



# *Florin J.A.C.L. Newsletter*

*Florin Japanese American Citizens League*

*- Sacramento Valley*

Andy Noguchi and Josh Kaizuka, Co-Presidents

P.O. Box 292634, Sacramento, CA 95829

Website: [www.florinjacl.com](http://www.florinjacl.com)

Facebook: [Facebook.com/florinjacl](https://www.facebook.com/florinjacl)

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**Women's Forum: Makiko Yamashita, Dr. John Onate,**

**Debby Staley, Deanna Tsukamoto**

## **2020 Spring Newsletter**

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### **Save the Dates:**

- June 13 - Women's Forum
- July 14 - Obon Workshop
- July 18 - Obon Festival
- October 10 - Nikkei Dogs
- December 5 - 85th Annual Awards and Installation Luncheon

# President's Message

**To: Our Members and Friends - Stay Safe and Keep Healthy:**

**From: Josh Kaizuka**

**Subject: Stay Safe and Keep Healthy**

Things have changed so much in such a short time. COVID-19 has undeniably changed our lives regardless of what you do, the type of work you do, are a student, or even retired. Everyone is being affected in some way, some more than others.

While we will stay on our mission to promote civil rights and social justice, our main priority now is the health and safety of our Florin JACL-SV members, their families, and our friends. As you know, there have been various guidelines you may have heard in recent days.

As of now, we are being advised to stay at home except for some necessary things but that can change. Some other recommendations:

Keeping about 6 feet way from each other and not be in large groups

- ❖ Just because you don't have any type of symptoms doesn't mean you aren't carrying the virus so be especially careful about transmitting the virus to others including your family members who may have underlying conditions
- ❖ Be aware of anti-Asian attacks and report it when it happens
- ❖ Be aware of scammers who are using the pandemic to take advantage of people with phone calls, emails, mail and some even coming to your door
- ❖ Keep up to date by getting information from reliable sources
- ❖ Wash your hands!

There are many ways to help people in our community, but make sure you are familiar with the organizations you are donating to.

Many Florin JACL-SV involved events that were coming up have been postponed or cancelled.

- The Davis Cherry Blossom Festival scheduled for early April has been postponed with the hopes to have it in the fall.
- The Manzanar Pilgrimage scheduled for the end of April has been cancelled.
- Various Tsuru for Solidarity "fold-in" events being planned have been cancelled.
- The Tsuru for Solidarity rally scheduled for June has been cancelled and/or postponed.

We will be keeping an eye on the current pandemic situation and make announcements on other Florin events that we normally would have throughout the year.

It is in times like this that we need to come together as a society and do our part to overcome this crisis situation. Unfortunately, there are those who are making racist remarks, fueling hate towards an entire ethnic group, and weaponizing the crisis to achieve a political agenda – something we have seen before. We will continue to be involved to speak out with our partner organizations and friends to help protect the civil and human rights of all people.

In the meantime, please take care and heed the warnings of medical professionals so that we can all get through this situation sooner rather than later, healthier, stronger and ready to get back to a semblance of normalcy!

# Northern California Time of Remembrance 2020

By Donna Komure-Toyama

The Florin, Sacramento, Lodi and Placer County JACL chapters held their annual Time of Remembrance program on February 8th at the California Museum and the Secretary of State's auditorium. The program was titled, "Standing Up for the Voiceless." Guest speakers were Emiko Omori, a cinematographer and documentary film director, and Satsuki Ina, filmmaker, author, activist, psychotherapist and co-organizer of Tsuru for Solidarity. The audience viewed their documentary film about the protests by Japanese American



From left to right: Satsuki Ina and Emiko Omori

advocates to close detention sites and to support immigrant and refugee communities. The film, as well as, the question and answer period after the film were uplifting and inspirational.



From left to right: Kalin Kipling-Mojaddedi (CAIR-SV), Kayla Umemoto, Mas Hatano, Satsuki Ina, Tara Umemoto, Abby Principe (Bulosan Center for Filipino Studies), Christine Umeda, Krista Yukimi Keplinger, and Koji Lo

The candle lighting ceremony, "Protest – Lessons, Impact and Hope," was narrated by Krista Yukimi Keplinger, Koji Lo, and Kayla Umemoto. It was wonderful to hear the thoughts and voices of our millennial generation. From Kayla: "As former U.S. Secretary Julian Castro stated, 'if you're not at the table you're on the menu'. . . .It is important that we are a strong voice for the voiceless to ensure that no community is on the menu." From Krista: "In the face of seemingly insurmountable moral bankruptcy and resulting compassion fatigue, it is important to remember that protest, more than anything else, is ultimately an expression of hope and optimism. From Koji: "People tend to wonder if protesting does make a difference. Past history says it

does [examples of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr.]. Present history says it makes a difference as well. And the most recent success was at Fort Sill . . . to protest the incarceration of migrant children. And then within days, the governor of Oklahoma issued a statement that Fort Sill will not house migrant children."

Special thanks to the NCTOR committee: Christine Umeda (Chair), Donna Komure-Toyama, Arleen Mataga, Andy Noguchi, Dan Okada, Sharon Takeda, Marielle Tsukamoto, Katie Uemura and Nancy Whiteside. Thanks also to our sponsors, Master of Ceremony Josh Kaizuka, the Sacramento Betsuin Choir, California Museum, Leah Nishizaki, Kaitlin Toyama, U.C. Davis Japanese American Student Society (JASS), and candle lighting representatives (Mas Hatano, Satsuki Ina, Tara Umemoto, Abby Principe, Christine Umeda and Kalin Kipling-Mojaddedi).

# Tsuru for Solidarity Update

By Josh Kaizuka

Locally, our Florin Chapter and our members have been promoting and organizing for Tsuru for Solidarity. Last fall, Karen Kurasaki organized a local Girl Scout fold-in and the chapter helped organize a regional meeting with a mini-fold-in at Parkview Presbyterian Church.



To kick off the New Year, we helped organize the Oshogatsu Protest rally in Yuba City. It was an unbelievably moving protest action with a diverse group of 30 organizations co-sponsoring, many from our local area, some from the Bay Area, and even one from Humboldt County. Nearly 300 people came out on a brisk but sunny Saturday. The Bakuhatu Taiko Dan kicked things off. We had speakers from a diverse group including survivors of the camps, immigrant rights, interfaith, prison reform, civil rights, Jewish, Muslim, and other grass roots organizations.

Three things happened that really made the rally very memorable. First, incarcerated in the Yuba County Jail heard the rally and they shouted out to thank and support the rally. Second, an incarcerated who is facing deportation proceedings saw the news coverage in jail and seeing the support,



reaffirmed his resolve to continue to fight so he can stay in the only country he has ever known and be with his family. Finally, a survivor of the camp who had never spoken about it came to the rally with a picture of himself on a poster. He finally spoke out and started his healing process thanks to Satsuki Ina. In appreciation, he and his wife made a substantial donation to Tsuru for Solidarity's Washington DC rally.



In February, there was another fold-in at Parkview Presbyterian Church and it was a packed house. To kick things off, Jim and Jean Kawano, Lorna Fong's aunt and uncle came to drop off 3,500 strung tsuru, Jessie Morris and his family came with a thousand folded cranes from the Sacramento Public Defender's Office, Liz and Kenji Ota brought a thousand, Kay Fong brought a thousand, and we ended up with nearly 10,000 Tsuru.



Jean Kawano told us how she saw the separated children in cages and she and Jim had to do something, they couldn't make it to Washington DC so they decided that they would fold and string 5,000 cranes to send! **(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)**

## Tsuru for Solidarity Update

**(FROM PAGE 4)** Also in February, we were invited to California State Stanislaus to speak on behalf of Tsuru at the university's Day of Remembrance event. The school newspaper's headline was "Tsuru for Solidarity brings powerful message to campus" and "Tsuru for Solidarity members Joshua Kaizuka and Christine Umeda spoke to a crowd of 77 people, sharing stories about the camp conditions in the 40's, showcasing their recent protesting efforts and urging all in attendance to be a part of a positive change."



## Standing Up – My First Protest



By Ellen Griggs

On January 11, 2020, I joined the Tsuru for Solidarity group to protest what was viewed as the illegal detention of immigrants by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the Yuba County Jail in Marysville. This was a first for me. I am Sansei brought up in a traditional, conservative Japanese household where the thought of standing up to my elders, much less the US government was never within the realm of possibility. In fact, even at age 76, standing up for my beliefs is still quite a new concept. Therefore, I never thought of myself as a protestor.

The idea of joining the Tsuru for Solidarity protest in Marysville evolved from my membership in the JACL and its mission to help the defenseless whether they're Japanese or not. Having grown up Sansei in Hawaii, I had only minimal information about the painstaking, historical work by the JACL to get the US Government to acknowledge and apologize for the illegal imprisonment of approximately 120,000 Japanese American citizens. After joining the JACL, the story was fleshed out as I met and heard the personal stories of former detainees from the WWII Camps. I began to feel the need to add my own voice to the mission.

The Tsuru for Solidarity movement was an inspiration that came at just the right time. I could begin to contribute to the mission of the JACL! I began folding origami cranes and recruited family and friends from all over the US -- Rocklin, CA; Austin, TX; Fillmore, CA; Peoria, IL; Seattle, WA. Though some had never folded origami and had to be taught long-distance, they eagerly joined in. I sent them kits and sample lessons and updates on of the planning for the protest March to the White House. We were all getting caught up in protest fever.

At a "fold-in" last fall, a planning meeting took place for the January Yuba County Jail protest. There was more that I could do besides fold cranes and wait for June to become more active.  
**(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)**

## Standing Up – My First Protest

**(FROM PAGE 5)** So, there I was at my first protest on a cold but sunny January winter day outside the Yuba County ICE Detention Center to demand the Yuba County Board of Supervisors end the contract with ICE and stop the inhumane treatment of immigrant detainees. The enthusiastic crowd, the dignity and quiet strength of the former WWII Japanese American internees, and the rhythmic pounding of taiko drums, was further evidence the Tsuru protest was a worthy cause. I thought, though a small step, I should do this.

My grandparents were immigrants; yet America opened its arms and I am the beneficiary. If they were alive today, I am convinced they would support me in joining the Tsuru for Solidarity movement. I shall stand up.

## Border Excursion: A Visit to Nogales, Arizona

By Maurine Huang

Every February, Japanese American communities in many locations conduct Time of Remembrance observances, solemn and thoughtful occasions designed to prompt those attending to reflect on the injustices of the WWII incarceration of some 125,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans for no reason other than their ethnicity. An important aspect of many such events is the deliberate drawing of parallels between then and now, along with a determined vow: “Never Again.” In recent years, this vow has become “Never Again is Now.” This year, many communities also hosted Tsuru for Solidarity events, the folding and stringing of origami cranes in preparation for a large pilgrimage at which some 125,000 cranes will be delivered to Washington DC.



On the weekend of Feb. 21-23, 2020, while my church, Parkview Presbyterian, in Sacramento, was hosting a very successful Tsuru for Solidarity event, I was attending a tiny Tsuru fold-in at Church of the Painted Hills (United Church of Christ) in Tucson, AZ, organized by my niece, Lynn Marie Price. Two days later, she and two of her friends took me to Nogales, AZ, where I got to see Donald Trump’s Big Beautiful Wall. It is most certainly big, but there was nothing beautiful about it.

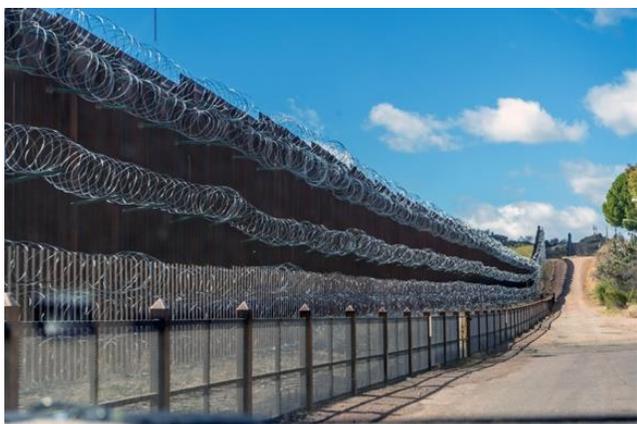
We approached The Wall from Interstate Hwy 19, the main route between Nogales and Tucson. Passing the vehicle Customs and Border Protection entry point, we turned right onto a dirt road bordered on the right by modest houses and on the left by The Wall. We were just in time to see a young man scrambling through coil upon coil of razor wire to the top of The Wall, as a policeman stood at the foot of The Wall yelling at him and three people stood across the street watching. As we drove cautiously past this little drama, we saw, through The Wall, the faint outline of another young man scaling down the Mexican side of The Wall. **(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)**

## Border Excursion: A Visit to Nogales, Arizona

**(FROM PAGE 6)** We continued for a few blocks beyond the crest of a hill, then turned around and returned. As we approached the site again, we saw the policeman leaning against a car across the road from The Wall, while the three people who had earlier been standing there were now standing pressed against The Wall talking with several people who we assumed were the young men we had earlier seen scaling The Wall. I was eager to take a picture, but felt that, with law enforcement so evident, it would not be wise.



We continued along that road, which, a block or so later, became a paved street. Several Customs and Border Patrol vehicles were parked along it, close to the pedestrian border crossing point, just as a few people, having been properly examined by CBP authorities, exited through a turnstile. Others were entering the facility, and I was informed that getting into Mexico from the United States is easy and can be accomplished quickly, whereas entering the United States can take quite a long time. For that reason, we did not try to cross into Mexico.



We drove around in Nogales for perhaps half an hour, visiting the border in several locations. Because of time constraints (I had an airplane to catch), we did not get out of the car. No matter where we were, looming above us was always The Wall, a monstrous slatted rust-colored structure which, I heard later, was about the height of a two-story building. I could not tell what material it was made from. It was adorned with coil upon coil upon coil of razor wire. In some places, single coils adorned only the top; in others, twin coils, one on top of another, were

fitted at both top and bottom, making a total of four coils; in still others, one or two more coils were added across the middle of The Wall, for a total of six coils. I couldn't help but wonder how those young men I had seen, clad only in thin tee shirts and blue jeans, were able to work their way through the coils without shredding their arms and legs. To further ensure "safety," in some parts of The Wall, on the Mexican side, strips of chain link fence, such as that used to fence in construction sites, restricted the extent to which people could reach between The Wall's slats. We were told that much of the ground on the US side of The Wall was deliberately kept unsafe, thus discouraging people from trying to scale to the top and then jump down.

The Wall divides two communities which, until its installation, used to exist in a kind of harmonious symbiosis, divided only by a chain link fence. The present wall was built in 1995, but without the multiple rolls of razor wire. The Trump administration has added many security measures, including so much razor wire that one visitor characterized his visit as feeling like he was in a concentration camp. It looms over the border communities, a menacing presence reminding us constantly that there is an "us" and there is a "them," and the "them" are dangerous and to be feared. **(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)**

## Border Excursion: A Visit to Nogales, Arizona

**(FROM PAGE 7)** Nogales, Arizona is a gritty little town of approximately 20,000 situated right on the US-Mexico border. Despite its small size, according to Wikipedia, it is Arizona's largest international border community, and an estimated \$30 billion in trade enters the US there, primarily fresh produce and manufactured goods. Just across the international border, Nogales, Mexico is a thriving city of some 200,000. The economy relies on tourism, manufacturing, production and export, and agriculture. Both sides suffer from the omnipresent reminder cast by The Wall.

I came away from the visit feeling distressed and discouraged, knowing that somewhere on the other side were many desperate asylum seekers being denied entry by the present administration's xenophobic and misguided interpretation of asylum law. The visit strengthened my determination to continue speaking truth to power as much as possible. It also made me extremely grateful for the continuing faithful witness of JACL and Tsuru for Solidarity. Never Again is indeed NOW.

## 2020 Florin JACL-SV Women's Forum

### *SAVE THE DATE*

**June 13, 2020 9:00 am-3:00 pm at the Buddhist Church of Florin**

This year's forum will focus on physical and emotional wellbeing. Spend an informative day learning about how to take care of yourself and others. This event will also include a continental breakfast, obento lunch (additional cost), and a raffle. More information and registration coming soon.

## Recent Donations

The Florin-SV JACL Chapter truly appreciates all the donations that are generously made to the Chapter's general and scholarship funds. Below are donations recently received:

**Toso Himel and Barbara Takei  
Heidi Sakazaki**

Donations to the Florin JACL general fund directly support the Chapter's programs that serve our mission to promote civil rights, social justice, and cultural heritage for all Americans through community education, alliances, and leadership. Thank you!

# A Proposed Florin JACL-SV Policy Opposing a Threatened War with Iran. What do you think?

By Andy Noguchi

With the current U.S. administration threatening war with Iran in January the dangers in the Middle East are rapidly growing and ever-present. A war in the Middle East would devastate life, human rights, the economy, and cause untold suffering for people around the world - including Americans at home.

After discussing this issue at our January and February Board meetings and reviewing our Florin JACL history of supporting peace, civil rights, human rights, and social justice over the decades, we would like to propose that the Florin JACL-SV Adopt a Policy Opposing a Threatened U.S. War with Iran (draft below).

Please let us know your thoughts by April 10<sup>th</sup> by emailing [FlorinJACL@outlook.com](mailto:FlorinJACL@outlook.com) or calling (916) 393-5007.

## ***Proposed Draft Policy Opposing A Threatened War with Iran:***

The Florin JACL opposes a threatened war with Iran and will look at each new situation on a case-by-case basis by weighing:

- 1) The massive destruction of life and human rights in such a humanitarian disaster.
- 2) The backlash, hate crimes, and civil rights violations against innocent people, including Muslims, Sikhs, Arabs, South Asians, and Jews in a Middle East war.
- 3) The lack of any reasonable justification for war, such as self- defense.
- 4) The many past decades of Florin JACL support for peace, civil rights, human rights, humanitarian efforts, and social justice. Supporting the August Women's Peace Event, co-founded by the late Mary Tsukamoto, for over 30 years is a key example.

## Membership Update

Thank you for being a member of our community! As you may know, active membership is an essential element in a strong JACL chapter. Thanks to your renewing membership, we can continue to defend civil liberties both locally and nationwide. We hope to see you at our events!

Welcome to our Newest Members!

**Emily Maseba**

**Kayla Itagaki**

**Tyler Takaha**

**Bryce Takaha**

# Study on Intergenerational Communication in the Japanese American Community

Our names are Kikuko Omori, Ph.D., and Rachel Keiko Stark, MS, AHIP. We are researchers at California State University, Sacramento. We are contacting you because you are a member of the Japanese American community. We are conducting a survey about intergenerational communication satisfaction among Japanese Americans and we would greatly appreciate your participation in our research. We are hoping to better understand any issues that might be preventing clear and comfortable communication between the generations of Japanese Americans. When you participate in the survey, you will receive a \$10 gift card.

In order to participate in the study, you must be Japanese American (i.e., fully or partially of Japanese descent) and **18-28 years old** or **65 years old or older**. If you decide to participate, you will be asked a series of questions. Your total participation time in this study is expected to last no more than 20 minutes. In order to give you a \$10 Target gift card, you will be redirected to a short survey where you fill out your name and your email address after the main survey. Your name and email address will NOT be associated with your responses. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.



Link to survey in English: <http://bit.ly/2EngVer>

こんにちは。

私たちはカリフォルニア大学サクラメント校の研究者で、大森喜久子、スターク恵子レイチェルと申します。私たちは今日系アメリカ人の世代間コミュニケーションに関する調査へを行っていて、皆様に協力していただければと思い連絡をしています。この研究は、年齢の違う人達とのコミュニケーションにおける満足度と民族意識の関係について理解を深める事を目的としています。この研究に参加するためには、日系アメリカ人であること（祖先に日本人がいる事）と**18-28歳**もしくは**65歳以上**である必要があります。参加をいただけるようでしたら、一連の質問に答えていただきます。この調査が終わるまでの時間は20分以内だと予想されます。また、参加にかかる時間のお礼として10ドルのターゲットギフトカードを差し上げています。参加していただいた皆様にギフトカードを差し上げるために、メインのアンケートの直後に名前とメールアドレスを記入いただく簡単なサーベイが現れますが、こちらで記入していただいた内容が、メインサーベイにおけるあなたの答えが結び付けられることはありません。

• サーベイはこちらから : <http://bit.ly/2NihVer>



Thank you,  
ありがとうございました！

Rachel Keiko Stark, MS, AHIP  
Health Sciences Librarian  
CSU Sacramento  
[stark@csus.edu](mailto:stark@csus.edu)

Kikuko Omori, PhD  
Assistant Professor  
CSU Sacramento  
[omori@csus.edu](mailto:omori@csus.edu)

# Community Rallies against Racist Graffiti at Sikh Temple

By Andy Noguchi

Nazi swastikas defacing the Orangevale Sikh Temple in January rallied a crowd of 150 neighbors, community groups, law enforcement, and public officials against hatred at a January 25<sup>th</sup> temple open house. Florin JACL members Josh Kaizuka, Fumie Shimada, Sue Teranishi, and Andy Noguchi attended. Co-President Andy Noguchi gave a support statement that day (below).

## Florin JACL Support Statement for Orangevale Sikh Center

Good morning. Thank you for welcoming us to your Gurdwara Sahib (Sikh Temple) during this challenging time. You honor us by inviting us to join you today.

No Americans, No Sikhs, No Muslims, No African Americans, No People should ever face the hate suffered by this peaceful place of worship. The florin Japanese American Citizens League – (Sacramento Valley) stands with you.

Today, racism, xenophobia, anti-immigrant sentiment run amuck in our country. Let's be honest about this. Those in Washington, D.C. feed this with their talk of Muslim Bans and Border Walls. Who are the victims? Innocent people like you all here today.

Do you know who were the first victims of the growing backlash after the 9/11 attacks? Sikh Americans! On September 15th, Balbir Singh Sodhi, a hard-working Sikh gas station owner in Phoenix Arizona, was viciously murdered by a hate-monger. Many Americans don't know this.

After the recent hate attack at your gurdwara, my heart went out you. I grew up near here. I remember coming home from high school one day to also find a Nazi swastika - carved into my family's home. What was our crime? Being a Japanese American family in a white neighborhood.

Over 75 years ago, our Japanese American families were among the 120,000 innocent people victimized by hate after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. What happened? The government locked our families up in America's concentration camps for up to 5 years.

But America learns from its mistakes. In 1988 President Ronald Reagan did the right thing and apologized to Japanese Americans.

Here today, public officials, law enforcement, and a diverse faith community know better. We all come together to say – No! Not in our community! America is better than this. We will stand up to the hate-mongers, the racists, and xenophobes. This is our country. Not theirs! Let's take it back.



As a symbol of solidarity, Josh Kaizuka, Fumie Shimada, and Andy Noguchi present strings of origami paper cranes to Dr. Jashan Singh of the Orangevale Sikh Temple. (Photo by Ras Siddiqui of Pakistani Link)

**Florin Japanese American Citizens League**  
**P. O. Box 292634**  
**Sacramento, CA 95829-2634**

**Return Service Requested**

