



## *Message from the President*

January is a great month for . . . starting over!

Personally, I really like January because I feel as if I have another chance to do whatever I didn't do in the previous year. This is a time of year when many people make resolutions to do this...or that...or the other thing – did you make one? I did! I want to OPTIMIZE my experiences of being an OPTIMIST.

January is also a time of year when people begin to attend workshops to motivate themselves to new levels with work or home – did you go to one? I did! Every year I go to my friends' Holiday Breakfast fundraiser and they always have a motivational or self-improvement type of speaker. Being an Orange Coast Optimist is going to help me accomplish my New Year resolution and heed the words of advice from the motivational speaker. This is what I recall she told us:

**HAVE FUN...If you don't, life is too long. And, if you don't like your life – change it!** We, as Optimists, have so many opportunities to have fun! I do not think that there is a month that goes by that there is not an opportunity to jump in, get involved and have a good time! Get involved...life is too short.

**BE WILLING TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW - to be bored is a sin!** Get out of the comfort zone of what you know well and live a little (more) by experiencing something new! OCO gives our members so many opportunities to be active and involved!

**GET OUT AND MEET INTERESTING PEOPLE – and YOU will be interesting!** OCO Optimists are the MOST interesting people on the universe. They are generous beyond belief, possess great humor, and LIVE for the betterment of their children. Next chance you get, strike up a conversation with someone you do not know, or do not know very well...and get to know them better - become an interesting person!

**BE WILLING TO TAKE RISKS – Stretch!** Get involved, be active, open up and get to know your fellow members. Take a risk!

**HAVE A DREAM – You cannot fail!** Our club has been very fortunate to have dreamers and movers and shakers to keep our organization going. Dreams and visions keep us on our toes as we work hard at trying to fulfill the visions which improve our programs, give back to our community, and develop our own children into being better people.

What is your dream?

In closing this month, I would like to give a big thank-you to **Mitch** and **Donna Okuda** who chaired the annual Holiday party at Hylond Home again. Together with **Eric** and **Marsha Hamamoto** and the Rancho Octagons, **Howard** and **Andrea Kunihiro**, **Bob** and **Arlene Kubo** and the OCO Octagons, and co-chair **Clay** and **Kathy Sakurao**, a wonderful party with Santa and elves delivering gifts was very much appreciated by the staff and residents! The Jr. Optimists were busy providing holiday gifts for the children of Orangewood Children's home. A salute to **Vince Hamasaki**, **Eileen Kato**, **Pat Doi**, and **Donna Murata** for another wonderful JO event! The last OCO event of the year was Mochi Tsuki at Tanaka Farms, and I want to thank **Les Ito** for chairing this event again and **Glenn Tanaka** for inviting our membership, cornstarch and all, to his "home" away from home. It is a lot of work to prepare for this event, so thank you to all who came out to wash rice and prep so that we could participate in this unique experience! And a big thank-you to **Judy James** for all that she does to make sure that the wheel keeps turning!

Please buy your Casino Nite tickets and prepare to have fun – see you there!

Neddie Bokosky

# Hylond Home

A very heartfelt THANK-YOU goes out to our OCO Octagons and Rancho Octagons for doing a fantastic job hosting our annual Christmas Party at the Hylond Home on December 14, 2003. Twenty-five of the 141 residents got to attend the actual party and had a great time playing Christmas BINGO, and filling their stomachs with pizza, cake and punch.

I would like to thank our OCO families for their generosity in fulfilling the Christmas gift wishes of all 141 residents. Your thoughtfulness and Christmas spirit made every one of those special people very happy. I'd like to also express my deepest gratitude to our former President, **Judy James**, new President, **Neddie Bokosky** and **Debbie Lew** for sorting all of the gifts and helping out with the festivities.

A special thanks goes to **Kurt Goss** and **Karl Hill** for playing Santa. **Kurt** has been doing the Santa routine at the home for many years. His warmth and Christmas cheer were well received by all everyone there. This was **Karl's** first year being Santa and he too did a great job.

Thank you **Eric Hamamoto** and the Rancho Octagons for providing all of the BINGO prizes. Thank you to **Dan** and **Daryl Hardy** for donating a Christmas Tree to the Hylond Home.

I would also like to acknowledge the following people for their helping out to make the party a success as well.

OCO Octagon President and Chairperson, **Bryce Kubo**  
My Co-chairs, **Clay** and **Kathy Sakurao**  
**Howard** and **Andrea Kunihiro**  
**Marsha Hamamoto**  
**Bob** and **Arlene Kubo** and sons, **Corey** and **Casey**  
**Cindy Goss**  
**Chris Kato**  
**Edwin Kimoto**  
**Nori Nishida**

If I forgot to mention anyone, please accept my apologies and gratitude.

Happy New Year!!!

*Mitch Okuda, Chairperson*

Some of the Mochi Tsuki fun at Tanaka Farms.



## ***Visions Program***

# **“I can make the world a better place by . . .”**

“Visions” is a program sponsored by OCO to provide an opportunity for students affiliated with OCO to use their creative talents by expressing themselves through their own original works.

Using the theme, “I can make the world a better place by...,” participants can submit as many entries in the following categories:

Literature - Poems, short stories or  
essays: fiction or non-fiction.

Visual Arts - Paintings, drawings, collages, photographs.  
*Tinkos (K-1) can only submit paintings, drawings and collages.*

All participants will be recognized for entering the contest. Awards will be presented by divisions in the literature and visual arts categories. The four divisions are: Tinkos (K-1), 2nd-4th grades, 5th-7th grades, and 8th-12th grades.

Entries are due February 7, 2004

**Work on your creation at a Visions workshop:  
January 24 and 31  
in the Rancho Alamitos Cafeteria**

**For more information, contact Kimi Lee (714)965-9808**

## ***Casino Night***

Break out those lucky dice! Wear your romantic or most creative outfits. We're going to have a great time raising funds, working together, making new friends and having fun all at the same time!

**Saturday, February 14, 2004  
6 - 11 p.m.  
Orange County Buddhist Church  
Anaheim  
Adults Only (21 and older)**

This fundraiser will support all of the wonderful programs offered by OCO. It will also help offset the increasing costs of our gyms and allow us to keep our fees at a minimum.

## ***TRI-STAR COMPETITION***

The OCO Tri-Star Competition will be held on Saturday, January 31, 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 an hour of regular practice.

# Junior Optimist



Cheryl Moore of Friends of Moonridge Zoo accepts a \$2800 check from Junior Optimist **Dalton Doi**, co-chairman of the 3-on-3 Fundraiser for the animals injured in the October wildfires. From left to right: **Cheryl Moore, Jason Lee, Taylor Hamasaki, Dalton Doi, Jordan Hamasaki.**



**Junior Optimist Officers, 2003-2004** (left to right): Garrett James, Co-President; Michael Kimura, Co-Treasurer; Lani Okuda, Co-President; Jonathon Lew, Co-VP Activities; Jodi Matsumoto, Co-Treasurer; Trisha Asao, Co-VP Activities.

The Orangewood Children's Home received 150 Christmas gift bags from Junior Optimist. Many of the JO's purchased small toys, school supplies and toiletry items for the kids; helped assemble some of the toys; and decorated and packed the bags. One mom who was helping assemble "Betty Spaghetti" dolls was having a great time doing that because she does not have a daughter and hadn't done this since she was a little girl.

**A big THANK-YOU to Mark Kimura**, who procured the donations of the stuffed animals, Betty Spaghetti dolls, finger bikes and many other items to put in the gift bags. Another big THANK-YOU goes out to **Eric Hamamoto** for allowing use of his room to pack the gift bags. I also want to acknowledge and thank **Francine Kimura, Donna Murata, Eileen Kato, Carolyn Kobayashi, Sandi Nakamoto, Tami Beeks, Alan Kobayashi and Bruce Shinto** for overseeing the project and to the JO's that contributed. I apologize if I inadvertently left someone out.

**Dalton Doi**, chairperson of the 3-on-3 fundraiser for Moonridge Zoo, presented a \$2800 check from JO to Cheryl Moore of Friends of the Moonridge Zoo at the Moonridge Zoo in Big Bear Lake across from Bear Mountain Ski Resort.

The JO's were also busy helping out at the Mochi Tsuki, cleaning out rice pots, tables and chairs; making mochi; and having fun in the biggest cornstarch fight in the history of OCO Mochi Tsuki.

*Vince Hamasaki*  
Advisor

# Octagons

Thirty-six of our 100 JO members have achieved a GPA (based on 4.0) of 3.5 or better. The following is a listing of those JO's and their school:

## 4.0

Jacquelyn Chew, Oxford Academy, Cypress  
Eric Fujimori, Cawthon ES, Cypress  
Bryce Kobayashi, Buena Park JHS, Buena Park  
Melissa Koga, Santiago Charter School, Orange  
Alex Lee, Royal Oak MS, Covina  
Spencer Lee, Huntington Christian, Huntington Beach  
Jonathon Lew, Vista View MS, Fountain Valley  
Kristen Minami, Mac Arthur Fundamental, Santa Ana  
Chelsea Nakano, El Rancho Charter, Anaheim  
Kelsi Nervik, Mayfair MS, Lakewood  
Kevin Nishida, Parks JHS, Fullerton  
Keanne Okabayashi, Newcomb Academy, Long Beach  
Andrew Quan, St. Pius V, Buena Park  
Stephan Robb, Fulton MS, Fountain Valley  
Stevie Shimoide, Fairmont, Yorba Linda

## 3.9

Jordan Hamamoto, Walker JHS  
Tina Kawagishi, Santiago MS  
Corey Nielsen, Carmenita MS, Cerritos

## 3.8

Dalton Doi, Niguel MS, Laguna Niguel  
Jordan Hamasaki, Newhart MS, Mission Viejo  
Maddie Harrison, Bell Intm., Garden Grove  
Michael Kimura, Fulton MS, Fountain Valley  
David Kushner, St. Margaret's, San Juan Capistrano  
Duane Murata, Buena Park JHS, Buena Park  
Allyson Oishi, Lexington JHS, Cypress  
Lani Okuda, Mayfair MS, Lakewood  
Sara Seto, Cerro Villa MS, Anaheim  
Joshua Yang, Carmenita MS, Cerritos

## 3.7

Austin Chang, Carmenita MS, Cerritos/GATE  
Kacey Miyagishima, Serrano MS, Lake Forest/Honor Roll  
Loren Robb, Fulton MS, Fountain Valley/Principal's Honor Roll  
Andrew Sakakura, Lexington JHS, Cypress  
Jenna Shimokaji, St. John's Episcopal, Rancho Santa Margarita

## 3.5

Garrett James, Moiola ES, Fountain Valley  
Niles Marquez, Masuda MS, Fountain Valley  
Colin Ozawa, Newhart MS, Mission Viejo

Last month was a very active month for the Octagons. We participated in a lot of fun events for the holiday season. The Octagons' biggest event was holding a Christmas party for the residents at Hyland Home who are mentally and physically challenged. They all enjoyed playing bingo, singing songs, eating pizza and cake, and opening their presents from Santa Claus. All the Octagons had a great time too, playing bingo with the residents, helping to feed them, and dressing up as Santa's helpers. **Bryce Kubo** and **Alan Hong**, the chairpersons, did a great job organizing this event. Thanks, guys!

Our second event was answering some of the letters to Santa that little kids wrote, which we got from the post office. Many of these children's families were not as fortunate during the holidays, so we dressed up as Santa's elves and delivered presents to them. All the families were very grateful and the kids were very excited to see us. Thank you to everyone who put in the time to come and deliver, and a special thanks to our drivers who were luckily able to find all the residences.

OCO's annual Mochi Tsuki marked the end of our quarter. Many of the Octagons came to help make mochi ... and of course to cover one another with cornstarch! So far the only event we have planned for January is working at the food bank in Garden Grove, which will be chaired by **Matt Sakurao** and **Scott Sakakura**. Awesome job, Octagons! I hope we start off the year just as well as we ended it.

*Stefanie Kato*  
VP of Membership

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**

"Each year, hundreds of Asian and Pacific Islander children and adults are stricken with blood disease. Approximately 30% of the patients have a family member, generally a sibling, who is able to donate marrow/stem cells. However, 70% must search for the matching donor outside their family."

The Nisei Week Queen's Council will be at Rancho on February 15 in an effort to recruit future marrow donors. It starts with a blood test. Consider this worthy cause.

*Stacey Yoshinaga*

Photographs provided by **Teddy Matsumoto** and **Pat Doi**.

Interested in contributing to the *Rak Kan News*?  
Please contact Stacey at [AllyAmy@worldnet.att.net](mailto:AllyAmy@worldnet.att.net).



## Orange Coast Optimist Club

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