



Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai Newsletter



Volume XII, Issue 3

3rd Quarter 2023



Fun at the 6th Yamaguchi World Grand Meeting

The 6th Yamaguchi Kenjinkai World Grand Meeting was held on July 28, 29, and 30, 2023 in Honolulu, Hawaii and organized and hosted by the Honolulu Yamaguchi Kenjinkai (HYK).

On July 28 the young attendees participated in the Youth Exchange. They had a morning of activities and then visited a lo'i (a taro pond) at the University of Hawaii and learned hands on, the significance of the lo'i and how it is maintained.



NYK Treasurer Naomi Suenaka (center) with Arturo Yoshimoto's children, twins Manami and Kysa Hayashi, Remi Hayashi and Shogo Hayashi.

On July 29, during the day, **Governor Tsugumasa Muraoka** and **Assemblyman Shungaku Yanai** met with the kenjinkai presidents. During their meeting, they drafted the World Grand Meeting Declaration, discussed the venue for the next WGM, and had an Opinion Exchange regarding future exchange opportunities. The next WGM will be in Yamaguchi, Japan.

In the late afternoon of July 29, the WGM was held at the beautiful Alohilani Resort. The event was attended by over 100 guests and included the presidents from China, Brazil, Los Angeles, Kona and Kauai.

The guests were given a warm Aloha and a beautiful lei made by the HYK members as they entered the ballroom for the reception. Governor Muraoka and Assemblyman Yanai provided heartfelt words of welcome and purpose. Also in attend-

ance was **Suo Oshima Mayor Kiyotaka Fujimoto** and other Yamaguchi government staff.

Attending from Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai were **President Arturo Yoshimoto** and his entourage **Reira Tanaka**, his children **Manami Hayashi**, **Kysa Hayashi**, **Remi Hayashi**, and **Shogo Hayashi**, and **Treasurer Naomi Suenaka**,

President Yoshimoto was selected to give the welcome greeting.

During the meeting, all of the kenjinkai provided a short overview of the activities of their organizations during the past year. By far, Brazil has the largest active youth group. However, our kenjinkai has the best events of the past year. No other kenjinkai could provide evidence of a better picnic or of a more meaningful Shinnenkai (New Year Party) at which NYK honors our members over the age of 80 years.

HYK members **Lynda Asato** and **Marilyn Higashida** performed a lovely hula which added more Aloha to the event.

President Yoshimoto presented both Governor Muraoka and **HYK President Gail M. Wakatake** with an exquisitely etched glass in the shape of California and a bottle of California wine as a thank you and memento of the event.

In the evening a buffet dinner was served during which guests were provided time to exchange business cards, small gifts, take photos and forge friendships with Yamaguchi descendants from all over the world.

(continued on page 2)



NYK President Arturo Yoshimoto and Yamaguchi Governor Tsugumasa Muraoka.

WGM Report—Continued from pg 1

The following morning of July 30, the HYK hosted a very “ono” (Hawaiian for delicious) buffet breakfast of all homemade dishes at the 100th Battalion Club House. Seating was informal to provide ample opportunities to meet, “talk story,” and learn about each other.

President Yoshimoto had us all play Rock Scissors Paper with the losers giving up \$1.00. More and more folks were eliminated and finally there were two people left in competition for many \$1 bills. However, President Yoshimoto had an ulterior motive. When the winner was declared, he announced that all of the winnings will be donated to the 100th Battalion Club House. This was met with a big round of applause.

We said sayonara to Governor Muraoka, Assemblyman Yanai, Mayor Fujimoto and the prefectural members and gave our warmest Aloha to our new friends.

—submitted by Naomi Suenaka

Visiting Professor from Oshima

On September 7, 2023, Ms. **Yumiko Mizutani**, a visiting professor from Yamaguchi University met with NYK Board members President **Arturo Yoshimoto**, **Michiko Ota**, former Treasurer, and Naomi Suenaka, current Treasurer, at the Japanese American National Museum. For this visit, **Florence Ochi**, NYK Vice President, made a special arrangement for Japanese-speaking docent, **Tami Hirai**.

Professor Mizutani’s purpose was to learn about the immigration of Japanese to the United States. A specific focus was to learn more about those who immigrated from Suo-Oshima.

After an insightful tour of the museum President Arturo treated the group to a delicious lunch at Chado Tea. During lunch Professor Mizutani interviewed President Arturo, Michiko and Naomi. She especially focused on the history of Naomi’s family because they are from Suo-Oshima.

On Sunday she had a full day of learning. Michiko took her to Union Church in Little Tokyo to meet her Shin-Issei friends, the old Japanese Hospital in East L.A., the Evergreen Cemetery, also in East L.A. where many people of Japanese ancestry are buried, and the Santa Anita Horse Race Track where so many Japanese and Japanese Americans were housed until the Internment Camps were built. The final place Michiko and Professor Mizutani visited was the Atherton Baptist Homes, where Michiko and other Nikkei reside. After a full day, on behalf of NYK, Michiko bid Professor Mizutani goodbye.

—submitted by Naomi Suenaka

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Visiting Professor—Cont’d.



Naomi Suenaka, Arturo Yoshimoto, Michiko Ota, Reira Tanaka, and Professor Yumiko Mizutani.



Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai

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