



## *Message from the President*

December 5 marked the opening of the OCO basketball season with our first games being played that day. In some ways I felt like a newcomer with my youngest daughter Karly playing as a Peewee Lower. Her uniform came just in time for this long-awaited game. Karly was so excited that she dressed seven hours before her game even started. It was so enjoyable to watch her teammates play their very first game as recent graduates of the Tinko program, smiling the whole time as they ran rim to rim. I am sure you had a similar, if not the same, experience as your child began the new season of play.

Tara, my Junior Girls Lower player, was excited too. Even though she dressed only five minutes before we were to leave the house, she was excited in another way. Not only was she looking forward to the series of games that lay ahead, but her team line-up had changed somewhat from the prior year, and there was that anticipation of the unknown. The roster changed not only because one of the players moved to San Diego, but because of **parity**. Actually, Tara's team line-up has changed every year for the past several seasons because of OCO's philosophy on **parity**. I must confess, even though Tara has been a subject of **parity**, I never understood it until this year.

You see, I was always more interested in Tara having fun while playing basketball, learning how to play and getting along with others in a team sport, improving her knowledge and skills of the game, gaining a positive social experience, giving back to the community, acquiring responsibility, developing as a person, providing a way to burn off all the French fries she loves to eat, and of course it was always more fun to win the game than to not!

Recently, I had the "rare" opportunity of listening to one of OCO's founding fathers define the purpose and meaning of **parity** within our basketball program, and suddenly a light bulb came on. **Parity** is the means of equalizing teams by level of skill, height (or lack of it), and knowledge to promote a more positive athletic experience. I realized a **parity** team should have a well-rounded roster of players who can get the ball to shooters, players who can shoot the ball from the outside, players who can shoot the ball from the inside, and rebounders - in case the players do not make their shots! A professional sports league has been quoted as saying that they believe the essential element to the success of a given sport is **parity**. I believe this philosophy is one of the secret ingredients to OCO's success: emphasizing the overall development of our youth.

I hope that your children have fun with their OCO family and friends, improve their knowledge and skill of whatever sport they play, learn sportsmanship and respect for others, become more responsible, have a positive social experience and most of all: fulfill their own athletic dreams this year!

Let the games of the 2004-2005 OCO season begin!

*Neddie Bokosky*  
OCO President

Those who assisted with the delivery of the gift baskets to the residents of the Tokyo Towers.



## Octagons

I'm so ExCitEd about this 2004-05 Octagon year!!! October and November have kept us on our toes. Our first event was Special Olympics held on October 23, chaired by **Brent Hashizu**. Everyone helped keep scores and manage lines for volleyball matches, while cheering on some real all-stars. We had a great turnout and they all loved getting an Oscar Meyer weiner whistle.

OCO's Halloween Party was a blast. The cafeteria was decorated with spooky cobwebs and colorful streamers. Thank you to **Lani Okuda** for chairing. And we can't forget our thrilling haunted house, chaired by **Scott Sakakura**. Throughout November, the Thanksgiving Canned Food Drive was going on and **Marques Carroll** has been doing an outstanding job of being in charge of collecting cans for our annual delivery of Thanksgiving food baskets.

A special thank-you to **Dean Otsuka** for all your assistance as well as organizing the Installation/Registration and putting together the Thanksgiving skit. I know we will accomplish great things throughout the year and form new friendships. We have many community service activities ahead of us and, of course, fun events too. Thank you to all our chairmen and to advisors **Mr. Kubo** and **Doc Kunihiro** for your guidance.

*Marci Asao*  
President

Our OCO Octagons have been doing a lot of community service these past months. We had our annual Canned Food Drive, chaired by **Marques**, collecting cans enough to give to more than fifty families. Our delivery of the baskets to the families went well with all of the parents' driving force and the organizing of chair people **Brandon Wong** and **Garrett James**, but since we had so much left over we were able to give some to other people in need. Since we've been doing so much, we have decided to have a little Christmas Party

*Continued on page three*

## Junior Optimist

The JO's have been extremely active for the months of October, November and the first part of December. Our first activity of the year was the OCO Halloween Party. We provided the games, created the Haunted Maze and Haunted Acres, and kept the drink containers full and the trash cans empty. We'd like to acknowledge, once again, **Mark Kimura**, who procured ALL the redemption prizes, and thank **Steve Henshaw** of "Fun Lines" and **Juan Pivaral** of "Comic Galaxy" for their donations. We also appreciate **Rosalie** and **Ron Lowe**, and **Carolyn** and **Alan Kobayashi** for photographing and printing the pictures of those darling costumed children.

We had a busy November meeting. Elections were held, and the following are the JO Officers for 2004-05:

Co-Presidents: **Alysa Ito**, **Tyler James**  
Treasurer: **Michael Kimura**  
Activities: **Jackie Tambara**, **Jonathon Lew**

After the elections, we assembled Holiday Fruit Baskets for the residents of Tokyo Towers, a senior housing complex, located in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles. There were JO's designing holiday tags, sorting fruit and placing it in circular trays, and wrapping the packages. **Linda Shimokaji** and **Elaine Miyagishima** donated the trays, cellophane and ribbon; **Carolyn Kobayashi** provided the tags and decorative stamps and **Jodee Yamaoka** supplied the mini-tubes of toothpaste. We especially want to thank **Eric Okazaki** of Fresh Plus Inc. for donating the cases of Fuji Apples, Bartlett Pears and Satsuma Tangerines.

The following morning, 16 JO's and two siblings met at Tokyo Towers to personally deliver baskets to each of the 300 residents. The JO's were met with joy and thankfulness from every resident who received a fruit basket. It was a rewarding experience for those who were able to go. *A sidenote:* We found out the day we were packaging the fruit baskets that if we packed a basket with four items, it meant death (something to do with the number four in Japanese). So, we added some additional items in each basket so that there was an odd number of items, which is good luck.

On Thanksgiving, 16 JO's and several other family members went to La Casa Garcia Restaurant in Anaheim to help out at their annual "We Give Thanks" feeding of the needy and homeless. The JO's worked the 3 - 5 p.m. shift, serving food and cleaning up. We want to thank **Skyler Jinkawa**, **Jordan Hamamoto**, **Austin Quon**, **Kelsy Saida**, **Stephanie** and **Lynzie Numata**, **Dalton Doi**, **Austin Chang**, **Victor Matsuyama**,

*Continued on page three*



Assisting on Thanksgiving Day at Casa Garcia Restaurant.

## Rancho...A Safe Haven?

OCO is very fortunate to have Rancho Alamitos High School for a place to practice and to have many of our events. We have a great relationship with the school thanks to **Eric Hamamoto**, and **Judy** and **Jesse James**. Rancho is like a second home to many of us, and at home we become very comfortable.

Several weeks ago there was a very minor incident that happened, yet if it happened in our own home, we may not consider this very minor. During a ball-handling clinic, one of the kids came up to me and said he could not find his ball. He gave me a description of his ball and I went looking for it. While searching every nook and cranny of the gym, **Tyler James** came up to me and asked, "What are you looking for, Mr. Hamasaki?" I told Tyler that I was looking for a basketball

Tyler told me while he was outside on the phone to one of his "lady-friends" he saw a couple of kids run outside yelling, "I jacked a ball," heading towards the asphalt basketball courts.

We went to where the kids had gone and when they saw Tyler and me, they dropped the ball like a hot potato. We asked them where they got the ball from and they said they found it right here. When we asked them why they dropped the ball like there was something wrong with it, they had no answer and they knew we nailed them. We took the ball and told them they should NOT be taking things that do not belong to them.

My point is that I believe when we feel comfortable somewhere, many of us will relax and tend not to be as careful as we would in a strange place. There are many times that I see bags and balls just left lying around outside the gymnasium or right by the doorways without anybody around, inviting to be taken (my two kids are guilty of this). I also make sure that I find out whose things they are or put them somewhere where there are adults around.

I believe Rancho is a "safe haven" if we all take the responsibility to teach our kids to be responsible for their things (I think many of the parents do this) and to care about each other, even if we don't know them, and ask about or move property that is left unattended. Fortunately for that boy who had his ball "jacked," Tyler took the responsibility to talk to me and together we got the boy's ball back.

*Vince Hamasaki*

### *Octagons continued*

for ourselves after our December meeting. It got most of us in the Christmas spirit with tons of gift cards going to good girl **Stephanie Kato**, but bad boy **Brandon Wong** got the coal instead of his present. This will teach us all to be good for next year so we don't get coal from Santa next year. With all this Christmas enthusiasm, we then assisted with the Hylond Home Christmas party, chaired by **Jodi Matsumoto** and **Trisha Asao**, where we had fun playing bingo and helping Santa deliver some presents to the residents there. We will also be acting as Santa when we give presents from a gift list sponsored by the Little Tokyo Community Service Center, chaired by **Brad Kimura** and **Wesley Koga**. Here at the OCO Octagons, we would like to wish you Happy Holidays.

*Bryce Kubo*

OCO Octagons President-elect,

### *Junior Optimist continued*

**Kevin Ishizu, Jordan Hamasaki, Duane Murata, Jenna Shimokaji, Taylor Yamaoka, Ross Higashigawa, Taylor Yamaoka, Alysa Ito** and Octagon **Allyson Oishi**, and their family members and parents for spending a part of their Thanksgiving Day to be of service.

At the Holiday Boutique, the JO's raised \$536 with their bake sale to be donated to A3M. The JO's thank all of you who purchased items to support A3M.

We welcome several VFW members into JO. They are: **Lynzie** and **Stephanie Numata, Kelsy Saida, Taylor Yamaoka, Nikki Fukuzawa, Randi Gibo, Ross Higashigawa, and Kevin Austria**. We also welcome **Ariana Di Stefano** to JO.

Finally, we want to welcome **Donna Okuda** as a Junior Optimist Advisor. She has already contributed greatly in the six weeks she has served with her creative artwork (Halloween Party games, fruit baskets) and baking skills.

Happy 2005!

*Vince Hamasaki, Advisor*

# OCO Golf Tournament Thanks!



Thank you to all the sponsors, contributors, and golfers who participated in the OCO Golf Tournament on December 6. The net proceeds of \$15,000 were donated to the nonprofit organization, Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches (A3M).

*This is a great event for the whole family. Take part in this Japanese tradition of pounding mochi in preparation for the new year. Be prepared to dive in. Wear your grubbies!*

## Mochi Tsuki

Sunday, December 26  
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.



Tanaka Farms  
5380 University Drive, Irvine

Located 1/2 mile south 405 freeway  
off University Drive and Michelson  
Strawberry Farms Road

Everyone brings a main dish, **plus**  
based on your last name initial,  
please bring:

A to G  
H to M  
N to R  
S to Z

*appetizers, chips/dips, etc.*  
*rice dishes, sushi, etc.*  
*salads, veggies*  
*desserts*

Check out the OCO Website: [www.ocoyouth.org](http://www.ocoyouth.org)

**Orange Coast Optimist** is affiliated with Optimist International, a world-renowned organization. Optimist clubs throughout the world are dedicated to the scholastic, physical, moral, and civic development of the youths in every community.

**Jabber from the Editor**

A string walks into a bar and orders a drink.  
The bartender says, "Sorry, we don't serve strings."  
So the string walks out.  
A few minutes later he returns, and tries again.  
Bartender says, "I already told you, we don't serve strings."  
The string is now pretty angry and walks out again.  
In the parking lot, he twists and turns his body and starts unraveling the ends. He walks back into the bar and orders a drink.  
Bartender looks at him for a moment, then says, "Hey, aren't you that string?"  
The string replies, "No, I'm a frayed knot."

Sometimes...don't you feel that way? Enjoy the holidays!

*Stacey Yoshinaga*

Photographs provided by **Pat Doi, Vince Hamasaki, and Teddy Matsumoto.**

**Upcoming Events -  
January - Tri-Star Competition  
- Visions Contest**

**February - Casino Night Fundraiser**



## Orange Coast Optimist Club

Newsletter  
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