



OREGON NIKKEI ENDOWMENT

OREGON NIKKEI ENDOWMENT CELEBRATES THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN HISTORICAL PLAZA

FALL 2015 | VOLUME 16
ISSUE 2
SEMIANNUAL

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Following the event, almost 300 guests joined us on a celebratory cruise down the Willamette River on the Portland Spirit. With George Takei onboard, we all danced the evening away with music provided by **Thomas Lauderdale of Pink Martini**.

A special thanks goes out to all those that have made this celebration possible, including our sponsors: The Boeing Company, Holst Architecture, Portland JACL/ Unite People, Portland Japanese Garden, Saito Family, Nathan Sasaki/Apex Real Estate Partners, Perkins Coie, The Benson Hotel, and Uwajimaya. Thanks to those that hosted a community table and all of our individual donors.

On a beautiful afternoon on Sunday, August 2nd, the Oregon Nikkei Endowment was proud to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of its Japanese American Historical Plaza and Bill of Rights Memorial in Tom McCall Waterfront Park. Since 1990, the Plaza has stood as a permanent memorial to the lives of Oregon Nikkei and their determined pursuit of liberty, equality, and justice as American citizens.

At this landmark event, O.N.E. was able to honor all those who were instrumental in creating and maintaining the Japanese American Historical Plaza. Over 300 attendees were on hand to hear **keynote speaker, actor, and**

activist George Takei, draw from his family's experience of being incarcerated. The Master of Ceremonies was local KOIN 6 News Anchor Ken Boddie and music was provided by the Minidoka Swing Band.

After an invocation made by Imam Muhammad Najieb, other guest speakers included Wajdi Said of the Muslim Educational Trust, U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams, Sho Dozono, and Anne Naito-Campbell. Portland Commissioner Nick Fish presented a city proclamation recognizing the anniversary of the Plaza while Former Portland Mayor Bud Clark provided moving reflections.



Photograph above and below courtesy of Curtis Suyematsu Reflections Photography





Gambatte!
Do your
best...stick
with it...try
harder...
persevere...
triumph over
adversity.

Someone who embodied this spirit most was Minoru (Min) Yasui who has been selected by President Obama to receive a posthumous 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the nation. In 1942, Min violated racially discriminatory military orders to initiate a test case of the constitutionality of the curfew imposed upon Americans of Japanese ancestry that led to their forced removal from the West Coast and unjust incarceration during WWII. He continued to dedicate his life to defending civil and human rights for all people. **Oregon Nikkei Endowment has been proud and honored to serve as the fiscal sponsor for the committee and Minoru Yasui Tribute Project that worked tirelessly for his nomination and is planning a**

series of exciting events in 2016 to honor Min and his legacy.

Our current exhibit, ***Gambatte! Legacy of an Enduring Spirit*** is photojournalist Paul Kitagaki Jr.'s visual exploration of this Japanese concept and enables the viewer to discover the ways in which generations of Japanese Americans persevered through their incarceration during WWII.

This spirit of *gambatte* inspires us every day and energizes us throughout the year as we realize our mission is more relevant today than ever before. We share the past to ensure the future and as you enjoy the photos and articles in this newsletter, know that **dedicated staff, amazing volunteers and you, our devoted supporters, made it all happen** and we owe everyone a debt of gratitude.

Someone who inspired and energized us every week was Lily Kajiwarra. We are deeply saddened by her recent passing, but continue with *gambatte* in honor of her enduring spirit. Starting with a large collection of donated books, Lily established our library at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, creating its own catalogue system and came in every Friday to maintain it with another one of our **most treasured volunteers, Shiuko Sakai**. Our newsletter featured them in our

Volunteer Spotlight, and Lily received the **Heart of the Community Award** at our 2013 Annual Banquet. We will be forever grateful to her—she was a dear member of our team, cherished friend, mentor, and teacher and will be missed beyond words.

And speaking of our team, we are thrilled to **welcome Cynthia Basye as the new Education Manager**. Cynthia served on our Board of Directors and was a member of our Teachers Advisory Council. Many of you will recognize her as she has volunteered for several of our events and fundraisers. She currently serves on the Board of the Oregon Council for the Social Studies and her knowledge and experience will surely enhance our educational offerings.

Finally and most important, we wish to express our deep appreciation to those listed on our volunteers and donors page. **Please never underestimate the power and importance of your giving, whether in time, in-kind or financially.** We would not be able to keep the doors open to the Legacy Center nor present the exhibits, programs and events we do without your support.

In closing, we wish you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season & a healthy and blessed New Year!

—Lynn Fuchigami Longfellow



Family Day

@ the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center

On Saturday, October 17th, we held another wonderful Family Day at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center. Kids and the young-at-heart were able to join in the fun as Lori Tsugawa Whaley performed Japanese folk tales with puppets. For the older crowd that day, Lori shared insights from her latest inspirational and historical book *The Courage of a Samurai: Seven Sword-Sharp Principle for Success*.

Be sure to join us for our next Family Day at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center on Sunday, January 10, 2016. The day will feature poet and author Lawrence "Larry" Matsuda reading from his latest works which includes the cool graphic novel *Fighting for America: Nisei Soldiers*.

OREGON NIKKEI ENDOWMENT ANNUAL BANQUET CELEBRATED MILESTONE



At this year's annual banquet, the Oregon Nikkei Endowment celebrated 25 years of the Japanese American Historical Plaza and honored all those who helped us reach this important milestone. This joyful event was held at the Hilton Portland & Executive Tower on Saturday, July 18th.

With Jeff Selby as Master of Ceremonies, the highlight of this lively evening included special remarks by our esteemed Oregon Governor Kate Brown, Consul General Hiroshi Furusawa, Azumano International Inc. President Sho Dozono, and retired Oregon Supreme Court Associate Justice W. Michael Gillette.

Entertainment included a sneak preview of Grateful Crane Ensemble's musical production of *Nihonmachi: The Place to Be*.

The night was made even more memorable by recognizing **Yoshio and Sawako Oda** with our **Heart of the Community Award** and honoring **Jean Matsumoto** with our **Paving the Way Award**.

Everyone gave generously to the dessert dash, paddle raise, silent auction, and wine pull. We wish to express our deep gratitude to our guests, donors, and sponsors, **Nobuko Masuoka** and **Delta Air Lines**, for their tremendous support.



Photographs Copyright 2015 Rich Iwasaki



Cynthia Basye joined the Oregon Nikkei Endowment staff in October. Cynthia's teaching career began in Albuquerque, NM. She taught in early childhood centers, kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms, and finally in teacher education programs at the University of New Mexico (UNM). While working at UNM, she was invited to join the New Mexico team of the Japanese American

National Museum's Enduring Communities Project. The team developed curriculum about the Japanese American experience in New Mexico during World War II. After moving to Oregon in 2007, Cynthia came to the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center archives to learn more about the *Issei* men who were interned at the Department of Justice Camp in Santa Fe, NM. She eventually began volun-

teering at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, helping with activities and working with student groups. In the spring of 2015 she joined the O.N.E. board. She is excited to now be a part of the staff.

As Education Manager, Cynthia is looking forward to working with students, teachers, and the O.N.E. staff and volunteers. She is committed to helping students make connections and learn a fuller history of Portland and the Northwest. She continues to appreciate the multiple ways in which the Oregon Nikkei Endowment addresses its mission. The history and culture of Japanese Americans are preserved and honored, and a bridge is built to advocacy and protection of civil rights for all Americans.



Over the summer, the Oregon Nikkei Endowment was proud to host the exhibition *Yosegaki Hinomaru: Souvenir, Heirloom or Art?* at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center. Curated by Rex and Keiko Ziak of Obon 2015, a nonprofit affiliate of Astoria Visual Arts, this powerful exhibit encour-

Continuing an exciting year, this fall has brought an all-new traveling exhibit from the San Francisco Bay Area featuring historic images taken in 1942 by War Relocation Authority staff photographers including Dorothea Lange juxtaposed with contemporary images by artist and photojournalist Paul Kitagaki Jr. Spanning seven decades, *Gambatte! Legacy of an Enduring Spirit* chronicles

multi-generations of Japanese Americans united by the defining experience of their incarceration during World War II. A visual exploration of the

Legacy Center. Joining Paul were presidents, treasurers, and key board members of the Tanforan Assembly Center Memorial Committee and the Contra Costa Japanese American Citizens League. Our special guests from California included Doug Yamamoto and his wife Betty, Esther Takeuchi, Richard Sekiguchi, Richard Oba, and Sidney Pucek. All of these individuals and their organizations were critical to sharing this stunning exhibit with our greater community here in Portland. Additional support was provided through the National Park Service's Japanese American Confinement Sites grant program.

Be sure to visit the Legacy Center before *Gambatte!* closes on January 17, 2016. And mark your calendars for our next blockbuster, the nationally traveling exhibit *Uprooted: Japanese American Farm Labor Camps during World War II* which will be on view from February 11 through June 19, 2016.

—Todd Mayberry



Photograph Copyright 2015 Rich Iwasaki

aged hundreds of visitors to explore questions around the *yosegaki hinomaru* or "good luck flag." Thanks to a wide range of sponsors, this exhibit was able to reach students from Tulip Tree Preschool, U.S.-Japan Connect, ANDEO International Homestays, and Portland State University. On Smithsonian Magazine's Museum Day Live!, an annual event with participating museums across the country, we saw so many new faces enter our doors. While at the exhibit opening, Lori Matsukawa from Seattle's King 5 News, Tracy Barry from Portland's KGW News, and a documentary crew from Japan's NHK World were on hand reporting.

Japanese concept of *gambatte*, together these past and present images add light to a dark chapter of U.S. history and speak with the authenticity of a life lived.

At the opening reception for this groundbreaking exhibit, we welcomed Paul Kitagaki Jr. and his family to the



Photograph Copyright 2015 Rich Iwasaki

Above: *Yosegaki Hinomaru: Souvenir, Heirloom or Art?*

Below: Paul Kitagaki Jr. (center) at the opening reception of *Gambatte!*

Join us for a
free and open
to the public
presentation at
the Oregon

Buddhist Temple. Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center collections volunteers **Taylor Ishida** and **Weston Nakamura-Koyama** will share the moving stories they uncovered from correspondence written by and sent to two Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II. Come trace one young girl's journey from the Portland Assembly Center to Minidoka through stirring letters written to classmates back home at Portland's Parkrose High School. Hear how, shortly after the bomb-

Collections Up Close: Letters from Beyond the Fence

Sunday, December 6, 3:30–5:00 PM

Oregon Buddhist Temple

3720 SE 34th Avenue, Portland, OR 97202

ing of Pearl Harbor, an innocent dentist in Portland's Japantown was arrested by the FBI and transferred to various Department of Justice prisons across the United States.

Learn about the extraordinary significance these letters hold. Discover how artifacts can give voice to family heartbreak and loss, speak to the power of friendships, and inspire a new generation to carry them on.

This
program is
presented
in partner-
ship with

the **Oregon Buddhist Archives** and **Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project**.



NIHONMACHI: THE PLACE TO BE Premieres in Portland!

On **November 9th**, the Oregon Nikkei Endowment was proud to present the **Grateful Crane Ensemble's** musical production of *Nihonmachi: The Place to Be*. Having first debuted in Los Angeles, the show made its Portland premiere at the Portland Center Stage's Gerding Theater at the Armory.

Through the use of nostalgic and classical songs, the play focuses on a family and their Japantown mochi (Japanese sweet cake) shop through three generations of trials and triumphs. An additional special matinee performance for school groups, including free tickets for underserved youth, introduced this history to our younger generation.

Our heartfelt thanks goes out to all those that made the event possible including the following sponsors:

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& many others!

Additional support was provided, in part, by the Regional Arts & Culture Council and the Oregon Cultural Trust.



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The traditional foods will include: nishime, kimpira gobo, kazunoko, makizushi, sekihan, and more...

COST:
\$130 include the jubako box & foods

Or \$100 if you provide your own jubako box. (\$60 is tax deductible)

DEADLINE TO ORDER:
Friday, December 18, 2015

MORE INFORMATION:
503-224-1458 or
info@oregonnikkei.org

MAIL FORM TO:
Oregon Nikkei Endowment,
121 NW 2nd Avenue, Portland,
OR 97209

OR ORDER ONLINE:
www.oregonnikkei.org

Support the Oregon Nikkei Endowment and enjoy traditional Japanese New Year's foods (osechi ryori) prepared by Nikkei community cooks, displayed in a three-tiered lacquer box (jubako). Drop off your jubako marked with your name at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, 121 NW 2nd Avenue, Portland.

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_____ boxes at \$130 each

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ORDER PICK-UP:
Thursday, December 31, 2015,
from 2:30 to 3:30 PM, at the
Oregon Buddhist Temple
3720 SE 34th Ave, Portland

Omiyage

returns!



Shop and support Oregon Nikkei Endowment at our holiday pop-up shop, Omiyage, from November 10th to December 24th.

Oregon Nikkei Endowment is excited to participate again in the Portland Business Alliance and Portland Development Commission's PDX Pop-Up Shop project. The project turns Portland's vacant retail spaces into temporary shops that showcase local talent and encourage downtown shoppers to seek out

unique gift offerings during the holiday season.

Celebrate the tradition of gift giving and choose from Asian inspired gifts and crafts created by local artisan, designers and authors. Omiyage will feature unique jewelry, fashion and home accessories, cards, origami ornaments, art objects, Anime inspired merchandise, books by local authors and a selection of curated vintage items from our Cherry Blossom Bazaar.

This year's store is conveniently located on the MAX light rail and bus transit mall at 341 NW 5th Avenue. Proceeds from Omiyage sales will support local vendors and our programs, exhibits and the mission of Oregon Nikkei Endowment. Hope to see you there!

Hours: 11:00am-6pm Wednesday-Friday
Noon-5:00pm Saturday and Sunday



COLLECTIONS UP CLOSE



Dr. Eugene H. Freund is a retired professor emeritus from the University of Nebraska Omaha's Department of Education Sociology/Anthropology. Over the past couple of months, Dr. Freund, or "Gene" as he asked us to call him, has been conducting extensive research utilizing the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center library and archives. We asked to Gene to share a little bit about his work and what brought him to the Legacy Center.

To fourteen-year-old Coby Freund of West Des Moines, Iowa, I am just Grandpa Gene and he thinks I'm "awesome!" Part of his pride in me is that for years we have been travel buddies, exploring this country while riding Amtrak. My youngest grandchild and I have traveled thousands of miles together on the California Zephyr and the Coast Starlight. We have seen the Rockies, the Columbia River Gorge, and Glacier National Park while eating lunch in the dining car. But his favorite destination is visiting me in Portland Oregon.

My grandson is half Japanese. His mom Emiko, who is from Japan,

and my son Randy met in college and they agreed to raise their son to be fluent in both languages. Well, the last time he was here I thought I would test him by introducing him to my neighbor, Fude Kagawa. She thought his Japanese was excellent. Then she said, "You know, when I was your age I was interned." Coby thought that was great – so young and already a job as an "intern." It was at this point that Fude explained the grim reality of Minidoka and the conversation became serious.

That was a turning point for me. Fude suggested that I visit the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center and discover the history of Japanese Americans in concentration camps during World War II. I took her advice and found a rich resource. I met Todd Mayberry, the director of collections and exhibits, and explained that I was a retired professor interested in doing research on the teachers who taught at Hunt High School. Perhaps I could write something that would explain the Minidoka concentration camp to kids like Coby so that they would understand what it was like to attend school behind barbed wire.

With the help of the ONLC staff and volunteers, I have found two teachers who made a big difference at Hunt High School. Both of them are now deceased, but I hope to tell their unique story. At ONLC, I met Shiuko Sakai who actually worked with one of the teachers I'm researching. She gave me valuable information for follow-up phone interviews with faculty children who lived and went to school in the camp. The story of the teachers who came and taught democracy behind barbed wire should be remembered and passed on to future generations.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Collections Up Close:

Letters from Beyond the Fence

Sunday, December 6, 3:30-5:00 PM
Oregon Buddhist Temple, 3720 SE 34th Ave, Portland, OR 97202

Free and open to the public

- Learn firsthand from our volunteers about the inspiring and heartbreaking stories Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center's museum collections can tell!

New Year's Osechi Ryori Fundraiser

December 30-31, 2015
Oregon Buddhist Temple, 3720 SE 34th Ave, Portland, OR 97202

- \$130 or \$100 if you provide a box.

To place an order or to volunteer contact us at 503.224.1458 or info@oregonnikkei.org.

Family Day at the ONLC

Sunday, January 10, 2016, noon-3 PM

- Poet and author Lawrence "Larry" Matsuda reads from his latest works including the graphic novel *Fighting for America: Nisei Soldiers*.

Mochitsuki 2016

Sunday, January 31, 2016
Portland State University, Smith Memorial Student Union, 1825 SW Broadway, Portland, OR 97201

- 2016, the Year of the Monkey, marks the 20th anniversary of Portland Mochitsuki! Join in this annual New Year's celebration with a cultural fair, performances, and activities for the entire family. www.mochipdx.org

Uprooted: Japanese American Farm Labor Camps During World War II

On view February 11–June 19, 2016
Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center

- A national traveling exhibit featuring photographs by Russell Lee documenting Japanese American farm labor camps in Eastern Oregon and Idaho.

MATSUTAKE!

A great group of current and new *Friends of O.N.E.* gathered matsutake mushrooms on the Oregon Coast. Thanks to the rainy weather, this year's harvest was abundant!



THANK YOU

Valerie, Amy, Hank, Rick, Joe, and Marty for organizing this event!



MEMORIAL & TRIBUTE GIFTS MAY 16, 2015 TO OCTOBER 31, 2015

In memory of Lily Kajiware

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In honor of Aya & Ed Fujii's 65th wedding anniversary, Aya Fujii's 88th birthday, Ben & Joyce Nakamura's 50th wedding anniversary and Terrie Natsuhara's 85th birthday
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Brandon Higa





JAMES RODGERS

Before moving to Portland, James Rodgers received his M.A. in Museum Studies from New York University in 2013 and had several years of experience working in the cultural sector. James had previously volunteered at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, NY, and the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens in Boca Raton, FL. His skill sets and professional training have been critical to a variety of exhibits, collections projects, and special programs here at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.

You've been a well-loved volunteer here at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center since you first came through our doors in October, 2013. What inspired you to become involved?

I've been drawn to the stories and experiences of the internees at the American camps since I first heard about them years ago. There is a strength and resilience there that I find very admirable - not only in their cultural identity as Japanese, but also in their national identities as Americans. They fought very hard for what they believed in and were ultimately rewarded for their diligence and sacrifices.

Tell us a bit about yourself and the volunteer work you've been doing here.

I lived in Japan for three years and it taught me so much about Japanese history and culture and it really instilled in me a desire to further U.S./Japan relations. Currently, I help Todd Mayberry,

director of collections and exhibits, with installing/de-installing exhibits, research, and cataloging of the museum's vast and ever growing collections. Sometimes I get chills when I look at the items or ephemera stored away in their boxes. There is so much history and life within the walls of the museum.

What has been a highlight of your involvement with O.N.E.?

That will have to be a toss-up between the dinner cruise with George Takei and the opening of the Yosegaki Hinomaru exhibit. So many stories left untold.

How would you encourage others to become involved with O.N.E.?

Look at your work and educational experiences and ask how they can best be used to help the museum. It takes individuals of all backgrounds and talents.

There are many ways to volunteer at Oregon Nikkei Endowment. We are always looking for docents, tour guides, and front office help, along with volunteers for special projects and events. Contact us at info@oregonnikkei.org or call us for ways that you can volunteer.

2015 TO OUR VOLUNTEERS THANK YOU!

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May 16, 2015 to October 31, 2015

All Friends of O.N.E. receive free admission to the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center all year long, a 10% discount on gift shop purchases, a subscription to the newsletter, and special invitations to event openings and programs. There is sure to be a category just right for you! *For more details call 503.224.1458*

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My support will help ensure that the history, art and culture of the Nikkei are preserved and shared with the community for generations to come.

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The mission of Oregon Nikkei Endowment is to preserve and honor the history and culture of the Japanese Americans in the Northwest, to educate the public about the Japanese American experience during World War II, and to advocate for the protection of civil rights for all.

The Oregon Nikkei Endowment newsletter is published to inform the Japanese American community, its friends, supporters, and the general public of its ongoing work in promoting an appreciation of the culture and historic legacy passed on to us by our immigrant forebears.

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On May 16, we were thrilled to host a party at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center for the release of **Dr. Toshio Inahara's** autobiography *A Nisei, Right Place, Right Time*. The day featured a book signing and riveting talk by the esteemed author who, among many other prominent accomplishments, was the first vascular surgeon in Oregon.