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GARDENA VALLEY JAPANESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community center providing various classes, programs, services, and facilities to the South Bay area. We also provide affordable housing through the JCI Gardens Apartments, the adjacent senior housing property.

The GVJCI's roots date back to 1912, when it was known as the Moneta Gakuen, a Japanese language school. In 1967, it was formally incorporated as the Gardena Valley Japanese Language School. Then, in 1968, the corporation changed its name to the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute to incorporate the broader services and functions the organization offers. In 1971, Compton Gakuen, Gardena Gakuen, and Moneta Gakuen merged, opening its doors officially as the GVJCI's Japanese Language School. The GVJCI has a very proud history spanning over 100 years.

Today, we continue to provide a variety of activities, programs, and services. We are truly fortunate to have an active and well-utilized center serving people of all ages. We thank you, the community, for your active participation and for your support through donations and volunteerism that enables the GVJCI to continue.

A space to engage, share, and embrace the Nikkei experience and culture.

The GVJCI envisions a vibrant network and a welcoming space for all persons interested in Japanese heritage and culture where history and tradition are honored, people are inspired to create action and change, and cultural pride and respect for all humanity are promoted.

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MISSION STATEMENT

VISION STATEMENT



HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020!

Happy Year of the Rat! Akemashite omeditou gozaimasu! The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI) Board and Staff send you best wishes for 2020. As we begin this new decade, we look back at GVJCI's growth in programs, services and activities. Not only have we made big strides from our humble beginnings, but we seem to be bursting out of our seams not having enough available space and time to hold all of the activities of the GVJCI and our member organizations. We are so fortunate to have such an active community center day and night, seven days a week, where so many call GVJCI a second home. We could not do all that we do without your support, participation, and collaboration. We sincerely thank you as participants in our programs and services, as volunteers, as monetary and non-monetary donors, sponsors, and as community collaborators. We look forward to a continued relationship with all of you in 2020.

Below is the list of our 2019 donations, grants, and sponsorships (if we inadvertently missed any names, please let our office know)....thank you!

In gratitude,
Alison Kochiyama, Executive Director



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Tomo No Kai Corner continued from page 5

Yoga and Zumba

By: Genie Nakano

These haiku and tanka summarize what yoga is for me...

Yoga
 is the yolk
 of my life
 Yoga mat
 my portable
 sacred spot

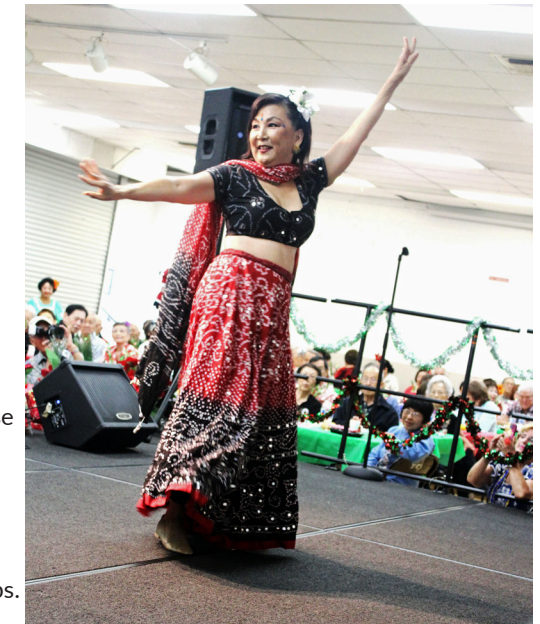
My mother in 1952 was taken to LA County Emergency Hospital. She was dying of the disease Lupus. She believed Yoga saved her and helped her live a long life. My mom was my first yoga teacher. To this day, I could not live without yoga. It keeps my joints and muscles flexible, strong and lubricated. Yoga keeps me standing tall and ready for action. I'm still dancing and enjoying Zumba at age 71.

Unfortunately I inherited Rheumatoid from my mother, which caused some damage to my hips. A professional Belly dancer for twelve years also contributed some damages. I got my left hip replacement in 2008 and my right one in 2019. (Yes, recently.) And it's Zumba that got me up and dancing again.

Salsa, Cumbia
 Merengue those hips
 my new love
 teaching Zumba to seniors
 **"Si Como no", yes, why not

Like no other exercise program Zumba is the sexiest most fun form of exercise I know. You roll shake shimmy and sway the hips shoulders spine to the rhythms of Zumba Zin. We don't just step dance -- we use our whole body. Zumba is a total body mind experience and it's so much fun!!!

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The Adventurers Club Announcements!

Next stop: Okinawa and Kyushu!
There will be two tours; each tour will spend half of the time in each area.

Fall 2020: Nov. 11 – 22 \$3,800 per person (land cost only); \$685 single supplement.

This tour will cover Okinawa, including the southwest islands, Naha, Manza Beach, Peace Memorial Park, Churaumi Aquarium, and Gyokusendo Cave; Kyushu will include: Kumamoto; Nagasaki; Arita; Fukuoka.

See the changing of Fall colors!

Spring 2021: March 26 - April 6 \$4,200 per person (land cost only); \$750 single supplement.

This tour will cover Okinawa, including the southwest islands, Naha, Manza Beach, Peace Memorial Park, Churaumi Aquarium, and Gyokusendo Cave; Kyushu will include: Kagoshima; Nagasaki; Arita; Karatsu; Yufuin; Beppu. See the cherry blossoms in full bloom!

Please note that these are tentative destinations, and that they are subject to change based on availability at the time of booking.

Why Okinawa?

Okinawa is the southern-most part of Japan, and is far from the main islands of Japan. With its distinct culture inherited from the Ryukyu Kingdom, Okinawa has always been considered an exotic destination even in Japan. The sea is gorgeous, the atmosphere in Okinawa is peaceful and relaxed, the local cuisine has its own unique style and flavors, different from mainland Japan. Also unique is Okinawan music and dance, accompanied by the sanshin.

Why Kyushu?

Since the 3rd century BC, various countries from around the world crossed the seas arriving in Japan to trade. Kyushu was the location where many of these cultural exchanges occurred. Its rich history boasts some of the most famous territorial wars between powerful samurai clans during the Tokugawa period. There is great pride in their local cuisine, pottery/ceramics and textiles. Kyushu is also known for its untouched natural landscapes and hot springs.

Please note that the Adventurers Club is a non-sponsored GVJCI activity. For more information, contact Tim Toyama at timtoyama@gmail.com



GEO Youth Appreciation Awards

The Gardena Evening Optimist Club honors outstanding youth of the community with a special annual "Youth Appreciation Awards" banquet at a local restaurant. This year, the dinner was held on November 19, 2019 at Dave & Buster's.



GEO Youth Appreciation Awards Dinner honoring Brooke Amano, Gideon Song & Elissa Estrada with Liana Balasbas, GEO President (left) and Jeanette Mena, GEO Youth Awards Chair (right).

The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI) was honored to be selected to nominate a youth for this impressive award. The GVJCI nominated Brooke Amano, West High School Senior and Interact Club Leader, for her outstanding volunteer efforts at the GVJCI in 2019. Brooke led and managed a group of 10 high school volunteers at the 5th Annual GVJCI Kansha Craft Show Fundraiser. The craft show was a success and we couldn't have done it without Brooke and her team! Brooke also helped secure WHS Interact volunteers for the 5th Annual GVJCI Elemental Funk Concert Fundraiser, and we're looking forward to partnering with her and WHS Interact in 2020!

Other honorees include Gideon Song, nominated by Boy Scout Troop 683; and Elissa Estrada nominated by the Gardena Police Department Explorer Post 142.

Congratulations Brooke, Gideon and Elissa and thank you for serving our community!



GVJCI MATSURI 2020

SAVE THE DATE!
JUNE 27-28, 2020



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Board of Directors Updates

Teri Kuwahara and Steven Awakuni have been members of the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute Board of Directors since 2015. They both served on the Board Governance Committee, and were instrumental in facilitating the process to develop GVJCI's new Mission Statement "A space to engage, share, and embrace the Nikkei experience and culture" and Vision Statement. Teri served as the Chair on the Governance Committee and helped to formalize the board committee structure, policies and procedures. Steven also served as Chair of the Governance Committee and guided the Board in the examination and updating of GVJCI's risk management policies and procedures.

Both Teri and Steven have ended their terms in December 2019. On behalf of the GVJCI, I want to extend my gratitude and appreciation for their support as members of our Board of Directors.

Ray Shibata
President, Board of Director

Facility Updates

By Dayton Lee, Interim Facility Operations Manager

Growing up in Gardena, I've always viewed the GVJCI as the place where I played Sansei Baseball and where we would go for the annual carnival. Nothing more, nothing less. Later in life, I opted not to make the move to Texas with the rest of my Toyota colleagues. So, when I received the call to ask if I was interested in helping out the GVJCI on a temporary basis...I thought, sure I can do that. And so began my tenure as the interim Facility Operations Manager at the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute. This was a complete departure from the marketing and advertising of Toyota vehicles and products that I did. This was not only a change in responsibilities, but coming from the corporate world, this was a change in work environment.

In my brief time here, I've discovered that the GVJCI is so much more than just a place where I played baseball or visited the carnival. It was interesting to learn that the roots of the GVJCI date back to 1912 and that there's such a proud history that spans over 100 years. We are a non-profit community center that provides affordable classes, programs, services and facilities to the South Bay. Non-profit being the key term here, quite different from the "for profit" company I came from. Being non-profit, we rely on donors, fund raising efforts and the support from our member organizations to keep our lights on. Again, quite different from what I was used to.

It's been said that time heals all, but time also takes its toll. Everything eventually experiences wear, breaks down and requires

maintenance, upkeep and repair. As was the case with the glass doors of the two-story JCI building. The building had its grand opening in 1976 and over time it's seen some improvements, but nothing recent. Over the past 43 years, the three sets of glass doors have stood the test of time, but with anything that ages...they've had their share of "operational" issues. We're happy to announce that as of late October, we had all three sets of doors replaced. We appreciate everyone's patience throughout the process and we're extremely happy to now have fully functioning doors!

Being non-profit, our budgets are meager so cautious spending is a common practice around here. Not to say that's a bad thing, but it takes a bit of getting used to. Coming in with "fresh eyes" and a different perspective on things, it's my personal opinion that both the Main Hall and the Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall could use some upgrades and improvements. If you look around, it's easy to see the many things that have fallen into disrepair. It's not that we don't want to fix it, but more so it becomes a matter of budget and priority. We have countless "back burner" items that will usually be deferred to the next year with other more urgent major repairs or replacements taking precedence.

We can't tackle everything at once, so for the immediate future we'd like to focus our attention on the JCI building. Replacing the glass doors were just part of the long list of things needed to give this two-story building a much-needed facelift. We'd like to be proactive and renovate not only to refresh appearance, but also to improve usability, functionality, energy efficiency and hopefully address those items before they become "front burner" issues. These improvements will have to be spread out over time. As I've mentioned, funding for such projects rely on donations and fundraising efforts. That's hard enough, but we're also challenged by increasing operational expenses. Keeping with the philosophy of providing affordable classes, programs and services, we've not increased hall and classroom rentals for quite some time. It's gotten to the point where some of the amounts charged didn't even cover operating expenses.

It's not sustainable for the GVJCI to continue to absorb increases in operating expenses, while keeping costs unchanged. We have this community asset and legacy that we have the responsibility to take care of and to ensure its continuation for future generations. With the start of the new year, we'll be making nominal adjustments to rental costs. We do this not for profit or gain, but just to continue to operate as we have and to be able to make the improvements the GVJCI so needs. We hope you can understand.

Again, thank you all for your continued support and generosity!!



Eagle Scout Project

We are very fortunate that Anton Shiozaki from Troop 378 selected the GVJCI for his Eagle Scout project. After discussion with GVJCI staff, it was decided that a new raffle drum was needed to replace the one that's been in service for over 30 years. He wanted to create a drum that was not only functional, but also looked nice. Anton researched several drum designs and started drawing what he wanted. After several attempts, Anton decided to build a drum with clear acrylic and wood accents.

He was given guidance by his Eagle Scout Advisor, Lori Fan and Assistant Scout Master Glenn Saruwatari. They taught him about counter balancing and weight requirements. In the end, the completed raffle drum came out even more beautiful than he could have imagined.



Anton has been going to the GVJCI since he was a child. His mom was born and raised in Gardena and he always accompanied his parents to GVJCI functions. He played Sansei Baseball and would help at the booth while his

dad cooked chicken at the Matsuri. He has many fond memories of attending GVJCI events and felt it would be great to give something back beyond his service hours.

He began his scouting career with Pack 862 at Faith United Methodist Church in Torrance. When he was 11, he bridged over to Troop 378 in WALTERIA. Anton received his Eagle Scout Award on November 6th of this year. He is so appreciative of all the help and hard work from the many people that supported him along the way.

In the near future, Anton wants to attend UC Irvine or UCLA while majoring in mathematics and statistics. He said his dream job would be to be a sports statistician working on analytics.

The GVJCI would like to thank Anton, Boy Scout Troop 378 and all of his family and friends for their support for a job well done!



2019 Board Fellowship

By: Bryce Ikemura

Over the last year, I had the extreme pleasure of sitting on the board of directors for the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute as a board fellow through Kizuna's Board Fellowship program. As I initially attended board meetings, I quietly observed the way the board members functioned together, discussing and debating various topics seeking eventual consensus to move forward as a unified body. Occasionally, the board members would ask my opinion. I became more comfortable sharing my thoughts from month to month as my mentor, Ray Shibata, helped guide me through the workings of the board and encouraged me to be more vocal during meetings. I served on a few committees through the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute's board, including the Development Committee, Day of Remembrance Committee, and Matsuri Committee. Each committee was different in their respective meeting objectives and end goals, but each gave me important insight and perspective as I began seeing how each independent committee fit into the organization's larger vision.

Particularly, I feel that my experience as a fellow is highlighted by the opportunities I had to work with the organization's stakeholders at Day of Remembrance and at Matsuri. While learning about the direction and administrative planning behind an organization's functions was important, I am thankful that I was able to meet and interact with the people who are personally invested in the GVJCI on a daily basis.



At the end of the program, I had become more comfortable around the board's members and with the organization, but more importantly, I found myself more invested in the GVJCI's mission and more passionate about my community. I am looking forward to being more involved with the GVJCI in the future and hope to continue giving back to the community that has given so much to me.

April Deadline for 2020 GVJCI Youth Scholarships

The GVJCI will be awarding scholarships to 2020 South Bay high school seniors and GVJCI Japanese Language School graduates (may live outside of the South Bay area). Applicants must have been directly involved with the GVJCI or its member organizations that hold regular activity at the GVJCI. Emphasis is placed upon GVJCI and other community involvement, volunteerism and future goals. High school students must have a minimum of a 2.5 GPA and have post-secondary educational plans.

Applications are available on our website: jci-gardena.org. Submission deadline is April 1, 2020, and award presentations will be made on June 27, 2020 at the GVJCI Matsuri Fundraiser.

Scholarships available: Gary Hori Memorial Scholarship, Gardena Valley JACL Scholarship, and the Gardena Valley Gardeners Association Legacy Scholarship, and other GVJCI scholarships.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT:
Part Time Bilingual Program Coordinator

- Develop bilingual programs primarily for seniors
- Collaborate with community individuals and groups
- supportive staff environment
- and much more!!!

Interested applicants can send cover letter and resume to: [Alison Kochiyama, akochiyama@jci-gardena.org](mailto:Alison.Kochiyama@jci-gardena.org).
Accepting applications until position is filled.

For more info, please visit our website!

1964 W 162nd St, Gardena, CA 90247 | (310) 324-6611 | info@jci-gardena.org | jci-gardena.org

the Loft HAWAIIAN RESTAURANTS

GVJCI Fundraiser at The Loft

Show your support for the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute while enjoying delicious Hawaiian fare!

Dates: 2/18 & 19, Tuesday & Wednesday
Time: 11:00am - 8:00pm
Place: The Loft - 2 locations!
North Torrance: 2210 Artesia Blvd., Torrance 90504
310-217-1000
South Torrance: 3160 Pacific Coast Highway, Torrance 90505
424-390-5638

The flyer will be needed. Please visit our website at jci-gardena.org to download the flyer. Thank you for your support!



Melissa F. Okabe

Real Estate Agent, CIPS, FTBS
License #02036508
Phone: 310-245-2564
Email: melissaokabe.re@gmail.com
Website: melissaokabe.com



- Medi-Cal Planning for Long-Term Care
- Living Trusts & Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Trust Administration
- Probate & Conservatorships



Judd Matsunaga
Attorney at Law



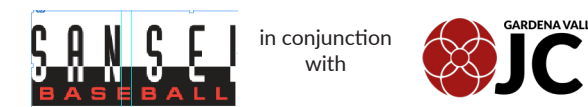
Mingming Zhan
Attorney at Law



Alejandro Benitez
Attorney at Law

Free Attorney Consultations | Home & Hospital Appointments Available

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info@elderlawcalifornia.com



present

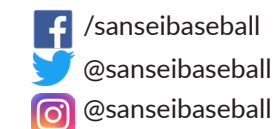
A BINGO NIGHT FUNDRAISER

Date: Saturday, March 14, 2020
Time: 6:00pm - 9:00pm
Place: Gardena Valley JCI, 1964 W. 162nd St., Gardena, CA 90247

Spend a fun night with your team and join us for spectacular BINGO! Proceeds go to SBL and Gardena Valley JCI.

Visit sanseibaseball.com for details.

For information on these events & more, follow us on



Urata, Doreen & Sidney
Uwatori, Sadae
Uyekawa, Gary T
Watanabe, Jun & Charlotte
Watanabe, Pat
Watanabe, Sue
Yamanaka, Flora
Yamane, Dick & Judy
Yamasaki, Robert DDS
Yoshii, Brian and Ericksen, Robert

TRIBUTES

\$1000+

In Memory of Kinuyo Sugimoto
Anonymous
In Memory of Frank & Sueko
Yonemura & Tom Yonemura
Yonemura, Harry

\$500 - \$999

In Memory of Kinuyo Sugimoto
Sugimoto, Glen & Maria

\$100 - \$499

In Memory of Paul Bannai
Akioka, Sam & Aiko
Kawata, Dulcie Ogi
Manzanar Committee
Matsushima, Teresa
Seo, Becky A.
Taga, Chris & Janet
Tofukuji, Laura & Dean
In Memory of Chiyo Fukunaga
Fukunaga, Atsuko & Betty
In Celebration of Eleanor Igawa's
Birthday
Trinidad, Roneale
In Memory of Myrna Kawahara &
Myrna Kawahara's 95th Birthday
Kaneda, Joyce
In Memory of Al Nakamatsu
Nakamatsu, Maria
In Memory of Ken Nobuyuki
Nobuyuki, Linda
In Memory of Kazuo Roger
Sakamoto
Sakamoto, May
In Memory of Kazuko Shimane
Inaba, Meiko, Doug, Risa &
Family, Laurie & Gary Oshiro &
Family
Matsuura, Vernon
Mikami, Richard & Ann
In Memory of DYM Threeriver
Mikawa, Florence & Daniel
In Memory Of Masako Ota,
Suzue Tsuno, Robert Murakawa,
Namiye (Nogami) Fukuzawa,
Harumi Morishige (Hawthorne),
Rev. Dr. Paul M. Nagano, June K.
Inouye, Keiko (Shikuma) Toma,
Katharine Aiso, Emiko Amy
(Terada) Nakawaki, Ume "Helen"
(Murata) Kita, Kiyoko (Wada)
Shimohara, Yoshio Oyama
Hayashi, Yoshiko

\$10-\$99

In Memory of Hellen Andrew
Moriguchi, Gertrude
In Memory of Paul Anna
Mar, Joyce A.
In Memory of Paul Bannai
Awakuni, Donna
Inose, Ken
Mar, Daisy
Mar, Joyce & Terence
Sakita, Kei
Tomita, Barbara S.
In Memory of William "Bill" Igawa
Awakuni, Dorothy
In Memory of Al & Victoria
Nakamatsu
Nakamatsu, Maria
In Memory of Kazuko Shimane
Akimoto, Karen
Mikami, Lynn
Mikami, Shirley
Shigemoto, Miyo
In Memory Of Eriko Shinozuka
Suehiro, Midori
In Memory of Kinuye Sugimoto
Awakuni, Dorothy
Inouye, Tomoko
Livernois, Joan
Oshio, Kay & Bernice
Storey, Gwendolyn
In Memory of Ishiko Takakawa
Miyamoto, Amy
In Memory of Sarah Yamaguchi
Jow, Cheryl
In Memory of Etsuko Yamashita
Uyekawa, Gary T.
In Memory of Dean Satoshi
Yonemoto
Anonymous

Vehicle Donations

Anonymous
Chao Nomura, Mary
Fisher, Debra
Gallardo, Benjamin
Gekko, Rich
Hayano, Arthur
Hirata, Erick
Hird, Kurumi
Huff, Kumiko
Ishii, Reiko
Kawahara, Larry
Kawanishi, Justin
Kouno, Bradley
Morita, Candace
Nagahashi, James
Ogata, Johnny & Lillian
Ogawa, Timothy
Ohara, Nancy
Oishi, Robert
Saiki, Wayne
Sakamoto, Kevin
Sakamoto, Marlene
Suruki, Kurt
Takamatsu, Sharlot
Tamashiro, Faith
Tani, Etsuko
Yamasaki, Rick

In-Kind Donations of Items or Services

@Home Kitchen
ABC Nursery
Akiyama Tsukemono
Akiyama, Miles
Amy Roper & Wallis Yamamoto,
Wally Yonamine Pearl Co
Anonymous
Awakuni, Donna
Awakuni, Ken
Awakuni, Steve & Sharon
Benson, Laura & Charlie
Boissett Collection
Boy Scout Troop 683
Calpis Company Ltd.
Certified Plant Growers
Cherrystone's
Country Touch Café
Crenshaw Lumber
Cropsticks
C-Stars Nursery
Elliot, Mr. Kris of Craft Import
Spirits
Elwood Nursery
Ezaki Glico U.S.A. Corp.
F.K. Nursery
FIA Insurance (Mr. T. Manaka)
Gardena Bowl
Gardena Buffet and Grill
Garibaldo's Nursery
George P. Johnson Company
Gomez, Christopher (Shibumi
Restaurant)
GVJCI Board
H&H Nursery
Honest Abe Cider & Mead
Hoops for Friends
I.T. Nursery, Inc.
Iida, Robert
Ikeda, Lurline
Ikemura, Bryce
Inouye, Dianne
Inouye, Jean
Kawahara, Larry
Keiro Senior Healthcare
King's Hawaiian Bakery &
Restaurant
Kochiyama, Jimmy
Kondo, Michiko
Kotohira Restaurant
Kubota Mortuary
Kuwahara, Teri & Gary
L&L Hawaiian BBQ
Lee, Cathy
Lee, Tracy & Cathy
Lomeli's Italian Restaurant
Marie Callender's Gardena
Martin Containers
Maui Chicken Gardena
Mixer Ink
Miyako Hybrid Hotel
Moneta Nursery
Morinaga Nutritional Foods Inc.
Mutual Trading Company
Nakaoka, Audrey
Nijiya Market
Oba, Rory & Debbie
Office of Dr. Goya & Dr. Mayeda
OD

Okamura, Dean
Okita, Brandon
Okumoto, Akiko
Otafuku Foods
OTY, Inc.
Oyagi, Charles & Carol
Oye, Airi T.
Park, Dr. Wayne
Phiten Torrance Shop
Rage Salon
Rascals Teriyaki Gardena
S.Y. Nursery
Sakae Sushi
Sanrio Surprises
Sapporo U.S.A., Inc.
Sea Empress Restaurant
Seki, Bob
Shibata, Asako
Shibata, Ray & Sharon
Shimabuku, Hazel
Shimada, Mallory
Shinsengumi Restaurant
Shore, Barbara & Kevin
Sprouts Mkt
Starbucks (Gardena)- Artesia
Sunflower Farms
Suzuki, Terri & Roy
T.Y. Nursery
Takano, Jeanne
Tamae, Paul & Hide
Tanaka Farms
Tanaka, Keith & Shirley
Tanouye, Mary
Terao, Dr. Ernest
Terao, Jun
The Loft Restaurant (North
Torrance)
Three Weavers Brewing Co.
Torii, Jim & Angie
Torrance Bakery
Townsend Appliances
Toyoma, Tim & Naomi
Turtle Beach
Unique Plant Rentals
United Plant Growers
Universal Waste
Uwatori, Sadae
Uyemura, Ray
Uyesugi, Bob
Vons Market, Gardena
Vorreiter, Atsuko
Waki, Glen & Rosemary
Walton, Michael
Waste Resources Inc.
Watanabe, Sue
Watari, Joe & Sachi
Yamada, DDS, Jason
Yamashiro, Enrique
Yoshimura, Eileen

GARDENA VALLEY
JCI Tomo No Kai Corner



On December 7th we celebrated our 40th Year Anniversary at our annual Xmas party! We ended 2019 with 767 total members. Thank you!

Hasta Luego, Asako

By: Pam Momoko Yan, Program Coordinator

You may have seen Asako's watercolor paintings on display at the GVJCI Art Show or maybe she taught you Sumie in the upstairs Bridge area during the Matsuri? Were you a student in her weekly Tomo No Kai Sumie class? If you were lucky, you designed your own hat in her Summer Hat decorating workshop or made a pendant in her Jewelry Recycling class.



Over the years, as I got to know Asako Ota, I discovered a richness in a world that I didn't know. Asako had lived in Colombia for a time and spoke fluent Spanish. She also ran her own sushi restaurant, Uozumi, in the city of Palmdale for nine years. I eventually discovered that Asako was an expert seamstress.

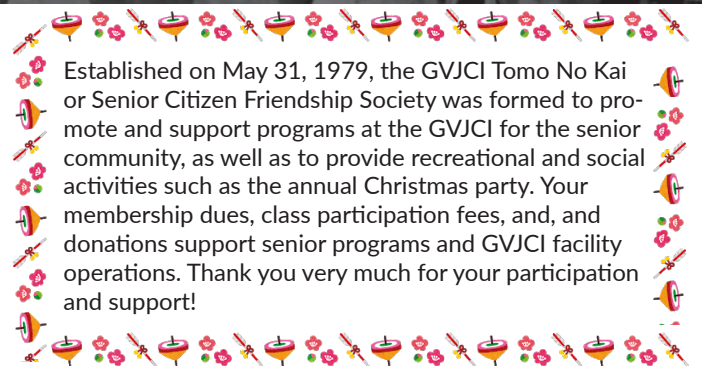
For 26 years, Asako worked at Mattel as a Fabric and Pattern Supervisor for Large and Small Dolls, Barbie & Ken, etc., traveling to China, H.K., Mexico & Taiwan to work with their soft goods production plants. She worked intimately with designers and engineers and even has her name on Mattel's patent for the soft battery cover that she helped design.

Asako's journey to becoming an expert pattern maker started

Transformation

By: Tim Toyama

I'm 67 years old. I've struggled with health issues my entire life. From my early years through the present, it's been asthma. When I hit my 50's, my illnesses included high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and Type 2 diabetes; my numbers were off the chart, especially my blood sugar; at one point my doctor told me that if my blood sugar didn't go down, he would put me on insulin. In 2015, I ruptured a spinal disk, and after agonizing for months, finally had spine surgery. I was a big mess. And then I discovered Genie Nakano's yoga classes at the GVJCI. Gradually, by taking Genie's classes, I recovered from the spine surgery, and eventually took a Yoga Teacher Training course and became a certified yoga teacher. I began teaching low-impact aerobics classes ("Move & Groove") at the GVJCI, and also began teaching Zumba. I lost 20 pounds. My blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar numbers are no longer sky-high; my numbers are normal, and I haven't had an asthma attack in three years. If I can do it, anyone can! Please take care of yourself; the time to start is now. In addition to Yoga, Move & Groove, and Zumba, the GVJCI offers many health classes. Visit the GVJCI office, or call 310-324-6611 for more information.



Established on May 31, 1979, the GVJCI Tomo No Kai or Senior Citizen Friendship Society was formed to promote and support programs at the GVJCI for the senior community, as well as to provide recreational and social activities such as the annual Christmas party. Your membership dues, class participation fees, and, and donations support senior programs and GVJCI facility operations. Thank you very much for your participation and support!

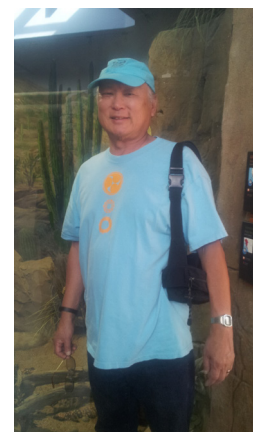
as a young child in Santa Barbara. Being poor, Asako's parents could only buy her one dress per year. Asako scoured discount stores for fabrics and every Christmas would ask her friends and family to send cloth.

One day, she saw an ad in a magazine for the Sugino Dress-Making School in Japan. Three years later, with the money she saved up, Asako flew herself to Japan and finished Sugino's 3 year course in 1 year. Despite the intense and concentrated studying, she managed to find time to study Hana-Ike, Koto, Ocha, Japanese cooking, and even taught English classes at night.

Asako says she met some amazing people at the GVJCI: fellow caregivers at the LTSC workshops; students in her weekly Sumie class; Debbie Mochidome (who leads the JCI Heritage Center Book Club); Tim Toyama whose Sansei Stories class was where she and I met; etc., etc.

It has now come time for Asako to say goodbye. It is bittersweet, but knowing all the magic she's had in her life, I feel like she has so much more magic awaiting her.

Hasta Luego, Asako.



BEFORE



AFTER!

FEBRUARY

GLASS SAND ART・グラスサンドアート

SAT, FEB 1, 2-4:30PM
2月1日土曜日 午後2時-4:30半
GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208
2階の207/208号室

日本で人気のグラスサンドアートをどなたにでも解りやすく、楽しく教えます。ご自身のお家に飾るのはもちろん、大切なへの世界でひとつしかない手作りの素敵なプレゼントにもなります。

This class will be conducted in Japanese. Class space is limited. Fee \$30 per person. Please RSVP at (310) 324-6611 or info@jci-gardena.org

*このクラスは日本語で行われます。

このクラスは人数制限があります。一人30ドルです。ご予約をお願いいたします。

Tel : (310) 324-6611 Eメール: info@jci-gardena.org

LA FOOD BANK FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WED, FEB 5, MAR 4, APR 1, 9-10AM
GVJCI Parking Lot

10-12lb boxes of shelf stable items for Seniors 60 years and older. 1st come 1st served! Ends promptly at 10AM. NO RSVP.

ALZHEIMER'S LOS ANGELES - UCLA DISEASE RESEARCH

FRI, FEB 14, 10-11:30AM
GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

Get an update on where research is at in the search for a cure for Alzheimer's disease. A speaker from the Mary S. Easton Center for Alzheimer's Disease Research at UCLA will share about past and present clinical trials.

Admission is FREE, but donations are appreciated. RSVP to info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611.

SMARTPHONE TRAINING - iPhone

SAT, FEB. 21, 10AM-12PM
GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

Do you have difficulty seeing or hearing on your smartphone? Come to this FREE workshop to learn how to make your phone louder and easier to hear. Learn the basic functions of your smartphone and much more! Please arrive 15 minutes prior to class. Latecomers will not be allowed to participate. Must bring your own iPhone smartphone to class. Class size is limited. Please RSVP at info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611.



DAY OF REMEMBRANCE EVENT - SCREENING OF THE UNTOLD STORY: INTERMENT OF JAPANESE AMERICANS IN HAWAII

SAT, FEB 22, 2-4:30PM
GVJCI Main Hall

We invite you to our annual Day of Remembrance (DOR) event to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066, which caused the mass removal and imprisonment of Japanese Americans during World War II. This year's program will feature the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i's documentary *The Untold Story: Internment of Japanese Americans in Hawai'i* followed by a panel discussion. Free to the public, but donations are appreciated! No registration required. For more information, please email us at info@jci-gardena.org or call us at (310) 324-6611.

MARCH

CULTURAL ROOTS AND EATS

WED, MARCH 4TH, 5-6:30PM, TUES, MARCH
10TH, WED, MARCH 18TH, THURS, APRIL 2ND,
4:30-6PM

GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall

This cooking workshop series will be taught by North High School senior and Girl Scout Kailee Sawai as her Gold Award Project. There will be 4 workshops sharing the origin and history of classic Japanese dishes, followed by a hands-on cooking demo. Geared towards 4th grade to middle school, this program is free of charge but space is limited! To register, please email Kailee at culturalrootsandeats@gmail.com.

HINAMATSURI

SAT, MAR 7, 11:30AM-12:30PM
GVJCI Upstairs Classrooms

Come celebrate Girl's Day at the GVJCI! Join us along with our Japanese Language School students for fun Hinamatsuri-themed crafts and tasty snacks! Registration is \$5. Please register online or at our office.

ALZHEIMER'S LOS ANGELES - HOME SAFETY

FRI, MAR 13, 10-11:30AM
GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

Find out what you can do to make your home safer while caring for someone with dementia. Learn about safety issues and how to use the latest knowledge and products to keep your loved one at home with less worry.

Admission is FREE, but donations are appreciated. RSVP to info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611.

T-SHIRT UPCYCLING WORKSHOP

SAT, MAR 14, 11:30AM-1PM
GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall

Join us for a fun and hands-on T-shirt upcycling workshop to learn sustainable ways to reduce our carbon footprint! The activity will be followed by a climate presentation. Shirts will be provided, but participants are encouraged to bring their own. This free event is geared towards all ages. NO RSVP needed. Visit our website for more info.

JAPANESE ONDO CLASS WEEKLY TUES, MAR 3RD TO JUNE 16TH, 2-3PM GVJCI Main Hall

Have you ever wanted to learn Japanese ondo (dance) like you see at Nisei Week or even our Matsuri? Then take our ondo class for all ages and levels! Fee is \$5 per person. Walk-in basis. For more information, visit our website or call (310) 324-6611.

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLASS WEEKLY ON TUES & THURS, MARCH 17TH TO MAY 21ST, 10AM-12PM

GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 204

Do you want to learn how to speak casually to others in English? Do you want to make friends or just have more meaningful conversations in English? If so, then enroll in our spring English conversation class for high beginners to low intermediate speakers! Class fee is \$100 (\$5 per class). To register, please visit our website, call (310) 324-6611, or email Stephanie (smayeda@jci-gardena.org).

SMARTPHONE TRAINING - ANDROID FRI, MARCH 20, 10AM-12PM

GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

Do you have difficulty seeing or hearing on your smartphone? Come to this FREE workshop to learn how to make your phone louder and easier to hear. Learn the basic functions of your smartphone and much more! Class size is limited. Please RSVP at info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to class. Latecomers will not be allowed to participate. Must bring own Android smartphone to class.

PT CAREGIVER WORKSHOP "CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER" BY HOME CARE

ASSITANCE/MILLENIA
SAT, MARCH 21, 2-4PM

GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

Join P.T. Ruth Kirihara in this workshop as you learn how to effectively care for others while being self-efficient. Gain a greater understanding of posture and body mechanics. Develop more awareness for home safety. Learn exercises for you and your family member or client. Know what resources are available to you while caring for others. Class size is limited. Please RSVP to info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611. Admission is FREE, but donations are appreciated.

JAPANESE HOMESTYLE COOKING WORKSHOP

SAT, MAR 28 & APR 11, 2-4PM
GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall

Have you ever wanted to learn to make Japanese comfort food like nikujaga, vegetable curry, and much more! Register for our 2-part cooking workshop taught by former restaurant chef Emiko Miyara. Fee is \$30 per person, and space is limited. To register, please visit our website or call (310) 324-6611.

APRIL

LAUGHTER YOGA WORKSHOP

SAT, APR 4th & Sat, MAY 2nd, 1-2PM
GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall

Laugh yourself out of stress and into health and humor! Laughter yoga sessions include easy stretches, breathing designed to us laugh. This class is taught by certified Laughter Yoga teacher Genie Nakano. Fee is \$7 per person. To register, please call our office (310) 324-6611.

ALZHEIMER'S LOS ANGELES SAVVY CAREGIVER EXPRESS FRI, APR 10, 17, & 24, 10AM-12PM GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

Take this 3 week course to learn how to improve your caregiving for someone with dementia. This workshop helps you to better understand dementia and how to respond to changes in our loved ones. Must attend all 3 workshops. Class space is very limited, please RSVP early. Admission is FREE. RSVP to info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611.

ROCKIN' THE BOAT: FLASHBACKS OF THE 1970S ASIAN MOVEMENT BOOK RELEASE SAT, APR 18, 1-4PM

GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall

A 320-page book with over 400 photographs by Mary Uyematsu Kao from 1969-1974, Rockin' the Boat chronicles the Asian American Movement that occurred in major cities across the country, with the main focus on the Los Angeles-area. There will be a slideshow featuring photos from the book, a talk by the author, and a panelist discussion by former members of the movement. Admission is FREE. NO RSVP necessary. For more info, please visit our website or call (310) 324-6611.



SPECIAL CLASSES COMING TO THE GVJCI!

SMALL BUSINESS FINANCIAL BASICS

A FREE OF CHARGE 4-part workshop series for entrepreneurs and small business owners to understand small business financial basics including business formation, calculating start-up costs, business credit + loan qualifying and Facebook ad budgets. Learn from industry professionals and small business owners about best practices for new small business to monitor finances and budget for grow. Classes held weekly on Tuesdays, March 3rd to 24th from 7-9PM in GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 204. RSVP to book your spot via email Mlochridge@ltsc.org or telephone 213 473 1658.

SAVE THE DATE!

MANZANAR PILGRIMAGE

"The Manzanar Committee will hold its 51st annual Manzanar Pilgrimage on Saturday, April 25, 2020 at the Manzanar National Historic Site. The Pilgrimage serves as an important reminder of what can happen when our county fails to uphold Constitutional rights for all, whether immigrants, Muslims, or communities of color. Please check our website at manzanarcommittee.org or call 323-662-5102 for more information."

