



Message from the President

Winter season is on the horizon!

If you've been around for as long as I have (12 years), you know why I'm excited about the month of October. Yes, it's the beginning of the winter season and that means the start of "basketball season" for our kids. They'll go out there on the courts to learn the fundamentals of the game, learn the value of competition, and learn sportsmanship in defeat and in victory. More importantly, though, it means I get to be around all of those energetic, fun kids.

OCO has become a way of life for me and my family. We thoroughly enjoy the game of basketball as I'm sure you all do, but the value of the "other" activities takes the OCO experience to another level. Here's a short list of activities to consider:

- October: **Halloween Costume Party** (*Just plain fun!*)
- November: **Thanksgiving Canned Food Drive** (*Dinner deliveries to the less fortunate*)
- December: **Hylond Homes Christmas Party** (*A party that our Octagons assist with for the Hylond Home patients who are mentally challenged*)
 - Mochi Tsuki (*A Japanese cultural activity to bring in the new year*)
- January: **Tri Star Competition; Visions** (*Bringing out the creative side of our kids*)
- February: **Essay Contest; Casino Night** (*A night for the adults, as well as our largest fund-raiser*)
- March/April: **Easter Party** (*OCO kids celebrating spring with our special guest: foster kids*)
- May: **Youth Recognition Dinner** (*Where we award scholarships and recognize deserving students*)
- June - **Steak Dinner** (*Help us raise funds for our future scholars while enjoying an awesome steak*); **OCO Junior Golf Camp; OCO Volleyball**
- July: **OCO Basketball Camp**
- August: **Nikkei Games** (*Games for the Generations*)
- September: **Installation Banquet** (*Join us in installing your new Executive Board*)

There are even more activities for your children when they join the OCO clubs listed below.

- Junior Optimist - for 7th and 8th graders*
- Octagons - for 9th through 12th graders*

Now you're looking at the list of activities and thinking to yourself ?#!. Don't let this scare you away. Get involved in a few of the*

2006 Optimist of the Year - Nancy Sakakura

Exemplifying all that an "Optimist" should be, Nancy Sakakura received this award at the Installation Dinner on September 22.

2006 - 2007 OCO Executive Board

President - **Nori Nishida**
 President-elect - **Wallace Chan**
 First Vice President - **Ellen Natsume**
 Second Vice President - **Dwayne Yoshinaga**
 Secretary - **Judy James**
 Treasurer - **Stacey Yoshinaga**
 Past President - **Neddie Bokosky**

Board of Directors - **May Auerbach, Staci Fujita, Alvin Hagino, Caryn Ito, Ann Joyce, Jameson Lee, Teddy Matsumoto, John Sun, Karen Uyematsu**
 SEYO Representatives - **Marsha Hamamoto, Bob Kubo**
 Octogan Advisors - **Bob Kubo, Howard Kunihiro, Judy James**
 Rancho Octagon Advisor - **Eric Hamamoto**
 Junior Optimist Advisors - **Vince Hamasaki, May Auerbach, Stacey Yoshinaga**
 Sergeant of Arms - **Teddy Matsumoto**
 OCO Webmaster - **Chris Kato**

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Octagons



Meeting prior to the Steak Dinner

The year is actually over; it seemed so short. This year was tough, being the largest group of Octagons so far, but we had a lot better turnout than what I had expected. With 100 Octagons we were always able to fill positions for events without a problem. My job was a lot harder than what I had originally expected. I thought that it wouldn't be so hard to lead a group, but a group this size was especially difficult. But no matter the size, I feel that our Octagon group did a great deal of service to our community, which is what it says on our job description. As Gandhi once said, "You must be the change you seek on the world." I feel that we have taken that idea to heart and we took the challenge to change the world. In one of our events we had a bake sale to raise money for Mr. Cliff Okada, who is in the Peace Corps and is trying to build buildings for the people in his African village so they can learn to support themselves.

Not everything was about work with us, though. We had some fun activities throughout the year, with a movie night and a beach party at the end of summer. These activities helped our large group become tighter in friendships. We were able to intermingle and get to know one another better.

I would like to say good luck to our next president, Ms. Lani Okuda, and our new advisor for next year, Mrs. Judy James, on a successful year. I know that they will both do a great job.

Bryce Kubo
OCO Octagon President, 2005-06

Summer is a time of rest and relaxation for most high school students. It's a time to hang out with friends till late at night and wake up late in the afternoon. It's a time to not think about homework or tests and to just have fun. This summer the OCO Octagons did more than just that. This young group of high school teenagers participated in several different community service activities this summer.

During the month of July the active youths ran a snow cone booth at the OCBC Obon. Many of the members helped by working in shifts every several hours for the two-day event. Then in August the Octagons helped put together all the T-shirt bags for the Nikkei games and they also kept score for some of the sporting events that weekend.

Although they have been busy with serving the community, they have also managed to have fun. To end the summer, before they all went back to school, the Octagons had their annual end of summer bonfire. They played in the water, ate hot dogs and burgers, and ended the night with s'mores. What better way to end the summer?

Now as school has started so has a new year full of more community service activities. This September 16 the Octagons, along with many members of OCO, will be participating in the Light the Night Walk for Kai Fujita. This walk around Angel Stadium is in support of Kai and is put on by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

So as summer has ended and fall has begun, the Octagons look forward to new officers and new events.

Stephanie Masamitsu
Vice President of Activities



At the Light the Night Walk

Junior Optimist / Young Adults Optimists

It's been a while since we've had a Junior Optimist report. The club has done a lot throughout the year, but here's a highlight of what took place this past summer:

*Nikkei Games - At the Track and Field event, we helped the organizers with whatever they asked us to do. At the 3-on-3 and coed basketball games, many JO's were participants as well as score flippers and runners. I would like to first acknowledge and thank the following for volunteering for both days: **Nicole Auerbach, JJ James, Skyler Jinkawa, Dane Okuda, Kayla Shimasaki, and Allyson Yoshinaga.** I want to also acknowledge and thank the other JO's who volunteered and those who worked more than one 1½-to-3 hour shift: **Chelsea Breesch, Kasidy Gibo, Taylor Hamasaki, Lynne Higashigawa, Taka Ishiwata, Alyson Kinoshita, Justin Lee, Samuel Ou, Nick Sugimoto, Bryan Tanabe, Michael Tomura, Michael Wong and Steven Wright.***

In fact, one JO's alertness while flipping the score helped saved a 3-on-3 championship game from an embarrassing situation. This same JO, along with two of his teammates, also volunteered to step in and play in the high school division so one team would not forfeit.

*The past year - I thank our JO Officers: Presidents **Tara Bokosky** and **Taka Ishiwata**, Treasurer **Sydney Bingabing** and Activities Chair, **Chase Hoida** for the job they did when given responsibility. All but Tara are returning, and I hope they will be given more of an opportunity to display the leadership skills they have.*

*I congratulate the 8th graders and wish them well in their high school years, and I appreciate their time and service in OCO Junior Optimist. I also thank **Donna Okuda** for her efforts and support this past year. She does so many things at OCO events. She felt badly that she could not always help out with the JO's also, but her leadership skills prior to our events helped greatly. I also thank **Pat Doi** and **Donna Murata** for their help especially at the Halloween and Easter Parties.*

*Moving forward, our new co-advisors will be **May Auerbach** and **Stacey Yoshinaga.** The three of us will work together and implement their ideas with some of the things we have done in the past few years. I believe in giving responsibility immediately; therefore, May and Stacey's imprint will be felt at the first meeting events.*

Our first meeting is planned for Saturday, October 7, the first day of practice. We'll have sign-ups, possible elections and prepare for the Halloween Party later in October. More details later.

Vince Hamasaki
JO Advisor

Young Adults Optimist Club

*I am really excited to announce the formation of a brand new Optimist club in Orange County: the Young Adults Optimist Club of Fountain Valley. This is a new group formed of "Young Adults" who want to stay involved in the community, stay in touch with their friends, and also make new friends along the way. It is a great way to continue our involvement now that high school is over. Thanks to all the great support of our parent club, OCO, and our advisor, **Judy James**, we have some big dates coming up that we invite all interested individuals to attend: (an Information Meeting was held at Tanaka Farms on Saturday, September 30), and our first official meeting is scheduled for Saturday, October 27. Also, we invite you all to attend our Charter Installation Banquet which will be held in mid-November (details to follow).*

So, if you are "too old for Octagons now, but too young for the Optimist Club," then definitely check out YAOptimist! For more information, feel free to contact Michelle Ito or Nicole Nishinaka at YAOptimist@yahoo.com, or call Michelle at 714/328-4792.

Michelle Ito
President

From the Bench . . .

OCO Basketball Committee

Marsha Hamamoto
Caryn Ito
Bob Kubo
Clay Sakurao
Mark Sugimura

Hope everyone had a great summer, and is ready to hit the court running.

Last year was our first year as a committee and was a huge learning experience for us and for you too! What we discovered was our identity: General Manager, Coach, Public Relations, Referee, and Player for the OCO Basketball Program. However, not CEO/Owner – that is the OCO Board. Policy/Guidelines/Rules were all developed by past OCO Basketball Commissioners (BBC) and now it is the Committee's responsibility. Approval is still the Board's responsibility. Like any rule that is written, there are ways around it. As hard as we try, we can never make it foolproof and do not want to, because behind all policies, guidelines, and rules is the OCO Philosophy; it is the philosophy that you must abide. It is the basic philosophy for all Optimist Clubs: "Friend of Youth" and "Bringing Out the Best in Kids." One of the most controversial rule is the Tournament Rule, and the most controversial section is the rule of when tournaments may be played. As many of you know, OCO was the founder and the force that got smaller basketballs and lower hoops to SEYO. In the interest of being a friend of youth and to provide the equipment to bring out the best in kids, it made perfect sense to use smaller basketballs and lower hoops. However, it barely passed in SEYO. OCO decided if we believed in this so strongly we needed to demonstrate this, not only during the SEYO season but throughout the whole year. Thus, a philosophy inspired the rule. The other reason is the tournament environment; it does not always bring out the best of kids (parents and coaches too). Playing in the tournament atmosphere we sometimes lose perspective of the bigger picture. I am not saying your players, parents, and coaches are going to get out of control at the tournament. However, there are others that we cannot control, making it hard to bring out the best in kids. All points of discussion, and we are happy (smiling, wearing my PR hat) to discuss this with everyone.

Running out of white paper, I need to thank everyone for their support and especially the original seven BBC members, **Wallace Chan, Alvin Hagino, Caryn Ito, Marsha Hamamoto, Vince Hamasaki, Mitch Okuda**, and myself. These were the seven who got us afloat and later it was **Caryn, Marsha, Vince, Wallace**, and me who kept the ship on course. For 2006-07, we will be changing the crew adding **Mark Sugamura** and **Clay Sakurao**; leaving are Wallace and Vince. We all want to thank **Wallace** and **Vince**. I do not know where the BBC would be without all their hard work. Do not worry . . . they are not leaving OCO: Wallace (OCO President-Elect, Tinko Director, Practice Scheduler, Coach, and of course Mr. Nikkei Games Basketball) and Vince (OCO NJB Director, SEYO Rep, and Coach) will be around.

Let us know how we are doing and if the ship needs to make a course adjustment...thanks for your support!

Bob Kubo
BBC Member

DISCOVERNIKKEI.ORG

By Melissa Nishimura

Launched in March 2005, and accessible in four languages - English, Japanese, Spanish, and Portuguese - www.DiscoverNikkei.org offers those interested in exploring the world of the Nikkei in both an historical and contemporary context. A wealth of information can be found in the Nikkei Resources section on Nikkei immigration and various other topics. One can browse through the information organized by broad topic or do a search in the individual databases. The Real People Multimedia section offers first person stories of the Nikkei experiences through video clip interviews with Japanese Americans, Canadians, Peruvians and others. In the Community Forum section, one will find articles and a Bulletin Board for online discussion and events posting.

In the Make History section of the Discover Nikkei Web site, one can conveniently create a personal online digital album collection of photos, videos, music files, and more. Nikkei Album is a unique way to preserve your family's history, or an organization's history and artifacts, for teachers to create interactive educational materials and lesson plans, for individuals to preserve their experiences with friends or their hobbies, or for artists to compile a portfolio of their work. You can also browse through album collections and individual items by subject, location, date, or by keyword search.

Check it out today...www.DiscoverNikkei.org!

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activities and build on it. That's how I did it and look at where that got me. Yes, you too can be the next OCO President. In all seriousness, give yourself an opportunity to really enjoy all that OCO has to offer. Your kids will appreciate it, and one day you'll look back and feel the same way.

Thank you for making OCO a successful organization. You are the difference.

*Nori Nishida
OCO President*

Upcoming Events:

OCO Halloween Party
Saturday, October 28

OCO Golf Tournament - All funds raised will be donated to the "Go For Broke" foundation
Monday, December 4
Mesa Verde Country Club

(For more information, contact your coach or visit the OCO website, www.ocoyouth.org)

Writers NEEDED!

Anyone interested in writing an article or two for the *Rak Kan Newsletter*?

Come on...share your writing talent with the organization!

Interested? Please contact Stacey . . . stacey@att.net.

Fun in the Sun and a *Day at the Docks* with OCO!

By Justin Yamasaki

It sure is nice when the stars line up and a game plan comes together. That's exactly what happened, *and then some*, for our annual OCO Day at the Docks! Between 7 and 11 a.m., OCO kids caught, literally, thousands of fish. **Grant Nishida** had the high count of 166 fish and several others just quit fishing after catching 100. The secret bait was cut anchovies and squid and after a while, bare hooks were wiggled in the water for a bite! This wasn't *fishing*, it was *catching*! These kids caught and released more fish in four hours than most people catch in a lifetime! After catching so many fish, we enjoyed the most delicious fish or cheeseburger lunch at Queen's Wharf Restaurant, right on the water!

A Special "**Thank You**" to our many sponsors, including our own OCO member **Patrick Maehara**, owner of Queen's Wharf Restaurant, for allowing us to fish off the docks and to **the Okuda family**, also OCO members, for their generous donation. Our other sponsors included **Daiwa Corporation**, **Andy's Fishing Tackle**, **New Fishall Bait** and the many volunteers who woke up extra early to lend a helping hand. Without these sponsors who believe in our kids, it would have been just another day.



Spotlighting our Optimists and other highlights

Community Service Award Honoree, Ted Matsumoto

In August, the Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council honored various individuals for their contributions to the community. Ted Matsumoto received this award, representing OCO. Thanks, Ted, for all that you do to enrich the youth of OCO!

Many of Ted's volunteer activities involve sports in various organizations. He continues his 14-year coaching career with OCO basketball that began when his daughter Kasey was five and has added daughters Jodi and Dale's teams to his resume. Ted also conducts basketball scorekeeping clinics with Marsha Hamamoto for Southeast Youth Organization (SEYO) players, schedules games and scorekeepers for SEYO and OCSA, and coordinates referees for the two leagues with Ed Kamiyama. In 2001 he organized OCO's volleyball program with the goal of teaching fundamentals to students in fifth through twelfth grades. For the Nikkei Games, he accepted appointments as Vice Chairman of the program as well as Nikkei Games Chairman for indoor sports which includes basketball, volleyball, and bowling. Additionally, Ted schedules the 3-on-3 basketball tournament for the City of La Palma.

Community activities other than sports also benefit from Ted's participation. He is serving his second term on the OCO Board of Directors and is Sergeant at Arms. He was honored as Optimist of the Year in 2003, Ted's community service extends beyond his OCO activities. He is also active with the Orange County Buddhist Church (OCBC), assisting with their various fund-raising activities including Hanamatsuri and Obon. For the past five years, he has made his daughters proud by serving as the OCBC Girl Scout Cookie chairperson.

Ted and his wife Judy have been married for 19 years and are the proud parents of Kasey, Jodi, and Dale. The girls are active in OCO Junior Optimist and Octagons and are on their way to fulfilling Ted and Judy's dream that their daughters will continue the family tradition of giving back to the community.

Race for the Cure

By Judy James

It was wonderful seeing the wave of "Orange" as Team OCO walked in the "Race for the Cure" on Sunday, September 24! We ended up having 73 members. That is so great for our first year...think of how many we will have next year!! We actually surpassed our goal of participants and money raised!!!

Seeing our friend, **Diane Otsuka**, being honored in the sea of "Pink" was more than words can describe and gave us more meaning as to why we were there!!! Thanks, Diane and **Sandie Nakamoto**, for the courage you have shown us...you are quite something else!!

Thank you to the James gang for inviting Team OCO over for lunch after the walk. Thank you, **Jesse**, for preparing a wonderful lunch. It was truly enjoyed by all!

Also..thanks to **Mitch Okuda, Howard Kunihiro, Bill Ito, and Jason James** for helping Jesse prepare the food in the morning!!! It was delicious!

Thanks to **Tami Nishida** for designing our awesome TEAM OCO shirts.

Once again, thanks to each and every one who participated or contributed to this worthwhile cause!

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 communityc

Check out the OCO Website: www.ocoyouth.org

Jabber from the Editor

I saw this quote today and thought it was worth sharing. "I know that you believe you understand what you think I said, but I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant." I think sometimes we get so busy, that we don't take a minute to ensure that we our communicating with others clearly. Taking a few minutes to think about what we are saying, how we are saying it, and ensuring that others heard what we intended to say will only help enrich communication as well as the relationships we have with others. I only bring this up as a reminder, as the world around us seems to be getting more complex, with added stresses . . . embrace your family and friends!

Stacey Yoshinaga

Interested in contributing to the *Rak Kan Newsletter*?
Please contact Stacey at StaceyY@att.net.

Thank you to the following OCO Members who have submitted OCO as recipients of their Company's contribution programs:

Julie Furumizo - Northrop Grumman
Alvin Hagino - Northrop Grumman
Bob Kubo - Sempra Energy
Jameson Lee - Sempra Energy
Stacey Yoshinaga - Washington Mutual

Photos by Ted Matsumoto and Justin Yamasaki



Orange Coast Optimist Club

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