

2002: A Commitment to Civil Liberties and Membership

by Joy Shigaki, 2nd Vice-President

Our Board retreat this past month helped get the new board grounded and focused on the work that lies ahead. In addition to spending quality time, sharing our personal stories, and familiarizing ourselves with the overall operations and structure of JACL, a substantial portion of our day was spent prioritizing our goals for the coming year. What emerged was a strong commitment to maintaining and upholding civil liberties and civil rights, as well as serving our JACL membership in meaningful ways.

Though we are still refining our ideas, some of the common goals include:

Civil Liberties

- ♦ Work to support the Washington State Civil Liberties Project;
- ♦ In coalition with Arab American and Pan-Minority communities, monitoring hate crimes and incidents of racial profiling. Raise awareness of hate crimes through educational rallies, events and speakers;
- ♦ Serve as a watchdog on anti-terrorism measures in Washington State;
- ♦ Monitor employment lawsuits;
- ♦ Monitor movement in affirmative actions; and
- ♦ Promote Japanese Americans/Asian Pacific Islanders in public and private employment opportunities. Monitor vacancies and positions in public office.

Membership

- ♦ Increase membership including youth and Kaizen members. Reconnect with past scholarship recipients. Increase outreach to Hapas and the GLB community;
- ♦ Increase fund-raising efforts;
- ♦ Secure a permanent home in either a cultural center or JACL owned building. Research possible partnerships;
- ♦ Hold more multiple generation family events such as Mariners events or sports tournaments; and
- ♦ Increase public relations efforts of JACL.

We need you involved: Committees are open to members and the public. All are welcome, there is plenty of work, and we encourage everyone to take a place around the table. Please join in.

For information on committees, please contact Arlene Oki, President, or one of our four Vice-Presidents. We can help find the right fit for you.

Historical Booklet

by Shea Aoki, Past Historian

JACL members and friends, a project that was completed in 2001 by the Seattle Chapter JACL was the publication of a concise history of the Seattle JACL from 1921-2000. A history of the early beginnings up to 1982 was originally published as the 60th Anniversary Booklet in 1982. When we began plans to reprint the booklet for the 79th Anniversary Installation Banquet, there were many requests to update the history to the current period.

After many months of hard work by committee members, volunteers, and past presidents and officers, the project was completed. In an abbreviated form, the booklet covers the Chapter's activities since 1921, continually in the forefront in the fight for civil rights. JACL's wartime role is detailed as well as its subsequent success for issei naturalization through the Walter-McCarran Act. Sponsorship of the Pride and Shame Exhibit and the Japanese Cherry Blossom and Cultural Festival are highlighted. Seattle JACL members were a driving force in the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 and these significant events are chronicled.

In the 80's and 90's Seattle JACL's activities are summarized under each Chapter President's year covering issues such as: fighting hate crimes, monitoring the media for racial stereotyping, building coalitions with other ethnic and civil rights organizations, fostering youth education with scholarships, and numerous other related issues.

See "Booklet" on page 3

February 27th – Please join JACL and many other community organizations at the annual Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Legislative Day in Olympia with speeches, cultural events, and the opportunity to meet with legislators. Begins at 11:30 AM outside of the Legislative Building. See you in Olympia!

Washington State Legislature: 1-800-562-6000.
Please contact your legislators regarding the following legislative bills:

HJM 4026/SJM 8036 - Requests a memorial to remember the Japanese American internment during World War II.

HB 2842 - Creates a civil liberties day of remembrance every February 19th for interned Japanese Americans of World War II.

ESB 5954 - Updates obsolete language. Revises the term "Oriental" on official documents.

President's Message

by Arlene Oki, President

Welcome to our newly formatted Seattle Chapter newsletter. We are very fortunate that the energetic and talented Joann Natalia Aquino has agreed to be our Editor-In-Chief/Publisher and Ryan Minato of our Board will provide Design and Layout services. Joann has extensive experience as a professional journalist, and is currently the Legislative Liaison and Community Outreach Administrator at the Washington State Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs. Ryan, who quietly does a tremendous amount of work for the Chapter, will continue as our Website Editor. Though the newsletter has a new look, we have not abandoned our commitment to distribute it to all members on a monthly basis.

After almost two months, I am feeling exhilarated, but overwhelmed, as so many issues and requests come before us. Just getting organized is a chore, and we must immediately begin to submit nominations and resolutions for the JAACL National Convention. I am grateful that our board is composed of caring and efficient individuals who are willing to help organize our events and articulate thoughtful arguments when decisions must be made.

The evidence of a heightened sense of commitment to work for harmonious race relations and social justice was greatly evident as thousands of diverse groups joined together at Garfield High School on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s national holiday. It seems that the annual celebration of his life gets bigger each year. I was honored to participate in the program, and tried my best to educate others about that shameful chapter in U.S. history when 120,000 Japanese Americans were incarcerated in WWII camps. I was moved almost to tears as I spoke about the heroic deeds of Nisei

veterans, an account that resonated well with the audience. They became quiet and then actually started to clap. The spirit of the day was made brighter by the presence of so many young people.

In May, the "Journey to Democracy" series will be inaugurated at Seattle Central Community College. This major venture is primarily funded by the Washington State Civil Liberties Fund established by State Representative Kip Tokuda, his legislative colleagues, and Governor Gary Locke. Kip, Bea Kiyohara, Jane Nakagawa, Ken Matsudaira, and Ken Alhadeff are the driving forces behind this ambitious, educational project. We will keep you informed as all aspects of the project unfold.

Our retreat was well attended and very productive. It also provided a good opportunity to get to know each other, as there are many who are new to the organization. I heard reasons why members joined the JAACL, and despite their diverse backgrounds, they all seemed to yearn for a sense of community. Our commonalities became especially evident as they shared family experiences and recollections of days past. Now I know why this has been my primary volunteer effort for many years: it is the sense of community that I receive from the JAACL and opportunities to learn from the many heroes who sacrifice so much to help our community and all communities of color.

Our Installation Banquet was an outstanding success. I am so grateful for your support on this important annual event. Thank you! Thank you!



Announcements

Thank You

Bob Shimabukuro, former Editor, for your excellent work and dedication to the Seattle Chapter newsletter.

For your generous donations:

Jene Deguchi Yoshi Mori
Dwight Imanaka Lawrence Tsunoda
Brian Ito

Events Calendar

Feb. 27 - Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Day, State Capitol, Olympia, 11:30 AM. Contact King County APIC (care of ACRS) at (206) 695-7600.

Feb. 28 - Center for Career Alternatives 22nd Anniversary Dinner silent with

auction and reception, Seattle Sheraton Hotel & Towers, 5 PM, Ticket price: \$70. Contact (206) 322-9080.

Mar. 5 - Asian & Pacific Islander Woman & Family Safety Center (APIWFSC) presents Australian Film Festival with Best Actress Recipient Rena Owen, China Harbor Restaurant, 2040 Westlake N., Seattle, 6 PM, ticket price: \$50. Contact (206) 467-9976.

Mar. 9 - The Japanese American Experience: A Lesson In American History with keynote speaker Byron Kunisawa, workshop for K-12 educators on civil rights issues related to Japanese American

internment, Puget Sound ESD 121, corner of 4th Ave. SW and SW 152nd Street, Burien, 8 AM - 4 PM. Contact (206) 522-5438.

Apr. 19-21 - 27th Annual Seattle Cherry Blossom Festival & Japanese Cultural Festival, Seattle Center, all day, FREE. Contact (206) 684-7200.

Ongoing until March 3 - "Superflat" a multimedia exhibit of contemporary Japanese art, Henry Art Gallery, 15th Ave. NE & NE 41st St., Seattle, Tuesday - Sunday, 11 AM - 5 PM. Contact (206) 543-2280.

Booklet, continued from page 1

To encourage the younger generation to learn about our organization and its history, 100 copies of the Booklet were donated to the Youth Conference last July. Complimentary copies were given to many local dignitaries. Through the generosity of close to 1,000 donors, both members and community supporters, including earmarked donations from Seattle JAACL Board Members, a total of \$5,965.14 in contributions was received in support of this project. Funds generated through membership and donations from the community helped the Seattle Chapter carry out meaningful activities such as this history project.

Thank you: Grateful appreciation is expressed to all who contributed time and effort to the 79th Anniversary Booklet. A special thanks should go to Ryan Minato for computer services, to Stacey Asato for layout and graphic design, Frank Shobo Fujii for cover design, Cherry Kinoshita and May Sasaki for co-editing, Kimi Nakanishi and Margaret Yanagimachi for record keeping and computerization of donor lists, Jeffrey Hattori for financial records, and many others. Your contributions were the success of the Historical Booklet project.

The following people are acknowledged for their support on the Historical Booklet project:

Paul & Mary Uno Hope Ohashi
Mr. & Mrs. George Tamura Mr. & Mrs. Robert Ohashi
Bill Tashima

Special donations: \$50 or more toward Historical Booklet.

Shea Aoki Prof. Kenji Okuda
Katherine Bannai Naomi Sanchez
Margaret Gojio May Sasaki
Patricia Ikegemi Frank Seto
George & Marie Ishii John & Polly Shigaki
Ray Ishii Gail Tanaka
Kazzie & Mits Katayama Elise Taniguchi
Cherry Kinoshita Uwajimaja
James Matsuoka Margaret Yanagimaki
Mako Nakagawa and other friends of JAACL

Contact: Limited supplies of Historical Booklet remain, anyone wishing to order a copy may contact Shea Aoki at (206) 723-6061.

Newsletter Sponsors

The Seattle Chapter Newsletter is sponsored in part by these generous donors:

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Momoye Asaba
Bi Hoa Caldwell
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Eva Chikusa
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Junzo and Masaye Nakagawa
Calvin and Naoka Takagi
John and Trisha Tubbs (new)

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Suzanne Hamada Maya Yamazaki
Drew Matsumoto

Mission Statement: The Seattle Chapter JACL is a non-profit, grassroots civil rights organization dedicated to empowering our local community through high-quality programs and strategic partnerships focusing on activism, education, and youth leadership development. As a chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, we strive to be a leading Asian American advocacy group for civil and human rights while promoting and preserving the values and cultural heritage of Japanese Americans.

Chapter Board Meeting: Our primary means of carrying out our mission is a monthly meeting, held at 6:30 PM on the third Wednesday of each month, except August, at the chapter office, 316 Maynard Ave. S., Seattle. Those wishing to make presentations or be added to the meeting agenda should contact President Arlene Oki prior to the meeting. All are welcome.

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Article and Event Submission: Board members should submit materials to the editor-in-chief (joannnatalia_editor@hotmail.com) by the Friday after the monthly board meeting. Calendar items emphasize chapter or community events not likely to be covered by community newspapers or by other newsletters.

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