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See page 6 for details

JOIN JACL CHICAGO TODAY!

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43rd Holiday Delight & Kodomo Matsuri

by Lisa Sakai

S aturday, November 11, 2023, was a bittersweet farewell to the last Holiday Delight held at the Clark Street location as the JASC will be moving to their new facility next year. This neighborhood event has long been a favorite within both

the JA and local community. Part craft fair, holiday market, cultural exhibit, food fair and children's playground—there is something for everyone. Even a visit from Santa!

Manning the JACL table in the Holiday Market area gave a great view of all the Asianinspired gifts and crafts being sold, as well as an opportunity to reach out to everyone who is shopping or walking by. Many of the people who attended Holiday Delight are also JACL Chicago members, so it was great to talk to old friends and re-connect with people I hadn't seen in a while. However, there were also some people who were unfamiliar with the JACL and most of their questions and



JACL CHICAGO BOARD MEMBERS, (LEFT TO RIGHT) BEN NISHIMURA, LISA DOI, AND BRIAN OZAKI VOLUNTEER AT HOLIDAY DELIGHT

interest were in learning about Kansha and Camp Daikon.

Aside from getting a jump start on their holiday shopping, most people came for the food. Besides the perennial favorite teriyaki burger (thank you Tohkon) and baked goods (thank you to all the bakers), this year's menu included different types of bento boxes (salmon, beef, karaage, tofu), sushi (inari, futomaki), onigiri, Katsu sando, curry

Continued on page 2

JACL Japanese American Citizens League CHICAGO CHAPTER

Securing and maintaining the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry.

Article submission deadline for our next issue is Feb 28th, 2024.

The JACLer is published by the JACL Chicago Chapter for its members, supporters, and friends. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and article submissions.

For More Information

For information about the JACL Chicago Chapter, call 773.728.7171, or visit <u>www.jaclchicago.org</u>

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43rd Holiday Delight continued

rice, okonomiyaki, nishime (thank you Jackie's Kitchen), furikake popcorn and Kashiwa mochi. As usual, the food sold out very quickly. I heard the mochi was exceptionally fresh and tasty. Tragically, I did not arrive in time to taste anything but the cookies, which luckily, someone had the foresight to buy early and hide at the JACL table!

Even though I didn't get to try the okonomiyaki, curry or salmon, it was better that I wasn't stuffing my face when I got to meet TV and film actor Jae-Boem Takata, otherwise known as Brian Tee. Tee played Dr. Ethan Choi on Chicago Med and now lives in Chicago with his wife and daughter. He enjoyed the fact that his daughter got to see an Asian Santa.

The highlight for the children is, of course, Santa's visit. Holiday Delight is one of the few places where children get to see an Asian Santa. Besides Santa, the children were kept engaged by the crafts at Tampopo Kai and games at Donguri Kai...absorbing their Asian heritage just by playing.

While visitors enjoyed their tasty lunch purchases, they also got to enjoy watching a variety of performances of Japanese dancing (Shubukai) and Japanese lute playing (Toyoaki shamisen) or Japanese drumming (Tsukasa Taiko) or the more reflective pursuit of Japanese flower arranging (Ikebana).

Overall, it was a great day. I just hope Santa can find the new location next year! 簐

Asian American Coalition of Chicago 41st Annual Lunar New Year Celebration Saturday 02.10.2024

AACC

Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace aacchicago.org | aacchicago2024@gmail.com HOSTED BY THE JAPANESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Annual Meeting Review

by Lisa Sakai

n Wednesday, November 29, JACL Chicago members gathered at Konbini & Kanpai for our annual meeting. We enjoyed the hospitality of Naomi, Jun Jun, and Aiko and delicious food from Eric Hattori and Piko Kitchen. President Lisa Doi provided a report back from convention, a recap of our early strategic planning conversations, and shared preliminary discussions for Kansha Too in 2024. Midwest District Governor Eric Langowski shared updates on happenings regionally and from the National Board Meetings.

Across the Midwest, chapters are focused on advancing civil rights. For example the Texas chapter has been actively fighting a new surge of alien land laws, in this case restricting property ownership by Chinese and Iranian immigrants. Brian Ozaki, Civil Rights Committee chair, reflected on Asian American Action Day and our work to support ending Chicago's Gang Database.

Next, Rebecca Ozaki, Kristi Lin, and Christine Munteanu each shared updates about various youth programs. Rebecca highlighted the Kansha Project and the return of the Kansha Alumni Leadership Board. The new ALB will get started in December. Kristi talked about Camp Daikon, a new partnership between JACL Chicago and Nikkei Uprising, that focused on identity development, political engagement, and community building amongst younger Nikkei. After a successful launch, the program will return in 2025. Finally, Christine shared an update on the scholarship programwhich is seeing a return to pre-COVID application levels this year.

After the programmatic updates, Tonko Doi, Membership & Fundraising Committee chair, shared that the chapter is still the second largest in the country! She also promoted the holiday ads that will be forthcoming in the next Pacific Citizen—keep an eye out for the well wishes from chapter members. Then Treasurer Megan Nakano provided an update on the chapter's finances and increased maintenance costs to keep up our 100+ year old building.



JACL CHICAGO BOARD MEMBERS (TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) BRIAN OZAKI, LISA DOI, LISA SAKAI, JOE GALLIGAN, KRISTI LIN, JENNIFER BROWN, (BOTTOM ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) MEGAN NAKANO, TONKO DOI, KELLY IJICHI, BEN NISHIMURA, AND STAFF, REBECCA OZAKI AT KONBINI AND KANPAI

The last report came from Rebecca who gave a staff report, including a preview for Day of Remembrance 2024! Please save the date for a two-part Day of Remembrance: on Sunday, February 18th, there will be a presentation on the intergenerational impacts of the WWII incarceration between Dr. Donna Nagata from the University of Michigan and Jami Nakamura Lin. Dr. Nagata has conducted research with Nisei, Sansei, and Yonsei on the ongoing impact of the incarceration and Nakamura Lin recently published The Night Parade, a speculative memoir which includes her reflections on her grandfather's incarceration. On

Saturday, February 17th, there will also be intergenerational discussion circles. More information to come!

The final order of business was to elect the new chapter board. We welcomed Ben Nishimura and Joe Galligan, both Kansha Alumni, to the board. We also thanked Josh Fidler, Brandon Lee, and Judy Tanaka for their board service. During the community announcements, Megan gave a reminder about the Asian American Coalition of Chicago's Lunar New Year on February 10th. We're looking forward to a great event hosted by the Japanese American community.

This holiday season and every day...

MEGAN NAKANO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Asian American Chamber of Commerce of Illinois Megan@AACCIL.org | www.AACCIL.org

JACL Board Retreat Recap

by Jennifer Brown

ACL embarked on a strategic planning process this year, prompted by various factors such as new board members, and programmatic hiatus caused by the pandemic. A chief factor was also the board grappling with defining the role of a civil rights organization in today's context and landscape of Chicago. Despite our longstanding history and reputation as the oldest Asian American civil rights group, defining our role in a world with numerous collaborative partners posed a challenge. Recognizing the need for realignment, the board agreed on the significance of a day-long retreat to foster deeper connections among the board, understand individual narratives, and formulate a unified vision for the current board. Megan Nakano, a former president and current board member, assumed the pivotal role of facilitating this retreat.

This retreat also marked the postpandemic inaugural in-person meeting, where several members met face to face for the first time. Eleven board members attended the retreat, and the agenda encompassed a historical overview of JACL, storytelling sessions highlighting individual connections to the organization, and discussions on the skills board members possessed to aid in fulfilling aspirations within JACL Chicago.

The day began with a historical overview of JACL, reviewing the organization's origins. The article delved into Dr. T.T. Yatabe's contributions to the community, and traced the organization's journey from the American Loyalty League in 1923 to JACL, electing Dr. T. T. Yatabe as its first national president in 1934. Tom Yatabe, his grandson, graciously read this overview for the board, sparking warm conversations about memories and connections among the members.

Against the backdrop of our historical context, we proceeded to deliberate on the current financial and programmatic status of JACL Chicago. A notable challenge surfaced during the financial review: beyond our annual mailing campaigns and the Kansha Project, we haven't organized additional fundraising events since 2019, and we were operating at a financial loss. Nonetheless, the programmatic assessment highlighted successes: Notably, Kansha



Project this year engaged 10 participants, and we launched the biennial Camp Daikon. Both initiatives witnessed a growing participation of Japanese nationals and received commendation from attendees. Collaboration with the PAVE coalition successfully ended the gang database, a significant step in enhancing community safety

and civil rights in Chicago. From the current overview of our organization, one thing became clear: we need the support and financial contributions of our membership in order to build on the legacy of our predecessors.

Following these substantial discussions, the board engaged in a session to exchange personal narratives that underscored our individual ties to the organization. We shared our reflections, encompassing our frustrations, appreciations, and envisioned the future trajectory of the organization. Additionally, we delineated the skills we aspire to contribute toward advancing the organization's objectives.

Highlights of the board vision included planning and executing a fundraising event annually to bolster financial support, reconceptualizing membership strategies to enhance the chapter's appeal and value proposition to our members, possibly revising the membership dues model, and exploring the process of acquiring a separate 501c3 status independent of National to facilitate organizational independence and fundraising opportunities.

The board is enthusiastic about the retreat's outcomes and we aim to leverage our diverse skills to propel the chapter forward. We earnestly encourage our members' continued engagement, inviting you to join us on this transformative journey. As the organization navigates a crucial phase, we kindly seek the support of our members in any capacity, be it through joining one of our committees or financial contributions, to fortify our endeavors.

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Ozaki Memorial Garden Dedicated in Chicago

By Phillip Ozaki

Sam Ozaki

In December of 1941 Sam Ozaki was 17 and a senior in high school in San Pedro County, Calif, whe Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Empire of Japan. Following the attack, the United States governmer forced more than 120.000 Japanese-Americans Into incarceration camps, Including Sam Ozaki and hi family. Ozaki's family was first moved to the Santa Anita Racetrack in Arcadia, California, a hors racing venue that had been coverted into an incarceration camp. During the 1990s, while Principa of William Howard Taft High School, Ozaki testified before the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Interament of Civilians: "They treated the horses. animals, better than they treated us."

Oraki's family was later moved to the Jerome War. Relocation Center In southeasterin Arkansas. During this time Ozaki petitioned to join the United States and he hortow his logarity to the United States and help reunite his father, who had been placed in a separate incarceration camp, with the rest of his family.

n september of 1944 Oraki was dispatched to the segregated 4420 Regimental Combat Feam, made up almost entriely of aganese-Americans. The 442nd became the nost highly decorated regiment in Kuerican military history and suffered huge assualities, sweing combat in Iraly, Prance, and Germany, Oxaki received a Purple Heart during WWI and in 2011, the 442nd was collectively homored by President Okama with the Congressional Gold Medal, the aution's histore rivitian award.



Arter the war, Ozaki used the or bin to arteno kooseven; oniversity in onkago, Arter earning a master's degree at Loyola University in school administration and supervision. Sam Ozaki Decame the first Astan-American Principal in the Chicago Public Schools, serving as the Principal of William Howard Tark High School from 077-1989. During his career and aften his retirement Principal Ozaki spoke of his experience in the incarceration camps to educate the public on the dangers of xenophobia and the delicate nature of our civil liberties. The activities of Principal Ozaki and others like him helped influence President Ronald Reagan into signing a 1988 law that issued a formal apology to each incarceration camps verview.

SAM OZAKI PLAQUE FOR THE OZAKI MEMORIAL GARDEN

n October 13, 2023, the William Howard Taft High School Alumni Association dedicated a plaque and memorial garden in memory of Sam Ozaki who served as principal from 1977 to 1989. Mr. Ozaki was a Nisei who fought in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, served as a leader for Japanese American Redress, and became the first Asian American high school principal in the city of Chicago. He was also a Chicago JACL Chapter leader.

In April 1942, Mr. Ozaki's family was forced to drive themselves to Santa Anita Race Track temporary concentration camp. He was one of 125,000 Japanese Americans who were incarcerated by the U.S. government during World War II. "They treated the horses, animals, better than they treated us," he shared with students, the media, and audiences about his wartime experience, testifying before CWRIC in 1980.

His family was then sent to Jerome concentration camp in the swamps of Arkansas. They were separated from his father, Kyujiro Ozaki, because the FBI abducted him from their family house shortly after Executive Order 9066. Mr. Ozaki and his brother, Yoji Ozaki, fought in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team even though few in their camp enrolled and earned a Purple Heart.

After the war, Mr. Ozaki resettled in Chicago where he completed his masters degree in education and then became an administrator at Le Moyne (now Inter-American Elementary Magnet School in Lakeview). He became principal at Shoesmith and O'Keeffe elementary schools, and Harrison, Lakeview, and Taft high schools. He married Harue Ozaki who was a Chicago Public School (CPS) nurse. They had three children.

Mr. Ozaki worked in CPS during difficult times of high racial tension when school systems around the country attempted to integrate *Brown v. Board of Education.* Neighborhood families were pulling their children from public schools and moving them to private and suburban schools. According to the alumni association, Principal Ozaki was one of the best principals at the school, the 2nd largest public high school in Illinois. Known for remembering the names and greeting all of his students, he made his diverse students feel welcomed and valued. Rebecca Ozaki, granddaughter and Chicago JACL staff member, says, "My grandfather has always been my hero and I learned from him the meaning of being part of a community. Through his words and actions, he taught me that it is our responsibility to share our story and build solidarity with others facing injustice. It means the world to me to see his legacy immortalized in a plaque and at a school where he made a lasting impact. Standing there in the garden with my son, Kai, his great grandson, was extremely powerful. I'm rest assured that Grandpa's story-my family's story-will reach future generations forever."

Phillip Ozaki, grandson and Development Director at National JACL says, "Thank you to the Taft Alumni Association and current leadership for this astounding garden and plaque. Because of Grandpa's inspiration, I've decided to work in social justice movements and education about the WWII incarceration. Grandpa's legacy was not only his heroic leadership but also a reminder to treat each other with respect, empathy, and compassion." *****

The Ozaki Memorial Garden can be visited at the northeast corner of Taft High School at 6530 W. Bryn Mawr Ave in Chicago.



THE OZAKI FAMILY AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, RYAN GLOWACZ (TOP RIGHT)



Apply for a JACL Chicago Scholarship!

Scholarships range from \$2,000 to \$5,000+ and are open to undergraduate and graduate students who have demonstrated a commitment to JACL's mission. Scholarships are open to all, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Previous JACL Chicago scholarship winners applying for a second award should demonstrate sustained engagement with JACL.

Deadline: March 1, 2024

Scholarships will be awarded at the JACL Chicago Scholarship Luncheon, scheduled for Sunday, May 19, 2024.

For more information, visit **www.jaclchicago.org/programs/scholarship-program** or contact Christine Munteanu, JACL Chicago Scholarship Committee chair, at **scholarships@jaclchicago.org**.



5415 North Clark Street Chicago Illinois 60640 p: 773.728.7171 w: jaclchicago.org

Becoming the Night Parade

by Jami Nakamura Lin

Imost three decades ago, when I was around five, I started telling myself stories. I knew, then, that I wanted to be a writer. When I got older, I started collaborating with my younger sister Cori on little projects.

All these years later, it's been a dream to be able to write *The Night Parade*, a speculative memoir that uses yōkai and other Japanese, Taiwanese, and Okinawan spirits, and creatures of myth as a way to interrogate my father's death and my bipolar disorder. The book ultimately asks: *how do we live with the things that haunt us*? I was lucky enough to have Cori illustrate the book in full color—just like we did when we were teenagers.



Yōkai macarons made by Kristi Lin (oni and kappa)

From the time we sold the book, Cori and I imagined having an enormous matsuri/ festival style event. Cori's dedicated party planning made this dream a reality, and on October 28th, we held the launch at UIC-Chicago. Around three hundred people attended, many dressed up as yōkai! We had volunteers and support from so many Chicago-area organizations, including Nikkei Uprising, JASC, JACL, Okinawa Kenjinkai, Taiwanese American Foundation, and Ho Etsu Taiko.

I am so grateful for the intergenerational aspect of this party, one of the strengths of our JA community. Nisei, sansei, and yonsei all pitched in, and the gosei all ran around twirling ribbon flags.



THE NAKAMURA LIN FAMILY: KRISTI (FROG WITCH), JAMI (FUTAKUCHI-ONNA), CORI (ONI), DONNA (MAGIC ERASER—A YŌKAI OF JAPANESE AMERICA), AND IN FRONT, LITTLE AKI (BAKENEKO)

In Japanese legend, the hyakki yagyō (translated as "the Night Parade of One Hundred Demons") is a procession of yōkai that gather in the middle of the night and cavort down the streets of Kyoto. For the yōkai , the Night Parade is joyful—a time when they can be together—but the humans know you could be spirited away.

I've always been interested in mythology, particularly in the idea that often the only thing that separates "mythology" from "history" is who was in power at the time. I'm thinking of this now, during the genocide of Palestinians. The stories we are exposed to, the stories we tell, shape our worlds. After Pearl Harbor, mainstream American newspapers like the LA Times agitated against Japanese Americans, putting forth a specific narrative. We see similar biased rhetoric, amplified further, weaponized against *Continued on page 10*



ATTENDEES AT THE PARTY





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Palestine. (As a mixed family my husband is Jewish—it is so important for us to try to distinguish the difference between Judaism and Zionism.)

And yet in these times of grief there are also these moments of joy and hope. Towards the end of the party, we all got in a circle and did the bon odori dance Ei Ja Nai Ka. This dance is special



THE ATTENDEES WHO DRESSED UP AS YOKAI! (HOW MANY NO-FACES CAN YOU SPOT?)

because it is not just Japanese, but distinctly Japanese American. Created by PJ Hirabayashi, the dance's movements commemorate and celebrate our history in the U.S. Members of Nikkei Uprising explained the specific resonance of this dance, as they would dance this outside Cook County Jail during their actions protesting the prison and its conditions. After we all learned the simple movements, we performed it together to the drumming of Ho Etsu Taiko. It is a dance of resistance. It is a dance celebrating our ancestors. It is a dance we performed all together—young and old, excited or shy, dressed as kappa and oni and tengu, monsters and ghosts, spirits and spooks. For that moment, we too were the Night Parade. May the movement continue to flow through our bodies. *****

The Night Parade can be purchased at any local bookstore, at Bookshop.org, or any other retailer. Follow Jami and Cori on instagram @jami_lin and @cori.lin.art, or at and www.corilin.co.





THE OKINAWA KENJINKAI MEMBERS PLAYING SANSHIN

Thank You to Our Generous Donors!

(9/13/2023-11/30/2023)

| Elaine Ogawa & Steve Arima | Mari Langowski | Nancy Toyama | Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago |
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Aikido World Alliance

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The Japanese American Citizens League is a nonprofit human and civil rights organization dedicated to preserving the civil liberties of Japanese Americans and of all Americans.

We welcome your participation.

Go Green! Receive the JACLer newsletter (in full color), news and updates via email. See page 2

| Calendar of Events | | |
|--|---|--|
| Saturday, December 16th, 2023 6-8pm | Next Gen. Nikkei Karaoke Celebration Green Light Korean Pub & Karaoke 2519 W. Peterson Ave. Chicago, IL 60659 | |
| Wednesday, December 27 1-4pm | Community Obento Delivery with Japanese American Mutual Aid & Next Gen. Nikkei Meet at Japanese American Service Committee at 1pm. Contact rebecca@jaclchicago.org to volunteer. | |
| Monday, January 22nd, 2024 | Kansha Project application available Visit jaclchicago.org/program/kansha-project for more information. | |
| Saturday, February 10th, 2024 | Lunar New Year Celebration hosted by the Japanese American community Drury Lane 100 Drury Lane Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181 | |
| Saturday, February 17, 2024 More details TBA | Day of Remembrance Pre-Event: Intergenerational Impact Workshop Japanese American Service Committee 4427 N. Clark Street Chicago, IL 60640 | |
| Sunday, February 18, 2024 2-4pm, RSVP coming soon | Day of Remembrance Japanese American Incarceration; Healing Histories Across Generations featuring Dr. Donna Nagata & Author, Jami Nakamura Lin DOR children's program will happen simultaneously from 2-4pm. Chicago History Museum 1601 N. Clark St. Chicago, IL 60614 | |
| Monday, February 26, 2024 11:59 pm | Kansha Project application deadline | |
| Friday, March 1, 2024 11:59 pm | Scholarship application deadline | |