DC NEWS NOTES
Publication of the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League

PRESIDENTS’ MESSAGE

Happy New Year, JACL DC Chapter!

We hope you had a wonderful 2016 and are enjoying the start of the Year of the Rooster.

The DC Chapter continues to be strong, with a healthy mix of individual, family and youth members of all ages and backgrounds. Our chapter activities and its successes could not take place without your continuing support and participation. We are very thankful for the ongoing leadership of John Tobe and his tireless work to continue to keep our Board and DC Chapter a relevant link to our history, traditions, community service and advocacy.

We are also humbled by the support given to us by current and former Board Members as we transition into our new roles as Co-Presidents of the DC Chapter. It is our vision that we continue to engage chapter members of all ages and to build an even stronger chapter with a diverse offering of programs that will honor our past and open new areas of discovery. In particular, we are excited about this summer’s 48th Annual JACL National Convention to be hosted in Washington, D.C.

John Tobe is the JACL National Convention Chair, and our DC Chapter will be working closely with him to prepare for the convention in July. Needless to say, the convention takes more than a village to successfully run. There will be many opportunities to volunteer in the coming months that will be communicated in upcoming News Notes and e-mails.

In this time in America, it is important for all of us to share our collective stories and to make sure history does not repeat itself. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you at upcoming chapter events.

Georgette Furukawa-Martinez
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Ron Mori
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CALENDAR

February 17, 2017 to February 19, 2018
Smithsonian EO 9066
Smithsonian National Museum of American History
Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II (JACL DC Chapter is a sponsor)

February 18 - March 9
Uprooted JA Farm Labor Camps (Philadelphia, PA)

March 4, 2017
JACL DC Chapter & Philadelphia Chapter: Casual Dinner after viewing the Uprooted JA Farm Labor Camps exhibit

April 1
Freedom Walk, 10AM
National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism

May
Memorial Day Ceremony with the JAVA – Arlington National Cemetery

June
Summer picnic in collaboration with OCA.
In lieu of this year’s picnic, we will be focusing on pre-convention activities and planning. We will forego our summer picnic this year and look forward to picnicking again with you next year.
MESSAGE FROM JOHN TOBE, DEPARTING PRESIDENT

As many of you know, my tenure as President ended late last month. I’m delighted to congratulate our new Co-Presidents, Georgette Furukawa-Martinez and Ron Mori. Both have been long-time chapter supporters, have intimate knowledge of the chapter and have a true commitment to the ideals of the chapter and JACL. With their leadership and vision, I know the chapter will achieve new heights. I also want to congratulate all the other board members who have taken it upon themselves to volunteer their time and energy in supporting what, in my opinion, is the best chapter in the country.

It has been an honor to serve as your President. It has been an honor to work alongside so many individuals who are committed to preserving our legacy, civil rights and culture. The new board has renewed our commitment to reach out to our youth and build the pipeline for the next generation of leaders. I’m excited about the energy of the board and our membership. There is still much to be accomplished, but collectively, we are united and ready to meet our goals.

While I am stepping down as President, I will still be actively involved in the chapter. In fact, I am the Chair of the 2017 JACL National Convention which will be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington DC from July 6-8. DC was chosen to host the national convention because this year is the 75th anniversary of the Executive Order 9066 which allowed for the incarceration of over 120,000 people of Japanese descent. We need to be aware and guard against a repeat of this injustice. During this time when so many things divide us, we need to rally around issues that bind us together, including our shared history, our common values and our support for civil rights. The convention will be an event where we as a community can come together and become one.

We are in the beginning stages of organizing for the convention. We have a reception planned at the Smithsonian American History Museum and another one at the Japanese Ambassador’s residence. If you are interested in getting involved, please feel free to contact me at john.tobe@gmail.com. Look for periodic updates on our progress in the near future.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve all of you, and I look forward to working with and seeing you at the convention in July.

OUR STORY: RESILIENCE, REMEMBRANCE, RESOLVE

JACL NATIONAL CONVENTION WASHINGTON DC 2017 JULY 6 - 8
INSTALLATION LUNCHEON

The Washington DC Chapter held their 71st Annual Installation Luncheon on Saturday, January 28, 2017, at the MeiWah Restaurant in Chevy Chase, Maryland. The keynote speaker was Stuart Ishimaru, the Director of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Fairness. Following the keynote address, Dr. Scott Nakamura, EDC Governor and President of the JACL Philadelphia Chapter, formally installed the 2017 members to their new board positions. John Tobe, who served as the master of ceremony for the event, was honored for his service as he stepped down as JACL DC Chapter president.

One of our new Youth Chairs, Christie Mori, shares her thoughts from Mr. Ishimaru’s speech.

There has always been a great debate whether history repeats itself. Have we been making the same mistakes for our country numerous times? Have we not noticed what is right or wrong in our nation yet? I’m here to show that yes, history does repeat itself, and has been for a while.

I think that our world has had trouble with accepting the fact that each person on this planet is different. Think about the Holocaust, the Internment of Japanese Americans, and the order to ban all Muslims from the U.S. What is one common thing that strings through each and every event? Stereotypes.

In my mind, I think that history has been repeating itself for a long time now. In 1941; The Holocaust, some persons believed that all Jewish people were responsible for the first World War. Then again, in 1942; the Internment of Japanese Americans, people again believed that all Japanese Americans hated the U.S. And even now, in 2017; people believe that all Muslims are terrorists. These are all terrible stereotypes that persons put up against thousands of innocent people. Guiltless people were treated unfairly, and the reason behind it was just because of their religion or where their ancestors originated from.

Listening to Mr. Ishimaru’s speech was extremely inspiring, not only because of what the horrible things that the Japanese Americans have dealt with, but the fact that in this terrible tragedy, they all came together as a community to make sure that this horrendous event will never happen again.

In my eyes, Mr. Ishimaru’s message was that spreading this story is the best thing to do. It is important for all of us to share this terrible event in history, not only because we need to make sure that history will never repeat itself, but also so this tragedy will never be forgotten.
DC NEWS NOTES

2017 DC CHAPTER OFFICERS

Georgette Furukawa-Martinez  Co-President
Ron Mori  Co-President
Linda Sato Adams  Co-Vice President
Nikki Yamashiro  Co-Vice President
Craig Uchida  Treasurer
Janice Nakano Faden  Community Outreach
Susan Fukui  Membership
Caroline Mori  Youth Chair
Christie Mori  Youth Chair

Michelle Amano  Vice President of General Operations, National Board Member
Leona Hiraoka  Member-At-Large
David Inoue  Member-At-Large
Merissa Nakamura  JACL Mineta Fellow
Craig Shimizu  JACL Masaoka Fellow
Miya Hiraoka Sluchansky  Member-At-Large
John Tobe  Member-At-Large
Lauren Yamagata  Member-At-Large
RALLY AT REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) DC Chapter took part in a rally at Reagan National Airport on February 1, 2017. Approximately 1,000 people turned out in protest against the recently enacted executive order restricting immigration and entry into the United States from seven predominately Muslim countries.

JACL Vice President of Public Affairs, Jeffrey Moy, made a passionate speech at the rally. Moy stressed that the United States cannot repeat the same mistakes made during World War II, when President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 allowing for the incarceration of approximately 120,000 people of Japanese descent. Moy recounted how members of his own family were negatively impacted during a time when wartime fear and racism caused elected officials to pass and enforce laws which denied people of their civil rights. The largest Japanese TV network, NHK News, interviewed Jeff Moy and Ron Mori, Co-President, JACL DC Chapter, as part of a story covering the rally, and that story was broadcast internationally on February 2, 2017. In addition, JACL DC Chapter members attended from DC, Maryland and Virginia to support the rally at National Airport.

The JACL national office issued a statement saying it “vehemently objects” to the Administration’s executive orders on immigration, calling them “xenophobic, fear-mongering tactics.”
On Wednesday, February 15, at George Washington University Law School, Karen Korematsu, the daughter of famed civil rights leader Fred Korematsu spoke about her father’s legacy and how his experiences relate to the present day. Before a packed room of over 100 students and activists, Ms. Korematsu recounted how she did not know of her father’s significant role until she was in high school in the mid-1960s. Ms. Korematsu said that her father was “disgusted” by how he and other Japanese and Japanese Americans were treated but did not want to share the hurt with her and her brother. She said her father knew his actions would bring criticism to him and his family but he often said, “What happened to me, occurred a long time ago. But I was right and the government was wrong.”

Ms. Korematsu said that when her father was selected by President Bill Clinton to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1997, he initially declined to attend due to the costs involved in traveling to the event. However, funds were secured, including funding from the JACL to ensure that Fred Korematsu and his family would be able to attend the event.

Ms. Korematsu added that “Korematsu v. United States is more relevant than ever” and that her father especially enjoyed speaking to law students and activists because they would be in positions to protect people and to enact change.

This event as co-sponsored by Muslim Advocates, and law schools including the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law, American University Washington College of Law, Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law, Georgetown University Law Center, Howard University Law School and Villanova Law School.

To learn more about Korematsu v. United States: http://www.korematsuinstitute.org/homepage/
On Thursday, February 16, 2017, the Smithsonian’s American History Museum celebrated the opening of a new exhibition, “Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II.”

The JACL collaborated with the Smithsonian to mark the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066, a document that President Roosevelt signed in 1942, two months after Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor. The order resulted in the imprisonment of 75,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry and 45,000 Japanese nationals in prison camps across the country, many being relocated far from home. Some 40 years later, the U.S. Congress formally recognized that the rights of the Japanese American community had been violated and President Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, providing an apology and restitution to the living Japanese Americans who were incarcerated during World War II.

Over 300 people attended an opening reception which was co-hosted by the Smithsonian Institution and the Embassy of Japan. Member of Congress including Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI), and Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-CA) also attended and addressed the gathering. In her remarks, Senator Hirono (who was born in Japan) cautioned everyone saying, “We need to stand up to our values. If not, we are complicit.” Hirono added that this exhibit sheds light on the dark days of internment.

Congressman Matsui (who was born in the Poston Relocation Camp) said that internment was unimaginable in a country which she loves and “with a stroke of a pen” could “…cause so many people to be uprooted, lose businesses and homes, and question the loyalty of so many. “Matsui added, “We must not only remember the past but we need to stay vigilant in the present in order to form a more perfect union.”

The original Executive Order 9066 is on display along with many rare and personal artifacts from those who were incarcerated. Included in the exhibit are personal items from DC Chapter Co-President Ron Mori and long-time DC Chapter member Mary Murakami.

This exhibit will continue until February 19, 2018. The exhibit was made possible by the incredibly generous donations of the DC Chapter members. The DC Chapter, along with other local JACL chapters and the National JACL are major sponsors of this exhibit.

Attendees to the 2017 JACL National Convention will be able to attend a special reception at the Smithsonian and experience a private viewing of the collection with Smithsonian docents who can provide greater detail about the origin and history of the artifacts.

To find out more about the exhibit: http://americanhistory.si.edu/righting-wrong-japanese-americans-and-world-war-ii
DAY OF REMEMBRANCE EVENT AT THE SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN HISTORY MUSEUM

On Sunday, February 19, 2017, the Smithsonian American History Museum commemorated the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 by hosting a panel discussion with student filmmakers and former camp incarcerees.

Personal stories which were captured on video were presented by winners of a national competition conducted by the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation’s Digital Storytelling Project. High school storytellers include DC Chapter members Carolyn Hoover, and Connor Yu, along with Reed Leventis and Halle Sousa. The conversation following the videos was moderated by Dr. Karen Ishizuka, an award-winning filmmaker, author, and former senior staff of the National Japanese American Museum, along with former incarcerees Shigeru “Shig” Yabu, Sam Mihara, Takashi “Tak” Hoshizaki, and Mary Murakami.

To view the films, please go to http://njamf.com/

A Special Thank You for Memorial Day Flower Donations

Every year during the Memorial Day week-end our Chapter and the Japanese American Veterans Association co-sponsor a memorial service for our fallen heroes who are laid to rest at the Arlington National Cemetery. Following the ceremony, attendees lay floral arrangements at the gravesites. We thank the following JACL members for their generous donations for the arrangements at the 2016 memorial service:

Linda Adams, Gordon and Linda Aoyagi, Shirley Bertoni, James and Margaret Brady, Michael and Janice Faden, Yuka Fujikura, Glen, Jane, and Kim Hirose, Donna Hollingshead, Dale Horos, Paul Igasaki, JACL Seabrook Rose Kuwabara, Floyd ad Irene Mori, Yoko Morita, Ray Murakami, John and Jane Ohashi, John Tobe, Craig Uchida, Martha Watanabe, Carolee Yoshida
Over 200 guests flocked to our annual Mochitsuki on December 10. In addition to our loyal and dedicated Chapter members, staff attended from the Embassy of Japan and from other local and national organizations. It was a nostalgic adventure for some and a learning experience for others as they sipped ozoni and enjoyed their bento lunches.

A last-minute change in venue to Julius West Middle School did not deter enthusiastic supporters from attending this event. The new location provided a larger space to spread out, enjoy each other’s company and exchange childhood stories. We even had a place inside to share the Japanese New Year’s tradition of pounding the steaming rice with heavy wooden mallets under the guidance of Floyd Mori and Craig Uchida, rather than enduring the cold outdoors. The Crafty Ladies sold their finely handcrafted holiday gifts. Young children had their own place to go shopping at their special $1 table. Children and those “young at heart” were also able to make their own “daifuku” mochi. Raffle items donated by Chapter members and merchants in the community included restaurant gift certificates, a hinamatsuri doll set donated by John Nakahata and his family, and handmade jewelry donated by Lorin Hirose, capped off a record breaking day for funds raised to support the mission of the DC Chapter.

Thanks to the board for organizing our largest event of the year and to all of you for coming out to support the DC Chapter.
2017 Legacy Fund Grants Program Announcement

San Francisco, CA – The JACL Legacy Fund Grants (LFG) Committee is pleased to announce that applications now are being accepted for the 2017 Legacy Fund grants. Committee co-chairs Jane Katsuyama and Janice Faden invite all eligible candidates to apply. Eligible applicants include all JACL chapters in good standing, District Councils, and the JACL National Youth/Student Council (NY/SC).

New for 2017, the maximum grant award has been increased, allowing certain recipients to receive as much as $7,500 in funding.

Grants will be awarded for projects and activities that support JACL’s 2016-17 Strategic Plan.

The Legacy Fund Grants Committee has increased the maximum award for 2017 in special recognition of the 75th anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s signing of Executive Order 9066. The Executive Order led to the incarceration of 120,000 U.S. citizens and other people of Japanese descent. Presidential Commission later declared this Executive Order as a violation of the internees’ civil rights. Many people in our communities are not aware of Executive Order 9066. Educating our communities of this injustice has been an important focus of many of our past LFG projects.

The Legacy Fund Grants application information and application can be downloaded at the JACL website www.jacl.org under “Social Justice”. For additional information contact Regional Director Patty Wada at pwada@jacl.org or by calling (415) 345-1075.

Completed applications are due May 1, 2017, to the JACL national office.

Grant recipients will be announced at the 47th JACL National Convention in Washington, DC, to be held July 6 to 8, 2017, at the Shoreham Hotel.

History of the Grants Program

The Legacy Fund was established by the JACL National Council in 1990 at the JACL National Convention held in San Diego. Gifts were first donated to the fund by JACL members who gave a portion of their redress awards to further the legacy of patriotism and hard-won civil rights that is central to the story of Nikkei in America. A portion of the Legacy Fund is used to fund the grants program.
19th Annual Cherry Blossom Freedom Walk
Saturday — April 1, 2017

EO 9066 75 Years Later: Echoing the Past...

Keynote Speaker: Peggy Nagae, the lead attorney for Minoru Yasui’s coram nobis legal team in the 1980’s when they reopened his WWII case and had his original conviction overturned.

Check-In Opens 9:00 A.M. | Opening Ceremony 10:00 A.M.

This is a FREE event.

National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism
(New Jersey Avenue and Louisiana Avenues and D Street, NW — closest Metro: Union Station)

SPONSORS: National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF), Japanese American Veterans Association, DC Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, and Ekoji Buddhist Temple
JACL MEMBERSHIP

Increase your support to the JACL by increasing your membership option:

- Thousand Club: $200 per year
- Century Club: $350 per year
- Millennium Club: $1,000 per year

Please consider supporting JACL-DC with employer matching donations or in-kind donations. Go online at http://www.jacl.org/member/index.php to join or renew today.

Join or renew your JACL membership today! Members receive a complimentary subscription to the Pacific Citizen Newspaper, free admission to the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, CA (just show your membership card), valuable discounts, access to special events, and eligibility for over $70,000 in scholarships awarded every year. Most importantly, your membership dues also will support the mission of JACL as the oldest and largest Asian American organization dedicated to protecting the civil rights and liberties of all Americans and preserving the Japanese American cultural and historical legacy.

To join or renew your membership online, go to http://www.jacl.org/member/index.php! If you’d like to join or renew over the phone, please call 415-921-5225 (Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm PST).

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK AND AT JACL-DC.ORG!

The JACL-DC chapter website (www.jacl-dc.org) posts the latest news and resources for our members. On the JACL-DC website, you’ll also find a photo gallery of our members at events like Keiro Kai, JACL Picnic, and our Mochitsuki. And you can post comments after every news item – even if it’s to say hi or “job well done” to friends in the chapter. Another way to keep up to date is to connect to the chapter on Facebook. Search for “JACLWDC” and friend us! Then you’ll get the latest information from us as posts to your wall.

ABOUT THE JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

Located in the nation’s capital, the Washington, D.C. Chapter partners with local, regional, national, and international organizations to build a network of support that maintains the proud history of the Japanese Americans and promotes the values and concerns of the APIA community.