

RICE PAPER

The newsletter of the Twin Cities chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League

January 1993

My vision for JACL in 1993

(and other random thoughts)

by David K. Hayashi

1993 Twin Cities JACL president-elect

When I first relocated to the Twin Cities from Sacramento, Calif., more than six years ago, I had a strong desire to "connect" with the local Japanese American community. It is surprising what one learns about the things you take for granted, especially when those things are no longer there, or at least, more difficult to find. Being in Minnesota makes me more aware of my ethnic identity, and I realize just how truly "Japanese" I really am.

I remember going to the JACL picnic in Elk Grove, Calif., every year; I was in an all-Sansei Boy Scout troop; I went to schools consisting of 25 to 45 percent Asian American students; I enjoyed an occasional Samurai movie at the Buddhist church; and I attended an all-Japanese Methodist church on Sundays. I ate lots of rice with my meals; loved mochi, tekka-maki, tempura, udon, and just about all Japanese foods. Although I was raised in a fairly "mainstream" environment and had a very diverse group of friends, the richness of the local Japanese American community and lifestyle was very much ingrained in my soul. When I moved to Minnesota, I was quite pleased and excited to learn of the Twin Cities JACL chapter.

So, after a few years of volunteering on the chapter board, here I am, president-elect for 1993-94. I must admit that I was somewhat apprehensive about being bestowed with this honor, but now that apprehension has been replaced with excitement

and motivation. I would like to share with you my thoughts and vision for the future.

First, I want to welcome the incumbents and new volunteers for the coming year. I know that the incoming board will be a good team to work with, and I am looking forward to what we can accomplish together.

Shift majority of event planning and fundraising to committees chaired by chapter members

Based on past experience as a JACL board member, I observed that, because of the overwhelming amount of time and effort that went into planning events such as Sukiyaki dinner, Festival of Nations, Fall Festival, etc., there was little time or energy at board meetings to do much else.

Our special events should be continued. These are important fundraisers, places to share and celebrate our culture, and if nothing else, places for the Japanese American community to gather.

I suggest that a majority of the planning for these events be done by committees outside of our regular monthly board meetings. In order to do this, we need to form committees for each event. This means we need your help - we need our members to volunteer to serve on

Installation Dinner and Annual Meeting of the Twin Cities JACL

Sunday, Feb. 14

12:30 p.m. Social "hour"

1 p.m. Luncheon

Holiday Inn West,

9970 Wayzata Blvd., Minneapolis

(Near 394 and Highway 169)

Keynote speaker: Lillian Kimura

National president of JACL

For more information and reservations,
call Kathy Koch, (612) 884-1238.

these committees. The committees can plan their respective events and report their progress to the board. This would allow the board to focus on additional priorities in the community.

Lead local efforts to more fully incorporate "Japanese American experience" into school curriculum

Even though the JACL was successful in lobbying for Redress, we still need to continue educating America about the Japanese American experience.

Visions for 1993, continued on Page 2.

★
**Discount
tickets available
for taiko drum
performance at
the Ordway Music
Theatre. See back
page for details!**
★

WELCOME

We would like to welcome these people who have recently joined or re-joined (after an absence) the Twin Cities chapter of JACL. Chapter membership has surpassed 170 – the highest level in several years!

New members

Connie Fukuda, Edina
Curt and Millie Grand, Minneapolis
Art and Irene Kato, St. Paul
Terri Kinneberg, St. Louis Park
Paul Kyono, Minneapolis
Eddie and Marion Morioka, Roseville
Mitsie Sample, Rochester
Sam and Evelyn Yagyu, Plymouth
Cary and Peggy Yamanaka, Apple Valley

Re-joined JACL

Fumio Hangai, Minneapolis
Shigeo Hotta, Minneapolis
Kodo Kawamura, Minneapolis
Dr. Tak Osada, Osseo
Dr. Yoshio Sako, St. Paul
Harry Takata, Eden Prairie

Visions for 1993, continued from Page 1.

It is a well-known fact that most of today's school textbooks do not sufficiently cover this topic.

The national JACL office has developed a curriculum guide, which is still in draft form, that could be distributed along with a copy of the "Gordon Hirabayashi vs. the United States" video to local secondary and high schools. I currently am researching the possibility of pursuing corporate grant monies to help fund this important project. Several local teachers are willing to be a part of a pilot program and write critiques of the curriculum and video. These critiques will be submitted with grant proposals.

Build coalitions with other groups

Another major undertaking I would like to see the board pursue is to develop strong relationships with other ethnic organizations in our community. This coalition building is very important. Not only can we learn much from other diverse cultures, but we can offer insights from the Japanese American perspective. We need to look at the commonalities, not differences, and support each other.

Become involved in human and civil rights issues

We also need to develop our awareness and involvement in human and civil rights issues, both at a local and national level. Though many people

in our community feel far removed from this topic, civil rights issues affect all of us. We need to stay aware of the issues, educate people whenever possible, and be a visible and active presence in the community.

Increase membership participation and benefits

We already have started to address the issue of declining local membership. Our membership chairperson, Sam Honda, has been calling many former members asking for their renewals; we have developed a new membership brochure (a copy is enclosed with this newsletter); and we are asking our current members to actively recruit new members.

Our goal, established in mid-1992, was to reach 150 members by year-end 1992. I am happy to report that we now have 170 members! According to the last census, however, there are more than 3,000 Japanese Americans in the state of Minnesota. So, we still need to keep pursuing new members. We also are developing more benefits for the local membership such as offering discounts at local stores and restaurants. I am also working to develop a pilot program to provide financial planning to our membership. All things considered, the perceived benefit of being a member of our chapter will be improved.

Work with and for youth

The Twin Cities JACL scholarship program has continued to be a success, and I feel there is even more that we can do for the Japanese American and Asian American youth in our community. There has been some mention of redeveloping the JAYs group (Japanese American Youths), and the board is fully supportive of this effort. I have been involved in the Asian American Renaissance Committee board, which is helping to develop youth interested in the arts, provide mentors and role models, and develop the local Asian American arts scene. We must continue to invest our time and effort in the younger generation. There are many challenging issues our children must face revolving around identity (or lack of), multiculturalism and ethnic pride that need to be explored and could become potential forums for discussion.

As we move into 1993 my hope is that you will share my enthusiasm and excitement about JACL and become actively involved in our chapter. If you'd like to help with our efforts this year, please give me a call or drop me a note, and we will be in touch.

Peace, happy new year and domo arigato!

David Hayashi
4709 Oakland Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55407
(612) 822-3659

Hundreds celebrate Aki Matsuri at the Normandale Japanese Garden

by Charissa Uemura

Despite unseasonably chilly weather, the 12th annual Sukiyaki dinner to benefit the Normandale Japanese Garden attracted hundreds of people to Normandale Community College on Sunday, Oct. 18. The dinner raised more than \$6,000 through sales at the gift shop and the 1,151 Sukiyaki dinners served that day, said fundraiser chairperson Kimi Hara.

For the second year, the Twin Cities JACL presented Aki Matsuri, a fall festival celebration of Japanese culture. The festival was coordinated in conjunction with the Normandale Garden Sukiyaki dinner.

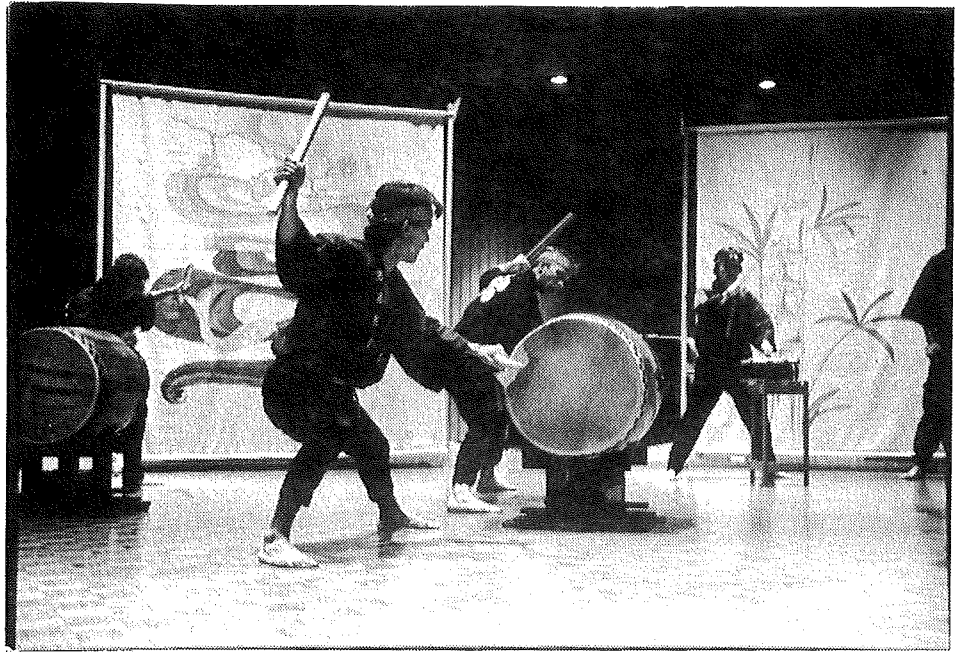
This year's expanded cultural program showcased the traditional arts – including koto music, calligraphy, ikebana, origami and odori – as well as judo demonstrations, taiko drum performances, literature readings and a photography exhibit. Free tours of the Japanese garden also were provided by members of the garden committee.

Although heavy scheduling of demonstrations and performances caused some wrinkles in timing and attendance at individual events, everyone's patience and good humor throughout the day were greatly appreciated.

Thanks to all who contributed their artistic talents to the program:

- Bando School of Classical Dance
- Kogen Taiko Drum Group
- Midway Judo Club
- David Mura
- Orr Books
- Sansei Yonsei Kai Japanese Dance Group
- Yoshi Satoh and Akiko Kitao
- Kathy Suzuki
- Charissa Uemura
- Wasui Kazuko Zobbi

Also many thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and effort throughout the weekend to make the day a success!



The Kogen Taiko Drum Group performed several shows to auditoriums filled to capacity at Aki Matsuri, held Oct. 18 at the Normandale Japanese Garden. Photo by Charissa Uemura.

Twin Cities delegates attend JACL Midwest District Council meeting

by Joanne Kumagai

The annual MDC meeting held in October was hosted by the Cleveland chapter with district governor Al Hida presiding. David Hayashi and I attended as delegates for the Twin Cities chapter.

I found the business meetings enlightening. In addition, the workshops proved to be invaluable: "Racism in Japan and its impact on American society" presented information about racist behavior against minorities in Japan and its impact in the United States. The workshop "The dilemma of the 'glass ceiling' for Asian Americans" brought to our attention the discrimination against Asian Americans in the work force.

As a first-time delegate, I found the opportunity to share ideas with other chapters was a gratifying experience. Some of our common concerns were: MDC's role on the national level, chapter membership, the Legacy Fund, and education. We, as a chapter, should be proud of the fact that our membership has actually grown, and that we continue to give support to the Legacy Fund.

As the meetings came to a close, both David and I agreed we gained much from this experience. We look forward to the spring MDC meeting in Chicago and the Tri-District meeting to be held in the fall in Cleveland.

Largest crowd ever makes Kids' Holiday Party a success

by Chris Murakami Noonan

The Twin Cities JACL hosted its fourth-annual Holiday Party for Kids on Sunday, Dec. 6, from 2 to 4 p.m., at the Shoreview Community Center. The party, which is quickly becoming a chapter tradition, was free again this year to all attendees.

This year's attendance was the best yet. Sixty-nine kids, ranging in ages from two months to 16 years, enjoyed a visit from Santa (a.k.a. Min Tsuchimochi), cake and cookies, and games. Plus each child received a personalized gift bag filled with surprises.

This year's entertainment featured the "Remarkable Reptiles" show by Jim Gerholdt, a reptile expert and instructor at the Science Museum. Jim brought along several of his friends – snakes, turtles and lizards. Perhaps the highlight was the boa constrictor, which several children wrapped around their shoulders as squeamish parents snapped their cameras!

Again this year, each family was encouraged to bring a toy donation to be given to Toys for Tots. We're very pleased to report that we delivered a car load of toys to the KARE-11 TV donation drop-off site. In addition \$45 was donated to Operation Joy, the organization that runs the Toys for Tots program.



Jim Gerholdt, a reptile expert, posed with one of the many children who braved the boa constrictor.



Santa (a.k.a. Min Tsuchimochi) delivers gifts at the Kids Holiday Party.

Many thanks to all the people who helped make the party a success.

Kathy Dalager
Sylvia Farrells
Susan Fink
Lisa Hintermeister
Gloria Kumagai
Joyce Miyamoto and Carly Faber
George and Judy Murakami
John and Jacqueline Nakasone
Jill Shellum
The Dan Trygg family
Min Tsuchimochi
Akiko and Tomino Tsutsui
Linda van Dooijeweert
The Jay Yamashiro family

The Twin Cities JACL would like to extend a very special thanks to Santa, who year after year has given much joy to the children at the holiday party.

Santa's response

Just to hear the joyous laughter of the children and see their eyes widen in amazement when Santa enters the room are rewards in themselves. It gives me great pleasure to be part of JACL's annual holiday party, and I hope I can continue to contribute.

Sincerely, Min Tsuchimochi

PEOPLE

Natural Reason

Essays in Honor of Joseph Norio Uemura

by Tom Oye

Dr. Joseph Norio Uemura, the Paul Robert and Jean Shuman Hanna Professor of Philosophy at Hamline University, was honored by 11 former students at Morningside College and Hamline University in a volume of philosophical essays titled *Natural Reason, Essays in Honor of Joseph Norio Uemura*.

The essayists, former students of Dr. Uemura, furthered their philosophical studies to doctorate degrees and are today scholars, teachers and authors.

A quote from one of the editors of the volume expressed the high regard for "Joe" as a teacher and a friend:

"Always their [former students'] experiences with Joe have stayed with them and have made philosophy an important and vital aspect of their lives and work."

Spotlight on Tom Oye

by Carolyn Nayematsu

The following appeared in the fall 1992 issue of the Asian Pacific American newsletter, a publication of the Asian Pacific American Learning Resource Center at the University of Minnesota.

The 1992 Distinguished Service Award went to Tom Oye for his outstanding contributions to the University of Minnesota, in particular to Asian American students. These contributions include being a member of the President's Asian Pacific Islander Committee, Concerned Asian American Advisory Member, President's Advisory Committee on Minority Student Affairs, University retention and recruitment committees, and several search committees. In addition, Oye is largely responsible for starting the scholarship fund and seeing that we have been able to award scholarships every year.

Born in Oregon, Oye received his undergraduate degree from Willamette University and his law degree from DePaul University. He is a veteran of the famous All-Nisei 100th Infantry battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, which served in Europe during World War II. His employment career spanned 30 years with General Mills, where he served as national credit manager.

In addition to raising a family with his wife, Martha, Oye has been active in local community service. He is on the all-inclusive curriculum review committee for Edina Public Schools, the Human Relations Commission for Edina, the Speaker's Bureau with Edina Public Schools Resource Committee and Wise Resource for Minneapolis Public Schools.

Our sincere thanks to a tireless and devoted advocate for the Asian American students at the University of Minnesota. It is volunteers such as Tom Oye who see that our needs are met.

INSIGHT

Oshogatsu: Japanese New Year

by Phyllis Louise Harris

The following appeared in Asian Pages, Jan. 1, 1993.

While New Year may be a holiday of rest and recuperation for many Midwesterners, to the Japanese *Oshogatsu* is the biggest holiday of the year. In Japan, shops, businesses and schools close for a week so that families may gather in ancestral homes for centuries-old traditions, including symbolic foods, traditional amusements, visits to Shinto shrines, and Buddhist ceremonies. Homes are decorated with bamboo, pine and plum blossoms symbolizing strength and gentleness, health, and longevity,

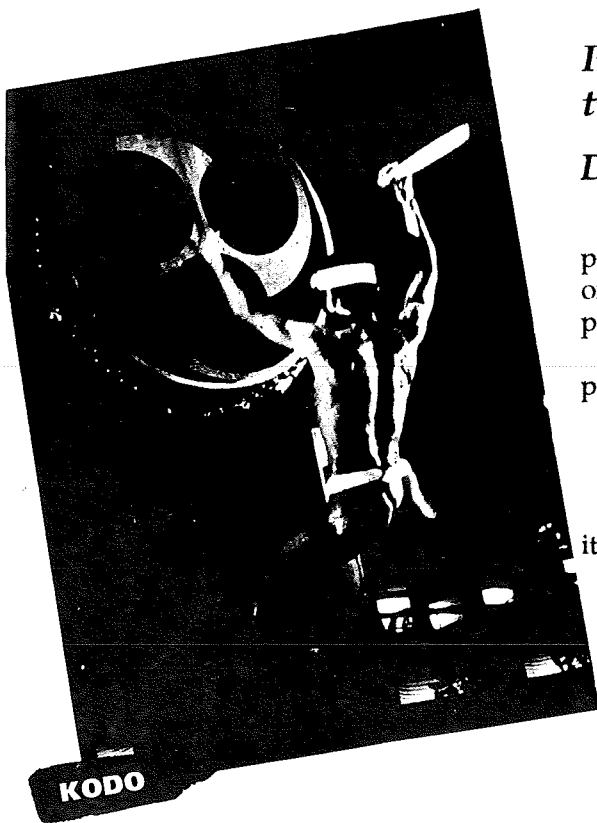
and fidelity in the midst of adversity.

As in many Asian cultures, Japanese New Year menus consist of foods symbolic of health, long life and fertility. Often the symbolism is derived from words with double meanings or foods of colors associated with good luck. Other symbols are based on visual connotations.

The lobster, whose body is bent like an old person, symbolizes the desired ability to live to a ripe old age. *Dai Dai* (Japanese orange) is a word that also means "generation after generation." The written character for chestnuts also means "mastery" or success. The carp is believed to have an indomitable spirit; red caviar symbolizes fertility; and *mame* means both bean and good health. Many *Oshogatsu* foods are red (lobster and red beans) symbolizing happiness, or are white

(rice and *daikon* radish) for honesty and purity. While some New Year foods appear only at the holiday, others are enjoyed year-round.

Perhaps the most important New Year food is *mochi*, a word that means both rice cake and "to have." Therefore, this traditional *Oshogatsu* food symbolizes wealth and longevity. As practical as it is tasty, *mochi* is made by pounding hot rice with big mallets. It takes two men wielding wooden mallets to pulverize the steamed rice into a sticky paste. The women of the household then form the *mochi* into round cakes symbolizing mirrors, one of the three ancient treasures. The cakes keep for days and can be cut into squares for toasting and eating as needed. *Mochi* is also used in *ozoni*, a soup that is traditionally the first meal of the year.



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JACL has reserved a block of top-price tickets at a discounted group rate and is passing this discount along to you.

Special ticket prices:
 Adults: \$17.85 (regularly \$21)
 Children (under age 18): \$10
 Handling charge per ticket: \$.25

If you'd like to take advantage of this discount, fill out the order form and return it to Joanne Kumagai at the address below. We'll mail out your tickets to you.

KODO
Tuesday, March 2, 1993
Ordway Music Theatre, 345 Washington St., Downtown St. Paul
7 p.m.: Insight, an informal, insightful pre-show discussion led by artists
and experts (attendance at the Insight discussion is optional)
8 p.m. Performance
Deadline for reserving discount tickets: Feb. 6

Mail this reservation form to:

Joanne Kumagai
 6418 Lee Ave. N.
 Brooklyn Center, MN 55429

If you have questions, call
 Joanne at (612) 537-8076.

Make checks payable to the
 Twin Cities JACL.

Reservation deadline: Feb. 6

KODO TICKET RESERVATION FORM

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____
 # Adult tickets _____ x \$17.85 each = \$ _____ Total
 # Child tickets _____ x \$10 each = \$ _____ Total
 Handling charge *per ticket* \$.25 = \$ _____ Total
 \$ _____ **Grand total**

We appreciate hearing from readers with comments and suggestions on improving this newsletter. We also appreciate news items and articles from the Japanese American community. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue!

The Twin Cities JACL Rice Paper *Chris Murakami Noonan, editor* 209 Dennison Ave., Shoreview, MN 55126 (612) 483-3897

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