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Club meets
1st, 2nd, & 4th Thursdays
At 11:45 am
Downtown Holiday Inn
Huntsville, AL

Opti - Topics

Nineteen Optimists and our speaker assembled at the Downtown Holiday Inn, today. We had no prospective members as guests, and we paid for five uneaten meals. For those who came, we had a surprise for desert: ice cream (scoops of chocolate, strawberry and vanilla).

Opening

President Tom Casteel was reported to be spoiling his grandchildren today, so President-elect George McDonough presided. He asked Rev. Jim Berry to give the invocation, and Zach Thompson led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. George said he was doubly honored to have the new Royal Baby named after him, and that Pope Francis's birth name was also George.

Treasurer Al Renz passed around copies of a letter received from Jeff Klimek, who is still incarcerated. The gist of the letter was that he misses the fellowship of the Club, and he hopes the Club would accept his apology for breaking the trust we had in him. He vowed to do everything in his power to repay the money he took once he is released.

Announcements



George reminded Club members to sign up for the many vacancies in the Club's various committees for next year. He especially encouraged our newer members to sign on so they may be mentored by an "old hand" and be ready for a committee leadership role in the future. "Our Club will thrive on the backs of its new members," he said.

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

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No one from the Picnic Committee attended today's meeting, but George reminded everyone who plans to attend the picnic to notify Gay Pepper by e-mail or phone call of their planned attendance. Also, everyone who attends is to bring a covered dish to complement the meat and drinks to be provided by the Club. Family members, especially grandchildren are invited, too. Joe Pullen, who has some health issues, has indicated he would attend the picnic if someone could pick him up.



George also reminded the Club of the drive for school supplies for Morris Elementary School, where we have JOOI Club. He said we did an outstanding job last year; we "did ourselves proud." The supplies donated nearly filled two vehicles when they were delivered, and the pupils at Morris Elementary really appreciated them. Bring them to any meeting (or the picnic).

Alberto Duarte said he had a personal "commercial." He will be teaching Spanish at the First Baptist Church beginning August 28. There are no restrictions on age or proficiency, and the classes are free. They will be held on Wednesdays from 5 p. m to 6 p. m. or from 6 p. m. to 7 p. m.

Fabiani Duarte had his own "commercial," as well. He invited Club members to hear him preach a sermon at the First Baptist Church at 5 p. m. in the new addition of the First Baptist Church in Huntsville. He is considering practicing his sermon at the picnic, perhaps in a shortened version.

**Don't Forget: WE NEED MORE MEMBERS!
Invite someone to our August 1st Picnic.**

Program



Program Chairman Duane Plank introduced our speaker, and former Optimist member (in Missouri), Dr. David Copeland, Madison County School Superintendent. In his introduction, Duane related that Dr. Copeland's wife, Brenda, suffers from a rare lung disease, and he asked for prayers for her.

Dr. Copeland thanked the Club for having him back, and began his talk by elaborating on his wife's condition. Doctors had given her only 24 months to live some six months ago, but she is amazing doctors by showing improvement instead of decline. He said he believes that God can heal her, and reiterated the need for prayer for her. He is leaving on a vacation trip to Miami, Florida with her shortly, his first vacation in 10 years.

Dr. Copeland began by saying Madison County is a great place to live. He has been told by an out-of-state consultant that the Huntsville/Madison County area is "well known to be the only place in America that is growing at this time." He then recited a few statistics about the Madison County School System: There are over 20,000 students in the system, of which 11,000 are transported over 12,000 miles to their schools using 218 buses. The system has 2,400 employees, whom he considers its greatest resource.

He said he has several passions for the County Schools. One is to build a thriving "Career Technology" program for those who do not choose to attend college. These programs are not necessarily for the "dumb" students, either, since these days most use high technology in their performance. The system has had engineering and auto mechanics, and will add new ones in: law/public safety (in cooperation with local law-enforcement agencies), emergency medical technicians, culinary arts, and building construction. He also has a passion for the special needs kids, and the County is providing quality programs for them.

Dr. Copeland outlined the future building projects in the county. Madison County Elementary School in Gurley will get a new academic wing to replace the antiquated school buildings, some built in 1929. There will also be a new school for Lynn Fanning Elementary School near Meridianville, and there are plans for a new high school in Monrovia, a 3-year undertaking.

He cited the excellence of Walnut Grove Elementary School near New Market. This school is a National Blue Ribbon School, one of only four in Alabama. This is a small, Title I school, having about 200 students, and they scored extremely high in

state tests. They are competing to represent Alabama in Washington, D. C., and he said if academics are a large factor, they are likely to win.

On a more somber issue, Dr. Copeland said that they have held Alert Training to train school administrators in how to deal with an active shooter in the school. The training includes simulations.

There are some pilot programs in the County to use computers in the classrooms. Some high schools are trying a BYOD (bring your own device), but many students do not have a device to bring.

Dr. Copeland closed his talk by saying he had not ruled out joining our Club in the future (Duane Plank has been after him). His wife's health and the rigors of his job prevent that for the present. He said he fondly remembers dipping corn dogs at an Optimist booth in Missouri. He appreciates being at our meeting. He very much agrees with our motto: Do what's best for kids.

In response to a question, Dr. Copeland says he is generally in favor of the controversial "Common Core" curriculum, now being adopted by 44 states and the District of Columbia. He has personally reviewed the text books, and finds their academic standards rigorous. He also likes the advantage to students who are forced to move to a different state, since they will study the same material in the new state as the one they left. However, he stated that Alabama has done very well on its own. He does not see any evidence that the Federal Government will foster controversial moral values or collect data on individual students, at least in the Mathematics and Reading texts.

Closing

Dr. Copeland nearly wore blisters on his fingers drawing a winner for our attendance prize today. Sidney Sandridge, Don Holder, Nate Showers, and Guy Kubic all missed out. Jim Berry's name was ultimately drawn

Clyde Nevins

Optimistic Quote of the Week

“Consider the postage stamp: its usefulness consists in the ability to stick to one thing till it gets there.”

~Josh Billings

CALENDAR

8/1 Thursday **No Meeting (Annual Picnic Saturday)**

8/3 Saturday 2:00 pm Ford's Chapel Pavilion

Annual Picnic

8/6 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank

Board Meeting

8/8 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

**Deborah Thomas – Senior Systems Engineer
Raytheon Missile Systems**

8/15 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank

Board Meeting

8/22 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

**Chris Crumbly – Manager, Advanced Development Office
Space Launch System, NASA**

8/29 Thursday **No Meeting (5th Thursday)**

9/5 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

TBD – George McDonough

9/12 Thursday 11:45 am Downtown Holiday Inn

TBD – George McDonough

Supplies Needed For Morris Elementary

If you watch the ads you will find Back to School Bargains. Those of you that wish to make a cash donation toward this project, Tom will be making a bulk purchase from Amazon on August 7th.

Sharpened #2 pencils - regular size (yellow)

Crayola Crayons - regular size (24)

Crayola Washable Markers

Crayola Colored Pencils

Dry Erase Markers (Fine Point)

Blunt Fiskar Scissors

Glue sticks

Roll Scotch Tape (No Dispenser)

Box of Kleenex

Reams of White Printer Paper

70-sheet spiral notebook (wide-ruled)

Composition Notebooks (Black & White)

Package of Pencil Erasers (House Top)

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: