Family Fun at Grandparents Day 2014  

by Komo Gauvreau

The Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) celebrated National Grandparents Day for the first time in 2014 with a family event full of fun activities. The event, co-sponsored by Lotus Preschool, featured traditional Japanese games, including kendo (toy), hanafuda (card game), a dress-up photo shoot, craft activities, origami, a scavenger hunt, kamishibai storytelling, and even a genealogist.

More than a hundred people participated in the event, including families from as far away as Petaluma and Hollister. Based on the overwhelmingly positive feedback, the event is expected to grow as more people hear about it. One parent commented, “The children really enjoyed all of the activities, including dressing up, origami, and the fun games.” Kids were not the only ones who had fun. One family noted that, “Grandma seemed really impressed with the event, especially all of the projects, and both enjoyed visiting the museum.”

The photo shoot was a big hit. Kay Park of Lotus preschool brought an impressive array of yukata (summer kimono). There was even a kendo outfit for boys to try on, thanks to JAMsj volunteer coordinator, Leslie Kim. Everyone thought that Lynne Yamaichi and Park did a great job dressing people for their individual photo shoots. Both kids and adults enjoyed dressing up in traditional Japanese attire, and as one grandmother noted, “I loved the photo shoot because it gave me a lasting memory of that day.”

The event also featured entertainment, both at JAMsj and down the street at the corner of Fifth and Jackson. The Yu-Ai Kai senior taikoclass (taught by San Jose Taiko) kicked off the event with a special performance. Later in the day, Saratoga Taiko put on an energetic performance, enticing people from every direction to come to the museum. May Matsuzaki, who leads the museum’s card-making volunteers, thought they were great. She praised Saratoga Taiko and its leader, Aki Okuno, for giving kids and grandparents a chance to try their hand at the instrument, saying, “I thought that they all enjoyed it.” At Fifth and Jackson, both Halau Na Wai Ola (hula) and the Wesley Ukulele Band donated their time, giving performances designed to attract attention to our event.

One of the best things about being a community organization is the camaraderie between the various organizations and members of the community, which is especially true of San Jose’s Japantown. When JAMsj reached out for help, no one said no. Yamaichi of Lotus Preschool enthusiastically accepted our invitation to partner. The San Jose JACL and its tenants graciously agreed to give up their parking lot so that we could offer supplemental parking for guests with disabilities. Pam Yoshida and Gordon Koo of Nikkei Traditions not only loaned us extra canopies but came over early in the morning to help set them up.

JAMsj volunteer Chris Hioki noted, “From my point of view, the best part of Grandparents Day was the cooperation between groups—JAMsj, Lotus Preschool, Nikkei Traditions—for the setup and planning.”

Before the 2014 event, JAMsj held just two children’s events a year. On the first Sunday in March, the museum displays a variety of hina dolls (traditional Girls Day doll sets featuring the emperor, empress, and court). The museum’s wonderful card-making volunteers lead the children in various activities, including crafts for boys and girls, coloring, and origami. A similar event is held in honor of Children’s Day (formerly Boys Day) but is timed to coincide with San Jose Japantown’s popular Nikkei Matsuri event on the last Sunday in April. In 2014 JAMsj introduced Grandparents Day as a September family event. Aggie Idemoto, JAMsj president, noted, “This inaugural cross-generational event is a keeper. I look forward to annual celebrations of grandparents.” And on January 11, 2015, JAMsj will host an oshogatsu family event featuring shodō (Japanese calligraphy), New Year-themed origami, kid crafts, button making, and more will be featured.

Note: The date of the next Grandparents Day event has not yet been set. Although the program booklet for the 2014 Grandparents Day event announced that the 2015 event would be held on September 6, we have been asked to change the date so that families who want to travel together for Labor Day weekend will not miss the event.

Thank you to Halau Na Wai Ola, Kenji Taguma, Nikkei Traditions, the San Jose JACL, Saratoga Taiko, Wesley Ukulele Band, Yu-Ai Kai, our partner Lotus Preschool, and all of our wonderful JAMsj volunteers who helped make this event possible.

For more information on Public Programs at JAMsj, or to join our volunteer team, please contact Komo at PublicPrograms@JAMsj.org

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**Message from the President  by Aggie Idemoto**

Throughout the years, the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) has received generous financial and material donations from community members. Some have had an interesting history, such as memoirs or photos discovered long after one’s parents had passed on. While we don’t have all the names or dates, the journey of a painting by watercolor artist Chiura Obata (1885 to 1975) has the markings of intriguing lore.

The principal of a downtown San Jose, California, elementary school, the late Vi Owens, found an Obata painting in a closet when the school closed down due to dwindling enrollment. She took it home for safekeeping and then reported the find to the San Jose Unified School District’s then-superintendent, Don Iglesias, who served in that capacity from 2004 to 2010.

When she delivered the painting to Iglesias, he thanked her and indicated that it would be displayed at the central office. He asked her where it should be archived after that. JAMsj was her immediate response.

This painting was not just any artifact. Obata was a gifted and talented watercolor artist who came from Japan and resided in San Francisco before WWII. He was incarcerated at Topaz, Utah, where he taught art classes. Upon his return, he taught art at U.C. Berkeley and subsequently published *Obata’s Yosemite*, a beautiful book depicting the place which was his greatest source of inspiration.

Joyce Oyama, a retired art teacher on the JAMsj board, noted that the painting, entitled *Flower Arrangement*, may have been inspired by Obata’s wife, who was a flower arranging teacher. JAMsj had the painting appraised by Machiko Shiozaki, owner of Kimura Gallery in Palo Alto. We then realized then we owned a priceless work of art. It turns out that this material donation was also a financial, historical, and artistic one. Since Obata is world famous, we are very fortunate to have a piece of his work. It will be treasured and admired for years to come. Come see it!

**JAMsj Winter Boutique: Another Winner  by Warren Hayashi**

The Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) successfully completed its 20th annual Winter Boutique at the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin Gymnasium on November 8, 2014. This much-anticipated event is one of the museum’s major fund-raising activities. Thanks to the talented vendor community and the volunteer museum staff, it was a very successful day. The money raised from the boutique is used for the operation of the museum.

We would like to thank all of the supporters of the boutique for their purchases of the crafts, foods, and specialty items from the museum. We are also grateful to all the vendors who provided prizes for the donation drawing and silent auction.

Hope to see you at the next event in 2015! Come do your Christmas shopping, hang out with your friends, and enjoy good eats! The 2015 boutique will be held on Nov. 14th. Check the website www.jamsj.org for the latest information.
San Jose Japantown: A Journey Launched Successfully! by Robert McKibbin

The official launch of the book, San Jose Japantown: A Journey, on November 29 at the Buddhist Church Betsuin, was a huge success. Co-authors Curt Fukuda and Ralph M. Pearce were on hand to sign books and talk about their book. The opening performance by San Jose Taiko’s very own Roy and PJ Hirabayashi mesmerized the hundreds of audience members and set the tone for a festive event.

The program, emceed by comedian and NBC Bay Area morning traffic anchor, Mike Inouye, opened with short but inspirational speeches by the Honorable Judge Paul Bernal (and official historian of the City of San Jose), Japanese American Museum of San Jose’s (JAMsj) representative Jimi Yamaichi, and co-authors Fukuda and Pearce.

After the speeches, the two authors diligently got to work signing hundreds of copies while folks paged through the book, mingled with friends, swapped stories, collected autographs from people in the book, and took in the many historical photos on display while enjoying the plethora of tasty snacks.

But the real star of the event was the book itself. With 470 pages, more than 500 photos, and a weight of 6.4 pounds, it covers in exquisite detail the history of Japantown from before it was even called that through 2010. There are hundreds of family names listed in the index to make it easy to find historical references to your own family.


Copies of San Jose Japantown: A Journey can be purchased at the JAMsj museum store. Come by the museum, leaf through the book, and experience a walk down memory lane. You will enjoy the journey. Looking at the numerous photos, you are bound to find many places and friends from the past that you will readily recognize. You can also shop from home at www.jamsj.org.

Legacy Means a Lasting Impact on JAMsj

The mission of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) is to collect, preserve, and share Japanese American history, culture, and art with an emphasis on the greater Bay Area.

JAMsj is working passionately to leave a lasting legacy about the Japanese American experience for present and future generations. You can help achieve this goal by including JAMsj in your estate planning. Besides outright financial gifts, your estate advisor can suggest other ways to incorporate gift-giving to JAMsj in your estate planning.

JAMsj is a 501(c) (3), tax-exempt non-profit organization, governed by a board of directors, has no paid staff, and is supported by more than 180 volunteers. The museum is financially supported by memberships, grants, donations, the annual Winter Boutique, admission fees, and retail proceeds.

Thank you for your continued support,
Aggie Idemoto, Ed. D., President
Robert McKibbin, Fund Development Director
Take Me Out to the Old Ball Game: Celebrating a 1944 Inter-camp Baseball Series
by Ralph Pearce

On October 26, the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) hosted a program celebrating the 70th anniversary of a series of baseball games played between the Gila River Relocation Center in Arizona and Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming. In 1944, the Gila River All-Stars traveled more than 1,000 miles to visit Heart Mountain for a series of thirteen games against various Heart Mountain teams. The trip was quite an ambitious undertaking for that time. And this was the second time, as the previous year Heart Mountain had sent a team to Gila River for a series of games.

The program began at 1 p.m. with Bill Staples, Jr., Kerry Yo Nakagawa of the Nisei Baseball Research Project and me introducing the nisei panelists: George Hashimoto, Ernie Inouye, Kenso Zenimura, Tets Furukawa, George Iseri, and Masao Iriyama. The audience of approximately fifty was treated to some great stories (and some good-natured kidding) by the panel. Memorable stories included Furukawa’s description of the bus ride from Gila River to Heart Mountain, as well as testimony about the amazing pitching of Heart Mountain’s Iseri.

Audience member Helen Imagawa pleased the crowd with her memories of the series. Her father was Russell Hinaga, who was San Jose and Heart Mountain’s counterpart to Fresno and Gila River’s Kenichi Zenimura. The two were friendly baseball rivals, and Helen recounted how thrilled she was when her father took her over to the opposing team’s dugout to meet Zenimura’s handsome young sons Harvey (Kenshi) and Howard (Kenso).

Kerry Nakagawa wowed the audience with some recently discovered historic footage of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig’s 1927 visit to Fresno’s Firemen’s Park. The twenty-one seconds of footage included Ruth and Gehrig posing for the familiar photograph with Kenichi Zenimura and John Nakagawa. Staples also shared some color footage of Heart Mountain baseball games taken by Eiichi Sakayue and acquired from the Densho Digital Archives.

The afternoon ended with book sales and signings with Staples, (Kenichi Zenimura: Japanese American Baseball Pioneer), Kerry Yo Nakagawa (Japanese American Baseball in California), author Marissa Moss (Barbed Wire Baseball), and me (From Asahi to Zebras). A fun and memorable time was had by all.

The anniversary celebration was the inspiration of Staples and Kerry Yo Nakagawa. It was coordinated through the efforts of Komo Gauvreau with the assistance of Chris Hioki, Iris Lou, and Roy Matsuzaki. A pre-program potluck was held with many wonderful dishes, including Kerry Yo Nakagawa’s tsukemono (which I tried and liked).

Many thanks go to the primary organizers (Staples, Kerry Yo Nakagawa, Gauvreau, Lou, and Hioki), all the former players, Marissa Moss, Steve Fugita with his camera, our museum crew for the day, and all of our enthusiastic attendees. Good work, everyone!
Nikkei Remembrance at Angel Island State Park  by Frederick Liang

On October 4, 2014, volunteers from the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) journeyed across the bay to attend the first organized Japanese American pilgrimage to Angel Island State Park. This pilgrimage was organized by the Nichi Bei Foundation in partnership with the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation and the National Japanese American Historical Society. The purpose of the pilgrimage was to allow the Japanese American community to reconnect with its history at the Angel Island U.S. Immigration Station. Ferries from the ports of San Francisco and Tiburon carried visitors from all over the Bay Area and beyond to commemorate the island’s history of detaining Japanese Americans.

Also known as the “Ellis Island of the West,” the U.S. Immigration Station at Angel Island was a major immigration station for the United States from 1910 to the 1940s. The immigration station was established under the Bureau of Immigration to monitor and control the influx of immigrants from across the Pacific Ocean. The island was an ideal location for an immigration station as it provided an isolated and restrictive setting for immigrants. Detainees were subjected to medical exams for communicable disease and hours of lengthy inquiry. The majority of immigrants detained were of Chinese descent, subject to the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Most Japanese immigrants detained at the immigration station were picture brides and returning American-born Japanese. Immigrants of Japanese descent were the second largest ethnic group to be processed at Angel Island (approximately 85,000). During WWII, the island continued to detain and incarcerate Japanese immigrants and prisoners of war (POWs). The POWs were subjugated to interrogation by the U.S. military. When the war ended in 1945, the immigration station was abandoned and left to deteriorate until its rediscovery in 1970 by a state park ranger, Alexander Weiss.

Weiss was working at Angel Island when he came across engraved Chinese poetry and other inscriptions on the walls of the former immigration station. He learned from his superiors that the “hazardous” immigration station was to be demolished. Weiss, convinced of the station’s importance and historical significance, immediately contacted his biology professor from San Francisco State University, George Araki, and photographer Mak Takahashi to document and photograph the site.

This began a movement by the Asian-American community to preserve the immigration station. Paul Chow formed the Angel Island Immigration Station Historical Advisory Committee (AIISHAC) to preserve the immigration station for historical interpretation. When you visit the renovated U.S. Immigration Station at Angel Island today, it is clear that the museum has done a great job of preserving the carvings of Chinese poems and authentically restoring the barracks to provide an immersive experience.

The itinerary of the main program was filled with music, poems, historical lectures, and stories of the Japanese American experience. The program started with musicians donning traditional Japanese garb and playing various instruments, including the koto and taiko drums. Reverend Ken Yamada of the Berkeley Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple chanted a prayer and bestowed a blessing on the souls of Angel Island. Tim Yamamura, of the Nichi Bei Foundation, gave the audience a proper welcome to the island before presentations from featured guests.

Because the backgrounds of the various featured guests were quite diverse, the program was extremely well-rounded:

- Poet and playwright Hiroshi Kashiwagi recited his poem, “An Issei Woman,” based on his mother’s experience of detainment at Angel Island.
- Ben Fenkell, interpreter of Angel Island State Park, greeted the audience and explained the importance of remembering all immigrants who made their passage to the United States through Angel Island. He revealed that Filipinos were also once detained at the immigration station.
- Kenji G. Taguma, president of the Nichi Bei Foundation, spoke of how we should recognize the efforts of the Angel Island Immigration Station’s rediscovery and preservation by Alexander Weiss, George Araki, and Mak Takahashi.
- Judy Yung, a retired professor from UC Santa Cruz and co-author of Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway America, lectured on the history of Japanese immigrants at Angel Island.
- San Francisco JACL presented a storytelling of Toshiko Inaba: Longest Journey Home, a script written by Judy Hamaguchi and acted by Pearl Wong and Tim Yamamura.
- Linda Harms Okazaki discussed how Nikkeis can connect their stories and family histories to Angel Island. New research on Japanese POWs and Nikkei imprisoned at Angel Island from both Hawai‘i and the U.S. mainland was presented by Grant Din.

[Continued on page 6—Remembrance]
The main program ended with acknowledgements by Kiyomi Tanaka of the Nichi Bei Foundation, giving thanks to those who supported and attended the Nikkei pilgrimage.

Before and after the main program, there were a number of activities and mini-exhibits for visitors at the mess hall. The mini-exhibits explored the history of the immigration station and the detainment of Japanese immigrants and POWs during WWII. Video interviews of Peter Ota (interpreter for Japanese POWs) and Mike Masuyama (son of a Japanese POW) were screened for visitors to watch. An outdoor display of Design Studio: Migration, Memory & Settlement was presented by California College of Arts architecture instructors Margaret Ikeda and Evan Jones. At the family history station, visitors retraced their family history with the help of Linda Harms Okazaki and other volunteers from the California Genealogical Society.

JAMsj had the honor of presenting the history of Japanese Americans in Santa Clara Valley and also providing several hands-on activities for children of all ages. JAMsj’s public programs coordinator, Komo Gauvreau, and JAMsj volunteers helped organize fun games, activities, and crafts. Mary Pitman, Chris Hioki, Shohei Ichiyama, and Fred Liang facilitated a luggage activity, the building of family trees, button making, a matching game with prizes, and origami paper folding. Visitors who participated in the JAMsj’s games and activities were able to bring a small souvenir home from their pilgrimage to Angel Island.

When the event ended, people patiently waited for the ferries to journey home. Because the first Nikkei pilgrimage was such a successful event, the history of Japanese immigrants to the U.S. Immigration Station at Angel Island was allowed to surface once again. Thanks to the efforts of dedicated local individuals, Angel Island will forever remain a historic landmark of the American immigrant experience.

Shop at Amazon? Here is an Easy, No Cost way to support JAMsj almost every time you shop at Amazon

1. Instead of logging into amazon.com, log into smile.amazon.com. On your first shopping trip, you’ll be asked which non-profit organization you want to support – type in Japanese American Museum of San Jose. You only have to do this the first time. The next time the site will automatically remember that you want to support JAMsj. That’s it – everything else remains the same – cost, products, your account etc. If you want to check if an item qualifies for the program go to the product detail page where you’ll see “Eligible for AmazonSmile donation”.

2. You can add a one button shortcut to your browser so you don’t have to remember anything.

3. JAMsj will receive 0.5% of the purchase price. Almost every physical product sold is eligible. Digital goods are not covered nor are recurring Subscribe-and-Save and subscription renewals.
On the night of September 4, 2014, groups of friends and individuals patiently waited outside of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) for a chance to view a special film screening of *Yuri Kochiyama: A Passion for Justice*. Directed by Rea Tajiri, this 1991 documentary chronicles the life and achievements of the late civil and human rights activist, Yuri Kochiyama.

This event was hosted by CAAMFest San Jose and co-presented with the Asian Pacific Islanders for Professional and Community Advancement (APCA) Northern California. Formerly known as the San Francisco International Asian American Festival, CAAMFest is one of the nation’s largest Asian American/Asian film festivals. Organized by the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM), CAAMFest holds annual film festivals in Berkeley, San Francisco, and San Jose.

To start off the evening, JAMsj president, Aggie Idemoto, introduced JAMsj’s advisory board member and De Anza College California History Center director, Tom Izu. He described how Kochiyama reminded him of his own family and its incarceration experience during WWII. His family rarely discussed what life in camps was like, leaving him in the dark about its harsh conditions. Izu jokingly remarked that as a child he thought the federally mandated “internment” camps were like summer camps. It was only much later in life that he learned the true nature of what being incarcerated meant for Japanese Americans.

The screening featured two distinguished guests: Stephen Gong, Executive Director of CAAM, and Matt Mui, APCA Advisory Board member. Due to family matters, filmmaker and director Rea Tajiri wasn’t able to attend. After Izu’s speech, Gong gave the audience his formal introduction about his role as CAAM executive director. Before presenting the film, APCA advisory board member Matt Mui emphasized to the audience the importance of screening a documentary about a human rights activist in a place like JAMsj.

Prior to his introduction, Gong described to me his special relationship with Kochiyama and her husband Bill. Gong worked closely with the Kochiyamas in the early Asian-American media movement. Together they won the Steven Tatsukawa Award in 1991 from Visual Communications. Gong also explained how CAAM initially wanted to screen the documentary for Kochiyama’s Oakland “life celebration” memorial in August 2014. Although the plan fell through, they decided to reach out specifically to JAMsj to be the documentary’s venue for CAAMFest San Jose.

The documentary recounts Kochiyama’s life and career as a vocal human rights activist by using footage of interviews with Kochiyama, as well as with her family members and friends. Kochiyama was born as Mary Yuriko Nakamura in 1921 and was raised in San Pedro, California. Her father, an Issei fish merchant, was detained by the FBI on December 7, 1941, on suspicions of espionage. He was recovering from surgery when detained but was refused medical care. As a result, Kochiyama’s father died shortly after being released. She herself ended up being incarcerated under Executive Order 9066. Despite such experiences, at that time Kochiyama considered herself “apolitical” or uninvolved in politics.

When WWII ended, Kochiyama became a Presbyterian Sunday school teacher and married a veteran of the 442nd regiment, Bill Kochiyama. Together they moved to New York City. There Kochiyama became “politically conscious” after seeing the detrimental effects of racism and segregation in American society, particularly for the black community. She moved her family to Harlem and enrolled her children in the Harlem Freedom School to help further racial integration in schools.

Kochiyama actively participated in many civil rights movements throughout her life. She was heavily involved in the black liberation movement and befriended Malcolm X, who strongly influenced her political activist career. A few of many sociopolitical causes she championed were anti-war protests against the Vietnam War, the Puerto Ricans’ struggle for independence, the Asian American identity crisis, and the push for ethnic studies at the City College of New York. She diligently voiced her concerns and never stopped fighting for communities in need. Even at an elderly age, Kochiyama continued to work as a dedicated activist for many social and political movements.

When the film ended, the audience members were able to ask questions of the presenters about Kochiyama and the documentary. A conversation about her open and warm personality led Gong and friends of Kochiyama’s to share their own personal memories of her. An impressive quality of Kochiyama, one audience member revealed, was her ability to befriend and remember the names of everyone she met. A woman, wearing a T-shirt with Kochiyama’s face printed on it, shared how she traveled across the country in hopes of reconnecting with her friend. These recollections of Kochiyama show that she was a personable, communicative, and touching individual. They also serve to solidify her legacy as an inspiring and compelling human rights activist.

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*CAAMFest 2014 Shows Kochiyama Documentary at JAMsj* by Frederick Liang

Tom Izu remembering Yuri Kochiyama’s legacy

Stephen Gong, Executive Director of CAAM

JAMsj News - 7
The connections of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) are often far-reaching. A recent connection is to Juneau, Alaska, where in July of this year a memorial was dedicated to the small Japanese community who were interned during WWII. JAMsj member, Alice Hikido, a former resident of Juneau, served on the committee together with Juneau community members. Their desire was to preserve this important part of history—that Alaskan Japanese were included in the 120,000 persons who were evacuated and interned during WWII.

The memorial also recognized the Juneau community for supporting their Japanese friends and neighbors during this difficult time, most especially when the internees returned to Juneau after the war was over and faced the difficult task of picking up their lives again. Although it has been more than seventy years since this occurred, this story is important to preserve for future generations.

The memorial is named The Empty Chair Memorial. The empty chair is a symbol of a chair left vacant for a graduating senior, valedictorian John Tanaka, who missed his graduation because he was shipped away to the Minidoka concentration camp in Idaho. This symbol also represents the absence of the Japanese community in Juneau at that time. It is heartwarming that a group of current Alaskans recognized the importance of telling this story and provided support for erecting the memorial. The city of Juneau has included the memorial on its walking tour map for the more than 300,000 tourists who visit Juneau each summer. Many of these tourists are unaware of the internment experience so this will be a valuable opportunity to share the story of how a community supported its friends and neighbors at a time when fear dominated the country and injustice prevailed.

When the effort to raise the funds for erecting this Alaskan memorial began, JAMsj board member, Joe Yasutake, learned of the project from Hikido. He concluded that it had merit since there is very little history or record of the internment of the Alaskan Japanese. Yasutake has extensive experience in writing grants for JAMsj and encouraged the committee to apply for a National Park Service grant, which had funds allocated for preserving the internment story. Yasutake’s effort paid off as the project was successful in satisfying the requirements of the grant and received a significant amount to jump-start the effort for raising the remaining funds.

Fortunately, many local institutions and Alaskans are continuing to preserve this important part of their history. A play, Within the Silence, was written to vividly explain the background and consequences of the forced removal and incarceration. Others have developed art and other educational materials around the Empty Chair Project. Further, the Alaska State Library is collecting and preserving poignant family stories, pictures, and documents.
Chris Hioki: Magician of Public Programs  by Stephanie Fugita

Chris Hioki started volunteering at the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) because he wanted to get in touch with his Japanese heritage as well as give his time to a worthwhile cause. He began volunteering after he transitioned out of his career at Wyse Technologies, where he provided customer support in technology and also worked in software quality assurance. Because he felt he was not enough familiar with JAMsj, he decided to attend the volunteer fair after seeing it on the museum’s website.

Hioki explained that his job is to provide support for JAMsj public programs, primarily event setups and teardowns. He also described himself as “a runner” (defined as those who carry messages and run errands) for events such as the winter boutique and book signings.

Born in San Jose, Hioki grew up in Sunnyvale and currently resides in Milpitas. When he is not volunteering at JAMsj, he works part time in a warehouse at a trophy parts distribution company. In his free time he enjoys listening to music such as the Grateful Dead and jazz. He also enjoys sports and is a loyal fan of Bay Area teams such as the Giants, A’s, 49ers, and Warriors.

Hioki stated that he really enjoys his experience at JAMsj and that he finds all of the volunteers very helpful. He expressed that his best experience was Grandparents Day, for which Komo Gauvreau’s public program group members did “a great job in a short period of time.” He explained that they “put on a great event and everyone cooperated.” Hioki ended by saying that he finds it inspirational when he walks into the museum and sees younger people helping out next to the more seasoned volunteers. Thank you for all your efforts, Chris!

Volunteers Feted by Board at Brunch  by Barbara Uchiyama

We have more than 180 people who volunteer in some capacity to ensure that our doors remain open. The Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) is an important cornerstone in San Jose’s Japantown as well as a source of educational and cultural events which reach far beyond the greater Bay Area. To show appreciation to our wonderful and tireless volunteers, our board sponsors a yearly thank-you brunch.

It was risky to project whether or not many would be able to come because it was held over the three-day Labor Day weekend. However, JAMsj’s calendar is so impacted that we had to take the risk. As it turned out, more than sixty volunteers ate, drank, and were merry on that beautiful Saturday morning amidst our outstanding agricultural display area. Once again, many volunteers made new friends and were able to bond with fellow volunteers.

We hope that if you are a volunteer and had to miss this one, you will be able to attend next year. Knowing that we couldn’t exist without you, the board extends a heartfelt thank you!
Many thanks to all of the generous donors who helped to pay off the loan on the new building and made possible the wide range of exciting programs that took place this year.

$5,000 and up
Oyama Family Foundation
Takahashi, Hannah

$1,000 to $4,999
Arakawa, Jeanette
Fugita, Steve & Karen
Idemoto, Aggie & Junio
JTB Cultural Exchange Corp.
Koketsu, Masao & Karlene
Lee, Emory & Ayleen Ito
Okimoto, Kristin
Sano, Annie Barbara
Tarr, Lois Shimizu

$500 to $999
Fujimoto, Tetsuo
Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Northern California
Kaku, Will
Koo, Gordon & Pam Yoshida
Morin, Gregory & Randy
Oyama, Joyce Yuri
Sakayue, Carolyn & Ernest Kazato
Tahara, Dexter
Taketa, Victoria
Yamaoka, George & Aki
Yamate, Emi

$200 to $499
Ando, Ernie & Emily
Battelle
Dobashi, Perry & Toni
Ellis, Jerry & Fran
Fudenna, Keith H.
Fukushima, Etsuko
Fukushima, M.
Furukawa, Ken & Joyce
Hane, Gerald
Hayashi, Helen
Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation
Ishida, Phyllis
Ishimaru, Mikio & Vicki
Iwanaga, Reiko
Kajiko, Tadao & Yoshiko
Kawahara, Tom & Toshiko
Kawakami, Ray & Kathleen
Kimura Gallery
Kimura, Kristine
Kurasaki, Jean
Kuros, Richard & Elinor
Maruyama, Patti
Masumoto, Mario
Mckibbin, Bob & Barbara
Mishima, David
Morimoto, Edward & Penny
Nisei Baseball Research Project
Nishimura, Erin
Okada, Hidechi & Natsyo

Okimoto, Teruko
Oyama, Leo
Oyama, Louise
Oyama, M.
San Jose Chidori Band
Sasao, Alice
Setoguchi, Carol
Shepherd, Masako
Shiba, Seiji & Della
Shimomichi, Warren & Rosie
Shiroyama, Hatsu
Suga, Kei & Mimi
Tanaka, Norm & Alice
Tomita, Stanley & Margaret
Tsunekawa, Tats & Rose
Walker, Bill & Mikiko
Yamaichi, Jimi & Eiko
Yamato, Donald & Mary
Yotsuya, Arthur & Patricia
Yuki, Thomas & Carol

$100 to $199
Ando, Lloyd & Elaine
Aritomi, Janice
Balfour, Alan & Linda
Doi, Tom & Chiyoko
Ellingson, Lynda
Fujii, Bob & Ida
Fujimoto, Don & Luanne
Fukuhara, George & Masako
Goebner, Nancy
Gotliffe, Harvey & Carmen
Hammer, Susan
Hanada, George & Shizuka
Hatakeyama, Shelley M.
Hayashi, Kevin & Roberta
Hirasaki, Hisashi & Jean
Hirose, Steven & Sandra
Honda, Elsie
Ichikawa, Takeo & Yoshiko
Inami, Frank
Iwamiya, Todd
Iwamura, Warren
Kanazawa, Ann
Kato, Ann Toshie
Kawabata, Allen & Patricia
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