



Orange Coast Optimist Rak Kan January 2008 - Issue 2



President's Message

Happy New Year to all our OCO family members! Hope all of you had a fantastic holiday season! I'm sure Santa brought many wonderful presents to our OCO

kids since we know the answer to the question if they were naughty or nice. The latter of course!

Our new year started off with a bang with about 250 OCO family members attending the Anaheim Arsenal game on Saturday, January 5. It was great to see the kids lined up on the court for the pre-game introductions and the exit tunnel at half-time. The Midget Upper boys had a great time playing the half-time game in front of the crowd. And of course, there were many autographs and pictures taken with Yuta Tabuse, the first Japanese-born player in NBA history (Phoenix Suns 2004-05) now playing for the Arsenal. He was very gracious and visited with us after the game and stayed until all requests were satisfied. We believe all the kids had a great time. Thank you to **Ally Kubo** for helping arrange this.

As you all know, our big fundraising event this quarter is our 7th annual OCO Casino Night at OCBC, Saturday, February 16, 2008, 6 -11 pm.

The majority of the net proceeds are used to pay for the gym costs of our basketball practices and ball handling clinics and for our other sports programs. As previously mentioned, our basketball program runs at a sizeable deficit. Thus, the success of Casino Night dramatically impacts the fiscal well-being of OCO. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Please sell and purchase Casino Night tickets, solicit sponsors and donations, build amazing silent auction baskets for people to bid on, and of course volunteer your time. There are hundreds and hundreds of volunteer hours that are consumed to make Casino Night a success. I encourage you to go up to your division representative and ask, "How can I help?" or contact **Glenn Tanaka** at gtanaka@aol.com. We would be so appreciative of your support of OCO!

Lastly, as we enter the middle of the SEYO Winter season, I would like to take a moment to remind ourselves that the games are more than about winning or losing. It is not surprising our competitive nature focuses on the game scores,

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ELECTIONS...

Nominations are currently being accepted for various OCO board of director positions. Elections will take place in February.

Interested in getting involved? For more information, please contact Ellen Natsume at enatsume@cox.net.

OCO Youth Groups

Octagons _____

Hello, everyone!

I cannot believe how quickly this year has gone by. Well, this past year we helped with many different events that not only benefited the attendees, but us as individuals. Being sophomores, we are becoming more responsible and mature about our actions and we take every event as a new lesson. Some of the events we participated in were Lite the Nite, OCO Halloween Party, Thanksgiving Canned Food Drive, Hyland Home Gift Collection, and Mochi Tsuki cleanup.

Our upcoming project is a bake sale we are planning to host at Rancho's gymnasium. All of the money we raise is going to the troops fighting in the war. We want to purchase many needed items that they do not have, and we hope our efforts will help them. I cannot wait to see what our next event will be and who we will be helping next.

*Tara Bokosky
President, Tenth Grade Octagons*



10th Grade Octagon Officers: VP Programs/Activities - Michelle Joyce, President - Tara Bokosky, VP Membership - Dane Okuda, VP Programs/Activities - Cody Sakurao, Treasurer - Nicole Auerbach, Secretary - JJ James, Co-Sergeant-at-Arms - Skyler Jinkaw, (Not pictured: Co-Sergeant-at-Arms - Taylor Frank)

Junior Optimists _____



Junior Optimist Officers: Treasurer - Clayton Takeuchi, President - Michael Chan, Secretary - Cherilyn Blandford, Vice President - Erica Sugimoto, Activities/Membership - Kara Shimazaki

Hey, everyone! Did you have a happy holiday?

Last December was a busy month for the Junior Optimists. First, we went to Tokyo Towers in Los Angeles and delivered rice cracker gift bags to the residents. It was so much fun, even though we didn't do a lot. **Kacie Hitomi** was our chairperson of this amazing event. We decorated the senbei (rice cracker) bags with origami.

We also went to Health Bridge Hospital and gave gifts to the patients. **Greg Karapoulios** did a great job as chairperson of this event. While we were there, we made door knob decorations to pass out along with the gifts.

In late December, we helped out at Mochi Tsuki. We had to clean the pots that were used to cook the sweet rice. It was a tiring job. The chairpeople of this event were **Justin** and **Jeffrey Kamo**.

This month, we had a fun event at Boomers. Thanks to **Nicole Sakamoto**, **Alexis Bartlett**, and **Julia Ngo** for organizing this event.

This year we plan to have lots of fun while doing community service and learning various other life skills.

*Michael Chan
Junior Optimist President*

Young Adult Optimists

The Young Adult Optimist Club recently hosted their second annual Christmas toy drive this past December. This year, they chose to donate the toys to the Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC), a pediatric health care hospital that strives to nurture, advance, and protect the health and well-being of children.

From the amazing support and generosity of the numerous SEYO teams, the Young Adult Optimist Club was able to collect over 200 toys this year. On December 22, YAO dropped off all the toys that were collected during our toy drive to CHOC. The employees of CHOC were extremely grateful and appreciative of our donation and assured us that the recipients of the toys would be ecstatic and make excellent use of their gifts.

We thank OCO especially for all their support and generosity with our toy drive this year.

Now that the new year has begun, YAO is very excited about starting a couple of new projects. With the help of **Jesse James** and **Scott Weimer**, YAO teamed with the OCSA basketball teams to collect old cell phones, phone chargers, and batteries. With the great work of chairs Marci Asao and Kasey Matsumoto, YAO will be making the donation of approximately 250 cell phones, phone chargers, and batteries that were donated through the OCSA basketball teams. These cell phones will be donated to H.O.P.E., an organization that provides support and services to abandoned and/or abused women and children.

YAO has also started planning the 2nd annual Nikkei Awareness Conference for this upcoming spring. Look for more information on this great event in the future!!

Happy New Year!

*Christine Kimoto
Board of Directors
Chair - Toy Drive*

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but there is so much more to learn and experience from the games. Feeling the joy of victory and the disappointment of defeat, while important, is only a small aspect of the game experience. We want to emphasize the value of team work, giving it your all and good sportsmanship. Those are life-lessons that transcend the outcome of any game.

Perhaps more importantly, there is the bonding and building of friendships that in many cases will last a lifetime. Many of these kids will continue to play SEYO in high school and NAU or OCSA in their adult life. And while exercise and staying in shape is part of the reason they continue to play, it is more about seeing their friends and going out to dinner afterward.

So, while you are observing your kids in the "heat of battle," shout out encouraging comments and show your support for the team in their quest for a victory. However, the real prize they are playing for is not the championship trophy, but rather the lifetime friendships they are forging.

Wishing you all a very joyous and prosperous New Year!

*Wallace Chan
OCO President*

Coaches' Corner

Happy New Year!

Three games into the season and it seems as if everything is going smoothly. However, January and February are our busiest months. How can this be? Practice on Saturday, and games on Sunday . . . and don't forget about VISIONS, Chapman Night, General Meeting - Junior-Upper games, Casino Night, and Tri-Star. All are important and all are for our kids. We lose practice time, but gain so much more.

I know you have heard about all of these events, but this year's Junior-Upper game on January 19 was what OCO is all about. In the past we would have three games, BJU-Blue, BJU-White, and GJU games. This year we only had one team in BJU-Blue and one team in GJU and two teams in BJU-White. OCO-2 vs OCO-3 is a game of OCO players, but, more importantly, OCO Junior Optimist. I am not saying these players are better JOs than the other Junior players. All the Junior players exemplify what we are striving for — good ball players on the court, but better community service citizens. What I am talking about is our support for the Junior players who have graduated from our youth program and are ready for our high school OCTAGON program. Hopefully in seven years we will see all our Tinkos playing in this game.

Just a reminder to turn in your OCO Tournament forms; tournament season is just around the corner! Finally, I would like to congratulate Coach Mike Bokosky of Chapman University with his 259th career head coaching victory surpassing Ralph Welch for the school's all-time wins mark. Mike has been a longtime OCO friend and from a quote in the *OC Register* Mike stated, "Staying at Chapman University instead of pursuing a Division I coaching career was his second best decision he has made in his life . . ." His first was being part of the OCO family. That's of course by marrying our own Neddie Bokosky.

In addition, our own Noelani Vilorio was named OC Player of the Week. Noelani is currently a junior at Huntington Beach High School. She was also named MVP of the Nike Tournament of Champions in Chandler, Arizona.

bob kubo
OCO Basketball Committee

Mottainai

Contributed by Bob Kubo

There is a children's book in Japan, "*Mottainai Grandma*," about a Japanese grandmother teaching her grandchildren "mottainai" (do not waste.) It brings back many childhood memories about the time I spent with my "bachan" (grandma). Which got me thinking that others probably have their own memories of various "lessons" they learned from their grandparents. These "lessons" are our parents' heritage. It is my hope that this heritage will be passed down to our children.

I always thought my dad was cheap, saving all the scrap wood after a project. He would often say, "Hey, don't throw that away, it is a perfectly good piece of wood." I hate to say it, years later, I have my wood pile for the "next" project. And then there was the joy in my dad's face, when he got a great deal at the grocery store. There were these chicken pot pies (not Marie Callender's) that cost a dime — they were horrible! But "mottainai" if we did not finish every bite and there was no culinary joy at dinner or lunch until the last chicken pot pie was eaten.

Once, at dinner there was a pile of cooked carrots on my plate. For some reason, I didn't want to finish them. My father told me that I had to finish my carrots. So being the obedient child, I stuffed all the remaining carrots into my mouth, and then promptly gagged on them spewing the carrots on the dinner table. My mother got upset at my dad for forcing me to eat them. Years later, I found myself telling my sons, "you better finish those peas on your plate, and if you throw them up, you'll have to eat that too!"

... I think that many of us can still hear their bachan saying, "You will go blind if you do not eat every grain of rice."

Ahh...the memories! To be more philosophical, it is "the whole idea that we are part of nature, and should be in a very harmonious relationship with nature is very much a deep part of Japanese psychology," a quote from Yuko Kawanishi, a sociologist at Tokyo Gakugei University. For more information and my inspiration for this article, visit <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=14054262&sc=emaf>

Things to Do, People to See...

Contributed by Melissa Nishimura

Thought these Japanese American National Museum events/exhibits might be of interest to the OCO families. I think the younger generation will find them fun and interesting.

A new art exhibit, "One Way or Another: Asian American Art Now" begins February 10 through May 4, 2008. The exhibit brings together 17 artists from across the country who defy the definitive conception of Asian American art.

Community Day is February 16, 2 p.m. The Day of Remembrance marks President Roosevelt's signing of Executive Order 9066 in 1942, which authorized the unconstitutional forced removal of 120,000 Japanese Americans from the West Coast and Hawaii during WWII.

The Japanese American National Museum is located at 369 East First Street, Los Angeles, located on the corner of First Street and Central Avenue in the Little Tokyo Historic District.

OCO Casino Night

**Saturday, February 16, 2008
6-11 p.m.**

Orange County Buddhist Church

\$30/person includes \$100 in chips, dinner by
Cherrystones, yummy desserts

Featuring: Silent Auction Baskets, Pop-a-Balloon,
Money Booth, Blackjack, Craps, Roulette

Texas Hold'em Competition - pre-register via email
Todd@Hoida.net

Questions or need tickets? Contact Diane Otsuka
at 714-943-3101

Jabber from the Editor

As I embarked on this edition, and saw the messages from the various contributors . . . it got me thinking about the new year. I thought about this email chain I had seen . . . and decided to take an excerpt from it and pass it on to you.

- I wish you enough...a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them.
- I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright no matter how gray the day may appear.
- I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun even more.
- I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive and everlasting.
- I wish you enough pain so that even the smallest of joys in life may appear bigger.
- I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting.
- I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess.
- I wish you enough hellos to get you through the final good-bye.

They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but then an entire life to forget them.

TAKE TIME TO LIVE! I wish you all "enough!"

Stacey Yoshinaga
Editor

Rak Kan News Photographer - Neddie Bokoyski



Orange Coast Optimist Club

Newsletter

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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.