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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 Place



The Optimist Club of Huntsville met at the ORC today, pending the finding of a Huntsville restaurant that is compatible with our Club's needs. Gay Pepper arranged for us to have an assortment of pasta dishes, salad, bread sticks and brownies, plus drinks from Nothing but Noodles.

NOTE: Mullins Restaurant has reopened, and a delegation from the Club visited the restaurant immediately after our meeting. They won't be ready for us until July. All of our meetings in June will be at the Optimist Recreational Center. We will meet at Mullins on July 9th.

Opening

Fourteen Optimists were in attendance today. Alberto Duarte offered the opening prayer, and President Al Adams led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements



President Al Adams announced that the Club's Board of Directors had voted to continue to **sell pecans** as a fund raiser this fall. Every member will be expected to sell 10 bags as a minimum. If you want more, there will be a sign-up sheet at next week's meeting for you to indicate how many more you want.

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

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Clyde Nevins

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The Club will participate in the **Huntsville Health and Wellness Fair** to be held on the Alabama A & M campus on October 3. The fair is sponsored by 100 Black Men of Huntsville. We will have a booth promoting our Club as well as the OI initiative to fight childhood cancer.

Richie Myers brought 2 more jalapeno pepper plants he had grown from seed to give away at the meeting.

Program



Program Chairman Duane Plank introduced our two guests from the Madison County School System. First introduced was Mr. John Southerland, Director of Development and Communications, and then our speaker, Mr. Matt Massey, Superintendent.

Mr. Massey began his talk by saying that he was very appreciative of the programs that the Optimist Club of Huntsville had for youth in the county. He singled out our Band Instrument Program, which provides arts education to many county students, and OI's childhood cancer initiative. He said he was especially appreciative of the childhood cancer program because one of his three children was diagnosed with a cancer that affected both of his eyes (at only 7 months in age). He related the monthly trips taken to Philadelphia, PA, for treatment; first hoping to save the boy's life, then hoping to save his eyes, and finally, hoping to save his vision. He said that his son is now cancer free, and though his vision is limited, he can read large print.

Mr. Massey told us that Alabama is one of only three states that allow the superintendent of schools to be elected. About half of the counties in Alabama elect their superintendent. He assumed office on January 1 of this year, and did some restructuring of the administrative offices.

One of the new jobs added was the Director of Communications and Public Relations, for which he hired John Southerland in March. Mr. Southerland is the point of contact for the kinds of opportunities our Club provides to the County schools.

Mr. Massey gave us an overview of the difference in funding for the City's school system and the County's school system, which are approximately the same size. The County has only its share of the county taxes for revenue, while the City has its own taxes plus its share of the county taxes. This results in the County operating its system with \$50 Million less than the City each year. In addition the City has a mayor and a city council that provide a "support team" that is lacking in the County.

The County is building two totally new schools which will be additional expense to the system. Huntsville's two new schools each combined two schools into one, resulting in a much more efficient system. One County school was closed, the Career Tech Center, with the various programs it offered assigned arbitrarily to various high schools in the County. As a result, the tech program mostly disappeared as teachers retired and principals gave preference to STEM classes. He hopes to consolidate the tech programs into a career tech center next year.

Despite the tight funding, Mr. Massey said the County is doing quite well. This is because "our people are fantastic." He related how the County in competition within the 8 districts had the outstanding teacher in both the elementary and secondary schools. The system also had 2 of the top 6 programs in digital instruction in the classroom. He reported that the current state budget will enable 10 County schools to add a Pre-K program next year.

In conclusion, Mr. Massey said he very much wants good communication between clubs such as ours and Mr. Southerland. He wants to take full advantage of the programs we offer at little or no cost to the system. He asked for questions.

Question and Answer Session

- Q.** Carl Winkler asked if Madison was the fastest growing city in Alabama.
- A.** Madison is a close second to Opelika.

- Q.** Jesse Lang asked if charter schools would drain funding from the County school system.
- A.** Yes. Each student lost to a charter school would result in losing about \$8,000 in funding.
- Q.** Jesse Lang asked what Mr. Massey thought about the “Tebow Rule” that allows home schooled students to compete in the school system’s athletic contests.
- A.** Whether the Tebow Rule is to be adopted is being taken up by the State Legislature.
- Q.** Clyde Nevins asked what would be the best way to get either a teacher or a counselor to spearhead one of our Club’s programs in a County school.
- A.** One of the functions of Mr. Southerland will be to promote such programs. When he has the information, he will ask the principals to include them in their schools.
- Q.** Al Renz asked if the County schools required community service of their students, as do the City schools.
- A.** Yes, the County requires all seniors to have a community service project prior to graduation.
- Q.** Alberto Duarte asked if foreign language instruction could be introduced into elementary schools, since young brains learn a new language much faster than older ones.
- A.** This could very well be included in the after-school programs being offered at elementary schools between the hours of 2:30 p. m. and 3:15 p. m. If a volunteer teacher could be found to start language instruction, it would be a good addition to other types of clubs already formed.

Closing

In conclusion, Mr. Massey invited representatives of our Club to arrange a visit to any school or classroom to promote any of our youth programs. He also agreed to meet with President Al Adams prior to his meeting with the school principals in July in order to be familiar with each of the programs. He reiterated that Mr. Southerland will be the point man for future interaction with our Club.

President Al Adams gave our speaker a tile with the Optimist creed. Mr. Massey drew Sidney Sandridge's name on the first draw. The next draw was our winner, Gay Pepper (see photo).

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

Clyde Nevins

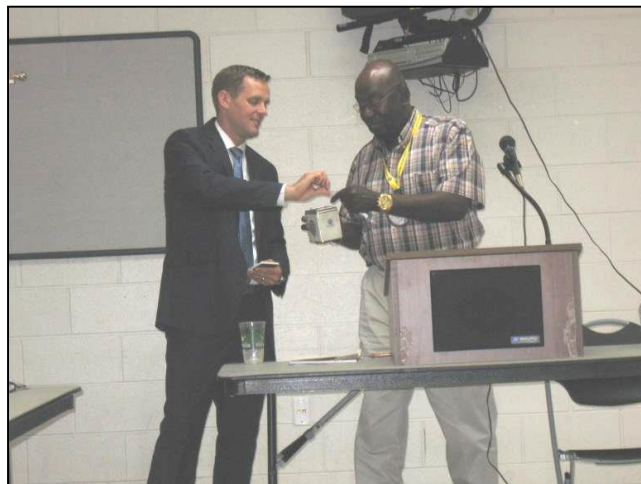
Optimistic Quote of the Week

“Optimism is essential to achievement and it is also the foundation of courage and true progress.”

~Nicholas M. Butler



John Southerland, Matt Massey and Tom Casteel chat before the meeting



Mr. Massey drawing our attendance prize winner's name: Gay Pepper

CALENDAR

- 6/11 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center
Sheriff Blake Dorning
- 6/18 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting - Food – (Duane Plank)
- 6/25 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center
Dr. Andrea Batt – Physical Therapist
- 7/2 Thursday
NO MEETING - Independence Day Holiday
- 7/7 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank – Whitesburg Dr.
Board Meeting
- 7/9 Thursday 11:45 am Mullins Restaurant
TBD – Jim Roe
- 7/16 Thursday 11:45 am TBD
Business Meeting - Food – (Duane Plank)
- 7/23 Thursday 11:45 am TBD
TBD – Jim Roe
- 7/30 Thursday
NO MEETING - 5th Thursday
- 8/2 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank – Whitesburg Dr.
Board Meeting
- 8/6 Thursday 11:45 am TBD
TBD – Tom Casteel
- 8/13 Thursday 11:45 am TBD
TBD – Tom Casteel

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
STAMP
HERE

TO: