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FALL 2024

# Tayūi



## 2024 KEIRO-KAI RECAP

This year's event was held at a new location, the Eden Township Japanese Community Center in San Lorenzo on Sunday, September 22. We had about 120 members with their families and friends in attendance. President **Tetsuo Ishisoko** opened with a moment of silence for the passing of two long-time members, **Yoshiko Sueyoshi** and **Tomi Van Eeghen**.

This year, NCOKK honored 28 *Keiro-sha*, between the ages of 80 and 98, 20 women and 8 men, with free bento, leis and *fukubukuro* goody bags. In alphabetical order, they are **Yoshiko Adams, Noriko Alberta, Toyoko Araki, Helen Austin, Kyoko Clemons, Takeko Cox, Fujiko Dandoy, Maria Frye, Michiko Fujii, Sumiko Fujimori, Jack Journeay, Iris Kaneshiro, Ben Kobashigawa, Fred Kodani, Akiko Kohler, Shingi Kuniyoshi, Haruko Lewis, Seitoku Nakama, Yumi Patrizio, Al Perez, Haruko Profumo, Thomas & Yoneko Rieker, Leo & Teruko Stone, Eiko Studier, JoJo Takata**, and last but not least, **Toyoko Yungling**. Among the *Keiro-sha* Honorees were two couples: **Yoneko & Thomas Rieker** and **Teruko & Leo Stone** and a brother/sister **Noriko Kuniyoshi Alberta & Shingi Kuniyoshi**. One of our Honorees, **Kyoko Clemons** was accompanied by her granddaughter **Kristin Bechere** (husband Rob Thomas) and great-grandson **Cameron** too!



Co-MC's **Megan Calhoun & Samina Adel** took over the mic by introducing 7 new members: **Maurice Kenji Clarke, Jasper Miura, Sara Nakasone, Alain Oyafuso, Saesha Rushing, JoJo Takata, and Kiyoko Winter** (no show).

Representing the Consulate-General of Japan in San Francisco was **Ms. Mayu Hagiwara**, who made a speech and the customary *kanpai ondo* toast. We also had a visitor from Okinawa, singer-songwriter **Takane Kochihira** who later performed *uta-sanshin* for the crowd.

The entertainment portion began with a rousing rendition of *Tachiutushi* by Okinawa *Eisaa* Shimadaiko. **(continued on pg.4)**



## My Kubasaki Experience and Beyond

by Irene Junko Hashimoto

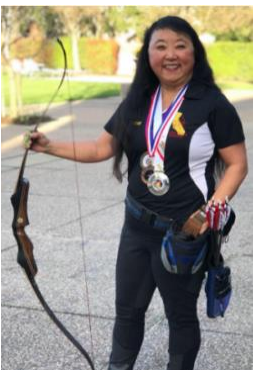


Irene (R)

Kubasaki High School will always be in my heart no matter where I am physically because of the unique circumstance of a hybrid community – US military, local Okinawan nationals, diverse racial mix and cultures, combined faiths – a flavorful stew of whoever was there at the time. I was 5 years old when my family moved to Okinawa from Kamakura where my sister Janet and I were born. We ended up living

our entire stay on Okinawa in Takahara Heights, Awase. I loved being able to see the Pacific Ocean from the backyard and pretending to be Mary Poppins running down the hill with our umbrellas during the typhoons. The hill of Takahara Heights was a challenge uphill by car and a super challenge uphill on foot from the bus stop. We dreaded mornings when we missed the school bus and had to walk from the bus stop in front of the Yamada's house then hike back up the hill to tell Mom we needed a ride to school. The only salvation was that a ride with Mom meant we got to school before the bus! On rainy days, the Yamada family would allow the drenched, chatty bunch on their covered porch until the bus arrived.

Commuting to schools at Mercy, Kadena, K-9, and Kubasaki helped prepare me for commuting between home and campuses of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. However, nothing prepared me for commuting on subways in New York City, where I miraculously survived for 15 years while building a career in technology consulting. I came out to California to reunite with my sister who resided in the East Bay and my parents who settled in Sacramento. While pursuing a career in leisure sports marketing, I met my second husband, started a family and a new career in teaching, and commuting to school again. For the next 16 years, I tried my best to instill the passion for learning that I experienced in Okinawa. I realized late in my teaching career that we DOD (Department of Defense) kids were blessed by a system of zero tolerance for nonsense, unlike today's students who experience no consequences for their unsafe, menacing, and hurtful intentions.



Now that I am retired, I focus much of my time on archery, which I picked up 12 years ago when my son's scout troop needed an archery instructor. Although I broke my wrist in a bad fall this February and was unable to compete during the entire season, I took gold in the 2024 National Outdoor Championship in the women's barebow, master 60+ division and maintained the #9 ranking in the U.S. Next year, my goal is to compete in all the national tournaments for a chance to make Team USA Archery! When I'm not

competing, I am leading scouts. This summer I had an opportunity to join 4 other scout leaders and 15 scouts on the 18<sup>th</sup> Matsuyama Sacramento Sister City Scout Exchange, 43 years since the first exchange. In 18 days, we toured Tokyo, Nara, Kyoto, Osaka, Hiroshima, and home-stayed with scout families in Matsuyama.

Nara, Kyoto, Osaka, Hiroshima, and home-stayed with scout families in Matsuyama. As a scout archer, I also served as a crossbow rangemaster and instructor at the 2018 World Scout Jamboree held at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia.



Before settling into archery and scouting, *taiko* occupied much of my leisure time. I spent a few years performing *wadaiko* in Salinas for the Japanese communities in Monterey County. To elevate my son's education and my teaching career, we moved to

San Jose where my son joined the San Jose Junior Taiko Group while I attended *taiko* workshops conducted by the San Jose Taiko Group. Later, I came across the *Eisaa Shima Daiko* group and met Master Kinuko Mototake who invited me to practices in Alameda. The invitation led me to memories of *Eisaa* folk dance lessons during summer breaks from college. Although the tunes and gestures came back, my body struggled to keep up with the fast beat, reminding me to slow down, in GI lingo, a "*skoush*."

Since retiring from public education, I work part-time at my neighborhood sports club. Benefits include free membership and a 3-minute commute. While I swim my laps, I question why it took a lifetime of being a work slave to realize that the purpose of work is to sustain one's health. I reflect on how fortunate I am to have my memory, unlike my mother who suffers from severe dementia. However, she has no worries or complaints and finally seems quite content with life. From the hot tub at the sports club, I continue to reflect. I remember the times on Okinawa as I lay on the grass, looking up at the sky through the trees and wondering what life would be like when I grew up. The sky looked the same to my mind's eyes – dramatically blue, interrupted by a white contrail from a fighter jet long gone.

Top Gun. I am a regular at the California Capital Air Show at Mather Air Force Base. I sit behind the fence and watch the Blue Angels and the Thunderbirds take off in formation, just as I watched the USAF fighter squadrons get airborne from outside the fence of Kadena Air Base, except now I buy a ticket and take a folding chair, not worrying whether the pilots would return. As a high school medical technician trainee, I worked as a volunteer at the Mercy Hospital and saw those who returned. I had an opportunity to assist the forensic pathologist conduct an autopsy. I will never forget the painful look on the 18-year old's face. I did not want to know his name at the time, but now I regret not knowing because I cannot honor his lineage, as I can for the victims of the Hiroshima atomic bomb, the Battle of Okinawa, the attack on Pearl Harbor, or the Holocaust. I know theoretically that we are all less than a hundredth of a percent different from each other and our genetic compositions decompose into star stuff eventually. However, knowing that we are given a chance to experience a unique life means all the more reason to cherish our togetherness in Kubasaki, Okinawa, the USA, and Planet Earth.  
*Heiwa (Japanese) ~ Shanti (Sanskrit) ~ Shalom (Hebrew) ~ Pax (Latin) ~ Irene (Greek)*

## 2024 CALENDAR of EVENTS イベントカレンダー:



**February 16, 2025** Shinnen-kai (New Year Celebration), 2025 年新年会  
12-4pm, Fairfield Community Center, 1000 Kentucky Street, Fairfield, CA



### Okinawan Language Research in NorCal Communities by Avery Yara London

*Haisai!* My name is Avery Yara London. I'm an NCOCK member and college student studying linguistics. Over the summer, I interviewed Okinawans in the kenjinkai and greater NorCal community about their relationship and usage of the Okinawan language. My school, Pomona College in Los Angeles, helped fund this project.

Okinawan is spoken by many elders, yet the language is rarely passed down to the younger generations. While there are revival movements within the Ryūkyūs, the significant California diaspora is often ignored. I began this research project to highlight the unique ways that our community continues to preserve the Okinawan language overseas.

Through my interviews, I found that only older community members use Okinawan on a daily basis, primarily among other Okinawan friends or family. However, many younger Okinawans in NorCal still regularly interact with their language outside of conversation. Music, cultural practices like *Eisaa* dance, holiday gatherings like *Soogwachi*, and casually saying "*haisai*" are important ways that our community keeps the language alive.

I also found that more and more young Okinawans are interested in learning the language. Most of the Okinawan youth I interviewed owned English-Okinawan dictionaries and textbooks, which are valuable new resources to diaspora members who lack strong Japanese language skills. Social media is another way that diaspora can connect and practice Okinawan with each other. Through communal learning, many of the interviewed Okinawans felt more comfortable speaking the language. While complete fluency in Okinawan was rare, I found that a lot of young community members could introduce themselves, form basic sentences, and knew tons of phrases!

I'm currently writing a paper from these interviews, which I plan to submit next year with help from my advisor at Pomona College. I want to thank everyone who volunteered for this project, and

**NOTE:** Avery was one of two recipients of our 2023 NCOCK High School Scholarship and is currently a sophomore attending Pomona College in Los Angeles.

He was selected to speak at the 2025 American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL) conference in Denver about this research. He is looking forward to spreading awareness about the Okinawan language and connecting with other "language activists."



### COMMENTS FROM OUR MEMBERS:

The kenjinkai has been a huge part of our family and has given us many friends and memories. Please accept this small donation in memory of our Mother, Yoshiko Sueyoshi. She loved seeing NCOCK thrive and grow from a few families doing a BBQ to what it is today. Much thanks.  
*The Sueyoshi Family (sons Rick and Dan)*

Thanks so much for inviting us to the picnic. Mom and I had a great time and loved getting to talk with other Okinawans. I think I need that get a Cornhole set so she can practice for next time!  
*Wendy Knight for Haruko Lewis*

I like that my name was recognized in the Tayui and the articles were a good read. I am personally interested in going to the Millbrae Japanese Cultural Festival in October.  
*Yas Matayoshi (new member and nephew of former President Yasuharu Matt Matayoshi)*

The Keiro-kai was such a nice occasion for me to learn and feel first-hand the closeness and the respect for the elders among the members of the community. It was interesting to learn also the land the Eden Japanese Community Center is standing on was once owned by a Japanese American family who had a nursery business. Thank you again for the invite to our Consulate, and I look forward to seeing you again in the near future.  
*Mayu Hagiwara, Consul/Director, Japan Information and Culture Center, Consulate General of Japan*



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## Okinawa Memories Initiative (OMI) Trip

by Nixie Young and Court Sugano, UC Santa Cruz undergraduates and OMI interns



Nixie & Court on Kokusai-dori

In March 2024, the Okinawa Memories Initiative (OMI), based out of University of California, Santa Cruz, sent ten undergraduate students, graduate student **Lex McClellan-Ufugusuku** (NCOCK member), Professors Alan Christy and Noriko Aso, and a member of The Humanities Institute (THI) to Okinawa for 10 days in collaboration with the University of the Ryukyus.

One of the goals of the trip was to learn about food systems and sustainability to research an exhibit on Ryukyuan food that will be at the Eloise Pickard Smith Gallery (Cowell College) at UC Santa Cruz this fall. An activity that the students did was to share a dinner with Mr. Ikemiyagi, an independent pig farmer whose father was one of the recipients of the 550 pigs sent from Hawai'i to Okinawa in September 1948. The event is known as "Pigs from the Sea." The students were able to speak with him about his experience in pig farming and how the pig farming industry has changed throughout the years. Another activity was a hands-on coral reef regeneration experience in *Onna-son* with a local fisherman. They demonstrated how the new coral is planted into the reefs and provided a lesson on Okinawa's local marine ecosystem. The coolest was a cooking demonstration led by a traditional Ryukyuan chef, Keiko Tsukayama. She was able to join the group at a local farmers market to explain the different types of local produce and how best to select and prepare them. Together the group and Keiko were able to make tempura, *goya champuru*, and other traditional Okinawan dishes.

On this trip, three of us were *Uchinaanchu*, including our graduate advisor Lex McClellan-Ufugusuku, whose roots are in *Tsukazan* village in *Haeburu*. For us, both undergraduates at UCSC, this trip was our first time in Okinawa. On one morning, the three of us went to the Prefectural Library in Naha to use their ancestor database and through the course of the morning, we were able to trace Court's family roots back to *Gaja* in *Nishihara* and to *Kin*. Nixie's family roots led to an area of *Chatan* that is now inside of Kadena Airbase. On different days, we traveled to those towns and looked at the land and the scenes that our great grandparents left more than a hundred years ago.

This will not be OMI's last trip to Okinawa. The goal is to travel back for a longer period of time in the near future, but for now, the students will continue to enroll in UC Santa Cruz's Okinawan history class, take independent studies with Alan and Noriko, and work on document scanning, analysis and conducting oral histories with people whose paths cross with Okinawa in a variety of ways. To learn more, please check out our website at <https://omi.ucsc.edu/> or send us an email at [omi@ucsc.edu](mailto:omi@ucsc.edu).

*(continued from pg. 1)* The entertainment portion began with a rousing rendition of *Tachiutushi* by Okinawa *Eisaa* Shimadaiko. The classical dance *Yotsutake* was performed by Miyagi Honryu Otori Kinsen Kai Arakaki Noriyoshi Ryubu Dojo's own **Mieko Merrill, Courtney & Yori Nakaishi**. Later **Mieko** danced solo to *Hamachidori* and *Kanayo*. Azama Honryu Seifu Ichisenkai Kinuko Mototake Ryubu Kenkyusho USA **Master Kinuko Mototake** danced *Nakazato Bushi*, *Kanayo Amakawa* and *Nuchibana* partnered with **Kyo Yohena** and *Kuijibama* solo. **Okinawa Eisaa Shimadaiko** continued with *Miruku Munari*, *Ashibina* and *Shichigwachi Eisaa Machikanti*. Performing *Minatokuri Bushi* and *Tanchame* were **Blake Hihara** and **Suzuka Suarez** of Azuma Honryu Seifu Ichisenkai. Scattered throughout the afternoon were songs by **Toyoko Yungling, Akiko Nagayama, Al Perez** and the operatic voice of **Helen Onaga**. Graceful hula moves were performed by **Sue Kainani Harnett**. During a program break, the ceremonial cake cutting was done by our oldest member in attendance – **Michiko Fujii** who is 98 years young! *Uta-Sanshin* by Okinawan visitor **Takane Kochihira** entertained us with a medley of Okinawan music, including his own. The finale was **Master Kinuko Mototake's** rousing spear dance *Bu nu Mai*. Since it was **Amir Adel** (of Okinawa *Eisaa* Shimadaiko) last stage performance before going to study in Okinawa, we gave him a rousing sendoff! The traditional *eisaa* with the **Okinawa Eisaa Shimadaiko** capped an afternoon of fun with everyone dancing *kacha-shi*!

We look forward to seeing all of you at our next BIGGEST annual event, the *Shinnen-kai* or New Year Celebration on **Sunday, February 16, 2025** at the Fairfield Community Center. Be sure to mark the date on your 2025 calendar. We hope you can come and help us make it a success as well!

### SAFER FALLING by Kenneth Higa

Based on information from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about one out of twenty seniors in the U.S. will be seriously injured by an accidental fall each year, and accidental falls cause more deaths than vehicle accidents. Survivors of falls can face permanent lifestyle changes due to injuries. Additionally, anti-Asian attacks became much more common at the start of the pandemic, and are still occurring more frequently than before. These have often involved seniors being pushed violently to the ground, sometimes fatally. There are a few things that we can do to reduce our chances of being seriously injured in falls.

**First**, we can eliminate hazards that commonly lead to falls. Removing obstacles in homes, including area rugs, routing cords out of the way, and installing non-slip bath mats and shower/tub grab bars are common examples. We can also consult with medical providers, including asking whether medications might affect balance.

**Second**, we can adopt behaviors that prevent falls, such as using handrails when going up or down stairs, or not looking at cell phones when walking. Using ladders safely, such as by having another person holding the ladder, can prevent especially dangerous falls from heights. *(continued on pg.8)*



## Open Letter from Kay Ueda, Curator of the Japanese Diaspora Collection, Hoover Institution Library & Archives, Stanford University:

We invite you to explore the rich history of *Uchinanchu* and trace the ancestral journeys of Okinawans to the United States. Discover how they supported their homeland during WWII through various relief efforts. We are thrilled to announce that two Okinawan Hawaiian newspapers are now available in the *Hoji Shinbun* Digital Collection at the Hoover Institution Library & Archives, Stanford University. This collection offers free access to digitized newspaper images and searchable text, providing a window into the past.

Check out the **Jitsugyo no Hawaii**, a business magazine from Hawaii dating back to 1911, to learn about the pioneering Okinawan businesses: <https://hojishinbun.hoover.org/?a=c&cl=CL1&sp=jnh&e=>

You can also delve into **Kosei Okinawa**, a postwar publication that highlights how Okinawans in the U.S. and Brazil contributed to their homeland's recovery:

<https://hojishinbun.hoover.org/?a=c&cl=CL1&sp=HSDCaaf&e=>

Even if you don't read Japanese, you can extract the text by clicking the "page" tab and using a translation app. Here's an example of Okinawan economic expansion in Kauai, Hawaii, in pineapple production: <https://hojishinbun.hoover.org/?a=d&d=jnh19290401-01.1.140&e=-----en-10--1--img----->



For those proficient in Japanese, we encourage you to help us improve the searchable text in the collection by creating an account and contributing to this invaluable resource. The registration website is the following:

<https://hojishinbun.hoover.org/?a=ur&command=ShowRegisterNewUserPage&opa=a%3d%26%3djnh19290401-01.1.140%26%3den&e=-----en-10--1--img----->

If you have any questions, feel free to contact them at [hojishinbun\\_support@stanford.edu](mailto:hojishinbun_support@stanford.edu). We appreciate the collaboration with Okinawa Prefectural Library, Meio University in Nago, Okinawa, the University of Hawai'i Hawaii at Mānoa, and the Hawai'i State Archives. We look forward to your participation and to fostering community engagement as we uncover and preserve our shared history.

## Memoir Reading by Mieko Walden by Joyce Tamanaha-Ho



*Mieko showing the newspaper article about her adoption*

On Saturday, November 9, 2024, NCOKK member **Mieko Anne Walden** shared several chapters detailing her recollections of 1960's Okinawa as an Okinawa-born adoptee to an American military couple. The event was held in-person at J-Sei in Emeryville and for a Zoom audience. The second in a series of readings from her memoir-

in-progress, it was part of a larger series of Okinawan-focused events organized by Debby Kajiyama of the *Beyond the Fence Collective* and Jill Shiraki of J-Sei. Moderated by professors **Jane Yamashiro** and Wesley Ueunten, Mieko

shared stories and artwork inspired by childhood memories of her dear grandmother, her life in the orphanage, and life



*Viewing one of Mieko's drawings*

with her adoptive parents as a military brat. Through audience questions, she discussed how her writing, art, and crocheted works gave her the space, courage and healing to explore pathways forward through many of her life's challenges, remembering those who helped guide and support her along the way. Audience members praised the therapeutic and evocative power of her story, which Mieko began writing over 15 years ago at the urging of a former roommate and the encouragement of countless others. Among the many in-person and via Zoom were also NCOKK members: Toyoko Araki and daughter Mimi Shiraishi, Mariko Oshiro Dantzer, Michio Goto, Dee Harris, Juli Kodani, Keiko Nakamura, Joyce Tamanaha-Ho and daughter Tamara, India Wade and Jane Yamashiro.



**THANK YOU**  
to our generous members:  
**Donations from 2024 Keiro-kai:**

Anonymous, Minoru Arakaki, Toyoko Araki, Yoshiko & Tom Canevari, Kyoko Clemons, Minami & Issa Cohen, Fujiko Dandoy, Setsuko Doi, Maria Frye, Yoshiko King, Noriko & Al Perez, Yoneko & Tom Rieker, Teruko & Leo Stone, Joanne Takata

Bea & Yuki Shiroma, in memory of Yoshiko Sueyoshi  
Sueyoshi Family, in memory of Yoshiko Sueyoshi  
Van Eeghen Family, in memory of Tomi Van Eeghen  
Amiki Ziomek Webster



## A TIP OF THE HAT, TO OUR MANY KEIRO-KAI VOLUNTEERS!

by Juli Kodani

The success of any social club is based, among many things, on the strength of its volunteers. These are people who are passionate about the club's mission, who want to share it with others and want to expand their knowledge and enjoyment. That was very evident at this year's Keiro-kai! First of all, we have to thank **Robbin Kawabata**, her husband **Carl Gutekunst** and **Agnes Masuda** from the Eden Community Center for making this year's event possible.

We had a group of enthusiastic people, many from our own core Board members, the "regulars" who help at every event, and a number of younger volunteers, some came with their family and some were new members! We may have missed getting your names, but with the shared experience, we hope that you gained a sense of satisfaction in doing a good deed!

Among the Board were President **Tetsuo Ishisoko** who with his son **Chris**, operated the AV system; Vice President **Annette Adams**, initially a rover but ended up handling the refreshment area herself; Secretary and Honoree **Ben Kobashigawa** set up the compostable bins for collecting food scraps and helped us collect the plastic for sorting and recycling; **Megan Calhoun** and **Samina Adel** did double duty with *eisaa* performances and co-MC'ing; and **Fred Kodani** manning the reception area with yours truly.

Others familiar faces were **Tsutomu Tomita** who oversaw the program's time management, **Sue Kainani Hartnett** (hula dancer) with husband **Steve** managed the T-shirt table, and the camera-toting roving photographers **Rachael Greathouse**, **Carl Gutekunst**, and **Robert Adams**.

In addition to those named above, we have to acknowledge the additional members who responded to our call to arrive by 10:00 am on Sunday and helped us clear out the room, set up and cover the tables, attach cushions to the chairs, hang the banner above the stage: **Jimmy Goto**, **Kenny Higa**, **Jasper Miura**, and members of the **Okinawa Eisaa Shimadaiko**. We would not have been able to open the doors before 11:30 am if it weren't for everyone's combined efforts!

Volunteers who assisted with assembling the *fukubukuro* goody bags for all 28 Honorees, helped to cut the ceremonial sheet cakes and passed them out included **Miana Adel**, **Francine Austin**, **Zoe Calhoun & friend**, **Jennifer Ishisoko**, **Wendy Knight**, **JoJo Takata** and some others already mentioned.

Thanks also to our Volunteer drivers **Al & Yumi Patrizio** and **Tom Canevari** for picking up some members who had no means of transportation. We realize now more than ever that there are members who are not able to drive, but want to attend our events. Please let us know if you can help us, even for a few times a year.

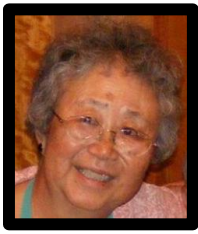
A BIG shout-out goes to **Keiko Nakamura** and **Akane Matsuo** for the beautiful programs they create for every one of our events, **Minami & Issa Cohen** for donating the two ceremonial sheet cakes, **Yoshiko & Tom Canevari** who brought their own bounty of oranges to share with everyone, and US Bank for the pens in each goody bag.

In the end, many stayed to help clear, clean and break-down the tables, pile the chairs and cushions, clean the kitchen, collect the garbage, move back everything into the main room. It took a "village" evokes feelings of our Okinawan community spirit on a small scale!

We hope EVERYONE had a wonderful time. Again, many thanks to all our volunteers!







## IN MEMORIAM

**Jeanette Date Yamashiro 1941 – 2024**

by Christine Yamashiro

Jeanette Date Yamashiro was the only child of Ken and Mary Date. She was born in Reno Nevada on November 18, 1941. She graduated from University of Nevada Reno

and moved to San Francisco where she was employed by the Internal Revenue Service. There she met George Yamashiro and they were married in April 1969. They lived in the East Bay, living in the Berkeley hills for most of their married life.



L - Yae Yamada, R - Jeannette

They were active members of our kenjinkai. Jeanette shared secretary responsibilities (English) with **Yae Yamada** (Japanese) for many years. She also enjoyed Ikebana. George and Jeanette were active league bowlers in the Nisei leagues. Jeanette was

predeceased by her husband in 2009, but had a large extended family including uncles, aunts and cousins along with her Yamashiro and Otani families. She had moved to assisted living in Sacramento from 2020 where she lived until her death on October 9, 2024.

*(Editor's Note: When Ban Ishii was President, I asked Jeanette about the early days of our kenjinkai. I realized that here was a story that had to be shared. She consented to put her thoughts in writing. I still have copies of her story in her own handwriting, long-hand! The following article appeared in the December 2018 issue of Tayui. I want to share it with our membership again and like Jeanette, I hope other members will share their stories too.)*

When I married **George Yamashiro**, I knew a little about his family. He and his father lived in Richmond, CA. His mother had passed away. There were 3 brothers and 2 sisters. His older sister, **Mary Otani**, had her own family, but she managed to do the cleaning and some of the cooking. The younger sister was a student at University of California, Berkeley.

George and I offered to help as best as we could since we were both working. One request Mary made was that we would take his father and two friends, **Mr. and Mrs. Toguchi**, when there would be Okinawa get-togethers. I wasn't sure of their ages, but it seemed that we had 3 of the older issei's in the group. At the first meeting when I saw how the smiles blossomed on everyone's faces as they met their old friends, it was very heart-warming.

The structure of the group seemed to be San Francisco side of the Bay: **Tom and Bea Shiroma**, their daughter **Yuki** (she was the only dancer at the time), and **Hiroko and Timothy Sakamaki**. On the East Bay were the **Yamashiro family**, **Tom and Isabel Oshiro**, **Mas and Yuko Yamamoto**, and **George and Yaeko Yamada**. Officers were President **Tom Shiroma**, Treasurer **Minoru Fujii** and myself as Secretary, but since my primary language is English, I needed a Japanese assistant. **Yaeko Yamada** offered to help. I would type the newsletter in English and Yaeko would write it in Japanese.

There was a group from the Fairfield-Sacramento area. **Hugh and Tomi Daffin** helped secure the Fairfield Community Center, which we are still using now. Before, we used a school auditorium in Oakland and a park in San Francisco, but facilities were limited.

Tom and Isabel Oshiro were housekeepers, cook and property manager for a large property and twice we were able to use it since the family was not home. Once we went to a park in San Leandro that Mas Yamamoto secured.

Just my random notes: **Emiko** and daughter **Emma Haley** always looked for us since George and I spoke English. **James and Helen Austin** always brought the soda, tea and water for New Years. Helen was very proud of her family. Her daughters were in college and later when I asked about her sons, her reply was that they had jobs. The membership was diverse, from farmers (like my father-in-law who grew bitter melon and *gobo*), company CEO's and housewives. Despite the diversity, we all came together and shared the culture with our families!

めんそーれー

**New Members / Address Changes as of 1/16/2025:**  
新会員加入 2025年1月16日付

Toshiko & George Alpi  
Trese Benzon & Jjay Mendoza  
Ryan Kaneshiro  
Matsuko Nakamatsu  
Jason Raquino  
Melody & Masafumi Shibata  
Suzuka & Gustavo Suarez



## REVISED TAYUI DISCLAIMER (2022)

### SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES FOR TAYUI NEWSLETTER:

You are invited to submit requests for any community announcements or other events that you feel are important to promote for our NCOKK members in the quarterly *Tayui* Newsletter. This includes Okinawan dance performances, concerts, Japanese festivals, local fundraisers, school events, etc.

Please consider if what you want to promote will benefit the NCOKK member community. The Tayui Editing Team reserves the right to make editorial and formatting changes to your story if space is limited.

### REQUIREMENTS:

1. It must be in **English and Japanese (if available)**
2. It must be emailed to the Editing Team at [sfokkjuli@yahoo.com](mailto:sfokkjuli@yahoo.com), at least **two (2) weeks** PRIOR to printing.



**TAYUI ADVERTISING RATES (for 4 issues):**  
Business Card \$100  
¼ Page \$200  
½ Page \$300  
Full Page \$500



(continued from pg.4)

**Third**, we can strengthen balance through exercise, including practices such as tai chi. With a better sense of balance, we might recover quickly from losing our footing, rather than actually falling.

**Finally**, despite our best efforts, falls can still happen. As examples, pets might unexpectedly run in front of people, or a surface might turn out to be slippery. In these situations, falling in a controlled way is usually much safer than falling in an uncontrolled way. Martial arts such as *judo* and *aikido* train people to develop reactions that reduce the risk of injury when falling. However, these falling techniques depend on significant athleticism, since their main purpose is to enable people to practice these martial arts safely. Unfortunately, we lose athleticism as we age, so these techniques should be adapted for everyday life. People who are interested in teaching themselves adapted falling techniques can visit sites such as <http://www.fearlessfalling.com/>. However, physical skills are usually most effectively learned through in-person instruction, so I will be teaching a workshop at UC Berkeley this winter (date and class fees to be determined, with the fees going to the UC Martial Arts Program and to facility maintenance, not to me). Please contact me at [kfhiga@berkeley.edu](mailto:kfhiga@berkeley.edu) if you would like updates about the workshop.

## UYEHARA TRAVEL TOURS HIGHLIGHTS

Uyehara Travel has the following tours scheduled for **2025**:

**Taiwan Tour**, April 6, 5 nights/6 days.

**Hokkaido Tour**, May 5, 5 nights/6 days.

**Northern European Cruise**, August 18, 4 nights/5 days aboard Celebrity Apex including 2 nights with tour in London before the cruise and an optional 3 nights tour of Paris after the cruise.

**Okinawa plus optional Yaeyama Islands**, October 30, 5 nights/6 days, 2 nights on Yaeyama.

**Nakayoshi Christmas Tour**, December 2, 2 nights/3 days, Palm Springs.



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