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Club meets

1st Thursday

At 6:00 pm

2nd, & 4th Thursdays

At 11:45 am

88 Buffet

Opti - Topics

Today's Meeting at 88 Buffet Restaurant

Thirteen Optimists and two guests attended our meeting today. Our guests were Bert Brewster, potential member and guest of Jim Berry, and Patricia Chumney, guest (and sister) of Vastell Williams. When he introduced his sister, Vastell said she surprised him last Tuesday, flying in from Brooklyn, NY, for her week-long visit.

Opening

President Al Adams was back at the helm for today's meeting, and he asked Rev. Jim Berry for the opening prayer and to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

Charlene Higgins, Chairperson for the Club's participation in the **Greenpower USA Race**, and her crew of volunteers attended the training at Whitesburg Middle School on Wednesday, and will be ready to help officiate at the race on Saturday, April 23. She'll be in touch with her crew before the race.



If you haven't received your dues statement, please contact Treasure Al Renz to get yours. This quarters' dues statement will give you an itemized accounting of what meals you ate and how much they cost for all of last quarter.

Please pay your dues promptly.

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

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2 YEAR

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1 YEAR

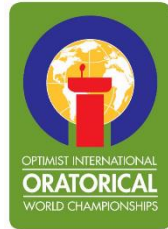
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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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Alberto Duarte announced that our Oratorical Contest winners, Devan Davis from Lee High School, and Bradliegh Herwig from James Clemens High School participated in the **Regional Oratorical Contest** at Birmingham last Saturday. They both performed excellently, and both should have won according to Alberto. Bradliegh did win the girl's contest; however, Devan came in a disappointing "one point behind" the declared winner, much to the surprise of Alberto and nearly all of those attending the contest.



Our **Youth Appreciation Banquet** will be held at the Braham Spring Activities Room on **Tuesday, April 26**, at 6:00 p. m. Chairperson Gay Pepper needs all nominations for awardees in by this weekend. She has sent out the necessary forms for nominations to all Club members by e-mail. Gay also needs to know if you will attend, including the number of guests you will bring. A sheet was passed around at the meeting. **Sign up or call Gay** directly with your reservation(s).

Program



Vastell Williams introduced **George Baker** a member and chaplain for the local DAV chapter. George is a native of New Market, AL, graduate of Alabama A & M, a 25-year veteran of the U.S. Army and a retired NASA employee where we worked at both NASA/Marshall Space Flight Center and NASA Headquarters. His career field was telecommunications. He is a Life Member of the DAV Association.

Mr. Baker began his talk by asking us to join him in a prayer. He then read two scripture verses, Deuteronomy 15:11 and Psalms 82:3 that direct us to help the poor and fatherless. He became a member of Chapter 26 of the DAV in Huntsville in 2014, and said he is convinced the Lord placed him in the DAV.

The DAV is a 501(c)4 non-profit organization whose mission statement states they:

- Help veterans transition back to civilian life by linking them with services that address their physical, emotional and financial needs
- Advocate for veterans with mental health challenges, especially post-traumatic stress.
- Link service-injured veterans to job training and job assistance programs
- Help homeless veterans by providing, food and shelter and assistance in paying utility bills.
- Give emergency grants to ill and injured veterans impacted by natural disasters (e. g., tornados in North Alabama).

Mr. Baker said he and his organization are not political, but they view with skepticism the statements of many politicians these days who “are going to take good care of our veterans.” The unanswered questions are: What will they do? How will they do it? Who will do it? How will it be paid for. A specific example is health care. Veterans are now guaranteed health care for life, but some are advocating health care for non-service related problems to be privatized or provided by a voucher system. He said not many doctors take Vet Medicine insurance, and vouchers will hardly cover the expenses of many veterans.

The local DAV chapter has a number of additional programs they do for vets:

- They help veterans file VA claims. These are now required to be filed on a computer, and many vets have neither the skills nor the internet access that’s required.
- They help homeless vets (about 48,000 nationally at this time) sign up with a VA program and get situated in an apartment, and provide funds for utilities and groceries.
- They sponsor a relief committee (George is a member) to raise funds to help local veterans. In fact, there will be fund raisers this Saturday at the Walmart on University Dr. and at the Kroger store on Hughes Rd. In contrast to some veterans’ organizations, 100% of funds raised go directly to those in need.

In closing his talk, Mr. Baker asked those attending to spread the word to any veteran in need. They need only to come by the DAV office at 1004 Jordan Lane (across from KFC) to get started, or sign in on the DAV web site: www.DAV.org. They can and will direct vets to available sources of assistance. He also said he is recruiting members of the DAV and had the necessary forms with him.

Closing

President Al gave our speaker a tile with the Optimist Creed on it. Our speaker drew names for the attendance prize: Bob Martin missed out, but Duane Plank won on the second try.

We closed the meeting by reciting the Optimist Creed.

Clyde Nevins

PHOTOS



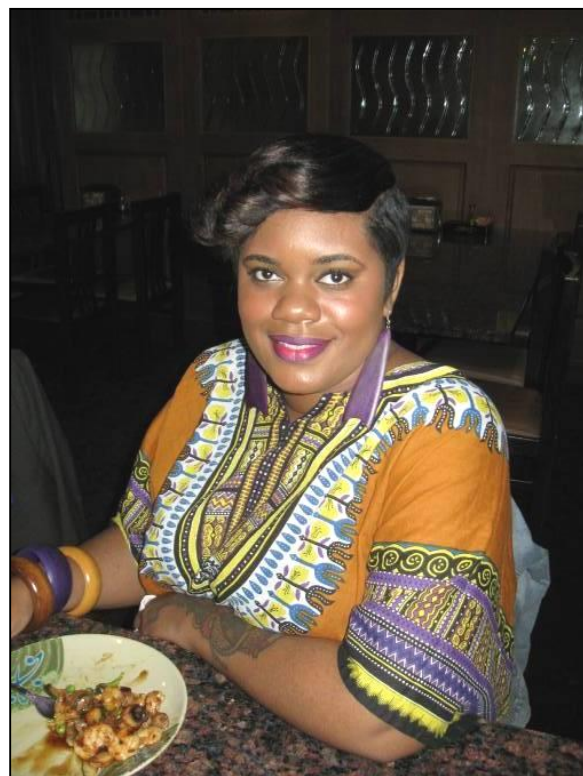
**Our Speaker, George Baker
From the DAV**



**Hand-outs Mr. Baker Brought
for Our Club Members**



Bert Brewster
Guest of Jim Berry



Patricia Chumney,
Sister of Vastell Williams

Optimistic Quote of the Week

“A "Veteran" " whether active duty, discharged, retired, or reserve" is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America," for an amount of "up to, and including his life."

~Unknown



Web Site: hsvoptimists.org

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/HuntsvilleOptimistClub/>

CALENDAR

- 4/21 Thursday **11:45 am**
Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting - Food – (Vastell Williams)
- 4/23 Saturday **10:30am - 4:30pm** Whitesburg P-8
107 Sanders Road, Huntsville, AL (Off Whitesburg DR)
Greenpower USA Race
- 4/26 Tuesday **6:00 pm** Brahan Spring Recreation Center
3770 Ivy Ave SW, Huntsville, AL
Youth Appreciation Banquet
- 4/28 Thursday - **NO MEETING**
Replaced by Youth Appreciation Banquet
- 5/2 Tuesday **4:00 pm**
1st Commercial Bank – Whitesburg Dr.
Board Meeting
- 5/5 Thursday **6:00 pm** 88 Buffet
Kathleen Paul – Happy Trails Therapeutic Riding Center
- 5/9 Monday **6:30 pm** Trinity United Methodist Church
607 Airport Rd SW, Huntsville, AL
Respect for Law Banquet
- 5/12 Thursday - **NO MEETING**
Replaced by Respect for Law Banquet
- 5/19 Thursday **11:45 am**
Optimist Recreation Center
Business Meeting - Food – (Al Renz)
- 5/26 Thursday **11:45 am** 88 Buffet
Dorothy Havens – Kids to Love

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:

PLACE
STAMP
HERE