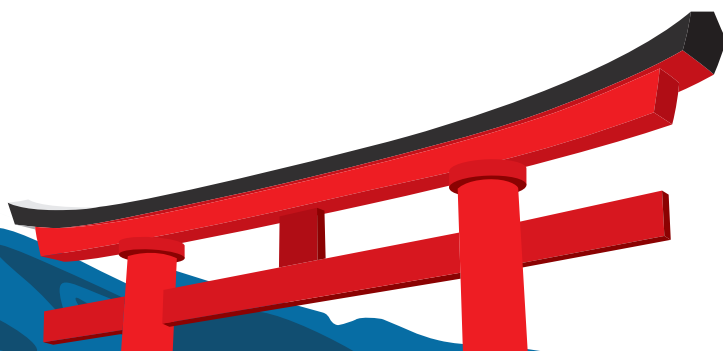




PORTLAND JACL NEWSLETTER

Portland JACL - Supporting Civil Rights Since 1928



• APRIL 2021 | VOLUME 27 ISSUE 4 •

Board Member MESSAGE

Day of Remembrance

By Jenny Yamada

Each year, Day of Remembrance is a time to reflect on how one executive order impacted our community forever. This year we shared about our own community's experience with redress and how that might inform Black Americans in their journey towards reparations. The Portland JACL partnered with Vancouver NAACP to put on the virtual event Day of Remembrance 2021 **"Redress and Reparations: Yesterday and Today."** Our co-President, Amanda Shannahan and Vancouver NAACP President, Jasmine Rucker Tolbert co-hosted. Our panel included Bridgette Fahnbulleh, Chair of the Vancouver NAACP ACT-SO Committee, Cameron Whitten, Founder and CEO of Brown Hope and co-founder of the Black Resilience Fund and Malia Forney, Student and active member of the Black Community of Portland. Chisao Hata moderated the discussion and Q and A session.

Peggy Nagae began the program with a presentation on the redress movement in Oregon. She went over the decades-long process that eventually led to the formation of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (encyclopedia.densho.org/Commission_on_Wartime_Relocation_and_Internment_of_Civilians/).

Continued on Pg. 2

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Cemetery Clean-up

April 24
9-11am

Cemetery Clean-up

April 25
12-2pm

Cemetery Clean-up

May 1
9-11am

Cemetery Clean-up

May 2
12-2pm

**Graduation Banquet is cancelled
but students will be recognized.**

Memorial Day Service at Japanese American Cemetery at Rose City Cemetery

May 31
1pm

Edited by Chong Sim
(simc0186@gmail.com)

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Peggy also reflected on the second Day of Remembrance in 1979, which took place at the Portland Livestock Facility, that sprung the local nikkei community into action for redress. Our hope is this year's DOR inspired some of you in a similar way to activate around reparations for Black Americans.

One of the ideas brought up during the panel was the importance of reflection on the past in order to move forward. As Japanese Americans know well, the US excludes a great deal from its history books. Because of this erasure, and as Cameron put it, America "is too good at forgetting," the act of remembrance is essential. It propels us into fighting for a more free and equitable society. Reflecting on her own family's experience with the Southern Homestead Act, Bridgette stressed the importance of oral history in particular. It keeps the hope for justice alive in our hearts when our stories are excluded from books. Verbal history is a vital tool to combat this warping of past traumas.

While momentum builds for reparations on a national level, it's important to get involved in our own communities. The panelists discussed some of the local efforts around reparations and ways to help. Part of the efforts in Portland involves addressing discriminatory housing policies. Malia talked about her studies of systemic racism and the ways that the government prevented Black Americans from building generational wealth through land grabs. As an intern at Prosper Portland, she observed that the project to reallocate land to the Black community of North Portland lacked input from that same community. She went on to note that the city has the power to do the right thing, but often chooses not to. That's why public participation is vital. We must be vigilant by attending hearings and paying attention to our local governments.

Another way to get involved is by supporting organizations already doing the work on the ground here. During the discussion, Black Futures Farms, Mudbone Grown and the Black Resilience Fund, which Cameron co-founded, were mentioned. Black Resilience Fund is an emergency fund that provides immediate resources to Black Portlanders. Since last June, 7,000 people have benefited from direct cash assistance.

The panel was enlightening and inspirational. It's impossible to do it justice in this short summary. If you missed the event, I strongly encourage you to watch the recording on our Facebook page: facebook.com/PDXJACL

Although it was frustrating to not be able to meet in person, by going virtual, we were able to bring more people together from outside our area to reflect on redress and learn more about reparations.

From slavery to Jim Crow to redlining and the continued murders of Black people, there's no denying the experience of Black Americans in this country is one of horrific injustices. The scars of systemic racism aren't easy to erase and the fight for reparations won't be an easy one, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't take it on. White supremacy hurts us all. We need a real catharsis in this country to address it. As author Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote, reparations is a "national reckoning that would lead to a spiritual renewal...Reparations would mean a revolution of the American consciousness, a reconciling of our self-image as the great democratizer with the facts of our history."

Next Steps

We've compiled a resource list for you to learn more about reparations and how Japanese and Asian Americans can help in the efforts: pdxjacl.org/dor-2021-resource-list

Get Involved

Portland JACL formed an Advocacy Committee last year after COVID restrictions began and around the time of the racial justice protests. Since then, we've attended the BLM car caravan protests, organized a Nikkei and Black Lives Matter panel discussion and helped get out the vote in November.

If you would like to get involved with our work, please reach out to us at: **contact@pdxjacl.org** or call **1.877.843.6914** and leave a voicemail.



Current Board Members



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Lynn Fuchigami Parks
Connie Masuoka
Marleen Wallingford
Jenny Yamada



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

❖ Stop AAPI Hate ❖

We are angry and heartbroken by the recent murders of eight people, including six Asian women in Atlanta, Georgia amidst a rise in Anti-Asian violence and hate crimes across the country.

As members of Asian and Asian American communities in Portland, Oregon, we denounce the murders of **Delaina Ashley Yaun, Paul Andre Michels, Xiaojie Yan, and Daoyou Feng, and several others who have not yet been named.**

We send our heartfelt condolences to the families whose lives have been forever changed by the sudden loss of their loved ones.

The past year has seen documented increases in hate crimes against Asian Americans, especially Asian women and elders, throughout the country. These acts of bigotry are part of a pattern of racism, misogyny, and xenophobia, and the misguided reaction to the coronavirus pandemic fueled by hateful rhetoric from elected leaders. We strongly denounce these hate crimes and deadly assaults on community members and stand in support of the victims and the families who have suffered pain and loss.

It is not by coincidence that Asian women have been disproportionately harmed. Asian women are fetishized and marginalized, treated as sex objects and are easy targets of violence. These women are our grandmothers, aunties, sisters, wives, partners, cousins, and daughters. They all are powerful and respected, and worthy of our love and protection.

Anti-Asian racism is nothing new. Our country has a long history of violence targeting Asian people, including the Chinese Exclusion Act and the forced removal and incarceration of people of Japanese ancestry during World War II. We are tired of a nation that treats our people as "forever foreign" and outsiders, who do not see us, our families, and our friends as equal.

The root causes of senseless violence are dangerous-racism, white supremacy, and prejudice must be stopped. We must protect our communities from this violence and continue to fight against hate and oppression. There is no justification for acts of violence and prejudice against Asian Americans or any racial or ethnic group. We join in support of all people of color.

In Solidarity



NICHIREN
BUDDHIST
TEMPLE



OREGON
BUDDHIST
TEMPLE

JAPANESE ANCESTRAL SOCIETY
OF PORTLAND



Epworth United
Methodist Church

HENJYOJI SHINGON
BUDDHIST TEMPLE

GRESHAM-TROUTDALE
JAPANESE AMERICAN
CITIZENS LEAGUE

VELEDA
CLUB

HIROSHIMA
CLUB

Get Your COVID Vaccine

Vaccines News:

The Rosewood Initiative
rosewoodinitiative.org

If you are having trouble getting a vaccine, there are community members who are able to help you secure one.

Vaccine Availability in your area:

vaccinefinder.org/search

Contact **Marleen@pdxjacl.org** to get assistance.

Second Chance Flowers at Japanese Cemetery at Rose City

Flower Lady Susan Okada

We recycle the potted plants that used to get thrown out. These second chance flowers get planted along the fence line. You can help our efforts.

When the potted plants die, knock off the potting soil in the plastic bucket near the trash cans. Place the lid over the bucket to keep the rain out. The soil will be used in the flower borders. Place the dead plants in the trash can.

Place plants that are dried out but not completely dead under the tree near the entrance. If you can, deep soak the potted plant in water first. These plants will be replanted in the flower borders around the cemetery.

Currently, we have a rabbit invasion at our site. They are eating the flower bulbs, plants, the bark at the base of the new cherry trees. If you see them, please try to scare them off. If you see the coyotes, get in your car.

They won't attack you, but better to be safe rather than sorry.

If you have the inclination, we would appreciate it if you could help dig up the dirt near the fence. The flower borders need to be continued along the fence line. The old asphalt road is beneath two inches of dirt in this area. It takes a big effort to break out those chunks. Even a foot of progress is appreciated.

The reward is that daffodils will blossom in March, the tulips in April and iris in May. Most of the roses will show their colors in June. The chrysanthemums (the national flower of Japan) emerge in the fall.

Join me in adding a bit of color to our place of honor. Covid 19 will be under control soon and we can come out to have our work parties and chuckle together. Our ancestors resting here have missed us, I am sure. Our new normal will take some adjusting to—but we will be ready.



❖ Celebrating With Proper Protocols ❖

By Sharon Takahashi
Cemetery Advisory Committee

Emerging out of the pessimistic Covid 19 Pandemic haze, we are seeing a sunlight at the end of our dark cloud. Memorial Day is approaching and vaccines are more readily available. At our last Zoom meeting with our committee, we decided to hold our community ceremony as we have in the past. **This year it will be May 31, 2021 at 1:00 pm.**

Vaccines availability has increased, and we have seen a large number of community members receiving the doses they need. Our cemetery is spacious and open; thus, we can safe distance and yet take part in the rituals. Masks will probably be required to protect us from others who may be carrying the virus, or others from us who may also be hosting the virus.

The church in charge this year is the Henjyoji Shingon Buddhist Temple, led by Reverend Kosho Finch.

We cordially invite the entire community to attend and see all the improvements we have made. Other improvements are forthcoming. The Japanese Ancestral Society has received a substantial grant from Mary Yamaguchi, long

time Portland resident and Ikoi No Kai volunteer, Mary (now deceased) chose to have Southwest Washington Community Foundation administer these funds.

Our usual cleaning parties for April and May are listed below:

Saturday times are usually 9-11
Sundays noon – 2

April 24-25	Saturday and Sunday
May 1 -2	Saturday and Sunday
May 15-16	Saturday and Sunday
May 29-30	Saturday and Sunday

Weather permitting, we will be picking up dry flowers, scrubbing moss and mildew off of grave headstones, trimming shrubs and flowers and watering. We have some young trees which need to be prepared for a warm summer season.

The convivial picnic atmosphere will have to be sidelined until we are more secure with Oregon's progress in the Covid 19 battle. Please email **stakahashi509@gmail.com** or call **503.330.1935** if you have any questions.



**WE ARE LOOKING FOR MEMBERS TO
VOLUNTEER TO BE SPOTLIGHTED!**



Portland JACL will celebrate API Heritage month with a Member Spotlight Series! Throughout the month of May we will be showcasing our diverse community of members to honor our histories and strengthen our connections!

Interested? Want to find out more?

Email us at contact@pdxjacl.org by April 15!

Follow us on   for updates @PDXJACL





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❖ Ikoi No Kai Supports the Community ❖

By Marleen Wallingford

Thanks to a generous donation from the Washington Community Foundation, the Japanese Ancestral Society Board under the leadership of June Schumann began planning to again provide monthly bentos for our homebound seniors. Since the Ikoi No Kai kitchen is not open, it was decided that our community would support local businesses by purchasing ready made meals.

In March, bentos were purchased from Uwajimaya and meals will be provided by Bamboo Grove the next month. Over 80 meals were delivered. If you know a senior,

who would appreciate an Asian inspired lunch, their name can be put on a waiting list.

Thank you to Janet Kakishta and Don Matsuda for organizing this community effort. All the drivers are volunteers and deliver the meals door to door.

In May, Jere Okada and Janet Kakishta are planning on having a card sale to raise funds to help thank all of the volunteers on this project. Val Itamura is working on treat bag for all of the helpers. If you would like to make something (not food), or donate money, please contact Janet or Val.

