COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 6
Salmon Festival
Oregon Buddhist Temple

March 20
Minidoka Swing Band
Oregon City Community Ctr

March 28
Minoru Yasui Day

April 1
Oregon Stories with Linda Tamura and Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble
Columbia Center for the Arts, Hood River, OR
(pjce.org for details)

April 1
JAVA Scholarship Deadline
www.java.wildapricot.org

April 3
Nichiren Spring Bazaar

April 23
Min Yasui Symposium
ONLC

May 1
Graduation Banquet
MAC Club

HONORING MIN YASUI, TELL YOUR FAMILY!

Board Member Message by Chris Lee

If you’re reading this, then you’re probably older than me. At least that’s what I’m counting on, because I’m hoping you can help. I’ll turn 31 this year and was one of the youngest people at the 2016 Day of Remembrance. Now, I don’t expect a whole bunch of “young” JACL members to show up out of the blue, because frankly there aren’t that many yonsei or gosei who are members. I’m also not asking for you to help us with membership, because that will be a separate column. However, I do want your help spreading Minoru Yasui’s message and the important lessons in history that we should never forget.

I know that the Day of Remembrance is not a happy anniversary and probably not one that you want to remember or celebrate, but it is important.

Every family has a story. Whether it was related to camp or how the war affected your family in other ways, it is a story that can be shared. Maybe your children or grandchildren never seemed that interested, or you’ve never wanted to share, but there is some benefit in revisiting old wounds.

By helping pass on family history, you can help younger generations understand the freedom we enjoy today.

I’ve heard some firsthand stories over the years from people who went to camp and I enjoy hearing them. Not because I like to focus on painful memories, but because I find they demonstrate the strength of community and the sacrifices made by those who came before us. It is also a harsh reminder of how fragile our system is. More than just stories, they are valuable lessons that we probably won’t learn on our own and definitely didn’t learn in school.

I’ve heard some firsthand stories over the years from people who went to camp and I enjoy hearing them. Not because I like to focus on painful memories, but because I find they demonstrate the strength of community and the sacrifices made by those who came before us. It is also a harsh reminder of how fragile our system is. More than just stories, they are valuable lessons that we probably won’t learn on our own and definitely didn’t learn in school.

Hopefully my generation will never witness anything like the incarceration experience. Hopefully we will never need a hero like Min Yasui.

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But, we can’t count on it. Without your voices, my generation won’t learn the lessons from the past and we risk making the same mistakes today. If you don’t want to share your family story then at least tell them about Minoru Yasui.

If you missed the 2016 Day of Remembrance honoring Minoru Yasui, here is a short summary of the proceedings from February 21, 2016 at Portland State University’s Hoffman Hall.

The agenda opened with an energetic performance from youth taiko group, En Taiko. Although the youngest member barely stood taller than the chu daiko drums, the group displayed an amazing level of skill and chemistry.

Following taiko was a welcome by emcee, Jeff Selby, and a short introduction by Portland JACL President, Marleen Wallingford. The panelists then gave a chronological look back at Min’s life and accomplishments.

Homer Yasui (Min’s brother) started by showing family pictures while giving an overview of their early family history. He shared some little known facts about Min—he played in the school band, lettered in track, and sported a mustache during college. One of the most impressive facts is that Min founded the Mid-Columbia Chapter of the JACL at the age of 17.

A video clip of Min was played to give a first-hand account of his arrest and the sacrifice he made by using himself as a test case against the U.S. Government. He went to great efforts just to get arrested, walking the streets for hours before approaching an officer (who dismissed him) and then going directly to a police department. After being convicted and spending nine months in solitary confinement, Min was sent to Minidoka.

Holly returned to the stage to share Min’s life in the Denver area after camp. After appealing the Colorado Supreme Court, he was allowed to practice law and his office became the headquarters for the JACL Mountain Plains District. He helped arrange the first JACL National Convention, which focused on recovering wages lost during the incarceration, and naturalization for Issei. Min became involved with many different community groups and was an early advocate for cross cultural collaboration and support.

The final presentation was given by Peggy Nagae, who spoke about Min’s court cases in comparison to Hirabayashi and Korematsu and emphasized their relevance in today’s post 9/11 world. She expressed great joy and satisfaction that President Obama recognized Min’s legacy with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Peggy also cautioned the audience that “justice is fragile and we must remain vigilant.” She challenged us to continue Min’s fight and ended by exclaiming “Let’s go forward and ignite justice in the name of Minoru Yasui.”

What Can You Do to Continue Min’s Fight?

- March on Min Yasui Day in Oregon, March 28th, 2016 starting at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, 121 NW 2nd Avenue.
- Support the documentary “Never Give Up!” at www.minoruyasuifilm.org
- Share your family’s stories
- Join and support civil rights organizations like JACL (or at least follow us on Facebook!)
Last November, my wife and I attended a tour of the Tohoku region organized by the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) in the US Japan Council (USJC). USJC is an organization whose mission is to maintain and improve relations between Japan and the US. It is unique from organizations with similar missions in that all US members are Japanese-Americans. You can learn more on USJC’s website. The ELP focuses on younger Nikkei.

On the tour, I had opportunities to hear from ELP members. This is a generation born of my generation, the Sansei. While my generation is much removed from our ancestral roots compared to our parents, the Yonsei – and this is a gross generalization – are even further removed. The Yonsei on the tour, however, expressed a strong desire to reconnect with their heritage and this motivated them to join the USJC. The ELP members are also an impressive group professionally. A committee of three organized a very well run two-day tour.

I visited Fukushima in 2013 and the welfare of the people in the areas affected by the triple disaster has been on my mind ever since. I learned of a fourth disaster in 2013 and the film, Stories from Tohoku, reinforced that: the disaster survivors fear they have been forgotten by the rest of the world and their countrymen.

I told my wife of this fourth disaster that in many ways to the residents is more painful than the natural disasters and nuclear meltdown. She decided she needed to go to the region. We want to hear your stories and we want to encourage you. Ganbatte!

The stories we heard were remarkable. Our tour visited NPOs and NGOs engaged in restoring the region. One young woman came to help immediately after the disaster from the Tokyo region and decided to permanently relocate to Ishinomaki. She started a small restaurant and her main goal is to employ people from the area, not make money. Another remarkable young man discovered that most of the physical therapists left the region so he relocated his family and his practice to Ishinomaki. As he put it, the residents pay the same taxes as people in Tokyo and should have the same access to medical services (healthcare is socialized in Japan.). At the end of our first day, we were joined by one of the staff of the area’s only hotel. He was born and raised in the area and relayed stories of horror and acts of true heroism the day of March 11 and immediately following. This young man expressed sincere commitment to the rebuilding of the region. He takes many visitors on tours of the area, educating them on the disaster and the rebuilding efforts. My wife was taken on a tour by one of Minamisanriku’s many volunteers who escort and educate visitors.

The rebuilding is moving slowly. This month marks the fifth anniversary of the triple disaster. But, there is so much more to do. The residents’ lives are far from normal. We went to what you would mistake as a mobile home park in Minamisanriku. It is the main shopping area. There you will find 3 grocers, a barber, a baker, and an appliance store. And while we did not tour any of the temporary housing, it is still very visible. The tiny trailer-like buildings are everywhere. The DVD about Tohoku showed vivid images of

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US JAPAN COUNCIL TOUR  
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the conditions. It is cramped. It is not good. There are still 19,000 people in temporary housing in Ishinomaki. This is a decrease of 6,000 since April, 2015. 32,000 were in temporary housing at the peak.

Much work has been done. As unbelievable as this may sound, there is a construction project to raise the elevation of Minamisanriku 60 feet. There are massive mounds of earth reinforced with concrete forms everywhere. There is a constant parade of dump trucks and you hear construction equipment from anywhere.

Evidence of the natural disasters is less obvious. The hotel in which we stayed had Tsunami water up the second level, but I did not see any signs of it. There are few remnants of the devastated structures left standing. There is a debate among the residents whether to keep some as monuments and memorials or to remove all traces of the triple disaster. We visited a public service building where two city employees manned a public address (PA) system broadcasting warnings until they both drowned. The PA system is now used to report when all conditions are normal at regular intervals. Some people returned to their homes after the initial broadcast warnings on March 11 to get pets or winter coats and perished. The two city employees who remained on the PA system until they died undoubtedly saved hundreds of people who otherwise would not have taken the warnings seriously. There was a long delay between the earthquake and when the water started rising. This region experienced a tsunami after the Chilean earthquake. One fisherman told us that he immediately realized the Tsunami was going to be big since he could see the ocean from where he was working. Those in town did not have that benefit.

We heard many first-hand accounts of how individual people were killed and of tragic avoidable deaths. Those stories really brought home how awful the disaster was. My wife’s guide pulled some 200 corpses from the water. He says he still sees their faces in his dreams. There have been and will be many events throughout this country on this fifth anniversary of the triple disaster to remember those who perished. Sadly, there is nothing that can be done for the dead.

My trip reinforced for me that it is the living that should be our concern. What I found to be the most memorable part of the tour was meeting the people who are in Tohoku. While many people have relocated to other parts of Japan (the official counts are inaccurate since many people have not bothered to update their voter registration, but it is well over 25% of the original population), of those who remain, many are there by choice. Some have relocated from other parts of Japan to help with the restoration. Others have decided to stay and do what they can to contribute to the rebuilding efforts. Some do what they can to help life seem normal for their neighbors. To an outsider, the progress is slow and the task seemingly impossible, yet those we met are committed. The people of Tohoku are remarkable and should serve as an inspiration to us all. Please do not forget them.

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (MIS) DATABASE by Setsy Sadamoto Larouche

During World War II, MIS soldiers accomplished many great deeds and helped shorten the war in the Pacific. Many individual awards were received, but due to the secrecy of much of their duty, they were slighted in the matter of having these awards recorded.

MIS soldiers were assigned to units where linguists were required, often for short durations. There was no MIS Central office to which unit commanders were required to report these awards. There is now a national effort to establish a database of awards received by these brave MIS soldiers.

If you are an MIS soldier or a relative and know about receiving any of the awards below, please contact me by email at larouche@msn.com, or call me at 503-698-4656 by March 30, 2016.

The only information we need is the veteran’s name, (serial number is optional), and the awards received from this list:

- Distinguished Unit Citation
- Ranger Hall of Fame
- Military Intel Hall of Fame
- Distinguished Service Cross
- Distinguished Service Medal
- Presidential Unit Citation (to individuals)
- Combat Infantryman’s Badge
- Silver Star
- Bronze Star
- Purple Heart Medal
- Legion of Merit
- Soldier’s Medal
- Air Medal
- British Empire Medal
- Letter of Commendation
The Minidoka Swing Band (MSB) recently returned from an educational concert tour: “Sharing Our Heritage and Culture to Japan, 2015.” MSB manager, Laura Baxter, says, “The trip was deemed a 100% success!” The band will be having a Domo Arigato Concert for supporters and those interested in their goodwill trip on Sunday, March 20, 2016. The program begins at 2:30 p.m. at the Pioneer Community Center, 615 5th St. in Oregon City. The Minidoka Swing Band will play their one-hour educational portion of the program, show pictures of the four different cities they traveled to in Japan and provide the opportunity for those in the audience to ask questions about this experience. Please come and let them share it with you! Everyone is welcome to attend this FREE event.

During the Japan concert tour, the Minidoka Swing Band combined music concerts with lectures and multimedia to educate Japanese citizens and others in attendance about the Japanese American Internment during WWII in America. Through photographs with narration and music, the group communicated the trials suffered by those from the Pacific Coast of Japanese descent and how music helped them overcome adversity. The program was developed by Larry Nobori, MSB music director and former internee, narrated by Yasuyo Strassmaier, Assistant MSB manager and edited by Mike Strassmaier, MSB Tenor saxophonist.

The Minidoka Swing Band was in Japan from November 7-15, 2015. Their first performance at Tama University of International Studies in Fujisawa and was held during the University’s Annual school festival. As with all of their concerts in Japan, they started with an hour performance including pictures and narration to tell the story of Japanese American WWII Incarceration. Their second half of the program was more energetic, big band music. Close to 300 Japanese students and local residents attended the performance; the majority whom never knew the Incarceration story. After the band’s performance about 12 local college musicians joined several of the MSB musicians for 45 minutes of jamming and improvisation. It was a great time!

On Nov. 9th the band members traveled to Tokyo where they stayed for three days. Time was spent touring the city and a performance at the Franciscan Chapel Center on Nov. 10th in Roppongi Heights, Tokyo. Here the band played to an audience of approximately 150 Japanese and Americans. Fr. Russell Becker, OFM, said that it was an excellent turnout!

As the band members loaded up their baggage and instruments again on November 12th, they moved on to Minamisoma, Fukushima, 200 miles north of Tokyo. Minamisoma, the sister city of Pendleton OR, was one of the cities ravaged by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. They lost over 2000 lives from the tsunami and had to evacuate the rest of the city because the Fukushima Nuclear Plant was leaking radiation and Minamisoma was only 16 miles north of the plant. Today the radiation levels have gone down and are considered safe, but monitors are set throughout the city to keep track of the levels. The population which was 74,000 is now only 63,000 because many residents did not return. The Minidoka Swing Band was proud and honored to play for this city as they continue their recovery efforts. During the band’s two and a half days in Minamisoma the band toured the ravaged tsunami areas, met with Mayor Katsunobu Sakurai, Minamisoma International Association (MIA) Chairman Mr. Haneda Histaka, were treated to a Japanese banquet, were honored to attend a reception with the City and MIA dignitaries and were invited visit the Minamisoma City Museum where they learned the fascinating history of the area. Besides the concert presentation to 300 at the Minamisoma Jas Mall food
court, the MSB held a lecture at the City Library to another 150 attendees. MSB band members like Larry Nobori and Nola Sugai Bogle, shared their personal internment memories. Todd, Elaine and Ken Yuzuriha told about their family’s experiences and how it affected them after being released. Ken Yuzuriha told the group about his grandfather and how he wanted his children and grandchildren to experience the best in life that the U.S. could offer; especially through education. Sharing this experience caused tears of emotion from both Ken and those in the audience. The audience left feeling moved and shared their appreciation. MSB band member Kokichi Tagawa also held a three-hour Jazz and improvisation class to about a dozen local musicians.

By 5:00 p.m. on November 14th, the band was packed and back on the bus for a five hour ride to their last venue, arriving at the hotel around 10pm. It was a short night, having to be loaded onto the bus at 9:00 a.m. for the 30-minute ride to Gotemba, a beautiful city at the base of Mt. Fuji and the sister city of Beaverton, OR. Unfortunately, Mt. Fuji was not visible because of cloud cover and light rain.

The band was greeted at the Gotemba Civic Center by the Gotemba International Association (GIA) president Mr. Toshimitsu Tsuchiya and other GIA committee members and was shown a beautiful stage and performance hall where they would be playing. The band was thrilled to see the elegant venue that the city of Gotemba provided! GIA committee members dressed in red jackets set up the three banners we brought from Portland and tables where they would hand out the elegant programs they created and MSB bracelets to all attendees. There were parking attendants and greeters at the door. Our presentation and concert began at 2:00 PM. We felt very special, and we believe the attendees got an extraordinary concert. Although there was and international golf tournament in town as competition, the band was happy with the 800 plus that came to learn more about World War II Japanese American Incarceration and to hear them play. The stage had a large screen so everyone could easily see the multi-media presentation. World War II Japanese Veterans from around the area were invited to attend the concert. They shared in a dedication and time of silence for both Japanese and American veterans from World War II. After the concert, the clouds parted enough to give Mt. Fuji a surprise appearance with a beautiful pink sunset. Mt. Fuji was telling the band, “a job well done!” That evening the Minidoka Swing Band shared a wonderful reception and meal with city and GIA dignitaries including a special performance for MSB! A jazz group called the ‘Local Sound Club’ and vocalists entertained the MSB with music and song. MSB members exchanged gifts with the Mayor of Gotemba, Mr. Kaizo Osada and GIA president Mr. Tsuchiya. It was all such a WONDERFUL experience- they learned so much and met many new friends. It was indeed a superb seven days.

The band’s mission to educate people about World War II Japanese American Incarceration was a victory. After the Gotemba presentation MSB manager Ms. Baxter and asst. manager Ms. Strassmaier met with Mr. Hiroshi Nikaido, Chairman of the Kansai Osaka 21st Century Association, Japan World Exposition 1970 Commemorative Fund Department, who is giving MSB a grant. Mr. Nikaido said “this was the best educational concert and presentation I’ve ever seen!” Mr. Nikaido asked the Minidoka Swing Band to return to Japan and perform for other cities. MSB felt very pleased to hear this from someone as important as Mr. Nikaido.

For more information, contact MSB Manager Laura Baxter at lcbaxter@frontier.com or 503-715-6689.
The Minoru Yasui Tribute (MYT) project was initiated in 2013 by Peggy Nagae, Min Yasui's attorney, and Holly Yasui, his daughter, in order to celebrate Min Yasui’s centennial in 2016 (he was born in 1916).

Peggy took the lead on the nomination of Min Yasui for a Presidential Medal of Freedom and helped organize ad-hoc committees for that purpose. Holly brushed off her play from 20 years earlier, renamed Citizen Min, and started work on a documentary film, Never Give Up! Min Yasui and the Fight for Justice, which was initially financed by the Mile High JACL. In 2014, Oregon Nikkei Endowment (ONE), headed by Executive Director, Lynn Longfellow, became fiscal sponsor of the MYT project. A National JACL Legacy Grant enabled the MYT committee to hire an administrator, June Schumann, who continues to donate many hours as a volunteer.

The journey from idea to realization has been long and arduous, accompanied by many dedicated supporters in Oregon, Colorado, California, Washington, New Mexico, Utah, Idaho, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Washington DC and elsewhere. Volunteers have spent thousands of hours sending emails, attending meetings, and for the Medal nomination, getting endorsements and conducting research for supporting materials, now being used in the documentary film and exhibit.

In 2014, National JACL passed a resolution, spearheaded by Chip LaRouche, in support of the nomination of Minoru Yasui for a Presidential Medal of Freedom. In early 2015, the MYT committee compiled two books, the nomination and supporting materials. Senator Mazie Hirono submitted the nomination to the White House, which contained over 115 endorsements from elected officials, national and regional organizations, and individuals who knew and worked with Min Yasui. The supporting materials included hundreds of photos, extracts from publications, legal briefs and historical documents. Students from Hood River Middle School, which Min Yasui attended as a youth, sent a video-letter to President Obama in support of the nomination.

In May of 2015, the Minoru Yasui “Voices of Change” Award was created by the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO). In Denver, Minoru Yasui Community Volunteer Award and the Minoru Yasui Inn of Court also weighed in with support to the project. An independent group, the Minoru Yasui Legacy Committee initiated work in Denver under the leadership of Min’s niece, Robin Yasui, to organize a centennial event there. In January 2016, Robin accepted a Martin Luther King Business Award on behalf of her uncle, and on April 22, new Colorado APABA president, Miko Brown, is dedicating the 2016 banquet to Min Yasui.

As a fiscally separate project, the play Citizen Min was read in Salt Lake City and Denver in 2014 and 2015 and excerpts will be read in various locations in 2016, with a full reading planned for September 10 at the University of Oregon. Holly is also developing a short monologue, EO9066, read at the 2016 Portland Day of Remembrance which was dedicated to Min Yasui; she proposes to present it at the Minidoka Pilgrimage in June and the National JACL Convention in July.

Likewise, the film has evolved into a fiscally independent project. Over 20 interviews and location scenes have been filmed in Portland, Hood River, Los Angeles and Denver. Film footage of Min Yasui has been procured, and hundreds of photographs and documents from family collections and archives have been digitized. For more information, see www.minoruyasuifilm.org.

In November of 2015, the White House announced that Minoru Yasui would receive a posthumous Presidential Medal of Freedom. President Barak Obama awarded the Medal to Min Yasui with the following words: “Today Min’s legacy has never been more important. It is a call to our national conscience, a reminder of our enduring obligation to be the land of the free, and the home of the brave…”

On February 1, 2016 a bill to establish March 28 as Minoru Yasui Day in Oregon was introduced by Representative Brian Clem. Organized by the ACLU and members of the Oregon MYT committee, the Yasui family, Nisei incarcerated during WWII, and students from Hood River Middle School testified before both House and Senate committees. The bill passed on the floor of the House unanimously and passed the Senate on February 24.

On March 28, the first Minoru Yasui Day in Oregon will be celebrated with a walk tracing Yasui’s defiance of the discriminatory 1942 curfew. The walk will start at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, near Min Yasui’s first law office, and end at the then-Police Headquarters on 2nd and Oak.

Minoru Yasui symposia are planned in several venues. The Portland symposium, The Life and Legacy of Minoru Yasui: Initiating Action and Igniting Justice, will take place on April 23. Min Yasui’s 100th birthday will be celebrated on October 19 in Hood River, Oregon, where the film, Never Give Up, will be premiered. Another independent celebration will take place in Denver on October 23.

Grants have been awarded to JACL chapters for a tour of play-excerpt readings and film clips in New Mexico May 2-10 and Seattle, Washington on June 25-26, coordinated by Nikki Louis; and to ONE for community discussion-focused events with coordinated by Chisao Hata, in Ontario (June 18), Portland (October 9) and Hood River (October 18). Grant applications are pending for Minidoka (June 24) and Boise, Idaho (October 15-16).

We thank the Portland JACL for its support of all our efforts and we encourage all members to participate in local and regional activities and carry on the legacy of Minoru Yasui.
### IKOI NO KAI AT EPWORTH MARCH MENU
1333 SE 28th Ave, Portland, 503-238-0775

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<th>Mon. 14</th>
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<td>Tue. 1</td>
<td>Somen salad/ beef barley soup</td>
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<td>Fri. 11</td>
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<th>Mon. 15</th>
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<td>Miso ramen</td>
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<th>Tue. 18</th>
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<td>Thai pork &amp; salad rolls</td>
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<td>Nira nabe</td>
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<td>Mon. 28</td>
<td>Garlic herb chicken</td>
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<td>Tue. 29</td>
<td>Korean beef &amp; noodles</td>
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<td>Thu. 31</td>
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### Menu Notes:
- Meals include salad or soup and dessert
- Closed Wednesdays
- Mondays, 12:30-2: hanafuda and bridge
- Mon-Tue, 11:30: chair exercises
- March 8, 10:30: Fujinkai Board Meeting
- March 17, 12:30: St. Pat's ping pong
- March 21, 11:30: Ohana Lunch Bunch
- March 24, 11:30: Marimba recital

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.