



**OPTIMIST  
INTERNATIONAL**

*Friend of Youth*

**PRESIDENT**

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

**1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

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

**2<sup>nd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

John Inman  
256-425-8022  
inman\_john@hotmail.com

**SECRETARY TREASURER**

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

**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

The Optimist Club of Huntsville held its regularly scheduled meeting at Mullins Restaurant, today. Thankfully, there was a break in our rainy weather, and 19 Optimists attended our meeting, along with 3 guests and our speaker. Our guests today were Nell Berry, wife of Jim, Scott Anderson, son of Cathy Anderson and grandson of George McDonough, and Laura Connaughton, wife of our speaker. It was good to see Cathy Anderson and Sidney Sandridge with us today.

President George McDonough opened the meeting on the first try this week, achieving a nice, clear gong. He asked Rev. Jim Berry to bring the invocation and Al Adams to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Optimist “family” news

Clyde Nevins reported that he had spoken to **Duane Plank in Crestwood** Hospital (room 432) this morning. Last Saturday, Duane experienced severe pain and itching in his left leg after a trip to his farm, and when it didn't let up, he went to the emergency room at Crestwood. It was unclear to the ER doctor what the problem was—insect bite, blood clot, etc.—so Duane was admitted to the hospital. Since then the doctors have diagnosed it as Cellulitis and are treating it with antibiotics and pain killers via IV. Duane expects to be in Crestwood at least until Saturday, probably longer. Elaine has asked for prayers for him and for the doctors to accurately diagnose and treat the problem.

## DIRECTORS

Don Holder  
256-881-4655  
don\_holder@comcast.net

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

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

Gay Pepper  
256-288-4321  
gaypepper@fcb-hsv.com

Jim Roe  
256-883-8950  
j\_m\_roe@yahoo.com

## PAST PRESIDENT

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

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Clyde Nevins  
256-881-8215  
[clyde.nevins@Juno.com](mailto:clyde.nevins@Juno.com)

## Announcements

President George McDonough said the **tribute for Zack Thompson** is now scheduled for the last Club meeting this month, June 26<sup>th</sup>. He had a long conversation with Zack's wife, Betty, and she is enthusiastically supporting the event. She plans to attend with the whole family.

President George has asked Gay Pepper to coordinate the event. Since Zack was a big supporter of Optimist International, Gay is planning to incorporate a monitory donation to OI in Zack's memory as part of the tribute. She will be recommending an amount from each Club member.

President George asked some of the "older" members (time in the Club, not age) to say a few words at the tribute.

Tom Casteel reported that **our Club now has an "official" address**. He has rented a post office box where mail can be received. The address is:

**Optimist Club of Huntsville**

**P. O. Box 2230**

**Huntsville Alabama, 35804-2230**

Tom read a **thank-you note** he had received from Ms. Emily Parker, band director of Buckhorn Middle School (one of Bill Clarke's schools). Ms. Parker thanked the Club for providing band instruments for more than 20 students, and for motivating the entire band to exhibit the qualities of optimism. She also thanked the Club for making her an honorary member.

## Program



President George asked Program Chairman Jim Berry to introduce our speaker for today. Jim introduced Joseph Connaughton, a Bombardier/Navigator with the 319<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group in World War II. Mr. Connaughton's talk was entitled *The Other D-Day*. Mr. Connaughton said he was happy to be speaking to us, and since he is one of only 5% of WW II veterans still alive, he was glad to be anywhere.

The "other" D-Day is the invasion of southern France on August 15, 1944. With all the attention focused on the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, the invasion of southern France is usually forgotten. However, Mr. Connaughton gave a few statistics on the "other" D-Day which showed it was a sizeable effort. This invasion (Operation Dragoon) involved:

- ❖ 450 warships (including 9 aircraft carriers)
- ❖ 550 troop transport ships
- ❖ 204 C-47s towing 2 gliders each with airborne troops
- ❖ 5000 planes supporting the invasion
- ❖ 90,000 soldiers (compared to 160,000 at the Normandy beaches)

Mr. Connaughton presented a slide show with maps and photographs illustrating his involvement in supporting this invasion. He began by telling how he and his crewmates had flight training on the B-26 in the U. S., then arrived in southern Sardinia in May of 1944. He said he and his 5 crewmates were all from different states, but were as close as brothers. They were assigned (he knew not how or why) during training and stayed together through the entire war. He is the last surviving member of his crew, the latest other member having died in January of this year.

One of the first slides shown was a cut-away picture of a twin-engined B-26 which illustrated where each of the six crew members (pilot, copilot, flight engineer, radio operator, bombardier/navigator and tail gunner) were located. His crew was assigned to be one of six airplanes in the 438<sup>th</sup> Squadron. Mr. Connaughton described in detail his mission on the morning of the invasion, beginning with the 3 a. m. briefing by the Commanding Officer (who was a ripe old age of 28). He explained how each squadron's airplanes took off, flew together, bombed together, and landed together during a mission. Taking off six abreast was a challenge, especially in the dark, and he told of other squadrons losing airplanes during takeoff that morning.

His squadron was assigned to bomb obstacles on the invasion beaches, and they had to complete their mission by 7:30 a. m. to pave the way for the 8:00 a. m. landings. A miraculous hole in the cloud cover allowed them to see their target, and by using their ultra secret Norden bombsight, they successfully completed their objective. As in all missions, he and all others in the operation were debriefed upon landing.

In a brief Q & A session, he reported that each plane could carry up to 4,000 pounds of bombs, but normally carried ten, 100-lb bombs. Also, they flew in whatever airplanes were available and in good repair, but often were assigned the same airplane as flown in before. He said his favorite airplane was named "Lady Luck."

### **Closing**

President George McDonough thanked our speaker, presented him a coaster with our Optimist Creed, and asked her to draw the name for our attendance prize. The winning name this week was Dr. Carl Winkler, who then closed the meeting by leading us in the reciting the Optimist Creed.

*Clyde Nevins*

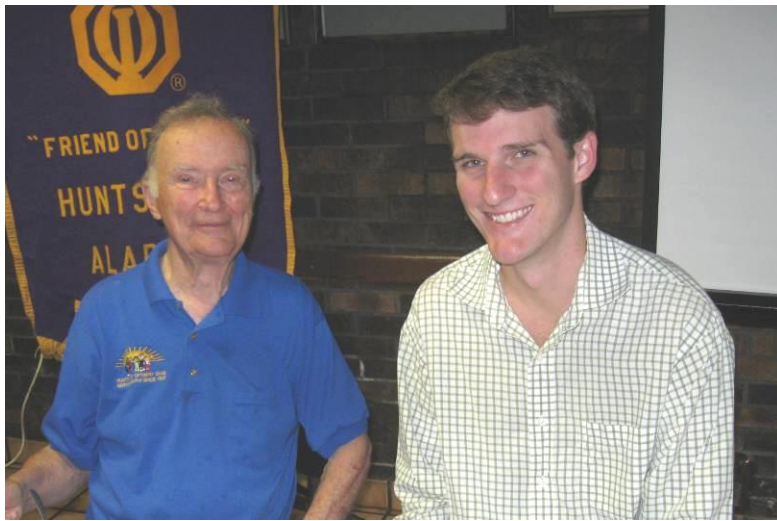
## **Optimistic Quote of the Week**

**"A man does what he must - in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures - and that is the basis of all human morality."**

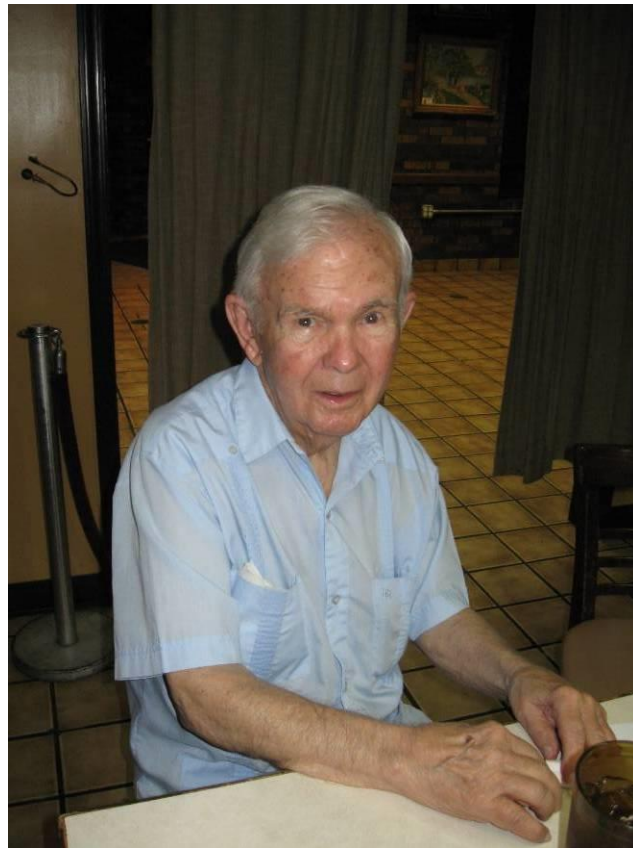
*~ Winston Churchill*

# CALENDAR

- 6/19 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center  
**Business Meeting - Food – (Gay Pepper)**
- 6/26 Thursday 11:45 am Mullins Restaurant  
**Tribute to Zack Thompson**
- 7/3 **NO MEETING**  
**Independence Day**
- 7/8 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank  
**Board Meeting**
- 7/10 Thursday 11:45 am Mullins Restaurant  
**TBD – Gay Pepper**
- 7/17 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center  
**Business Meeting - Food – (Jim Berry)**
- 7/24 Thursday 11:45 am Mullins Restaurant  
**TBD– Gay Pepper**
- 7/31 **NO MEETING**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Thursday**
- 8/9 Saturday Time TBD Ford’s Chapel UMC’s Pavilion  
**Annual Picnic**



**George McDonough & grandson Scott Anderson**



**Dr. Sidney Sandridge**



**Joseph and Laura Connaughton**



**Cathy Anderson**

## 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



**Huntsville Optimist Club**  
710 Versailles Drive  
Huntsville, AL 35803-1728



**TO:**