2 to 5 years in prison.

Al also reported that an audit of last year's books has been completed without a problem, and that he has submitted IRS form 990-N to the IRS for our club.

Committee Reports

Essay Committee



Committee Chairman Al Renz reported that he had received notice from teachers at Randolph HS and Whitesburg MS that they will likely submit 20 or more essays for the contest. The contest has been heavily advertised to our JOOI Clubs, too, so Al expects more than 50 essays in the contest. He has 3 judges lined up already, but he said he would welcome anyone else who would like to judge them. Essays are due at the end of the month, and there will be a three week period for the judging.

JOOI Club Committee



Committee Chairman Fabiani Duarte ran well over the 5-minutes allotted by President Tom for his report, but he had a lot to say about the JOOI Club project. Last Monday's Hampton Cove MS installation had about 60 attendees from their over 100 membership. They reported that they have adopted a project to support Manna House. On Tuesday, Chapman MS had about 50 members attending their installation. They, too, have already adopted a project: a book drive with a goal to get 1,000 books for the United Way book drive.

On Tuesday evening our JOOI Club at Morris Elementary School met. Their club is reviewing the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., and their school sponsor began going through the Optimist Creed with them, item by item, to help them understand what Optimism is all about. Their meeting concluded with an assembly line for about 60 "snack packs," which are packages of food provided for indigent children for the weekend.

Fabiani announced that Earth Fare, "the healthy supermarket," is planning a *free* after-school dinner during the week of March 11-16 for all JOOI Club members and their parents. Attendees will be taught about cooking and eating healthy. A bicycle and gift cards will be given away as door prizes.

Finally, Fabiani reported that Madison Academy had recently called him to say they were ready to start two new clubs. Fabi has been working with them for several months, and it looks like his work is now paying off.

President Tom Casteel announced that the JOOI Club District Convention has been scheduled for the weekend of March 9-10 at Meridian, MS. Our Club has a standing offer to pay for 2 members and a sponsor from each JOOI Club to attend a convention. The cost would be \$95 each, which covers food, hotel, and registration. Tom would consider renting a 15-passenger van to carry the Huntsville group, if enough sign up.

Fund Raising Committee

This is a newly formed committee established by the Board of Directors. Members of the committee are Bob Martin, Al Renz, Matt Hancock, and Fabiani Duarte. No report as yet.

Tri-Star Basketball Committee



Committee Chairman Jesse Lang said everything is ready. He has personally contacted many schools, and the contest has been advertised to all of our JOOI Clubs as well. The ORC opens at 9 a. m., and the contest starts with the youngest age group at 9:30 a. m. Al Renz has ordered and obtained the trophies. Jesse could use your help, so come if you can.

Pancake Breakfast



Committee Chairman Alberto Duarte reported that everything is ready for the breakfast. Tickets have been distributed, and Alberto said he will not accept any tickets to be returned, just \$50. We will begin serving breakfast at the Cooper House at 7:30 a. m., but Optimists will be needed earlier to fire up the grills, make coffee, etc.

Clyde Nevins asked if the money members donate for unsold tickets could be in the form of a check made out to the Hawthorne Conservatory, an arm of the Central Presbyterian Church in Huntsville. This would qualify the donation for an income tax deduction. This was agreed to. Tom Casteel said he still had two pancake-colored aprons for sale at \$13 each.

Alberto reported, after a short interlude to Mary Flynn, that there would be live music at the pancake breakfast provided by a student from the conservatory on a grand piano.

Oratorical Contest



Committee Chairman Alberto Duarte reported that the contest will be held at the Cooper House on March 9 at 9:00 a. m. He said he is optimistic (what else?) that the increase in the prize money for contest winners (\$300 for first, \$200 for second and \$100 for third), in addition to the chance of winning a District scholarship, should attract many more contestants this year. He has set up a special e-mail address for the contest and has e-mailed all of the schools with the specifics on how to enter.

Optimist Foundation

Foundation President Bill Clarke reported that December was a good month for the Foundation's investment portfolio. The fund had \$752,371 at the beginning of December, and ended the month increased to \$755,992 even after some \$6,000 was provided to the Club for Youth Activities.

Old Business

President Tom reported that the Board of Directors had voted to increase prize money for both the Essay Contest and the Oratorical Contest. This is different than what was voted on by the Club at last month's business meeting, where only the Oratorical Contest prizes were increased. He stated that the Board modified the Club's budget by taking the necessary \$750 from the amount allocated to the Band Instrument Program for purchase of new instruments. Tom stated that the remaining \$1,250 should be sufficient, considering that we get several donated instruments (we recently had 2, in fact), and the "new" instruments are really used ones ordered from E Bay or the like.

George McDonough moved to accept the Board action to increase the Essay Contest as well, and the motion was seconded by Fabiani Duarte and passed.

Al Adams moved that the money needed for the prize money increase be taken from the Band Instrument Program, as proposed by the Board of Directors. The motion was seconded by Bill Peters and passed.

Tom stated that he thought the prize money should be documented, and provided the new wording for Revision D of the Club's Policy Manual, which also included a few additional housekeeping changes. George McDonough moved that the revisions to the Policy Manual be approved. Fabiani Duarte seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

New Business



President Tom reported on a proposal made to the Board of Directors by Col. Kenny Watts from the Semper Fi Community Task Force. Basically, the proposal is to have our Club involved through one or more JOOI Clubs in providing a school-based television reporting of sports and other events which are no longer adequately covered in our 3-day-a-week newspaper. The project would have to be coordinated with the Huntsville City Schools, and could involve the Communications Department at Alabama A & M University. The Board of Directors referred the proposal to the Club with a favorable vote.

After much discussion on just what the Club was signing up for, and who is to do what, Duane Plank moved that a new committee be formed to investigate the proposal further and report back to the Club on any concrete actions needed. The motion was seconded by Fabiani Duarte and passed. President Tom appointed the committee as follows: George McDonough, Alberto Duarte, John Inman, Fabiani Duarte, and Tom Casteel.

Closing

We had lots of business today, and the meeting ran longer than usual, closing at 1:20 p. m. Carl Winkler had already left by then, so Tom Casteel led the Optimist Creed to close the meeting.

Clyde Nevins

Optimistic Quote of the Week

“You can do anything if you have enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is the yeast that makes your hopes rise to the stars. With it, there is accomplishment. Without it there are only alibis. ”

~Henry Ford

CALENDAR

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

1/26 Saturday 7:30 to 11:30 am **Cooper House**
405 Randolph Ave. SE

Annual Pancake Breakfast

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

2/5 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank

Board Meeting

2/7 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

Andy Setlow – Science Education Project

2/14 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

Lowell Zoller – Burritt on the Mountain

2/21 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center

Business Meeting - Food – (Jim Berry)

2/28 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

Lee Marshall – Journalist, WHNT News 19 Team