



Reflection on Bon Odori

by Mari Sugiyama

Seattle Bon Odori is part of the core of our Japanese American community. Where the Japanese community used to be centered and populated in areas of the International District/Chinatown or Beacon Hill, many have moved out of the cities to the suburbs. But for one weekend out of the year, we know there is a place where we can congregate and celebrate our heritage and culture together. Whether you celebrate by dressing in yukata and dancing or by socializing with friends in the beer garden while eating hot dogs, we are all gathered, ultimately, for the same reason.

Behind the dancing, food and friends, we learn the true meaning—to pay respect and homage to those who have passed. But, it is also a time for us to see what it means to be Japanese American by taking a traditional Japanese festival and making it our own hybrid, whatever that may be.

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Last Bi-District Conference

At last year's National Council meeting, there was a vote to change the National Conventions from biennially to annual conventions. This constitutional by-law amendment goes into effect in 2010. The JAACL Districts have held their biennial meetings in the odd years between National Conventions. This year will be the last year where the smaller district gathering will take place.

The California Districts (Northern California, Central California and Southern California) held their Tri-District meeting during February in Fresno, California. The Midwest District and Eastern District will hold their Bi-District meeting over the July 24 to 26 weekend in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Intermountain District and Pacific Northwest District, that includes the Seattle Chapter, will hold their Bi-District meeting over the July 30 to August 2 weekend in Ontario, Oregon. The host chapter has planned a weekend of activities for us during our Bi-District meeting. There is golfing at Scotch Pines Golf Course in Payette Idaho on Thursday. On Friday, each district will have their individual meetings, as well as an opportunity to meet and learn about National issues at a Forum in the afternoon. It is expected that several National officers will be in attendance. On Saturday, workshops are scheduled, ranging in topic from the Census to Japanese culture. A closing dinner on Saturday will conclude this eventful weekend.

Lodging will be at either the Holiday Inn or the Holiday Inn Express. All meetings will take place at the Holiday Inn. For registration information, contact Elaine Akagi, [redacted]. The registration deadline is July 16.

Kristina Logsdon, Civil Rights Committee, Honored for Social Justice

On May 15, the Northwest Asian Weekly awarded a member of our community with the Women of Color Empowered Award. The only Japanese American awarded, Kristina Logsdon, was also the youngest and was rewarded for her civic engagement. As Racial Justice Campaign Coordinator for the Progressive Majority, Kristina coached and supported over 20 candidates in their campaigns for local and state office. Her work to recruit and train candidates of color resulted in several



Kristina Logsdon.

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UPS Honors War-Interned Japanese Americans with Honorary Degrees

by Dawn Rego, Seattle JAACL President
(UPS class of 2000)



Dawn Rego.

On Sunday, May 17, 2009 the students, faculty and staff of the University of Puget Sound (UPS) extended a belated honor to former students who were forced away from their studies because of Executive Order 9066 which authorized the removal of those of Japanese ancestry on February 19, 1942. UPS joins the ranks of the University of

Washington and many others across the county who are bestowing honorary degrees to former internees.

These students will receive degree Bachelor of Arts Honoris Causa, Nunc pro Tunc, meaning "a thing is done at one time which ought to have been performed at another." In so many ways this degree is much more significant than the degree itself. It is a homecoming to a place that held the promise of an education and a bright future. It is an acknowledgment of the past and the injustice that these students faced. It is another step in the healing process for these students, their families and the Japanese American community.

"Each loyal student removed from campus at that time represented a life and an education suddenly interrupted," said UPS President Ronald R. Thomas. "By

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Pre-pay for JACL Banquet

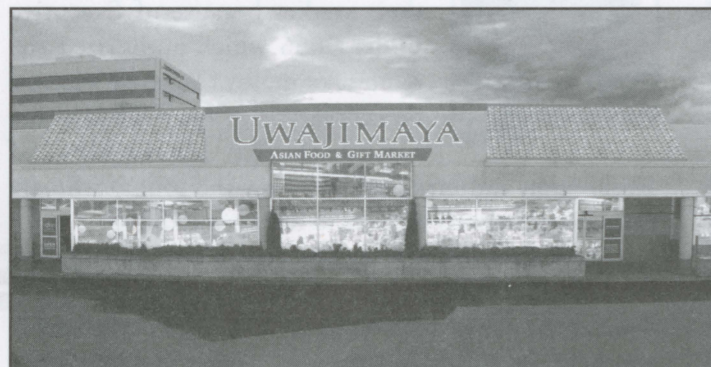
Tickets for the banquet can soon be purchased on-line using a PayPal account (details to follow). Guests will also have the option to register for the banquet through Janette Girard by email:

Save the Date
February 20, 2010
88th year of the JACL Banquet.

Uwajimaya: Changing Face, Same Spirit

Providing community staples for over 80 years, Uwajimaya continues to expand its footprint in the Northwest with a location in Renton. "Fourth Uwajimaya opens end of June at the Renton Village Shopping Center. It will carry Uwajimaya's trademark Asian produce, live seafood and sashimi; gifts, kitchen ware and beauty care products from Japan; meat service counter with special cuts for Asian cooking; deli with ready to eat foods; and huge variety of groceries from throughout Asia. On the exterior the familiar blue tile will greet customers and a new exciting piece of contemporary artwork." commented Tomoko Moriguchi Matsuno, President & CEO.

Uwajimaya also has an improvement project in the works at its Bellevue location. "Upgrading Uwajimaya Bellevue is a high priority. We are looking at several options on how to best accomplish. Bellevue is an important market for Uwajimaya and we want to improve the shopping experience for our loyal Uwajimaya customers." stated Tomoko.



Renton Uwajimaya.

Whether a destination spot to stock up on household essentials or cruise the snack aisles, Uwajimaya continues to provide a convenient layout, broad selection of items and welcoming atmosphere.

Uwajimaya Locations

Seattle - 600 5th Avenue South

Bellevue - 15555 NE 24th St. & Bel Red Rd.

Beaverton, Oregon - 10500 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale HWY

Renton - 501 South Grady Way

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For myself, it started as a kid when all I remember is kori and too many people. Then, in middle school and high school, it was all about socializing with friends and enjoying summer. As I transitioned from high school to college, it became more and more about the aspects of family and culture—bringing my younger cousins to practice to learn the dances, even though an occasional kori bribe was needed. As a member of the Seattle Japanese Queens Court, Bon Odori was purely *our* event to share with people outside of the community, such as the Miss Seafair candidates and others. And now, as I continue my involvement with the Queens Court, Obon is an opportunity to, once again, share and teach about our culture.



Seattle Bon Odori.

My feelings about Obon and the importance it carries for me has evolved throughout my life. What was once a fun, summer event for hanging out with friends, is now something with much more meaning to me. I am proud to be Japanese American and carry that with me everyday. Obon provides an annual opportunity to express and show my Japanese American culture on a different level and in the process, I am also able to re-evaluate myself.

Bon Odori, an official Seafair Community Event

Seattle Buddhist Temple

1427 S. Main Street

Saturday, July 18 from 4 - 10 PM

Sunday, July 19 from 3 - 8 PM

Practice sessions are held in the Temple's gymnasium and will run from 7:30 - 9:30 PM on July 6 - 10 and July 13 - 14.

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Washington State firsts: Latina mayor of a city, Samoan-American elected official, African-American sheriff and Korean American on the Tacoma City Council.

Kristina can't remember when she became interested in social justice work as she has always been exposed to the needs of marginalized communities. Her mother, a first generation Japanese American, raised Kristina and her brother in rural West Virginia. A single mother without a driver's license, a car or a job, she relied on the kindness of the community to drive her to the grocery store, guide her through the complicated process of applying for state aide, and teach her how to hunt and skin deer. Despite these circumstances, Kristina only discovered that she was low-income when the cans she took to school for a food drive appeared back on her porch one day.

With such dependence on the community, Kristina's mom was quick to teach the importance of giving back. It is no surprise to Kristina that she landed into non-profit work after moving to Seattle in 2001, first with an environmental advocacy organization, next with a political action committee working towards achieving racial justice through the election of progressive candidates of color, and now with the Win/Win Network directing the Ballot Initiative Network. At Win/Win she is able to combine her passion for the environment and social justice issues and increase the diversity of our elected officials by working with a wide coalition of progressive groups. Kristina believes the history of the Japanese American community is an ample of why it is important to work in concert with other marginalized communities to ensure the cycle of injustice ends. She is a proud supporter of JACL and a member of the Civil Rights Committee.

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granting these degrees now, we complete a circle, welcoming these individuals into the ranks of alumni and returning them to full inclusion in the Puget Sound community."

Each year, UPS honors the 36 students who were interned during WWII with a Day of Remembrance (DOR) observance. Each February a plaque honoring these students and paper cranes are placed near the twelve sakura trees near the Wheelock Student Center. Many of these trees were planted by the Japanese American students and more were planted in 1989 by a student organized ceremony to welcome the former internees and their families back to campus. The college also hosts guest speakers during their DOR observance to educate the current students and faculty. Seattle JACL was proud to be a community sponsor of the 2009 DOR speaker.

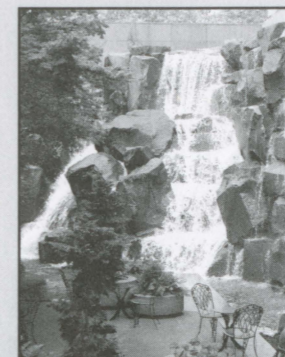
I had the great opportunity to attend the President's Commencement Dinner that celebrated and honored these students and their families. There I had a chance to meet the honorees and their families, some that had traveled in from California and other parts of the county. During his remarks President Thomas compared these students with the cherry blossoms that bloom on the trees around the student center. Their blossoms are beautiful and offer the promise of spring to come, but stay for only a short time. Much like the students who were so full of hopes and dreams that had to leave much too soon because of EO 9066. Also that evening and the commencement the following day, Harold Moss was honored with a degree Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa. He is the first and only African American mayor of Tacoma and a tireless civil rights leader.

On behalf of the Seattle JACL, I would like to thank President Thomas and the University of Puget Sound for this long overdue honor to these students and their families. A special thank you to UPS Trustee Jill Nishi and Professor Michael Veseth for leading this initiative and ensuring that these students were honored and celebrated.

Question of the Day

The Japanese-Americans have made many numerous contributions. We can be proud and amazed at all that has been added to the vibrancy of the Pacific Northwest.

- Where is this space?
- Who made the design?
- Why was it built?
- Have you ever had lunch here?



Answers for previous issue

Minoru Yamasaki, world famous architect born and raised in Seattle. Studied architecture at the University of Washington School of Architecture and went on to design some of the world's most famous buildings.

He designed the Pacific Science Center here in Seattle. The five arches, with design elements from Italian architecture (the lattice work), are world famous and were designed with the Seattle Center's "21st Century" science theme in mind.

Yamasaki was born in 1912 here in Seattle. While his life began in poverty, he went on to design some of the world's most famous buildings, including the U.S. Consulate in Kobe, Los Angeles's Century City Plaza and the Lambert-St. Louis air terminal in Missouri, as well as the World Trade Center.

Source: Answers.com, Detroit News

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 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 Dawn Rego prior to the meeting.

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Article and Event Submission: Board members should submit materials to the editor [redacted] 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.

Seattle Chapter JACL website: www.jaclseattle.org

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