

PORTLANDJACL NEWSLETTER

*Founded in 1928,
Portland JACL is one of
the most respected civil
rights organizations in
the country.*



PDXJACL.ORG

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

December 17:

Portland JACL mails out 2011
Calendars

December 25:

Merry Christmas!

January 1:

Happy New Year!

January 23:

Oregon Hiroshima Club
Shinnenkai
Chinese Village Restaurant
Contact Mrs. Masuoka at
(503) 236-8623

January 30, Noon - 4 p.m.:

Mochitsuki Celebration
Scottish Rite Center
See Flyer inside for ticket info!

February 20, 2 p.m.:

Day of Remembrance
Hoffman Hall, Portland State
University

March 1:

Deadline for Community
Scholarship Applications
See www.pdxjacl.org for details

March 5 - 8:

JACL - OCA Leadership
Summit
Washington D.C.

March 6:

OBT Spring Bazaar

DECEMBER 2010 • VOLUME 16, ISSUE 5

A Bus Tour Through History

*Board Member's Message by Jean
Yamamoto*

Diane Hess, Education Director of the Fair Housing Council of Oregon, had one seat left and invited me along to "Fasten Your Seat Belts...It's Been a Bumpy Ride. A Tour of Portland's Hidden Discriminatory History". Being a relative newcomer to Portland (15 years) I knew just a little about Oregon's sad history and in recent years learned more about the Japanese American internment experience. The bus tour added and enhanced my understanding. It may be one thing to read about history but to actually see where it happened and hear the stories truly makes the history real.

Our group met at the Oregon Opportunity Network parking lot. Oregon Opportunity Network is a non-profit organization dedicated to provide affordable housing and economic opportunities for working families, seniors and people with disabilities. We got on the bus and headed out to the Convention Center where we passed the sculpture, "The Dream" of Martin Luther King Jr. with a child and an immigrant. Diane said that the Fair Housing Act of 1968 was the hardest of the Civil Rights Acts to pass. Even today only 1 out of 10 instance of housing discrimination is reported. It is illegal to discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or familial status. Oregon also added marital status, source of income,

sexual orientation including gender identity, honorably discharged veterans / military status, and domestic violence victims.

The bus turned up North Williams passing Legacy Emmanuel Hospital and blocks of chain link fenced off empty lots, once a vibrant African American community of business, homes, and churches but now abandoned to urban renewal that didn't materialize. We learned about neighborhood covenants that excluded African Americans and Asians and discriminatory practices by banks and insurance companies called redlining.

We got off the bus at Vanport and Ed Washington, the Community Liaison for Diversity Initiatives at Portland State University, described his carefree childhood in Vanport. The huge housing development had segregated apartments but integrated schools and recreation centers. It was a grand adventure for the kids but quite difficult for his mother who had to adjust to moving cross country with 5 children to a small apartment.

Next stop was the Expo Center in front of the torii gates designed by Valerie Otani. Torii signifies sacred places and although the Expo Center's history as the temporary internment site is not sacred, it is a memorial to all those unjustly held. The brilliant Fall light sparkled off the thousands of silver tags but were quiet in the

(Continued on next page)

Board Member's Message cont.

breezeless day. I read the newspaper articles etched in the bases of the torii and the racist epithets, so commonly used in the 1940s, stung.

Rolling along to New Columbia which replaced the aging Columbia Villa housing. New Columbia master planned community now includes a mix of affordable rentals, single family homes, senior housing, an elementary school, a Boys & Girls Club, and a community garden. Tucked into the community are pocket parks. What's nice about New Columbia is that it better integrates with the Portsmouth neighborhood by connecting streets and sharing enrollment in the elementary school and the Boys & Girls Club.

Diane informed us that Oregon had the highest Ku Klux Klan membership in the country and many prominent lawmakers and judges were KKK. The PGE Park site was where the Klan held their rallies. I learned that in the hills around the Multnomah Athletic Club were terraced Chinese vegetable gardens. But the city wanted them out for other development. Imagine how different it would be to actually have sustainable gardens in Southwest Portland.

Dr. Randy Blazak of Portland State University and Chair of the Coalition Against Hate Crimes took us back to the scene where Mulugeta Seraw was

murdered in 1988. The narrow Southeast street with boxy apartment buildings probably looked the same as on that terrible night when skinheads beat Seraw to death. The crime shone a light on violent racists and resulted in the creation and enforcement of Oregon's hate-crime laws. One positive result of the civil suit was to provide for the education of Mulugeta Seraw's son in Ethiopia, who is now a successful pilot.

The tour ended with Diane pointing out that housing discrimination can also occur around disabilities or family status. Any housing built after 1981 must meet design and construction qualifications for accessibility for people with disabilities. It is also unlawful to discriminate against renting to people with children.

This was an eye opening experience to get on the bus and learn from the experiences of the past and to be aware of discriminatory practices today. Lest we think this is all behind us, Kentucky Senator-elect Rand Paul, recently said that he opposes the Fair Housing Act because a free society should allow private discrimination. And finally, I'm glad I jumped at the opportunity to take the bus ride as it enriched my understanding of how far Oregon has come and to appreciate the legacy of what those who went before us.



Valerie Otani shares her story at the Expo Center Torii

PORTLANDJACL

NEWSLETTER

America at its Best by Eric Saul

The speech that follows was given by Mr. Eric Saul, an Army historian and former curator of the Military Museum at the Presidio of San Francisco. It was originally delivered in Seattle on March 25, 2001 on the occasion of a Medal of Honor Ceremony honoring William K. Nakamura and James Okubo, two heroes of the Seattle Nisei Veterans. As we begin preparing the logistics for honoring the 100th/442nd and MIS with the Congressional Gold Medal in Washington, DC next year, this same speech highlights many of the reasons why these Nisei were selected and deserve to receive the Congressional Gold Medal.

"So why was it you Nisei, second generation, born in America, were willing to volunteer for the Army from the plantations of Hawaii, often when you were considered second-class citizens, or from concentration camps in America? Your parents couldn't become citizens or own land, so land was put in your name. Before the war, you wanted to be doctors, lawyers, and professionals, but you couldn't. No one would hire you. So you worked on your family farms, flower orchards, and shops. You were often segregated in the Little Tokyo's and Japan Towns. You couldn't go where you wanted, be where you wanted, be whom you wanted.

Furthermore, your President, on February 19, 1942, signed an Executive Order that said you weren't Americans anymore; you were "non-aliens." So why did you join the army? Why did you become soldiers, and ironically become, of all things, the most decorated army unit that this country has ever produced?

There were words like *giri* and on, which your parents taught you. Which means "duty," and "honor," and "responsibility." You had to pay back your debt to your country.

Oyakoko: love for family. Your parents couldn't become citizens, but you loved your families ND you had to prove your loyalty at any cost. You used your bodies as hostages for your families to prove your love for democracy and justice when you volunteered from those camps.

Kodomo no tame ni: "for the sake of the children." Many of you didn't have children at the time, but you knew you wanted to have families. And you knew that you didn't want your children to have to suffer as you did. You wanted your children to be able to be doctors, and lawyers, and professionals. If you went into the military, did your job, perhaps things would change. You knew it, and you fought for it. You even came up

with your own regimental motto that's on this honored regimental flag in front of me. It was "Go for Broke." You set the tone for your own regiment, and lived up to its motto. You made democracy work. Because of your wartime record, your children can now be what they want in a country that you wanted for them.

Enryo: humility. There's an old Japanese proverb that says if you do something really good and you don't talk about it, it must be really, really good! You never talked about your wartime record. You didn't tell your children, you didn't tell your wives, and you didn't even tell the country.

Gaman: internal fortitude, keep your troubles to yourself. Don't show how you're hurting.

Shikata ga nai: sometimes things can't be helped. But other times, you have to go for broke, and you can change things.

Haji: don't bring shame on your family. When you go off to war, fight for your country, return if you can, but die if you must.

Shinbo shite seiko suru: strength and success will grow out of adversity. When I was curator of the Presidio Museum, I wanted to know why you joined the Army. Why did you join from a concentration camp? A veteran from Cannon Company named Wally told me a story. His family was sent from Los Angeles to the Santa Anita racetrack, which was an Assembly Center for Japanese Americans. There, they were put in a horse stall. Before the war, they had a flower shop, they had their own home in Los Angeles, and they were a middle-class family. Now they were living for weeks in a horse stall that hadn't been cleaned when they moved in, and it stunk of horse manure. Wally's father said to him, "Remember that a lot of good things grow in horse manure." It did.

I remember hearing a story from a Chaplain Higuchi, the chaplain of the 442nd, who was from Hawaii. I asked him, "How could the Nisei have joined the Army under these circumstances? How could they have done what they did?" Chaplain Higuchi said he himself couldn't understand, because he was from Hawaii and hadn't suffered the same discrimination. But his job as chaplain was to go through the pockets of the Nisei who had been killed in combat. He remembered going through the pockets of one mainland Nisei. In his wallet was a news clipping that told how the family farm had been burned down by racists near Auburn, California. Yet this Nisei still volunteered for the service. Chaplain Higuchi said that there was no medal high enough in
(Continued on next page)

America at its Best continued

this country to give to this Nisei who had been killed and was lying in front of him. Chaplain Higuchi had to write a letter home to his parents.

You Nisei fought for this country, your country. It has taken fifty-six years to get to this point, but you made democracy stand for what it really means. When you came home from the war, President Truman had a special White House ceremony for you. It was the only time that the President of the United States had a ceremony at the White House for a unit as small as a battalion. It was raining that morning in Washington, and Truman's aide said, "Let's cancel the ceremony." Truman said to his aide, "After what those boys have been through, I can stand a little rain." He said to the Nisei, bearing their regimental standard with the motto of "Go for Broke," "I can't tell you how much I appreciate the opportunity to tell you what you have done for this country. You fought not only the enemy, but you fought prejudice and you won. You have made the Constitution stand for what it really means: the welfare of all the people, all the time." Lastly, he advised the Nisei to keep up that fight.

So in the 1980's you fought for redress. One of the reasons that redress passed so overwhelmingly in Congress was the overwhelming record of the 100th/442nd and the MIS. The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 provided an apology for your parents and for your suffering. So on the battlefields of France, Italy and Germany, "Go for Broke" stood for the welfare of all of the people, all of the time.

You never lost faith in your country, and we are here today to celebrate that faith. The result of that faith is that your children can be anything that they want: professionals, doctors, and lawyers. The price that you paid for democracy was the highest combat casualty rate of any regiment that served in the United States Army. The 100th/442nd suffered 314% combat casualties. The 100th/442nd was an oversized regiment, with its own cannon and engineer company, and even its own artillery battalion. The four thousand men who started off in February of 1943 had to be replaced nearly three and one half times. Eventually, about 14,000 men would serve in the 100th/442nd.

I see many of my friends from I Company and K Company here today. In one battle alone, the battle for the Rescue of the Lost Battalion in October 1944, which you fought in, two thousand of you went in to rescue two hundred Texas soldiers who couldn't be rescued by their own division. You went and suffered almost a thousand casualties in that one battle alone,

of almost five days of constant fighting. In K Company, you started off with 186 riflemen. By the time you reached the Lost Battalion, there were only eight men standing. I Company did worse. They started off with 185 men. By the time they reached the Lost Battalion, there were only four men still standing in the company. It was unbelievable! You rescued the Texas Lost Battalion, and for that you won two presidential unit citations. The army designated the Rescue of the Lost Battalion to be among the top ten battles fought by the U.S. Army in its 230-year history.

You Nisei ultimately won seven unit citations, and no other unit for its size and length of service has won that many presidential unit citations. Chet Tanaka counted how many citations and how many medals the 100th/442nd earned. Of the fourteen thousand men who served, there were eighteen thousand medals for heroism and service. You had become the most decorated unit in American military history for its size and length of service and until recently almost no one knew your stories. You really hadn't told anyone, including your families or children. You were truly enryo. If you do something that is really good and you don't talk about it, it must be really good.

Toward the end of the war, in April 1945, the 5th US Army asked you to create a diversionary attack to help break the German Gothic Line. The US Army had three infantry divisions lined up to breach the Gothic Line, which protected the Po Valley and the entrance to Austria. And those three divisions couldn't do it - they were stalemated for six months.

The Army then asked the 442nd, the "Go for Broke" Regiment, to break the stalemate. The commander and officers of the 100th/442nd said to the commander of the 92nd Division, "General Almond, we have a plan. We can create a diversionary attack and break the Gothic Line if you give us 24 hours." The General figuratively fell out of his chair and said, "Impossible. We've had three divisions hammering away at the Gothic Line."

The Germans had their best SS Divisions on the mountains and it was considered an impenetrable fortress. He told the Niseis to "Just create a diversionary attack and we'll do the rest." But you Nisei soldiers had your own plan. You were smart. Your average age was about twenty and your average IQ was 116, which was eight points higher than necessary to be an officer in the army. You were barely a hundred twenty five pounds soaking wet, but you were college-
(Continued on next page)

PORTLANDJACL

NEWSLETTER

America at its Best continued

educated, and you were going to “Go for Broke.”

So you climbed up that mountain called Mount Fogarito, which the Germans had so heavily fortified. You climbed it where they didn't expect you. It was nearly a 4,000-foot vertical precipice. You climbed the mountain that was unclimbable, in combat gear. The Germans couldn't possibly expect an attack from that point. From nighttime until dawn you climbed, almost eight hours. Men fell down as they climbed the mountain, and no man cried out as he fell, so as not to give away the position. At dawn you attacked, go for broke. You took the mountain and you broke the Gothic Line. It didn't take 24 hours, as you thought, or a few weeks, as the Army had planned. It didn't take six months. The U.S. Army reported that you broke the Gothic Line in only thirty-four minutes!

If the story of the 100th/442nd is unbelievable, there is a more unbelievable story. It is the story of the Military Intelligence and Language Service. More than 6,000 Nisei served throughout the Pacific in a super-secret branch of the military. The Nisei provided the eyes and ears of intelligence and language skills that helped to break the stalemate in the Pacific. They broke secret codes, interrogated prisoners, provided valuable propaganda, and translated millions of documents to help win the war in the Pacific. By the war's end, General Willoughby, General MacArthur's chief of intelligence, declared that the Nisei shortened the war by two years and saved a million Allied lives.

Never had so many owed so much to so few. I only wish that a million people could be here to hear your story and know of your service. I wish every American could know your story. We owe a great debt of honor to you Nisei for what you did for the country and for democracy. It is a debt that can never be repaid.

I am here to tell the story for your children, because I know you can't say it. It is a legacy that they must carry on and remember what you did for them and for all of us. Your legacy continues to protect us all.

I remember during the Iranian crisis that there was talk of keeping Iranian Americans possibly in protective custody. Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga said, “You can't do that. That's already been done, and you were wrong then.” So your wartime service protects all of us.

You did make the Constitution stand for all of the people, all of the time. History works. You made it work, and you made it work for me, for your children, and for this country.

President Ronald Reagan remembered, when he

signed the bill enacting the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which was called House Resolution 442, that blood that has soaked into the sands of a beach is all of one color. America stands unique in the world, the only country not founded on race, but a way, an ideal.”

You Nisei came home, and became what you wanted. Eventually, many of you entered the professions and could go where you wanted and do what you wanted to do. You went about your lives, but you made sure that your parents could become citizens. By 1953, you saw your parents naturalized. Your parents had to wait, in some cases, sixty-five years to become American citizens and that they could own land for the first time and that others of Asian descent could own land for the first time. Your greatest success was that your children could be what they wanted to be, without the discrimination that you suffered.

Some of you became lawmakers and entered the House and the Senate. There were more than 590 laws in California in the 19th and the early 20th century against Asians. You fought a fight to make sure those laws were challenged and overturned one by one. We thank the Japanese American senators, Sparky Matsunaga and Dan Inouye, veterans of the 100th/442nd, for doing that. We thank you for your providing the legacy upon which they could fight for those rights. Justice prevailed, and your parents became citizens. We stand at a pinnacle of your history in your golden years. Redress passed and a nation apologized for a terrible injustice perpetrated against its own citizens.

A few months ago at the White House, President Clinton belatedly awarded 20 Medals of Honor to Japanese Americans. Clinton stated in his speech of the Nisei that “in the face of painful prejudice, they helped to define America at its Best.”

Last night I was speaking to one of my K Company friends, Tosh Okamoto, and he said to me, “You know, the awarding of the Medals of Honor to our boys is sort of the icing on the cake. I've sort of been angry for a long time at my country and what happened to us during the internment. Getting redress and the apology, and having the country recognize my buddies, lifted a cloud from my head. I now really feel like I'm truly American and it was all worth it.”

So this is the happy ending of the 100th/442nd/MIS story, and I thank you for sharing it with us. I salute you. God bless you. And tell your kids to tell the world! “



MOCHITSUKI 2011

P O R T L A N D • O R E G O N

15th Annual Japanese American New Year Celebration • Year of the Rabbit

Sunday, January 30, 2011

11:00am-4:00pm

Scottish Rite Center
1512 SW Morrison Street, Portland
(15th and Morrison Street)

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Interactive Cultural and Food Fair:

Mochi Sampling, Sushi, Japanese food and Hawaiian food

Demonstrations and hands-on activities for all ages:
mochi pounding, mochi making, ikebana, origami, games and much more!

•

Three Terrific Stage Shows featuring:

Mochi Pounding, Taiko drums, Traditional and Contemporary Dance, Koto, Storytelling,
and the Minidoka Swing Band.

•

Sponsored by:

Japanese American Citizens League, Oregon Nikkei Endowment, Portland Taiko,
Konko Church of Portland

•

For more info visit us at www.mochipdx.org, facebook, twitter

VENDOR INQUIRIES WELCOME!

Contact the event coordinator: Malia Acohido

Email: malia@eightbridgesdesign.com tel: 503-333-9926

Save money and time! Presale tickets available November 15, 2011. Tickets sold online at www.boxofficetickets.com 1-800-494-8497 — and at these locations: Oregon Nikkei Endowment at 121 NW 2nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97209, 503-224-1458 and Lyrik Coffee Shop at 2035 SE 39th Ave Portland, OR 97214, (503) 230-0302

Pre-sale Admission: Adults \$7, Students/Seniors \$5, 12 & under \$3, 2 & under free. Admission includes entry to cultural fair and stage performances.

Parking: Metered parking available but scarce. Private parking lots nearby.

Save yourself parking hassles! Scottish Rite Center located on the MAX line at the PGE Park Stop.

PORTLANDJACL NEWSLETTER

Mochitsuki Celebration Make Memorable Experiences

Sunday, January 30, 2011 will be the 15th annual Mochitsuki Celebration in Portland, hosted by JACL, Portland Taiko, Oregon Nikkei Endowment and Konko Church of Portland. Throughout the last year, wide-ranging discussions have been under way to strengthen this unique event that combines high caliber performances with a cultural fair that showcases a wide range of community groups. The mission of Mochitsuki is to keep Japanese American traditions vital, educate the broader public and strengthen the community by working together.

This year, the goal is to make memorable experiences. Within the large event will be more hands-on or interactive activities, more activities that relate to New Year's traditions and expanded and more diverse stage shows. The most dramatic changes are on the stage. All performances will take advantage of the beautiful theater at the Scottish Rite Center, featuring three different line-ups. Minidoka Swing Band will start off the day with a full set at noon, and the show at 2 pm will feature J-pop and hip hop, the dynamic koto playing of Mitsuki Daizai, and Sahomi Tachibana. The 4 pm show will have acrobatics and juggling by Nanda of Port Townsend Washington, storytelling by Robert Kikuchi-Ynggojo, Epworth break dancers and Tanuki Taiko and Fujinamikai. Both afternoon shows will include Portland Taiko and mochi pounding by Utsuki Kai.

In the past, tickets for the stage show were separate from the entry to the cultural fair. This year all the activities and performances will be included in a single general admission, encouraging everyone to participate in the full range of experiences.

Many of the community organizations are enriching their offerings to include more opportunities to learn about New Year traditions. Ikebana International is hard at work cutting bamboo to invite participants to make the pine and bamboo arrangements that are special for the season. Daizo Cooking School and Konko Church are teaming up to make samples of ozoni, the special New Year's soup, and children will have the opportunity to make a special bento for the Year of the Rabbit.

Please plan on bringing your family and friends to Mochitsuki. Tickets are available without service charges at Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center and Lyrik Cafe, 2035 SE 39th Avenue at Lincoln, Portland. Tickets are available from www.boxofficetickets.com, 800 494-8497.

Even better, join us in volunteering a few of hours on that day to make these special events possible. Volunteers (including students who need community service hours) should contact the coordinator, Malia Acohido, malia@eightbridgesdesign.com. If you would like to be part of the Usuki Kai mochi pounding team, you are encouraged to join, contact Michael Walcott, michaelwalcott4@msn.com.

Clark Center Loaves & Fishes December 2010 Menu

Wednesday 1 - Lasagna

Thursday 2 - Beef Stroganoff

Friday 3 - Sweet & Sour Chicken

Monday 6 - Beef & Macaroni Casserole

Tuesday 7 - Turkey Pot Roast

Wednesday 8 - Baked Fish w/ Lemon Dill Sauce

Thursday 9 - Savory Baked Chicken

Friday 10 - Roast Pork w/ Gravy

Monday 13 - Vegetable Lasagna

Tuesday 14 - Bread Tilapia

Wednesday 15 - Chicken a la King

Thursday 16 - Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce

Friday 17 - Ham w/ Cranberry Sauce

Monday 20 - Open Faced Sloppy Joe

Tuesday 21 - Meat Loaf

Wednesday 22 - Chicken Provence

Thursday 23 - Sliced Roast Pork

Friday 24 - CLOSED, Christmas Holiday

Monday 27 - Cheese Ravioli

Tuesday 28 - Tuna Tetrazinni

Wednesday 29 - Chicken w/ Orange Glaze

Thursday 30 - Swedish Meatballs

Friday 31 - CLOSED, New Years



Ikoï No Kai at Epworth

1333 SE 28th Ave, Portland

Wednesday 1 - CLOSED

Thursday 2 - Beef & Mushrooms

Friday 3 - Lasagna

Monday 6 - Sharon's Korean Donburi

Tuesday 7 - Kanto Daki Oden

Wednesday 8 - CLOSED

Thursday 9 - Curry

Friday 10 - Holiday Lunch

Monday 13 - Skip's Chicken Stir Fry

Tuesday 14 - Chicken Katsu

Wednesday 15 - CLOSED

Thursday 16 - Bento

Friday 17 - Mulligatawny Soup

Monday 20 - Sharon's Dim Sum Plate

Tuesday 21 - Nappa Meatball Soup

Wednesday 22 - CLOSED

Thursday 23 - Pork (baked)

Friday 24 - CLOSED

Monday 27 - Calamari

Tuesday 28 - Birthday Sushi

Wednesday 29 - CLOSED

Thursday 30 - New

Year's Eve Soba Noodles

Friday 31 - CLOSED

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Your Portland JACL Newsletter comes to you thanks to DocuMart on SW Main in Portland, who prints it at a greatly reduced cost. Please consider them for your printing needs: 503-228-6253.

A big thank you to Chris Onchi, as well, Chris has been printing our labels, making data entry changes, and assisting with the annual calendar for many years. Her business is Chris' Mailing Service: 503-452-6864.



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