

Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai Newsletter



Volume XII, Issue 2

2nd Quarter 2024

2024 NYK Annual Picnic

Sunday, June 9, 2024



Nearly 170 Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai members and friends attended this year's picnic despite the cool weather. June gloom quickly disappeared when **Kokoro Taiko** opened the day's festivities with two rousing numbers: "Miyake" and "Omatsuri." Emcee **Aki Fukuhara-Vaughn** welcomed everyone and introduced **NYK President Bruce Kimura** who acknowledged our special guests: **JK Yamamoto**, **Rafu Shimpō** staff writer; **Kihei Otani**, President Ehime Kenjinkai; **Hiroataka Akaiwa**, President Fukuoka Kenjinkai; **Jennifer Kawase** President Kanagawa Kenjinkai and her father, **Frank Kawase**, former President Kanagawa Kenjinkai.



L-R: Clark Yoshida; Dawnalyn Murakawa-Leopard, accepting for her daughter Jennalee, & Bruce Kimura.

NYK VP **Clark Yoshida**, 2024 Scholarship Chairman, announced this year's recipient, **Jennalee Kimiye Leopard**, who was unable to attend due to a prior commitment. Accepting the award on

her behalf was Jennalee's mother, **Dawnalynne (Murakawa) Leopard** (read about Jennalee on pg.3).

Lunch was then announced. Many members pre-ordered and enjoyed delicious bento from **Nijiya Market** in Torrance. Complimentary foods were served: hot dogs and chili were donated and grilled by former president **Arturo Yoshimoto**; sno-cones, donated by former president **Victor Fukuhara**; and soft drinks, water, and juices, courtesy of NYK, were enjoyed by all.

After stuffing ourselves, it was time to burn off the calories. **Beverly Toyama** taught a new, fun dance: "the Pokemon Ondo," which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. The traditional "Tanko Bushi," the coal miner's dance,

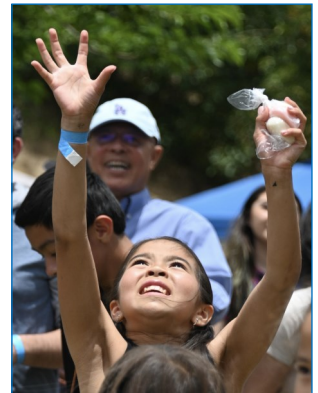


followed with classical dance instructor **Imoto Sensei** and **Aki Fukuhara-Vaughn** assisting as dance captains.

Chocolate candy was tossed to children 12 and under who caught as much candy as they could hold.

Throwing out the candy were former scholarship recipients: **Clark Yoshida**, **Dawnalynne Leopard**, **Collin Kawahara**, and **Luca Mukai**.

Bagged mochi were then tossed out to all by our NYK Board members, followed by a photo of all attendees taken by **Shogo Hayashi** (see photo on page 6).



Special guest vocalist, **Miki Jimenez**, a member of **Kokoro Taiko**, treated us to Mieko Hirota's hit song, "Ningyo no ie," and "Matsuri" by Kaze Fujii.

Board member, **Mike Vaughn**, hosted the game and races which were enjoyed by toddlers to seniors. After the games, the Opportunity Drawing was held to close out the day.

The NYK Board thanks everyone for attending this year's picnic and we hope that you all had a fun and enjoyable day!

Whittier HS Honors Yosh Nakamura!

On March 12, 2024, the Whittier Board Union voted to approve the renaming of the Whittier High School Fine Arts building to “**Yosh Nakamura**.” Hired in 1952 as an art teacher at Whittier High, Yosh, as he likes to be called, was given this honor for his lifelong dedication to art education.

Yosh, age 98, served with distinction in the 442nd infantry regiment as a mortar specialist during WWII and in 2023, Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai recognized Yosh at its New Year Luncheon. NYK is very proud of our distinguished member and congratulate him on this prestigious honor.



*NYK member Yosh Nakamura was honored at the 2023 New Year's Luncheon (pictured with then president Arturo Yoshimoto).
—Photo by Reira Tanaka*

NYK 120th Anniversary

Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai will be celebrating its 120th Anniversary and bring in the 2025 New Year with a luncheon on Sunday, February 23, 2025 at the Quiet Cannon Banquet Facilities in Montebello.

*Please mark your calendars!
This will be a special event and we hope to see many of our members join in the festivities.*



Picnic Photos this page by Tony Fukuhara

2024 NYK Scholarship Recipient



Congratulations to **Jennalee Kimiye Leopard** who is this year's Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai's scholarship recipient. A graduate of Mira Costa High School, Jennalee is very active in many organizations. As evidence of her service, she received the "Committed to Community Award and Youth Award." She has volunteered at JANM,

interned for USC Shoah Foundation and at Johnson Favaro (an architectural firm). She was also a coach for Sender One (a rock climbing gym). Her many other activities, unfortunately, cannot all be listed here.

Academically, Jennalee has been on the Honor Roll every semester since the sixth grade and graduated high school as an AP Scholar with Honors. She is a member of the National Art Honors Society Member, the Tri-M Music Honor Society, and the National Honor Society, and the California Scholarship Federation.

Below are excerpts from one of Jennalee's essays: "My ancestors, Haru and Seiji, first came to the U.S. in 1905. Their first son Kiyoshi, my great grandfather, was born in 1918. Shortly after that they returned to Iwakuni after the death of Seiji's father. Their family remained in Iwakuni, but in 1936 Kiyoshi returned to the U.S. at the age of 18, along with his brother and wife. Together, they settled down in a rural neighborhood and started to learn how to speak English. To Kiyoshi, education was the most important thing, and he dedicated himself to earning a high school diploma in the U.S. while also supporting himself and his family by working with his brother as a gardener and landscaper, saving their money until he had enough to lease land to start a flower farm of his own. Even though he faced many challenges, including losing everything and having to start over after World War II, he was still successful in America, and his legacy lives on in our family until this day.

Some interesting facts about my ancestors: Minoru Nange, was one of the last Samurai in Japan. I only know that he was born in 1864, but I do not know anything else about his life or experiences. My great uncle, Keiji Ishii, provided the lumber to restore the Kintaikyo Bridge during its most recent renovation. Also, my great-grandmother was the valedictorian of her Iwakuni class and that one of her needlepoint projects is still displayed at her school to this day."

Jennalee will be attending UCLA where she will focus her studies as a Mathematics/Economics major.



2024 PICNIC PHOTOS!



Photos on this page and page 1 by Shogo Hayashi



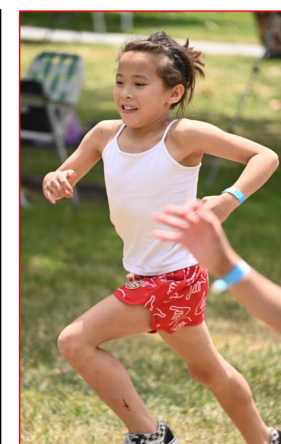
*NYK Board Members Taking a Break.
Standing (L-R): Lorraine Kimura, Florence Ochi,
Bruce Kimura, Tricia Tao, and Naomi Suenaka.
Sitting (L-R): Atsu Kimoto and Michi Otaya.*

*(Right): Former president Arturo Yoshimoto
grilling hotdogs for everyone!*

Photos this page and page 3 by Shogo Hayashi



Photo by Shogo Hayashi



Picnic Photos by Tony Fukuhara

Picnic Special Acknowledgements

Kokoro Taiko
Ron Dam, Miki Jimenez,
Joann Matsunaga,
James Ricalde
Brandon Suemoto
Ken Sumida

Rafu Shimpō
JK Yamamoto

Photographers
Tony Fukuhara
Shogo Hayashi

Guest Vocalist
Miki Jimenez

Ondo Instructors
Beverly Toyama
Imoto Sensei
Aki Vaughn

Hot Dogs and Chili
Arturo Yoshimoto
Shogo Hayashi

Sno-Cones
Victor Fukuhara
Tony & Carol Fukuhara
Warren Fukuhara

Volunteers
Judith Hawkins
Collin Kawahara
Bryan Kimura
Dawnalyn Leopard
Luca Mukai
Tritia Tao
Vicky Tao
Our little members who
helped with drawing
tickets!



Ticket Sales

Caballero, Jennifer \$40.00
Caballero, Jaclyn \$20.00
Eto, Yuki \$40.00
Ford, Umeno \$40.00
Fujimoto, Mitsugi \$40.00
Fujita, Ayako \$40.00
Fukuhara, Cindy \$40.00
Fukuhara, Larry \$40.00
Fukuhara, Tony \$40.00
Fukuhara, Victor \$40.00
Fukumoto, Kiyo \$40.00
Fukumoto, Yuki \$20.00
Gohata, Nancy \$40.00
Gravett, Violet \$40.00
Hamamoto, Sally \$40.00
Hashibe, Eiko \$40.00
Hashibe, Eric \$40.00
Hawkins, Judith \$40.00
Hayashida, Linda \$100.00
Hernandez, Lisa \$40.00
Hopfield, Judy \$40.00
Horita, Sachie \$40.00
Igawa, Yoko \$20.00
Imoto, Susan \$40.00
Isobe, Yoko \$20.00
Itagaki, Edward \$40.00
Kamimura, Eunice \$40.00
Katsumoto, Kaiji \$40.00
Kawahara, Bert \$40.00
Kawahara, Marti \$80.00
Kawahara, Glenn \$40.00
Kawase, Frank \$40.00

Kim, Jean \$40.00
Kimoto, Atsu \$100.00
Kimura, Bruce \$80.00
Kishimoto, Yoshiko \$40.00
K-M Air Enterprises \$40.00
Lee, Larry \$40.00
Matsuda, Jane \$40.00
Matsuda, Kumiko \$40.00
Matsuoka, Hitomi \$40.00
McGuire, Wendy \$40.00
Miyamoto, Esther \$40.00
Monji, Garry \$40.00
Morimoto, Kiyo \$40.00
Morimoto, Jurina \$100.00
Mukai, Susan/David \$40.00
Murakawa, John/Emy \$40.00
Nagamine, Ellen \$40.00
Nagamine, Hisako \$40.00
Nakamura, Yoshio \$10.00
Nakashima, Takuma \$40.00
Nakata, George \$40.00
Nakatsu, Joan \$40.00
Nakayama, Mary \$40.00
Nakazono, Karen \$20.00
Nishikawa, Mitsunori \$40.00
Nishiki, Nancy \$40.00
Nishiyama, Dexter \$40.00
Ochi, Florence \$80.00
Ono, Yoshi \$40.00
Ono, Mitsuko \$40.00
Ota, Julie \$40.00
Ota, Laurine/Ken \$24.00

Cindy Fukuhara \$10.00
Tony Fukuhara \$10.00
Victor Fukuhara \$10.00
Leonard Tanaka \$10.00
Eric Hashibe \$15.00
Clark Yoshida \$15.00
Frank Tanaka \$20.00
Atsu Kimoto \$40.00
Jean Yamada \$40.00
Kihei Otani/Ehime \$50.00
Tak Sorida/Hiroshima \$50.00
Frank/Elaine Koyama \$50.00
Yoshitaka Morioka \$50.00
Yoshio Nakamura \$50.00
Nanka Kyogikai Kenjinkai \$50.00
Mitsuko Ono \$50.00
Patrick Seki \$50.00
Tom/Judy Shigemitsu \$50.00
Kaiji Katsumoto \$60.00

John/Emy Murakawa \$60.00
Joan Nakatsu \$60.00
Yoshi Ono \$60.00
San Gabriel Nursery \$60.00
Yaeko Tanaka \$60.00
Hirota Akaiwa/
Fukuoka Kenjinkai \$100.00
Trace Fukuhara \$100.00
Susan Imoto \$100.00
John Itagaki \$100.00
Bert Kawahara \$100.00
Jennifer & Frank Kawase/
Kanagawa Kenjinkai \$100.00
K-M Air Enterprises \$100.00
Naomi Suenaka-Derr \$100.00
Kiyo Fukumoto \$160.00
Michi Ota \$540.00
Lisa Hernandez \$1,000.00
Arturo Yoshimoto \$1,000.00



Opportunity Drawing Donations

5 Bags of 5 lb. Rice
Bruce and Lorraine Kimura

Stuffed Animal Toys
Erin Masuda

Various Gifts
Naomi Suenaka

Three \$20 Cash Prizes
Mike and Aki Vaughn

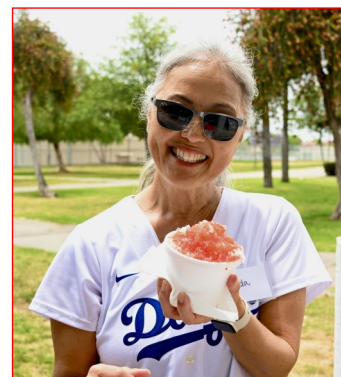
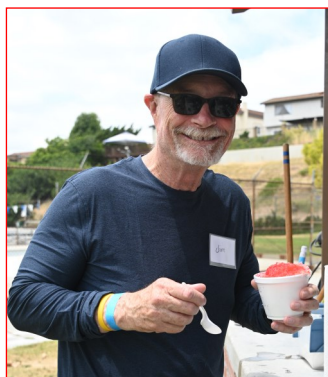
**Microwave Mitts, Tea Set,
and Ceramic Bowl**
Frances (Yanai) Wong

Red and White Wines
Keiko Yamasaki

**Yamaguchi T-Shirts
& Yamaguchi Keychains**
Arturo Yoshimoto

Every donation
is appreciated!
Your continued support of
Nanka Yamaguchi
Kenjinkai allows us to
provide events to
maintain connections that our
forefathers
established in 1905.

Renfro, Eiko \$10.00
Salisbury, Georgene \$40.00
Sahara, Ronald/Freda \$40.00
San Gabriel Nursery \$40.00
Seki, Patrick \$40.00
Shakir, Mari \$80.00
Suenaka-Derr, Naomi \$40.00
Takasugawa, Christina \$20.00
Taketani, Linda/Rich \$30.00
Tanaka, Frank \$40.00
Tanaka, Leonard \$40.00
Tanaka, Yaeko \$40.00
Taniguchi, Mariko \$40.00
Tao, Tricia \$40.00
Tao, Kenny \$40.00
Toyama, Beverly \$40.00
Van Hoy, Linda \$40.00
Vaughn, Aki/Mike \$40.00
Wong, France \$40.00
Yamachika, Yoko \$40.00
Yamada, Masaharu \$40.00
Yamasaki, Keiko \$40.00
Yasuda, Bill/Michelle \$40.00
Yasuda, Henry \$40.00
Yasuda, Kathleen \$40.00
Yasuda, Margaret \$80.00
Yasuda, Richard \$40.00
Yasuda, Robert \$20.00
Yoshida, Clark \$40.00
Yoshida, Fred \$20.00
Yoshida, Caroline \$20.00
Yoshimoto, Arturo \$50.00
Yoshimura, Sachiko \$20.00



Photos this page by Tony Fukuhara

If you would like a copy of any photo in this newsletter, please let us know which page number and row the photo is located and we'll be happy to email it to you.



Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai

2024 Board Officers

Bruce Kimura President
Clark Yoshida Vice President
Aki Fukuhara-Vaughn Secretary
Naomi Suenaka Treasurer
Laura Lee Yamaguchi Government Liaison
Mike Vaughn Legal Counsel

2024 Board Members: Lisa Hernandez, Atsuko Kimoto, Lorraine Kimura, Florence Ochi, and Michiko Otaya.

2024 Board Advisors: Victor Fukuhara, Kiyoshi Igawa, Patrick Seki, Helen & Henry Yasuda, & Arturo Yoshimoto.

Facebook & Instagram Administrator Laura Lee
Webmaster Bruce Thompson
Newsletter Creator Aki Fukuhara-Vaughn

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