

ROTARY CLUB OF HAYWARD

High Gear



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Editor: Anna Powers
Asst Editor: Brian Schott
Photographer: Becky Avelar

Monday, April 21, 2008: President Mullins called this special meeting to order at 12:15 PM. The room was dressed to the nines for the occasion. **Andy Krate** led us in the Pledge. We were graced with the vocal stylings of songbird **Kathy Streeter**, who lead us a'cappella in *God Bless America* and *Hello*. **Jim Wieder** gave the Thought for the Day, with a quote from Winston Churchill, "The price of greatness is responsibility,...and the people of the United States cannot escape responsibility,...but the world over which they range is itself contracting in relation to our powers of locomotion at a positively alarming rate."

The anticipation grew, as **President Mullins** introduced our MC for the afternoon, **Ken Meirovitz**, Chairman of the Outstanding Rotarian Committee and 2008 winner. The Outstanding Rotarian of the Year award is the most prestigious Club award. It is given to a Club member who exemplifies the "Ideals of Rotary" through their character, merit, behavior and morals. Someone who has demonstrated outstanding service in all four Avenues of Service: Club Service, Community Service, Vocational Service, and International Service. **Ken** recognized the distinguished Committee members, all looking dashing as ever, and all past winners themselves. They are, **Mona Diamantine** - 2007, **Bob Scheppler** - 2006, **John Wilma** (absent) - 2005, **George Pacheco** - 2004, and **Dick Bowman** (advisor) - 2000. Computer king **Ed Avelar** provided the slide show presentation – great job! **Ken** also thanked **Vintage Catering** for providing a delightful lunch.

And now the moment we've all been waiting for... Who was born in the United States; has lived in Hayward since age 2; is very athletic; knows all things technical (but became bored being an engineer); is a huge Cal Bears fan; hates the smell of roses; HE boxed under the name "The Machine"; is a "real" biker and loves tandem rides followed by a good, cheap dinner; and was a recent past President? Give up? **Congratulations to our 2008 Outstanding Rotarian of the Year – Bob Sakai.** **Bob's** guests of honor included wife **Marge**, sister **Ann**, former secretary **Elena**, friend **SY Kim**, and doctor **Donald Knotts**.

Dale Vigil introduced our visiting Rotarians: **Bob Tucknott** of Dublin, **Char Romandi** of Piedmont, **Clark Streeter** and **Kathy Streeter** of Livermore and guest **Jeanie Parsons**, and **James Pacheco** of Castro Valley. We also welcomed many guests who joined us for the celebration: **Kunio Okui** with **Ken Meirovitz**; **Lynne Pacheco** with husband **George**; **Sue Scheppler** with husband **Bob**; husband **Ken Smith** with **Beth Ehrlich**; **Milly Rubiolo** with husband **Steve**; **Karin Mai** with husband **Don**; **Barbara Avelar** with husband **Ed**; **Linda Horner** with husband **Chuck**; **Linda Bristow** with husband **Steve**; **Karen Bevels** with **Carrie Alejandre**; **Victoria** with **Rob Cook**; and **Lori Bautista** with **Joel Garcia**. **President Mullins** thanked **George Pacheco** for donating the centerpieces. Those with a Rotary Wheel sticker on the back of their Rodeo flyer got to take one home. **President Mullins** also presented special flower arrangements to **Kathy Streeter**, **Sue Scheppler**, **Linda Bristow**, **Milly Rubiolo**, **Barbara Avelar**, **Victoria "soon to be Cook"**, and **Karin Mai**.



Outstanding Rotarian of the year
Bob Sakai

New Member Induction: We are pleased to welcome **Monica Des Jarlais**, President, Moreau High School. **Monica** is sponsored by **Ed Mullins**, under the classification Private Education.



ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS: President Mullins announced that the Rowell Ranch Rodeo assignments are now published – see brochures on the tables. Event date is May 17-18. We bypassed our normal fines and foolishness in order to pay homage to our Outstanding Rotarian.

Ken Meirovitz gave a brief history of the Outstanding Rotarian award, which was first awarded in 1972, with a \$25,000 donation to the Club and the only Paul Harris Fellowship awarded at the time. Past winners include **Mona Diamantine, Bob Scheppler, John Wilma, George Pacheco, Kathy Streeter, Ed Avelar, Don Mai, Steve Rubiolo, John Hunter, Ken Meirovitz, and Charley Plumber**, to name a few.

George Pacheco gave us an in-depth look at **Bob Sakai's** personal history. Born in Hayward, has 8 brothers and sisters. Grew up next door to Tennyson High School - it was a farming area with all orchards in the late 40's. Dad was a wholesale Rose grower, **Bob** would drive the roses from Hayward to Richmond and to this day he can't stand the smell of roses. **Bob** lived so close to Tennyson High that the 7:50 AM school bell was his wake up call so he could make it to school by the 8 AM Bell. Bob was in the first class at Tennyson High to go through all four years at Tennyson. Graduated from Cal Berkeley with a BA in Electrical Engineering. When **Bob** was a senior at Cal, his roommate talked him into taking the Law School exam. **Bob** passed the exam with a higher grade than his roommate who was studying Law. He did not want to study Law at that time so he applied for graduate school and was accepted. He got his MBA in Industrial Engineering. **Bob** was in varsity boxing and was the Berkley University Inter Mural Wrestling Champ - his nick name was "The Machine". **Bob** worked as an engineer for a couple of years. During that time he lived on "Easy Street" in Mountain View. Then he got bored and went back to Law School, graduating from Hastings College in San Francisco. **Bob** met Marge in 1976; she was the 5th woman he dated that week. He and Marge talked on the phone for one month before they went out on a date. From the start, Bob and Marge laughed together all of the time. On one occasion in Lake Tahoe, they were together with several couples when another couple joined them and asked why they were having such a good time and how did they know each other. It turned out **Bob** had dated most of the women in the group and had introduced most of the couples. **Bob** feels his work and Rotary are closely related. At work he helps people solve problems and at Rotary we help people who have problems. **Bob** feels his profession is providing a service where people come to him for help and he provides a service. **Bob** also likes Rotary for the relationships you build. The people in this Club are all people you would want to have a relationship with. Bob looks forward to coming to meetings and events because these are some of his best friends. The things **Bob** enjoys most are the things we've accomplished as a group. **Bob** has attended two International Rotary Conventions - Chicago and Copenhagen. **Bob** enjoys Rotary on the local level the most. The Kenya Truck project was the Club's international project for his year as president, which purchased a truck for a village in Kenya to use to transport their goods to market. It's a follow-up to the Kenya tractor project that took 4 years to complete. "**Lance Sakai**" really enjoys biking, and recently retired from Jack Smith Law Offices.

Bob Scheppler gave us a glance at **Bob's** Community Service history. In the early 70's, **Bob** helped start the "East Bay ISSEI Housing Program", to buy and develop a 100 unit apartment complex in Hayward for low income Senior citizens, and served as a Director and President for several years. He served on the Eden Township Japanese American Citizen's League for 12 years and as President for 2 years, and directed the scholarship program for 25 years. **Bob** served as Director, Secretary/Treasurer, Vice President, and President for the 100 Club of Alameda County. He was also on the Board of the Boy Scouts of America for a few years and as District Chairman. Other community service activities include Director for the Hayward Chamber of Commerce, Hayward Education Fund, United Way of the Bay Area, and as a member of the Rowell Ranch Rodeo Board. Among **Bob's** current community service activities is serving the East Bay Regional Parks District as a member of the Bike Patrol.

Michael Mahoney (standing in for John Wilma, who was sorry to miss the celebration) provided us with **Bob's** Club Service contributions. Service is defined as, "performance of a labor for the benefit of others." **Bob** certainly exemplifies the meaning of service. He has served as the member of the Speaker Committee, bringing many outstanding speakers to our Club. **Bob** is described as being quietly competent, and has served with distinction. While he was Club President (2006/07), we celebrated the Club's Foundation Million Dollar Dinner with such celebrities as Betty Boop. **Bob's** award today is well deserved, and we thank you for your service.

Have you visited our website lately? www.haywardrotary.org



Mona Diamantine gave a tribute to **Bob's** Vocational and International Service. Vocational Service recognizes "the worthiness of all useful occupations", as seen in the example of the blue-ribbon winning corn farmer who believes, "If I want to grow good corn, I must help my neighbors to grow good corn too." In this spirit, the sharing of Rotary with others who are non Rotarians is having a great influence in raising the standards of practice in every field. **Mona** gave some examples of how **Bob** has shared his knowledge, or one could say his seeds of wisdom, to help others develop into prize winning organizations. Some of them have been mentioned before, but they are worth mentioning again to help each of us understand how **Bob Sakai** has utilized his vocation throughout his entire working career to model the object of Rotary and to make Hayward his prize winning corn field. He was Chair (1992 & 1993) of the Boy Scouts of America, Tres Ranchos District. **Bob** helped incorporate Chime-In, Inc. He was a Director of California State University, Hayward Foundation, Inc. He served as organizer and President for the first 5 years of East Bay ISSEI Housing, Inc. **Bob** was Director of the Eden Township Japanese Community Center, the Hayward Education Fund, the Hayward Chamber of Commerce, and Director of United Way of the Bay Area. He helped incorporate Hayward-Funabashi Sister City Committee, Inc and the PC Clubhouse. He was President (2006-2007) of the Hayward Rotary Club and the President of the Hayward Rotary Club Foundation (2000-2006). **Bob** served as the Executive Director (1983-1988), President (1992 & 1993), and is a current Director of the Martin C. Kauffman One Hundred Club of Alameda County. He was President of the Eden Township Chapter of the Japanese American Citizen's League. As an attorney, not only has **Bob** served in each of the roles I mentioned, but in most all cases he has given free legal counsel as well.



Next we heard from wife **Marge Sakai**, "Playmate of the Year", who was presented with a beautiful flower bouquet – no roses. Marge pointed out that through all the years, **Bob** has always been involved in community work. His parents served as good role-models in this regard, and it has rubbed off on his siblings as well. **Marge** has always been encouraging and supportive of his community work, often participating herself. She thanked everyone for recognizing him. **Ken** pointed out that **Marge** translated the Dictionary Project letter into Spanish, error free.

Next up, the man of the hour - **Bob Sakai**. He said that **Marge** is the brains of the operation, and thanked her for her support, advice, and help. **Bob** also thanked **Jack Smith**, his law partner for 30 years, for his continued encouragement and willingness to let him spend time on community service. **Bob** then thanked all of his friends here, "my best friends", for our support and friendship. Rotary has been one of the most important parts of his life. In recognition of devoted service to the ideals of Rotary, **President Mullins and Ken** presented **Bob** with a Paul Harris Fellowship plaque and \$1,000 in his name, to be designated to someone by **Bob** (since he is already a Paul Harris Fellow several times over). **President Mullins** closed the meeting with a final tribute to **Bob**, saying he is truly a role model to the rest of us.

Next Week: Come hear about and sample some of Larry Ratto's viticultural delights.

May Meeting Reminder: We will join the Castro Valley Club for our joint Rowell Ranch Rodeo meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 12:15 PM, at the Willow Park Country Club, instead of our regular meeting on Monday, May 12.

1:20 PM - Meeting adjourned - "Rotary Shares – Share it Today".



Front: Bob & wife Marge, Back: sister Ann, friend SY Kim & former secretary Elena

Front: Marge & Bob Sakai, Back: Michael Mahoney, Ed Avelar, Bob Scheppler, Ken Meirovitz, Mona Diamantine & George Pacheco

Hayward Rotary Club Calendar

- April 28** **Larry Ratto, Rancher and Wine Maker - a special catered event!**
- May 5** **Hayward Police Chief Ron Ace.**
- May 12** **No Rotary meeting -**
May 13 **Tuesday: Joint Rodeo Meeting at the Castro Valley Rotary Club at willow park.**
12:00 noon.
- May 17-18** **Rowell Ranch Rodeo. Remember the Fun! Remember the Reason!**

Need to find or confirm a Location?

Visit the District 5170 Website @ <http://www.rotary5170.org>



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www.haywardrotary.org
Email: hayrotaryclub@sbcglobal.net

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Hayward Rotary Club
P.O.Box 629
Hayward, CA 94543

First Class Mail

www.haywardrotary.org

