



**OPTIMIST  
INTERNATIONAL**

*Friend of Youth*

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**Club meets**

**1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays**

**At 11:45 am**

**Mullins Restaurant  
Huntsville, AL**

**Our business meeting  
is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Thursday of the  
month at the Optimist  
Recreation Center on  
Oakwood Ave**

# Opti - Topics

## Opening

Twenty Optimists attended our second Club meeting at Mullins Restaurant today, on perhaps the coldest temperature at the lunch hour in recent times. It was good to see Jeff and Sidney Sandridge at the meeting. President George McDonough had worked with Mullins to rearrange the meeting room's tables into a U shape. This allowed nearly all of the members to sit facing the podium so they would not have to turn their chairs to see the speaker.

Our server, Michelle, did another efficient and friendly job of taking our lunch orders, and even those who ordered from the menu (rather than the daily specials) were served promptly.

President George asked Dr. Sandridge to give the invocation, and Gay Pepper led the Club in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Announcements



Committee Chairman Jesse Lang reported that the Club's Tri-Star Basketball competition held last Saturday morning was the most successful yet. More girls than boys participated, including two sets of twin girls. Jim Roe, who helped run the event, said a couple or more volunteers would have been helpful. Tom Casteel has pictures from the event on our web site.



Essay Contest Chairman George McDonough reported he is having trouble getting entrants for our essay contest. The deadline for submitting entries is now February 7, moved back from the earlier date of Feb. 1. George will have three judges and complete the judging in a matter of days once the entries are received. He, his daughter Kathy, and Al Renz are the judges.

## Program



Program Chairman John Inman introduced our speaker for today, Mr. Gary Taus, CEO of BizTech in Huntsville.

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Mr. Taus had 30 years of experience in starting new companies in information technology before coming to Huntsville. He currently is still on the Boards of Directors of several IT corporations, and is a member of the Rotary Club of Huntsville. During his talk, Mr. Taus remarked about these positive attributes of Huntsville:

- ❖ Huntsville was proactive in seeing a need to diversify to commercial businesses, and not relying totally on NASA and DOD to keep the technical workforce employed.
- ❖ Huntsville is blessed with a wealth of talented engineers, with perhaps more engineers per capita than any place in the U. S.
- ❖ The quality of life in Huntsville far exceeds that in other high-tech centers, such as Boston and Silicon Valley.

BizTech, located near UAH, has 12 to 15 fledgling companies occupying office space in their building. BizTech provides mentors from local corporations, gives advice on how to start a new company, and builds bridges to venture capital sources. Mentors generally volunteer, and don't have to be heavily recruited. BizTech services are free, but they do rent office space for those who want a temporary location while working out details of their start-ups. BizTech also has competitions among fledgling entrepreneurs to sharpen their skills in presenting their ideas to venture capitalists.

Mr. Taus said that about one out of 10,000 ideas for new products or services get written down. Of those, perhaps 1 out of 1,000 get serious consideration, and only one out of 100 actually become a business. Wikipedia and Farmville were start-ups in Huntsville. Many successful start-ups tend to be absorbed by large corporations.

A new initiative by BizTech is to help revitalize downtown Huntsville. The goals of this initiative are to attract the interest of "twenty-something's" and fill up the second and third floors of down-town buildings. BizTech is providing a "co-working space" where young people can meet and exchange ideas. Mr. Taus said that he has verbal commitments to fill up the available space.

More information is available on the organization's web site: [www.biztech.org](http://www.biztech.org).

President George thanked our speaker for his talk, and gave him a tile with the Optimist Creed as a memento. He asked Mr. Taus to draw for our attendance prize. Collusion might be suspected, since John Inman's name was the first one drawn.

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

*Clyde Nevins*

## Optimistic Quote of the Week

**The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But... the good Samaritan reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?"**

*~Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## CALENDAR

1/30 Thursday **No Meeting (5<sup>th</sup> Thursday)**

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

### **Board Meeting**

2/6 Thursday 11:45 am Mullins Restaurant

### **TBD – Jim Berry**

2/13 Thursday 11:45 am Mullins Restaurant

### **TBD – Jim Berry**

2/20 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center

### **Business Meeting - Food – (Jim Berry)**

2/27 Thursday 11:45 am Mullins Restaurant

### **TBD – Jim Berry**

# - PHOTOS -



**Bill Clarke and Tom Casteel Carry on a Conversation**



**John Inman and our Speaker Gary Taus**



**Our Server, Michelle**



**President George McDonough**

## 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:**