



PACIFIC CITIZEN

Delicious food offerings await attendees of the 2023 Nikkei Community Picnic, which is sponsored by organizations and businesses of the Nikkei community to celebrate Japanese American heritage.

PHOTO: RICH IWASAKI

» **PAGE 5**

First Street North Breaks Ground.

» **PAGE 8**

Sansei Rockers Are Back.

» **PAGE 6**

CIRCLES OF TRUST

The JA community in Portland's commitment to collaboration is key to its success.

CELEBRATING
95
Years

LETTER to the EDITOR ::::::::::::::::::::

Dear Editor,

Nikkei4Palestine objects to JACL President Larry Oda's mischaracterization of our collective demands in the Vol. 178, No. 3, issue of the *Pacific Citizen* article "Challenges Ahead" (Feb. 23-March 7, 2024, issue).

N4P is committed to Palestinian liberation and immediately ending Israel's genocide of Palestinian people. Many members of N4P are active JACL members and leaders.

In December 2023, N4P sent a letter to the JACL National Board, requesting the JACL call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, denounce the U.S.'s funding of Israel's genocide, end partnerships with Zionist organizations, refuse to attend AJC-funded trips to Israel and repudiate the idea that supporting Palestinian human rights or rejecting Zionism is inherently anti-Semitic.

N4P urged the JACL to build relationships with Palestinian, Muslim, Arab and anti-Zionist Jewish organizations. The letter has received over 380 signatures from past and current JACL members, youth and Kakehashi alums and Nikkei community members and organizations.

N4P is not demanding that the JACL divest from partnerships with organizations because they are Jewish. This mischaracterization plays into dangerous Zionist propaganda that seeks to equate Zionism with Judaism and label any critique of the Israeli state as anti-Semitic. N4P supports partnerships with Jewish organizations like Jewish Voice for Peace that implore U.S. divestment from institutions that support the Israeli state and its genocide against Palestinians.

N4P urges the JACL to divest from its partnership with the Anti-Defamation League. The ADL supports the "Countering Violent Extremism" approach to counterterrorism, which enables increased law enforcement surveillance and criminalization of Arab, Muslim and Black communities in the United States — policies that the JACL has historically cautioned against, including in the wake of 9/11.

Other organizations that JACL partners with on civil rights work, programs and national policy coalitions have similarly joined the call to drop the ADL as a partner in social justice work, including the American Friends Service Committee and the Council on American-Islamic Relations, among others.

Although, as President Oda mentions, the JACL adopted a policy of noninvolvement in international affairs in 1954, there have been examples since of commenting on global affairs. In 1970, the JACL resolved to include comment on international relations when it took a position against U.S. intervention in the war on Vietnam. Since then, the JACL has weighed in on multiple global issues, notably including apartheid in South Africa in 1986. It is true that in 1988 JACL resolved not to comment on the bilateral U.S.-Japan relationship; however, the 1988 resolution seems limited to U.S.-Japan relations.

N4P calls on the JACL to stand in solidarity with Palestine. We know that the JACL has the power and influence to contribute to the growing efforts across the country in calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and an end to all U.S. aid to Israel.

Nikkei4Palestine urges all JACL members to join us by directly emailing the JACL National Board and your local chapter leadership to take immediate action and say, "Never Again for Anyone."

Sincerely,

Sakae Kikuchi, JACL member, on behalf of Nikkei4Palestine

HOW TO REACH US

Email: pc@pacificcitizen.org
Online: www.pacificcitizen.org
Tel: (213) 620-1767
Mail: 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 206 Los Angeles, CA 90012

STAFF

Executive Editor Allison Haramoto
Business Manager Susan Yokoyama
Senior Editor George Johnston
Digital & Social Media Marie Samonte
Production Artist Eva Ting
Circulation

The *Pacific Citizen* newspaper (ISSN: 0030-8579) is published semi-monthly (except once in December and January) by the Japanese American Citizens League, *Pacific Citizen*, 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 206, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Periodical postage paid at L.A., CA

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to National JACL, 1765 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115.

JACL President: Larry Oda
Executive Director: David Inoue

P.C. EDITORIAL BOARD

John Saito Jr., chairperson; Ron Kuramoto, MDC; Rob Buscher, EDC; Marcia Chung, CCDC; Nancy Ukai, NCWNPDC; Sheldon Arakaki, PNWDC; Lisa Olsen, IDC; Mitchell Matsumura, PSWDC; Remy Kageyama, Youth Rep.

Subscribe

Get a one-year subscription of the *Pacific Citizen* newspaper at: www.pacificcitizen.org or call (213) 620-1767.

Advertise

To advertise in the *Pacific Citizen*, call (213) 620-1767 or e-mail: busmgr@pacificcitizen.org.

LEGAL

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the express permission of the *Pacific Citizen*. Editorials, letters, news and the opinions expressed by columnists other than the national JACL president or national director do not necessarily reflect JACL policy. Events and products advertised in the *P.C.* do not carry the implicit endorsement of the JACL or this publication. We reserve the right to edit articles. © 2024

Periodicals paid at Los Angeles, Calif. and mailing office.



STACI TOJI, ESQ.

TOJI LAW, APC

Estate Planning for the Generations

3655 Torrance Blvd., Suite 300 | Torrance, CA 90503
(424) 247-1123 | staci@tojilaw.com | www.tojilaw.com

LIVING TRUSTS | WILLS | POWERS OF ATTORNEY

JACL MEMBER? Y N \$50 \$100 \$150 \$200 OTHER _____

Name : _____

Address 1 : _____

Phone Number : _____ E-mail : _____

The *P.C.*'s mission is to 'educate on the past Japanese American experience and preserve, promote and help the current and future AAPI communities.'

* Your donations will help build and preserve a cohesive library of the *Pacific Citizen* to educate future generations.*

INFORMATION: 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 206 | Los Angeles, CA 90012 | TEL: (213) 620-1767 | WWW.PACIFICCITIZEN.ORG

2024 SPRING CAMPAIGN

'I'm glad to see the *Pacific Citizen* growing and evolving with its website and especially LOVE the much easier-to-navigate digital archives. It's a treasure trove for JAs to learn about our community's history and for scholars and journalists looking to connect the past with the present. Thanks for the improvements, *P.C.*!'

— Gil Asakawa



JACL MEMBERS

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you've moved, please send new information to: National JACL 1765 Sutter St. San Francisco, CA 94115 (415) 921-5225 ext. 26. ALLOW 6 WEEKS FOR ADDRESS CHANGES. TO AVOID INTERRUPTIONS IN DELIVERY, PLEASE NOTIFY YOUR POSTMASTER TO INCLUDE PERIODICALS IN YOUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS (USPS Form 3575)

JACL Members Not Receiving Your *Pacific Citizen*? Please contact Tomiko Ismail, JACL Membership/Database Administrator, at (415) 921-5225, ext. 26, or email tismail@jacl.org.





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PROTEST IS AS NORMAL A PART OF COLLEGE AS INSTANT RAMEN

By David Inoue,
JACL Executive Director

In the past year as my kids have taken a liking to Shin Ramyun and Cup Noodles, we have more instant ramen than I would care to admit in our pantry. The unfortunate side effect of this is that when I find myself up late at night, I get a craving for that instant ramen. I get out the old Revere ware copper-bottomed pot that my parents got me when I left for my freshman year of college and have a late-night snack that I probably should

not at my age. This late-night ritual brings me back college memories.

And yet, now there is much more that brings me back to my college years. The news is flooded with campus protests from Columbia and Yale on the East Coast to USC and Berkeley on the West Coast and numerous campuses in between, including my alma mater, Cornell. Congressional hearings featuring the presidents of the very colleges where these protests are occurring have added to the news cycle and in some ways led to the protests. Speaker of

the House Kevin Johnson took the time to visit the Columbia campus to admonish the student protesters.

Contrary to the gnashing of teeth about the current protests by folks like speaker Johnson, organized protest and takeovers have always been a part of the modern college experience. In my time at Cornell, there was a full takeover of the main administrative building on campus — although not once did the speaker of the house come to campus to mount a counterprotest. Does it say something to the power of the protest, or the relative weakness of Speaker Johnson right now that he would feel compelled to address a student protest in person?

Yet, there are some changes on college campuses since the eons ago when I was a college student. In recent years, the concern has been with ensuring college campuses are safe spaces. Unfortunately, the implementation of this concept has led to impairment on the discourse of contrasting views.

I want to be clear that no one should ever be made to feel unsafe or subject

to harassing behavior. But what we should be willing to do is experience discomfort. When we settle into the protest group, we're surrounded with strength in numbers with people who largely agree. What we see now with the campus conflicts around Israel-Palestine is that there are two opposing sides, both with valid and compelling arguments for their perspective, and it is not as simple as one side of the protest fully in the right and the other clearly in the wrong.

It is how we navigate these types of disagreements that validates, or perhaps reveals, the inadequacies of the modern university as a place to engage in intellectual discourse. This includes examining one's own position for weaknesses as well as picking apart the opposing views. With both sides in this issue, with as much righteousness as each side might see in their position, there is just as much that can be revealed as flawed.

We have all heard of the challenges of misinformation and disinformation. If we are to find the truth in this conflict, we need to recognize when

our own side is sometimes engaging in bad behavior, even as we point out the other side's flaws. We need to also acknowledge the truths that the other side might bring, or even what are our shared truths, such as the preservation of life and when are actions counter to that value.

This brings us back to the idea of the late-night instant ramen. For pretty much any college student, the late-night instant ramen or maybe cereal for dinner is a common experience. It was also often a shared experience in the dorm community space where we might take a break from studies for a few minutes. And it is in that vulnerability of a late night, with serious sleep deprivation, that some of these difficult conversations can happen, outside the harshness of a public demonstration, but with the earnestness of students learning together, understanding that we might not have all the answers but can learn from one another and perhaps learn something new.

David Inoue is executive director of the JACL. He is based in the organization's Washington, D.C., office.



LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE

DON'T DRINK THE WATER

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

If you're traveling to Mexico, people will tell you, "Don't drink the water." Why? Drinking contaminated, or unclear, water can make you sick, i.e., Montezuma's revenge. Contaminated water can look clean but still have harmful bacteria, viruses and parasites causing diarrhea, vomiting and stomach pain, which can ruin your trip.

But what about here? The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for making sure that public water supplies within the United States are safe. In 1974, Congress passed the Safe Drinking Water Act. This law sought to protect the nation's public drinking water supply by giving EPA authority to set the standards for drinking water quality and oversee the states, localities and water suppliers who implement those standards.

Tap water in the United States is some of the best in the world, and it must meet strict federal standards to ensure it's safe to drink. As a kid growing up in the 1960s, we never worried about drinking the water straight from the garden hose or the drinking fountain at school. We all did and thought nothing of it. But that was a long time ago.

Since then, a government study found that "Drinking water from nearly

half of U.S. faucets likely contains 'forever chemicals' that may cause cancer and other health problems" (source: www.ktla.com/health/, July 6, 2023). "Forever chemicals," aka PFAs, are a group of chemicals found in manufactured products that will remain in the human body for years and don't degrade in the environment.

U.S. conglomerate 3M (originally the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co.), DuPont and other chemical manufacturers have been contaminating drinking water with PFAs across the country for over 50 years. How do I know? Last month, District Judge Richard Gergel gave final approval to a U.S. class-action settlement in which 3M agreed to pay as much as \$12.5 billion to resolve litigation over PFAs. However, 3M did not admit liability in the settlement.

Found in everyday products such as nonstick frying pans and waterproof clothing (e.g., Scotchgard), PFAS can linger in the environment for a long time and have been linked to serious health conditions, including cancer and birth defects. Attorneys had alleged that 3M and other manufacturers sold products containing PFAs when they knew of potential health and environmental problems. The \$12.5 billion is to test for and filter out dangerous chemicals across the country.

According to a recent article in the *Hill* (March 24, 2024), public health officials in more than two dozen states voluntarily reported a total of 214 intestine-related disease outbreaks associated with drinking water between 2015 and 2020, according to a recent analysis from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The outbreaks resulted in at least 2,140 cases of illness, 563 hospitalizations and 88 deaths.

You can get sick if you use contaminated water for cooking, washing food, preparing drinks, making ice or brushing teeth. Contact with contaminated water, such as wading or swimming, can also lead to illness.

However, while it's generally safe for drinking, tap water is not sterile, and there are a few situations in which using water straight from the faucet could endanger your health, according to experts and a CDC report published in the journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases*. The risk is higher for older adults and those with weakened immune systems (source: www.aarp.org/health-living/info-2023/when-not-to-use-tap-water.html).

"Using water straight from the tap for those activities is a bad idea whether you have municipal water or get your water from a well because you could introduce a harmful pathogen into your body," says Rachel Noble, a microbiologist and professor in the Institute of Marine Sciences at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. It's best to use distilled water or boiled tap water for those purposes, the CDC says.

"Most tap water naturally contains

low levels of microorganisms such as bacteria and amoebae," says Shanna Miko, an epidemic intelligence officer with the waterborne disease prevention branch of the CDC. Pathogens found in tap water such as *Pseudomonas*, nontuberculous mycobacteria and *Legionella* account for a significant percentage of the 120,000 hospitalizations and 7,000 deaths due to waterborne diseases annually, according to the CDC.

"Legionella? Do you mean Legionnaires' disease?" Yep — it's back. Legionnaires' disease is a severe form of pneumonia caused by a deadly bacteria found in drinking water systems across the country. The bacteria can rapidly multiply and become a health hazard in man-made water systems like plumbing if the water is not adequately treated and maintained. While it can be treated successfully, about 1 in 10 people who become infected "will die due to complications from their illness."

Legionnaires' disease is not transmitted from person to person; instead, people contract the illness from exposure to the *Legionella* bacteria itself. Public water systems, for instance, can become sources for *Legionella* growth, posing potential health risks as people inhale the bacteria present in the air surrounding the contaminated water. Other common sources of *Legionella* infection include potable water used for showers, cooling towers in air conditioning systems, decorative fountains and hot tubs.

Usually, "The water is safe to drink because those pathogens typically get killed by stomach acid," says Miko. "But the pathogens can multiply

if they're inhaled or introduced to more vulnerable parts of your body such as your eyes or nasal passages, potentially causing serious or deadly infections. She continues, "Those are dark, moist places that don't have the benefit of stomach acid to help neutralize these bugs."

Now, you're probably wondering if the tap water at your home is safe to drink. While an occasional sip from the faucet might be harmless, you should remember that tap water is not sterile — so it's best to avoid in some situations.

To protect against "water-loving" germs at home, the CDC recommends the following:

- Boil water for 1-3 minutes, and let it cool before use.
- Use a water filter labeled as "NSF 53" or "NSF 58." Filters with an absolute pore size of 1 micron or smaller are also effective.
- Purchase distilled or sterile water, especially when using a device to flush sinuses.
- Flush your faucets and showerheads if you haven't used them in a while.
- Regularly clean and upkeep all appliances that use water.

Judd Matsunaga is the founding attorney of Elder Law Services of California, a law firm that specializes in Medi-Cal Planning, Estate Planning and Probate. He can be contacted at (310) 348-2995 or judd@elderlawcalifornia.com. The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Pacific Citizen or constitute legal or tax advice and should not be treated as such.



A MOTHER'S TAKE

Showing support at the San Gabriel City Council meeting

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MARSHA AIZUMI



ALL ARE WELCOME

By Marsha Aizumi

In March, my husband and I had the opportunity to speak at the San Gabriel City Council meeting. My husband graduated from the high school in this city, and so I asked him to speak, even though this is not his favorite thing to do. He would rather let me do the talking, but in this case, since he graduated from San Gabriel High School, I thought it was important that they hear from someone who lived and was educated in their city. So, I said, "Let's both speak!"

The back story is that the San Gabriel City Council created a Health, Equity, Access Relations Commission to help with diversity, social justice, equity and safety in their community. Their goal was to raise awareness so that ALL people are respected. They hold events regarding mental health, anti-Asian hate and many other educational programs.

Recently, an All Are Welcome program was presented to support the LGBTQ+ community, and suddenly, there was a call to terminate the commission because "it is no longer needed." With all that is going on in the world, it felt like this call for termination was based in anti-LGBTQ+ feelings or an ignorance to what is going on around the country.

A member of the HEAR Commission reached out to our PFLAG San Gabriel Valley chapter for support from parents. Hence, Tad and I decided to speak. Here is an excerpt from my speech:

My son was bullied and harassed in a high school in the San Gabriel Valley. I watched my son struggle every day . . . his grades go from As and Bs to Ds. He barely graduated. He was also suicidal, but I am a fortunate parent because he never lost hope (I started to cry here).

One of the ways our children live in hope is to see others who are advocating and sending messages that their lives matter. This is what the HEAR Commission is doing. Bringing hope. And with hope comes resilience.

For almost two hours, public comments were given. For every negative comment, there were four positive comments of support for the All Are Welcome program and the HEAR Commission. Besides parents speaking, there were students who came to support and many students who wrote in to have their thoughts read aloud at the meeting, since they were away at college. If these young people are an indication of our future, the country will be in good hands.

In the end, we do not know if our words and thoughts made a difference. But to me, the most important thing was that we stood up and made our voices heard. Were there LGBTQ+ individuals that were present and needed to see this overwhelming support for them? Were there parents who are hiding in

fear and shame that needed to hear other parents that were supportive and proud of their children?

I watched with pride as my husband spoke. He was very nervous, but I know that he pushed through his fears to speak up for his son. Aiden, you would have been so proud of Papa.

I love an early 2000s TV show called "The West Wing." It is a political drama written by an amazing writer, Aaron Sorkin. In one of the episodes in Season 1, I heard this line and have never forgotten it: "Decisions are made by people who show up."

Tad and I showed up that night along with so many other parents, LGBTQ+ individuals and allies. We won't know the ripple effect of our presence and our words, but all who spoke decided to show up and courageously be visible.

This year we all need to show up. With the 2024 elections only seven months away, our votes to make sure our country continues to be a place where **all the people** have a voice is vital. For those of us in support of the LGBTQ+ community, we need to make our voices heard by voting for those who will represent our interests. For those of us in the JA or API community, we need to vote not just for people who look like us but also who support our JA/API interests.

So many people want to "cut us down" and make us small, invisible and voiceless. People want to blame us for Covid or anything happening that is negative. But being involved in this issue in San Gabriel made me realize that united, our voices matter, and "going high" as Michelle Obama has stated can make us feel proud of who we are.

Please join me and show up this year in whatever way that you can to preserve our democracy and all that democracy means for each and every one of us. . . .

*When the sharpest words wanna cut me down
I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown 'em out*

I am brave, I am bruised

I am who I'm meant to be, this is me

Look out 'cause here I come

And I'm marching on to the beat I drum

I'm not scared to be seen

I make no apologies, this is me

From "The Greatest Showman," sung by Keala Seattle (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLFEvHWD_NE)

Marsha Aizumi is an advocate for the LGBTQ+ community and author of the book "Two Spirits, One Heart: A Mother, Her Transgender Son and Their Journey to Love and Acceptance."

News Briefs

USC Nixes Speeches, Commencement

In the aftermath of University of Southern California taking the unprecedented step of canceling 2024 valedictorian Asna Tabassum's graduation speech in advance of its May 10 main commencement, the school's leadership has announced its decision to sack the entire ceremony, citing "substantial" security risks for the event. The decision to cancel Tabassum's speech came after outcry over her public support for Palestinians. The self-described "first-generation South Asian American Muslim" was quoted as saying, "The university has betrayed me." USC's commencement cancellation also meant the cancellation of the keynote speech by USC alumnus Jon M. Chu, director of the 2018 hit movie "Crazy Rich Asians." Additional fallout after the decision included pro-Palestinian demonstrations on the campus, just southwest of downtown Los Angeles. Several colleges campuses nationwide have also seen demonstrations roused by the Israel-Hamas conflict, including on the campus of USC's crosstown rival, University of California Los Angeles.

2024 Women of the Year Selected

The Downtown Los Angeles Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League and the Japanese Women's Society of Southern California have selected Sue

Yanaga Kawasaki, Genevieve Hatsumi Uyeda Lew, Michele (Misaki) Nagata, Trudy Nodohara and Barbara Kato Yanase Shirota as this year's Women of the Year ([see tinyurl.com/33j2p4a2](http://tinyurl.com/33j2p4a2) for more information about each honoree). The five Japanese American community leaders will be recognized at 12:30 p.m. on May 5 at Quiet Cannon, Rooms Crystal 1 & 3, 901 N. Via San Clemente in Montebello, Calif. Tickets are \$60 per adult and \$30 per child, age 10 and younger. On-site registration begins at noon. Make checks payable to Downtown Los Angeles JACL. For more information, call Rodney Nakada (English/Japanese) at (213) 628-1808.

USJC Taps Yamamoto to Lead

The U.S.-Japan Council board of directors announced that it has selected Audrey Yamamoto to be the council's next president and CEO. Currently chief operating officer at the Asian American Foundation, Yamamoto succeeded President and CEO Suzanne Basalla at the end of March. Yamamoto will lead USJC's staff in the U.S. and Japan and work closely with the council's boards in both countries in carrying out the council's mission of developing and connecting diverse leaders to strengthen the bilateral relationship. "It is the honor of a lifetime to build on the legacies of Founding President Irene Hirano Inouye and President and CEO Basalla," said Yamamoto.

» See NEWS BRIEFS on page 9

2024 HEART MOUNTAIN PILGRIMAGE

POWELL & CODY, WY • JULY 25-27, 2024

Registration open NOW through June 30



DETAILS & REGISTRATION @
www.heartmountain.org/pilgrimage

HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION
info@heartmountain.org • 307.754.8000
www.heartmountain.org



This image from Apple Maps shows the triangular area along Judge John Aiso and East Temple Streets in Little Tokyo where the First Street North project will be built.

PHOTO: APPLE MAPS



(From left) Bill Seki, Esq., of the law firm Seki, Nishimura and Watase on Feb. 13 in Little Tokyo; City of Los Angeles Deputy Mayor of Housing Jenna Hornstock; Los Angeles City Councilmember Kevin de Leon; and Senior VP of U.S. Bank Impact Finance Lisa Gutierrez

A FIRST SMALL STEP BEFORE A GIANT LEAP

KABC Channel 7 news anchor David Ono serves as the master of ceremonies at the Feb. 13 groundbreaking for First Street North in Little Tokyo.

PHOTOS: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON



First Street North breaks ground on a transformative project for Little Tokyo.

By P.C. Staff

Whether one looks at it as an expansion for Little Tokyo or a return to what it used to encompass prior a long ago act of eminent domain that took the land for a parking lot, the end result will be the same. Little Tokyo's 140-year-old footprint, demography, environs and destiny will change for decades to come, thanks to an ambitious new mixed-use development project called First Street North.

It was for those reasons that leaders, participants, stakeholders and everyday citizens from the civic, political, veterans, business and non-profit domains came together on a sunny and cool morning on Feb. 13 for a ceremonial groundbreaking near Little Tokyo's Go for Broke Monument.

As envisioned, First Street North will transform the area bounded by Judge John Aiso Street to the west and East Temple Street to the north to North Alameda Street with new construction that will not only mean 10,000 square feet of operating

space for the Go for Broke National Education Center — one of the new development's partners, along with the Little Tokyo Service Center and the City of Los Angeles, plus private and other government entities — but also 330,000 square feet of indoor space five stories high (with underground parking) that will include 248 affordable units for low-income individuals and families, 80 of which will be "permanent supportive units for unhoused people" and 63 units for homeless veterans.

Furthermore, when completed, the plan is for "legacy" businesses such as Fugetsu-Do and Suehiro Restaurant to relocate to the new development, which will also house an additional theater for East West Players. According to Mitchell Maki, president and CEO of GFBNEC, completion should be achieved by late 2026 at the earliest or spring 2027 at the latest.

Speaking last September at GFBNEC's annual Evening of Aloha gala, former Alhambra Mayor Jeff Maloney said the new space will include "a multipurpose room for presentations and community meetings, a state-of-the-art conference room and a temporary exhibit space, and I think most exciting, an outdoor courtyard that will be designed to give the proper honor to every person whose name is inscribed on our monument."

Maloney added that part of the development would include an interpretive center next to the Go for Broke Monument, as well as an additional commemorative wall to include 16,000 Japanese American service members who served during World

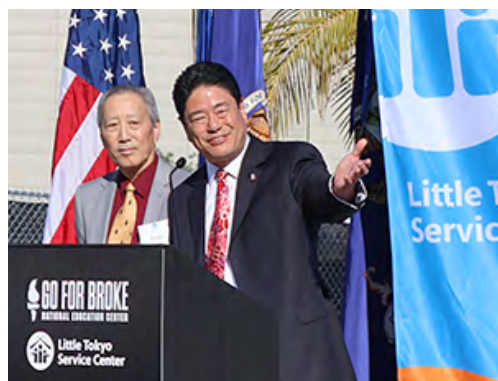
War II but were not sent overseas.

The February groundbreaking began with a rousing taiko performance by J-Town Taiko Club, after which KABC-TV news anchor David Ono took over as master of ceremonies, introducing such speakers as Little Tokyo Service Center Executive Director Erich Nakano and GFBNEC's Maki, who recognized three Japanese American Army veterans in the audience: Ed Nakamura, who served in the Military Intelligence Service; Yoshio Nakamura, who served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team; and Tokuji "Toke" Yoshihashi, who served in the 100th Infantry Battalion.

Other speakers that morning chosen to give some remarks about their particular organization's contribution to the project included attorney Bill Seki, a partner at law firm Seki, Nishimura and Watase; City of Los Angeles Deputy Mayor of Housing Jenna Hornstock; Los Angeles City Councilmember Kevin de Leon; Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles Kenko Sone; Senior VP of U.S. Bank Impact Finance Lisa Gutierrez; Little Tokyo Service Center Director of Real Estate Debbie Chen; Field Representative for Assemblymember Miguel Santiago Eric Moon; L.A. Development Fund President and City of L.A. Economic Workforce Development Department General Manager Carolyn Hull; Genesis L.A. President and CEO Thomas De Simone; and LTSC Community Development Director Takao Suzuki.

Suzuki recognized some of the

» See LEAP on page 12



(From left) LTSC's Executive Director Erich Nakano and GFBNEC's President and CEO Mitchell Maki address the audience at the First Street North's groundbreaking ceremony.

(From left) Eric Moon, field representative for Assemblymember Miguel Santiago, after presenting LTSC's Erich Nakano with a certificate of recognition to commemorate the First Street North groundbreaking



Looking into the Future Together

2024 JAACL NATIONAL CONVENTION PHILADELPHIA

Scan the QR Code or visit the link below!

CONVENTION REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

JACL.ORG/2024-JACL-NATIONAL-CONVENTION

A receipt for a U.S. flag purchased by the Portland JACL chapter, dated Dec. 8, 1941

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SETSY LAROUCHE



Members of Portland JACL assemble annual calendars in 2014 to be sent to chapter members



A Nihonmachi display at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon



Unite People, the youth group affiliate of Portland JACL, with Sec. Norman Mineta in 2014 after receiving a JACL Legacy Fund Grant at the 2014 JACL National Convention in San Jose, Calif.

PHOTOS: RICH IWASAKI



Citizens and residents carry banners on Jan. 28, 2017, at the March for Justice and Equality along Martin Luther King Boulevard in Portland. Members of numerous organizations, including Portland JACL, participated in the march.

CIRCLES OF TRUST

The Japanese American community in Portland's commitment to collaboration is key to its success.

By Emily Murase,
Contributor



Portland JACL board members Jeff Matsumoto (left) and Amanda Shannahan speak with young visitors on July 27, 2019, at Natsu Matsuri in Beaverton, Ore. The annual festival features a variety of organizations presenting numerous aspects of Japanese and Nikkei heritage and culture.

What are the defining characteristics of the Japanese American community in the Portland area? Members of the Portland JACL board of directors, past and present, and community leaders agree that a commitment to collaboration, both within the Nikkei community and with other communities, is key to the many circles of trust.

"There is a lot of crossover among leaders of community organizations," said JACL Portland President Jeff Matsumoto, a Yonsei who moved to Portland from California eight years ago. "Our chapter members are involved in the Japanese Ancestral Society and the Portland Japanese Gardens and the Nisei Veterans Group. This crossover helps us to be connected."

Setsy Larouche, who first arrived to Portland from Japan in 1955 and has served as JACL Portland's membership chair for 20 years, explained, "To celebrate graduating high schoolers, 11 community organizations sponsor the Japanese American Graduation Banquet. Can you imagine that this is the 77th year of this event?" Similarly, what had been disparate community gatherings for many years has come together as the Annual Nikkei Community Picnic, a free event that attracts hundreds of community members.

Former JACL Portland President Marleen Wallingford, whose family has lived in Oregon

for generations, said, "Our chapter is deeply committed to collaboration and is constantly reaching out to other communities. In the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, we reached out to the Black community and are supporting efforts around Black reparations. We launched an anti-racist book club that started with Ibram Kendi's book 'How to Be an Antiracist.' Earlier, in the weeks after 9/11, we reached out to the Muslim Educational Trust."

Larouche and Wallingford recount an episode from the Portland JACL chapter archives that explains the motivation for this kind of chapter activism. "The day after President (Franklin D.) Roosevelt delivered the 'Day of Infamy' speech in the wake of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the principal of Lincoln High School addressed the entire student body with similar rhetoric. My uncle, among the students in the assembly that day, including many Nikkei students, wrote about it in his diary how he felt targeted and uncomfortable."

In going through chapter archives, Larouche came across a very memorable receipt. "If you look at the date stamp, it says Dec. 8, 1941, the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. On this day, the JACL chapter purchased a U.S. flag from the Portland-based Meier & Frank Department Store." She recalls that the flag was eventually donated to Portland State University many years later.

Like the Portland JACL chapter, the Portland-based Japanese Ancestral Society is also highly collaborative, and its leadership reflects the crossover that Matsumoto has described.

Current Japanese Ancestral Society President Rich Iwasaki is a former Portland JACL president and a professional photographer who can be seen at nearly all Nikkei community events. He echoes the sentiment of current chapter board members: "While there is no



Holly Yasui speaks during the commemoration of Minoru Yasui Day on March 28, 2017, in the atrium of Portland City Hall.

Japantown/Nihonmachi in Portland anymore, we are such a small community that we see each other all the time.”

According to Kourtney Goya, writing from the Oregon Encyclopedia, the Japanese Ancestral Society of Portland has its origins as far back as 1907, when large numbers of Japanese immigrated to Oregon. By 1910, more than 3,500 Japanese immigrated to the Portland area seeking work on railroads, in canneries, logging in forests and farming one of the 83 Japanese-owned farms that controlled more than 4,600 acres in the state.

Among those farmers were Matsumoto’s paternal grandparents, who immigrated from Shiga Prefecture in the early 1900s. “Building on the work of my Issei grandparents, my father and his two brothers formed the Iwasaki Brothers wholesale nursery, which remains one of the largest in the Northwest,” explained Matsumoto. The nursery celebrated its centennial in 2016.

Matsumoto’s maternal grandparents ran a small hotel in Portland Japantown/Nihonmachi, which provided all manner of social services to Japanese newcomers, including job referrals. Henry Sakamoto, in his research featured in the Oregon Encyclopedia, writes that there were actually two Nihonmachis in Portland, not only in the northwest district but also in the southwest. Both were thriving commercial and residential neighborhoods up until World War II when the incarceration left both places ghost towns.

With Japanese immigration to Portland came the need for a dedicated burial place. Due to racism and segregation, the Japanese community needed its own place to bury the dead. The Japanese Ancestral Society stewards the Japanese cemetery on land purchased by the Nikkei community and organizes an annual Memorial Day service in partnership with the Portland JACL and several other Nikkei organizations.

The Society also funds and staffs the Ikoi no Kai, a community hot lunch program offering an Asian menu including pork katsu, Hawaiian loco moco and Korean bibimbap, on-site, four days a week for just \$9 for seniors 65-plus, \$11



The Monument to Nikkei Veterans at the Japanese Cemetery during the Memorial Day ceremony in 2018

PHOTOS: RICH IWASAKI

for adults under 65 and \$6 for kids. A monthly bento lunch delivery service is also offered to home-bound seniors. With just a few part-time staff paid by the Society, the program relies on a team of dedicated volunteers. This year, Ikoi no Kai celebrates 45 years of service to the community.

The program is held at the Epworth United Methodist Church, which was founded by Japanese immigrants in 1893. According to George Azumano, writing for the Oregon Encyclopedia, the number of Issei in the Portland area began with 30 in 1887 and tripled to 100 in 1892. The Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church in San Francisco sent Rev. Teikichi Kawabe to visit Portland three times, after which the church decided to open the Japanese Methodist Mission.

By 1903, a church building was purchased using a combination of local donations of \$2,500 and \$3,500 from the Methodist Episcopal National Board of Missions. The church moved to its current location at 1333 S.E. 28th Ave. after purchasing the property for \$20,000. In 2011, 95 percent of the 200-plus congregants identified as Japanese American, according to Azumano. The church has hosted Ikoi no Kai since 1985.

A relative newcomer to the Portland Nikkei community is Hanako Wakatsuki-Chong, who became executive director of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon in July 2023 after serving as the superintendent of the Honouliuli National Historic Site in Hawaii and as a policy adviser on Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Affairs in the Obama White House.

Formerly known as the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, JAMO has the mission to “preserve and honor the history and culture of Japanese Americans in the Pacific Northwest, educate the public about the Japanese American experience during WWII and advocate for the protection of civil rights for all Americans.”

The impetus for preserving Oregon’s Nikkei history can be traced to the 1973 Issei Appreciation Project that gathered documentation of Issei before the 1924 ban on Japanese and other Asian immigration by the federal Immigration Act.

Then, according to Sakamoto, in 1988, the City of Portland embarked on plans to expand the Tom McCall Waterfront Park near the location of the northwest Japantown. These plans involved a collaboration between the Oregon Nikkei Endowment (now the Japanese Ancestral Society), the Japanese Business Assn., the Japanese American Citizens League, other Nikkei community-based organizations, multiple city departments and local foundations.

The resulting Japanese American Historical Plaza, dedicated in 1990, features 13 granite and basalt stone monuments engraved with poems by Nikkei poets memorializing the struggles of Japanese Americans in Oregon.

Two reunions of Oregon Nikkei in 1990 and 1995 attended by 900 and 700 individuals, respectively, created additional momentum for creating video documentaries and mounting historic exhibits about the Japanese American experience in Oregon and gave rise to the idea of the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.

Through the generosity and advocacy of local business leaders Bill and Sam Naito, a location for the center was secured in 2004. However, to accommodate expanded exhibit space and fulfill a strong desire to locate in the former Nihonmachi area, the center was renamed the Japanese American Museum of Oregon and moved to its current site, the Naito Center, at 411 N.W. Flanders St. in Old Town in May 2021.

JAMO features a permanent exhibit that immerses visitors in the everyday lives of Japanese Americans before, during and after WWII. Highlights include a Minidoka barrack and the actual cell where celebrated civil rights champion Minoru Yasui, then a 26-year-old law school graduate, was held in solitary confinement for nine months, according to the *Oregonian* newspaper. The museum is a beloved cultural, artistic and historical hub for the Japanese American community.

Wakatsuki-Chong talks about how special the Portland Nikkei community is compared to other places: “I am extremely impressed with the level of collaboration here, a level that I haven’t seen before. I find it so refreshing and inspiring. This ability to work together provides the Japanese American community in the Portland area with great strength and leads to effectiveness.”

She cites the example of Oregon House Bill 4085, which would create a \$6 million fund to offset the cost of applying for permanent U.S. residency (green card status). She found strong support among other Japanese American organizations for this legislation as leaders recognized the importance of advocating for immigrants and nonresidents.

Wakatsuki-Chong explains that she first became interested in the work of the JACL



The exterior of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon

PHOTO: RICH IWASAKI, COURTESY OF JAMO

when she joined Friends of Minidoka while in college in Idaho, where she spent her formative years. Reflecting on her partnership with the Portland JACL, she points to “Nobi’s Night Out,” a 1920s speakeasy-themed fundraising gala for the museum that was held last year in honor of the late Nobi Masaoka, a very active JACLer.

According to the most recent American Community Survey (2014), the population of Portland was 602,568, of which 2,869, or 6 percent, identified as Japanese. Yet, the Portland JACL has a membership of more than 400 people, a membership that is larger than chapters where there are many more Japanese Americans in the general population and, in fact, making it the largest JACL chapter in the country.

Clearly, the Portland JACL plays a central role in the circles of trust that define the Nikkei community in the Portland area, and the chapter’s success can be attributed to its extraordinary commitment to working collaboratively throughout the Nikkei community and beyond. ■



A Minidoka barrack on display at JAMO

PHOTO: RICH IWASAKI, COURTESY OF JAMO



A 2023 Nobi’s Night Out fundraiser flyer PHOTO: JAMO

OK, BOOMERS — THE SANSEI ROCKERS ARE BACK



Harry Manaka, Hammond B3 organ, keyboards

PHOTOS: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON



Harold Payne, guitars, vocals



Royce Jones, vocals



The band, popularly known as Sansei Rockers, rehearses for its upcoming show taking place at Little Tokyo's Aratani Theater on May 11.

All generations are welcome as the old school rock 'n' soul band gets ready to tear the roof off the Aratani Theater.

By P.C. Staff

After four well-received, sold-out shows over back-to-back weekends last June at a Little Tokyo venue, a new old favorite is back and ready to rock.

Just a couple of days short of making its debut last May at the Japanese American National Museum's benefit gala, the band known as the Sansei Rockers will perform at "Sansei Rocker: Get Ready, Cuz Here We Come!" from 2-4 p.m. on May 11 at the Aratani Theater in Little Tokyo.

If you're unfamiliar with this band, it arose like the legend of the phoenix following the 2020 publication of a book by the band's leader, Harry Manaka, whose literary paean to the bands of L.A.'s "Sansei dance music circuit" of the 1960s and '70s was titled "Chronicles of a Sansei Rocker" (see the Dec. 18, 2020, issue of the *Pacific Citizen* or visit tinyurl.com/yk7y75fw).

As he wrote about that era and all the bands that were part of that scene, Manaka also included his own adventures as a musician. The book proved to be an unexpected success, and in the summer of 2022, he took part in the Sansei Rocker Symposium at JANM's Tateuchi Democracy Forum. (A video of that event may be viewed

at tinyurl.com/4j2ymp6a.)

Like a snowball rolling down the side of a snow-covered hill, the idea of putting a band together grew — and after 2023's proof of concept performances, the boys are back in town.

In 2024, the band, including Manaka, is comprised of vocalist Royce Jones and electric bassist Bobby Flores, both of whom played with Manaka many years ago in their band Somethin' Else, plus keyboardist and arranger Wayne Wakai, guitarist/vocalist Harold Payne, electric guitarist John DePatie, percussionist Richie Gajate Garcia and drummer Charles Ruggiero.

Missing in the 2024 lineup, however, is guitarist and concert impresario Gerald Ishibashi, who had a band of his own: Stonebridge.

"Last year, Gerald graciously took time out of his busy schedule to help me with my show. This year, he is involved with projects of his own and won't be joining us. With that said, we've left the door open for future collaborations," Manaka relayed via email. Added for this year: Ken Fong.

To sound good, however, takes preparation. In the runup to this new show, the band has been busy at Holloway Prods. in Santa Fe Springs, Calif., rehearsing and fine-tuning a repertoire that includes peak Motown favorites —

"My Girl," "Can't Help Myself," "Beauty Is Only Skin Deep," etc. — not to mention other Top 40 hits such as "Mustang Sally," "All Day Music" and a medley of songs by the Rascals, an inspirational favorite of Manaka's.

Although Manaka says there are still some balcony tickets left, the show is nearly sold out. If you're local to Los Angeles and feel like going to a go-go, visit tinyurl.com/3khnn92j for tickets.

If you can't make it, however, there is a way to see a short movie about Manaka and his musical pals: As part of the 40th VC Film Fest, aka the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival (May 1-10), the Digital Histories 2024 segment, which takes place on May 5 at the Aratani Theater, will feature 15 short movies by a "creative community of Asian American aunties and uncles turned documentary filmmakers."

One of the movies is Cory Shiozaki's six-minute-long "Chronicles of a Sansei Rocker." Tickets are available at tinyurl.com/b88yxvsv. The entire lineup, which includes a documentary about another band with Asian American members titled "The Carry On Story" by Mitchell Matsumura, will be part of the bill.

For the lineup of shorts, visit tinyurl.com/3pr59y72.



(Above) John DePatie (left), lead guitar, and Bobby Flores, bass, and (below) Wayne Wakai, synthesizers, arrangements, alto sax, vocals and guitar



Richie Gajate Garcia (left), percussion, and Charles Ruggiero, drums



Thank You for Your JAACL Membership!

We're grateful to have some of the most engaged and committed members around! Because of your loyal support, we have more premium membership upgrades and generous additional gifts than ever. We're also appreciative for those who renew year after year (some for 50 years or more!) and for our increase in new members. Your dedication is essential to our ongoing mission for social justice, education, and community! Thank you! - JAACL Membership Department



Not a member? Join us today!

Visit jaacl.org/member
or contact us at mbre@jaacl.org

RON WAKABAYASHI TO RECEIVE THE SUE KUNITOMI EMBREY LEGACY AWARD AT 55TH ANNUAL MANZANAR PILGRIMAGE

Attorney Don Tamaki will be the event's keynote speaker.

By *Manzanar Committee*

LOS ANGELES — Ron Wakabayashi, former regional director of the U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, has been named as the 2024 recipient of the Sue Kunitomi Embrey Legacy Award.

The award, named after the late chair of the Manzanar Committee, who was one of the founders of the annual Manzanar Pilgrimage and was the driving force behind the creation of the Manzanar National Historic Site, will be presented at the 55th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage on April 27.

Wakabayashi, who was one of the pioneers who participated in the first organized Manzanar Pilgrimage in 1969, was born in Reno, Nev., during the war years and had family members incarcerated at Rohwer and Topaz.

After his family returned to Los Angeles in 1947, Wakabayashi attended California State University, Los Angeles, before becoming the national youth director for the JAACL in the late 1960s. He was a founder and director of the Asian American Drug Abuse Program and then went on to become the JAACL national director during the redress campaign.

Wakabayashi later became the executive director of the Los Angeles City Human Relations Commission and the director of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations. He served in this position starting in 1999 and provided conflict resolution services related to race, color or national origin.

"We are honored to recognize Ron for all his outstanding contributions to our community and defending the civil rights of all Americans," said Manzanar Committee Co-Chair Bruce Embrey.



Ron Wakabayashi



Don Tamaki

In addition, the Manzanar Committee announced that attorney Don Tamaki will be the event's keynote speaker.

Tamaki, senior counsel of the Bay Area law firm Minami Tamaki LLP, is best-known as co-counsel for Fred Korematsu during his coram nobis court case in which he appealed his 1944 conviction for violating the order that forcibly removed Japanese/Japanese Americans from the West Coast and incarcerated them in American concentration camps and other confinement sites. Tamaki helped lead a successful effort to get Korematsu's conviction vacated in U.S. District Court in 1984.

Tamaki also co-founded the Asian Law Alliance in San Jose and has served as the executive director of the Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco.

In 2021, Tamaki was appointed by California Gov. Gavin Newsom to serve on the nine-member California Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans to study the cumulative historic and present-day impact of 246 years of enslavement, 90 years of Jim Crow oppression and 60 years of segregation and its vestiges and to recommend to the Legislature what California should do to address these harms.

"We're honored to have Don Tamaki as our keynote speaker on this 55th anniversary of the first community-wide pilgrimage," said Embrey. "Don's tireless activism over the years, his leading role in the coram nobis cases and most recently his role in the California Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans makes him uniquely qualified to speak at our pilgrimage."

For more information on the Manzanar Pilgrimage, visit www.manzanarcommittee.org.

Celebration of Life for Judge Raymond S. Uno

A Celebration of Life was held for Judge Raymond S. Uno at the Cleone Peterson Eccles Alumni House at the University of Utah, his alma mater, on April 20. A capacity crowd of more than 300 people filled the ballroom for Utah's first minority judge. Uno, 93, was a nationally recognized civil rights activist who leaves behind a legacy of service and dedication in his pursuit of social justice and breaking barriers in human equality. Speaking on behalf of the Japanese American Citizens League was former JAACL National Executive Director Floyd S. Mori, who conveyed his condolences and praise for Uno, who was also a former JAACL national president.

PHOTO: PATTI HIRAHARA



NEWS BRIEFS » continued from page 4

Medal of Freedom Push for Mitsuye Endo

In advance of the 80th anniversary of the Supreme Court's Dec. 18, 1944, unanimous ruling in *Ex parte Mitsuye Endo* that the War Relocation Authority could not imprison law-abiding citizens, a petition drive to posthumously award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Mitsuye Endo, aka Mitsuye Endo Tsutsumi, has begun. As a result of the 1944 SCOTUS decision, within two weeks the U.S. government began taking steps to shutter the 10 WRA concentration camps. On the change.org petition drive page, started by attorneys who in the 1980s revisited the three failed Supreme Court challenges to the mass Japanese American incarceration brought by Gordon Hirabayashi, Fred Korematsu and Minoru Yasui using an obscure legal tactic *writ of error coram nobis*, are the words: "Endo's courage and conviction are an embodiment of what it means to be a responsible American citizen. ... we request that President Biden posthumously award Mitsuye Endo Tsutsumi with the Presidential Medal of Freedom." Hirabayashi, Korematsu and Yasui all have received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The link to the petition is at tinyurl.com/bdev2mwn. Meantime, a link to a column on the same topic by JAACL Executive Director David Inoue may be read at tinyurl.com/msz5sytc. Endo died in 2006.

Mint Rolls Out Patsy Mink Quarter

The late Rep. Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii), the first nonwhite woman to be elected to Congress who was also instrumental for her role in the 1972 passage of Title IX has been honored by the U.S. Mint. On March 25, the Mint released into circulation a 25 cent coin bearing Mink's likeness on its reverse as part of its 2024 American Women Quarters. Title IX — later renamed the Patsy Takemoto Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act — banned gender discrimination "under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." A video from the University of Hawaii about Mink, Title IX and the new quarter can be viewed at tinyurl.com/yv4xxnbx. Bulk orders of the Mink quarter may be purchased from the U.S. Mint at tinyurl.com/ctprtwv2.

Hawaii: Thumbs Up on Shaka Gesture?

Lawmakers in Hawaii have in 2024 introduced a pair of bills — Senate Bill 3312 and House Bill 2736 — to make the "shaka" the state's official gesture of goodwill and the aloha spirit, and recognize the island state as its birthplace. Sometimes accompanied with a shake and an appeal to "hang loose," the shaka gesture — a pinky and thumb extended with the remaining fingers curled down — is expected to, according to Hawaii state Sen. Glenn Wakai, "sail through."

Ventura JAACL Hosts Asian American Films

Through a grant from the City of Thousand Oaks, Calif., the Ventura County

Japanese American Citizens League is hosting a free-to-the-public mini film festival to celebrate Asian American Heritage Month on consecutive Saturdays in May. Programs 1 and 2 are May 11 and 18, respectively, at Thousand Oaks Grant R. Brimhall Library Community Room, 1401 E. Janss Road. Program 3 will take place at South Oxnard Library, 4300 Saviers Road in Oxnard. To register for Program 1, visit tinyurl.com/z7edems3. To register for Program 2, visit tinyurl.com/mr2t8cwd. To register for Program 3, visit tinyurl.com/mt7mpz9s. For the lineup of films, visit tinyurl.com/4efykd8s. Film festival organizer and VCJAACL board member Janice Tanaka said, "I am pleased to announce that filmmakers Paul Daisuke Goodman ("No No Girl") and Malloree Ortega ("The Girl Who Left Home") will be in person to talk about their work and take questions from the audience." For more info, visit vcjaacl.org or email infovcjaacl@gmail.com.

Embezzlement Trial of Girardi, Kamon to Begin Next Month

Barring unforeseen changes, May 21 will be the start date for the federal fraud trial involving disbarred attorney Thomas Vincent Girardi of the defunct Girardi Keese law firm and the firm's former controller and CFO Christopher Kazuo Kamon. Girardi, 84, is charged with five counts of wire fraud and is alleged to have embezzled more than \$15 million from his clients. Kamon, 49, worked at the firm from 2004-20, oversaw the firm's finances and accounting department, and was responsible for paying the firm's expenses. The indictment alleges that from 2010-20, Girardi and Kamon fraudulently obtained more than \$15 million that belonged to Girardi Keese clients. Kamon is in federal custody. According to published reports, Kamon is alleged to have "used falsified invoices, fraudulent transfers and cash kickbacks from the firm's accounts to steal millions of dollars" and "improperly used the firm's funds for his personal expenses, including ... tens of thousands a month for 'female companionship.'" Kamon's attorney has not indicated whether he will seek to sever his client from Girardi's trial.

Japanese Oscar Winners' B.O. Totals

Two Japanese movies each won Academy Awards on March 10: Studio Ghibli's "The Boy and the Heron" for Animated Film and Toho International's "Godzilla Minus One" for Visual Effects. According to figures from BoxOfficeMojo.com, the international total gross boxoffice receipts for the pair, respectively, stand at about \$173.3 million (\$46.8 million domestic plus \$126.5 million internationally) for "Heron" and about \$115.9 million (\$56.4 million domestic plus \$59.4 million internationally) for "Minus One," which is North America's highest-grossing Japanese live-action movie.

— P.C. Staff

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

NATIONAL

Irei — A National Monument for the WWII Japanese American Incarceration
Los Angeles, CA
JANM

100 N. Central Ave.

The *Ireichō* contains the first comprehensive listing of more than 125,000 persons of Japanese ancestry who were forcibly incarcerated during World War II. Visitors can now view the book and leave a special *hanko* (stamp/seal) for each person in the monument as a way to honor those incarcerated. The project's online archive is now searchable alphabetically or by camp.

Info: Visit ireizo.com for more information and janm.org.

NCWNP

Japanese Heritage Night With the San Francisco Giants
San Francisco, CA

May 17; 7:15 p.m.

Oracle Park
24 Willie Mays Plaza

Price: Starting at \$32 for JCCCNC Members

Join the JCCCNC at Japanese Heritage Night as the San Francisco Giants take on the Colorado Rockies. The evening will also feature special pregame entertainment that will highlight local cultural performances.

Info: Visit <https://www.jcccnc.org/japanese-heritage-night-2024/>.

'Taken From Their Families: Japanese American Incarceration on Angel Island During World War II'
San Jose, CA

Thru June 23

Japanese American Museum San Jose
535 N. Fifth St.

Price: Museum Admission

This exhibit features stories from 24 individuals from Hawaii and the West Coast who were incarcerated on Angel Island after Dec. 7, 1941, and whose lives were forever changed because of it.

Info: Visit <https://www.jamsj.org/exhibitions>.

PSW

'We Said No! No!: A Story of Civil Disobedience' Screening

Santa Monica, CA

May 11; 2-4 p.m.

Santa Monica Public Library MLK Jr. Auditorium
601 Santa Monica Blvd.

Price: Free

Filmmaker Brian Tadashi Maeda screens his award-winning feature documentary about the Japanese Americans who, while imprisoned at the Tule Lake concentration camp, refused to say "yes" to the infamous Loyalty Questionnaire. A panel discussion with the cast and crew follows the screening.

Info: Visit smp.l.org.

Ondo Classes at the GVJCI
Gardena, CA

May 22, 29, June 5, 12; 6-7 p.m.

Gardena Valley JCI
1964 W. 162nd St.

Price: \$5 for Each Class

Get ready for summer by participating in the GVJCI's ondo (Japanese dance) classes for all ages! All levels are welcome to join; registration is required.

Info: To register, visit <https://gvjci.wufoo.com/forms/>

Sake in the Park

Los Angeles, CA

July 26; 7-10 p.m.

Grand Park in Los Angeles

Price: Fundraiser Event

Save the date! Summer is just around the corner, which means that Sake in the Park is almost here. This year's celebration will take place in Grand Park, the biggest venue in the event's 16-year history. This event is a fundraiser for the Little Tokyo Service Center and will include an inclusive ticket with unlimited food and drink. Early bird tickets go on sale June 1.

Info: Visit www.ltsc.org/sake.

'Giant Robot Biennale 5'

Los Angeles, CA

March 2-Sept. 1

JANM

100 N. Central Ave.

Price: Museum Admission

This recurring art exhibition partnered with Eric Nakamura, founder of Giant Robot, highlights creative works celebrating the ethos of Giant Robot, a staple of Asian American alternative pop culture and an influential brand encompassing pop art, skateboard, comic book, graphic arts and vinyl toy culture. "Giant Robot Biennale 5" will feature artists Sean Chao, Felicia Chiao, Luke Chueh, Giorgiko, James Jean, Taylor Lee, Mike Shinoda, Rain Szeto and Yoskay Yamamoto, among others.

Info: Visit www.janm.org.

'J. T. Sata: Immigrant Modernist'
Los Angeles, CA

Thru Sept. 1

JANM

100 N. Central Ave.

Price: Museum Admission

James Tadanao Sata (1896-1975) created some of the most adventurous photographs made in America in the 1920s and '30s. At the onset of WWII, he was forced to abandon photography and instead made drawings and paintings about life in the camps.

Info: Visit www.janm.org/exhibits/jt-sata.

Okaeri Connects! LGBTQ+ Support Group
Virtual Event

English Speaking LGBTQ+ only —
Second Sundays from 4-5:15 p.m.

Japanese Speaking LGBTQ+ only —
Third Sundays from 4-5:15 p.m.

(9 a.m. JT)

Japanese Speaking Parents/Allies —
Third Sundays from 2-3:15 p.m.

(7 a.m. JT)

Price: Free

Are you a Nikkei LGBTQ+ individual or have a Nikkei LGBTQ+ loved one? We create affirming spaces by sharing our personal experiences and stories. We believe that building relationships, being seen and connecting ourselves within our Nikkei community can improve the quality of our lives.

Info: To register, visit okaeri.org/connects. For questions, please email connects@okaeri.org.

PNW

Genji Mihara: An Issei Pioneer
Seattle, WA

Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Washington
1414 S. Weller St.

An Issei pioneer, JCCCW's feature exhibit on the life of Issei leader Genji Mihara (1890-1982) is part of a larger biographical project on Mihara, who immigrated to Seattle in 1907. Features include original photos and artifacts donated by Mihara's family, historical research and quotes from oral history interviews, including one from Mihara himself in the 1970s.

Info: Visit www.jcccw.org.

MDC

Japanese American Veterans Memorial Program
Minneapolis, MN

May 16; 10-11 a.m.
Fort Snelling National Cemetery
7601 34th Ave. S

Save the date for this important event that will honor more than 100 local Japanese American veterans. Volunteers are needed for various tasks in preparation for the event.

Info: For more information, email chiratadulas@tcjacl.org.

'Muttsu no Kazoku: Six Families' Journey From Internment to Scott Exhibit

Scott, AR

Thru July 27

Plantation Agriculture Museum
4815 Hwy. 161 S

Price: Museum Admission

This exhibit tells a story that has long been overlooked, as it explores life for the Shingu, Futamachi, Nakamura, Oshima, Yada and Yoshimura families before, during and after WWII, with a special focus on their lives in the farming community of Scott after their release from Rohwer War Relocation Center.

Info: Call (501) 961-1409.

IDC

2024 Topaz Art Pilgrimage
Salt Lake City, UT

May 2-4

Utah Museum of Fine Arts
410 S. Campus Center Dr.

Topaz Museum

55 W. Main St., Delta, UT

Price: \$80 to attend the May 4 gathering; some additional/optional fees available.

The Friends of Topaz Museum and the Topaz Museum announce the 2024 Topaz Art Pilgrimage, which will pay tribute to the 11,212 people of Japanese Descent who were incarcerated at the WWII American concentration camp at Topaz and will explore the legacy of the artists of Topaz. The pilgrimage will be held in conjunction with the exhibition "Pictures of Belonging: Miki Hayakawa, Hisako Hibi and Miné Okubo." On May 4, bus transportation will be available from Salt Lake City to Delta for a day trip to the historic Topaz site and Topaz Museum.

Info: Registration is required.

Visit <https://topazmuseum.org/pilgrimages/>.

47th Utah Asian Festival 2024
Salt Lake City, UT

June 8; 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

Utah State Fairpark

1055 W. North Temple

Price: Free

This annual festival demonstrates unity in the Asian community and showcases a wealth of traditions, including performances, exhibits and food. Don't miss this event that features something for the entire family to enjoy.

Info: Visit <https://utahasianfestival.org/>.

'Pictures of Belonging: Miki Hayakawa, Hisako Hibi and Miné Okubo'
Salt Lake City, UT

Thru June 30

Utah Museum of Fine Arts

Marcia and John Price Museum Bldg.
410 Campus Center Dr.

This exhibit reveals a broader picture of the American experience through art-works and life stories of three Japanese American women from the pre-WWII generation, seen together for the first time.

Info: Visit <https://umfa.utah.edu/pictures-of-belonging>.

EDC

Second Asian Street Food and Music Festival
Cambridge, MA

May 5; 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

Harvard Square
Church Street

Price: Free

This festival will feature live performances, crafts curated by international vendors and delicious street food.

Info: Visit www.hspaa.org.

2024 Boston AAPI 5K
Carson Beach, MA

May 18; 9 a.m.

South Boston

AAPI 5K is a community run celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Proceeds will benefit local AAPI nonprofits.

Info: Visit <https://raceroster.com/events/2024/76132/2024-boston-aapi-5k>.

'Songs for Modern Japan: Popular Music and Graphic Design, 1900-1950' Exhibit

Boston, MA

Thru Sept. 2

Museum of Fine Arts

465 Huntington Ave.

Price: Museum Admission

Through graphic design, typography, music and the societal environment in Japan, visitors will get a sense of how design and music celebrating modernity and globalism gave way to endorsing nationalism.

Info: Visit <https://www.mfa.org/exhibitions/songs-for-modern-japan>.

ADVERTISE HERE

Events in the calendar section are listed based on space availability. Place a 'Spotlight' ad with photos of your event for maximum exposure.

FOR MORE INFO:

pc@pacificcitizen.org
(213) 620-1767

 PACIFIC CITIZEN

Send a Gift Subscription!

\$50 Print Subscription (Non-JACL member) or \$36 Digital (pdf) Subscription. Use this coupon or go to our website!

Go to our website: <https://www.pacificcitizen.org/subscriptions/>

Or send with check to: The Pacific Citizen 123 S. Onizuka St., #206a, Los Angeles, CA 90012



Name: _____

Address: _____

(required for PRINT subscriptions)

Phone: _____

Email: _____

In MEMORIAM

Abe, Spencer Tsutomu, 79, Fresno, CA, Oct. 4, 2023.

Akahori, Ted Tatsuo, 96, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 6.

Brown-Oda, Joanne, 71, New York, NY, Oct. 10, 2023.



Davidson, Satoko, 89, Ridgeley, WV, Nov. 19, 2023.

Endo, Douglas, 71, Gardena, CA, Nov. 28, 2023; he is survived by his brother, Richard (Arlene) Endo, and a niece.

Fukai, Iris Katsuko, 68, Torrance, CA, Dec. 26, 2023.



Gotanda, Osame, 103, Los Angeles, CA, Dec. 16, 2023.

Hamada, Masako, 102, Anaheim, CA, Jan. 8.



Hayashi, Alice Wada, 100, St. Louis, MO, Sept. 28, 2023.

Hayashida, Jill Miyo, 49, Sacramento, CA, Nov. 13, 2023; she was predeceased by her father, Willie; she is survived by her mother, Gale Hayashida; brothers, Mark (Kimiko) and Michael; and 3 nephews.

Imamoto, Phyllis, 88, Harbor City, CA, Jan. 16.

Kawachi, Mark Hideki, 69, San Marino, CA, Dec. 9, 2023.



Kobayashi, Arthur, 89, Chatsworth, CA, Sept. 7, 2023; B.S., UC Berkeley (mech. eng.); he was predeceased by his brothers, George (Kathie) Kobayashi and Masaaki (Atsuko) Kobayashi; he is survived by his wife, Tamiko; children, Michelle, Erin, Gwen Komatsubara (Kenny) and Alan (Sandy) Kobayashi; siblings, May Kawakami (Hodge) and Nob (Patti); many nieces and nephew.

Kobayashi, Tamiko, 102, Monterey Park, CA, Feb. 5.

Kozuki, Warren Isamu, 80, Newport Beach, CA, Oct. 21, 2023; he is survived by his wife, Irene Kozuki; children, Wayne Kozuki and Kristina (Tai) Hirosumi; gc: 13.

Kubo, Harold, 96, Campbell, CA, Dec. 12, 2023; he is survived by his wife, Betsy; children, Colleen, Marsha, Milt (Kelly) and Jody (Lois); gc: 10; ggc: 3.

Kutsuma, Betty, 91, Westminster, CO, Nov. 29, 2023; she is survived by her children, Tina Kutsuma, Tammy (Mike) Irvine and Terry Kutsuma; she is also survived by many nieces and nephews; gc: 4; ggc: 5; gggc: 1.

Maruyama, Herbert, 94, Wheat Ridge, CO, Oct. 14, 2023.

Masunaga, Harold, 91, Honolulu, HI, March 9.



Matsumoto, Colleen Hatsumi, 84, Sacramento, CA, March 6.

Meguro, Leo Ryoichi, 101, Alhambra, CA, Dec. 6, 2023.

Mishima, Taro, 103, Los Angeles, CA, Sept. 10, 2023; he is survived by his wife, Miyoshi; children, Steve Mishima, Scott Mishima and Sharon Mishima; he is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

Miyahara, Gary T., 68, Sacramento, CA, Feb. 28, 2023; graduate, University of California, Riverside; he is survived by his mother, Nami Kubota; sister, Christine (Bill) Fong; a niece, a nephew and a grand niece; he is also survived by many aunts, uncles and cousins.



Miyamoto, Haruko, 98, Torrance, CA, Jan. 31.

Narita, Cobi, 97, Los Angeles, CA, Nov. 8, 2023; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Gila River WRA Center in AZ; a well-known jazz music impresario in New York City, she founded the nonprofit Universal Jazz Coalition and organized the Salute to Women in Jazz (known later as the New York Women's Jazz Festival); she is survived by her children, Robert, Susan Narita-Law, Judith, Charlene, Lisa, Patricia and Richard; sister, Therese Nakagawa; gc: 13; ggc: 6.

Onishi, Henry, 87, Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 31, 2023; he is survived by his daughter, Kelley (Darryl) Yamanka; siblings, Gertrude Iwami, Esther Onogi, Stanley Onishi and Sharon (Rodney) Kunimoto; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Tamaki, Jean, 93, Sacramento, CA, Oct. 1, 2023; she is survived by nieces, great-nieces Erin (John) Takechi and Robin Satow; great-grand-niece, Lauren Takechi.

Tokishi, Thomas Masao, 90, Gardena, CA, Dec. 8, 2023; he is survived by many nieces and nephews.

Totsubo, Kazue, 99, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 17.

Yada, Seizi Masaichi, 79, Federal Way, WA, Nov. 15, 2023.

Yamaji, Rosie Setsuko, 93, Mountain View, CA, Sept. 12, 2023; she was predeceased by her husband, Haruo.

TRIBUTE

EDITH WATANABE



Edith Sadako Watanabe passed away peacefully on March 5, 2023, just a few months shy of her 100th birthday. She was born on July 12, 1923, in San Francisco to Sadakusu and Tatsuyo Enomoto. Her father was the proprietor of Enomoto & Co., an importer and wholesale grower of chrysanthemums and roses at his nursery in Redwood City.

Edie, as she was known to friends and family, graduated from Galileo High School in 1941. She attended UC Berkeley until she was forced to withdraw when Executive Order 9066 called for the incarceration of Japanese Americans living in the Pacific states during WWII. Luckily, her older adult siblings quickly arranged for the family to relocate to Denver, Colo., thus avoiding the camps. In 1946, Edie graduated from the University of Denver with a bachelor of science in chemistry. In 2009, UC Berkeley awarded her with an honorary degree. After WWII ended, her family returned to San Francisco.

Edie met her husband Tom at a JAACL convention, and they married in 1953. They lived in the Windsor Hills neighborhood of Los Angeles until they moved to Rolling Hills Estates in 1970 with their four children. Combined with Tom's successful medical practice, Edie's financial management and investment savvy helped ensure the family's comfort and security. Edie was a dedicated mother who gave her children the best educational opportunities and exposed them to music, theater, sports, travel and lots of good food! She loved the large space of her home's backyard and the variety of ornamental plants, flowers and vegetables and fruit trees that she had selected.

After raising her young children, she returned to school and obtained a master's degree and teaching credential from USC and taught as a substitute teacher.

Edie and Tom were JAACL Life Members and longtime and active members of Centenary United Methodist Church in Little Tokyo and the Japanese American Medical Assn. They were also founding members of the Japanese American National Museum.

Edie had many other interests including traveling, investing in the stock market and playing bridge. After many years of earning points in competitive play, she achieved the American Contract Bridge League Life Master rank in 2004.

Edie did not overtly push her children but was never hesitant to nudge them when needed and was proud of their academic and professional achievements. Edie enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was in good health, with a strong will and a sharp mind until the end. At 99 she could still recall details of her childhood in San Francisco and all the friends, family and events of her very full life.

Edith was predeceased by her husband, Dr. Tom T. Watanabe; siblings, William Enomoto, Yuriko Oku, John Enomoto and Rose Nakada; and daughter-in-law, Betty Watanabe. She is survived by her children, Neil Watanabe, Wendy Watanabe (Eric Winter), Dr. Alyssa Watanabe and Kara Watanabe Kent (Phil Kent); grandchildren, Jennifer Prindle (Andy Prindle), Tyler Watanabe (Cindy Qin), Matthew and Nicole Kimi Look, Thomas Winter and Christopher and Daniel Kent; and great-grandchildren, Jack, Samantha and Lily Edith Prindle.

In lieu of flowers or koden, please consider a donation in her honor to the Japanese American Medical Association Scholarship Fund (jamasocal.org).

PLACE A TRIBUTE
 'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$20/column inch.
CONTACT:
 Editorial@pacificcitizen.org or call (213) 620-1767 ext. 104

KUBOTA
 Sharing. Community. Legacy.
 久保田葬儀社
 T 213-749-1449
 F 213-749-0265
 911 Venice Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90015
www.kubotamortuary.com

福井 FUKUI MORTUARY
 Five Generations of Experience
 FD #808
 707 East Temple Street
 Los Angeles, CA 90012
 Gerald Fukui
 President
 Ph. 213/626-0441
 Fax 213/617-2781



REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

CELEBRATING Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander HERITAGE MONTH

By JR Fujita

Each May, we celebrate Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. There are an estimated 24.7 million Asian and 1.8 million Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander residents in the United States, according to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau.

AANHPIs are now the fastest-growing population in the U.S., accounting for a recent 2.4 percent annual growth. AANHPI Heritage Month recognizes the contribution and influence of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islander Americans to the history, culture and achievements of the

United States.

We see more cultural festivals and events during AANHPI Heritage Month, such as music and film events, cooking demonstrations, galas, special exhibits in museums and galleries, cultural performances and celebrations in our communities.

There will also be a variety of workshops, speakers, short films and special features held across the country. The best part — there will be diverse food offerings that bring back childhood memories and provide an opportunity for families and friends to gather, reconnect and celebrate together.

AARP also has a variety of free resources and information specific to the AANHPI community that can

be found at aarp.org/home-family/voices/asian-community/. Resources include a Family Caregiving Guide, community voices highlighting stories from our community, video spotlights and information related to health, jobs and money management.

Caregiving is one of the cultural ways AANHPIs honor and show respect for their elders. The AARP Caregiving Guide is a practical tool to help you care for family elders. You'll find information, resources and checklists to help you get organized and find the support that you might need.

There is also an AARP AAPI Community on Facebook at facebook.com/AARPAAPI, which provides a platform for connecting, viewing stories and learning about historical events, as well as a place to learn about upcoming events hosted by AARP such as film screenings, question and answer sessions and educational workshops.

However, you choose to participate in AANHPI Heritage Month, I hope you take time to celebrate in a meaningful way and learn something new!

JR Fujita is a senior state and community engagement specialist for AARP and is based in Sacramento, Calif.

LEAP » continued from page 5

dignitaries in the audience that morning, including former L.A. City Councilmember Jan Perry, who represented Little Tokyo; former state Assemblymember George Nakano; Alhambra's Maloney; and former L.A. School Board member and former State Assemblyman Warren Furutani.

Also making remarks that morning were Little Tokyo Community Council Managing Director Kristin Fukushima; California Wellness Foundation Program Director Jamie Schenker; Home Depot Foundation Store Manager and District Team Depot Captain Luis Miguel; California Community Foundation

Housing and Economic Opportunity Director Maria Cabildo; and National Equity Fund Managing Director Debbie Burkart.

LTSC's Chen, the final speaker before the groundbreaking said, "We want to thank all the community organizations and stakeholders that have been involved, that have given public comment, that have invested their time and their resources into realizing the vision for this project. And I want to do a special acknowledgement to the Little Tokyo small businesses that have provided their thoughts and their feedback, and we hope to see many of them in the building when it comes online." ■



Wearing hardhats and with shovels in hand, a group of First Street North supporters, including WWII veterans Toke Yoshihashi, Ed Nakamura and Yoshio Nakamura, during the Feb. 13 groundbreaking in Little Tokyo

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

Judd Matsunaga's
ELDER LAW SERVICES OF CALIFORNIA
A Professional Law Corporation

- Medi-Cal Planning
- Asset Protection for Long-Term Care
- Living Trusts & Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Trust Administration
- Probate

JUDD MATSUNAGA
Attorney at Law

Home & Hospital
Appointments Available!

Multiple Office Locations

Torrance • Los Angeles • Pasadena
Encino • Fountain Valley • Westlake Village

800-403-6078

www.elderlawcalifornia.com

New Online Banking & Mobile App

Find details and instructions on our website

www.jaclcu.com/virtual/

**National JACL
Credit Union**

800-544-8828 www.jaclcu.com

PROMO CODE: PCSMART23