

Rak Kan

February 2003



Orange Coast
Optimist

Message from the President

Happy New Year!! Hope everyone enjoyed the holidays! I sure was busy through the holidays. I felt like a chicken with my head cut off . . . really! Did you all make a New Year's resolution? If you haven't, can I suggest one? Don't put off taking care of yourself! (A ha! You thought I was going to say, "Get more involved" . . . or . . . "volunteer to chair an event" . . . or something along that line, didn't you???) With all the hustle and bustle of getting our kids to all these extracurricular activities and sports, attending all our own social gatherings, working, P.T.A. activities, doing homework with the kids, we tend to lose sight of our own self . . . at least, I know I do. So, I encourage you to take time for yourself. Take care of yourself too. Make that doctor appointment for your annual checkup! You need to stay healthy for yourself, your family and OCO! See that's where OCO comes in . . . if you're not healthy, you'll miss all the events we have in store for you for 2003! So don't delay, start now . . . TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!!

Well, we ended the 2002 year with a bang! A mochi bang!! There was a record breaking crowd at the OCO Mochi-Tsuki on Sunday, December 29! It was also a very memorable Mochi-Tsuki because it was the last time it will be at the Otsuka Farms. Thank you to **Stella, Jimmy, and Diane** for hosting our Mochi-Tsuki for the past years. You have been very gracious hosts!!! We'll all miss the farm and the memories we have had there! Thanks must also go out to our Chairperson, Les Ito. He did a fantastic job organizing this event and has volunteered to do this for the next decade!!!! After that, his son Ryan will continue with the tradition of chairing the event!

Our Casino Night is in full swing . . . or should I say "Ka-Ching"!!! Please reserve that night, Saturday, February 15, 6 to 11 p.m. at the Orange County Buddhist Church. This event is now our largest fundraiser and many of our programs depend on its success! Come out and support OCO!!!

We have a lot in store for you this year! Please continue reading this newsletter for information on all the upcoming events. See you at the gym!


Judy James



Mochi-Tsuki Re-Cap

by Chairperson Les Ito

The Mochi event which was held on December 29 at Otsuka Farms was once again a great success with the largest attendance yet. Participants cooked, pounded, and formed 150 pounds of rice. . .bringing good luck for the new year to all who attended. Many thanks go to all the people that helped pull this event off. Special thanks go to the **Otsukas'** for hosting, **Teddy Matsumoto** for manning the machines, **Jesse James** for the breakfast, **Alvin Hagino** for washing, Mrs. O for leading the forming team, **Ryan Ito** for helping the pounders and **Richard Fukuhara** and his renowned Taiko group. This will be the last time for Mochi-Tsuki at the Otsukas'. Thanks Jimmy.

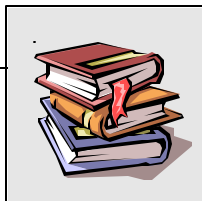


Jr. Optimist News

Book Drive

Help the Jr. Optimists by donating any "gently" used books or magazines. Their original goal was to collect over 500 books; however, they have increased the challenge to 2,000 books!

Bring your donations to the girl's gym during practice, now through January 25. For every two books brought in, get a raffle ticket for a special prize!



In the month of December the Jr. Optimists helped in many ways for different causes. One of the ways that we helped was wrapping Christmas gifts of toys and various other items. We had a good turnout for this event which was held at Rancho Alamitos High School. The Rancho Octagons were the host of this event which was for OCSA. Another event was when we went Christmas caroling at the Alamitos West Convalescent Hospital. We sang eleven songs and afterwards we served the patients cake. There were three standout optimists; they were **Andrew Quan, Rukka Suzuki, and Michael Ishihara**. These people were the most generous of the group because they showed extra care. They were the ones who helped them eat and had extended conversations with the patients. Our next event after the caroling was the Mochi-Tsuki where we washed the pots that were used to cook the rice; everyone was a big help. In the end, after all of the mochi was put away we had our famous cornstarch fight so that everyone left with a souvenir of a white face and clothes.

Our next event that is currently underway is a book drive; we are collecting books during practice till January 25. This will benefit Sierra High School, an alternative school for female high school students who are mothers. This means you can bring in books or magazines that have been gently used, suitable for any age group.

Lastly, we would like to thank **Neddie Bokosky** for her generous donation to our UNICEF fund raiser and the **Kunihiro** and **James** families, along with OCO, for each matching the money we collected for UNICEF this past Halloween.

Bryce Kubo
OCO Junior Optimist Co-President



Casino Night

An OCO fund raiser...

Viva Las Vegas

Saturday, February 15, 2003

6 – 11 pm

Orange County Buddhist Church

Tickets \$25 each

Adults only (21 and older)

Contact Ellen Natsume

for more information

enatsume@cox.net or

(949) 367-0757

or check out our website www.OCOyouth.org

Includes dinner, raffle prizes, Blackjack, Craps, Roulette,
and Bingo...lots of fun and surprises!

Viva Las Vegas *Pizza Day*

Families that sell four or more casino night tickets earn a ticket into the casino night pizza day. The whole family will be invited to have pizza, punch, and dessert on Saturday, February 1! Pizza will be served all day, so come whenever it is convenient! Get your team to sell their four tickets and celebrate together!

OCO Night at Chapman University

Come join the fun on Saturday, January 25, for an exciting Chapman Men's Basketball game. The most exciting part is that our OCO kids will be the half time entertainment. They get to strut their stuff on the court, as we showcase what our basketball program features. Free admission to OCO families! See your team representative for more information.

TRI-STAR COMPETITION

The OCO Tri-Star Competition will be held on Saturday, February 8, at Rancho Alamitos High School. The Tri-Star Competition is a basketball skills contest in the areas of dribbling, shooting, and passing. All OCO basketball players will participate in the contest during their first hour of regular practice.

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.

If you know of someone not currently playing in our OCO program who would like to join, contact Jesse James @ jessedjames@ocoyouth.org.

Photos taken by **Shirley Goya**; Casino Night logo designed by **Shirley**, too!

Upcoming Events

January 25 - OCO Night at Chapman University

Visions projects are due 1/25 - contact Darrell Yoshinaga (562.673.9458) for details.

February 8 - Tri-Star Competition

Jabber from the Editor

"Hats off" to all our **OCO coaches**, and especially to **Bob Kubo** and **Doc Kunihiro** for their patience and efforts in helping to shape our youth of today. Just observing the interaction of our coaches and our youth group advisors has put me in awe.

I recently heard testimony from one of our past OCO program youths who commented that although at the time she didn't realize the value of being involved in the youth groups like Jr. Optimist and Octagons, she is grateful that she was prodded to do so. She feels all the events and activities exposed her to experiences that she draws on today.

A challenge to us all - help make some meaningful, lifelong impacts!

Stacey Yoshinaga



Orange Coast Optimist Club

Newsletter
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