



## Message from the President

Recently I was asked to give some background on OCO to those attending the Youth Appreciation Dinner in April. Not that I have a great memory or am an expert on OCO history, it is just that I am the President of OCO and this is one of the things a president does. Well, having a rather bad memory lately, and wanting to sound like I knew what I was talking about, I decided to check-out our website to see what I could find there to use in my presentation. I was pleasantly surprised to find the link "Who We Are." This was perfect; I thought to myself, this was the very topic I was asked to talk about! Well, to my surprise, there were only two words on this entire page:

### Under Construction



I said the words out loud: "Under Construction"?! After a moment I chuckled at myself since this seemed to be the theme of my personal life lately with the remodel of my kitchen, bathrooms, and garage. I definitely felt like I was under construction lately and not my home. Then I wondered, Is this what life is all about? Is this what OCO is all about? Are we actually "Under Construction" at all times, forever being updated, renewed, changed, and improved upon?

I thought about it and decided that, yes, "Under Construction" does describe who OCO is. Although some things we do the same year after year, other things we may only do one time and then never again. Some changes we bring upon ourselves while some changes just happen. But over the years, whatever project we happen to be taking on, the outcome, the finished project, seems to make us a better place to be. And, like my home projects, you wonder if everything will come out okay, but when the project is finished, you are glad you waited for the end results.

Our basketball program seems to be "under construction." After over 20 years as the Basketball Director for Orange Coast Optimist, **Jesse James** has decided to pass the ball but will continue as Gym Commissioner. Jesse met with the coaches and then an announcement was made to all the members at the Steak Dinner last Saturday by SEYO reps **Marsha Hamamoto**, **Bob Kubo** and **Vince Hamasaki**. Jesse addressed those in attendance and, as always, had a few words to share.

There is no question that our youth basketball program is what it is today because of **Jesse's** vision and ability to get others to take action towards a common goal. I thank **Jesse** for his dedication to the program and for all these many hours he has spent living and breathing OCO, and for bringing in many wonderful new members, **Judy James** in particular!

Even though **Jesse** will no longer be serving as basketball director, our program is in good hands with our new "Basketball Committee" members: **Marsha Hamamoto**, **Bob Kubo** and **Vince Hamasaki**. During the basketball meeting **Wallace Chan**, **Alvin Hagino**, **Caryn Ito**, and **Mitch Okuda** volunteered to help serve on this committee. So, if needed, **Marsha**, **Bob** and **Vince** will have an amazing pool of seasoned and capable people to call upon. Fortunately for us, **Jesse** and **Judy**, along with a couple hundred dedicated OCO members, have spent years "working on our game." The plays are all there and our dynamic "Three-O" will be making sure these plays are carried out and the OCO tradition continues. So get ready for another great basketball season!

In addition to being at the Steak Dinner when **Jesse** announced his retirement, we were served up a delicious dinner buffet by **Diane** and **Jimmy Otsuka** and Co. Now, this "Co." represents about 20+ people who helped cook, set up, serve up and clean up. All the grub was so good, it really made winning another can of W-D 40 worth it! All 200 tickets were sold. Thanks to all of

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Junior Optimists assisted at the Cypress Little League Challenger Baseball Program. Right - Nicole Auerbach on second base. Far Right - Lam Ho, Jordan Hamasaki and Dalton Doi pointing the way to home plate.



## Junior Optimists

The Junior Optimists volunteered on three Saturday mornings to help out at the Cypress Little League Challenger Baseball Program. Challenger Baseball is a program for special needs people ranging in age from six years to adults. They play two to three innings of baseball with their "buddies" assisting them with batting, running, and fielding.

It was wonderful to see our JO's interact with their buddies throughout the games. Our JO's were very helpful, encouraging, and had a lot of fun with their buddy and the other players. Some of the JO's had to figure out ways to motivate and keep their players focused on the game. I received numerous compliments from the parents of the special needs kids. Some of them loved the way our girls interacted with the kids. Others spoke about how our guys were "real buddies" to the kids, not out there because they had to be.

Acknowledgements need to go out to our own **Jeanne Tsuruta** who set this up for us and to **Jon Peat**, Chief Commissioner, for giving us the opportunity to help out. I would also like to thank **Donna** and **Mitch Okuda** for running the 9 a.m. sessions and their daughter **Lani** and some of her friends for helping out. I also want to thank **Eric Hamamoto** and **Ron Shimoide** for cutting their practices short so the 8<sup>th</sup> grade guys can go and help.

At our last JO meeting at the end of April, we voted to help out at OCBC's Obon on July 16-17. On Saturday, our JO's will be working the snow cone booth with the Octagons. Also, some of the JO's and their advisors will be participating in the Obon Dance.

Vince Hamasaki  
Advisor

## Octagons

April was busy, busy, busy! The Octagons were on the prowl lending helping hands and preparing to dance the night away at this year's Seyo Dance. On April 9 a committee organized by several Octagon members collaborated with other Seyo organizations to help make the dance a success. The OCO committee consisted of **Whitney Itano**, **Dean Otsuka**, **Kasey Matsumoto**, **Stefanie Kato**, **Bryce Kubo**, **Shannon Nishinaka** and myself who gathered ideas, met with the Seyo board, and created an event where people could socialize and make new friends. All proceeds were given to A3M, and tons of positive feedback was received, which was fantastic. Don't forget the people who set up and stayed to help clean up. Octagons took on the jobs like good children completing the fun-filled night.

**Lance Kanamori** chaired Hanamatsuri held April 16. Octagon members manned the snow cone booth, getting sticky and wet making yummy snow cones which satisfied many customers' taste buds.

Octagons also helped baby-sit children at the Keiro Luau Bingo event held at OCBC. While the event occurred, Octagon members played with little children keeping them busy and smiling.

**Bryce Kubo** chaired Junior Blind Olympics, where members helped out participants and kept a positive attitude, always willing to help.

In May our monthly meeting was combined with a movie night. Following the meeting Octagon members kicked back and relaxed, enjoying the movie, *Kicking and Screaming*. We all went to The Block together, carpooling with the advisors and older members in their cool rides. Thanks to all the drivers! The movie night was an event for all members to socialize and have fun.

Congratulations to all graduating seniors and Octagon scholarship winners who were awarded at the Scholarship dinner: **Dean Otsuka**, **Whitney Itano**, **Taka Suzuki**, **Kenny Kawamoto** and **Amanda Yoshida**. Good luck to all of you in the future!!! I hope next month will be a success! Keep up the super job, Octagons!

Marci Asao  
Octagon President

# Nikkei Games 2005

## *Games for the Generation*

July 30 through August 21, 2005

Deadline to register for the various events is fast approaching. Please visit [www.nikkeigames.org](http://www.nikkeigames.org) for more information, as well as application forms for the following events:

Adult Basketball  
Golf  
Karate  
Track and Field  
Volleyball  
Youth Basketball (3-on-3)

Take part in the fun!

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you and then some...it looks like we met our goal to award \$10,000 in college scholarships at our next Youth Appreciation Dinner! **Marsha Hamamoto** was the chair of our Scholarship Program and Youth Appreciation Dinner held in April. From the money raised during our Steak Dinner last year, the judges awarded the \$10,000 to sixteen different recipients to help them with their education this fall! Our judges had a tough job of meticulously screening, interviewing, and discussing each applicant to come up with these final sixteen. Thank you again to **Greg Kimura, Ellen Natsume, Sue Blandford** and **Marsha** for doing such a fantastic job!

And thank **YOU** for all the big and small ways you help make OCO what it is!!

*Neddie Bokosky  
OCO President*

## Better Late Than Never

A big thank you to: **Doc** for taking charge of cooking the food at this year's OCO Easter party, **Jesse James** for buying the food, and everyone who came and brought food...because it is all about the food. Thank you to: **Eric Hamamoto** and the Rancho ASB officers for making the great balloon arch and setting up the stereo equipment, **Ellen Natsume** for the cotton candy machine...always a hit with the kids, and to **Stacey Yoshinaga** and **Ann Joyce** for helping me shop for the toys, **Donna Okuda** for always making creative crafts for the kids, **Vince Hamasaki** and the Junior Optimists for help with the redemption booth and the games, **Bob Kubo** and **Michael Hoida** for organizing the OCO Octagons to fill all those eggs and having the egg hunt on a special lawn of gym floor.

*May Auerbach  
Easter Party Chairperson*

**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.

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

**Jabber from the Editor**

"Live each day to its fullest" is what I wish for all of us. It saddens me to see people sweating over the little things, that I know in the moment feel like huge roadblocks. I think that we often get caught up with schedules and work and we fail to enjoy or even notice the little things. Many times I feel as though we are all missing great opportunities because we have blinded ourselves.

So, as the summer begins . . . and you know it will be over before you know it . . . be sure to slow down, appreciate the things you have, and most of all . . . have fun!

*Stacey Yoshinaga*

Photos provided by Vince Hamasaki

Interested in contributing to the *Rak Kan Newsletter*?



## **Orange Coast Optimist Club**

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