



THE RICE PAPER

A newsletter of the Twin Cities Chapter
of the Japanese American Citizens League

e-mail: info@tcjacl.org

website: www.tcjacl.org | @TwinCitiesJACL

July 2024

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CHAPTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Twin Cities JACL, PO Box 580325,
Minneapolis, MN 55458

www.tcjacl.org (click on "connect";
then write message in box)

info@tcjacl.org

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

夏になりました。
Summer has come.

Minnesota is a unique place where all four seasons are strongly felt and celebrated. Summer in particular is a time of many festivals and community gatherings. In this issue of *The Rice Paper*, we share a few of the important events over the past few months and the many exciting gatherings to come. Here is a quick list of highlights:

May 9	Scholarship Banquet
May 16	Japanese American Veterans Memorial Program
July 1 - August 5	High Schoolers' Study Circle
August 4	Summer Picnic
August 18	Obon Festival (volunteers needed!)
October 6	Chrysanthemum Banquet

After dedicated tenures of purposeful service to our chapter, brother-and-sister duo Clara Imon Pedtke (Webmaster) and Paul Imon Pedtke (Treasurer) have had to step away from their roles as their personal and professional lives continue to take them in new and exciting directions. Please join me in thanking them for their contributions to our community, and be sure to greet them if you see them at future Chapter events. In the meantime, please let us know if you or someone you know might be interested in joining the TCJACL team in either the Webmaster or Treasurer capacity! Full training is available and no experience is needed!

As we look forward to all that the summer has to offer, I also want to remark on the recent heavy rains that ushered us into the season. States across the Midwest, including Minnesota, experienced dramatic and deadly flooding, which affected many of us personally in one way or another. Now, as the waters recede, is the time for us to explore how we can recover in a way that leaves our infrastructure more resilient to the inevitable challenges in our uncertain climatic future. In true Minnesotan spirit, we shall continue learning how to live with extreme weather.

水の流れと身の行方
日本のことわざ

As water flows toward an unknown fate, so too goes life.
Japanese proverb

In solidarity,

Vinicius Taguchi
Chapter President

Upcoming Events

Save the Dates

- **Sunday, August 4 – JACL Summer Picnic at Rosland Park in Edina** (same place as last year and “fingers crossed” without the rain!) The Nakasone family will again do their famous and delicious BBQ! A flyer (with more details) will be sent out soon. Asia O’Neil is currently looking for volunteers. If interested in helping in any way, email her at theasiaoneil@gmail.com
- **Thursday, August 15, 6 pm – Cookbook Club potluck at Gloria Kumagai’s home in Golden Valley.** RSVP to Gloria at gloriak377@aol.com and let her know what recipe you plan to share.
- **Sunday, August 18 – Obon Festival at Como Park in St. Paul, 3-9 pm.** Amy Dickerson is in need of 2 volunteers to staff the JACL table for the 6-9 pm shift. Includes transporting boxes back to storage. Please email Karen Tanaka Lucas at katalucas49@aol.com if you can help. Also donations of Japanese items in good condition sell well. Let Amy know if you have items to donate.
- **Sunday, October 6 – Chrysanthemum Banquet at MN Humanities Center in St. Paul (987 Ivy Ave E) from 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm. A buffet dinner will be served.** Our guest speaker will be Naomi Ostwald Kawamura, Executive Director of Densho. Additional information will be sent out in mid to late August.

Naomi brings with her a deep knowledge and passion about public education’s role in ensuring that the stories of Japanese American WWII incarceration reach the future generations. “Making history relevant to people in the present is what animates the work that I do in community and in my scholarship. The Executive Director role at Densho bridges my personal commitments, scholarly interest, and my professional experience into one unique opportunity.”

- **2024 Summer Research and Writing Opportunity for High School Students –** A new pilot program has been formed by the Education Committee. Under the direction of Yuichiro Onishi, the students will have an opportunity to participate in either 1) a Youth Study Circle and/or 2) an Immersion in History Research and Writing. Learning objectives are: 1) Achieve a deeper understanding of the wartime Japanese American experience; 2) Hone the conventions of academic thinking and writing through discussion, secondary literature review, and formal and informal writing exercises; and 3) Sharpen analytical perspectives by engaging in the task of contextualization. For further information, contact Yuichiro Onishi at ohni0001@umn.edu

Other Community Events of Interest

Sunday, September 29 – Kimchi Festival at Wolfe Park, St. Louis Park from 10 am-6 pm Sponsored by the Adoptee Hub to foster familiarity with Korean culture and kimchi, one of Korea’s most familiar foods. Admission is free and open to the public. There will be kimchi making and tasting, live entertainment, and kids’ activities.

Saturday/Sunday, October 19/20 – Taste of Asia – a 2-day celebration of Asian food and culture – at Asian Village in Blaine (301 Northtown Dr). The family friendly, free admission event runs from 11 am to 8 pm on Saturday and from 12 noon to 5 pm on Sunday. There will be local AAPI food vendors, stage and dance performances, and cultural activities. Last year’s attendance was over 15,000. For more information, go to the Taste of Asia Minnesota website and its Facebook page.

Recent Events

2024 High School Graduates Honored by Twin Cities JACL

The Twin Cities JACL's Scholarship Awards Banquet was held on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at Normandale Hylands United Methodist Church in Bloomington. The following 2024 high school graduates were honored during the program.

Hakuto Higuchi (Blake High School) – plans to attend Case Western Reserve

Simon Kutz (Decorah High School) – plans to attend Princeton

Sammy Knight (Delano High School) – plans to attend U of M, Carlson School of Management

Lauren Restad (Roseville Area High School) - undecided

Graduates and guests were greeted by Twin Cities JACL Chapter board member, Sylvia Farrells. Fred Tsuchiya was the evening's Master of Ceremonies.

Scholarship awards totaled \$8500. The following scholarships were awarded:



Dr. Norman Kushino and Kay Kushino Memorial Scholarship - **Hakuto Higuchi**

Susan Matsumoto Memorial Scholarship - **Simon Kutz**

Earl K. & Ruth Tanbara Memorial Scholarship - **Sammy Knight**

Tom and Martha Oye Memorial Scholarship - **Lauren Restad**

Twin Cities JACL Service Scholarship - **Simon Kutz**

Congratulations and best wishes to the 2024 graduates!

2024 Graduates at JACL Banquet-
Hakuto Higuchi and Sammy Knight (who is Jane Hayano's grandson)

Class of 2025

If you know of any 2025 high school graduates, please contact scholarship@tcjocl.org. Local scholarship applications will be sent in January 2025. JACL membership is required of scholarship applicants. Some of the known 2025 high school graduates are:

- Alexander Sasha Bly (Irondale High School)
- Jeha Hwang
- Sage Kiritschenko (East Ridge High School),
- Romare Onishi (Blake, Minneapolis)
- Melody Parkhurst (Chaska High School)
- Nathanael Sahara (Minneapolis)
- Sumiko Webb (Minneapolis)

If you are interested in learning more about these scholarships, please contact scholarship@tcjocl.org. Donations may be sent to TC JACL Scholarship c/o Fred Tsuchiya, 5311 Scenic Heights Drive, Minnetonka, MN, 55345.

The Relevance of JACL Today

(As part of their 2024 scholarship applications, graduating high school seniors were required to submit an essay on the topic "The Relevance of JACL Today." We are sharing some of those essays in this Rice Paper publication.)

The Relevance of JACL Today - Essay by Simon Kutz

My lifelong, geographic isolation from the Japanese American community was broken by the JACL. Opportunities to serve in a district leadership position, lobby congressional offices and travel to the 2023 National Convention were only possible through the JACL. With these experiences, the JACL has connected me with a wonderful Asian American community while exposing me to the functions of advocacy. My personal experience has shown how relevant and important the JACL is in the 21st century, and how, by connecting individuals to community and policy, the JACL can continue to grow.

The JACL's ability to connect individuals to the community is perhaps the most rewarding component of membership. Prior to joining the JACL, I had met few Japanese Americans and knew little about the struggles many face today. But now, my service as Midwest District Youth Chair has introduced me to the welcoming Japanese American community. By attending the 2023 National Convention, I was able to truly bond with many community members from places as far away as California and New York. As the Japanese American community increasingly settles in more diverse areas, connection through the JACL becomes even more important.

Connection of community members across vast geographic distances was at the forefront of the 2023 MDC Youth Spring Summit. But co-moderating a panel with state and local politicians from around the district also brought me my first upfront exposure to domestic politics. Lobbying congressional offices at the JACL/OCA Leadership Summit a couple of weeks later brought a further opportunity to be connected with the political process, this time at the federal level. Going into these events, I knew that my passion encompassed foreign policy, international relations, and national security. Now, after having co-moderated the panel and participated in the summit, I have been inspired to also explore avenues in domestic policy.

At a time when government, especially at the federal level can appear severely disconnected from the people they serve, the JACL's initiatives to connect people with policymakers is essential to advance the interests of the Japanese American community and the engage individuals in the political process. The fight for civil rights in America is not over, and the passion for politics that JACL events can bring to all ages ensures that the struggle for justice will continue with future generations.

My personal journey in the JACL started out as a desire to find community, and in just over a year, it has transformed into a deep appreciation for this organization that quickly welcomed me into the Japanese American community and fostered an enthusiasm for domestic politics. As the JACL searches for its way forward, it must not abandon its commitment to a nationwide community or its devotion to the struggle for civil rights, as I have experienced how both can be so rewarding for an individual and for an organization.

The Relevance of JACL Today – Essay by Haruto Higuchi

Based on the 2020 census, the chance that two randomly selected individuals are from different ethnic or racial backgrounds is 61.1%, and this percentage continues to grow as time passes. However, even with these numbers that signify a more diverse population, hate crimes continue to increase.

From my personal experience and by learning from others, I've noticed that many of these racially motivated attacks stem from a lack of knowledge. Currently, I am enrolled in a class named Film Analysis, and a recent film that we analyzed was about a French law that outlawed religious symbols in French public schools. The film follows the life of a Muslim girl and the negative impacts that the law has put upon her as it prohibits her from wearing her hijab. The film highlights the opinions and stances that the enforcers of the law have, and most specifically shows the lack of information they have on what the hijab means to the protagonist and the reason she chooses to wear it. The main argument of the film is that people are afraid of the unknown, in this case, Islam, and will push it away when given the chance.

In my personal life, I have thankfully been able to surround myself with people who don't see me as different because of my racial identity; however, I have still encountered instances where my teammates, classmates, and friends have used my race to make a joke, and throughout my life, I have both ignored and addressed their comments. When I was younger, I never followed up on others' comments and believed it was only their opinion on humor. However as I grew up with these people, they progressed farther from jokes. It wasn't until then that I began to realize that a lot of racially motivated acts don't immediately start from harmful intent, but the opposite. When people grow up in a place where harmful racial acts aren't addressed, they become accepted in the community, and they become more and more extreme.

Later in life, as I began to be more of a role model, I once again met people, mostly younger peers, who were accustomed to doing racial acts, and since they looked up to me, I had the opportunity to change the way they saw these jokes. To my surprise, whenever I addressed their comments, they were quick to change their attitude towards these racial comments. Although I couldn't fully eradicate them from a single person's dialogue, as I am only one person in their life, I've noticed that they were more careful with the words that they chose. I think that these experiences highlight a different aspect of the unknown that the film didn't address: people are innately curious about the unknown. Humankind has always been afraid of numerous topics in life; however, curiosity follows close behind these fears, and these curiosities bloom into growth. For example, ever since we took our first step humans have feared death, however, these fears sparked the curiosity of what causes death, leading to countermeasures that have led humanity to extend life expectancy by more than half a century. I think that the fear that others have of minorities can also be used as a place for growth, and I believe that JACL is doing exactly that. By taking a stance and presenting ourselves for who we are, while also supporting others for who they are, I believe that JACL is integral to promoting a future community where everyone is proud of the identity of each other.

Undergraduate / Graduate Scholarship Applications Available in September

The Twin Cities JACL is pleased to announce the availability of undergraduate/graduate level scholarships to be awarded later this year.

Scholarship applications will be available on September 1, 2024 for students currently enrolled in a post-secondary educational program and students who are currently enrolled in a graduate level program.

Scholarships are available to current JACL – Twin Cities Chapter members only. Membership must be active as of September 1, 2024.

Applications will be available at <https://www.tcjacl.org/scholarships/apply/>. Only one scholarship may be received during a degree program. Applications are due on November 1, 2024.

For more information, please contact scholarship@tcjacl.org

Submitted by Pam Dagoberg, Scholarship Chair

Thomas (Tom) M. Kurihara Passes in May

Former St. Paul resident and long-time St. Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee (SPNSCC) board member, Thomas Minoru Kurihara, passed away on May 24, 2024 at age 88 years after a brief illness. Born in San Francisco, California, on September 17, 1935, Tom was the only child of Masuo and Grace (Tanbara) Kurihara.

In November 1941, the Kurihara family planned to travel together to Japan, but because Tom had chicken pox, his father went alone. Due to the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Tom's father, who was born in Japan, could not return to the US until later in the war. After President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, Tom and his mother were sent first to the Pomona Assembly Center at the Los Angeles County fairgrounds in May 1942. In August 1942, they were moved to permanent quarters at Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Tom's mother requested a transfer to the Poston camp in Arizona to be with her parents, and they moved there in November 1942.

When World War II ended and the camps closed, Tom's family decided to move to Minnesota. His maternal uncle and aunt, Earl and Ruth (Nomura) Tanbara, who were the first Japanese Americans to resettle in Minnesota during World War II, welcomed Tom's family and many more displaced Japanese Americans to St. Paul during and after the war.

Tom graduated from Monroe High School in St. Paul in 1953, and he received a Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps (NROTC) scholarship to attend Stanford University. Following graduation in 1957, Tom joined the US Navy and served in many areas throughout the world until 1969, when he was honorably discharged at the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

Tom then worked in Washington DC for the Pentagon, US Department of Agriculture, US Department of Transportation, and US Department of Defense. After retiring from Federal civil service in 1991, he worked for Northrop Grumman. In 1998, Tom became a consultant to a variety of major national and international companies in managing information technology standards.

Often making trips to St. Paul from his home in Arlington, Virginia, Tom supported SPNSCC by routinely helping at events such as the Festival of Nations and the Obon (Japanese Lantern Lighting) Festival at Como Park as recently as last August. In 2008, he donated a bench at the Global Harmony Labyrinth in Como Park, "in memory of Ruth Tanbara, Charter Member of the Saint Paul Nagasaki Sister City Committee, A Life of Public Service and Volunteerism, October 1907 - January 2008." On May 10, 2024, SPNSCC held a special celebration to honor Tom with the Chip Fricke Award, which recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to international understanding and good will.

Tom was also generous to the Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League (TCJACL), helping to fund scholarships in both Ruth and Earl Tanbara's names. He attended the annual TCJACL scholarship dinners to present graduating high school students with scholarship awards in Earl and Ruth Tanbara's honor.

In 2010, Tom established the Earl K. and Ruth N. Tanbara Fund for Japanese American History in Minnesota at the Minnesota Historical Society.

Tom was active in other Japanese American organizations, traveling to Heart Mountain and Poston, and teaching the broader community about his experiences at 'camp.' He was a world traveler who learned from each of his expeditions. We will always remember Tom for his generosity, good humor and helpfulness. Preceded in death by two of his children, Tom is survived by a son, daughter and 3 grandchildren. At Tom's request, no services are being held.



At one of the many TCJACL Scholarship Banquets Tom attended to present the Tanbara Memorial Scholarship to a deserving high school graduate.



Tom (2nd from left) with Judy Murakami, Sam Sikkink, Zack Sikkink, George Murakami, Mari Sikkink, and Michael Sikkink at the May 2019 TCJACL Scholarship Banquet.



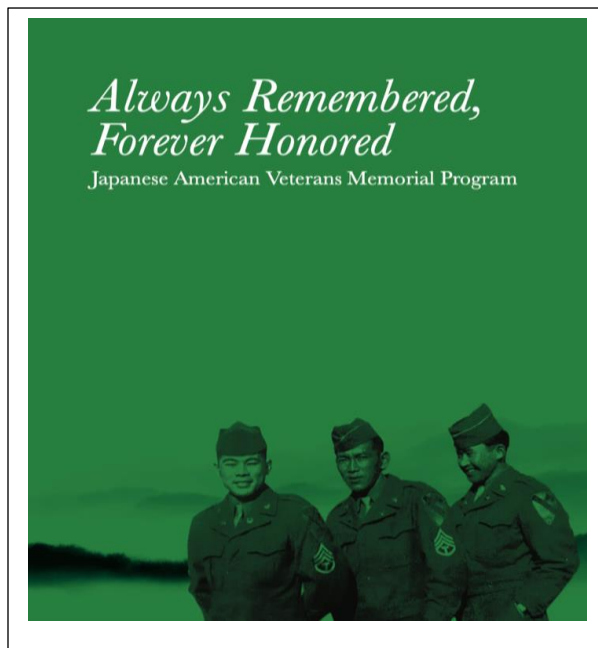
December 2021 – at the new visitor center at Historic Fort Snelling. Tom enjoys the view from the second floor.



Outside of the new visitor center - front row – left to right – Tom, Kimmy Tanaka, Karen Tanaka Lucas, Cheryl Hirata-Dulas; back row – Steve Lucas, George and Judy Murakami

Submitted by Krista Hanson. Photos by Cheryl Hirata-Dulas

Tribute to Local Japanese American Veterans held in May



On May 16, 2024, about 150 veterans, families of deceased veterans, dignitaries and distinguished guests gathered at Fort Snelling National Cemetery (FSNC) on a cool spring morning to remember, honor and give tribute to 131 local Japanese American veterans who served in conflicts from World War II onwards. Ninety-nine of those honored are buried at FSNC.

Sally Sudo, whose four brothers all served in the U.S. military during World War II or in the Korean War, suggested to the Board last year that the TCJACL reinstate the tradition, held annually around Memorial Day. The Japanese American Veterans of Minnesota (JAVM) held its first service twenty-five years ago in May 1999. The last service was held in May 2010.

The TCJACL was awarded a grant from the Japanese American Community Foundation, providing partial support for the program. An organizing committee was formed, and the program was carried out through additional contributions from the chapter's general fund, community donations, and in-kind donations.

The program began with a Call to Attention and the posting the colors by the FSNC Memorial Rifle Squad, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by local veterans, Thomas Hara and George Murakami. Rev. Debra Ting, Interfaith Minister from the Twin Cities Buddhist Sangha, gave the invocation.

After acknowledging the significance of the land on which the program was being held, Steve Ozone, program emcee, gave credit to JAVM and its officers who were instrumental in organizing the earlier programs: Bud Nakasone, president; Sam Honda, vice president; and Kathy Ohama Koch, secretary/treasurer.

Veterans in attendance were acknowledged: General Paul Nakasone, Bud Nakasone, John Nakasone, Ken Yoshitani, Tom Hara, George Murakami and Lt. Toufong Lor. All other veterans were asked to stand to be acknowledged. Special guests were also acknowledged (listed on page 10).

Program speakers were Marcus Syverson, Assistant Director at FSNC; Col. Edwin (Bud) Nakasone (Retired), JAVM president; and Lt. Toufong Lor, founder of the American Veterans Memorial Park in Cannon Falls, Minnesota.

The keynote address was given by U.S. Army General Paul M. Nakasone, who retired in February 2024 after a distinguished 37-year military career. He ended his career as the director of the National Security Agency and commander of the U.S. Cyber Command. "Today, we pay tribute not only to the countless brave souls who have sacrificed their lives in service to our nation, but also to the resilience and courage of Japanese Americans who have stood tall at every conflict since World War II," stated Gen. Nakasone.

After a moment of silence, an Honor Roll Call was held. Gail Wong rang the kansho ritual bell, and Matt Abe, Lani Bennett, Peggy Doi, Mark Honda, and Gloria Kumagai alternated reading the names of the 131 Japanese American veterans. Each of their fathers served during World War II in either the Military Intelligence Service or the 100th Infantry Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team.

The program concluded with a benediction by Rev. Debra Ting, a rifle salute by the FSNC Memorial Rifle Squad, the playing of "Taps," and retiring of the colors.

After the program, family members and volunteers placed a bouquet of flowers at the gravesites of each of the 99 veterans buried at FSNC. Program attendees were invited to meet for lunch at 98 Pounds Buffet in Bloomington.

To view the veterans memorial program video, visit: <https://youtu.be/LjPIFG4ecHc>

To view the printed program, visit:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/15uoOc6bSizxx0wiCuqxWVnLw3FGdeX3t/view?usp=sharing>

The MIS soldiers in the photograph on the program cover are (from L to R): Bud Nakasone, Mickey Ogata, and an MIS soldier to be identified.

Publicity:

KSTP News: <https://youtu.be/ybXi1WKzbXg>

MPR News: <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2024/05/16/minnesotans-honor-the-states-japanese-american-veterans>



Photo caption: General Paul Nakasone (5th from left) at Fort Snelling National Cemetery with members of the program planning committee (L to R): Sally Sudo, Carolyn Nayematsu, Gloria Kumagai, Steve Ozone, Cheryl Hirata-Dulas, Karen Tanaka Lucas, Victor Ohno, Lani Bennett and Peggy Doi. Not pictured: Vinicius Taguchi. Photo credit: Randy Kiriara



Photo caption: General Paul Nakasone (7th from left) with volunteers, Rick Paulbick, Sandi Doi Paulbick, Carol Takekawa Dean, Amy Dickerson, Doug Cameron, Kimmy Tanaka, Chris Doi, Victor Ohno (volunteer coordinator), Dede Doi, Terry Ronning, Joy Rikala and Sue Lundquist. Not pictured: George and Judy Murakami and Daniel Dulas. Photo credit: Randy Kiriara

With Deep Appreciation...

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations, without which the program could not have been carried out: American Veterans Memorial Park, Fort Snelling National Cemetery Memorial Rifle Squad, Fort Snelling National Cemetery staff, Japanese American Veterans of Minnesota, Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS), Twin Cities Buddhist Sangha, Kimmy Tanaka (MNHS), Randy Kiriara (event photographer), and Bolster (program design).

Distinguished guests (in alphabetical order):

American Legion Post 450

Ernest Denzer, Commander of the Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad

Dan Matthews, who recently helped obtain eligibility for awarding Purple Hearts to ten MIS Nisei linguists and others who died in a plane crash on Okinawa in August 1945.

Major General Rick Nash-former Commanding General, 34th Infantry Division, and 30th Adjutant General of Minnesota

Col. Don Patton – Executive Director, World War II Round Table

Rick Shiomi – writer of the play, “Secret Warrior,” about the Military Intelligence Service scheduled to be presented by the Minnesota History Theater in 2025.

Hon. Kesha Tanabe–United States Bankruptcy Judge for the District of Minnesota, the first Asian American woman appointed to the federal bench in the state.

Rep. Mark Wiens–House District 41A and a member of the Veterans Affairs Committee

Financial Supporters:

Japanese American Community Foundation

Twin Cities JACL

Community Donors: Lani and John Bennett, Carol Dean, Peggy Doi, Daniel Dulas and Cheryl Hirata-Dulas, Thomas Hara, Linda Hashimoto and Willy van Dooijeweert, Rosie Iversen, Teresa and Michael Kinneberg--in memory of Kiyoshi Ishibashi, Lucy Kiriara, Gloria Kumagai, Steve and Karen Lucas, The Martin Family--in memory of Walter Tanaka, Joyce Miyamoto and Jim Faber, Judith and George Murakami, John and Jacqueline Nakasone Family, Carolyn Nayematsu and Vincent Platt, Chris Noonan, Harley and Christina Ogata, Victor Ohno and Sue Lundquist--with matching funds from Medtronic, Toni Okada--in memory of Ed Okada, Sally Sudo, The Family of George M. Suzuki, Hon. Kesha Tanabe, Gail and Ben Wong, and Dean Yanari.

Submitted by Cheryl Hirata-Dulas

Minnesotans honor the state’s Japanese American veterans

[Estelle Timar-Wilcox](#) May 16, 2024, 3:20 pm

Reprinted from MPR News (<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2024/05/16/minnesotans-honor-the-states-japanese-american-veterans>)

Generations of military veterans gathered at Fort Snelling’s cemetery today to honor Minnesota’s Japanese American veterans — including 99 people who are buried there.

Many of those 99 trained here, too. Fort Snelling was home to a linguistics school, where about 6,000 people were trained in Japanese language. Those linguists went on to break codes and serve on the front lines, a role that military officials said was crucial in bringing the end to the war.

Edwin “Bud” Nakasone was one of those linguists. As a teenager living in Hawaii, he witnessed the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Soon after — on Christmas Eve, 1947 — he made the move from Hawaii to Minnesota.

He attended today’s ceremony with his son, Paul Nakasone, a retired army general and the former director of the National Security Agency.

Paul Nakasone wants to recognize stories like his father’s more — particularly given the prejudice and discrimination that Japanese Americans faced, even as they entered the military. “Sometimes, those are stories we don’t talk a lot about,” Nakasone said.

Former Navy officer Toufong Lor wants to lift up those stories, too. He’s in the process of constructing a veteran’s memorial park in Cannon Falls, where he says he’d like to build a memorial to the Japanese American soldiers who served in World War II.

Lor's father was recruited to the U.S. military while living in Laos in the 1960s. Lor credits the Japanese American soldiers for paving the way for other Asian Americans, in the military and in civilian life.

"Our Hmong Americans are stepping up because of that foundation, and I'm just really honored that we have veterans before me," Lor said.

The Japanese American Veterans Memorial program hosted the event ahead of Memorial Day. Lor said he hopes to see more like it, honoring both next week's holiday and Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May.

Selected MPR News Photos of the Event
More Photos of the Tribute to Japanese American Veterans
Kerem Yucel, MPR photographer

General Paul Nakasone



Note the new Minnesota state flag



Standing for a moment of silence



Paul Nakasone & dad, Edwin (Bud) Nakasone



Readers read the names on the Honor Roll



Gail Wong strikes a gong after each name is read



For more photos of the Japanese American Veterans Memorial Program, please go to page 18.

TCJACL participates in the 2nd Annual Asian American Pacific Islander Month Festival

The 2nd annual Asian American Pacific Islander Month Festival was held on May 18th at the Rosland Park picnic pavilion in Edina, MN. This year's theme was "Reach for the Stars."

The festival was organized by the Edina Asian American Alliance (EAAA), a multi-ethnic and intergenerational grass-roots coalition of students, parents, and community members. The group was formed after an online anti-Asian, antisemitic incident involving Edina High School students occurred in March 2022 and gained Metro-wide attention. In recognition of their work, City of Edina Mayor, Jim Hovland, presented the EAAA Leadership with the Mayor's Commendation for Service to Youth Award.

Over 30 groups participated in the event. The festival provided Edina's multicultural Asian American community with an opportunity to educate the public and showcase their communities. Many attendees dressed in their native costumes adding to the colorful atmosphere of the event.

The TCJACL participated this year with an information table staffed by Karen Tanaka Lucas, Cheryl Hirata-Dulas, and Sally Sudo. The display on the Military Intelligence Service Language School attracted many interested adults. Children also

stopped by to win prizes such as candy, chopsticks, nesting kokeshi dolls, toy tops, and paper lanterns while getting a mini cultural lesson. Chapter vice president Kendal Takeshita was a featured speaker. He gave a short presentation about the significance of the TCJACL and how the injustices of World War II shaped the chapter's commitment to civil rights and a willingness to stand in solidarity with other AAPI organizations.

Amongst the entertainment provided were Chinese Dragon Dancers, martial arts demonstrations, and a variety of ethnic music and dance groups. Food trucks were available for refreshments, and crafts, games and face painting were provided for the youngsters. Several hundred attendees enjoyed a beautiful May afternoon and went away with a deeper understanding of the history, culture and arts and crafts of the diverse Asian American community in Minnesota.



(left to right): Karen Tanaka Lucas, Sally Sudo, and Cheryl Hirata-Dulas
at the JACL table

Submitted by Sally Sudo



TCJACL Vice President Kendal
Takeshita talked about the
Chapter's work in addressing
injustice.

Note: For more info and photos about the festival, including a quote from Sally Sudo, visit:

<https://asamnews.com/2024/05/21/resilience-diversity-inclusion-edina-minnesota-asian-american-pacific-islander/>

. West Metro Asian Fair Report

Ever since the cancellation of the Festival of Nations in 2020, we have been working to sell off our substantial stock of hachimaki, koi, fans, chopsticks and other accessories which were in high demand by students who had attended the 4-day indoor event. The Festival, our primary source of income for many years, began in 1939 and permanently ended in the pandemic.

The Twin Cities JACL staffed a sales booth at the West Metro Asian Fair on June 1. The Saturday event was bracketed by two days of rain but, despite dismal weather forecasts, the sun and summer weather graced us for the 2nd Annual West Metro Asian Fair held at Hilde Performance Center in Plymouth. While the attendance and participation has grown for the West Metro Asian Fair, the commercial success and our income from it have been disappointing, and we are reassessing our continued involvement.

TCJACL is planning to have a very small entry at the Education Center at the State Fair as a trial this year and we are amping up for the big effort at sales during the 6-hour outdoor Obon Festival August 18 at Como Park. Volunteers are needed for the Obon to set up noon-3, shifts 3-6 and 6-9 pm. Contact Karen Tanaka Lucas at 952-270-3278 or katalucas@gmail.com to volunteer or have questions.

Thanks so much to our volunteers at the West Metro Asian Fair: Pam Dagoberg, Amy Dickerson, Sudie Hoffman, Gloria Kumagai, Patti Kameya, Ammanda Neitz, Chris Noonan, Asia O'Neil, and Karen Lucas with logistical aid from Tim Dagoberg, Bob Hetzel, and Steve Lucas. The food, camaraderie, networking, and performances were worth it alone!

Below are photos of our booth with Pam Dagoberg and Patti Kameya (left) and of Kendal Takeshita (right) who spoke on stage representing the governor's office and giving a shout out to TCJACL.



Article submitted by Karen Tanaka Lucas; photo credit: Cheryl Hirata-Dulas

East Side Freedom Library in St. Paul Celebrates its 10th Anniversary: Love & Solidarity Symposium

The East Side Freedom Library (ESFL) celebrated a decade of commitment to justice, equity, and solidarity on June 7 and 8.

Through the lens of *Love & Solidarity*, the weekend symposium brought together an impressive group of local and national artists, activists, academics and organizers to share experiences on ways their communities unite in acts of solidarity.

The opening reception on Friday evening included remarks by Saengmany Ratsabout, ESFL Executive Director, and a social hour catered by Shirley Yang, who has catered numerous TCJACL events.

The free, day-long Saturday symposium featured several workshops. Because love and solidarity emerge as components of resistance and resilience to foster a shared responsibility for positive change, each of the four sessions highlighted contemporary movements that embody these values, grounding collective efforts toward a society where love, collaboration, partnership, and solidarity are paramount.

The first session, "Transforming Archives with a Focus on Community Perspectives and Driven Approaches," highlighted community-driven archives and resources, seeking to comprehend their creation and why they have emerged as pivotal entities in the archival landscape. One of the panelists was Naomi Ostwald Kawamura, Executive Director of Densho. Naomi will be the keynote speaker for our Chrysanthemum Banquet on October 6, 2024.

In the next session, labor activists, organizers, and scholars discussed "The Intersection of Racial Justice and Labor Equity." Panelists included Ellen David Friedman, board chair of Labor Notes, who was the keynote speaker for the evening's banquet.

Yuichiro Onishi moderated the third session, "Erasing the Borders: Solidarity for the Centuries," which delved into the question of what happens when we draw outside the colonized lines that separate us and engage our artist, scholar and activist selves for the causes of justice and freedom?

The final session, "Organizing with Joy, Prioritizing Mental Health, & Preventing Burnout," explored community organizing strategies, managing stress to prevent burnout, and cultivating joy in activism. The session ended with a Move2Heal group stress-relieving exercise led by April Bryant.

The Love & Solidarity Symposium concluded with a banquet at Metro State University. Labor organizer Ellen David Friedman gave the keynote speech and the ESFL Board presented community awards.

The Twin Cities JACL was honored to be one of thirteen sponsors of the event. Over the past ten years, the chapter has collaborated with ESFL on numerous programs including exhibitions, writing workshops, Day of Remembrance commemorations, and panel discussions on the Japanese American experience. We are grateful to ESFL for providing technical support to allow us to host virtual programs during COVID, for housing our chapter's extensive book and resources collection, and for offering a welcoming venue for our gatherings and events.

The ESFL has its home in the former Arlington Hills library, one of St. Paul's historic Carnegie library buildings at 1105 Greenbrier Street, located in the Payne-Phalen neighborhood. The ESFL's mission is to inspire solidarity, advocate for justice and work toward equity of all.

We wish the East Side Freedom library all the best as it launches into its next 10 years. To support the work of the ESFL or for more info, visit: eastsidelibrary.org



Naomi Ostwald Kawamura, Executive Director of Densho (2nd from left) answers an audience question in the session, "Transforming Archives with a Focus on Community Perspectives and Driven Approaches." Other panelists (L to R) are Saengmany Ratsabout, ESFL Executive Director; Lisa Janette (moderator), Head of Archival Processing, University Libraries, University of Minnesota; and Michaela Day, Independent Researcher.



Yuichiro Onishi, Associate Professor in the Department of African American & African Studies, U of MN, moderates the session, "Erasing the Borders: Solidarity for the Centuries."

Panelists (L-R) were Rev. Dana Neuhauser, Deacon, New City Church; Mario Lee, President & Chief Steward, AFSCME Local 8; Laura Mann Hill, Artist, Million Artist Movement, Speaking Out Collective; and Michelle Tong, Assistant Professor of Neurobiology, Macalester College.



Founding co-directors of the ESFL (East Side Freedom Library), Beth Cleary and Peter Rachleff, at the symposium banquet.

Members of the Education Committee had the opportunity to meet with Lisa Janette, head of Archival Processing at the University of Minnesota, and Naomi to discuss the possibility of applying for a grant to organize and possibly digitize the TCJACL materials that are now stored in our storage unit. Both Densho and the University Archives are interested in helping with the project.



Twin Cities JACL table at the banquet, held at Metro State University in St. Paul. Seated (L-R), Gloria Kumagai, Naomi Kawamura, and Rio Saito (Executive Director of the Japan-America Society of Minnesota). Standing (L-R): Selena Moon, Ben Hartmann, Cheryl Hirata-Dulas, and Kaitlyn Szabo.

Before the opening reception the evening of June 7, members of the Education and the Chrysanthemum committees met with Densho Executive Director Naomi Ostwald Kawamura for a late lunch at W. A. Frost in St. Paul.

Article and photos submitted by Cheryl Hirata-Dulas

Gyokaku Meet and Eat

On June 29, 2024, a group of nine JACLers met for a Greet and Eat event at Gyokaku BBQ in South Minneapolis for a delicious meal. The group had fun cooking much of their own at the table. There were about nine different cuts of meat, chicken, and shrimp. There were also appetizers, soup, and a salad. The group had a good time sharing food and barbecue-ing skills.



Starting at left and moving clockwise: Jim and Sylvia Farrells, Karen Tanaka and Steve Lucas, Amy and Jon Dickerson, Vincent Platt and Carolyn Nayematsu, and Gloria Kumagai.



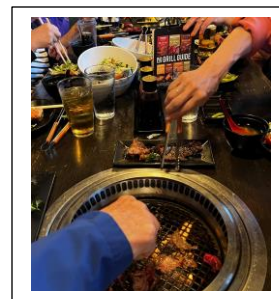
There were about eight "starters", including miso soup a green salad, and edamame.



Karen and Steve enjoyed some of the other starters such as chicken garlic noodles, kimchi, and sushi.



Too soon, the meats started arriving – short ribs, filet mignon, ribeye, New York steak, chicken, pork, and shrimp. There was hardly room at the table for the food.



Jon, our personal grill master, at work.

White House Initiative Empowers Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders: A Recap of the Economic Summit

On July 2, 2024, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI) hosted a groundbreaking economic summit in St. Paul, MN. This summit marked a significant stride towards empowering and advancing the economic prospects of these communities across the United States. Twin Cities JACL members were invited to attend, and I opted to attend it.

Background and Objectives

President Biden's Executive Order (EO) 14031 authorized the creation of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (Commission) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Commission, co-chaired by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra and the U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai, advises the President on ways the public, private and non-profit sectors can work together to advance equity, justice, and opportunity for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA and NHPI) communities. The 25-member Commission consists of leaders appointed by the President who reflect the rich diversity of AA and NHPI communities throughout the United States.

KaYing Yang who resides in St. Paul is one of the commissioners. The Deputy Assistant to president Biden and the Senior Liaison to AANHPI is Erika Moritsugu, whom I met in April when she visited Minnesota. Erika told me that she became involved in social justice issues as a result of reading the JACL Network Update publications. I found a few copies from 2010-2011.

The Economic Summit convened stakeholders from government, business sectors, non-profits, and community organizations. The primary objective was to strategize and implement initiatives that foster economic growth, entrepreneurship, and workforce development within these communities. The summit also included a Listening Session during which community members shared public comments with commission members. Comments could be submitted after the session as well.

Key Highlights

1. **Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development:** One of the focal points of the summit was promoting entrepreneurship among AA and NHPI communities. Workshops and panels featured successful entrepreneurs who shared their journeys and insights. Discussions emphasized access to capital, mentorship opportunities, and overcoming barriers to starting and scaling businesses.

2. **Workforce Development and Education:** Recognizing the importance of education and skills training, sessions at the summit addressed ways to enhance educational opportunities and workforce readiness among AA and NHPI youth and adults. Collaborations with educational institutions and vocational training programs were highlighted as crucial pathways to economic empowerment.
3. **Financial Literacy and Investment:** Another critical aspect of the summit was promoting financial literacy and encouraging investment in AA and NHPI communities. Financial planning workshops and sessions on investment strategies were conducted to equip attendees with the knowledge and tools necessary for building financial security and wealth.
4. **Policy and Advocacy:** Advocacy for policy initiatives that support AA and NHPI economic development was a central theme throughout the summit. Discussions focused on advocating for policies that promote equitable access to resources, eliminate barriers to economic advancement, and ensure representation in decision-making processes. Many of the community comments emphasized this.
5. **Networking and Collaboration:** The summit provided a platform for networking and collaboration among attendees, fostering partnerships between government agencies, businesses, and community organizations. These connections are vital for implementing and scaling initiatives aimed at supporting AA and NHPI economic empowerment.

Impact and Future Directions

Moving forward, the initiative plans to build on the momentum generated at the summit by continuing to engage stakeholders, monitor progress, and implement targeted strategies to address the economic disparities faced by AA and NHPI communities.

In conclusion, the AA and NHPI Economic Summit held on July 2, 2024, in St. Paul, MN, was a pivotal event that demonstrated the collective efforts and commitment towards advancing economic opportunities for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. By focusing on entrepreneurship, workforce development, financial literacy, and policy advocacy, the summit set a robust foundation for future initiatives aimed at promoting economic empowerment and overall equity across these diverse communities.

The evening before the summit, I was able to attend a dinner hosted by the Minnesota Humanities Center. I met commission members and representatives from other AA and NAPI community organizations. It was a nice introduction to the economic summit.

Commissioner KaYing Yang is planning to reach out to our chapter to learn more about the Japanese American community as she believes that we can offer strategies and ideas for equity. She introduced me to a staff person, Kota Mizutani, who is very active in JACL. He called JACL his family! Reflecting on the professional lives of both Kota and Erika, it was nice to see how JACL has influenced them.



Kendal Takeshita, Erica Moritsugu, and Gloria Kumagai



Kota Mizutani and Gloria Kumagai

Japanese American Veterans Memorial Program Photo Captions

Photographer: Randy Kiriara

1. Three generations of the Nakasone family (L to R): Paul, Edwin (Bud), John and Jacob
2. Gail Wong, Gen. Paul Nakasone and Rev. Debra Ting
3. Gen. Paul Nakasone and Lt. Toufong Lor
4. Peggy Doi, Gloria Kumagai, Mark Honda, Matt Abe and Lani Bennett
5. Tom Hara, Gen. Paul Nakasone, and George Murakami
6. Fort Snelling National Cemetery (FSNC) Memorial Rifle Squad: Tom Trost, Robert Whaley, John Barnes and Ernie Denzer
7. Ernie Denzer, John Barnes, Tom Trost, Jack Wallace, and Steve Landgraf
8. Steve Landgraf and Jack Wallace
9. Tom Trost, John Barnes (behind flag) and Ernie Denzer
10. George Murakami (standing L) and Tom Hara (standing R) lead the Pledge of Allegiance
11. Rev. Debra Ting
12. Gen. Paul Nakasone, Bud Nakasone and Jacob Nakasone; Rep. Mark Wiens and Duffy Ohama in the next row
13. Steve Ozone
14. Veterans stand during acknowledgment of veterans and active duty military personnel.
15. Ken Yoshitani
16. Col. Don Patton
17. Lt. General Richard Nash
18. Marcus Syverson
19. Gen. Paul Nakasone and Bud Nakasone
20. Lt. Toufong Lor
21. Gen. Paul Nakasone
22. Lani Bennett
23. Gloria Kumagai
24. Matt Abe
25. Mark Honda
26. Moment of Silence
27. Gail Wong
28. Peggy Doi
29. Ernie Denzer, Mike Pluta, Steve Landgraf, Jack Wallace, Robert Whaley, John Barnes and Tom Trost
30. Joe Collova
31. Retiring of the flags: Steve Landgraf, Jack Wallace, Tom Trost, John Barnes and Ernie Denzer
32. Peggy Doi, Harley Ogata and Sandi Doi Paulbick
33. Judy Moriguchi and Alice Hirabayashi
34. Attendees picking up flowers to decorate gravesites
35. Linda Hashimoto van Dooijeweert and Macy, Hana and Mark Yonekawa
36. Amy Dickerson and Terry Ronning
37. Matt Abe, Myounghee Hanson and Karen Tanaka Lucas
38. Lea Kiriara and Lucy Kiriara
39. Rick Shiomi
40. Rick Tanaka, Lorrie Saito, Terry Kiriara, Scott Takekawa and Elaine Dykema
41. Mari Sikkink, George and Judy Murakami, Chris Noonan, Lisa Hintermeister and Steven Murakami
42. Cheryl Hirata-Dulas, Rob Lynn and Patty (Ohama) Lynn
43. Steve Ozone, Gen. Paul Nakasone, and Dan Matthews
44. Mark and Andrea Honda
45. Sandi Doi Paulbick, Lisa Takekawa, Carol Takekawa Dean and Dick Takekawa
46. Terry Kiriara and Randy Kiriara
47. DeLynne and Steve Barrow
48. Gail Wong and Anna Murakami
49. Rep. Mark Wiens and Cheryl Hirata-Dulas
50. Gao Vang, Lt. Toufong Lor, Samuel Ogata and Christina Ogata

52. Roger Terwey, Edie Sugimoto Terwey, Judy Sugimoto Carroll and Bill Carroll
53. Cheryl Hirata-Dulas and Sally Sudo
54. Samuel Ogata, Peggy Doi, Harley Ogata and Carly Ogata
55. Victor Ohno, Doug Cameron, Joy Rikala and Sue Lundquist
56. Gail and Ben Wong
57. Gloria Kumagai and DeLynne Barrow
58. Lorrie Saito, Paul Dykema and Elaine Dykema



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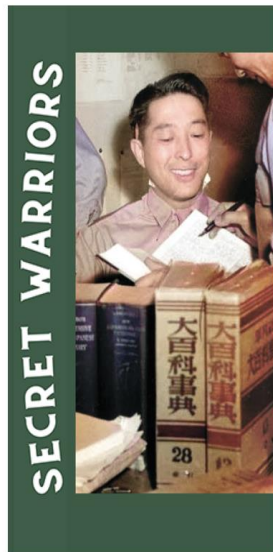
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Secret Warriors

March 29-April 19, 2025

By Rick Shiomi

Directed by Lily Tung Crystal

They are the warriors you don't know. Inspired by the stories of the Japanese Americans who served as translators and interrogators for the U.S. Armed Forces, Secret Warriors features two men, Koji Kimura and Tamio Takahashi, who took extraordinary risks to save their fellow soldiers in the Pacific Theater during World War II. As the eyes and ears of General MacArthur, they saved countless Allied lives and shortened the war by two years. Discover their compelling personal journeys and heartfelt love stories set against the backdrop of the war and the incarceration of their families.

Sansei Yonsei Kai



JAPANESE DANCE GROUP

Join our all ages, all gender, all ethnicity
inclusive Japanese dance & cultural
group!



We have a busy summer of
performances & festivals
ahead of us and would
love to have some new
volunteers! Come learn
dances, origami, kimono
dressing, and more!

contact Linda for more information:
linda@urbantraveler.com



Japanese American Citizens League
Twin Cities Chapter

Who Do You Know?

Help us identify young people between high school
and pre-school for our scholarship program!

Send the following:

Name, address, expected graduation year

to: scholarship@tcjacl.org

Names will be added to our database and applications
sent to individuals to apply their senior year!