PORTLAND JACL
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PORTLANDJACL NEWSLETTER

Portland JACL – Supporting Civil Rights Since 1928

• NOVEMBER 2026|VOLUME 32 ISSUE 11 •

Board Member MESSAGE

The Things We Carry Forward

By Connor Wakayama

Looking back on this past summer, I feel fortunate to have witnessed big milestones in the lives of two special people in my Japanese American community.

In late August, I traveled back to my hometown of Honolulu for the 100th birthday of my friend "Uncle John" Mori Hayakawa. Over several days, family and friends gathered to celebrate a century of John's life, over platefuls of sushi and Hawaiian-style comfort food.

John is Nisei, second-generation, and his memories include events I've only read about in museums or history books. He can recall episodes from his childhood in Oakland's Japantown during the Great Depression, his family's incarceration in Poston, Arizona, and the motley array of jobs—cocktail lounge busboy, marshmallow maker, ice plant worker—he worked in Chicago after leaving camp in summer 1943.

John has lived in Honolulu since 1967 and spent more than 25 years working as a professor at the University of Hawaii School of Public Health. He's in remarkable health and has even gained some online fame recently for videos of his workouts with Honolulu fitness coach Egan Inoue. In the videos, John can be seen doing sit-ups, flipping tires, and hopping through agility ladders. It's difficult to watch them without feeling inspired.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

November 3
Election Day

November 11
Veteran's Day

November 14
Portland Taiko Fall Concert
Lincoln Hall, PSU | 7pm

November 15
Portland Taiko Fall Concert
Lincoln Hall, PSU | 2pm

November 26
Thanksgiving

November 28
Portland JACL Holiday Party
Oregon Buddhist Temple | 5pm



Connor visits with his 100 year old friend, Uncle John Hayakawa from Honolulu.

A few thousand miles away, and nearly 99 years younger, is Suki Nakamoto, who lives next door to me in Portland with her parents, Scott and Corinne.

Suki is a year and a half old, and every time I return after being out of town, I am struck by how much she has grown. Over the past many months, she has gone from crawling to walking with ease and has graduated to increasingly animated attempts to communicate with the world around her. Being her next-door "uncle" since I moved in has been a special and unexpected joy.

Suki is Gosei, fifth-generation Japanese American. In some ways, the world she will grow up in will be almost unrecognizably different from the one John entered a century ago. By the time Suki is 17—the age John was when he left Poston—the technologies shaping everyday life may be difficult for us to imagine even today.

And yet, Suki already has numerous connections to a much older heritage. She delights in the bright magenta koinobori (carp streamer) that waves in the wind over her front porch. She is beginning to eat rice, her favorite part of sushi. Earlier this year, she attended her first Obon.

Witnessing milestone moments in these two lives—one just getting started and the other reaching a rarefied 100th birthday—makes me wonder: what is the "Nikkei-ness" that connects these two across three generations? What will be carried forward and what will change?

As a Yonsei, I reflect on these questions with some regularity. With many of us in our 20s to 40s, we are in some ways a bridge generation, standing between our elder Nisei and Sansei and the budding Gosei. It feels as though we have an important role to play to help ensure the passage of culture from the past into the future, even if the way we engage with our heritage is different from how previous generations have done so. Rather than being encouraged to assimilate and hide our Japanese heritage, we often find ourselves wanting to express it, sometimes by maintaining traditions, but also by adapting them in new and creative ways.
Fortunately, Portland has many places where that process of carrying culture forward happens. The Japanese American Museum of Oregon helps preserve and share our history, while bringing that history into the present through exhibitions and events. At Obon, people across generations gather over yakisoba and karaage and perform the dances with varying degrees of confidence. And JACL helps maintain the gatherings that bring our community together year after year, from the Nikkei Community Picnic to Mochi Pounding to Day of Remembrance.

These gatherings do more than preserve traditions. They create opportunities for people to meet one another, for newcomers to find their way into the community, and for older

generations to pass along stories, practices, and memories. For us younger generation Nikkei, they serve as places where we can keep learning about our culture so we are prepared to perpetuate it.

And staying engaged may well be a piece of the recipe for a long and happy life. When asked for his advice on how to live well to 100, John emphasized keeping busy with meaningful things, staying curious, and maintaining a strong circle of social connections. While one could apply this approach to many things, it seems especially fitting for engagement with our Japanese American heritage and community. It is a lifelong journey with ever more to learn, more to contribute, and incredible people to meet along the way.

I don't know what our world or our Nikkei community in Portland will look like when Suki and her peers are 100. But I hope they still find special places to gather, learn, and celebrate who they are. And I hope they can look back on our generation and see that we did our part to make those places possible.

2026 Scholarship Recipients





Here are the recipients for this year's National JACL and Portland JACL Yumibe Scholarships.

These two students were recognized with scholarships from the National JACL:

Nina Ichikikawa

CWO-4 Mitsugi Murakami Kasai Scholarship

Nina is attending the University of Southern California. Her most meaningful high school activity was serving on her city's board. She was able to work alongside passionate adults and curate attainable solutions for community issues regarding things such as food insecurity, homelessness, and land acknowledgement.

Kira Sato

Kenji Kasai Scholarship

Kira is attending the University of San Franciso. She was the co-president of the Portland JACL's Unite People and was a regular volunteer at Ikoi No Kai. Kira is a National Merit Scholar finalist and was president of her school's Japanese Culture Club.

2026 Centenarian Luncheon


Photos by Jim Nagae

Honorees:

Richard Endow
Proud to have graduated from UW with a degree on Political Economics. Loves Journalism (crime stories), listens to NPR "Current Affairs", avid reader of New Yorker Magazine, loves Jazz.

Linnea Okazaki Foss
Linnea does the NY Times crossword puzzle daily. At 104, when her daughter asks questions, she tells her to "look it up on Wikipedia.

Aya Fujii
The "tomboy" of the 5 Iwasaki sisters. At 8 years old, as the sisters were weeding the berry field with their hoes, Suddenly a garter snake appears sending the sisters screaming and running away. Tomboy Aya, calmly raises her hoe and slices the snake in half.

Tom Fujii
The ever smiling and cheerful Tom Fujii. When asked what his favorite thing to do? "Listening to the accomplishments and achievements of others gives him pleasure", thus hisbright smile!!

Amy Furumasu
Amy worked for 21 years at the WA Dept of Healthy and Human Services. She will be 99 next month and her family remembers their weekends at Lake PendOreille.

Jim Hasegawa
Jim endured three internment camps: Pinedale Assembly Center, Tule Lake and Minidoka. This Hood River orchardist's advice to the younger generation was "Get an education and save money."

Kimi Iwamoto
A big smiler who raised two great community volunteers (Oregon and Hawaii), always sends visitor's off with a kiss.

Fude Kagawa
We are grateful for her many years of volunteering at Ikoi No Ksi. Her family continues to volunteer there and that is a priceless legacy.

Misako Kodama
Misa was born in California but loved taking friends and family to enjoy Japan. She was meticulous in all her planning.

Seichi Konno
A Beaver to the core, Seichi was honored to be inducted onto OSU's Engineering Hall of Fame.

Shu (Kiyokawa) Konno
Shu comes from hardworking Hood River orchard roots. She says a successful person doesn't get there alone. Seichi and Shu had been married 70 years.

Jean Kozawa
This young lady remembers getting up at 5 to harvest asparagus and then going to

school She remembers getting a nickel tip as a waitress—and being grateful for it.

Mishie Matsumoto
Mishie enjoyed flower arranging and puzzles. Her advice to young people: "Always give 100%."

Taka Mizote
Growing older doesn't take away her joy of playing bridge, mahjong, and exercising like a demon. She excels at her role of volunteer social director at her current senior living.

Tsuyako Monas
Tsuyako enjoys being part of the bento program. She was a member of the TWS (Transpacific Women's Society) and Hyakudo Kai (100 year club), both organizations are gone now but Tsuyako embodies the aim of Hyakudo Kai—live to a healthy 100 years of age.

Ella Morisato
Ella was a champion crocheter and knitter who gifted residents of Holladay Park Plaza with her creations. Residents love Ella's family's visits because they brought their therapy dogs.

George Morishige
He was interned at Pinedale and Tule Lake. He enjoyed farming with his wife in Ontario and was active in the church and local JACL chapter.

Setsuko Morishige
Setsuko and George do not get out and about much now that George has given up driving. Their two children check in on them as they live close by.

Janet Ayako Nagata
Janet worked at several Japanese restaurants but her favorite job was working at Azumano Travel, assisting Japanese business travelers.

Sam Naito
Sam is an accomplished Portland businessman. How great is it that a major Downtown street carries the family name. His son Verne remembers Dad's saying, "You are your own worst enemy." Like the little train's refrain from the Golden Book, "I think I can…I think I can…" leads to I know I can.

Harry Nakamura
At 96, he still has shovel in hand methodically tilling his garden soil. Constant companion and care giver to wife Betty. Words of wisdom, In facing Life's Challenges, "never give up."

Frank Nakata
Friends and family celebrated his 100th birthday at Ikoi No Kai in October. Frank is dearly loved for his Takuan and culinary skills.

Etsuko Ichikawa Osaki
(Note: Etsuko turned 95 and this was her inaugural year but passed away weeks after being interviewed.)

Etsuko was interned at Puyallup Assembly Center, Minidoka and Crystal City, Texas. Her husband Herb was on a field trip from Pacific University to Seattle when he ventured into the Seattle Betsuin Hondo and heard Ets playing the piano. It was love at first note and she and Herb were married for many years. Thery supported youth causes and Oregon Buddhist Temple for many years.

Bertha Saiget
Bertha instilled in all the importance of education. She was active in establishing the Portland Chinatown Museum. Her advice to all is "Eat your dessert first."

Sachiko Simmons
Sachiko is a newcomer to Portland, having moved here in 1917. She worked at Ohio Oil Company for many years and could take dictation at 98 words per minute. Because she experienced the impact of the atomic bombs in Japan, her wish for all of us is to work toward a world with no war veterans—in short, a world with no war.

Kazue Sumoge
She was born in Hood River County and enjoys going for car rides in the beautiful valley. She enjoys watching sports on TV and doing jigsaw puzzles and crossword puzzles.

Satoru Terada
Satoru was born in Honolulu, HI and worked for the Social Security Administration for many years. He resides at Hearthstone Assisted Living and his family is very grateful for our monthly bento project.

Alice Watanabe
She raised 3 outstanding children as a young widow and has been a devoted member of Portland Nichiren Buddhist Temple. She is a great repository of history, places, people and events. She embodies the "gambatte (never give up)" spirit.

Chiyoko Watanabe
Chiyoko is a Kibei Nisei (born in the US but sent to Japan during wartime. She owns an orchard in Hood River and was married to George Mitsuo Watanabe for many years. Her son Neil admires her greatly and says, "She always dad what was expected of her."

Vivian Wong
Vivian's lifestyle is being cramped by mobility issues but she was a long time diner at Ikoi No Kai, our community lunch program. She enjoyed sewing and taking art classes.







Photo Corner



The 4th annual Centenarian Luncheon was held on October 10, 2026 at the Doubletree Hotel-Hilton in Lloyed Center. Eight 95 years and older were honored with leis and delicious lunches. We wish them good health and much happiness for the future. Photo by: Chip Larouche



The Minidoka Swing Band entertained us on Sunday, October 11, 2026 at the Epworth United Methodist Church. This Band was founded in 2007, by Robbie Tsuboi as a youth band to teach about the internment through the music of the big band era of the 1930's and 1940's. Today it is a community band which includes members with family ties to the concentration camps as well as talented, caring musicians. The Director is Shaun Congos and the Manager is Elaine Yuzuriha.



On October 4, 2026, at the Mission Theater, The Nisei Paradox: Japanese American Draft Resister During World War II, written and directed by Jeff Thomson was presented. This production was sponsored by: JAMO, Portland JACL, and the Oregon Law Foundation.

Call to Action: National Archives

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has announced the **closing the National Archives at San Francisco** (located in San Bruno, California) and scattering its collections in June of 2026. The stated reasons is to cut costs and consolidate storage. The collection is slated to be split among five other national archive facilities.

The collections holds more than 75,000 cubic feet of historical, immigration, court, and genealogical records—dating back over 175 years—covering Northern and Central California, Nevada, Hawaii, American Samoa, and Pacific Territories. Notable items include records from the birthright citizenship case United States v. Wong Kim Ark, Alcatraz inmate files, Japanese American WWII incarceration documents, and Bureau of Indian Affairs tribal records. There are also legal records related to the motion to vacate Fred Korematsu's 1944 conviction; Japanese picture bride files; Alien Files containing visas, photographs, and family-history materials; records documenting Indigenous and Hawaiian communities; Mexican Land grant cases; and arrival case files for Russian Jews and other immigrants from throughout the world.

On October 14, 2026, California Attorney General Rob Bonta filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California against the National Archives and Records Division.

The lawsuit asserts that NARA made the decision unilaterally behind closed doors without proper public hearings, environmental or community impact reviews, or consultation with state, local, and tribal governments. Critics argue that dispersing the records will irreparably harm researchers, families tracing their ancestry, and tribal communities that rely on local access to deeds, enrollment files, and federal boarding school documents.

The National Council of the Japanese American Citizens League endorses a national advocacy campaign involving all JACL chapters to oppose the NARA.

Call to Action

All JACL Districts, Chapter boards and members are requested to respond in one or more of the following ways:

1. Write letters to the interim Director of the National Archives, Ed Forst

2. Send via email to Director of NARA Ed Forst ***(ArchivistOfTheUnitedStates@nara.gov)***, Chief of Staff Corey Cooke ***(corey.cooke@nara.gov)***, or Executive for External Affairs and Communications Grace McCafferty ***(grace.mccaffrey@nara.gov)***

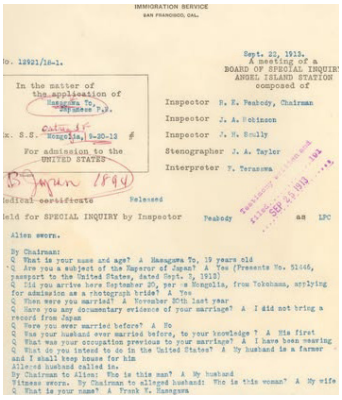
3. See template for draft letter content ***(https://tinyurl.com/letter-content-template)***

4. Write a letter to your U.S. congressional legislative representative and Email copies of your letters to Save OUR National Archives ***(SaveOurNationalArchives@gmail.com)***

5. Tools created by SONA ***(saveournationalarchives.org/take-action)*** and Chicago Area Archivists ***(chicagoarchivists.org/NARAClosuresAction)*** to craft your personal message.

6. ***fundNARA.com*** has instructions on additional action





NIKKEI WINTER HOLIDAY PARTY & JACL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, November 28, 2026 @ 5pm
at Oregon Buddhist Temple

Create a new holiday tradition and please join us for the 10th annual Nikkei Community Winter Party where we will joyfully welcome the holiday season.

* This will be a semi-potluck dinner where the main course (Kalua Pork w/ Cabbage, and Vegetarian/Vegan Chili) will be provided.

* Bring a side dish of your choice (Optional – we would rather have you and your family there)

* There will be activities for kids, raffle for the adults, and a visit from Santa and a short general meeting of Portland JACL.

Start the holidays with food and fun!

For more information or to RSVP:
Contact Connie at connie@pdxjacl.org or call/text 503-318-5839.



Unite People's Holiday Wreath Sale

Get ready for the Holidays and reduce your stress by pre-ordering winter greenery to decorate your home or office.

This is a fundraiser activity for Unite People, a youth driven community and social justice group. The proceeds will help fund projects to educate youth and seed community projects.

_____ _____
Your Name Phone number

Mixed wreaths with berries	**Qty**	**Price**	**Total**
12 inch		$21.00	
16 inch		$29.00	
20 inch		$45.00	
24 inch		$55.00	
NEW! 26 inch Snowflake with berries		$45.00	
30 inch Candy Cane Style with berries		$20.00	
30 inch Swag with berries and bow		$20.00	
15 foot Garland		$23.00	
Red Bow		$ 6.00	
Poinsettas 6 inch pots		$12.00	
Total			

Deadline to order is November 21, 2026

Pick-up date:
Sunday, December 6, 2026
from 11-2pm
at Epworth United Methodist

Mail this form to:
Unite People
6305 E Burnside
Portland, OR 97215
or
Order online at
pdxjacl.org

Please make checks payable to UNITE PEOPLE

Ikoi no Kai - November 2026

1333 SE 28th Ave / 503-238-0775
ikoinokai.org

MON	TUES		THURS	FRI
2 **Ebi Fry** Panko-fried Shrimp 海老フライ *11:30am Chair Yoga* *12:30pm Mahjong*	**3** **Ganmodoki** Tofu Fritter がんもどき *12:45pm Sing-along*	**X**	**5** **Crab and Mushroom Croquette** カニ＆きのこのコロッケ	**6** **Beef Stew** ビーフシチュー *10-11:30am Shigin*
9 **Chicken w/ Ume Sauce** 鶏肉の梅ダレ *11:30am Soroban* *12:30pm Mahjong*	**10** **Chap Chae** Korean Glass Noodles 豚チャプチェ *12:45pm Sing-along*	**X**	**12** **Lemongrass Tofu** レモングラス豆腐 *10:00am Ukulele*	**13** **Black Bean Chicken** 鶏肉の豆豉炒め *10-11:30am Shigin* *12:30pm Bingo*
16 **Tenshin Don** Crab Omelette Rice Bowl 天津丼 *11:30am Soroban* *12:30pm Mahjong*	**17** **Hambaagu** Hamburger Steak ハンバーグ *11am Blood Pressure* *12:45pm Sing-along*	**X**	**19** **Okonomiyaki** Savory Pancake お好み焼き *11am Blood Pressure*	**20** **Char Siu** Chinese BBQ Pork チャーシュー *10-11:30am Shigin*
23 **Yaki Udon** Stir-fried Noodles 焼きうどん *12:30pm Mahjong*	**24** **Birthday Sushi** お誕生日寿司 *Reservations required (suggested donation $12) *12:45pm Sing-along*	**X**	**26** **CLOSED**	**27** **CLOSED**
30 **Chicken Meatball Nabe** Chicken Hotpot 鶏団子鍋 *12:30pm Mahjong*				

Chefs: Naomi Molstrom-M Kyoko Adcock-Tu Justin Sato - Th/F

Suggested Lunch Donation: $9 for seniors 65+ / $12 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) reserve@ikoinokai.org

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

*** vegetarian option available on that day - please reserve two days in advance**

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

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