



**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

The Optimist Club of Huntsville assembled for a regular meeting at Mullins Restaurant, today. Nineteen Optimists and two guests were in attendance. Our guests were Nita & Bill Peters, wife and son of Optimist Bill Peters. It was good to see Don Holder, Andrew Driver and Ralph Caneer back with us. We've been missing them.

President George McDonough asked Rev. Jim Berry to open the meeting in prayer, followed by Bill Peters leading the Club in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Announcements

Also passed around was a sheet for signing up for our Club's **Installation Banquet** on Thursday, September 25. The banquet will be held in our meeting room in the Optimist Recreation Center and will begin at 6:30 p. m. If you haven't committed, one way or the other, please call Gay Pepper and tell her if you will attend the banquet and how many, if any, guests you will bring with you.

Bob Martin asked for inputs on where we might hold our **Christmas party** this year. He said it's not too early to reserve a place, now that our traditional place in the Downtown Holiday Inn is no longer available. If you have any suggestions, please contact Gay Pepper. John Shirey suggested that our room at the ORC be reserved as a backup.

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## **Program**

President George McDonough welcomed our speaker for today's meeting, our own Optimist Bill Peters. Since Bill was also our speaker last week, George said that no introduction was necessary.



Bill's talk today covered the work he did at Johnson Space Center to initially save and reuse Skylab, and then to save highly populated places on the Earth from Skylab reentry.

Bill began his talk by describing the Skylab configuration and the four missions (three manned). Skylab was an outgrowth of the Apollo program, and was NASA's (and the world's) first true space station. He also briefly touched on the efforts to control the temperature on Skylab after the meteoroid/thermal shield was lost during ascent.

### **Plan A: Save Skylab**

Once the three planned missions were completed, Skylab was abandoned and left in orbit. At that end of the three planned missions in 1974 it was predicted that it would stay in orbit for about 10 years. Since the systems on Skylab were in such good condition, NASA decided to re-boost it to a higher orbit and to program future manned missions. This would be done by using a specially designed propulsion module to be carried in orbit by the forthcoming Space Shuttle, then predicted to be operational in 1979. This would give plenty of time to have Skylab available for the new missions. However, due to much higher than expected drag in orbit, up-dated predictions of the time of Skylab re-entry put these missions in jeopardy.

Consequently, Bill headed a team, operating from Bermuda, that succeeded in reenergizing the power systems on Skylab. After that, by using the on-board gyros and software updates, Skylab was reoriented into an orientation that would increase its orbital life from 6 months to 1 year. Not surprisingly, delays in the development of the Space Shuttle soon made this extra time much too short. The effort to reuse Skylab thus had to be abandoned.

### **Plan B: Save the Earth**

Bill headed a new team, this time working from Houston, with a new objective: control the impact zone of Skylab when it re-entered. The U. S. State Department was quite antsy about the massive hardware of Skylab falling on a highly populated area of the Earth. Bill's team was charged with adjusting the drag on Skylab to control the re-entry time, and thus the location. The team's target was to have the Skylab hardware re-enter 810 miles SSE of Cape Town, South Africa, in the middle of the ocean.

There was some uncertainty of how soon the Skylab hardware would break up during re-entry. Leading up to Skylab's re-entry, there were numerous cartoons in papers around the world about the threat of being hit by falling Skylab debris. When it eventually re-entered, it broke up much lower in altitude than predicted. This caused some of the hardware to re-enter and land in western Australia, southeast of Perth. Bill said he received lots of "fan mail" from people whose plans were affected by the uncertainty in where Skylab would re-enter.



As a result, NASA sent a team to Australia to follow up on all reported incidents of Skylab hardware causing damage. Fortunately, there was little damage and only one known fatality (a rabbit). One of the re-entry debris fragments is on display at the Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville (photo).

### **Closing**

President George McDonough thanked Bill for his informative talk, saying he was always happy to learn from people who actually worked and not those who just watched. He opined that Skylab paved the way for the current International Space Station, providing all the necessary information needed for sustained operations in Earth orbit.

George gave the Bill our traditional speaker's gift of an Optimist Creed printed on a tile to add to the one given last week. Bill said he might eventually get a full set for his dining room table.

Bill drew a name for the attendance prize, also, and the first name drawn was Gay Pepper, and she took home the pot.

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

*Clyde Nevins*

## Optimistic Quote of the Week

**“It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things.”**

~ *Leonardo da Vinci*

## Calendar

- 9/18 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center  
**Business Meeting - Food – (Bill Peters)**
- 9/25 Thursday **6:30 pm** Optimist Recreation Center  
**Officer Installation Banquet**
- 10/2 Thursday 11:45 am Mullins Restaurant  
**TBD – George McDonough**
- 10/7 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank  
**Board Meeting – 2014-15 Board**

# - PHOTOS -



**Andrew Driver**  
**(sorry about the eyes, Andrew)**



**Don Holder**



**Ralph Caneer+**

## 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:**