



# PORTLAND JACL NEWSLETTER

Portland JACL – Supporting Civil Rights Since 1928



• SEPTEMBER 2023 | VOLUME 29 ISSUE 09 •

## Board Member MESSAGE

### 2023 National Convention Demonstrates 'Rooted in Community'

By Jillian Toda-Currie

Last month, our Vice President, Chris Lee, gave a preview of the JACL National Convention which we both attended for the first time. I want to give an update and summary of what happened, starting with a reflection on the overall experience.

#### Three ways 'Rooted in Community' was demonstrated

The 53rd convention was held in Los Angeles in late July with the theme of "Rooted in Community." The convention embodied this theme to me in three ways.

First: the convention was hosted at various venues throughout LA's Little Tokyo, including the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC), Homba Hongwanji Temple and the Japanese American National Museum (JANM). Spreading out at various venues isn't typical. While we had to pay close attention to the day's locations, we were more integrated into Little Tokyo. We were also encouraged to support the neighborhood's restaurants, markets and cafes (which we gladly did).

Second: days before the convention began, attendees were informed that our accommodations were moving from the

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Sept 7

**Opening of George Tsutakawa Exhibit**  
Japanese American Museum of Oregon

Sept 9

**Portland Taiko Farm Festival**  
Triskelee Farm  
3pm - 6pm

Sept 16

**Children's Chorus of Three Nations**  
First Congregational United Church of Christ  
2pm - 3:30pm

Sept 17

**Nichiren Buddhist Fall Bento**  
11:30am - 2pm

Sept 21

**Portland JACL Board Meeting (Virtual)**  
6:30 - 8:30pm

Sept 30

**"Finding Her Beat" Portland Taiko**  
Hollywood theater  
2pm - 4pm

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### Continued from Pg. 1

Hilton DoubleTree in Little Tokyo to the Westin Bonaventure in the Financial District. The Local 11 union representing thousands of LA's hospitality workers went on strike in July. Out of dozens of hotels, the Westin was the only to have negotiated a contract with the union by that time. The move meant many additional hours of work by JACL staff and extra travel time for convention attendees, but this was the right decision. I could hear the workers chanting outside of the DoubleTree as our bus arrived in Little Tokyo and I felt proud that the JACL had supported workers in the community. JACL went beyond just talking about being rooted in community, but also used our finances to take action.

Third: in the same way that the people of Little Tokyo make it a community, it was the people (JACL members) at the convention who brought the theme to life. There were people catching up with old friends and I met several who had attended so many National Conventions that they were losing count. Hearing from other chapters was a good reminder that while we have many differences, we also have many of the same obstacles and are part of a greater JACL network that hopes to address those and evolve the organization with the changing community. This year's logo, designed by Tom Watanabe, also recognized change. The logo features a "friendship knot" and Watanabe said, "The use of gradation serves to depict a transition over time while also showcasing the beauty of the Southern California sky."

### Convention Summary

The agenda for the convention was packed with plenaries, workshops, receptions, film screenings and more. I couldn't attend any of the film screenings because of concurrent sessions, but they sounded fantastic. Luckily, two of the six feature-length films shown had been screened in Portland: *Manzanar, Diverted*, which our chapter screened in spring 2022 and *No No Girl*, which our chapter screened this past February at

our Day of Remembrance event. I'm glad that other JACL members were able to view these important films.

Another film that our chapter screened for our Day of Remembrance (2022), *Reparations* by Jon Osaki, was shown at the National Council to all delegates. The short film raises awareness of the work that has and continues to be done toward reparations for the Black community. The film's message – reiterated by Osaki, who spoke with us – is that we all must stand in solidarity with Black folks in the struggle for reparations because it is part of our collective liberation. This discussion laid a good foundation for one of our resolutions that the delegation voted on.

The National Council session resulted in all three proposed resolutions passing. The first resolution supports advocacy for the rights of people who are transgender and nonbinary. The second resolution is to oppose legislation which attempts to establish alien land laws that would limit land ownership based on country of origin. The third resolution supports the California AB 3121 Task Force to Study and Develop Reparations Proposals for African Americans. JACL will send copies of this resolution to California Governor



Gavin Newsom, Secretary of State Shirley Weber, State Senator Steven Bradford and Assemblyman Reggie Jones-Sawyer communicating the JACL's support for the efforts to address the longstanding impact of slavery.

The amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws that would standardize and simplify the membership structure was unfortunately tabled until next year's convention. While it's disappointing to have to wait a whole year, this will ensure that the topic gets sufficient time for explanation and discussion. Expect to hear more about these changes next summer, when the convention will be hosted in Philadelphia, PA.

Something else coming up in the near future is JACL's visioning work. The plenary, "Envisioning JACL's Future Together," summarized the hopes, opportunities as well as challenges JACL faces. A visioning initiative will be underway to listen to the

community's ideas, concerns and needs so that JACL can envision the future as we approach JACL National's 100th year (2029).

Although updates on this work at the National level are forthcoming, it's never too soon for our chapter to do our own collective visioning. We know youth are the future, and the work that Unite People has done demonstrates this. The formation of our chapter's Advocacy Committee in the last few years highlights collaboration that is essential for maintaining ties across communities. But there is plenty more to be done to ensure our chapter thrives (and continues to be the largest chapter!).

What do you want to see in Portland JACL's future? Do you have ideas for how we can strengthen our membership? We'd love to hear from you! Reach out to a board member with your ideas, or contact us on our website:

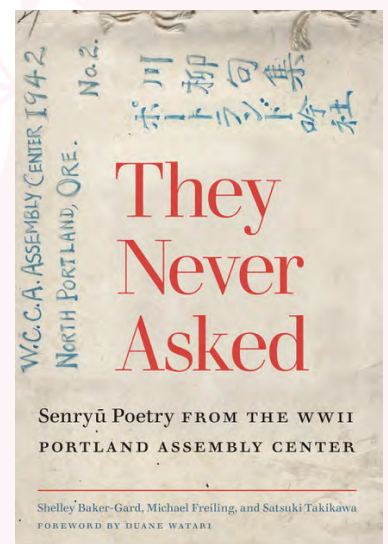
[www.pdxjacl.org/contact/](http://www.pdxjacl.org/contact/).

## ❖ They Never Asked ❖ Senryu Poetry from the WWII

Duane Watari was clearing out his mother's house when he found boxes of his grandfather's writings. His grandfather, Misaki Joe Kinoshita wrote under then pen name of Jōnan. He wrote thousands of poems during his lifetime; all in Japanese. He also kept records of the works of other Issei poets including the work of Hisaki Saito who wrote under the pen name of Ryūko. Duane began searching for a translator with Japanese poetry associations here in Portland. He came in contact with Shelley Baker-Gard coordinator of the local Haiku Society of America. Through her connections she and Duane met Michael Freiling who agreed to literal translate the poems and Baker-Gard would put translation into the English senryū form. Assistance was also received from Satsuma Takikawa a native Japanese speaker and teacher from Kyoto along with several other translators. Jōnan and other's poems were selected from the period of August 1942. This provides a window into the experiences of

the Issei for English speakers. Many of us never had the opportunity to find out about the removal and incarceration experience through their words. Poetry has provided an avenue for us to experience their private thoughts at a pivotal time in our history.

The story of this difficult translation work was told to a packed audience at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon on July 29. The book is published by Oregon State University Press and available on-line as well as the museum.



# ❖ A Sense of Place: The Art of George Tsutakawa ❖

Exhibition opens September 7, 2023. Please Join Us!



The Japanese American Museum of Oregon presents a survey of work by influential Seattle artist George Tsutakawa (1910-1997). Inspired by his life in the Pacific Northwest and his Japanese heritage, his work reveals a fascination with the natural forms and aesthetics that he encountered in both environments. Representing his prolific career across a variety of media, including watercolor, sumi, sculpture, and fountain design, this will be the first Oregon exhibition of his work.

## Friends of JAMO Exclusive Opening Reception

**Thursday, September 7**

- 5:30-6:30pm  
Exhibition Opening at JAMO
- 6:30-7:30pm  
Reception at Lan Su Chinese Garden

This event is for Friends of JAMO and registration is required. [RSVP here.](#)

## Lecture by Mayumi Tsutakawa

Arts writer and daughter of the artist

**Saturday, October 28, 2pm**

Location TBD--mark your calendars!



# ❖ Finding Her Beat ❖

## Taiko Documentary & Live Performance

**WHEN:** September 30, 2023 @ 2:00pm – 4:00pm

**WHERE:** Hollywood Theatre (4122 NE Sandy Blvd, Portland, OR)

Finding Her Beat is a documentary film from 2022 that spotlights the best female taiko drummers from North America and Japan. The film features Tiffany Tamaribuchi, a world-famous taiko player, who recently moved to Portland to be the Artistic Director at Portland Taiko.

Tiffany will perform live before the film.

The screening is also a benefit for Portland Taiko. Proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to support artistic and educational programming.

### Buy Tickets

Please help us spread the word! We are sincerely grateful to The Hollywood Theater for selecting this film and supporting our organization. Finding Her Beat recently won the award for Best Music Documentary at the Melbourne Documentary Film Festival and Film Threat said Finding Her Beat is "One of the Year's Most Engaging and Captivating Documentaries! 10/10!"

### Buy tickets at:

[hollywoodtheatre.org/eventsfinding-her-beat/](https://hollywoodtheatre.org/eventsfinding-her-beat/)



Photo by Katherine Saunders





## ❖ Photo Corner ❖



Photo by: Chip Larouche

On Aug 9, 2023, a Memorial Service was held at the JA Historical Plaza to commemorate 78 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Invocation was conducted by Rev. Eisei Ikenada and his assistant, Lincoln Hirata of the Nichiren Buddhist Temple.



Photo by: Chip Larouche

Portland Taiko performed at the annual Hiroshima/Nagasaki Memorial Service held on Aug 9, 2023 at the JA Historical Plaza. Taiko group opened and closed the ceremony.



Photo by: Chip Larouche

Tsubaki Buyo Doukokuai Dancers also participated in the ceremony. They are L to R: Ann Shintani, Yoshiko Kamata, and Ritsuko Fujiwara.





On July 23, 2023, Defining Courage was shown at the Aratani Theater hosted by David Ono and Tamlyn Tomita.



A special reception sponsored by the Consulate General of Japan in LA was held on July 20, 2023 at the Sake Dojo. L to R: Chip and Setsy Larouche, Consul General Sonne, Mrs. Sonne, Larry Oda, National President of JACL.



The Youth Luncheon was held on July 21, 2023 at the Nishi Hongwanji Betsuin Temple, attended by L to R: Jillian Toda, former Congressman Mike Honda, Chris Lee, Setsy Larouche. Photo by: Chip Larouche



Dr. Russell Yamada, Sylvia Yamada, and Jillian Toda-Currie, attend the JACL Sayonara Banquet on July 22, 2023, at the JACCC in Little Tokyo, LA. Photo by: Setsy Larouche

## Chris Lee: Portrait of a Portland JACL Board Member



Chris Lee is Portland JACL's former co-President and current Vice President. We interviewed Chris and asked him to share his experiences as a board member.

### **Chris, when did you first get involved with Portland JACL?**

I first started attending board meetings in late 2013, but have participated in JACL events for a long time. Before Unite People was created, I was part of the youth group at Epworth. Robbie Tsuboi had us volunteer at community events such as Mochitsuki, DOR, and the community picnic.

### **How long have you been a board member and what made you decide to become a member of the JACL board?**

I've been on the board for almost 10 years. Originally, I joined to give back to the community. The demographics in Portland, as a city, and Oregon, as a state, are predominantly white. The experiences that I had growing up in the Nikkei community were really positive for me and would not have been possible without the hard work, struggle, and sacrifice made by generations before us. Having places and events to be surrounded by other Japanese and Asian Americans

is really important. Everyone should have somewhere they feel like they belong and have community. My goal was to help ensure that we have that here.

### **What has your experience been like as a board member?**

I'm not sure that I want to help lead an organization through COVID again, but I am very proud of the programming and advocacy that we were able to do during such a challenging time. With so many challenges in the world today, it feels good to be doing something positive.

Being on our board and serving as a co-President has been one of the most fulfilling things that I've done in my life. I've had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people through the work that we do. Our board members are all very passionate about our mission and our community. We are an entirely volunteer board and you can tell by the energy and passion that people bring with them.

One of the surprising benefits of serving on our board is the impact it has had on my career. Throughout the years, I've learned a lot from my fellow board members. Not just about planning and running events, but things that they bring from their day jobs and professional experiences that help our board. Watching how they interact with our community and the various stakeholders that we interface with, has been an incredible learning experience.

I've even been able to include my participation on our board as part of my development plan at work. For the last 12 years I have been working at Western Energy Institute, a trade association in the energy industry. I started as a Program Manager and



am now the Director of Program Development. I am responsible for our leadership development programs and creating new programs. When I first joined our board, it was early in my career. Both my President and COO at that time were curious about JACL. I was on an ok career trajectory at that point, but wasn't always passionate about my work. Being a part of our board helped me change the narrative with them in a positive way. It also gave me an opportunity to show leadership skills that I otherwise would not have been able to display in the office.

### **Who would you encourage to consider becoming a board member?**

I think there are many different reasons that somebody should consider joining our board. First and foremost is the community aspect of our organization. As a board member you'll

have the chance to meet people and build community. The other part of our mission is around civil rights. If you're curious about social justice and advocacy then this is a great way to learn more and engage more actively. As a volunteer board, there is flexibility for board members to bring in their own interests and pursuits too. Ultimately, anybody that is looking to give back or get more involved in the community would be a great candidate to join our board. Even though it is work, we have fun too. I would be happy to meet and talk with anybody that is curious.

Thank you, Chris, for sharing your experiences with us and for all the work you have done for our community! If you are a Portland JACL member and are interested in learning more about being part of the board or volunteering with our organization, please reach out to Chris at [Chris@PDXJACL.org](mailto:Chris@PDXJACL.org).

## **Children's Choirs of Three Nations**

### **Representatives from China, Japan, and Korea**

**WHEN:** Saturday, September 16 · 2 - 3:30pm PDT

**WHERE:** First Congregational United Church of Christ (1126 SW Park Avenue Portland, OR)

The Chinese, Japanese and Korean communities of Portland are pleased to present a special performance titled "Children's Choirs of Three Nations" at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 16, 2023 at the First Congregational UCC in downtown Portland. This is the eighth year of "Three Nations" events designed to serve as a model of cooperation and friendship between the three nations.

Join us for an hour of music presented by elementary-aged children from Portland's Chinese, Japanese and Korean communities. The Portland Mandarin Children's Choir is an after school learning program started in 2022 to help children learn Mandarin songs while improving music fundamentals and embracing cultural diversity. Students will perform "Jasmine Flower"; "Painting & Little Pond," and "You Look

Beautiful When You Smile." The Nozomi Music School is a private school opened in 2019 by Nozomi Imade, a long-time music teacher in Japan, where both adults and children learn a variety of music, including Japanese songs. The students will perform "Sukiyaki," "Sakura & Summer Festival & Momiji," and "Hometown." The Oregon Korean School enrolls 200+ students and meets on weekends at the Korean American Community Center. The students will sing "New Arirang with an instrumental accompaniment," and "Butterfly" with a Taekwondo performance.

Speakers at the event include Jin Lan, President of the Oregon China Council; Yuzo Yoshioka, Consul General, Consular Office of Japan in Portland; and, Greg Caldwell, Honorary Consul for the Republic of Korea in Northern Oregon.

# NICHIREN BUDDHIST TEMPLE 2023 Fall Bento



29th Annual Take-Out Food Bazaar  
Sunday, Sept. 17, 2023 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Pre-Order Form**

# of orders \$ amount

**Special Bento \$18.00**

(Chow mein, Chicken,  
Yasaimono)

(Quantities are limited)  
(Orders accepted in order received)

Total

Please return this pre-order form with  
your check by **Sept. 9, 2023**

Make checks payable to:  
**Portland Nichiren Buddhist Temple**

All proceeds benefit:  
Portland Nichiren Buddhist Temple  
2025 SE Yamhill Street  
Portland, Oregon 97214

503-235-8292; 971-413-0398

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER

Your order will be ready for you at the Will-Call line.





## Iko no Kai - SEPTEMBER 2023

1333 SE 28th Ave / 503-238-0775

MON	TUES		THURS	FRI
				<b>1</b>  <b>Ganmodoki</b> Fried Tofu Fritters
<b>4</b>  <b>CLOSED</b>	<b>5</b>  <b>Shrimp Salad Rolls</b> <i>Kinfe Sharpening</i> <i>12:45pm Sing a Long</i>	<b>X</b>	<b>7</b>  <b>Sudori</b> Sweet & Sour Chicken	<b>8</b>  <b>Gyudon</b> Beef Rice Bowl  <i>Bingo</i>
<b>11</b>  <b>Grilled Saikyo Zuke Salmon</b> <i>11:30am Chair Yoga</i> <i>12:30pm Mahjong</i>	<b>12</b>  <b>Chicken w/ Sesame Sauce</b> <i>11am Blood Pressure</i> <i>12:45pm Sing a Long</i>	<b>X</b>	<b>14</b>  <b>Tonjiru Takikomi Gohan</b> <i>*vegetarian option available</i> <i>11am Blood Pressure</i> <i>11:30am Aikido Stress Relief</i>	<b>15</b>  <b>Chowmein</b>  <i>Ohana Lunch</i>
<b>18</b>  <b>Hiyashi Chuka Ramen</b> Cold Ramen Salad <i>12:30pm Mahjong</i>	<b>19</b>  <b>Pork w/ Black Bean Sauce</b> <i>12:45pm Sing a Long</i>	<b>X</b>	<b>21</b>  <b>Tuna Tofu Burger</b>  <i>10:45 Move On Class</i>	<b>22</b>  <b>Tonkatsu</b>
<b>25</b>  <b>Grilled Chicken w/ Tomato Sauce</b>  <i>12:30pm Mahjong</i>	<b>26</b>  <b>Birthday Sushi</b> <i>*Reservations required</i> <i>11am Blood Pressure</i> <i>12:45pm Sing a Long</i>	<b>X</b>	<b>28</b>  <b>Miso Salmon</b>  <i>11am Blood Pressure</i> <i>11:30am Aikido Stress Relief</i>	<b>29</b>  <b>Shrimp Gyoza</b>

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

**Suggested Lunch Donation: \$9 for seniors 65+ / \$11 for adults under 65 / \$ 6 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**



**PORTLAND JACL**  
PO BOX 86310  
PORTLAND, OR 97286

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## 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**

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

Edited by Chong Sim (simc0186@gmail.com)