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Club meets

1st, 2nd, & 4th Thursdays

At 11:45 am

**Check Website for
location**

hsvoptimists.org

Opti - Topics

Today's Meeting Mullins Restaurant

Another slim turnout of only 12 Optimists showed up for our meeting today. We were glad to see new member Rebecca Billings with us, and Richie Myers was back from his trip to Canada.

The service at Mullins was much better today. We had one server, Stephanie, who did a great job of getting the meals out and refilling the drinks. The sugar-free strawberry pie was enthusiastically consumed by at least two members.

Opening

President Al called on Rev. Jim Berry to bring the opening prayer, and then led the Club in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Optimist Family News

President Al Adams reported that **Tom Casteel** had outpatient surgery this morning to remove a growth from one of his vocal cords. A biopsy will be performed on the growth, so please pray that it is benign. Tom's throat will be sore for at least a couple of days - maybe he'll get to eat lots of ice cream.

Announcements

President Al Adams thanked those members who attended all or part of the **4th Quarter District Meeting** held last week at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel at the Huntsville International. Al said it was an excellent meeting; the best he had attended.

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

DIRECTORS

2 YEAR

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1 YEAR

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Clyde Nevins

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Al said that OI is pushing for a good attendance at the **International Meeting in Canada** next summer. If enough members are interested in going, he said perhaps we could rent a van or bus for the travel.



President Al said that the **Installation Banquet** will be the last Club meeting in September. Newly elected District Governor Tolanda Beal will install the new officers and also swear in our recent group of new members. More details later.



President Al passed around a sign-up sheet for the **Club Picnic** on Sept 12 at Ford's Chapel UMC in Harvest. All members are urged to indicate if they will attend, and if coming, how many guests they will bring.

Al said that the format for the picnic would be the same as last year. The Club will provide the meat, and Club members will bring the side dishes and desserts. Buddy Beck said he would contact Sheriff Dorning to see if he would provide barbequed chickens as he has done in the past.

Program

President Al Adams introduced our speaker for today, Ms. Libby Parker. Ms. Parker is the creator, founder and president of **HOPE Leadership Academy**. She is a member of the South Huntsville Optimist Club (because she cannot attend meetings at lunchtime due to her full-time teaching position).

Ms. Parker thanked the Club for supporting HOPE camps this past summer in several Madison County Schools. She said HOPE stands for:

Helping Others Pursue Excellence. She recounted how three years ago, in her 25th year of teaching, she had a vision of how to help at-risk students not only graduate,

but excel. From her research in graduate school she created the HOPE program.

She related the main reasons that at-risk students drop out of school. Indicators of trouble for at-risk students are, among others:

- ❖ From a home in poverty
- ❖ Frequently move and change schools
- ❖ Have trouble in English or Mathematics
- ❖ Have a poor attendance record; i. e., above 10% absence during the school year.

The students targeted are those who are gifted but don't fit the mode at school. Many have great potential; they just need help in developing those skills necessary for success in life.

The HOPE program for a student last 3 years, usually beginning in the fifth grade:

- ❖ Year 1: "Why my voice is important." Participants in the 5th through 8th grades develop and accomplish service projects at their schools such as helping special needs students, being a peer buddy or beautifying their school.
- ❖ Year 2: "How my passion influences the World." Participants in 6th through 9th grades visit local non-profit organizations to see how they were started. They volunteer time at a non-profit.
- ❖ Year 3: "How my optimism leads to a greater future." Participants in the 7th through 10th grades research a career goal that appeals to them. They learn the education and training that will be needed, along with the current salary and demand for this career. They may have opportunities for job shadowing during the year. They make a presentation on what they have learned. Also in this year, recruiters from colleges and the military are invited to tell students of scholarships that are available.

Ms. Parker gave two examples of students who were either failing or below average in their school work, and after being in the HOPE program excelled. They made the honor roll, won awards, and overcame their fear of public speaking. They went from no-chance-to-graduate to honor students.

Ms. Parker said she hopes to expand the program into other school districts, namely Huntsville City, Morgan County, and Scottsboro City school systems. The problem is the funding needed and the volunteers that are required to make the program work. On the funding end, she has filed a 501(c)3 application with the IRS so that donations to HOPE will become a tax exempt organization. She is counting on Optimist Clubs in these areas to assist, especially in the oratorical skills.

Question and Answer Session

- Q.** Alberto Duarte asked about the costs for the program.
- A.** In Madison County last year, the system-wide costs were: Year 1: \$30,000; Year 2: \$25,000; and Year 3: \$25,000. The high cost items are those for transportation and for paying teachers.
- Q.** Duane Plank asked if she had met with the Superintendent of Madison County Schools and his assistant.
- A.** Yes, she had, and they are very interested and supportive; however, the County is strapped for funds.
- Q.** Al Renz asked who put up the money necessary for filing the 501(c)3 application.
- A.** Ms. Parker said she paid the \$175 State fee, the \$400 IRS fee, and is paying the several hundreds of dollars for all the legal work not donated out of her own pocket.
- Q.** Jim Berry asked about the location of “poverty pockets” in Madison County.
- A.** All of the Title I schools fall into this category. Title I schools are Sparkman Middle School, Madison Crossroads, Hazel Green, Walnut Grove, New Market, New Hope and Owens Crossroads.

Closing

President Al gave a tile with the Optimist to Ms. Parker, who said she didn't have one, and asked her to draw for our attendance prize. **George McDonough** won on the first drawing.

Dr. Carl Winkler led us in the reciting the Optimist Creed.

Clyde Nevins

Optimistic Quote of the Week

“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope or confidence.”

~ Helen Keller

- PHOTOS -



Our Speaker, Libby Parker



New Member Rebecca Bill

CALENDAR

- 9/1 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank – Whitesburg Dr.
Board Meeting
- 9/3 Thursday 6:00 pm TBD
TBD –
- 9/10 Thursday
NO MEETING – Replaced by Club Picnic on Saturday
- 9/12 Saturday 3:00 pm - Ford’s Chapel, 280 Ford Chapel DR, Harvest, AL
Annual Club Picnic
- 9/17 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting - Food – (Andrew Driver)
- 9/24 Thursday 6:30 pm Optimist Recreation Center
Installation Banquet
Special Guest – Governor Tolanda Beal
- 10/1 Thursday 6:00 pm TBD
TBD –
- 10/6 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank – Whitesburg Dr.
Board Meeting
- 10/8 Thursday 11:45 am Mullin’s Restaurant
TBD –

THE OPTIMIST CREED

Promise Yourself -

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.

To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true

To think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

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

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

To 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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PLACE
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TO: