



PORTLAND JACL NEWSLETTER

Portland JACL - Supporting Civil Rights Since 1928



• AUGUST 2022 | VOLUME 28 ISSUE 08 •

Board Member MESSAGE

By Connie Masuoka

By the time you read this article you may not remember that a terrible act of hate was perpetrated against a young Japanese family visiting Portland. Either because you did not hear about it as it was nearly a week before there was any substantive information in the major media outlets or the from the numbness from being inundated by the tumultuous onslaught of violent events that seem to happen daily.

On Saturday, July 2, 2022, a man, Dylan Kesterson, started verbally attacking by yelling racial slurs and then punching in the head (50 times by the victim's account) a father, Dr. Riuichi Abe and also hitting in the head his 5-year-old daughter as they were on a tandem bike ride on the East bank Esplanade. Luckily, because they were wearing bicycle helmets neither was severely injured and good people were able to intervene and get help. The man was arrested at the scene but was released later that same day. He did not appear for his court date three days later but was found that day rearrested and jailed and is currently charged with 19 counts of bias crime as it was found that he also committed as hate crime in April 2022.

As horrified and angry as I am that such a racial motivated hate crime happened in my town, I know it is not an isolated incident and that it happens here regularly, and most incidents go unreported and/or unacted on. But this crime is

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

August 3-7
JACL Convention
Las Vegas

August 6
Obon Festival
Oregon Buddhist Temple

August 7
July 10 Japanese American Plaza Clean-up
8am - 12pm

August 8
Hiroshima/Nagasaki Remembrance
Tom McCall Waterfront Park | 6pm

August 13
Nisei Highway Dedication
Wy'east Middle School, Hood River | 1 - 2pm

August 20
Dances of Three Nations
"The Round" | 2pm

August 21
Nikkei Community Picnic
Oaks Park | 12pm - 4pm

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the act that broke the proverbial camel's back. Not only was this family viciously assaulted, but the criminal justice system failed in that it allowed this man to walk free without consequence that same day. And it has been learned that this same man attacked others for racial reason a few months earlier and was not arrested. It would appear that racism is not just relegated to deranged individuals but is also present in our justice system where the system underplays bias/hate crimes.

I am grateful and proud of our community members, Chisao Hata, Mike Irinaga, Rich and Yoko Iwasaki, John Kodachi, Weston Koyama, Joni Kimoto, Jeff Matsumoto, Anne and Erica Naito-Campbell, and Amanda Shanahan who immediately spearheaded actions that have

brought attention to and hopefully a way to stop racial hate and violence in our city. This is not over at the time of this writing our leadership is waiting to meet with the district attorney's office, police bureau and court officials and there is the pending trial of Dylan Kesterson.

And beyond the scope of social justice, we need to extend empathy to the Abe family. As Portlanders it is incumbent on us to help the family heal the emotional and psychological scars they have incurred. Their words haunt me; "I want to get out of the city as soon as possible, I want to leave the United States. I never want to see this city again." Let us find a way to help them.

A GoFundMe campaign has been set up to help the family get the support services they need.



To the Elected Officials of Our City, County, and State Governments:

To the Communities in Which We Live:

For Our Japanese American Families, Friends, and Community:

And In Solidarity with Our Fellow Communities of Color:

As a coalition of Asian American organizations, we are horrified and angered by the racially motivated violent attack against a California family visiting Portland, Oregon. The family was attacked simply because they were Japanese.

On Saturday, July 2, Dylan Kesterson, 34, brutally attacked a 36-year-old father and his five-year-old daughter in front of the father's wife while they were all bicycling on the Eastbank Esplanade around 3:45 pm. Without any provocation, Kesterson, who is 5'11" and 200 pounds, approached the vacationing family and verbally assaulted them using anti-Japanese slurs. Kesterson then pummeled the father over 50 times in the head before punching the five-year-old daughter several times in the head. Fortunately, both father and daughter were wearing their helmets before right-minded bystanders intervened to chase off Kesterson.

We are further outraged that Kesterson was released from jail on the very same day he brazenly attacked the family. It is disgusting and incredulous that despite being arrested and charged with violent hate crime (Bias crime in the first degree, a Class C felony punishable by up to 5 years imprisonment), he was allowed to walk free even without any bail required by a Multnomah County judge. While recently adopted pretrial release guidelines issued by the Oregon Supreme Court may have contributed to Kesterson's initial release, District Attorney Mike Schmidt subsequently charged Kesterson with additional "assault" crimes after he simply walked out of jail. These additional assault crimes, which include the intent to cause serious physical injury, stemmed from the original attack, then allowed the court to hold Kesterson in custody without bail once he was re-arrested.

Despite clear evidence from the outset of his racial animus and use of physical violence on complete strangers, nothing prevented Kesterson that day from inflicting further attacks on other Asian community members after he was released. As the father later said of the traumatizing attack: "We felt we may be killed." The actions of both Kesterson, who attacked a young family because of their race, and Oregon's criminal justice system, which allowed the immediate release of a violent hate crime perpetrator, are completely unjust and unacceptable.

Our hearts go out to the family members directly impacted by this terrible assault. Because this is yet another horrendous act of anti-Asian hate, we know that members of our community are experiencing anxiety about their personal safety and the safety of loved ones. We need to know that Oregon's criminal justice system works to protect our communities, too.

Also troubling and disturbing is the recent report that this is not Kesterson's first racial assault. According to news reports, Kesterson now faces 19 counts for two separate hate crimes, including a prior attack for which, for some unknown reason, he was not arrested or charged at the time. In addition to the vicious attack on the young Japanese family riding their bicycles along the Willamette River on July 2nd, he is now accused of racially intimidating, assaulting, and harassing three Asians on April 17th.

According to news reports, on April 17th, Kesterson attacked an Asian woman coming out of a coffee shop after he had just yelled racial slurs and chased a teenage boy. After the Asian woman and friends came out of the coffee shop, Kesterson is reported to have slapped a full carrier of coffee out of her hand while later screaming "Are you Filipino?" Kesterson then grabbed the back of the Asian woman's head extremely hard, ripping strands of her hair, and threw her on the back of her car where she eventually fell to the ground. The police never arrested Kesterson despite pleas from the victim.

These unprovoked racial attacks continue a despicable pattern of hostility and horrific hate crimes perpetrated against Asians throughout this country. We demand greater acknowledgement that people of Asian descent are being hurt by hate and racism, and we call on all state and City of Portland elected officials to immediately correct the extreme failure of the system, including adding bias crime in the first degree to the category of non-releaseable offenses under the new pretrial release guidelines, to prevent a violent hate crime attacker being released back into the public while awaiting trial. Additionally, we demand to know why the Portland Police Bureau failed to arrest Kesterson for the racial attacks involving several people on April 17th.

No progress around social justice can be made if violent perpetrators of hate crimes remain unchecked. Racism and racial prejudice cannot be solved with tools of an oppressive system. The criminal justice system should work to keep all communities safe and encourage public support instead of alienating those who are marginalized or merely given lip service. Hate crimes are traumatizing not only to the victims but to the entire related community members as well.

In Solidarity,

*Portland Chapter, Japanese American Citizens League
Japanese American Museum of Oregon
Minoru Yasui Legacy Project
Henjyoji Shingon Temple
Unit Souzou
Japan-America Society of Oregon
Japanese Ancestral Society of Portland
Japanese American Business Association (Shokookai)
Hiroshima Club
Oregon Nisei Veterans*

*Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
Chinese American Citizens Alliance
Nichiren Buddhist Temple
Epworth United Methodist Church
Portland Taiko
Veleda Club
Gresham-Troutdale Chapter, Japanese American Citizens League
Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans, San Francisco
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association*

NIKKEI COMMUNITY PICNIC RETURNS

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, 2022 AT
OAKS PARK AREA 4**

This year we will provide at no cost:

Main dish: Connie's Vegetarian
Chili and Shoyu Hot dogs

Drinks, Watermelon, eating
utensils, plates, and napkins

Also Bingo, Prizes, Ride bracelets
for kids high school and younger
(Free ride bracelet needs to be
reserved ahead)

Please bring a your favorite side
dish to share or make a monetary
donation to help defray the costs

ALL
AGES

WELCOME

Masking at your discretion

**RSVP and also order ride bracelets by August 15 to
youth@pdxjacl.org or call Connie at 503-243-3291**



Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway

MEMORIAL HIGHWAY ADVISORY GROUP

American Legion Hood River Post 22

Japanese American Museum of Oregon

Oregon Nisei Veterans

Portland Japanese American Citizens League

The History Museum of Hood River County

with support from The Bend Heroes Foundation

A bus from Portland to Hood River
and back will be available. Contact
Dr Connie Masuoka at 503-236-8623

In March 2022 the Oregon State Legislature unanimously passed Senate Bill 1509A to dedicate Highway 35, a 41-mile byway between I-84 in Hood River and Highway 26 near Government Camp, as the Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway. An advisory group of Oregon nonprofits is overseeing the installation of highway signs and developing ways for travelers to easily find answers to their questions: "Who were the Nisei Veterans? What did they do in World War II? Why is this highway named in their honor?"

WHO WERE THE NISEI VETERANS?

During World War II, over 500 second generation Japanese American (*Nisei*) soldiers from Oregon served with honor and distinction in the United States military.

Their service came despite the forced removal of their families from Portland, Hood River, and other cities and towns west of the Cascades under Executive Order (EO) 9066.

GET ON BOARD!

Funds for the highway signs and educational material about the historical significance of the Nisei Veterans of World War II must be privately raised.
See back for details.

Signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt in February 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to barbed wire enclosed incarceration camps in the US interior.

In January 1943 a restriction barring Nisei from military service was lifted and 33,000 Japanese American men and women served in the European and Pacific Theaters of World War II.

They served with fierce determination fueled by their desire to prove their families' rightful place in the country of their birth, the United State of America.

442nd Regimental Combat Team

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team, activated in February 1943, served in Italy, France and Germany and became the most decorated unit for its size and length of service in the US Army's 246-year history.

Speaking at the 60th reunion of the 442nd in Honolulu, General (Ret.) David Bramlett lauded them through the lens of World War II history: "If you go to the US Army's official history, you will find 233 infantry regiments served in WWII; including the 18 Marine regiments, then you realize 251 infantry regiments fought in WWII. The most decorated of them all is the 442nd."

The 442nd, including the 100th Infantry Battalion (dubbed "The Purple Heart Battalion") was awarded eight Presidential Unit Citations.

Military Intelligence Service

Because of the highly classified nature of its mission, the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) was kept in secrecy for more than 30 years. MIS soldiers



General David A. Bramlett
US Army (Retired)



served in the Pacific Theater translating enemy documents, interrogating Japanese prisoners of war, intercepting enemy communication, and persuading enemy units to surrender.

In 1972 under the Freedom of Information Act, the scant records of their activities were made available. In April 2006,

more than 50 years after World War II, the MIS was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation for their wartime valor throughout the Pacific Theater.

Women's Army Corps & Cadet Nurse Corps

Beginning in 1943 Japanese American women were permitted to join the Women's Army Corps. Many, like Rose Tanada and her older sister Emiko, served in the Cadet Nurse Corps (CNC).

Rose graduated from Gresham High School and Emiko, from Sherwood HS. In response to EO 9066, the Tanada family reported to the Portland temporary detention center, followed by incarceration at Minidoka. In July 1944 the sisters were permitted to leave Minidoka for Chicago, where they enlisted with the CNC and received their medical training at Thomas Wilson General Hospital, a US Army hospital in Staunton, Virginia.



Rose Tanada, member of the Cadet Nurse Corps

TEACHING FUTURE GENERATIONS

"Who were the Nisei veterans of WWII? Why do they still matter?"

In 1946 President Harry Truman welcomed the 442nd to the White House, saying: "You fought not only the enemy, but you fought prejudice — and you have won."

Students today may wonder if his comments were premature. But there is little doubt that the Nisei veterans were an important step in our nation's journey towards social justice, and Truman's next words reverberate today, "Keep up that fight, and we will continue to win — to make this great Republic stand for just what the

Constitution says it stands for: the welfare of all the people all the time."



www.tigertigerpdx.com



JOIN THE DRIVE!

Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

DONATE ONLINE

www.pdxjacl.org/NiseiVetsHwy/

DONATE BY CHECK

American Legion Hood River Post 22

P.O. Box 1803

Hood River, OR 97031

Oregon Nisei Veterans

12811 SE Hawks Crest Place

Happy Valley, OR 97086

OREGON NISEI VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL HIGHWAY ADVISORY GROUP

Gary Akiyama, Budget and Finance

Mike Allegre, Media and Public Relations

June Arima Schumann, Chair,
Minoru Yasui Legacy Project

Eric Ballinger, Co-Chair of Highway Initiative

Carl Casey, Commander,
American Legion Hood River Post 22

Anna Goodwin, Executive Director,
The History Museum of Hood River County

Janet Hamada, Executive Director,
The Next Door

Ron Iwasaki, Commander,
Oregon Nisei Veterans

Chip Larouche, Treasurer, Oregon Nisei Veterans

Setsy Sadamoto Larouche, Vice Commander,
Oregon Nisei Veterans

Jeff Matsumoto, President, Portland JACL

Dwight Onchi, Community Relations

Carol Suzuki, Operations Director,
Oregon Senate Majority Office

Mark Takiguchi, Interim Deputy Director,
Japanese American Museum of Oregon

Linda Tamura, Co-Chair of Highway Initiative

Dick Tobiason, Co-Chair of Highway Initiative,
The Bend Heroes Foundation

Barbara Watanabe, Communications

❖ Healing from Community Trauma ❖

By Spencer Uemura

Our community is strong, with deep roots in Japan and America. We have contributed positively to the present and future of this country, despite difficult circumstances. And last month, it was disappointing to hear that racist violence not only continues nationwide, but impacted a Japanese family as they were enjoying the Eastbank Esplanade. This is our community, these are our neighborhoods, these are the streets we walk.

Our minds and bodies remember the pain of the past, and hearing about this unsettling event in the present can trigger a kind of emotional flinching reaction in which we are flooded with memories of similar events we have experienced. While many of us may have not experienced incarceration in World War II, it is natural to have a resurgence of memories from times when we have been bullied, isolated, or otherwise singled out based on our race. A common response is increased fear, isolation, and avoidance of things that remind us of the past.

An excellent solution for this community trauma is community care, where support is mutual and shared among members of a community. This type of support, in conjunction with policy change efforts, is vital to our healing and the prevention of similar attacks. So what can we do to respond to what happened at the Esplanade?

- Recognize that it could be beneficial to talk about how you've been impacted by news of the attack.
- Consider checking in with your Japanese American elders, family, and friends. How are they doing? How are you doing?
- What are the places or events where you might feel some support and shelter in community? You might consider coming to Obonfest at OBT on Sat 8/6, or the Annual JACL Picnic at Oaks Park on Sun 8/21. Community spaces can be powerful reminders of our shared resilience and joy.

- Mental health therapy might also be beneficial. For more information about how to seek therapy, please see my brief tips below or email me at Spencer@pdxjacl.org.

The recent attack is a frightening reminder of violence, but we are not strangers to coping with trauma. Repeated reminders to "gaman" may have carried our community through the past, but we have the chance to make a new way forward.

May we lean into community in times of pain and fear, both giving and receiving care.

How to start therapy:

- Helpful NPR article: Things to consider when looking for a therapist, where to start looking. <https://bit.ly/NPRstarttherapy>
- Open Path Collective: Listing for therapists who offer lower cost, out-of-pocket options. Can filter based on a number of criteria. <https://openpathcollective.org/find-a-clinician>
- Psychology Today: Online therapist listings, searchable based on insurance, therapist identity, therapy approach. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us>
- There may be other opportunities for mental health supports through an employer's Employee Assistance Program, or other local low-cost options.
- Other questions? Feel free to contact Spencer@pdxjacl.org.

Reporting incidents of bias and hate: <https://bit.ly/ORBiasHotline>.

Survivors or witnesses of hate crimes can use the hotline to talk to trained staff, receive a referral to law enforcement, or be put in touch with a social service agency. Interpreters available in 240 languages. Can report online or over the phone (1-844-924-2427).

Photo Corner

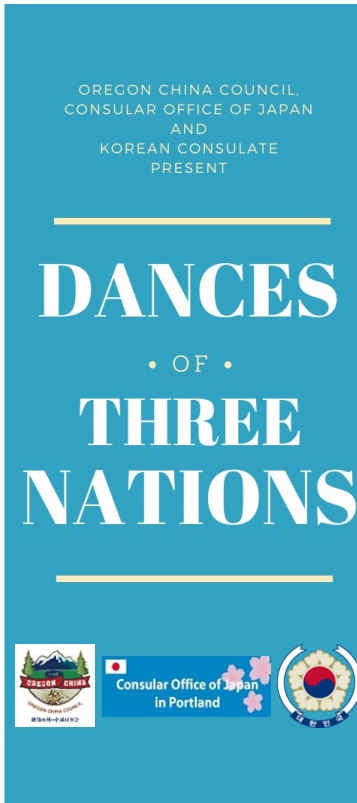


Tiger Tiger event July 17th. Jenny Yamada and Setsy Larouche hosted many visitors to our JACL booth.

Minidoka Swing Band and the Portland Taiko performing at the Nikkei Park in Vancouver, WA on July 15, 2022.



Here's a group photo of the weekly singing group at Ikoi No Kai on July 5, 2022. They will also perform on Aug 8th at the Japanese American Historical Plaza's Hiroshima/Nagasaki Day.



FREE EVENT

Date: Saturday, 20th August, 2022

From 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Venue: "The Round" 12600 SW Crescent Street, Beaverton

Note: "The Round," an outdoor venue beside Beaverton City Hall. Seating is limited to a few concrete benches, so please consider bringing folding lawn chairs, blankets or pillows to sit on.

Scan this QR code,
you can see details.



❖ Current Board Members ❖

Jeff Matsumoto
President

Christopher Lee
Vice President

Heidi Tolentino
Secretary

Jillian Toda-Currie
Treasurer

Setsy Larouche
Membership Chair

Maki Doolittle
Erika Jennings
Weston Koyama
Connie Masuoka
Amanda Shannahan
Spencer Uemura
Marleen Ikeda Wallingford
Jenny Yamada
Board Members at Large

Congratulations to Sachi Kaneko who will be attending medical school this year. She has resigned from the Portland JACL Board and we will be sorely missed.

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



Iko no Kai - AUGUST 2022

1333 SE 28th Ave / 503-238-0775

MON	TUES		THURS	FRI
1 Chilled Udon w/ Pork Shabu Shabu 12:30pm Mahjong	2 Shrimp Salad Rolls 12:45pm Sing a Long		4 Pork Miso Eggplant 10:30am Move On Class 12:30pm Bridge/ Hanafuda	5 Bang Bang Chicken
8 Pork Bao Buns 11:15am Chair Yoga 12:30pm Mahjong	9 Kakiage Cold Soba 12:45pm Sing a Long	X	11 Sui Shrimp Gyoza 11:15am Aikido Stress Reduction with Dwight 12:30pm Bridge/ Hanafuda	12 Japanese Style Pork & Beef Meatballs Bingo
15 Chicken Karaage 12:30pm Mahjong	16 Shumai 12:45pm Sing a Long	X	18 Salmon 12:30pm Bridge/ Hanafuda	19 Tonkatsu Ohana Lunch
22 Miso Ramen Salad 12:30pm Mahjong	23 Orange Chicken 12:45pm Sing a Long	X	25 Birthday Sushi 11:15am Aikido Stress Reduction with Dwight 12:30pm Bridge/ Hanafuda	26 Niku Maki Sliced Pork Rolls Craft Project with Susan
29 Curry w/ Summer Veggies 12:30pm Mahjong	30 Croquettes 12:45pm Sing a Long			

Cooks: Naomi Molstrom-M Kyoko Adcock-Tu Rieko Shimada-Th/F

New Lunch Prices: \$8 for seniors 65+ / \$9 for under 65 / \$ 5 kids

Reservations preferred / Indoor Dining Limited

*** For reservations please call and leave a message or email:**

(ph) 503-238-0775 (email) ikoinokai7@gmail.com

Seating at 11:30 am with lunch served promptly at noon

**** vaccination card and signed COVID waiver will be required in order to dine indoors**



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PORTLAND, OR 97286

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REMEMBERING HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI: BUILDING TOWARD NUCLEAR JUSTICE

OREGON



PHYSICIANS
FOR SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY



MONDAY, AUGUST 8TH, 2022 • 6:00 PM
JAPANESE AMERICAN HISTORICAL PLAZA AT
WATERFRONT PARK, PORTLAND