



Opti - Topics

Bulletin of the Optimist Club of Huntsville

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Opening

Twenty Optimists, four guests, and our two speakers gathered at the Downtown Holiday Inn for today's meeting. It was good to see Charlie Ross, one of our Friend of Optimist members, in attendance. Martha Pullen was also hosting a meeting today, so we ate from the buffet counters. In addition to other deserts, a giant cake was on the desert table in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Holiday Inns.

President Tom Casteel called on Clyde Nevins to give the invocation, and Alberto Duarte to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Alberto introduced his guest, Ray Jones, a long-time civic leader in Huntsville. Fabiani introduced his guest, Anna Morgan, who has joined Still Serving Veterans to replace Fabiani in November. George McDonough introduced two guests, his daughter Kathy Anderson, and his son Dan McDonough. Kathy works for the Missile Defense Agency, and Dan is a psychiatrist.

Program

Fabiani Duarte, this month's program chairman, introduced today's speakers: Dr. Otha Solomon, President, and Tami Tubell, Secretary, of Tennessee Valley Ambucs. Dr. Solomon gave a brief history of Ambucs, formerly known as American Business Clubs. The organization was started in Birmingham in 1914 and is now in 28 states with 5,000 volunteers. The mission of Ambucs is "Creating Mobility and Independence for People with Disabilities."

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Dr. Solomon showed a 9 minute video showing how people, especially children, who suffer from spinal bifida, cerebral palsy, autism, or Down's syndrome are able to enjoy riding their "bikes" just like regular kids. The bikes provide them mobility and give them increased aerobic capacity in a way they thoroughly enjoy. Hand-powered, foot-powered, and hand/foot powered models are available. Adults sizes are also available and are being provided to veterans and others with disabilities. Several models of the 20 different bikes available were on hand for Optimists to inspect.

The Tennessee Valley chapter of Ambucs is 2 ½ years old, and in that time has distributed 150 bikes at little or no cost. Small bikes average cost is \$333, the most expensive bike costs about \$1,100, and the average for all bikes is about \$750. Since most families with children with disabilities are already cash-strapped, Ambucs generally provides the bikes at no cost. Currently there are 49 people on the "wish list" waiting for the funding needed to order the bikes for them. Bikes are generally delivered within 2 weeks, but must be assembled and adjusted to fit the recipient by volunteers.

Ms. Tubell also spoke, and enumerated some other programs Ambucs participates in, as partners: Miss Wheelchair Alabama, Still Serving Veterans, and a program to provide scholarships for physical therapists.

Optimists were invited to visit their web site, www.huntsvilleambucs.org, for more information.

Announcements

President Tom Casteel reported that he had received more school supplies for Morris Elementary School from Optimists, today. More are still needed, and will be accepted up until school starts in about two weeks.

Duane Plank announced that he had spoken to Dr. Copeland, and invited him to join our Club. Dr. Copeland told Duane he liked what our Club is doing, and he plans to join once the schools are open and running smoothly. In the process Dr. Copeland told Duane that his daughter's house had burned down as a result of a spark from a cook-out.

Fabiani Duarte reported that he and President Tom had attended the Youth Services Council meeting. The most important item resulting from the meeting is that there are training programs planned for Optimists who are sponsors of our JOOI Clubs. Also, a similar training session is planned for 30 Teach-For-America teachers who will be working in our schools this year, and for the veterans who will mentor in the schools. The training will center on selecting service projects from the GenerationOn and carrying them out. By agreement with the Huntsville City Schools, there are 16 schools targeted to take part.

Closing

Dr. Solomon drew George McDonough's name on the first draw. This is the second week in a row that an Optimist who has brought a guest (or two) has won the attendance prize. I see a trend, here. Carl Winkler led in the recitation of the Optimist Creed to close the meeting.

Don't Forget: WE NEED MORE MEMBERS!

Invite someone to our August 9th meeting.

Clyde Nevins

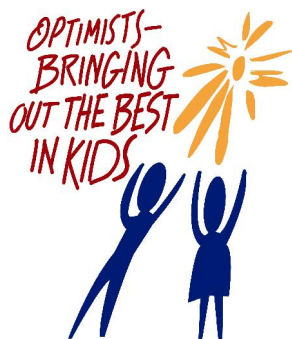
Optimistic Quote of the Week

"A true friend knows your weaknesses but shows you your strengths; feels your fears but fortifies your faith; sees your anxieties but frees your spirit; recognizes your disabilities but emphasizes your possibilities."

~William Arthur Ward

CALENDAR

- 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
Fran Fuhler, Manna House
- 8/30 **5TH THURSDAY - NO MEETING**
- 9/4 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank
Board Meeting
- 9/6 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn
Dr. Casey Wardynski - Huntsville City Schools
- 9/13 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn
TBD - Jim Roe
- 9/20 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting - Food – (Jim Roe)
- 9/27 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn
TBD - Jim Roe



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TO:

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