CO-PRESIDENTS’ LETTER

Happy New Year, DC Chapter!

We have an exciting year planned for you, offering a variety of events to fill your calendar and satisfy different interests. They range from culture-sharing traditions to basketball games with Rui Hachimura bobblehead giveaways to a huge nationwide pilgrimage of Japanese Americans focusing on closing current detention camps in the U.S.

Our first event is the DC Chapter’s annual Board Installation on February 22, with guest speaker Shirley Ann Higuchi, Chair of the Heart Mountain Foundation, who will discuss her upcoming book: *Setsuko’s Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration*. Please join us as we install our 2020 Chapter board. We will say hello to Kim Hirose-Tobe and welcome back to Brandon Mita, but unfortunately farewell to our co-president Georgette Furukawa, who moved to Los Angeles for a new job but whose heart is still partly in DC. We are grateful for her energy, creativity, and generosity. Because of her frequent travels, we may be fortunate enough to have more local Georgette sightings.

Looking forward, this year we are excited that we are one of many organizations who will partner with Tsuru for Solidarity on their “National Pilgrimage to Close the Camps,” taking place in DC from June 5-7. Organizers plan to bring 125,000 paper cranes, or tsuru, as expressions of solidarity with immigrant and refugee communities and symbolically represent the Japanese Americans and Japanese Latin Americans who were in U.S. incarceration camps during World War II. Since the event is taking place in DC, there will be many volunteer opportunities for our Chapter members, including a fold-in event to contribute to the tsuru for the pilgrimage.

See you at Installation.

With thanks and gratitude,
Janice Nakano Faden
Niki Yamashiro

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CALENDAR

February 2: JCAW Shinshun Matsuri  February 19: Day of Remembrance  February 22: Installation
April 25: Manzanar Pilgrimage  May 24: Memorial Day  May 16: Amache Pilgrimage
July 3-6: Tule Lake Pilgrimage  July 9-12: Minidoka Pilgrimage  July 31- August 1: Heart Mtn. Pilgrimage
Welcome to New JACL DC Chapter Members

We welcome the following new and returning members to our JACL DC Chapter community. We are growing!

- Tiyo Fonte
- Shin Inouye
- Lori Kasamatsu
- Adam Peir
- Rebecca Radle
- Margaret Riddle
- Laurel Saito
- Ayaki Sato
- Aya Takai
- Mia Tilman
- Emil Trinidad
- MacKenzie Walker

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JCAW SHINSHUN MATSURI

Sunday, February 2nd 10:30am-3:30pm
Washington Marriott Wardman Park
(2660 Woodley Road NW)
Buy tickets here by 1/31!
Norman Mineta Book Talks
(Repurposed from the November 20, 2019 issue of the JACL Weekly Digest with additions from News Notes Editor)

On November 19, 2019, Secretary Norman Mineta and Andrea Warren, author of Enemy Child: The Story of Norman Mineta, a Boy Imprisoned in a Japanese American Internment Camp During World War II presented a book talk and signing at the Smithsonian Museum of American History. Secretary Mineta shared not only some of his experiences growing up but also of having his childhood turned into a story. He emphasized his desire to inspire young people to make a difference in their lives. Ms. Warren, a former teacher, explained her interest in writing a book about Secretary Mineta with middle and high school students as a target audience.

Earlier in the morning, Secretary Mineta and book author Ms. Warren spoke to a large audience of primarily middle schoolers at the Library of Congress. During the talk, Secretary Mineta displayed his passion for encouraging young people to become engaged and take charge of their lives by saying, “There are two things you own—your name and your integrity.” Throughout the question and answer period, students showed their interest in Secretary Mineta’s story and in the author’s craft of writing Enemy Child.

DC Chapter members present included Minister Ken Mukai of the Embassy of Japan, Julie Abo, Linda Adams, Janice Faden, Barbara and Frank Nekoba, Noriko Sanefuji, and Matthew Weisbly.
KAKEHASHI
by Matthew Weisbly and Janice Faden

In Japanese, Kakehashi means building bridges. The Kakehashi project is a government-funded grassroots exchange program that brings groups of Americans to Japan for engaging, focused, and customized experiences. The Kakehashi Project creates seven to ten day trips based on each group's interests. This allows each participant to meet and learn directly from Japanese counterparts who can match their experience and enthusiasm and gain different perspectives and new knowledge in their fields.

Two DC Chapter members, Matthew Weisbly and Noriko Sanefuji, participated as supervisors in the most recent trip. Here are Matthew's reflections on his experience.

For years I had always heard about the Kakehashi Project and how much it was a chance for students and young Japanese Americans to explore their roots back in Japan. I planned for years to apply and take part in the trip as a participant. I never expected I'd be going as a supervisor, let alone as a staff member of JACL or helping to plan the trip! But it was one of the greatest experiences of my life. Not only getting to explore Japan for the first time, but also to see how excited all of the participants, many of them my own age, were to be along for the trip. We explored the bustling city of Tokyo, the old and modern feelings of Nagoya, the rural countryside of Fukui, and the rebuilt and thriving city of Fukushima.

As a 5th generation Japanese American, my family left Japan over 120 years ago, and since then we've lost our language abilities and many of our customs. But going back and talking to so many people, and seeing how much our customs in some ways have not changed at all was amazing. Our hosts and colleagues in Japan were just as surprised by us as we were of them, sharing stories, our cultures, and comparing how similar we still are despite coming from thousands of miles and hundreds of years away.

It truly is a trip that influences many of us for the rest of our lives. For all of the participants in my group, and throughout the program, thank you all for applying and joining us on this program. Thank you to my fellow supervisors who helped to lead this trip, and thank you to all of the JICE (Japan International Cooperation Center) coordinators and staff who made it all possible. I can't wait for all of the February 2020 participants to experience the same amazing adventures we did!

For the February trip, our DC Chapter co-vice-president, Linda Adams, has been selected to be a supervisor.
Ichi, ni, san...ich, ni, san...was the chant that let the mochi pounders maintain a steady rhythm as they pounded the sticky rice into mochi. On Saturday afternoon December 14, almost 200 Chapter members, family, and friends, gathered to celebrate our annual Mochitsuki. We were delighted that Minister Ken Mukai, Head of Chancery from the Embassy of Japan, and his son Arata were able to join us.

Barbara, Frank, and Jeff Nekoba and Sachi Mukai prepared the traditional ozoni. Kitchen crew, organized to efficiently serve a selection of bento boxes, included Donna, John, and Katie Hollingshead; Dale Horos; Dana St. George; Keith Adams; and Bobby Murphy. Board members made sure that the show ran smoothly from soup to mochi pounding, which Kota Mizutani and Erika Ninoyu led, to raffle drawing, to music by the JBE Band --Embassy officials and Japanese business people who play music on the side. The Crafty Ladies sold their popular and unique handiwork; they included Nancy Yamada, Michelle Amano, Shirley and Megan Bertoni, Mitsuko Furuhashi, Sonia Misawa, Jean Morimoto, Yoko Morita, and Eileen Roulier. Once again, John Tobe drove to New Jersey to pick up the mochi orders in preparation for the event.

Matthew Weisbly, this year’s JACL Daniel K. Inouye fellow, attended Mochitsuki and reflected on the shared mission of our Chapter.

“I’ve always been interested to see the different ways that our community keeps our culture, traditions, and history alive as we’re separated by distance and time, especially when we move away from larger hubs our community has built. I had the chance to grow up in Arizona, where there wasn’t a large Japanese American community, but it was tight-knit and we did what we could to stay connected to our past. Events

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MOCHITSUKI cont’d

like Obon, Haru matsuri, and camp pilgrimages were common, but Mochitsuki was never one we held. Even after moving to Los Angeles, where mochi is common and I’ve seen advertisements for Mochitsuki events throughout the city, I never had the chance to attend one. Coming to DC and joining the DC Chapter for its Mochitsuki was my first experience with it.

“Being at Mochitsuki reminded me so much of my time in middle school. While I mainly grew up without a large connection to my Japanese American roots, I spent a few years in Eugene, Oregon. It was there that I learned more about our community and our past, and we had festivals upon festivals for every holiday we could imagine. Obon, Oshogatsu, children’s day, Haru and Aki matsuri, we had probably a festival every month. We made food, played with friends, and held auctions. The memories I have from then are some of my absolute favorites.

“So maybe it was the school setting, or the auction layout, or the bentos, or the friends and families who were there, but Mochitsuki reminds me of why we host events like these. In part, it is because we want and need to connect to our past, to the lives that our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents left behind when they moved to the US to start a new life. These events remind us of a culture we may at times know nothing about, but we know the rituals and traditions because that’s what we grew up with. We have an understanding that our community here has a new history and a new path that’s separate from all that came before, and that events like Mochitsuki, Obon, Matsuri, Oshogatsu, to all of us are just as Japanese as they are American now.”

Perhaps it was that spirit that motivated eight new members to join our Chapter while attending Mochitsuki. We welcome them to our community and hope to see them at many more events.
IN MEMORIAM
ERIC L. ROBERTS

ERIC L. ROBERTS passed away on October 16, 2019 from metastatic melanoma. He was the 35 year partner/spouse of Steven Shimoura and brother-in-law of Chapter member Susan Hane. The Chapter will best remember Eric for the chicken teriyaki at the Chapter picnics and when asked about the sauce that it was HIS grandmother’s secret recipe! Eric was a strong supporter of JACL and had many JACL friends from across the country. He (and Steven and Susan) were instrumental in the caring of Seattle Chapter member Elaine Reiko Akagi while she battled pancreatic cancer. A Celebration of Life was held on January 18 at Sandy Spring Museum.

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

We hope you will be able to come out to observe Day of Remembrance which marks President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s 1942 signing of Executive Order 9066 and subsequent incarceration of nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans.

Location: Smithsonian National Museum of American History
Date: Wednesday, Feb. 19
All day: On display—Japanese American National Museum exhibit, “Contested Histories”
Time: 6:30pm—Presentation and panel discussion about the turbulent history of the artifacts
Heart Mountain Summer Teacher Workshops

The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation is now accepting applications for two week-long workshops for educators to be held in Wyoming this summer. The workshops, entitled “Heart Mountain, Wyoming, and the Japanese American Incarceration,” are supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and will take place during the weeks of July 19-24 and July 26-31. The program focuses on getting teachers to the sites where history happened. The Foundation is currently accepting applications for participants.

During the workshops, participants will learn about the history of Japanese American incarceration from a renowned group of experts from around the country. The faculty also includes former incarcerees from the camps, such as Sam Mihara, who was confined at Heart Mountain as a child. In 2018, Mihara received the Paul E. Gagnon Prize from the National Council of History Education for his presentations about his incarceration.

Workshops are open to full-time or part-time teachers and librarians in public, charter, independent, and religiously affiliated schools, as well as homeschooling parents. Other Grade 5-12 school-system personnel, such as administrators, substitute teachers, and curriculum developers, are also eligible to participate. Teachers at schools in the United States or its territorial possessions or Americans teaching in foreign schools where at least 50 percent of the students are American nationals can also participate in this program. If accepted, applicants will receive a $1,200 stipend to assist with travel expenses. Interested educators can apply via the program’s website at workshops.heartmountain.org. The application period closes March 1, 2020.

For questions or more information on the workshops, email juliea@heartmountain.org.

Tickets for Wizards Basketball Game

by Martha Watanabe

On Wednesday, March 25, the Washington Wizards will feature Rui Hachimura as part of the National Cherry Blossom Festival at their game against the Phoenix Suns at 7:00 pm. The team is giving away Rui Hachimura bobbleheads and a t-shirt. The Chapter has purchased 20 tickets at $20 per ticket.

If you are interested in tickets, contact Martha Watanabe at mmwatanabe14@hotmail.com.
INSTALLATION LUNCHEON
JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE — DC CHAPTER

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND THE 74TH INSTALLATION LUNCHEON FOR THE 2020 JAACL-DC CHAPTER OFFICERS

Meiwah Restaurant
4457 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD
Saturday, February 22, 2020
12:00—2:00 p.m.
$30 per person (includes tax and gratuity)

Keynote Speaker
Shirley Ann Higuchi
Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation Board Chair
Shirley will share her reflections on her upcoming book: Setsuko’s Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration.

If you are interested in attending, please send an e-mail RSVP to jaclwdc@gmail.com to reserve a space, and bring cash or a check to the luncheon for payment. Deadline to RSVP is February 20, 2020.
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.