



THE RICE PAPER

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

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April 2026

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then write message in box)

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PRESIDENT’S REMARKS

春先のような天気になりそうです。

No matter how hard the winter, flowers will bloom again. Operation Metro Surge, the latest siege of our community by our own federal government, has officially ended. And yet, ICE remains a persistent threat in the Twin Cities, harassing and kidnapping the most vulnerable among us. Lest we forget, over 3,000 of our neighbors are still missing, and their families continue to face the harsh unknowns as they try to meet their basic needs and eventually reunite with their loved ones. We ask that you keep them in mind and continue looking for opportunities to support them by donating to groups like [Minnesota 8](#), who provide direct assistance on the ground.

As your needs evolve and your interests grow, please keep your chapter in mind as a resource that can support you, direct you to other resources, and even create opportunities for you to explore your own ideas and interests. We are proud to share many opportunities to engage with your fellow chapter members in the coming months. Please read the following pages carefully so you don’t miss out!

またお花見に行きましょう！

In solidarity,

Vinicius Taguchi
Chapter President

UPCOMING EVENTS THIS SPRING

- **Tuesday, April 28 – 7 pm - World War II Round Table**

James McNaughton, author of [Nisei Linguists](#) will be speaking at the Minnesota History Center, 3M Auditorium. Kimmy Tanaka, board member of the TCJACL Chapter, will speak briefly about the MISLS at Camp Savage and Fort Snelling.

- **Saturday, May 2, 9-11 am – Cherry Tree Festival**

Ben Hartmann, TCJACL Treasurer, has volunteered to represent us at the St. Paul Nagasaki Sister City Cherry Tree Festival. Go to the grove of cherry trees near the Mannheimer Memorial, Como Park. There will be crafts and games, too!

- **Saturday, May 9, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm – HSPH Student Presentations**

The students in the University of Minnesota class, *Community Building for Justice: Twin Cities Japanese American Activism*, taught by Professor Yuichiro Onishi and Jon Matsunaga and partnering with the Minnesota Writing Project, will present their final projects at the Liberal Arts Engagement Hub.

- **Tuesday, May 12 – TCJACL Scholarship Banquet**

Five Twin Cities area senior high school students will be receiving TCJACL scholarships in a few weeks. Their names and their essays will be printed in the next issue of the [Rice Paper](#). The Scholarship Committee was very much impressed by the students' accomplishments during their last four years in high school and wish them well in the years to come.

- **Saturday, May 16 – Minnesota Japanese American Veterans Graveside Decorating**

Flower pick up is between 10 and 11 am at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Details for this event can be found on page 6 of this newsletter. Contact Cheryl Hirata-Dulas at chiratadulas@tcjacl.org by Wednesday, May 13 if you have questions. Volunteers are also needed to decorate the gravesites of those whose family/friends are unable to attend. Contact Lani Bennett at lanib@tcjacl.org for more information.

- **Saturday, May 16, 1-3 pm – [Enmity and Empathy: Japanese Americans in Minnesota during World War II - Ka Wong's book event](#)**

This presentation was originally scheduled for February 2026, but is now a reality! The free book event will take place at Fort Snelling and will feature a talk and book signing by Mr. Wong, who is a professor of Asian Studies at St. Olaf College. He drew on personal interviews, archival sources, and historical literature to describe the struggles the previously incarcerated Japanese Americans and their families endured in Minnesota after World War II. He is also producer, director, and writer of the film, "Beyond the Barbedwire: Japanese Americans in Minnesota". (Information from the Minnesota Historical Society)

- **Saturday, May 16, 2-4 pm – Edina Asian American Alliance AAPI Month Festival: [Cultivating Community](#)**

Cheryl Hirata Dulas and Karen Tanaka Lucas will be representing the Twin Cities Chapter of JACL at the 4th Annual Festival to be held at Rosland Park in Edina. The festival is free and open to the public. TaikoArts Midwest will be featured as one of the performance groups. In the event of a weather cancellation, the Festival will be held on Sunday, May 7.

- **Sunday, May 17, 1 – 2:30 pm – [Scott Kurashige, author event](#)**

The East Side Freedom Library will be the site of a discussion of Scott Kurashige's new book, [American Peril: the Violent History of Anti-Asian Racism](#). After the presentation, there will be a discussion with Bao Phi (spoken word artist and writer) and Bo Thao-Urabe (founder and president of Seed, Grow, Bloom LLC).



- **Speaking Engagements** – A few of our TCJACL members will be involved in outreach to the community. The first occurs on May 1 at Eastview High School. This program, “Japanese American WWII Experience,” has become an annual event for John Suzukida and Sally Sudo. They will present to about 150 students in three, 90 minute sessions.

The second event is at St. Olaf College on May 8. Peggy Doi, Sally Sudo, and Karen Lucas will be speaking about the JA WWII Experience on a panel, facilitated by Ka Wong, for AANPI month. There will be a reception at 5:30 pm before the 6-7:30 pm presentation. The event will take place at the Viking Theater at the Buntrock Commons, St. Olaf College.

- **Tuesday, June 23, 5:30 – 7 pm – National Asian Pacific American Museum Commission**

The MN Regional Convening and Listening Session will be meeting at the Wilder Foundation in St. Paul. Its purpose is to have APA community leaders to share experiences and the importance of preserving our history as part of documentation for Congress to make a case for a National APA history museum

- **Sunday, August 16 – Obon Festival, Como Park, St. Paul**

This annual summer festival is something not to be missed – it has booths, food, Japanese dancing, martial arts and taiko (drum) demonstrations. When darkness falls, the Japanese Lantern Lighting Ceremony starts at the Conservatory Pond.

Volunteers - Amy Dickerson, chair of the Obon Festival Committee, is looking for volunteers to help at the TCJACL booth. There will be 3 opportunities for you – 1) Set Up: Noon to 3 pm – 5 volunteers; 2) Shift One: 3-6 pm – 6 volunteers; 3) Shift Two and Breakdown; 6-9:30 pm – 4 volunteers.

Items for Sale – The committee is also asking for donations of used Japanese antiques or items that are in good condition to sell. Examples are Japanese dishes, kimonos, getas, paintings, decorative items. Since you will be doing some spring cleaning, be sure to consider where your Japanese (Asian) treasures will be welcomed.

PLEASE CONTACT AMY DICKERSON AT adickerson323@gmail.com IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME OR HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR TREASURES.

RECENT EVENTS

- **Wednesday, April 29 – 6:30 pm – James McNaughton, author event**

James McNaughton, author of [Nisei Linguists](#) will be speaking at the Savage Library. TCJACL’s 3-banner exhibit on the MISLS will be on display.

- **Saturday, April 25 – NJAHS Visioning Meeting**

Gloria Kumagai, TCJACL board member, attended the meeting, “[Fragile Freedoms: Lessons Learned-Regional Perspectives on WWII Confinement Sites](#). Partnering with the U of M’s Writing Project, their inquiry question is “How did men and women assert their rights under WWII exclusion and confinement within regions? How can we apply these equal protections today?”

- **Monday, April 20 – API Day at the Capitol – Belonging: 250 Years in America**

The doors for this annual event opened at 9 am with a rally that began at 10. TCJACL member Peggy Doi spoke about the MISLS, JACL, and the history of the JA community in Minnesota.

- **Saturday, April 18 – [Returning the Sword](#), author event**

Minnesota author Caren Stelson shared her newest children’s book, [Returning the Sword: How a Japanese Sword of War became a Symbol of Friendship and Peace](#). This is a true story of Minnesota soldier, Orval Amdahl, who found himself in Nagasaki, Japan, in 1945. Before he returned home, he had the chance to take a Japanese sword as a war souvenir. The story tells of the sword’s return to the sword’s Japanese owner – a symbol of peace and honor. Caren’s other familiar children’s book titles include [Sachiko](#) and [A Bowl of Peace](#).

- **Friday and Saturday, April 10 and 11 – IFEST**

Karen Tanaka Lucas, with a history of organizing our chapter's participation in what was called the Festival of Nations, successfully did it again. However, you will have to wait until the next issue of the Rice Paper to find out her perspectives about this year's event.

- **Thursday, February 19 – Day of Remembrance Film Screening**

About 100 people attended the film screening of One Fighting Irishman, the story of Wayne M. Collins, a civil rights attorney who represented more than 5,000 Japanese Americans imprisoned at Tule Lake during WWII. The film was followed by panel discussion, with Steve Ozone, TCJACL Vice President, moderating. The panel consisted of the director/producer Sharon Yamato (filmmaker), Wayne Merrill Collins (son of Wayne Mortimer Collins), Hiroshi Shimizu, and Carol Reitz. One of the evaluation comments was, "The film and panel discussion were illuminating. Both also shone a light on parts of the incarceration I didn't know." Out of the responses, 71% rated the program outstanding and 24% gave the program an excellent rating.

Steve announced that Sharon had sold most of her DVDs about the making of the film. She will be writing about her Twin Cities visit in an article, published by Rafu Shimpo, a bilingual Japanese-English language newspaper.

REPORTS

Twin Cities JACL Scholarship Committee 2025 Annual Report

This report was inadvertently omitted from the February 2026 issue

2025 members of the Scholarship Committee were Pam Dagoberg, Sylvia Farrells, Kendra Kuhlmann, Teresa Swartz, and Fred and Fred Tsuchiya.

The Twin Cities JACL awarded scholarships totaling \$12,500 to five 2025 high school graduates in May 2025. Scholarship applications were evaluated based on scholastic achievement, extra-curricular activities, community service and an essay topic entitled "The Relevance of JACL Today." Scholarship recipients were required to be current JACL members (individual student or family membership levels).

No undergraduate or graduate scholarships were awarded in 2025.

The Scholarship Committee is in the process of identifying 2026 high school graduates. To recommend a 2026 high school graduate for one of this year's scholarships, or to add a future graduate's name to the database, please contact scholarship@tcjacl.org.

The Scholarship Committee is aware of the following 2026 high school graduates:

Cooper Daikawa (Centennial High School)

Raegan Dean (Prior Lake High School)

Cale Marella (Woodbury)

Maxwell Murakami (Byron High School)

Addison Neitz (Wayzata High School)

Kiyoshi Pellinen (Golden Valley)

Ryan Shiroma (St. Paul)

Marco Takekawa Litgen (Woodbury High School)

2026 high school graduate scholarship applications will be mailed to students listed above no later than January 31. Completed applications and transcripts are required to be postmarked no later than Friday, April 3, 2026.

Donations to the Twin Cities JACL Scholarship Fund may be sent to TC JACL Scholarship c/o Fred Tsuchiya, 5311 Scenic Heights Drive, Minnetonka, MN, 55345.

Update on the Save Act

TCJACL President Vini Taguchi sent an email blast in March indicating that the SAVE Act had reached the Senate floor for a vote and to contact our senators to vote against it. The good news is that the SAVE Act failed to pass the U.S. senate, leaving millions of voters unaffected for now.

The Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act, also called the SAVE America Act, is a federal bill that would require voters to provide documentary proof of U.S. citizenship when registering to vote in federal elections, including a passport or certified birth certificate, and would impose stricter voter ID requirements for casting ballots. The bill passed the House of Representatives in February 2026 along party lines, with a 220-208 vote.

Despite House approval, the legislation faced strong opposition in the Senate. Debate in the Senate resumed in April 2026, but the bill did not secure the 60 votes needed to overcome a filibuster. On April 20, 2026, the Senate formally rejected the SAVE Act, marking the second time the legislation has failed to advance in the upper chamber. Critics argue that the bill would create significant barriers for millions of eligible voters, including low-income Americans, young voters, rural residents, and women who have changed their names after marriage, while proponents claim it ensures election integrity.

The bill's provisions would have required states to verify citizenship using federal databases, remove noncitizens from voter rolls, and impose criminal penalties on election officials who register voters without proper documentation. However, data shows that noncitizen voting is extremely rare, and many Americans lack ready access to the required documents, raising concerns about potential disenfranchisement.

While the SAVE Act passed the House, it failed in the Senate, and there are currently no plans to override the filibuster or bring it back for another vote in the immediate future. The legislation remains a contentious issue in U.S. politics, particularly in the context of the 2026 midterm elections. President Trump has said that enacting the SAVE act into law is a top priority.

Submitted by Gloria Kumagai, Board Member

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Lakeland Press has a documentary on Bud Nakasone in production.
- The Savage Library project is now completed. Several members of the Education Committee of our chapter (Patti Kameya, Gloria Kumagai, Steve Ozone, Cheryl Hirata Dulas, and Karen Tanaka Lucas) have worked on developing a poster exhibit on Camp Savage. The exhibit is in the Heritage Room of the library.
- Seventeen Syllables and Other Stories is the next selection for the book group. Its author is Hisaye Yamamoto. The group decided that they would meet in late summer.

**In Observance of Memorial Day,
the Twin Cities JACL cordially invites
Family and Friends to Commemorate
the Service and Sacrifice of
Minnesota Japanese American Veterans
by Decorating Our Veterans' Gravesites
at Fort Snelling National Cemetery**

Date: Sat., May 16, 2026

Time: Pick up flowers between 10 and 11 a.m.

Location: Fort Snelling National Cemetery

*For veterans whose family/friends are unable to attend,
volunteers will decorate the veterans' gravesites.*

*Please let us know if a veteran's family/friend plans to pick up flowers
so we do not assign a volunteer.*

*For Japanese American veterans who are buried
at other local cemeteries (such as Lakewood Cemetery),
families are also invited to pick up flowers (please be sure to RSVP).*

RSVP by Wed. May 13 to:

Cheryl Hirata-Dulas at chiratadulas@tcjacl.org

Volunteers are needed to decorate veterans' gravesites.

Contact Lani Bennett at lanib@tcjacl.org

Event will be held rain or shine.

Note: There will not be a formal program.

DIRECTIONS FOR FLOWER PICK UP

Enter Fort Snelling national Cemetery at the Main Gate on 34th Avenue. Follow signs to the flower pick up area.

- From I-494, take the 34th Avenue exit; head north on 34th Avenue
- Turn right at the Main Gate into cemetery;
- Turn left onto Pruden Drive
- Turn right onto Mallon Road

REMEMBER THAT FLOWER PICK UP IS FROM 10-11 am ON SATURDAY, MAY 16!

We are grateful to our Minnesota Japanese American Veterans for their dedication, service, and sacrifices.

Honor Roll 2026

Toshio Abe	Harry Kumagai	Dr. Takeshi (Tak) Osada	Benjamin Masaru Tashiro
Sadao Akaki	Hisashi (Butch) Kumagai	John Oshima	Charles Tatsuda
Yuki Akaki	Tsutomu (Steve) Kumagai	Frank Owata	Robert Teragawa
Saburo (Bill) Doi	Tadaji Kuranishi	Nobukazu Oyanagi	Minoru (Min) Tsuchimochi
Edward John Evans, Sr.	Jim Kurata	Tom Oye	Takuzo Tsuchiya
William Ezaki	Thomas Kurihara	Dean Saiki	Charles Ujifusa
John Takeo Fukuda	Jerry Kusano	George Saiki	Harry Umeda
Frank Fukumoto	Kiyoshi Jim Kusunoki	Isamu Saito	Tom Urabe
William Furuyama	Warren Kyono	James Sakaguchi	Tom Utsunomiya
Edward Katsushi (Ed) Hara	Morris Lundin	Seiji Sakai	George Watanabe
Sam Hara	Brian Matsumoto	Yoshio Sako	Hideo Watanabe
Tsuyoshi Hashimoto	Kaye Matsumoto	Bujiro Sanmonji	David Yahanda
Richard Hidani	Masao Matsumoto	Ann Sato	Ken Yamaguchi
Theodore Hirabayashi	Yoshio Matsumoto	Shigeo Sato	Yukio Yamaguchi
Patrick Hirasawa	Herb Matsuura	Robert Sawamura	Ryoji Yamakuchi
Osamu (Sam) Honda	Diane Moriguchi	Yutaka Semba	Albert Yamamoto
Yoshinori Honda	Tom Moriguchi	Paul Shimada	Geore Yamane
George Hoshino	Frank Mukai	Sam Shimada	Robert Rivera Yamashita
Tom Ichimura	James Murakami`	Dr. Paul Shimizu	Edward Yamazaki
Isaac (Ike) Iijima	Larry Murakami	Isamu (Sam) Sugimoto	Frank Fusao Yanari
Keiji Iko	Nobuo Murakami	James Sugimura	Mitsuo (Mits) Yoneji
Muneo Robert (Bob) Imon	Tom Nagamitsu	Tsuguo Sumada	Tokio Yonekawa
Ted Inouye	Sam Nakanishi	George M. Suzuki	George Yoshida
Kiyoshi Ishibashi	Tadashi Nakauchi	Susumu Tagichi	Minoru Yoshida
Phil Sunao Ishio	Harold Nakayama	John Akira Takekawa	Edward Yoshikawa
Jim Katayama	Harry Nishimura	Thomas Tsuyoshi Takekawa	Howard Yoshimura
Mitz Kawaguchi	Robert Nishizuka	Yutaka Takekawa	George Yoshino
Junie Kawamura	Mikiri (Mickey) Ogata	Nobuo Tanabe	Henry Yoshitake Yoshino
Jodie Anne Kimura	Robert Ohama	Donald Tanaka	Hikaru Yoshino
Nobuo Kimura	Fred Ohno	Frank Tanaka	John Yutaka Yoshino
Jim Kwanichi Kirihara	Henry Ohno	Ken Tanaka	Paul Yoshino
Mikio Kirihara	Joe Ohno	Seigi Tanaka	
David Kitagawa	Tom Ohno	Walter Tanaka	
Shiro Kosobayashi	Edward Okada	Masao Tanamachi	
Tom Kosobayashi	Minoru Onomiya	George Tani	

To add a veteran's name to the Honor Roll list or make correction to the list, contact Cheryl at chiratadulas@tcjacl.org

Thank you!

Submitted by Cheryl Hirata Dulas

In Memoriam

In recent months, two women in our Japanese community have passed away. The first is Yoko Breckenridge who passed away in Plano, TX, on January 11, 2026, at the age of 92. Upon moving to Minnesota from Japan, she became a successful businessperson – as a barber for 15 years. As a barber in Mankato, her most famous customer included NFL Hall of Fame and Vikings quarterback, Fran Tarkenton. After moving to Minneapolis, he obtained her real estate license and spent 40 years in that business. She was also active in the Japanese community. She founded a private Japanese library, received the Mondale Award, and in December 2024, was featured in the Smithsonian’s “Japanese War Brides” exhibit in Texas. After her death, her library was divided into 3 parts : the Yoko Brecken-ridge Japanese Library in Cannon Falls, the Cha-Ami Japanese Cultural Center in St. Anthony (Minneapolis) and MN Nihon-jinkai in Rochester. She is survived by her son, Richard (Amanda) and granddaughter, Emma.



(obituary from the [Minnesota Star-Tribune](#), March 15, 2026)



The second woman who recently passed away is Akimi Oyanagi, who died peacefully on February 27, 2026 at the age of 101. She is survived by her son, Steve (Carol) and extended family. After coming out of a World War II internment camp, she attended Hamline University in St. Paul where she met her husband, Kenji. Her work history started in Ramsey County where she was a social worker; then she taught kindergarten in the St. Paul Public Schools. Akimi was an active member of Epworth United Church. She also enjoyed crafting – crocheting and knitting and looked forward to gardening. A memorial for both Akimi and Kenji was held on Tuesday, April 21, at Mill City Church in northeast Minneapolis. Memorials can be sent to the Oyanagi Endowed Scholarship at Hamline University Institutional Advancement, 1530 Hewitt Avenue, St Paul, MN 55104. Please include “Kenji and Akimi Oyanagi Endowed Scholarship” on the memo line.

(obituary from the [Twin Cities Pioneer Press](#), April 12-13, 2026)

With much sympathy, we announce the passing of Vincent Platt on April 11, 2026. He was 89 years old. He was born in Minneapolis and graduated from Oberlin College and Harvard Law School. He spent his professional life at West Publishing (now Thompson Reuters). Vincent is survived by his wife, Carolyn Nayematsu, his two children, Anthony and Bonnie, and 3 grandchildren, Darren, Melody, and Benjamin. Together, he and Carolyn spent many years renovating their home and gardens on Summit Avenue. They loved to travel and visited forty-nine state capitols. Vincent was a lifelong reader with his favorites being books of humor and comic strips. He also collected ceramic pigs and paintings of pigs. Memorials can be given to the Minnesota Urban Debate League or a memorial of your choice. A Celebration of Life will be held in June.



(obituary from the [Minnesota Star-Tribune](#), April 26, 2026)

Upcoming events occurring in June-December 2026 are listed below. Details about the events will be provided in future issues of the [Rice Paper](#).

- July 29-August 2 – National JACL Convention in Las Vegas
- July 29 – Twin Cities Buddhist Church Obon Festival – contact Cheral Tsuchiya
- Sunday, August 2 – TCJACL Picnic at Rosland Picnic Shelter, Edina – contact Asia Oneil
- Sunday, August 16 – Obon Festival, Como Park, St. Paul – contact Amy Dickerson
- Sunday & Monday, October 10 & 11 – Ireicho Stamping of Names, Historic Fort Snelling – contact Ireicho.org for reservations; Densho will sponsor digitization services and advice on conducting historic research
- Friday-Sunday, October 16-18 – Swingposium sponsored by Midwest Taiko and Theatre Mu
- October/November – Chrysanthemum Banquet

Board meetings are usually scheduled for the second Thursday of each month.

To be notified of JACL activities, relevant opportunities, and events that occur on shorter notice than our [Rice Paper](#) can communicate, please sign up for the TC JACL “email Blast” by contacting us at info@tcjacl.org or by visiting www.tcjacl.org/subscribe. Sign up now. Don’t miss out! Update us when your email changes.

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Thank you. Your TCJACL Board of Directors.

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