

Rotary Club of Hilo



LAVA FLOW



February 9, 2018

Reporter: HRH

President **Steve Handy** welcomed us all to the meeting on a sunny, windy day in Hilo.



Earlier we were *graciously greeted* by **Bobby Stivers-Apiki** and **Deana Scott**. **Deana** had the honor of inviting our visiting Rotarians and members to introduce themselves



and their guests. Joining us were **Cynthia Clark** from the Rotary Club (RC) of Kihei-Wailea with her guests



Alison and **Debbie**, **Jimmy Yagi** with his guests **Douglas** and **Jennifer Shinsato**, and **Lisa Rantz** with **Patty Bray** and **JD Domizio**.

Rotarians were reminded of the upcoming Valentine's Membership Mixer at the East Hawaii Cultural Center on February 15, 5-8 p.m., with potential members invited as guests (Free).

Recognitions

Biff Kennedy gladly accepted congratulations on his 52 years of married bliss to **Anna** and **President Steve** noted that **Alberta** and the late **Morris Dobbe** would have celebrated 64 years of marriage on Feb. 6.

Celebrating birthdays were **Shane Okimoto** (Feb. 6) and **Helen Hemmes** (on Feb. 8).

President Steve also recognized *club anniversaries* for **Chuck Porter** (24 years on Feb. 4), **Mike Meyers** (3 years on Feb. 6), **Bobby Stivers-Apiki** (11 years on Feb. 9), and **Janet Montrose** (1 year on Feb. 10).

Announcements

Marcia Prose posed with a package of underwear, pointing out the ad for Friends of the Children's Justice Center in the Hawaii Tribune-Herald's full-page spread published on February 8. There's a box at Day-Lum Realty for donations of underwear this month (new for keiki of all ages). A response from the crowd to **Marcia's** request queried, "Do we have to take off our underwear?". Thanks for the packaged donations today, **Judy Gibson** and **Treena Breyfogle**! Thanks too for all who took selfies with Rotary pins!



Kerry Glass then encouraged Rotarians to sign up for and/or donate to the American Heart Association's Hilo Heart and Stroke Walk on Saturday, March 10. He also asked for volunteers to sign up to staff the relief station for the Big Island Marathon on Sunday, March 18. After the race, volunteers will be treated to **Susan Munro's** extraordinary French toast.



Eric Anderson noted he was now this Club's representative to the East Hawaii Peace Coalition. All Rotarians are encouraged to review, sign, and return a Rotary mediation pledge form. Those who do will get a copy of the text with a certificate in April and in September a program will focus on the Peace Corps (if I heard correctly). A member voiced **Eric** was the "perfect choice." "Peace Be With You."



Charlene Meyers thanked Rotarians who have supported the Polio Plus ride program and noted persons can still register if they participated. Those who register and raise \$100 in donations get a commemorative towel ("priceless" in value) plus a 2oz Aikane Ka'u coffee. Donations at other levels such as \$200 and \$250 receive other coffees in addition. The Club is now at 327 percent of goal in its annual giving to Polio Plus. Someone opined, "**Charlene** is priceless as well."



President Steve reported the sad news that **Susan** and **Leo Myers** have resigned from the Club as has **Barbara Garcia** (due to her work schedule). He then encouraged Rotarians to donate funds for the Rotary Club of Waikiki's park project, noting that our Club Foundation will match the funds \$ for \$. What an incentive, plus it's a way of acknowledging other Clubs that contributed to our Centennial Park project!

Steve then announced that our Club's efforts to get partners for a global grant were unsuccessful, so he was pleased president-elect **Keith Okamoto** has agreed to participate in a Rotary Club of Maui (which one?) global grant project for New Delhi, India. **Stew Hussey**, International Chair, contributing \$100 to **The Rotary Foundation**, was then limited to two minutes to sing **Steve's** praises as a leader, noting that **Steve** knows how to "delegate upward."



President Steve noted that project in Fiji is going well, and said (jokingly!) that "We're in trouble now" as **Kathleen McGilvray** will be going along to help, as well District 5000 Governor **Nalani Flinn**.

Happy Dollars

Kathy Borer donated \$20 (happy-sad dollars) to share that her case load working with child welfare includes 25 families totaling 50 children. **Dr. Josh Green** is attempting to ease the case load to 20 children via HB 2277 as a pilot project for East Hawaii. She asked for letters of support right now, noting that the change would help workers serve families—and thus benefit the community—in substantial ways.



Kui Costa donated \$100 to the **Hawaii Rotary Youth Foundation (HRYF)** in support of **Kathy's** work and request.



Helen Hemmes noted she enjoyed



celebrating her birthday and that she was born in the Year of the Dog (as was **Mitchell Dodo**, though a generation later), and said she would contribute the sum of her years in age plus her years in Rotary (30 years on Feb. 13) to the **HRYF** via a contribution from her Required Minimum Distribution from an IRA.

Newton Chu donated \$11 to **The Rotary Foundation for Polio Plus** in honor of



his first 5000 foot bicycle climb on Mauna Loa, over 11,000 feet. It took him four hours to get up and 45 minutes to get down!

Charlene Meyers then shared it was **Newton's** first time to ride a bicycle over 10,000 feet and donated \$20 to the **HRYF**. Congratulations, **Newton**!



Nancy Cabral encouraged Rotarians to attend the 26th Stampede rodeo on the 17th, 18th, and 19th, and gave \$100 to Polio Plus.

Jim Becker, a member of the Rotary Club of Petaluma, CA, noted he was a relatively new visitor and still learning how to navigate the transportation system to get to Club meetings on time from Honokaa. (How about a 10 minute delay for a crane on the bridge?) He's pleased the RC of Hilo is participating in a global grant, as he's been involved with 5 or 6 with his Rotary Club. Thanks for the \$25 donation!



Birthdays:

Shane Okimoto February 6
Helen Hemmes February 8
James Yagi February 18
Lorraine Shin February 20
Naomi Menor February 23
Jim Cheney February 28

Club Anniversary:

Toshi Aoki February 1, 2002 (16)
Anna Liu February 3, 2017 (1)
Chuck Porter February 4, 1994 (24)
Michael Meyer February 6, 2015 (3)
Bobby Stivers-Apiki February 9, 2007 (11)
Janet Montrose February 10, 2017 (1)
Helen Hemmes February 13, 1988 (30)
Dirk Yoshina February 14, 1992 (26)
Robert Fox February 24, 1984 (34)
Cornelia Waiiau February 24, 2017 (1)
Keith Okamoto February 26, 2016 (2)
Eddie Hara February 27, 1987 (31)

Wedding Anniversary:

Biff & Anna Kennedy February 4 (52)

Announcements:

February 15 - Valentine Social
February 16 - No Meeting
March 9 - Aunty Edna
Diabetes Awareness

Rotary Club of Hilo Board of Directors

2017 - 2018:

- President – Steve Handy, Jr.
- Past President – Randy Hart
- President Elect – Keith Okamoto
- Vice President – Mitch Dodo
- Co-Secretary – Treena Breyfogle
- Co-Secretary – Jan Tanouye
- Treasurer – Corey Kawamoto
- Sergeant at Arms – Shane Okimoto
- Rotary Foundations – Malcolm Chun
- Membership – Connie Ichinose
- Public Relations – Marcia Prose
- International Service – Stew Hussey
- Community Service – Wally Wong
- Vocational Service – Bobby Stivers-Apiki
- Club Service – Kui Costa
- New Generations – Gail Takaki

Foundation Chairpersons:

- Hilo Rotary Club Foundation – Tim Beatty
- The Rotary Foundation – Malcolm Chun
- Hawaii Rotary Youth Foundation – Mitchell Dodo

Our thanks go to our substitute sergeants-at-arms, **Dirk Yoshina** and **Genie Phillips**, who handled the microphones and collected the donations!

New Member Induction

President Steve called on **Lisa Rantz** to introduce the Club's new corporate members, **Patty Bray** and **JD Domizio**. Welcome!



Program -- Cuba

By then it was 12:33 p.m. with **President Steve** inviting **Chris Tamm** to present the program of the day – on Cuba. **Chris Tamm** began by asking if anyone had visited Cuba. No one?



He noted he grew up in Rhodesia in the 1950s and that his personal radar with Cuba began in June 1962 with his acceptance at The University College of Southampton (to study Marine Radio and Radar, planning to travel the world in the Merchant Navy like his father before him), and he was due to report there on January 7, 1963. He wrote to request a delay in his arrival due to the Cuban Missile crisis in October 1962 and subsequent potential challenges to the area. He noted he never did show up at the University! In the mid-1970s, Cuban troops were in Angola and Mozambique, directly affecting the situation in Rhodesia. Reasons for visiting Cuba were the thought that there must be a success story in Cuba for the communists, and that in 2016 President Obama partially eased the blockade.

The USA has imposed travel restrictions, so USA citizens traveling to Cuba must buy 2 two separate unrelated round trip tickets, e.g., from Hawaii to Vancouver (roughly 6 hours). Next steps



include changing currency to Canadian Dollars, flying from Vancouver to Toronto (roughly 4 hours), and then flying from Toronto to Varadero, Cuba (roughly 4 hours). The package available for independent travelers includes air/local transportation/hotel food and beverage, with no Cuban stamp in the passport to facilitate return to the USA. There are some exceptions, such as going with a chartered group that focuses on cultural activities.

United States dollars can be spent only with incurring a 10 percent penalty. There are two currencies, Cuban pesos for local persons that can only be used in certain shops, and convertible pesos, which visitors can use to shop in limited tourist areas.

Cuba, he noted, has a population of 11.8 million, with a declining population, declining immigration, and declining GDP. Inflation is running at 4.8%; exports total \$2.8 billion and imports, \$10.8 billion. Cuba is 42,000 square miles in size, about 10 times the size of Hawaii Island.

The airport arrival was an experience in itself, as all tourists must have health insurance. The Canadian health insurance package differs from that of the USA, but eventually he and his wife made it to their four star hotel, Hotel Punta Arena. The hotel and room both had maintenance issues—illustrated with photos and described with captivating words—and the “Tropical Rainstorm” thanks to a leaky roof resulted in an inch or so of water in the lobby, water quickly mopped up.

Interesting photos abounded, including those of a five-legged cat (not—just its tail!), the cash register in the store selling Havana Club Rum (a fine product), a photo featuring Air Force One with all of its latest technology flying over a street scene that looked like Havana in the 1950s, the Americano items such as “Lucky Strike” umbrellas, and the “new old” contrasts en route to and in Havana. The main road from Varadero to Havana, a 120 mile trip by bus, was wonderful, he noted, and the Missile Crisis Museum well-maintained, for example, but homes and other buildings featured have real challenges, and some of the sidewalks are trip hazards! Also of interest was learning about the bartering of oil from Venezuela with medical doctors educated in Cuba. (Education in Cuba is free, from kindergarten through a Ph.D.)

In Havana, **Barbara** and he had the fun of riding in a fabulous car (the same vehicle that Michelle Obama and daughters rode in!). While some of the cars look great—and others not—many (such as the '51 Chrysler and the '53 Chevrolet featured in photos) sound different now due to noisy, Bulgarian diesel engines.

He ended his presentation by showing a photo of a fabulous home owned by Comrade Fidel “who lived in style” at that home. **Barbara** and he saw only two such homes on their trip. Enough said.

In Closing

President Steve called on **Jen Tanouye** to the 4 Way Test of the Things we Think, Say or Do, and members were reminded - there is no meeting on Friday, Feb 16.



Photographer: **Eric Anderson**