

Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai Newsletter



Volume III, Issue 1

1st Quarter 2014

2014 Shinnenkai New Year's Luncheon —Jan 26, 2014

Over 50 members of the Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai (NYK) gathered at the Quiet Cannon in Montebello to officially welcome in the new year. The slightly overcast day outside was brightened by the beautiful fuschia-colored azalea centerpieces that were generously donated by San Gabriel Nursery.

The program opened with a special performance by NYK member, **William Christopher Ford**, who danced "Hashi" (Bridges), about the invisible connections or bridges that exist between parents and their children and between husband and wife. (For more information or to contact William, please visit his website: Kaizendojo.com.)



William Christopher Ford
—Photo by Richard Fukuhara

Emcee **Aki Fukuhara-Vaughn** introduced club president, **Richard Fukuhara**, who welcomed everyone with "Happy New Year" greetings. He showed the audience the 1st place trophy that was won by the NYK Bowling Team members **Pei Eto**, **Kevin Eto**, **Sam Nakata**, and **Russ Yamaguchi** for the highest score at the **Kyogikai Bowling Tournament** last November.

A brief general meeting was held and the 2014 slate of officers was presented to the membership. A vote was taken and the following officers were elected:

2014 NYK Board

President, **Richard Fukuhara** VP, **Arturo Yoshimoto**
Secretary, **France Yanai Wong** Treasurer, **Naomi Suenaka**

Before lunch was served, glasses were raised and **Henry Yasuda** led everyone in a *kampai* toast and **Rev. Kiyoshi Igawa** delivered the invocation.

Entertainment Director, **Patrick Seki**, who had recently undergone throat surgery, turned the karaoke hosting duties to **Kiyoshi Igawa**. Those who entertained the audience were **Ayako** and **Reijin Fujita**, **Aki Fukuhara**, **Kiyoshi Igawa**, **Yasuko Katayama**, **Yoshiko Kishimoto**, **Elsie Myers**, and **Henry Yasuda**. Attendees enjoyed closing out the karaoke portion of the program with the singing of "Sukiyaki".

A highlight of our annual new year's luncheon is the honoring of members 80 and 80+ years of age. This year, 18 recipients received large, beautifully wrapped 2014 calendars with photo inserts of last year's NYK events. Kudos to the creative team of **Millie** and **Steven Tani** for the calendar concept and for putting them together.

Our Senior Honorees



(Front left to right): **Yoshiko Kishimoto**, **Tomiko Hirshfield**, **Umeno Ford**, **Mitsuko Yamamoto**, **Tomiko Nakata**, **Yoshiko Monji**, **Mitsuko Ono**, & **Mieko Nakamura**.
(Back left to right): **Reijin Fujita**, **Hisako Nagamine**, **Masaki Matsubara**, **Aiko Sakamura**, **Helen Yasuda**, **Henry Yasuda**, **Maurine Oban**, **Roy Oban**, **Hideo Morikawa**.
(not pictured **Haruko Morikawa**.)

—Photo by Richard Fukuhara

A "2013 Year in Review" slide presentation was created by Richard and narrated by past president, **Arlene Nakamura**. It was good to see the many photos from our 2013 events.

Naomi Suenaka next hosted the popular and always fun Bingo games with the assistance of **Paige Fukuhara**.

Door prizes were then presented to all attendees by our Shinnenkai helpers: **Carol & Paige Fukuhara** and **Lora Nakamura**.

Before closing out the program, Richard Fukuhara announced the **2015 Yamaguchi World Grand Meeting** to be held in **Los Angeles** on **November 7 & 8, 2015**. Along with delegates from Yamaguchi-Ken prefectural government, we hope that delegates from Yamaguchi kenjinkais around the world will be attending.

The luncheon ended with a well-earned *arigatou* to those who unselfishly helped to make the 2014 Shinnenkai (New Year) party a wonderful day to remember!

Special Acknowledgments

William Christopher Ford, **Carol & Paige Fukuhara**, **Yoshiko Kishimoto**, **Lora Nakamura**, **Bruce Thompson**, and **San Gabriel Nursery**.

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2014 Shinnenkai Party—Cont'd from pg. 1

Shinnenkai Committe Members & Volunteers



(Front): Richard Fukuhara; (2nd row l to r): Aiko Sakamura, Helen Yasuda, Yoshiko Kishimoto, Atsu Kimoto, Michiko Otaya, France Yanai Wong, Arlene Nakamura, & Aki Fukuhara-Vaughn. (Back row l to r): Henry Yasuda, Kiyoshi Igawa, Naomi Suenaka, Millie & Steven Tani. (not pictured Patrick Seki)

—Photo by R. Fukuhara



All photos by Bruce Thompson
<http://fusako.com/nyk2014/>





"Getting to Know You" Member Profile

はじめまして

Naomi Suenaka



Naomi Suenaka is the 2014 NYK Board Treasurer. She served as the 2013 Board Treasurer and 2012 Board Secretary. Her father, Kingo, was Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai President in 1960-1961.

Where were you born? I was born in East Los Angeles. My parents were living in the San Fernando Valley at the time but there was no hospital that would allow "yellows" so my mom went to East Los Angeles where my grandparents lived.

Where was your family during WWII? My mother's family was interned in Heart Mountain, WY. My father was living in Hawaii and became part of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). He met my mother in Minnesota where he was stationed. My mother and her girlfriends left camp to work as domestics in Minnesota.

What kind of work did your family do after the War? They were truck farmers in the San Fernando Valley. My father became active in the Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai and served as komon, advisor and president. He was an active fundraiser representing the San Fernando Valley.



With my husband, Doyle

Where were you raised and educated? I was raised in the San Fernando Valley and graduated from Cal State Los Angeles.

Are you married? I am married to Doyle Derr. We went to Junior High and High School together. Doyle has 5 grandchildren. I have 2 nieces, Joy and Leanne, and a nephew, Todd, and they each have one child, Saylen, Lennox and Kira. I am also very close to my dearest friend's daughter, Lauren, whom I consider my "niece".

How did you get involved with NYK? Arlene Nakamura called and asked me to get involved. She was about to be elected as the very first female president of any Kenjinkai and asked me if I could help.



My parents, Haruyo & Richard Kingo Suenaka 1980's

Do you have a special or proud memory (or memories)? I have many, many special memories. The most recent event was when a group of the Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai went to Japan for the 3rd World Conference in 2011. I met the Yamaguchi City Speaker of the Assembly, Mr. Yanai. He told me he knew my father and spoke highly and warmly of him. It was an honor. Other memories are being made now with my mother who is 92 years old and still going strong.

Where have you traveled? I have been lucky to have traveled to many places. I've been to the western and eastern states, most of the European countries, Japan, China, Vietnam, the Caribbean Islands, Bermuda, Mexico and we are fortunate enough to go to Hawaii every year.



Italy 2012 with my "niece", Lauren, my close friend's daughter.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? I was on the board of the Grateful Crane Ensemble for several years and still help them with their annual fundraiser. The Grateful Crane is a performance group that produces shows to educate the Yonsei, Gosei and others about the sacrifices the Issei and Nisei made for them. They have produced "Nihonmachi", "Camp Dance", "I Saw Bachan Kissing Santa Claus", and most recently "Momotaro". Now I volunteer for the Rising Stars, a program for high school students of Japanese heritage. On Saturdays at the JACC the students are provided with life skills workshops and given cultural experiences.

I love to work in the garden. I think it's because after years of working in a field where compromise, negotiation, and mediation were required, plants never "monku". I take Tai Chi and two exercise classes. I watch *Modern Family*, *The Big Bang Theory*, *CSI*, *NCIS*, *Bones*, *Hawaii Five-O*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, and more. I guess I'm a real TV addict.

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My brother Larry, niece Joy, mom, niece Leanne, & nephew Todd. November 9, 2013

2014 NYK Picnic Date Set

When: Sunday, June 22, 2014 *Save the Date!*
 Where: Leo Politi Picnic Grounds
 On Stadium between Scott Rd & Academy Rd
 Time: 11:30 AM start—5:00 PM

We can always use extra hands to set up / clean up and help with the various events. If you are interested, please contact any one of our board members.

If you'd like to attend any one of our events and you don't have transportation, please contact one of our board members and we'll try to assist you. ///

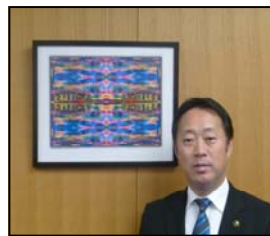
Akemashite Omedetougozaimasu

謹んで新年のお祝いを申し上げます。会員の皆様にはお健やかに新春をお迎えのことと心からお慶び申し上げます。本年も宜しくご支援のほどお願い申しあげ、新年のご挨拶と致します。



Did You Know?

NYK Board president, Richard Fukuhara, visited Yamaguchi Prefecture in October, 2013. He visited Iwakuni and met with Mayor Yoshihiko Fukuda whom the NYK hosted in October 2012.



Iwakuni Mayor Fukuda



Richard with Iwakuni Resource Center Director Matsuoka.

Mayor Fukuda treated Richard to a wonderful seafood dinner and arranged tours of the new Iwakuni Airport, the famous White Snake Museum, Iwakuni Castle, and Kintai-kyo Bridge. Upon returning home, Richard created two photo-art works of the Kintai-kyo Bridge and sent them to Mayor Fukuda as a thank you for his hospitality. The Mayor sent the above photo with a thank you letter and extended greetings to our NYK members.

Richard also met with Director Matsuoka of the Iwakuni Resource Center and presented him with the Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai 100 Year Anniversary book.

If you know a member who has recently graduated from high school / college or who has been recently honored or has news to share, please let us know and we'll publish it in this newsletter. Contact Arlene Nakamura at arlenenakamura@gmail.com or Aki Vaughn at aki@vaughnlawoffice.com or call 562-234-5702.

Scholarship Applications



Scholarship applications are now available to graduating high school seniors who are descendants of Yamaguchi-Ken.

The winner(s) will be awarded their scholarships at our annual picnic on June 22, 2014.

Contact Scholarship Chairperson,
Arlene Nakamura
 Email: arlenenakamura@gmail.com
 Phone: 626.281.6548

You can also find the scholarship application on Facebook at Yamaguchi-Kenjinkai-Los Angeles.

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Like Us on Facebook

The Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai Facebook page, created and administered by Steven and Millie Tani, is not only loaded with information about past and upcoming NYK events, photos and newsletters, but also features the latest news about Yamaguchi, Japan and the Nikkei community.



www.facebook.com

Yamaguchi-Kenjinkai-Los Angeles



Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai

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