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Club meets

1st Thursday

At 6:00 pm

2nd, & 4th Thursdays

At 11:45 am

Mullins Restaurant

Opti - Topics

Tonight's Meeting Mullins Restaurant

In contrast to our recent evening meetings, there was a sparse turnout of only 12 Optimists tonight. Some of our members are out of town, and it was a cold evening for some to venture out. We did have one guest, Marlene Renz. It was good to see Willie Brunetti with us.

Opening

President Al Adams asked Rev. Jim Berry to bring the opening prayer and lead the Club in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Optimist Family News

Tom Casteel is no longer "Silent Tom." His voice was nearly back to normal tonight. Tom said he still had a little pain, but his recovery from his series of radiation treatments on his vocal cords is progressing nicely.



President Al reminded everyone that tonight was supposed to be the final night to **pay for your pecans** from our Pecan Sale. If you haven't paid for your allotment, Al asks that you do promptly.



This month is the first month that our Club has participated in the award of the **Star 99.1 Young Citizen of the Month Award**. The winner, a young man named Peter Schmitz, was to receive his award at the beginning of tonight's City Council Meeting.

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

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Since this conflicted with our meeting, our gift card of \$25.00 was given in our name by Kenny Anderson from the City's Multicultural Affairs Office.



Don't forget! Our Club's **Christmas Party** replaces our regular Thursday meeting next week. The party will be **at the Cooper House, Tuesday, December 8 at 6:00 p. m.**

If you care to participate in the "Dirty Santa" gift exchange bring a wrapped or bagged gift costing no more than \$10.00.

President Al asked me to report that **everyone who receives this bulletin**, including former members and widows of members, **is more than welcome to attend the Christmas party**. If you need a ride to the party, call Al and he will arrange for someone to pick you up.



In the next couple of weeks the schools at which we have band instruments will be holding their **Christmas Concerts**. If you can attend one or more of them you will see first hand how our Band Instrument Program is benefiting kids. Here's the known schedule for upcoming concerts:



Huntsville Middle School will hold their band concert at Grissom High School on **Sunday afternoon, Dec. 13 at 2:00 p.m.**



Westlawn Middle School will hold their Christmas concert on **Monday, December 14 at 6:30 p. m.** in the school's gymnasium.



McNair Junior High School's concert is on **Tuesday, December 15 at 6:30 p. m.** in the school's gymnasium.

Program



Our program tonight was brought by **Ms. Cassie Watson Scott, Executive Director of Christmas Charities Year Round.** Ms. Scott is a native of Madison County and graduated from Buckhorn High School. She has been the Executive Director of CCYR since March of this year. She said she has always been interested in nonprofit organizations that help people, and she loves her job. CCYR is in its 66th year of operation. Interestingly, it was started because of farm families that were forced into poverty by the boll weevil. There are three full-time and three part-time employees. They are a participating organization with United Way.

Ms. Scott said she had no idea of how many needy families there are in Huntsville and Madison County. There are over 5,000 local families that need services such as those provided by CCYR. There is a large gap between the “haves” and the “have-nots.” Her organization provided over 97,000 items of clothing to families in the last 6 months, for example.

Ms. Scott said that of all the programs at CCYR, her favorite is the Mobile Closet Program. She said the Mobile Closet is “like my second child.” This program takes truckloads of clothing, school supplies and hygiene products directly to the schools. There, all kids who have a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian can get the items they need. Ms. Scott related that when they went to University Place School this year they were not expecting more than 40 kids to participate in the program, but 150 kids asked for help.

With a choked voice and teary eyes, Ms. Scott told of a little girl at the school who was given a toothbrush. Upon receiving it, the little girl asked, “Is this just mine?” and “Do I have to Share?” Subsequently, Ms. Scott learned that the girl had four siblings plus two parents, and all of them were using a single toothbrush. Of course she sent the little girl home with seven toothbrushes. She said since then she never brushes her teeth without thinking of that little girl.

What most people think of when CCYR is mentioned is their distribution of toys and food baskets at Christmas. They of course will be doing that again this year, and expect to help 1,500 families have a merry Christmas. They will have a “Can-a-thon” in conjunction with WAFF this Friday in support of this program. If you get this newsletter in time and want to help, you can deliver your cans to the Redstone Federal Credit Union on Wynn Drive. They will also be open all day on Dec. 23 for walk-ins to pick up clothes and toys.

Christmas Charities Year Round participates in the 211 telephone program (new to me, and I bet to you, too). Anyone, no matter where in the U. S., can call 211 and report a family in need in Huntsville or Madison County. This need will be met by one of the participating non-profits in Huntsville.

Yes, CCYR takes donations! They take just about anything, no matter how dirty or battered. They have outlets for scrap metal and for rags that can be recycled. Of course, toys in good condition, non-perishable food items and clothing are always welcome.

In closing, Ms. Scott says that volunteers are more than welcome to pitch in on the preparations for providing Christmas toys, clothes and food baskets to needy families. (Our Club has done that in the past, but needs a volunteer to head a committee to do it again). Also, we are welcome to just observe a Mobile Closet program in action.

Ms. Scott thanked the Club for our continued financial support of CCYR. She said they do not take for granted those organizations that partner with them, and they use every cent as wisely as possible. She said, "We are to be blessed and be a blessing."

Closing

President Al gave presented speaker a check as part of our Community Service Grants. He also gave Ms. Scott a tile with the Optimist Creed on it, and asked her to draw a name for our attendance prize. Bill Clarke and Alex Chu missed out before Vastell Williams took home (half) the money.

Dr. Carl Winkler wasn't able to attend the meeting tonight, so Al Adams led the Club in reciting the Optimist Creed to close the meeting.

Clyde Nevins

Optimistic Quote of the Week

"Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmas-time."

~Laura Ingalls

CALENDAR

12/8 Tuesday 6:00 pm **Christmas Party**

Cooper House

12/10 Thursday

NO MEETING – REPLACED by CHRISTMAS PARTY

12/17 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center

Business Meeting - Food – (Gay Pepper)

12/24 Thursday

NO MEETING – CHRISTMAS

12/31 Thursday

NO MEETING – 5th THURSDAY / NEWS YEARS

**New Year
2016**

1/5 Tuesday 4:00 pm 1st Commercial Bank – Whitesburg Dr.

Board Meeting

1/7 Thursday 6:00 pm Mullin's Restaurant

TBD – Richie Myers

1/14 Thursday 11:45 am Mullin's Restaurant

Michelle Reavis and Kim Davis – Steady for Life

1/21 Thursday 11:45 am Optimist Recreation Center

Business Meeting - Food – (Richie Myers)

1/28 Thursday 11:45 am Mullin's Restaurant

Pam Clasgens – Development Director, HEALS, Inc.

- PHOTOS -



President Al Adams presenting a check to our speaker.

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.

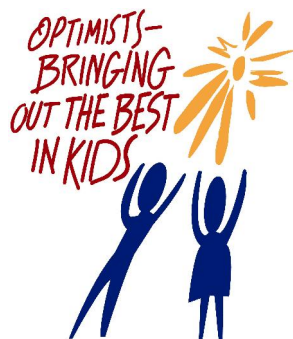
To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

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: