

FILM SCREENING OF HULA GIRLS

Sunday, April 19, 2015 at 2:00 PM
SFVJACC, 12953 Branford Street, Pacoima 91331

Hula Girls is a Japanese sub-titled film, based on a real-life event. The year is 1965, and the remote Japanese coal mining town of Iwaki is facing a devastating economic blow when the demand for coal takes a sudden plunge when oil is becoming the predominant energy resource in Japan. As the mineworkers are laid off, the women of the town take it upon themselves to help their once-prosperous community from the economic collapse, by bringing the ancient Hawaiian art of the hula dance to their village of Iwaki in Fukushima Prefecture.

The mining company develops a plan to use hot springs, which seeped into the mines, to provide heat for a Hawaiian Center spa resort. The plan is greeted with hostility by the miners, but the company recruits Madoka Hirayama, played by **Yasuko Matsuyuki**, a down-on-her-luck dance instructor from Tokyo to train local girls in the hula. The character Madoka Hirayama is loosely based on Kaleinani Hayakawa, who stayed at the Hawaiian Center for 32 years, while also becoming the founder of the first hula school in Japan. Her work helped inspire the hula craze in Japan.

Hula Girls won several awards upon release, including five major awards at the 2007 Japan Academy Awards, including best film, best director, best screenplay, best supporting actress for **Yu Aoi** and most popular film. It was also chosen for Japan's entry for the 79th Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

Ticket Donation: \$5

Bento \$10 (Deadline to order bento: Friday, April 10, 2015)

See any JACL Board members for tickets or Contact: Nancy Gohata at yaiko16@verizon.net or (818) 371-8013

Please check flyer on page 11.



UPCOMING EVENTS



COME JOIN US IN THE FUN AND ACTIVITIES

April 19

Hula Girls

April 21

Third Tues. Movie Outing

April 25

Manzanar Pilgrimage

May 19

Third Tues. Movie Outing

May 24

Taro Food Demo

June 27/28

SFVHBT Obon

July 6-10

Suzume no Gakkou &
Kizuna Discovery Camp

January 24, 2016

2016 Installation Date
Change

Board Meetings

Second Wednesday of
each month

Questions or Comments?

Please email

kyoshino@verizon.net

or send comments to:

Nancy Gohata

14229 Carl Street

Arleta, CA 91331

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

March 25, 2015



A book that I have greatly appreciated the past year has been Rev. Michael Dowd's *Thank God for Evolution*. He reminds us that we are all on a common journey of life, propelled by the unstoppable force of evolution (or nature, or a higher power.... your choice). He covers a wide range of topics in his book, including evolutionary psychology, physiology and evolution in religion.

We are all aware of the evolution in the availability of information, and of the information explosion in many diverse and changing forms. Also evident is the acceleration of changes in technology. These changes have affected some organizations and institutions in major ways. Politicians find themselves on unstable ground, where disruptive changes can arise at any moment.

The JACL has done its best to evolve to meet changing conditions of its membership base and its demographics. Most institutions find themselves placing preservation of the institution at a high priority, and for most institutions, preservation is equated to maintaining the status quo. However, I feel that all JACL members are aware that with a predominantly aging membership, that JACL chapters need to evolve and adjust in order to survive two generations from now.

I feel that the JACL has done great work on remembering the past, and guarding the future. I would like to have the JACL be influential enough to have it be "Learning from the past to help shape the future."

Someone raised the question "What is the JACL" at the last board meeting. I feel today's answers might be very different from answers back in 1929 when the organization was formed, though the core reason for the organization has not changed.

Let me make a second request for the sharing of your thoughts, ideas, and concerns regarding the future of our San Fernando Valley chapter of the JACL. I would like to see new members join. I would also like to see younger members join our chapter.

Sincerely,
Harold Kameya



Help Us Reduce Postage and Visit Us Online

You can greatly help our chapter by getting the Chapter newsletter via email. Please go to kyoshino@verizon.net and register your e-mail address

Visit us online at: <http://sfvjacl.weebly.com/> or jacl.sfv@gmail.com
Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/sfvjacljacl.sfv@gmail.com>



DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

On February 28th, our community's Day of Remembrance was held at the Japanese American National Museum (JANM).

In response to recent news concerning the civil rights violations within the African American community the program featured Curtis Rooks a Japanese American/African American who is a professor of Asian Studies at Loyola Marymount College. Also speaking was Maya his 14 years old daughter. In addition, on the panel was Mike Murase, a Sansei having deep-rooted connections to the African American community.

Maya's speech came from her unique experience growing up in the schools as a Japanese/African American. Her facility in expressing herself was fresh and well-articulated. She was impressive in her ability to value and uphold both of her identities.

Sansei Mike Murase grew up Los Angeles in a mixed Asian/African American community. He noted that while we are commemorating February 19, 1942 as our date to remember, he reminded us of February 21st, 50 years ago, as the date Malcolm X was assassinated. Mike says that after reading the "Autobiography of Malcolm X", his life-long views were forever changed. Mike also noted February 11th, 25 years ago, when Nelson Mandela was freed, after spending 27 years in prison, precipitating the end of apartheid.

This year's DOR program provided a refreshing look at a community we have been together with for many years. It served as a reminder of our common goals of working for justice in this country.

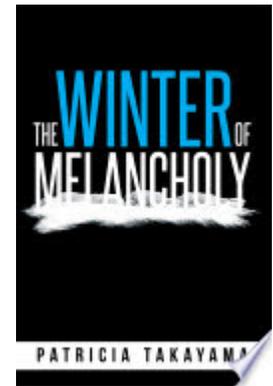
Article submitted by Phil Shigekuni

Patricia Takayama's ebook Available Now.

JACL board member, **Patty Takayama's** historical fiction short story collection, "The Winter of Melancholy," is currently available in ebook format, for under \$5.00. However, a delay has postponed the paperback release until the end of May or possibly June.

The Winter of Melancholy opens in Manzanar Internment Camp, a WWII relocation compound in the Mojave Desert, where Japanese American citizens were incarcerated along with their immigrant family members. Told from the viewpoint of the women whose lives were shaped by this period of isolation, separation and suffering of one's extended family, we trace the resilience of the women, their strength, spirit and compassion that weaves through their stories from the immigrant to post war generations.

The other short works of fiction include stories: of a Japanese American girl who encounters racism on a PTA sponsored field trip, a midwife whose work requires her to drive up and down the El Camino Real to ply her trade, a Nisei woman who translates Japanese radio programs during WWII for the U.S. Army to intercept troop movements. These stories and others trace the challenges that women encountered in the face of racism, duty as the family breadwinners, transformation in response to social change, and finding ways to forge and retain familial connections



THE OLD PEOPLE PLAY

Sunday, March 15, 2015 was a perfect day to attend the Rosenthal Theater to see the OLD PEOPLE PLAY (written by Jason Fong and music by Shin Kawasaki) with friends. It was advertised as “A WHIMSICAL MUSICAL ABOUT AGING AND DEATH. WE PROMISE WE WON’T MAKE YOU CRY (that much).”

The opening was dark, with the Grim Reaper appearing and people dying. They are in a waiting room preparing to be taken to their final destination. Here you laugh, cry and enjoy the singing and stories each character shares. It makes you reflect and think about life and the future. Here are some comments from the attendees. **Doreen Kawamoto:** “I loved the play, the singing was great and it was funny and sad. I even fell in love with the character Ben. I would definitely want to see it again.” **Linda Kuratomi:** “Seeing a play in an intimate 99 person theater, you felt a connection with the actors. It is hard to imagine being in a waiting room knowing your life is over and having to wait to die or go to your ‘final destination’. We learn about the many regrets in life that the people in the waiting room experience and *all the coulds and would have beens*. This is all set to music with enough humor to keep the play from being depressing”.

It was a touching play that reminds us all to make the most of your life while you can. The group concluded the outing with a gastronomical treat at the Yang Chow restaurant in Chinatown.

Article submitted by Linda Tanaka & Mitzi Kushida



Photo below (L to R):
Our friends from the Greater
Los Angeles JACL Chapter

Emily Kuroda, Janet Okubo,
Miyako Kadogawa, Mas
Yamaoka, Louise Sakamoto,
Kanji Sahara

Photo above (L to R):
Kneeling: Keiko Kuratomi, Linda Tanaka,
Nancy Gohata, Nancy Takayama, Mike Hagiwara
Standing: Yas Gohata, Mary Endo,
Rodney Kageyama, Mitzi & Al Kushida,
Maria Parocua, Doreen Kawamoto,
Dan Taguchi, Kurt Kuniyoshi,
Ken Takemoto, Emily Kuroda





SUZUME NO GAKKOU

(for children entering 6th - 8th grade)

Dates: July 6 - 10, 2015

Place: SFVJACC,
SFV Japanese Language
Institute Classrooms
12953 Branford St.,
Pacoima, CA

Time: 8:30 am to 1:00 pm

Cost: \$100.00 per child

Check:

Make payable to "SFVJACL"

Registration:

Mitzi Kushida
bighisa@aol.com

For information:

Linda Tanaka
lkitai@hotmail.com
(805) 527-1224

WANTED FOR SUZUME NO GAKKOU PROJECT: Facial Tissue boxes. 5" X 4 1/2"

KIZUNA'S 2015 SUMMER PROGRAMS

REGISTER AT WWW.KIZUNA-LA.ORG/PROGRAMS

NIKKEI DISCOVERY CAMP AGES 11-13 (GRADES 7-8)

The Nikkei Discovery Camp is a local cultural summer camp program for kids ages 11-13, centered on building a foundation of Japanese American culture & heritage.

LOCATION

San Fernando Valley Japanese
American Community Center
12953 Branford St
Arleta, CA 91331

DATES & TIME

July 6 - July 10, 2015
Monday thru Friday
9:00am - 1:00pm

PRICING

Standard Registration
\$100 per student

*Community service opportunities available for high school students;
up to 30 hours for those who want to serve as counselors.

Kizuna partners with the SFV-JACL's Suzume No Gakkou program.



Farewell and Thank You, Japanese American Historical Society of Southern California!

On March 1, 2015 nearly 300 community members and other well-wishers attended the Japanese American Historical Society of Southern California's (JAHSSC) "sayonara" luncheon. After 38 years of service, the JAHSSC will close shop and hand over their resources and coffers to the Little Tokyo Historical Society.

The lively program, held at the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute, included performances that represented different snapshots of the Japanese American experience. The "Songbird of Manzanar" Mary Kageyama Nomura, accompanied by the Grateful Crane's Youth Ensemble, sang songs from the 1940s. Asian American Movement activist Nobuko Miyamoto, from the group a Grain of Sand, also sang in honor of JAHSSC co-founder Iku Kiriya. Artist Dan Kwong performed a one-person play that recounted his youth of the 1960s and 1970. Iku's children, writer and artist Traci Kato-Kiriya and news editor George Kiriya stepped up at the emcees of the event. They provided a great deal of humor as they passed out hundreds of gift cards throughout the program.

John Esaki from Visual Communications screened an instructive documentary about the JAHSSC's history. From their beginning, the organization's founders dedicated themselves to collecting the different histories of Japanese Americans throughout Southern California. These efforts culminated in publications such as the popular *Nanka Nikkei Voices* anthologies as well as curricula implemented in local schools. Through much of its history, the JAHSSC also recognized the contributions of various individuals and organizations for their social justice activism. Past honorees include, redress and Manzanar Pilgrimage activist Sue Kunitomi Embrey, longtime teacher and mentor Glenn Omatsu, and Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress. The JAHSSC also recognized the Valley's own Harold Muraoka in 1993, the SFVJACC in 1996, and Tak Yamamoto in 2000.

Several SFVJACL members attended the event including **Nancy Takayama, Nancy Oda** (also representing the Tuna Canyon Detention Station Coalition), **Marion and Phil Shigekuni, Barbara and Dennis Okita, Nancy and Yas Gohata, Harold Kameya, C. Aujean Lee**, and yours truly. Some of us were pretty hungry and so decided to eat the delicious King's Hawaiian chocolate cake as an appetizer before everyone else opened up their bento. Smart people!

Article submitted
by JP DeGuzman

Photo: Nancy Takayama and Michael Okamura, President of Little Tokyo Historical Society, give a big check to the Japanese American Historical Society of Southern California



MEMBERSHIP IS IMPORANT TO OUR ORGANIZATION

JACL Members: We need your help to recruit new members!!!

We're proud to be one of the most active chapters in the Pacific Southwest District, but recruiting new members has been very difficult. A few years ago, one of our members gave a gift membership for one year to a friend. How pleased we all are that her friend has continued to renew that membership every year. Can you think of someone you'd like to be part of our JACL family? Consider gifting someone. There is a membership form in this newsletter.

Please contact me at yaiko16@verizon.net for membership questions/and or ideas for recruiting new members. Nancy Gohata, Membership Chair

Snapshots from a People's History of the 818

There were at least three doctors in the Sakaguchi Hall at the SFVJACC, on Wednesday, March 11th when a crowd of about 50 people came to hear Dr. J P De Guzman give an informative lecture with photos that summarized his Doctoral Dissertation. The program was titled "Snapshots From a People's History of the 818". We learned how persons of color were treated in the San Fernando Valley. JP highlighted many incidents in the San Fernando Valley's history that repeatedly show racism, segregation and how the Valley was divided by race into two separate areas. JP received his PHD from UCLA in 2014.

He talked about the early Japanese American families such as the Sakaguchi family and their pre and post WW2 experience. He also covered other races such as the Mexican American, African American and other Asian Races. He told us about many events that happened throughout the Valley, including racial tensions at San Fernando Valley State College (Cal State Northridge) in the late 1960's. JP received his bachelors degree from this very campus at CSUN.

JP had to interview many people to get an oral history of their experiences. This was a very time consuming process and took close to ten years to interview, research and write about these events. He was able to use old newspaper articles, including some from the JACL's Pacific Citizen to gage the tone of the racial tensions. The PC was a source for many of his reference material.

Though JP's presentation was only an hour long, he managed to highlight the important racial issues that occurred in the San Fernando Valley.

Many thanks to **Mitzi Kushida** and the JACL Board for organizing this event and for providing Baja Fresh dinner before the talk.

Article submitted by Keiko Linda Kuratomi



REJECTED: Forum on Tule Lake Inmates

On February 22, the San Fernando Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League brought Tulean history to the front from different perspectives offered by **Dr. Art Hansen** from the world of academia, **Takako Day**, author, and **Yukio Kawaratani's** personal experience, concluding audience participation led by facilitator, **Phil Shigekuni**. **Nancy Gohata** served as an MC for the panel.

More than seventy years ago, while the Japanese and Japanese Americans were in concentration camps, the U. S. War Department and the War Relocation Authority (WRA) decided to test the loyalty of all people of Japanese ancestry who were incarcerated in the WRA camps who were seventeen years of age and older. The Kibei were caught in the middle with a language and cultural barrier as a "minority within a minority within a minority." As a result, 5,000 men, women, and their children have been branded "disloyal" in two swift motions of a pen marking "No and/ or Yes". At the time, the government suspected kibei more than other Japanese Americans as "the most dangerous element". Some even left the survey blank which put them into jail in the Tule Lake stockade, Klamath Falls jail, Moab, Utah, and Leupp, Arizona with a ten thousand dollar fine like **Kentaro Takatsui** for not backing down.

Dr. Art Hansen, Professor Emeritus from California State University at Fullerton, quoted an inscription on the front page of **Michi Nishiura** Weglyn's landmark book, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps*, reads: "Dedicated to **Wayne M. Collins** Who Did More to Correct a Democracy's Mistake Than Any Other One Person." At a time when people barely knew Collins' name, Nisei historian Weglyn called attention to the attorney responsible for almost singlehandedly fighting deportation and restoring citizenship to more than 5,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry who had renounced their U.S. citizenship. The tedious and time-consuming process that involved researching and filing some 10,000 individual affidavits from both renunciants and witnesses consumed Collins' life for no less than two decades. **Dr. Art Hansen** posed a question that said, "If you know what you aren't, you will know what you are." As an educator, he answered historical questions without hesitation and referred to a bibliography that may be of interest to you. Please contact me for the list.

Yukio Kawaratani, who was only 14 years old then, spoke eloquently from his heart saying, "We were sent to Tule Lake for many different reasons, opinions, circumstances and misinformation that had nothing to do with loyalty. But for years we have been labeled as the "trouble makers" because we didn't comply for the better face of the community like most of the others did. Among Nisei, the standard question was, "What camp were you in?" I never hesitated to say Poston and Tule Lake, but I was always angered by those who acted surprised or reacted to the fact that I was a "No, No."

Takako Day, author of "Show Me the Way to Go Home", revealed portions of her interviews of kibei in Japan. She began by saying that everyone has but one life to live; they tried to make the best decision, not just for their own survival, but for the future of their families. And if 120,000 people were incarcerated, then 120,000 stories must be heard and accepted. These men stayed alive by holding their breath through the post-war days, and most have passed away without telling their stories even to their own families. This is a cruel lot in life for them. The community has closed its eyes to this cruelty, which forced a minority to live in shame for more than half a century, while at the same time glorifying battlefield deaths as if fighting in war was the only way to contribute to the country. And so I ask the question: have we ever suspected that the fissure in the JA community might have been the direct result of the government's "divide and conquer" strategy toward minorities, and furthermore, isn't it a shame for the JA community to leave the fissure as it was in Japanese American history instead of trying to heal it? She said, "I believe that the time for healing has come to the community, and that it is time for all of us to rise above the government's manipulation of subgroups within a minority. The government has already admitted its mistake through the redress and reparations enacted in the late 1980s.

Continued on page 9

REJECTED: Forum on Tule Lake Inmates continued from page 8

Under Redress in 1988, Congress and President Reagan apologized for a grievous wrong and gave reparations to each internee, including those who were in Tule Lake.

In 1998, President Clinton awarded **Fred Korematsu** a Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country's highest civilian honor, for his protest against the internment. And this year, President Obama awarded the late **Gordon Hirabayashi** a Presidential Medal of Freedom for his protest. Also, in 2002, the National JACL Board finally issued a public apology to the Heart Mountain draft resisters for not recognizing their wartime stand of protest”

Wendy Hirota Takatsui attended the SFV JACL sponsored forum called **Rejected: Forum on Tule Lake Inmates** and wrote later, “My father was not a disloyal American. He was a resister of conscience who said his constitutional rights were being violated and he would sign if his rights were restored.” She was deeply touched by Dr. Art Hansen who said. “We can say **Farewell to Tule Lake** when all former Tuleans can stand up and say they were proud of their stance of defying authorities on the loyalty questionnaire. Instead, they were made to feel stigmatized and disloyal within their own Japanese community, both during and after the war. He is remembered at SFVJACC’s VFW Garden as a honorable member of the Military Intelligence Service.

The goal of the program was to educate about this complex episode in American History. Thank you to **Nancy Gohata, Harold Kameya, Phil Shigekuni, Patty Takayama** and **Nancy Takayama**, members of the committee. Refreshments were kindly provided by the Board.

Article submitted by Nancy Oda

Photo (L to R): Seated: Phil Shigekuni, Yukio Kawaratani, Dr. Art Hansen, Takako Day
Standing Row 2: Marion Shigekuni, Michiko Tokunaga, Patty Takayama, Nancy Oda, Doreen Kawamoto, Sumi Yamaguchi, Mitzi Kushida, Linda Tanaka, Nancy Gohata
Back row: Harold Kameya, Alden Katagihara



COMMUNITY CORNER

Condolences to Board member, **Christina Aujean Lee** and her family on the passing of her grandmother, Karen Kapryun Lee on January 30, 2015.

Condolences to Board member **Michiko Tokunaga Kus** and her family whose mother Mrs. Harue Tokunaga passed away on March 10, 2015.

Congratulations to **Wesley DeGracia**, son of JACL member, **Susan DeGracia**, who received the National Board Certification in 2014, JACL member, **Karen Yoshino**, daughter of JACL member **Yas Gohata** and Board member **Nancy Gohata** who received her National Board Certification in the year 2000 and JACL member **Katherine Yonemura** who earned her National Board Certification in 1999. National Board Certification is a voluntary high-stakes assessment program designed to recognize and reward accomplished teachers. It is one of the profession's highest distinctions. The process involves written exercise that probe the depth of a candidate's content knowledge and pedagogy. Like board certified doctors and accountants, teachers who achieve National Board Certification have met rigorous standards through intensive study, expert evaluation, self-assessment, and peer review. **Wesley** is a history teacher at Cleveland High School, **Karen** is a math teacher at Patrick Henry Middle School, and **Katherine** is a fourth grade teacher at Hesby Oaks Leadership Charter. JACL is proud to recognize their accomplishments. Please let us know if you know other JACL family members who have also achieved the National Board Certification.

Congratulations to the San Fernando Valley Nisei Week Queen candidate **Kelsey Nakaji Kwong**. Kelsey's parents are **Phillip and Nancy Kwong**. Kelsey is the grand niece of the late **Sam and Terry Uyehara**.

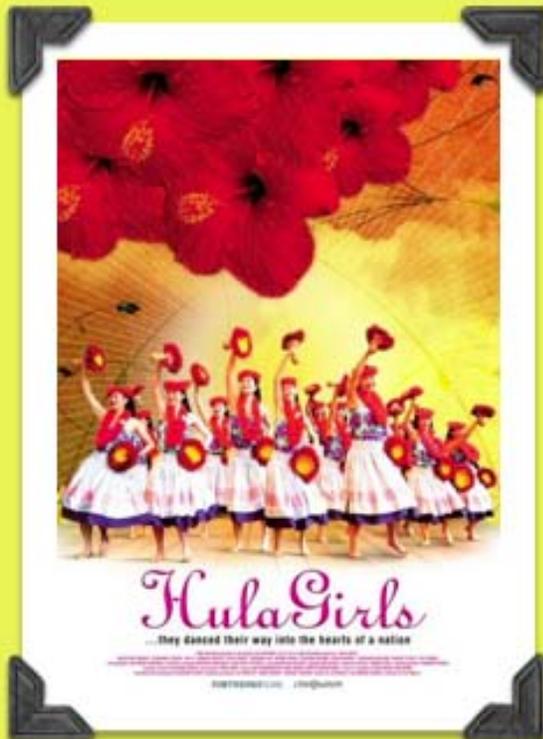
Learn the Tongan culture of the Tara Leaves and Taste the "Lu"

Behind the green heart shaped leaf, Taro leaves continues to be one of the staple food sources for the Tongan community. Native plant to Tonga, "Lu" or Taro leaves are planted in wet-fields and grown in sub-tropical weather. Its history and ways of preparing "Lu" have been passed down from generation to generation. For many Tongans, "Lu" or Taro leaves have always been apart of the Tongan cuisine. Being steamed, baked or cooked in an "Umu" or underground oven, "Lu" is used to celebrate many occasions such as birthdays, weddings and baptisms. As we celebrate Asian Pacific Islander month, join me on May 24th as we learn and taste the culture of Tonga through "Lu" or Taro leaves.

Come for the tasting at the SFV JACC on Sunday, May 24th at 2 PM. For additional questions about the event contact Nancy Takayama at: (818) 899-7916 or nt.high.mtn@juno.com or about the Tara Leaves contact Isa at: louise.fonua.07@gmail.com



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JACL

SFV Chapter

FILM SCREENING

HULA GIRLS

Sunday, April 19, 2015, 2:00 pm

*SFV Japanese American Community Center
12953 Branford Street, Pacoima 91331*

In 1965 the planned closing of a coal mine in Iwaki (northeastern Japan) will put 2,000 people out of work with devastating effects on the community. The mining company plans to build the Hawaiian Center to promote tourism, but the idea is met with resistance by the community's union families who boycott the effort. However, a few young women in Joban see the call for dancers to possibly provide a more promising future. Norio Yoshimoto is put in charge of organizing the center, with Madoka Hirayama, a professional dancer fleeing creditors in Tokyo hired to train the dancers. The girls start to tour neighboring communities and dance to promote the centers.



*Donation: \$5
Bento: \$10
Deadline to order bento:
Friday, April 10, 2015*

Contact:
Nancy Gohata at
yaiko16@verizon.net or
(818) 371-8013

Checks payable to "SFVJACL"
Send to 14229 Carl St., Arleta 91331

San Fernando Valley Japanese American Citizens League Membership Application

Membership Categories

Regular/Individual

Regular sustaining members of the organization

Couple/Family

Membership for an individual, their spouse/partner and any children under 25 years of age.

Youth/Student

Members 25 years of age or younger or students currently enrolled in a college, trade school, or university.

1000 Club

A membership category where members make a larger annual contribution to their chapter and national programs of the organization

1000 Club Life

Members who pay a lump sum to establish a lifetime membership

1000 Club or Century Club Spouse

Spouse or partner of a JAACL 1000 Club or Century Club member

Century Club

An exclusive membership category where members make a larger annual contribution to their chapter and national programs of the organization

Century Club Life

An exclusive membership category where members pay a lump sum to establish a lifetime membership

🍏 New Member

🍏 Regular/Individual - \$67.00

🍏 Couple/Family - \$110.00

🍏 Youth/Students - \$25.00

🍏 Renewing Membership

🍏 1000 Club Individual - \$200.00

🍏 1000 Club Spouse - \$32.00

🍏 1000 Club Life - \$3000.00

🍏 Gift Membership

🍏 Century Club - \$175.00

🍏 Century Club Spouse - \$32.00

🍏 Century Club Life - \$5000.00

Member Information

Member ID: _____ (renewals only)

First Name

Last Name

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Phone

Email

Payment Method

🍏 Check

Please make checks payable to:

Japanese American Citizens League

🍏 Credit Card

🍏 Visa

🍏 MasterCard

🍏 American Express

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

(Month / Year)

Send the completed application along with your payment via U.S. mail to: **JAACL Membership**

P.O. Box 45397

San Francisco, CA 94145-0397

Or join Online: <http://www.jacl.org/member> → →PSWDC → →San Fernando Valley

San Fernando Valley

JACL

Civil Rights • Justice

14229 Carl Street
Arleta, CA 91331