



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Baristas to Fund “Bikes to Rwanda”**

### ***“Baristas for Bikes” Fundraising Effort to Provide Rwandan Coffee Farmers with Basic Transportation***

**BERKELEY, Calif. U.S.A. (March 24, 2008)** – Pacific Bay Coffee Co. & Micro-Roastery joins forces with non-profit organization Bikes to Rwanda to outfit many of the Rwanda’s coffee farmers with bicycles to provide communities with basic transportation and enhance the production of specialty coffee crops. The fundraising effort, called “Baristas for Bikes,” coincides with the Specialty Coffee Association of America’s (SCAA) Western Regional Barista Competition (WRBC) held on March 28-30 at the Gaia Arts Center in Berkeley, Calif.

The goal of Baristas for Bikes is to secure enough funding to purchase 200 bicycles for use by Rwandan coffee farmers. Baristas (the Italian term for skilled and experienced espresso bar operators) throughout the West, particularly those participating in the WRBC, are being challenged to raise enough money to purchase at least one bike each (\$120) while increasing awareness for the program. Baristas for Bikes ends on the WRBC’s final day of competition, March 30. All baristas raising enough money to buy one or more bikes receive a limited edition “Baristas for Bikes/Bikes to Rwanda” T-shirt and are eligible to enter the contest to win prizes valued at more than \$150.

Bikes to Rwanda establishes and outfits shops with tools and parts to maintain the bikes. The organization was founded in 2006 by Stumptown Coffee Roasters in Portland, Oregon. Currently, walking is the primary mode of transportation for many Rwandan farmers living in mountainous terrain. Many times these farmers move hundreds of pounds of coffee cherries on foot. Some farmers have hand-built wooden bikes to transport their crop as well. The specially designed cargo bikes provided by this program improve the lives of the farmers and their families.

The WRBC, which is hosted by Pacific Bay Coffee Co. & Micro-Roastery, will feature top baristas from California and Hawaii. Competitors prepare and serve four espresso, four cappuccinos and four original signature drinks of their own creation—all in 15 minutes.

One head judge, two technical judges and four sensory judges will critique the contestants. Scores are based on drink taste, presentation, technical skills and cleanliness. Current USBC champion, Heather Perry of Coffee Klatch Roasting in San Dimas, Calif. has won the previous three WRBC events. The event is free and open to the public. For more information: [www.wrbc2008.com](http://www.wrbc2008.com)

The mission of the SCAA's 10 regional barista competitions, including the WRBC, is to encourage and recognize the professional achievement in the art and skill of espresso preparation and service.

SCAA's regional events culminate with the 2008 United States Barista Championship on May 2-5 in Minneapolis, Minn. The event coincides with the SCAA's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference & Exhibition.

### **About the SCAA**

Celebrating 26 years of success, SCAA is the world's largest coffee trade association. SCAA members are located in more than 40 countries and represent every segment of the specialty coffee industry, from coffee growers to coffee roasters and retailers. The SCAA's mission is to be the recognized authority on specialty coffee, providing a common forum for the development and promotion of coffee excellence and sustainability. The SCAA's dedication to excellence in coffee is realized through the setting of quality standards for the industry; conducting research on coffee, equipment and perfection of craft; and providing education, training, resources and business services for members. The SCAA's annual conference is held in a different U.S. city each year and is the coffee industry's largest gathering and exhibition.

### **About Pacific Bay Coffee Co. & Micro-Roastery**

Since 2004, John and Kerry Laird and their crew of passionate coffee aficionados have offered a unique experience at the independent, self-designed, family-owned, specialty coffee house and micro-roastery, Pacific Bay Coffee Co. in Walnut Creek, Calif. Pacific Bay's coffee beans have origins from around the globe and are always roasted in small quantities to ensure freshness and optimal flavor for each variety of bean. At their new Berkeley roastery, a wholesale bean and barista training program is offered to coffeehouses, cafés and bakeries. Contact: [info@pacificbaycoffee.com](mailto:info@pacificbaycoffee.com)

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