



Opti - Topics

Bulletin of the Optimist Club of Huntsville

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A fine turnout of 20 Optimists, one guest, and our speaker attended today's meeting, nicely matching our guarantee of 22 meals to the Downtown Holiday Inn. It was good to see Matt Hancock, Sidney Sandridge, and Alfred Adams at the meeting.

Opening

Club Chaplain Sidney Sandridge gave the opening prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. John Shirey introduced his guest, Joseph Hill, an employee of Regions Bank. President Tom Casteel announced that he has accumulated an impressive amount of school supplies for Morris Elementary, but more are still needed and will be accepted until school starts. He also announced that he is now the grandfather of a girl after the first seven were all boys. His daughter-in-law in Ottawa, Canada, gave birth a week ago.

Tom read a letter from Heals Clinic that thanked the club for our donation to their work. In the letter, Club members were invited to arrange a visit with them and see our money at work. The letter was signed by all members of the Board of Directors for Heals, including our own Matt Hancock.

Program

Duane Plank introduced today's speaker, Dr. David Copeland, Chairman of the Madison County School system. Dr. Copeland was born in Birmingham, but spent his 30-year career in education in the state of Missouri. He was an Optimist club member while in Missouri. Dr. Copeland replaced Dr. Terry Davis on March 1, 2012.

Dr. Copeland related about his tumultuous first 3 days in his new position. One day after assuming his duties, the

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March 2 tornados struck in the county, and he saw the tornado, in person, while driving near Lynn Fanning Elementary School. He learned Buckhorn High School had been damaged, but had to seek help in finding his way to the school. The next day he was on the way to Birmingham to attend see Hazel Green High School play in the championship basketball game when he learned that he had become the grandfather of a baby girl, his first granddaughter.

Dr. Copeland raved about the quality of the schools in Madison County and recounted the several national awards that they have either won, or are in the finals for selection. He said this success is mostly due to the fine leadership of his predecessor, Dr. Davis. Currently, there are 65 people in the Central Office, about 1,500 teachers, and about 2,500 support staff. Madison County has been recognized as the most efficient district in the State of Alabama; i. e., the county does more with less money.

Regarding the future, Dr. Copeland stated that he wants to bring new technology into the class room, like laptops and iPads, but wants to design a curriculum to make the most effective use of them. He said that kids these days are sharp on technology, and new methods are needed. In any case, he believes books will still be around. He also wants to start a meaningful apprentice program, in partnership with large corporations like Toyota, to train kids who are not going to attend a 4-year college. The program would train kids in the specific skills needed by industry, and would ensure them a job offer upon completion. His idea is to make schools a place that kids want to be at, thereby reducing the drop-out rate.

Madison County has \$22 million to spend, and Dr. Copeland has made his recommendation to the School Board on how to spend it. His recommendation is to expand the Sparkman High School campus by rerouting road that now bisects it. In the new area that would become available he wants to add a Fine Arts Center, Laboratories, and an ROTC facility, costing about \$12 million to \$14 million. The remainder of the funds would be used to renovate elementary schools.

In response to a question, Dr. Copeland said that for every teaching job open there is an average of 270

applications, and for every administrative opening there is an average of 68 applications.

Closing

John Shirey's name was the first one drawn, and he was there to take home the attendance prize. John claimed it was only justice since he had brought a guest. Dr. Carl Winkler led the recitation of the Optimist Creed to close the meeting.

Don't Forget: WE NEED MORE MEMBERS! Invite someone to our August 2nd meeting.

Clyde Nevins

Optimistic Quote of the Week

"Teaching is the greatest act of optimism"

~ Colleen Wilcox

CALENDAR

8/2 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

TBD - Fabiani Duarte

8/7 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank

Board Meeting

8/9 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

Dr. Harry Hobbs - Huntsville Police Department

8/16 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center

Business Meeting - Food - (Fabiani Duarte)

8/23 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

TBD - Fabiani Duarte

8/30 **5TH THURSDAY - NO MEETING**

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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TO: