



## **PRESIDENT**

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## **SECRETARY TREASURER**

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**Club meets**

**1<sup>st</sup> Thursday**

**At 6:00 pm**

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

**At 11:45 am**

**88 Buffet**

# Opti - Topics

## **Today's Meeting at 88 Buffet Restaurant**

Thanks to Gay Pepper, we had a place to meet today. Mullins Restaurant closed without notice to us, and President Al Adams didn't learn of it until Sunday night after he returned from the District Meeting at Orange Beach. He called Gay, and she arranged for us to meet at the 88 Buffet. As usual, the food was plentiful, tasty, and oh so tempting, and our server did a fine job of keeping our drinks topped off.

All of our banners, badges, and audio/visual equipment are still behind the locked doors of Mullins, so we made do without them. President Al has left a note on the door asking the owners to please contact us and make arrangements to get our stuff back.

There were 14 Club members in attendance and two guests. Our guests were George Reynolds, guest of Jim Berry, and Tom Howell, guest of the Club. It was good to have Buddy Beck with us today.

## **Opening**

President Al Adams asked Rev. Jim Berry to bring the opening prayer. We didn't have a flag, today, but that didn't prevent us from reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Optimist Family News**



Tom Casteel reported he had talked with **Duane Plank**, and learned that Duane had taken a bad fall while he is recovering from his hip surgery. Duane had fallen backwards while negotiating some stairs and ended up breaking a bone in his back. This required surgery, and Duane said he is now pain free.

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

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## **NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

#### **Clyde Nevins**

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## **Announcements**

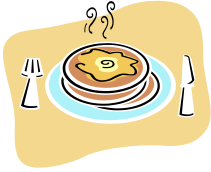


President Al and Tom Casteel attended the **AL-MS District meeting in Orange Beach on January 22, 23 & 24.** They reported that the temperature there reached a not-so-balmy 17 degrees with the wind chill. They said the further south they drove the colder it got. The good news was that it wasn't raining there, so they didn't have the ice and snow that we had "up north."

**Our Club did quite well in picking up awards at the District Meeting.** Past District Governor Tom Howell was at our meeting today to pass out the major ones, and Al Adams displayed some of the others. Here's a run-down of our awards presented by Governor Tom Howell:

- ❖ Our Club received the Distinguished Club award. We were also in second place in A & A points for the entire district.
- ❖ Tom Casteel received Builder of Excellence Award for his participation in starting a new Optimist Club in Gulfport, MS.
- ❖ President Al Adams received an award (a framed certificate plus a special Optimist wrist watch) as Distinguished President.
- ❖ Secretary/Treasurer Al Renz received similar awards as Distinguished Secretary/Treasurer.
- ❖ Two of our members received PGI recognition. Tom Casteel received an award for achieving level 10 (the highest level), and Al Renz received an award for achieving level 7. Both Tom and Al are also named in the Winter issue of *The Optimist* magazine, two of only 8 receiving recognition in all of OI. Check it out on page 5 of your copy.
- ❖ Our Club/s bulletin, Opti-Topics, was awarded first place in the District. We received a patch for this for our awards banner.

Governor Tom Howell said it was a privilege to be able to present these awards in person. Tom said, "Thank you for the great work last year."



Keep selling those tickets to the Club's **Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, February 6**. That's only one week from this coming Saturday! Tickets are \$5.00 each, and you are on the hook for selling (or buying) all 10 that Alberto has given to you;



## Dime-A-Day

Tom Casteel, needs only one more of you to **sign up for the Dime-A-Day program** so he can meet his quota of 10. Give (or mail) your check for \$36.50 to Tom. Make your check out to Optimist International Foundation, and put "Dime-A-Day" on the notation line. **Your contribution will be tax deductible.**

## Program



Program Chairman Richie Myers introduced our speaker for the day, Ms. Pam Clasgens, Development Director for Heals, Inc. Ms. Clasgens began by saying it was great to be with us and share in seeing the honors our Club from the District Meeting. She congratulated the individual winners and our Club for the awards received.

Ms. Clasgens next asked if our Club had anything to do with JOOI Clubs. On learning our sponsorship of the several clubs, she related that her daughter was president of the JOOI Club we sponsored at Whitesburg Jr. High School when she was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She said her daughter benefited a lot from the opportunity to be a leader, and it was a stepping stone to further achievements later on.

HEALS, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in Huntsville, Alabama dedicated to providing accessible quality, school-based primary health care for children through collaborative efforts with the Huntsville City/Madison County school systems and the medical community. They serve low-income children from birth to age 19 who need medical, dental or vision care. They have clinics in several Title I elementary schools in Huntsville and Madison County, and over 2,000 kids per year benefit from HEALS care. This care includes an annual physical, and the program has added giving a pair of sneakers for every kid when they get their annual physical. She said, "What's great about the program is that the doctors and nurses have the time to develop a personal relationship with the kids getting care, and usually know them by name."

Ms. Clasgens shared two "show and tell" stories to illustrate HEALS care. For the first story she showed a pair of ragged sneakers worn by girl whose feet obviously needed a larger size. She was given a new pair that fit her. Similarly, a young boy at Morris Elementary was identified as needing new socks as well as new shoes. She showed the pair of socks—they were extremely dirty and did not match. He was embarrassed to show his socks, but elated to get a new pair to wear to school

She next told was about a 14-year old boy at Madison Cross Roads School who received a dental checkup after not having one for seven years. The panoramic X-ray taken as part of the exam showed a cyst in his jaw bone that he was unaware of (no pain or other symptoms). Because this condition was caught early, HEALS was able to arrange surgery at UAB that removed the cyst and prevented serious damage later in his life.

### **Question and Answer Session**

- Q.** Clyde Nevins asked if there were plans to expand the number of HEALS clinics.
- A.** Yes, there are two more clinics planned in the next year or so (depending on how soon funding is available). One is at Lincoln Village, the private elementary school in the former Lincoln Elementary School. The other is at the Madison County Elementary School at Gurley. Also, it is planned to move the dental clinic at Martin Luther King Elementary School from the portable building in the parking lot to a remodeled area inside the building where the medical clinic is already located.
- Q.** Buddy Beck asked if volunteers are used and/or needed.
- A.** Generally not for the day-to-day operation of the clinics. However, there is frequently need for manual labor to paint and/or repair the clinic facilities.
- Q.** Jim Berry asked when the clinics are open.
- A.** The clinics generally follow the school calendar for the school in which they are located. However, a couple of clinics are open during the summer, and there is a reduced schedule of openings during holidays.
- Q.** Jesse Lang asked where the funding for HEALS comes from.
- A.** There are three primary sources: (1) 25 % from Medicare reimbursement, (2) 25 % from fundraisers and donations, and (3) 50 % from grants. Applying for grants goes on throughout the year.

### **Closing**

President Al gave presented our speaker a tile with the Optimist Creed on it, and a check for \$2,500 Mrs. Clasgens drew the name of the winner of our attendance prize: George McDonough. George said it was the first honest drawing he'd witnessed.

A pair of Toms: Tom Casteel and Tom Howell, led the Club in reciting the Optimist Creed to close the meeting.

*Clyde Nevins*

## Optimistic Quote of the Week

**“It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.”**

*~Mahatma Gandhi*

## CALENDAR

- 2/2      Tuesday 4:00 pm  
1st Commercial Bank – Whitesburg Dr.  
**Board Meeting**
- 2/4      Thursday 6:00 pm      88 Buffet  
**George Reynolds – Aikido Martial Arts Instructor**
- 2/11      Thursday 11:45 am      88 Buffet  
**Kelly Ballard – JOOI Clubs**
- 2/18      Thursday 11:45 am  
Optimist Recreation Center  
**Business Meeting - Food –  
(Jim Berry)**
- 2/25      Thursday 11:45 am      88 Buffet  
**Karen Ouriel Mockensturm – Executive Director of Fantasy  
Playhouse Children's Theater and Academy**



**The Patch Awarded to Our Club Bulletin, OPTI-Topics**

**Congratulations Clyde**





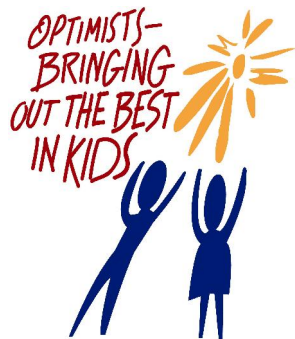
**Governor Tom Howell Presents  
Al Adams the Distinguished  
President Award and Watch.**



**Governor Tom Howell Presents  
Al Renz the Distinguished  
Secretary-Treasurer Watch**



**Governor Tom Howell Presents  
Tom Casteel the Builder of  
Excellence Award**



**Huntsville Optimist Club**  
P, O, Box 2230  
Huntsville, AL 35804-2230

**TO:**

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

## **THE OPTIMIST CREED**

**P**romise 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