PRESIDENTS’ LETTER

Happy summer DC Chapter!

We hope that the summer is treating you well and that you are all surviving this summer’s heat and humidity!

Summer marks the passing of half of 2019 and looking back, we are proud of how much this chapter has done. Just in this edition of News Notes, you will be able to read about the Memorial Day Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, the Annual Picnic, and our Chapter’s participation in the JACL National Convention. Looking forward, we are excited about some of our big chapter events, namely Keiro Kai and Mochitsuki.

It is thanks to the support and dedication of our members and friends that we are able to continue to host events that bring together our community. On behalf of the board, we hope that all of our members know how much your support means to us. And, as DC Chapter members, you may be pleased to know that the DC Chapter has seen close to a 4 percent growth in membership since 2018 and is the largest chapter in the Eastern District Council! As JACL nationally faces declining membership, it is heartening to see the vitality of this Chapter, and we are hopeful that it will continue to grow.

As always, if there is anything we can do to better support the DC Chapter, please do not hesitate to reach out. The Chapter’s success and strength is due to your engagement and support, and we are grateful to be a part of this wonderful Chapter.

With thanks and gratitude,
Georgette and Nikki
The 71st Memorial Day Service, jointly sponsored by the DC Chapter, the Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA), and the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF), was held at Arlington National Cemetery on May 26, 2019. The day began with a program at the Columbarium Ceremonial Courtyard, followed by teams of participants decorating 90 gravesites of Japanese Americans and two Caucasians.

Key Kobayashi, MIS veteran and JAVA’s inaugural vice president, began the Memorial Day gravesite decoration program in 1948. When he passed away in 1992, his family continued the project. This year the Kobayashi family was represented by 13 members, some traveling from Texas, Ohio, and New Jersey. Mrs. Kyoko Kobayashi, wife of Key, has participated in the ceremony all 71 years.

Two guest speakers were Keegan Thai and Wade Ishimoto. Keegan is a 5th grade student at Spark Matsunaga Elementary School, located in Germantown, MD and the only public school east of the Rockies known to be named in honor of a Japanese American. Keegan, speaking on the significance of Memorial Day, emphasized that it is a day to honor our men and women who have sacrificed their lives to “protect our country with pride, honor, and persistence.” Wade Ishimoto, former counter terrorist expert with the Department of Defense, urged his audience to “encourage our youth to consider serving in our military, in law enforcement, or in civil service.” He also encouraged them to consider becoming public servants, teachers, or volunteers for civic projects.

During the ceremony Douglas Ichiuji, member of the Board of Directors of the NJAMF, paid tribute to the American patriots, including the Japanese Americans, who are interred at Arlington Cemetery. His father, a member of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and Poston Concentration Camp internee, and mother are both laid to rest at the National Cemetery.

Terry Shima was invited to speak this year about Sgt. Kelly Yeiichi Kuwayama, a bemedaled 442nd combat medic. He told the story of how Kuwayama was injured in a battle in the Voges Forest while rushing to attend to the wounded. In vivid detail Terry Shima described how Kuwayama was wounded himself when he came to the rescue of Senator Daniel Inouye.

David Iwata, retired executive of Marriott International and a member of JAVA, had leis flown in from Hawaii for placement at the gravesites of 442nd soldiers as a gesture of aloha.

A very special thank you to the following people who gave contributions for the flowers placed at the 90 gravesites: Shirley Bertoni, James and Margaret Brady, Joyce and Paul Casso, Janice and Michael Faden, Paul Igasaki, Rose Kuwabara, Yoko Morita, Susan Morita and Allen Matsumoto, Mary Murakami, Barbara Sakamoto, John Tobe, Craig Uchida, Martha Watanabe, and Carolee Yoshida.
DC NEWS NOTES

MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE
On a sunny Saturday afternoon (June 15), approximately 50 Chapter members gathered for the annual JACL DC Chapter picnic at Wheaton Regional Park.

The food spread was impressive as always—Martha Watanabe, Steve Shimomura, and Eric Roberts made their famous chicken teriyaki, board member Michelle Amano brought delicious kalua pig, and Chapter co-president Georgette Furukawa prepared her legendary Hawaii-style kalbi. Chapter members did not disappoint, bringing somen salad, chirashi rice, sushi, bean curd and celery salad, pasta salads, homemade brownies, rice crispy squares, and so much more! Food was plentiful, and everyone was able to leave with to-go plates of food for dinner or the next day.

As tradition, the Chapter held its raffle—thank you to all who generously donated. A special thank you to the Crafty Ladies who donated a beautiful gift basket chock full of handmade items. There was a good selection of items—from big ticket items like the Crafty Ladies’ gift basket to tea cup sets. Thanks to the number of raffle items we had this year, a majority of attendees walked away with a prize!

At the picnic was also the traditional Japanese summer activity, the suikawari (aka: the watermelon smash), where a person is blindfolded, spun, and given three tries to break open a watermelon. This year there were two fields: under 18 and 18 and over. Big congratulations to the winners, Lorin Hirose and Hana Sakaniwa. Carrying on the family tradition, Hana’s strength shined through, breaking the wooden stick and the watermelon, just as last year her dad, Bob Sakaniwa won his field breaking the mini-bat on the watermelon!

Thank you to everyone who came! The picnic has always been a fun, family-friendly event where Chapter members can catch up and meet new people, and it was wonderful to see the tradition carried on this year.

And, thank you to everyone who helped make the event possible: Linda and Keith Adams, Michelle Amano, Janice Faden, Georgette Furukawa, Kim Hirose, Alice Lin, Lisa Mori, Christie Mori, Gabrielle Ogata, Eric Roberts, Steve Shimomura, John Tobe, and Martha Watanabe.
News Notes is continuing to report on pilgrimages to incarceration sites this year in an effort to help our members add information to their personal stories. Ray Locker, editorial consultant, Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, provided the notes for this article.

The eighth annual Heart Mountain pilgrimage occurred on July 27, 2019. Featured speakers were Tom Brokaw, former NBC anchorman, and former Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Lance Ito, whose parents met at Heart Mountain. Also present were Norman Mineta and Senator Alan Simpson, who met as Boy Scouts while Mineta was incarcerated at Heart Mountain. They worked together in Congress much later in their lives.

Brokaw received the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation’s LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness Award, which goes to those who have provided exceptional service to the Heart Mountain community. In an at-times tearful speech, Brokaw said, “Race is not in any fashion in America a measure of worthiness…We’re all the same.” He continued by saying the “race card” is played too often in American politics as a means to divide us.

Judge Lance Ito, whose parents met at Heart Mountain, gave the keynote address to the pilgrims, honoring the farmers who turned the dusty high desert soil of the Big Horn Basin into rich farmland. Those farmers were led by his father, James Ito, who used his skills developed at the University of California Berkeley to analyze the area’s soil and determine which crops could thrive when the farms finally received irrigation. Ito showed a series of seven posters highlighting the work done by his father and the fellow farmers who raised more than one million pounds of produce that they stored in a root cellar being restored by the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. “You talk about organic farming,” Ito said. “They had to pick the bugs off the plants.” Ito talked about his parents and their fellow incarcerees, many of whom lost everything when they were forced to leave their homes and businesses on the West Coast. Ito showed the audience a poster of his mother, Toshi’s high school diploma was delivered to her at the Santa Anita Assembly Center by the principal of Los Angeles’ John Marshall High School since she had to leave school six weeks before graduation because her family was forced from their home and into Santa Anita before the end of the school year.

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Mineta appeared throughout the pilgrimage, starting with a showing Friday morning of the new documentary by Diane Fukami and Debra Nakatomi – *Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Story*. That documentary, which has aired nationally on PBS, told about Mineta’s journey as a child from San Jose to Heart Mountain and then to the U.S. House and the Cabinet under Democratic President Bill Clinton and Republican President George W. Bush. During the documentary and a panel discussion afterward, Mineta said he cherishes the term “citizen” because he and his family were called “enemy non-aliens” at the beginning of World War II when they and 120,000 other Japanese Americans were incarcerated in the series of 10 camps run by the War Relocation Authority. He added, “That threat still exists. What’s our democracy all about?”

Simpson, who first met Mineta in 1943 when his Boy Scout troop from Cody traveled to Heart Mountain for a jamboree with the scouts behind barbed wire, said he has to “keep it light, because [the incarceration] is heavy on the heart.” He told the crowd to get a copy of the dissent in the 1944 Supreme Court decision *Korematsu v. United States* by Justice Frank Murphy. “He used the word racism six times,” Simpson said, adding that Murphy called the incarceration a product of war hysteria and racism.

For the first time ever, the Japanese ambassador to the United States appeared at a pilgrimage. Ambassador Shinsuke Sugiyama told the attendees that every Japanese citizen needs to know about what happened to their friends and relatives in the United States during the war. “Heart Mountain is a place of moral significance,” Sugiyama said, adding that he first became interested in going to Heart Mountain after a visit to the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. “I had to come here and see how you did it and got to redress. “Back in Japan, Japanese people need to know better what happened here,” Sugiyama said. “I am here to lead a course of understanding.”

Authors Duncan Williams, Bradford Pearson, Andrea Warren and Shirley Ann Higuchi, the Heart Mountain board chair, appeared in two panels on Friday. Author and documentarian Frank Abe and Cal State Fullerton professor Arthur Hansen appeared in panels about the Heart Mountain draft resisters, who were convicted and sent to prison in 1944.

There were many multigenerational discussion groups that met on Friday as is custom at the pilgrimage. Many of them discussed trauma, identity, modern day issues, and other topics.
LADIES LUNCHEON

And now the Ladies Luncheon is 10! Forty ladies were present for the 10th anniversary luncheon, held last month. Between 30-40 ladies (and gentlemen) attend the luncheons, which alternate between restaurants in Maryland and in Virginia. Attendance is greater when held in Maryland, since most attendees live in Maryland. The July luncheon was attended by 4 nisei women: Katherine Matsuki (accompanied by two of her daughters), Frances Ushiro (accompanied by two of her daughters), Alice Takemoto, and Mary Murakami.

The original luncheon was attended by 30 ladies back in 2009 and was held at the Matuba Restaurant in Bethesda. The nucleus of the group was originally the JACL ladies that founder, Barbara Nekoba, knew from many, many years ago. As the nisei friends grew older and stopped driving, daughters, granddaughters, and husbands have stepped up to bring them to the luncheons; and, as mothers, fathers, and grandmothers have passed, these daughters and granddaughters continue to come. Friends tell their friends, ladies bring their family members—many new people have joined over the years. The attendees faithfully offer to bring others, even those they do not know. The group is very inclusive and friendly, thanks to the tone that Barbara has established. Participants can attest to the fact that many special friendships have been formed.

New faces at the July meeting were: Dale Shimoda-Horos, Donna Hollingshead, Frank Moy, and Frank Nekoba.

Locations for the luncheons will continue to alternate between Maryland and Virginia. They will be held in March, July, and November. Quarterly meetings used to be the norm, but inevitably were hostage to weather concerns during the winter, so the meetings are now scheduled thrice per year to eliminate this problem.

Anyone interested in future luncheons, please contact Barbara Nekoba at bnekoba@verizon.net or call (703)780-9124. There is no membership fee nor any obligation beyond your presence and lunch cost.
From July 31-August 4, JACL delegates convened in Salt Lake City, Utah at the Little America Hotel. This was a special occasion for all of the delegates. This was not only the 90th anniversary of the JACL but also the celebration of the 50th convention. During the convention we had very spirited debates on many resolutions and on several constitution and bylaw changes.

As delegates for the DC Chapter, we wanted to provide the chapter with a recap of the proposed constitution and bylaw changes, as well as the resolutions that came to the floor. During the first full day of the convention, we discussed the constitution and bylaw changes. The first change that was discussed was for the JACL to go back to a biennial convention. It was decided to continue to hold the convention annually, and it was announced that the 2020 National JACL Convention will be held in Las Vegas!

Another constitutional bylaw discussed was the removal of the JACL hymn, slogan, and the Japanese American Creed from the constitution, but the national council voted to keep the JACL hymn, slogan and the Japanese American Creed in the constitution.

The third constitutional bylaw discussed related to the supervision of the Editor/General Manager of the Pacific Citizen. Proponents of this constitutional bylaw change, which passed, sought to provide unity of command for all the staff of the National JACL under the direction of the Executive Director. The Editor/General Manager of the Pacific Citizen will still have oversight over staff of the Pacific Citizen but will need to seek consultation from the Executive Director.

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Three resolutions were on the national council’s agenda. The first resolution was a call on Midwestern colleges to address exclusionary practices toward Japanese Americans during WWII. It was stated on the national council floor that only 25 percent of American institutions of higher education accepted Japanese American students and Japanese American applicants were denied admissions due to race-based bans or quotas at many Midwestern colleges. This resolution passed.

The second resolution was to get a Midwest Regional Director hired to the JACL staff. If a new regional director could not be hired, Midwest districts would receive the stipend that all the other districts receive that do not have a regional director. An addendum was added to the resolution that PSW would also receive this stipend, only for the next financial year for the JACL budget.

The third highly-debated resolution that was passed was an apology to Tule Lake resisters. There was a possibility that the resolution was not going to be voted on this year, but several delegates believed that a vote needed to happen with all the history that was presented at this year’s national council. For more background, go to JACL.org and click on JACL Concludes 50th Convention in Salt Lake City.

There were about 15 exhibitors at the convention as well. Representing AARP, our very own Ron Mori, as well as Scott, were on hand to tell people the work AARP is doing to support older adults and family caregivers. AARP also held a drawing for an autographed copy of Karate Kid II by Tamlyn Tomita.

There were also several workshops for participants to attend. Scott spoke about family caregiving and the work AARP is doing to support family caregivers. Tomoko Tsukamoto, a nurse from the Salt Lake City area, discussed the nurse’s role in working with and supporting family caregivers and their loved ones. Many attendees of the panel came with questions and shared their caregiving experiences.

The convention ended with the traditional Sayonara Banquet. On Sunday after the convention, some of the delegates visited Topaz, a former internment camp site. This was the first time Scott attended the convention as a delegate and was grateful for the opportunity to learn about and participate in the national council.
NEW MEMBER

Please welcome our new member, Marissa Herron, who joined during the months of June/July.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

DC Chapter member? Lunch on us at Keiro Kai!

Have you thought about joining the JACL DC Chapter? Or, is it time to renew your membership? In addition to supporting JACL at a national level—fueling JACL’s mission to protect civil and human rights for all, stand up and speak out on cultural and historical preservation, and foster community empowerment—your membership also helps your local DC Chapter host community events, share news and events in the area, and publish a quarterly newsletter highlighting Chapter related activities.

Joining or renewing your membership is easy! Go online to https://jacl.org/member/ or, e-mail us at jaclwdc@gmail.com. Not sure if you need to renew your membership? Please e-mail jaclwdc@gmail.com to check.

One immediate benefit of being a DC Chapter member in September is that you receive a complimentary meal at our upcoming Keiro Kai event on September 28, 2019. Check out the flier in this edition of News Notes for more details.

Hope to see you on September 28.

IN MEMORIAM

Lisa Yoshiko Faden

Peacefully at St. Joseph’s Hospice on Wednesday, June 19, 2019, Lisa Faden of London, ON, and formerly of Bethesda, Maryland, at the age of 47. Beloved wife of Robert MacDougall. Loving mother of Yuki and Eli. Cherished daughter of Michael and Janice Faden of Bethesda, Maryland. Dear sister of Julie and her husband Ian Shifrin.

Lisa was a graduate of Walt Whitman High School, Amherst College, Harvard Graduate School of Education, and University of Western Ontario. Lisa taught at Newton North High School, Newton, Massachusetts, Wellesley High School, Wellesley, Massachusetts and was a researcher at the Centre for Education and Innovation at the Shulich School of Medicine at U.W.O.

A funeral service was held at the Logan Funeral Home, 371 Dundas St. (between Colborne & Waterloo) on Friday, June 21, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. Private family interment of ashes in Restmount Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, friends who wish, may make memorial donations to the London Food Bank or to a Food Bank in your community.
The Embassy of Japan invites you to the performance of
the Japanese Chorus Group
IMAOKIRUHITO RESONANCE HARMONY
and
Classical Pianist
RYO YANAGITANI

Imaoikiruhito Resonance Harmony travels to the US to present beautiful songs of “reunion and harmony”. Ryo Yanagitani, from The Ryuji Ueno Foundation will perform elegant music under the theme of “connection”. This event will also commemorate the 18th anniversary of 9/11.

Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Washington D.C. Temple Visitors’ Center
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
9900 Stoneybrook Drive, Kensington, Maryland 20895

RSVP is encouraged.
https://www.imaoikiruhito.com/washingtonDC
Admission is free.
Keiro Kai & Family Day

*** Featuring ***

JACL-DC Top Sushi Chef: David Inoue
JACL-DC Top Chef: Michelle Amano

Sushi, Teriyaki Chicken, Grilled Beef, Salads, Sides, Dessert
Games & Entertainment for all ages!

September 28, 2019, 12:00—2:30 PM
North Bethesda Middle School
8935 Bradmoor Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817

JACL members are FREE! If you are not a member, please consider joining the DC Chapter
(join today at https://jacl.org/member/)
Non-members $10 per person or $20 for a family of four

For planning purposes, please RSVP by September 25, 2019 to:
https://bit.ly/33XoH6k
Questions: e-mail the JACL-DC Chapter at JACLWDC@gmail.com
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.

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 www.jacl.org/member! 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 SOCIAL MEDIA, FOLLOW US AND STAY IN TOUCH!!

https://jacl-dc.org/  JACL- DC Chapter  @jacl_DCchapter  @jacldcchapter

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.