

The ALABAMA-MISSISSIPPI **ACTION NEWS**



Official Publication of the Alabama-Mississippi District of Optimist International

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 2016

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ZONE – LT. GOVERNOR

- 1 – [Gwen Little](#)
- 2 – [Debra Merritt](#)
- 3 – [Brian Baine](#)
- 4 – [Sherrie Cook](#)
- 5 – [Arthur Mack](#)
- 6 – [Joseph Shaw](#)
- 7 – [Paul Beeler](#)
- 8 – vacant
- 9 – [Deran Cathey](#)

[AL-MS District website](#)
[Optimist International website](#)
[Optimist Leaders Online](#)
[OI Foundation website](#)

Governor's Corner ...

Wow! The 2015-2016 year has come to an end and it's been a blessing for me to have served as the Governor for this great District of Alabama and Mississippi. We were successful in finishing the year with a plus 6! Thanks so much to all those members who came through for the District by bringing us back in the positive. You are all the BEST members and part of the BEST District in the Optimist International because we help each other.

Since December 31, 2015, we as a TEAM have helped to add 655 Optimists to Optimist International!! On December 31, there were 9 new Clubs. Now, they have 58 New Clubs and several more were in the works on September 28th!

CONGRATULATIONS to all those clubs that have fulfilled the requirements for Honor and/or Distinguished Club! Thank you for your efforts and leadership!

I do want to urge all Club Presidents and Secretary / Treasurers to complete the [Annual Activities Recognition form](#) on page 32 of the directory located on the district website. Every new Optimist can make a difference right now and into the future.

The winner of the weekend stay in Birmingham will be announced via email or at the next meeting in Montgomery. I truly appreciate every member who added one or more members during the year.

Since we were successful in ending the year with a positive in growth, we can now help Governor Pam Black begin her year on the right track.

I hope to see you all at the next District meeting on October 28-30. God bless you all and thanks again for your commitment and dedication to Optimism.

As we reflect on the past year, I hope each of us can say to ourselves, "I did my BEST" for this District. If that statement is true for you, then you have succeeded in making a difference that will change the lives for the youth in your community.

Thank you again for giving me the privilege to serve as your Governor and thank you for all that you do to bring out the BEST in kids, in your communities, in your members, and in yourselves. Right Here, Right Now!

2015-2016 Governor and Your Friend Forever,
Tolanda

A Message From 2016-2017 Governor Pam Black

Fellow Optimists, as we stand at the starting line to a new fiscal year, I'm reminded that the year stretching before us is a marathon, not a sprint. Or, as technology expert Anil Dash wrote in "The Starting Line is Not the Finish Line": "Launching something meaningful is about every day, every minute that happens *after* the start."

We are about to enter a new Optimist Year filled with fresh, new and a seemingly endless field of opportunities laid out before us. So let's seize those opportunities to add new members, build new clubs and the ultimate reward will be serving more youth in more communities. It's a joint effort from all of us because "Together We Can".



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- OCT 15** President's Pride Report due. Submit online at www.optimistleaders.org by no later than 11:59 PM.
- OCT 15** Deadline to make 1st Quarter District Meeting Hotel Reservations
- OCT 20** Deadline to submit 4th Qtr A&A Report to A&A Chair [Jacob Ransom](#)
*See also [Club Forms](#)
- OCT 21** Deadline for Advance Registration for 1st Qtr. District Meeting. Special Edition Action News will be available soon.

**1ST QUARTER AL-MS DISTRICT MEETING
OCTOBER 28 – 30, 2016 / MONTGOMERY, AL**



OPTIMISM ...

A Philosophy of Life

Here are a few examples of how Optimism is working in the District:

BIRMINGHAM sponsored a combined internet safety / substance abuse prevention program, including an "I Say No to Drugs" poster contest for teen girls with Girls, Inc. of Central Alabama on July 13th.

BIRMINGHAM WEST END sponsored their annual Youth Conference featuring sessions on health/nutrition, anti-bullying, internet safety and a career fair on September 24th.

CAPITAL CITY will be sponsoring a Bicycle Safety Rodeo on October 14th.

CENTRAL MONTGOMERY sponsored their Annual Youth Conference for the River Region Boys & Girls Clubs on July 27th, which featured "real life" discussions on Peer Pressure, Dress for Success, Public Speaking and Careers.

HUNTSVILLE dedicated four musical instruments at the Hawthorne Conservatory in memory of Duane Plank on September 6th.

MOBILE donated school supplies to four Boys and Girls Clubs in Baton Rouge, LA, following the devastating flood that took place recently.

MOBILE CRICHTON will be sponsoring their annual Football Awards program and honoring "Football Players of the Week" at their meetings throughout the high school football season.

MOBILE MIDTOWN presented youth awards at Strickland Youth Center on August 30th.

PERDIDO BAY sponsored their 30th annual Mullet Festival on Labor Day, September 5th.

TALLADEGA sponsored their 5th annual *Spirit of Talladega* Tablescapes Fundraiser in partnership with the Alabama School for the Deaf Varsity Cheerleaders on September 17th.

GOVERNOR'S THREE NEW MEMBER HONOR ROLL

As of September 29, 2016, the following members sponsored at least three new members into an Optimist Club:

Kathy Yordy (7) – Shoals	Michael Holt (6) – Birmingham West End
Leon Evans, Jr. (6) - Birmingham	Tolanda Beal (6) – Birmingham West End
Debra Coleman (6) – Selma	Steven Dowe (5) – Jackson
Anita Jackson (5) - Birmingham	Jeanie Ward (5) – Selma
Ileene Spencer (5) – Daphne	Vera Hendrix (5) – Talladega
Brian Baine (4) – Fort Payne	Benjamin Irvin 4) – Selma
Misty Monroe (3) – Fort Payne	Martha P Gargis (3) – Shoals
James Henderson (3) – Mobile Midtown	Alfred G Adams, Jr. (3) – Huntsville
John Varnado (3) – Central Montgomery	

ACHIEVEMENTS & AWARDS PROGRAM THIRD QUARTER RESULTS

2015-2016

Jacob Ransom, A&A Chair 2015-2016, has announced the following results for the Third Quarter ending June 30, 2016. The results are for the TOP TEN CLUBS in the three size categories, the TOP TEN CLUBS (size not considered), and the TOP 5 ZONES.

CATEGORY I

(20 or < members)

1 – Hernando	6 – Senatobia
2 – Shoals	7 –
3 – Metro-Tuscaloosa	8 –
4 – Cleveland	9 –
5 – Coldwater	10 –

CATEGORY II

(21-40 members)

1 – Huntsville	6 – Foley
2 – Birmingham West End	7 – Mobile
3 – Selma	8 – Athens
4 – Daphne	9 – Rogersville
5 – Huntsville-Evening	10 –

CATEGORY III

(41+ members)

1 – Birmingham
2 – Central Montgomery
3 – Talladega
4 – Madison
5 – Perdido Bay

OVERALL TOP TEN

1 – Huntsville	6 – Huntsville Evening
2 – Birmingham West End	7 – Central Montgomery
3 – Selma	8 – Hernando
4 – Birmingham	9 – Foley
5 – Daphne	10 – Shoals

ZONE STANDINGS

1 – Zone 1
2 – Zone 3
3 – Zone 9
4 – Zone 6
5 – Zone 2

Optimist International Representative

James H. Adams

Past Optimist International Vice President

To Visit AL-MS District



The AL-MS District will be honored to have Past OI Vice President James H. Adams and fellow AL-MS District Optimist as our OI Representative at the 1st Quarter District Meeting in Montgomery, AL. James is a member of the Central Montgomery and Macon West Optimist Clubs. He has served in numerous leadership positions at the Club, District and International levels, serving as Southeast Region Vice President in 2015-2016 and earning the distinction of Distinguished Governor for the 2005-2006 year.

James is a graduate of Tuskegee University with B.S. degrees in Chemistry and Chemical Engineering. He holds a Master's Degree in Chemical Engineering from Auburn University. In his professional life, James is an Environmental Engineer with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

ORDERING OF SUPPLIES

If you want to order supplies for your Club, please CALL Jim Miner at 256-232-7977 by **no later than October 18** for delivery at the District Mtg. This is a great way to save money for your Club by avoiding shipping & handling charges!

TOPICS FOR 2016-2017 SCHOLARSHIP CONTESTS ANNOUNCED

Topics, contest applications, and the Club Chair Planning Guides for the 2016-2017 [Scholarship Contests](http://www.optimist.org) are available online at www.optimist.org.

The topic for the [Essay Contest](#) is: "Chasing Optimism in the Face of Challenges"

The topic for both the [Oratorical Contest](#) and the [CCDHH](#) (Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing) is: "What the World Gains from Optimism"

[Click here for more information about the 2nd Annual Optimist Oratorical World Championships.](#)

Please note: The Essay and Oratorical contests are open to students under the age of 18 as of October 1, 2015. The CCDHH is open to young people through grade 12.

For more information on a particular contest, please contact the following District Chairs:

Essay: [Tom Howell](#) 256-776-8588

Oratorical: [Gwen Little](#) 205-393-3067

CCDHH: [Vera Hendrix](#) 256-493-5905

"Don't cry because it's over,
smile because it happened."

— Dr. Seuss

2016-2017

MEETING SCHEDULE

First Quarter District Meeting

October 28-30, 2016 – Montgomery, AL

Second Quarter District Meeting

January 27-29, 2017 – Gulfport, MS

Third Quarter District Meeting

April 21-23, 2017 – Hoover, AL

Optimist International Convention

July 6-8, 2017 – Albuquerque, NM

Fourth Quarter District Convention

August 24-27, 2017 – Southaven, MS

David Mills (Childhood Cancer) & Debbie Merritt (OI Foundation) will have "Silent Auction Tables" at the 1st Quarter District Meeting in Montgomery. David is also asking for input from Clubs re: projects / fund raisers for the year. Debbie encourages you to bring Christmas themed items.

**PLEASE BRING ITEMS TO DONATE
FOR THESE WORTHY CAUSES!**

Honor Club



A great goal for the upcoming Optimist year is achieving Honor Club status. Honor Club criteria represent the basic level of service any Optimist Club should strive to provide every year - the Honor Club concept promotes service to children, service to community, and service to ourselves through personal growth and development. Click here for the [Honor Club Tracking Form](#). Beginning October 1, the Honor Club Tracking Form will replace the Annual Club Planning Conference Form.

Important IRS Information for New Optimist Clubs

The Internal Revenue Service has issued a new policy regarding 501 (c) (4) organizations. Optimist Clubs fall into this category. Effective July 8, 2016, any new Club must file IRS form 8976. The filing fee for the form is \$50.

For more information and a link to the form, click [here](#).

Club President-Elect Mailing

A Club President-Elect packet has been sent to each 2016-17 Club President that submitted a Club Officer Elect Form to Optimist International. The packet includes useful information regarding events, programs, and membership incentives to help guide Club President-Elects in the upcoming Optimist year. Submit the [Club Officer Elect Form](#) as soon as possible if your Club has not done so. If you have questions or need assistance, contact Charlotte in the Member Services Department at charlotte.baker@optimist.org.

REMINDERS



- Please send inputs for the October-November Issue of the **Action News** to [Arthur Mack](#) by November 1, 2016.
- Clubs have until Oct. 15 to submit the **President's Pride Report** for awards purposes according to www.optimistleaders.org. If your Club is submitting it [online](#), you must do so by **no later than 11:59 PM on Oct. 15, 2016**.

Check out the updated
Optimist International Bylaws
Effective October 1, 2016

[http://www.optimist.org/Documents/
2016-2017 bylaws.pdf](http://www.optimist.org/Documents/2016-2017%20bylaws.pdf)

HOBY Opens Registration for 2017 State Leadership Seminars



Each spring, 10,000 high school sophomores from across the country join one of HOBY's 70 State Leadership Seminars for 3-4 fun days of life-changing leadership training. School counselors select and register students for the seminar where students explore their leadership talents and cultivate them to become school and community leaders. Optimist International is one of HOBY's largest supporters by sponsoring students for the seminar. Please inform your local high schools that registration opened on September 7, and that your Club can sponsor students at \$350 each. Please visit HOBY.org for more information or contact Sunshine Navarro Shively at shivelys@hoby.org or 818-851-3980 x400.

IN MEMORY OF

Kathy Allen
Huntsville Evening
Horace W Hobbs
Perdido Bay

SNAPSHOTS FROM AL-MS DISTRICT CONVENTION AUGUST 25-28, 2016. BIRMINGHAM, AL



Friday Night Entertainment - Gov. Tolanda Beal thanks Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame Youth Programs Director Ray Reach with drummer Timothy Huffman, a college student at UAB, and bassist Caleb Edwards, a senior at Alabama School of Fine Arts.



Assisting with Hospitality Suite Set-Up - Delores Stringer - Birmingham West End, Robin Tiggs - Talladega, Vivian Seals - BWE, Jon Ryan - Birmingham, Jacob Ransom, Major Scott - BWE, Allison Hendrix - Talladega. Not pictured - Nancy Ryan - Birmingham, Dorlinda Prince & Carolyn Coleman - BWE, and Michelle Foster - Talladega. Other Zone 1 members also volunteered throughout the weekend.



Gov. Tolanda Beal, Traci K. Allen (sponsor) & Dorlinda Prince (Birmingham West End) and Zone 1 Lt. Gov. Gwen Little are pictured in the hospitality suite with members of the Martha Gaskin JOI Club, sponsored by the BWE Club. The JOI members were very helpful with assisting with various chores during the District Convention throughout the day on Saturday.



Members of the Martha Gaskin JOI Club assist with distributing handouts during the District Convention.



BWE Pres. Michael Holt presents gift to Saturday's lunch meeting guest speaker Bessemer Chief of Police Nathaniel Rutledge, Jr.



District Sec-Treas. Vera Hendrix, Gov. Tolanda Beal, Gov.-Elect Pam Black, Ol Rep. Fatima Plater, & BWE Pres. Michael Holt thank guest speaker Bessemer Chief of Police Nathaniel Rutledge, Jr. for his excellent presentation.



Gov. Tolanda Beal & OI Rep. Fatima Plater present the Builder of Excellence Award to Tom Casteel (Huntsville) for his efforts in the building of the Gulfport, MS Club, along with Past Gov. Tom Howell and Zone 7 Lt. Gov. Paul Beeler.



Gov. Tolanda recognizes 1st Timers: Zack Carpenter, President-Elect - Loxley; Sylvia Long, President-Elect – Central Montgomery; and Helena Williams, President – Tuskegee University.



Leon Evans, Jr. (Birmingham) served as Master of Ceremonies at the Saturday evening District Banquet.



Recording artist Jessica Lloyd (Birmingham) provided entertainment at the District Banquet by sharing a few of her all original songs from her album "Another Angel," which is available for purchase online at <http://www.jessicalloyds.com/>

A portion of each CD sold will be donated to the Diocese of Birmingham's Bishop Disaster Relief Fund to help families impacted by natural disasters. Jessica also sang and her husband Curtis (Birmingham) provided dance music following the banquet.

2016-2017 DISTRICT LEADERSHIP



OI Representative Fatima Plater (center) congratulates the 2016-2017 District Leadership Team pictured L to R: Immediate Past Governor Tolanda Beal, Governor Pam Black, Secretary-Treasurer Vera Hendrix, Past Governor Tom Howell, Past Governor David Mills, Governor-Elect Jacqueline Sullivan, Lt. Governors: Zone 1 - Norma Stewart, Zone 2 – Henry Long, Zone 3 – Alfred Adams, Zone 4 – Roberta Lewis, Zone 6 – Ileene Spencer, Zone 9 – Nancy Boyd.

Not pictured: Zone 5 – Ernie Rogers and Zone 7 – Paul Beeler. Zone 8 is vacant at this time.

Committee Chairs

Achievement & Awards.....	Jacob Ransom
Activities	Pam Black
Candidate Qualifications.....	Helen Howard
CCDHH.....	Vera Hendrix
Childhood Cancer Program.....	John Stewart
Conference & Convention	Jim Miner
Essay Contest.....	Roberta Lewis
Facebook Page.....	Norma Stewart
Finance.....	Jim Miner
Internet Safety.....	Pam Black
Jr. Golf.....	John Varnado
Leadership Development.....	Gloria Vail
Membership.....	David Mills
New Club Building.....	Paul Beeler
O.I. Convention Ambassador.....	Janet N Smith
O.I. Foundation Representative.....	John Varnado
Oratorical Contest.....	Ben Spencer
Parliamentarian.....	Sherrie Cook
Personal Growth & Involvement (PGI).....	Cedie Kendall
Sergeant-at-Arms.....	Michael Holt
Supply.....	Tom Causey
Webmaster.....	Tom Casteel
Youth Clubs.....	Helen Howard

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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DATED INFORMATION ENCLOSED