

MINUTES of the December 7, 2021,
Joint Meeting of the Rotary Clubs of Honolulu, South Hilo, Waianae Coast
and Windward Oahu

The December 7, 2021, joint meeting of the four clubs was called to order by Honolulu Club President **Gwen Yamamoto Lau** at noon. She thanked the meeting facilitators, Virtual Meeting Maestro **Brian Dunkel**, Scribe **Nancy White**, and Photographer **Robyn McCreary** and gave Chat instructions. South Hilo Club President Keith Greer introduced the Inspiration Speaker Pat Aiona, Jr. Quoting Churchill who said, "One makes a living with what one gets, and one makes a life with what one gives", Mr. Aiona segued into the value and meaning of what all Rotarians give. President of the Waianae Coast Club Rocky Naeole thanked him and asked Don Arakaki to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. **President Gwen** thanked Mr. Arakaki and introduced **Al Linton** for the singing of the National Anthem. President of the Windward Oahu Club Lori Williams thanked **Mr. Linton**, gave Chat instructions to nonmembers, and welcomed all to the meeting. Rocky Naeole asked Rotary District 5000 Governor Sandy Matsui to share a few words. She also welcomed everyone to the special joint meeting and expressed her appreciation of General Shinseki for speaking on this anniversary, the seventh of December. She referred to the first Asian 4-Star General as a Rotarian at heart and shared his words "that you must love those you lead. You can command but not lead without that love." **President Gwen** thanked the District Governor and introduced retired U.S. Army General Shinseki who was born and raised in Lihue and was the first Asian Secretary of Veterans Affairs in addition to being the first Asian 4-Star General.

General Shinseki began by describing the first time he left Hawaii 62 years ago at the age 16 for a community of Flemington, NJ. Sponsored by a Kiwanis Club he spent 6 months learning about others and them about him. (Including the fact he could speak English, make change with American money, and dribble a basketball.) It was the beginning of a learning journey which led him to West Point and a career in the army. He thanked Rotarians for their investment in youth programs like the one he experienced. General Shinseki served in the army 38 years and led the Dept. of Veteran Affairs 5-1/2 years. He described Pearl Harbor as an enormous tragedy, and one of the greatest losses was that of mutual trust—which led to, among other things, the internment camps for fellow citizens. This Day is more than a memorial, but an important source of lessons. He asked us to never forget all those who marched to war for our country. He briefly described his career and advancement through the Viet Nam War and the Cold War, all of which led to his current position as chair of the Board of Directors of the Army Historical Foundation at the National Museum of the U.S. Army. He cited the importance of preserving the lessons of history. In particular he related the incredible story of Margraten, Netherlands, where annually on Memorial Day, the residents came out *en masse* to honor the buried American soldier whom they had adopted in gratitude for the service performed to safeguard them and their way of life. The General invited us to visit the U.S. Army Museum and to cheer for the right team. Beat Navy. Keith Greer thanked the General for his outstanding presentation and led the Q & A which followed. Fran Tannen led the 4-Way Test, adding a 5th—to have fun. After the singing of Hawaii Aloha, **President Yamamoto Lau** gonged the bell to adjourn the meeting.