

ROTARY CLUB OF HONOLULU
ROYAL HAWAIIAN HOTEL MONARCH ROOM
DATE: MAY 21, 2019
PRESIDING: **PRESIDENT NOMINEE RICH PROCTOR**

Our meeting today was special in many ways. Of course we all can never truly ignore our gorgeous setting, but we also had a splendid number of guests and Rotary superstars. We also had a distinguished speaker, and we were eager to hear what he had to say (understatement of the year). President-Nominee **Rich Proctor** presided, and he did a great job.

Bob Borek's inspiration alluded to our speaker **John Henry Felix's** lifelong activities, leadership with and special recognition by the Boy Scouts (now the Scouts of America). **Bob** has been extremely active in scouting with his keiki, and he noted that the motto of scouting could just as easily be a motto for Rotary, as both organizations seek to improve the world, the life situation of all people and the development of the scout.

Glenda Anderson led us in the pledge of allegiance and **Kent Reinker** and **Carol Sakata** led us in singing our national anthem. **Dawn Marie** welcomed our visitors. **Steve Nikkola's** Rotary Minute relayed a very moving inspirational moment of how much he has grown in and appreciates his participation in our Literacy Program at Kuhio Park Terrace, which is chaired by **Diana Sakurai**. Thanks so much, **Steve**, and of course **Diana**.

Carolann Biederman reported on the progress of this year's Service Above Self campaign. Our goal is \$100,000 and to date 97 wonderful members have contributed \$89,828. We're almost there, folks! Get us over the top before the November 15 deadline.

Don Anderson, who is Acting President of the Club Foundation, gave a great report of where we stand. The Foundation started in 2005 with \$266,000, and today---even though we've used funds therefrom on many occasions---the fund has a balance of \$1,829,000! The Will Henderson Scholarship Fund totaling \$144,000 is part of that corpus, which means the club has \$1,685,000 for club and community projects. Marvelous! **Don** noted the positive trend of club members including our club in their long-range financial planning, and at least half of those have pledged at least \$1,000. Honolulu Rotary rocks!

Robyn McCreary presented an idea that she'd like the club to consider, i.e., collecting and recycling used hearing aids for people who need them. Think it over.

Rich announced that Saturday, May 25, District 5000 is having a spring training session to learn more about "how Rotary works". Good project. Go!

Dave Rolf introduced our fellow member and speaker, **John Henry Felix**. Among **John Henry's** seven decades of accomplishments are soldier, airman, educator, diplomat, businessman, author and humanitarian. He was the U.S. Representative to the South Pacific Commission, which is made up of 24 nations. He was the national chair of the March of Dimes and was one

of the founders of Hawaii Public Radio. He served as Gov. Burns' Chief of Staff; he was a City Council member; he chaired all---get this!---all of the city boards and commissions during the terms of five mayors! He was recognized by the Boy Scouts as their outstanding volunteer, and of course he is currently one of the five members of the board of directors of Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART).

John Henry recently wrote an op-ed article opposing the current plan to have rail go all the way to Ala Moana Center. He feels the construction should pause----please note that word pause----not stop at Middle Street. He feels that the public was defrauded in the information given to them (us!) before we voted (and approved by a small majority) for the entire project. We approved a \$5 billion project, not a \$9 billion project. The original concept was to connect three centers of learning, and decidedly not three shopping centers. **John Henry** feels that Hawaii can be a center of innovation (think driverless cars, just as the new airport shuttles will be driverless), and looks to Singapore as an example of how Hawaii can lead in the future. **John Henry** feels that mistakes have been made, but we can mitigate the damage by pausing (at Middle Street) and assessing different solutions to the problem. **John Henry** used our excellent bus system as an example of how Honolulu can excel in a transportation system. Our bus system is the envy of the nation.

John Henry said that noted Hawaiiana scholar and philosopher George Kanahale encouraged us to always remember the Hawaiian sense of place. He feels that rail could be the catalyst for a better Honolulu if the fourth and final segment of the rail system were underground---yes, even though we're talking about downtown Honolulu. He feels it's wrong to consider having a private "partner" to dig us out of the huge over-budget situation we're in. (P3=public-private partnership).

Summary: Does Rail meet the Four Way Test? I surely have my opinion. What's yours?

Alice Tucker, Scribe