



NOTE: Ed's on vacation, and in his absence, the Lava Flow will be an all-volunteer effort. The usual format will return on October 23.

September 27, 2019

On an absolutely gorgeous day today the Rotary Club of Hilo held their weekly meeting in the back far corner of the restaurant in the Hilo Hawaiian Hotel instead of our usual site in the ballroom downstairs (apparently Nutrien AG Solutions had a large gathering of various vendors to show growers what is available to them to help them in their agricultural endeavors).

With the Ringing of the bell, right on time, everyone in attendance stood for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, led by **Dee Scott**.

Greeters

Greeting everyone today showing up were **Ian Kitagawa** and **Beverly Heikes** (though **Ian** did show up slightly tardy and missed saying hello to all of us who managed to come earlier).



Greeter Beverly Heikes

Visiting Rotarians & Guests



Guest Mark Jimenez

Guests of Rotarians, as announced by **Beverly** today: **Daniel Diamond** guest of **Chris Tamm** **Mark Jimenez** guest of **Tina Jimenez**. **Michelle Mitchell** (our guest speaker)

introduced by **Shane Okimoto**

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- **Tim Beatty** – had a birthday on 09/22
- **Alan** & Zohra **Kusunoki's** wedding anniversary was on 09/24 (47 years)
- **Ian Birnie** – celebrated 32 years in the club on 09/20
- **Jerry Watanabe** – 09/22 marks 30 year with the club
- **Tim Beatty** – on 09/27, a member for 17 years
- **Corey Kawamoto** – 09/27, also a member for 17 years

Announcements

For the “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” gathering, to be held on October 26th starting at the YWCA building in downtown Hilo, **Kerry Glass** encouraged all to either walk (in women's shoes of course) that morning or to pledge their support for this program to help stop all kinds of violence against women. It's a great event with a large variety of people participating, from Public Figures on down to anyone interested in offering their support. Plus, it's fun to see all the men trying to walk in women's shoes.

And while he had the mic, **Kerry** called up **Kathleen McGilvray** and announced she has attained a Paul Harris Plus 1 status and gave her the appropriate pin. Congrats **Kathleen**.



Kerry Glass presents a pin to Kathleen McGilvray

That same day, though in the evening, **Marcia Prose** said there will be a costume party/dinner function at Nani Mau

Gardens to help in another charitable fundraising event. See her for tickets and more information.

Wally Wong is soliciting donations of anykind candies for a Hilo Kids Party to be held at the Edith K Tennis Stadium near Halloween. Most anything will be acceptable. And the Student Dictionaries are about ready and should be ready to be given to the various classes at a number of schools. He still needs more volunteers to help in the distribution of the dictionaries, so you are willing to help, contact him for the days, times and schools on his list.

Corey reminded everyone of the infamous **Chicken Hekka** party we have every year, to be held on Thursday, 10/17 at the AJA Hall (right across from the Golf Course – We've all been there at one time or another so it's easy to find).

Randy Hart talked about the “One World Event” coming up, which various Clubs are participating in, much of which is centered on Bali Incentives and the donations of prosthetics (of which **Treena Breyfogle** has contributed enough for the purchase of 3 devices). A large gathering will be ending up that evening at Doug Adams' home (a Rotarian from one of the other Clubs) so see Randy to participate and make reservations at Doug's party, since, for sure, spacing is limited there.

Happy Dollars

Mike Meyer was just happy, for no good reason except that's the way he normally is - \$20.



Mike Meyer

Kerry (again) was exceedingly happy for honest people as he lost his wallet somewhere at Home Depot which was picked up by someone in the parking lot and taken to the customer service desk there in the store. Amazing! \$20.

Chris Tamm is all excited about the World Cup of Rugby going on now for 6 weeks and commented about some of the matches, including some upsets (in Rugby?). \$20.

Nancy Cabral contributed \$100 to the YMCA event and mentioned she would like all the help she can get from

us for her involvement as our 100th President next year and for the celebration party late next year honoring our Club's long standing. All volunteers are welcomed and needed.

Randy gave \$50 for the Brew Crew event held at Kona Brewing Co. last week.

Bobby Dugar mentioned the Aloha Paws adoption event the Humane Society hosted and a lot of pets found happy homes. \$5.

Pres. Anna Liu thanked everyone for responding to her email request regarding our having meetings here in the restaurant rather than downstairs. Not sure what the final tally was for, at least for next week, the meeting will again be up here, not downstairs. \$20.

Guest Speaker

Today we are honored in having **Dr Michelle Mitchell** talk to us about something we are all aware of – the Hawaii Doctor Shortage.



President Anna and Dr. Michelle Mitchell

Pres. Anna read off a brief bio of **Dr. Mitchell**, who is a Board Certified Family Physician, caring for patients of all ages. Dr. Mitchell chose Family Medicine for its diverse scope of practice and focused on the patient and disease effect on the family as opposed to focusing on the disease itself. She believes medicine is collaboration between physician, patient and family.

In a very enlightening & informative slide presentation, Dr. Mitchell began by stating companies of all sizes have lost approximately \$530 billion (gads that's a lot) for all sorts of various health reasons regarding their employees. Not only being sick and taking time off but people still work when unhealthy (allergies, back pain, arthritis, colds, etc.) causing problems and lots of non-productive time at work (themselves and the others around them). Costs to a

company are heavy, not just the medical costs but the basic bills these people inject.

Missed days are always a problem, about 16 or so per employee every year (on the average, of course). Thus the need for doctors.

In Hawaii, what we have statewide versus what we need for doctor care is a big difference, a lot fewer doctors in total. Last year alone Hawaii lost 108 doctors for various reasons (death, retirement, change of practice and, unfortunately, 39 left the state to practice elsewhere). The number of physician shortages are on all the islands with an astounding 41% shortage here on the Big Island. Primary care doctors, which most of have to see normally, are short by 23%.

Plus doctors here in the State are older, on the average, than in other places. Of all the doctors here, 25% are older than age 65 (and still working) while (WOW!) 50% are older than age 55. Obviously, the need to attract and retain younger doctors is dramatic.

Part of the problem is insurance coverage. HSMA insures about 75% of Hawaii population but HMSA uses a payment transformation income formula in paying doctors for their work and treatments. Basically they reimburse doctors \$24.00 for every 1 patient every month regardless of the work or treatments involved.

This is lower than the cost to run a medical practice, for which the doctors get, on the average, about \$33.00 per hour from HMSA. This is lower than plumbers, craftsmen, salespeople and, for sure, lawyers. And this is why Hawaii has a shortage. Also caring for new patients is more costly, time consuming and often takes more work, without being reimbursed properly for their time. Thus many doctors are reluctant to see new patients.

Health care costs are increasing also, mainly for administrative and increased paperwork. There has been a 20% growth in health care workers in the last 10 years, most in clerical and administrative positions and a 30% increase in wages for all employees. And the doctors have to have these kinds of staffs to account for all the paperwork, insurance regulations and billings required.

People think doctors make a lot of money, but the average CEO of a company earns a huge amount over what a Primary Care doctor may earn.

The government can make a big difference in what we can do for doctors and in our retention of them. Locally our 2 government reps we should be contacting on this are Senator Roz Baker (senbaker@capitol.hawaii.gov) and Representative John Mizuno (repimizuno@capitol.hawaii.gov) to give them your view about what we need to do to get and keep doctors.

And with that, a question and answer session was started with lots of questions and comments from us in attendance. So many that **Pres. Anna** had to say that Dr. Mitchell would stay to answer whatever questions she could after the meeting.

Pres. Anna thanked Dr. Mitchell for coming and provided her with a goody bag full of lots of "thank-you" items.

Adjournment

Nancy was asked to lead us in our traditional Club meeting closing of the recitation of the 4-Way Test after which the gong was sounded ending today's meeting.

Don't forget next week we will still be here in the restaurant so don't head off for downstairs when you come. See you all then again.

Pau