

# ROOSTER CALL



## PLATTEVILLE OPTIMIST CLUB

CURRENTLY MEETING 7:00 AM FRIDAYS AT COUNTRY KITCHEN, HWY 151, PLATTEVILLE, WI

**Friday, July 31, 2015**

**Attendance:** Twenty three (23) Optimists attended today, with nine (9) members wearing their Optimist shirt (Maxine, Charlie, Ken, Steve, Bob, Leon, John, Ernie and Tom). Guests included Leon's wife, Madge Neuheisel, and our speaker, Dick Rundell.

**Mystery Greeter/Greeted:** Steve Lane greeted Ernie Thalmann

**Luck of the Draw:** Steve Lane's ticket was drawn for Joker Draw, and he drew the 6 of Clubs and won \$2. Pot is at approximately \$312.

### **Business Meeting:**

#### Old Business

- Seeking a 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President
- Installation/Awards Banquet September 27<sup>th</sup>

#### New Business

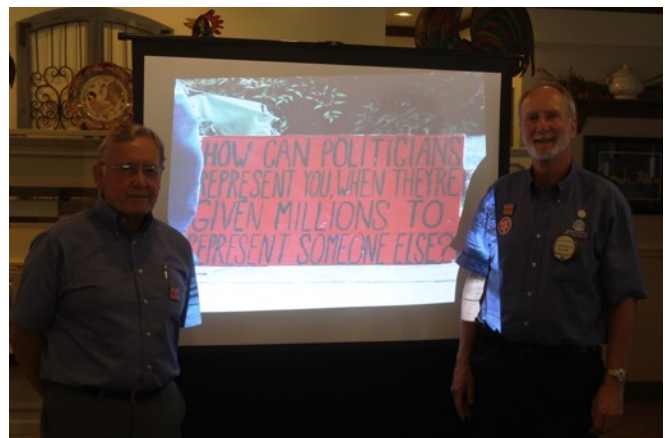
- Board Meeting – August 4<sup>th</sup>
- Sign-up for Grant County Fair – The sheet was passed around and Maxine will attach to an e-mail to all members.
- Shirts have been ordered.

Announcements: Mound City Bank will celebrate 100 years with a Business After Hours on Aug 19<sup>th</sup> @ Legion Field.

### **Program:**

Our speakers today included Dick Rundell and our own Charlie Clark. Their presentation addressed the issue of money in politics and the bipartisan "Move To Amend" efforts being promoted not only in Platteville and other communities around SW Wisconsin, but also statewide and nationally.

In the last five years, especially after recent Supreme Court cases such as Citizens United vs. the Federal Elections Commission (FEC), and McCutcheon vs. FEC, there has been a tremendous increase in money spent to influence elections and, in affect, politicians. Basically such court decisions said corporations are people with constitutional rights, and that money is the same as free speech.



Some of the statistics shared by Dick and Charlie about money in politics and in particular, the election process, were amazing. For example, "outside money" (i.e., money spend by individuals,

corporations, super PACs, etc., and excluding political party committees) spent in elections in 2012 compared to 2008 represented an increase of over 300%. In the 2012 presidential election cycle, the political contributions of 3.7 million individuals was equaled by just 32 wealthy individuals. Approximately 68% of the money contributed in that 2012 election represents only 0.26% of the contributors. In “freshman orientation,” new members of Congress are told to use 4 hours out of each 10-hour day raising money for their next election.

Such statistics brought about by these Supreme Court decisions demonstrate the need for creating something called “Move To Amend,” a national movement “to end corporate personhood and demand real democracy” by having an amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

However, federal and state legislators are too beholden to, even dependent upon, their corporate and wealthy donors to take initiative to reverse Citizens United. Since only state and federal office-holders can officially initiate the amendment process, these elected officials have to hear a message loud and clear from the electorate, i.e., “We the People.” In other words, if it happens, it is because it starts at the grassroots level.

There are people in the Platteville area organizing to have a referendum put on the ballot for elections in April 2016. The referendum would state that Platteville is on record as wanting a Wisconsin Congressional delegation to support, and the Wisconsin Legislature to ratify, an amendment to the United States Constitution stating [1] only human beings — not corporations, unions, non-profits or similar associations — are endowed with constitutional rights, and [2] money is not speech, and therefore limiting political contributions and spending is not equivalent to restricting political speech. Currently there are 60 Wisconsin communities and counties that have approved such a statement, and there are 16 States that have already gone on record a supporting such an amendment.

Signatures to get the referendum on the April 2016 local ballot will be collected over a 60-day period from this September 1 thru October 30. To learn more about the local effort to get the referendum on the ballot (and more importantly, to get involved!), contact Dick Rundell @ [rrundell@centurytel.net](mailto:rrundell@centurytel.net). For much more information on Move To Amend, particularly at the state level, go to <[wimta.org](http://wimta.org)>.

**Minutes taken and submitted by Eileen Engelke; edited for “Rooster Call” by Charlie Clark.**