



PORTLAND JACL NEWSLETTER

Portland JACL · Supporting Civil Rights Since 1928

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BOARD MEMBER MESSAGE

2020 Day of Remembrance

Jenny Yamada, Board Member

The 2020 Day of Remembrance event took place at PCC Sylvania's Performing Art Center on Sunday, February 23. This annual commemoration of the signing of Executive Order 9066, which resulted in the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, included the Portland premiere of the award-winning documentary film "Alternative Facts: The Lies of Executive Order 9066." Japanese American Museum of Oregon and PCC sponsored the event that drew around 180 people.

Portland JACL Co-President, Amanda Shannahan welcomed those in attendance and led a panel discussion with a Q&A following the film.

The panelists included the film's director/producer, Jon Osaki, and Peggy Nagae, lead attorney for Min Yasui who challenged Executive Order 9066.

"Alternative Facts" delves into an unexplored part of the Japanese-American incarceration story, that of the lies and deceit used to justify the signing of 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It examines the pre-war attitude towards Japanese-Americans and other immigrant groups, the

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 4 - 5th

10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Cherry Blossom Bazaar **(Cancelled)**

April 25th

PNWDC District Meeting
Via Teleconference

April 28th

Last Day for Voter Registration

May 3rd

JA Graduation Banquet
Monarch Hotel

May 15th

1 p.m.

Memorial Day Service
Rose City Cemetery
(Followed by Service at Lone Fir Cemetery)

May 23rd

Rose City Cemetery Clean Up

June 5 - 7th

National Pilgrimage to Close the Camps
(Cancelled)

Ikoi No Kai is closed for now.

Our nation's response to the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19 has been evolving. Many of the planned activities have been cancelled or delayed.

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people involved (such as General John L. DeWitt, California Attorney General Warren, and Lt. Colonel Karl Bendetsen), and the fabricated evidence that was used to rationalize the order. It also explores the cover-up that went all the way to the United States Supreme Court.

The film includes enlightening interviews with the legal team who later challenged 9066 and Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga, the researcher who found a copy of the original "Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942" in the National Archives. The original version of the report was racist and contained fabricated evidence. This document greatly aided in the coram nobis retrials, which overturned the convictions of Fred Korematsu, Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui, and the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which granted an official apology and redress.

By including interviews with younger Japanese-Americans, "Alternative Facts" succeeds in showing the impacts of incarceration on future generations and how trauma is experienced multi-generationally. It also helps connect what happened to Japanese-Americans during WWII to our current climate of fear, attitudes towards refugee and immigrant communities, and attempts to abuse authority by our government. The takeaway message is clear: never again is now.

This sentiment was stressed during the panel discussion where Jon Osaki spoke about his inspiration to make the film. The anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant rhetoric brought about by the 2016 Presidential election, combined with the total lack of truth to any of the reasons for incarcerating Japanese-Americans compelled him to make the film. Jon hurried to get the film completed in two

years so that it could go out before the 2020 Presidential election cycle. He also wanted to make sure that as many as possible of the former incarcerated Japanese-Americans were able to see his film. He felt this part of the incarceration story was missing and could be healing to victims while also inspiring action. He reminded us that no one stood up for us then, but we can do something now. He ended by urging the audience to support the efforts of groups like Tsuru for Solidarity.*

Peggy Nagae reminisced about the 2nd Portland Day of Remembrance in 1979 at the Livestock Pavilion where Min Yasui spoke. She stressed the importance of holding events like DOR and Min Yasui Day, which is March 28th in Oregon. She encouraged the audience to keep supporting and attending these events.

This year's Day of Remembrance was both informative and moving, and left many motivated to take action.

If you are interested in viewing or learning more about "Alternative Facts: The Lies of Executive Order 9066," please visit the film's website: www.alternativefacts9066.com

To learn more about Tsuru for Solidarity, visit www.tsuruforsolidarity.org.

Visit www.minoruyasuilegacy.org to learn more about the Min Yasui Legacy Project.

***Tsuru for Solidarity** is a nonviolent, direct action project of Japanese American social justice advocates working to end detention sites and support front-line immigrant and refugee communities that are being targeted by racist, inhumane immigration policies. It will culminate in a pilgrimage to Washington D.C. on June 5-7 with a rally to close the camps. It will be the largest gathering of Japanese-Americans since WWII.

Once Put In Concentration Camps, Japanese Americans Rally For Detained Immigrants

Homer Yasui, 95, has a message: “Stand up, do something! Be counted. Help us.”

My 95-year-old grandfather, Homer Yasui, has never been one to dwell on trauma. He's tough and blunt and funny, and as the keeper of our family history. He's described his incarceration matter-of-factly many times: how the FBI took his father away on December 12, 1941, five days after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, and how the government ultimately sent his family to a concentration camp.



Homer Yasui holds a placard with the name of the camp where he was incarcerated during World War II, part of a protest Sunday in Tacoma, Washington, at a present-day immigrant detention center.

It's rare that he reveals any pain over what he and the rest of his family went through. But he's outraged now as he watches history repeat itself.

"Imagine putting immigrant children in a prison because their parents brought them to the United States perhaps illegally," he said.

"Throw 'em in jail? This is supposed to be a country of refuge and salvation and asylum, and here we're treating them like criminals and putting people in jail!"

That's why last Sunday morning, as black clouds loomed in the south and the weather forecast predicted sheets of rain all day, he donned his Tsuru for Solidarity T-shirt and dressed head to toe in black - "I look like a ninja," he joked - to go to a protest outside the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington.

At the detention center, a handful of volunteers set up tents and hung paper cranes - tsuru, as they're known in Japanese - on the cyclone fence. Each colorful strand of paper birds was tucked into a plastic bag to protect it from the elements. In Japan, it's believed that folding 1,000 cranes will make one's wish come true. For Japanese American activists, the cranes are a reminder of their history and an expression of solidarity with communities experiencing racist incarceration today.

Despite the unpromising weather, a crowd of about 400 people would soon show up for one of the first big actions organized by the Seattle chapter of Tsuru for Solidarity, a project led by Japanese Americans calling for an end to immigrant detention and incarceration. On June 6, Tsuru delegations from around the country will converge in Washington, D.C., with 126,000 paper cranes - representing the number of people

of Japanese ancestry incarcerated in the U.S. During World War II – to stage a massive demonstration calling for closure of the immigrant detention camps and end to the Trump administration's targeting of immigrant communities through mass arrests, family separation, detention and deportation.

My grandfather hopes to be among them. After all, he experienced incarceration and family separation firsthand. Like other Japanese immigrant men - "enemy aliens" - who were influential in their communities, my great-grandfather, Masuo, was apprehended suddenly, without explanation, and denied legal representation. He never had a trial.



A sign outside the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington, bluntly summarized the message of Sunday's demonstration.

Grandpa remembered coming home from school on that Friday with his little sister and finding their father gone. "When we asked my mother where father was, she said 'Torareta' in Japanese. That means 'He was taken.'"' She didn't know where.

It took the family two days to learn that Masuo and other immigrant leaders had been taken to the Multnomah County Jail in Portland, Oregon, an hour away. "We knew the ax was gonna fall," Grandpa explained – Japanese men had already been rounded

up in the days following Pearl Harbor, and his father was a well-known businessman. "I wouldn't say we panicked, we weren't even shocked, really; we were just really disheartened. That's what it was."

No one knew anything. Even if they did, the family couldn't drive to Portland to see Masuo without passing Bonneville Dam, an area off-limits to people of Japanese descent. Soon, they couldn't travel anywhere at all – and then, on May 5, 1942, the government came to take them away, too.

"Those were such chaotic days, I don't really remember the details," Grandpa told me at the protest, his hands fidgeting. "78 years ago is a long time to remember." Nearby, another family was experiencing its own grief. Outside the gates of the Northwest Detention Center, a woman named Angela stood in the cold with her young daughter, Joanna, watching a growing group of protesters mass on the sidewalk with colorful signs in English and Spanish. She wasn't there to protest; she had driven from Portland to visit her husband, who was detained inside. Immigration and Customs Enforcement took him away on February 18th as he was on his way to work, Angela said in Spanish, hesitant to give any more personal information. He tried to call her at her job, where she'd been since six in the morning, but "they don't let us answer the phone," she said.

Last year, about 50,000 people were in ICE custody on an average day. And up to 200 people are transferred to the Northwest Detention Center, now formally known as Northwest ICE Processing Center, every month to await the outcomes of their immigration cases, according to the grassroots group La Resistencia. Speakers from the Japanese American public history organization Densho and the Seattle chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League described why they had partnered

with La Resistencia in organizing the day's demonstration.

Mike Ishii, a lead organizer of Tsuru for Solidarity who was at Sunday's protest, expects the June event to be "the largest gather of Nikkei since World War II." The rallying cry: "Never Again is Now."

With any luck, grandpa will be one of the Japanese American camp survivors taking Tsuru for Solidarity's "never again" message directly to Washington in June. He did have a message for everyone: "I want more people to get involved. Stand up, do something! Be

counted. Help Us."

"My fervent hope is that my health will allow me to travel to Washington, D.C., and carry a placard or a string of tsuru, or something to demonstrate against the racist policies of our federal government," he said. "I think it is my duty, while I'm still able to say something and still able to walk, to protest."

Mari Hayman
Editor, Huffpost

Full Story: <https://www.huffpost.com>

PHOTO CORNER



Portland JACL presents the premiere of Alternative Facts: the Lies of EO 9066 at the Performing Art Center at Portland Community College.

Left to right: Setsy Larouche, Sachi Kaneko, Jenny Yamada, Lynn Fuchigami Park, Amanda Shannahan, Peggy Nagae, Jon Osaki (Producer/Director), Marleen Wallingford, Jeff Matsumoto and Connie Masuoka.

We are proudly wearing our Portland JACL Votes t-shirt.



Tsuru for Solidarity had a paper crane folding table at Day of Remembrance in the lobby of the Performing Art Center. Patrons were engaged in a social justice action, close the camps.



EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020

SPRING BAZAAR

11:30 AM TO 2:30 PM

LUNCH TAKE-OUT, BAKE SALE, PLANT & PRODUCE SALE,
AND ASIAN TREASURES

Please use the following order form and make checks payable to Epworth United Methodist Church.
Please mail by April 20 to: *Epworth United Methodist Church*
1333 SE 28th Avenue
Portland, OR 97214
Phone #: (503)232-5253

<u>Item</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Chicken and Gyoza Bowl	\$10.	_____	_____
Chowmein	\$8.	_____	_____
Inari	\$6.	_____	_____
Total Amount			_____

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____

Food is take-out only.

You may pick up your tickets on the day of the bazaar at the Pre-Sale ticket area.

All proceeds benefit Epworth United Methodist Church.

NEWSLETTER UPDATE

The future of our newsletter continues to be a top issue for our board and something we discuss regularly. In the short-term we are committed to maintaining the current paper newsletter format that you are all familiar with. This won't change until we have a long-term plan in place, which most likely will take us through the end of the year to develop.

In the meantime, we are taking steps to reduce our current costs as much as possible. This means that we are cleaning up our mail list and removing lapsed memberships from the list sooner. We are also looking for ways to reduce costs to print and mail the newsletter. If you keep your membership current, then you shouldn't notice a change, but this will help us carve out some savings.

If things continue to stay on schedule, then

you should also receive this issue of the newsletter via email at some point during the month. Initial testing has gone well but has also helped identify some small changes that are needed before we can send it out to a larger audience. We are excited that an email newsletter will finally be available to our members as this is something we have wanted to offer for some time. Hopefully you won't mind receiving our newsletter in both paper and email formats while we continue working on long-term options.

Look for another update in the May newsletter as we continue working on the future of this newsletter.



Christopher Lee

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If you would like to contact the Board,
their email address is **First Name@pdxjacl.org**



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TSURU FOR SOLIDARITY FOLD-IN

Saturday, April 25, 2020, 5:00 PM
Oregon Buddhist Temple



Join us for this Tsuru for Solidarity project to make and contribute origami cranes, or tsuru, for the national pilgrimage to Close the Camps in Washington, DC in June 2020. Across the country, Japanese American communities and allies are making tsuru to bring attention to the inhumane treatment of immigrants and refugees and to show solidarity with immigrant children and families who are experiencing forced incarceration and separation. 125,000 cranes will be brought to the protest in Washington D.C. as a symbol of peace, hope, and healing. Our goal is to contribute 15,000 tsuru from Oregon.



Please go to <https://tinyurl.com/TsuruforSolidarityOregon> to sign-up to join us in-person at the event, and/or to register the number of cranes you plan to bring or drop-off.

Learn more at: <https://tsuruforsolidarity.org/>

This event is co-sponsored by the Oregon Buddhist Temple, Portland JACL, and Unite People.