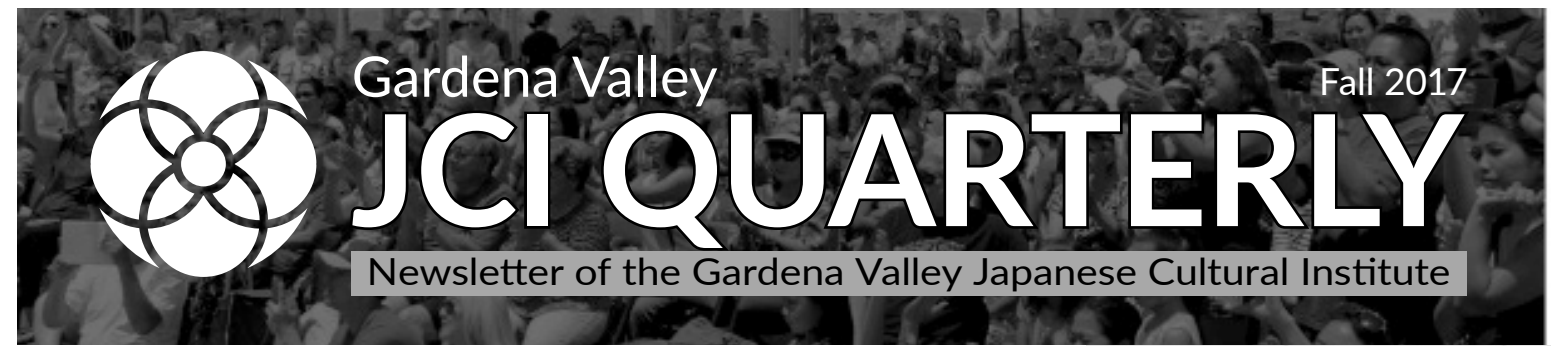




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GARDENA VALLEY JAPANESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community center providing various classes, programs, services, and facilities to the South Bay area. We also provide affordable housing through the JCI Gardens Apartments, the adjacent senior housing property.

The GVJCI's roots date back to 1912, when it was known as the Moneta Gakuen, a Japanese language school. In 1967, it was formally incorporated as the Gardena Valley Japanese Language School. Then, in 1968, the corporation changed its name to the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute to incorporate the broader services and functions the organization offers. In 1971, Compton Gakuen, Gardena Gakuen, and Moneta Gakuen merged, opening its doors officially as the GVJCI's Japanese Language School. The GVJCI has a very proud history spanning over 100 years.

Today, we continue to provide a variety of activities, programs, and services. We are truly fortunate to have an active and well-utilized center serving people of all ages. We thank you, the community, for your active participation and for your support through donations and volunteerism that enables the GVJCI to continue.



A space to engage, share, and embrace the Nikkei experience and culture.

The GVJCI envisions a vibrant network and a welcoming space for all persons interested in Japanese heritage and culture where history and tradition are honored, people are inspired to create action and change, and cultural pride and respect for all humanity are promoted.

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 Atsuko Fukuda, *Teacher*
 Naoko Okamoto, *Teacher*
 Masumi Sasaki, *Teacher*
 Chiaki Suzuki, *Teacher*
 Eriko Yamamoto, *Adult Class & Conversation Class Teacher*

In Memory of George Ajioka

With heavy hearts, we say goodbye to the late George Ajioka, our longtime Board of Director and dear friend to so many of us. George Ajioka passed away on August 4, 2017 and lived a full and active life until the end. George was very active with GVJCI and was even a dedicated student of GVJCI's Monday night Japanese Conversation Class. Alvin Takamori, GVJCI Board of Director, also a student in the Conversation Class says, "I probably met him in the Japanese Conversation Class, which we both attended for many years. My attendance was very spotty, but George, even though his Japanese was better than any of us, really wanted to support the class, so he went all the time."

George's involvement with the GVJCI began in 1950 when he helped to build booths out of plywood for our first Matsuri or Carnival as it was called back then. George worked hard at the Matsuri every year, and could be found working in the Produce Booth amongst his friends. George was also a master wood-worker, and helped lead the project with the boy scouts to build our own game booths that we still use today. George was always there to lend advice or a helping hand. George valued friendships and was caring and supportive to our staff and volunteers, giving us pause in our busy routines with his warm smiles and words of encouragement.



George will be dearly missed and always remembered.

GVJCI "Always" Work in Progress (Part II)

It seems like it was just yesterday when the original article was in our Winter 2015 newsletter. We reflected on the 2014 installation of new partitions for the 2nd floor classrooms, a new roof for the Nisei Veterans Memorial Building and the maintenance of various floor areas of the facility and here we are already in the Fall of 2017!

The Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall kitchen is still under construction/upgrades. It is taking a bit longer than we expected due to circumstances beyond GVJCI's and our general contractor's control. We thank those who have and are donating towards the expense of the kitchen reconstruction, we hope to have it up and running early 2018.

In the meantime, due to the generosity of the Keiro Grant, we were able to install an ADA Door Operator for our Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall. We are very grateful to Keiro for funding this much needed upgrade for our senior and physically challenged participants.

Funding for this program has been made possible by a grant from KEIRO.

Manzanar Immersive: An Interactive Theater Escape Room Event

Coming to the GVJCI in November/December 2017 is the debut of Manzanar Immersive, a live-action, interactive experience that shares important lessons about the Japanese American World War II history in a hands-on, engaging environment. Manzanar Immersive is an in-person "empathy" experience in which people collaborate to solve puzzles, complete activities, and interact with character actors as they proceed through the narrative of a Japanese American family living through the wartime experience.

For more information or to help support Manzanar Immersive, please visit <https://chuffed.org/project/manzanarimmersive> or email manzanarimmersive@jci-gardena.org

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New Classes!

Smartphone/Tablet Class
 6 weeks, Every Thurs Nov 2nd to Dec 14th (skipping one class)
 10AM-11AM
 \$10 per class (paid before or at the beginning of each class) or
 \$50 for the entire session (paid at the beginning of the session)
 We have tablet rentals for free

Sansei Stories Plus
 Come join Tim Toyama as you work through to develop your own story!
 Everyone has a story, trust us.
 Weds, Oct 11, 18, 25, and Nov 1.
 7-9:30PM
 \$5 per session (drop-in)



GVJCI Receives AT&T Investing in California Award



On August 25, 2017, GVJCI received a generous grant award of \$5,000 from AT&T for the Investing in California Award "to recognize outstanding local community commitment and service programs in AT&T communities." GVJCI is honored and grateful to receive this significant award and generous monetary support. We will continue to serve the community the best we can, and this support goes a long way. GVJCI was nominated by Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi, whom we thank for his ongoing support and involvement.

AT&T representative John Heffernan presents award to GVJCI Board President Charlie Oyagi and Executive Director Alison Kochiyama, with California State Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi.

Japanese Language School

The new school year of 2017 - 2018 began on September 9, 2017. Many new young and adult students enrolled to learn the Japanese language and culture more deeply while some are trying to investigate and examine their roots. I am very grateful that they chose our school to pursue their interest and we will do our best to help them accomplish their goal. I also welcome back the returning students and hope to work closely with them to make this a fruitful and rewarding school year.

Our returning teaching staff will be Naoko Okamoto Sensei, Eriko Yamamoto Sensei, and Atsuko Vorreiter Sensei, who is also our school Vice Principal. We are also fortunate to have four new teachers joining us this year, Chiaki Suzuki Sensei, Atsuko Fukuda Sensei, Masumi Sasaki Sensei, and Mayumi Fuchino Sensei. We have a very cohesive teaching staff and it is a great pleasure to work with all of them. Together we vow to do our best for the students, the language school, and this community.

This year the Japanese school lost one of its strongest supporters, George Ajioka. He encouraged me every chance he had to do my best as Principal of the school, especially during the times when my confidence was at a low point. I am grateful to him for taking me under his wing and assisting as well as advising me when I needed help the most. He was a good friend who I always referred to as my Sempai. Sempai sayonara, mata au hi made.

In closing, my appreciation and gratitude goes out as always to all of our Japanese Language School Family; the GVJCI, the Teachers, the Parent Group, the Volunteers, the Supporters, and our Partner Organizations. I humbly ask for their continued support and cooperation.

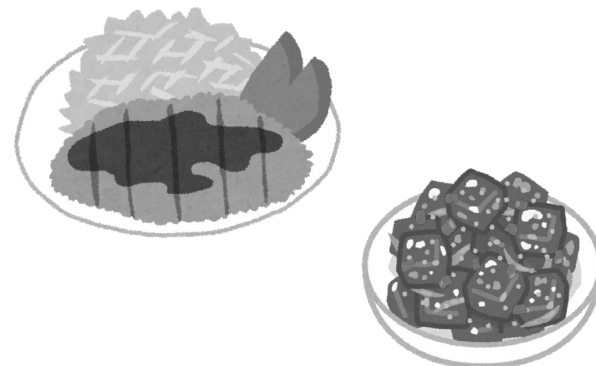
Douzo Yoroshiku Onegaishimasu,
Lawrence Hada, Principal

The Loft Hawaiian Restaurant Fundraiser

After a little break, our restaurant fundraisers are coming back to the GVJCI! It's a win-win situation.....take a break from cooking, while supporting the GVJCI!

Where: The Loft Hawaiian Restaurant - 2210 W. Artesia Blvd., Torrance, 90504
Date: Tuesday, November 14th AND Thursday, November 16th
Time: ALL DAY

A FLYER will be needed. Please visit our website at jci-gardena.org to download the flyer. Thank you for your support!



MAPFRE/Commerce West

MAPFRE/Commerce West Insurance Company, formerly Western Pioneer, was formed in 1948 with the help of many Nisei insurance agents to provide Japanese Americans affordable automobile insurance. MAPFRE/Commerce West Insurance Company continues the "Western Pioneer Group Program" today, in which members of Japanese American non-profit organizations can purchase automobile insurance at discounted rates. In addition, annual donations are given to non-profit organizations that have the most members joining this plan. This special discount program benefits the drivers and the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI). Please ask your agent about this program. Below is a partial list of participating agencies.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| COSTA MESA
Miyazaki Ins. Svcs.
(714) 979-8700 | HUNTINGTON BEACH
Mizuno Insurance
(714) 964-7227 | Kagawa Ins.
(213) 628-1800 | PASADENA
FIA Ins. Svcs., Inc.
(626) 795-7059 |
| CULVER CITY
Trust Insurance
(310) 839-3127 | LA PALMA
The J. Morey Ins. Co.
(714) 562-5910 | Tatsuno Insurance
(213) 626-1954 | SANTA MONICA
Autoline
(800) 770-7978 |
| GARDENA
AHTKY Insurance
(310) 516-0110 | LONG BEACH
Nori Marumoto Inc.
(562) 595-4403 | MONTEBELLO
Ogino-Aizumi, Inc.
(323) 728-7488 | TORRANCE
Kamiya Ins. Agency
(310) 781-2066 |
| Nakamura Agency
(310) 327-0717 | LOS ANGELES
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(213) 626-1547 | MONTEREY PARK
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Calling All Adventurers!

Itching for adventure, to see new and different things? The Adventurers Club could be your ticket.

The purpose of the Club is to attend events such as plays, concerts, films, museums, and anything else.

The first adventure happens in November; it's a play called, "Yohen," at East West Players in Little Tokyo. Yohen is written by Philip Kan Gotanda, with a cast that features Danny Glover, of the "Lethal Weapon" movies, "Color Purple," and many other movies. The play is described as "James and Sumi Washington are an interracial couple struggling to maintain their 37-year marriage after James retires from the US Army. The dramatic change in routine prompts questions about life, love, and aging, as the couple attempts to repair what's broken and decide what is worth saving." The show date is November 12, Sunday, at 2pm. In order to qualify for the group rate, at least 10 people need to sign up. The group rate is \$40 per ticket (20% off the regular price). Please note that this is a non-sponsored GVJCI activity, and that carpools can be arranged. The deadline to sign up is October 23.

For more information, please contact Tim Toyama at 310-848-9890 or email at timothytoyama@aol.com.

Yohen will be the first adventure, others are being planned. If you'd like to help plan the adventures, please contact Tim.

Qi Gong Workshop for Caregivers of Nikkei Seniors

As our Nikkei population ages the definition of "caregiver" has certainly changed. In skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, there are paid professionals, dedicated volunteer caregivers and family members.

For those Nikkei who live in their own homes or with relatives, they may also be using the services of caregivers. Some might be paid professionals or more likely family members. Many of our Nikkei seniors are themselves caregivers to other elders.

The physical and emotional demands placed on caregivers can be enormous. Even if you aren't a caregiver today, you might be one tomorrow!

Research from major universities indicate that the ancient art of Qigong has a strong link to the prevention of illness, reducing stress, managing chronic conditions (such as Alzheimer's type symptoms, arthritis, cancer, chronic pain, immune system problems, Parkinson's Disease), increasing longevity, and promoting healthy active aging.

Everyone providing services as a caregiver to Nikkei seniors or those anticipating become a caregiver are invited to attend this special workshop.

Through a generous grant from Keiro, workshop participants will learn the gentle movements of Qi Gong to combat illness, reduce stress and promote healthy aging. The movements are easy to learn and can be done by anyone. Caregivers that practice Qi Gong will benefit themselves and their patients.

The workshop will be held on:

Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017

Time: 9 to 11 a.m.

Location: Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute.
1964 W. 162nd Street, Gardena, CA 90247

Room: 207/208 upstairs. A handicap accessible elevator is available.

Space is limited and pre-registration is required. To RSVP, please call (424) 262-8268 or email

HappyQiGong@gmail.com and please put GVJCI

Workshop in the subject line.

Funding for this project has been made possible by a grant from Keiro.



An Interview with Mits Arayama, Designer of the GVJCI Logo

On Thursday, August 24, 2017, Alison Kochiyama and I drove to the Irvine Spectrum to meet Mits Arayama, the designer of the GVJCI logo. Over the course of a leisurely lunch, Mits provided details of his fascinating life:

Mitsuhiro Arayama was born in Hiroshima, Japan, in 1944. His father was a police officer in Hiroshima. A few days before the atomic bomb was dropped, his father had an intuition that something bad was going to happen, so he sent his family two miles away from Hiroshima City. When the atomic bomb was dropped, Mits' father was in Hiroshima City and was a victim of the blast. Mits' mother looked for her husband for weeks but didn't find him.

Mits' mother was born in Los Angeles in Little Tokyo. Her family owned Nakamura Grocery Store on First Street. In 1922, she went to Japan and met Mits' father. Mits' has two sisters. In 1955 his mother left Japan with her three children and settled in Inglewood; at that time Inglewood was 99% Caucasian, with only a few Japanese families. Mits went to Inglewood High School.

Mits has great admiration for his mother and for what she accomplished. She single-handedly raised three children while working as a seamstress. His mother, Kimi, retired at the age of 65, and was one of the first residents of Tokyo Towers. Kimi was a trained dancer, but hadn't danced while raising her family, however, when she retired, she started dancing again and became a renowned dance teacher, eventually reaching the level of Grandmaster. At the age of 100 years, she moved to Keiro, and passed away at the age of 105 years.

After graduating from Inglewood High School, Mits attended Cal State Long Beach as a Business major, with an interest in advertising. While at Long Beach, Mits experienced the birth of the Asian American Studies program. After graduating from Cal State Long Beach, Mits partnered with Koyo Graphics, which was located in Gardena.

It was at this time (early 1970's) that Mits was approached by his friend, Ken Nakaoka, to design a logo for what soon became the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI). They knew each other because Mits helped with Ken's campaign for Gardena City Council. Later, Ken was the Master of Ceremony at Mits' wedding.

Mits was given the task of designing a GVJCI logo that represented the four generations of Japanese Americans: Issei, Nisei, Sansei, and Yonsei, and the mission of the GVJCI to connect all four generations. Mits envisioned the Japanese idea of "Wa," which translates as "harmony," and "peaceful unity." The logo Mits designed has a ring in the center (the GVJCI), connecting with four larger rings (Issei, Nisei, Sansei, Yonsei), thereby illustrating the idea of "working together and growing

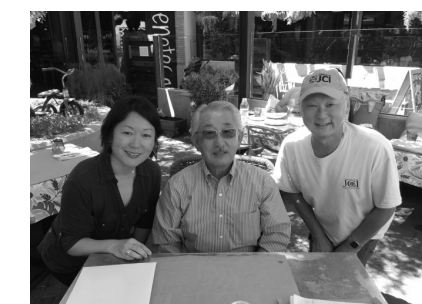


together." Brilliant! This has been the GVJCI's logo for over 40 years!

In the early 1970's, Mits joined Nissin Foods in Gardena. Mits was given the challenge of introducing two Japanese products to the U.S.: "Top Ramen" and "Cup Noodles." The challenges were enormous given the American food culture; fast food was a hamburger and a coke, fast food was something you didn't make at home, and, importantly from a marketing perspective: Was Top Ramen a soup with noodles, or noodles with soup? What is it? How do you position these products in supermarkets? How do you brand these products, so that people will think of them as delicious food you can make at home in minutes? And remember, this was before microwave ovens were everywhere. When the products were presented to the major supermarkets, they all said, "No."

Testing and surveys were done; no one knew how to categorize the product. Mits actually had to go to Washington, D.C., to get a label for the product, and that label was "Ramen Noodles." One idea that worked to market the products was to base the soup on chicken soup, since everyone knows what chicken soup is. Another idea was to market it as, "Much more than a soup."

Finally, with TV and print marketing, people started to buy the products. And, as we all know, Top Ramen and Cup Noodles became a hit with college students. It was economical, convenient, hand-held, filling, and satisfying.



These products are now sold throughout the U.S. and the world, including: Mexico, South America, Europe, Southeast Asia, China.

Mits quickly rose through the ranks of Nissin, becoming its Chief Executive Officer.

After 30 years, Mits retired from Nissin, but itching to have his own company and be his own boss, bought a Minuteman Press franchise in Dana Point, where he continues to exercise his entrepreneurial skills and talent, growing his company, winning awards, and serving in community positions, such as Chairman of the Board for the Chamber of Commerce.

Mits told us many interesting stories: about the differences between Japanese and American management styles and workers, about the many hoops and hurdles he went through to establish Nissin products in the U.S., and also developing the frozen burrito! So many great stories, too numerous to fit in this space.

So, Thank You, Mits, for a splendid conversation. We hope our paths cross soon!



SANSEI BASEBALL
PLAY BALL!

T-BALL | SOFTBALL | BASEBALL

OPEN HOUSE
FOR TRAIL & NEW PLAYERS
OCTOBER 21st
at GVJCI from
5pm - 6pm
FOR ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS
REGISTRATION FOR FAMILIES
SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

REGISTRATION OPENS
IN OCTOBER
FOR THE
SPRING 2018
SEASON

GAMES PLAYED
AT NORTH TORRANCE
HS & GUENSER PARK

facebook website

FUN ★ SPORTSMANSHIP ★ TEAM

CO-ED	GIRLS SOFTBALL & BOYS BASEBALL		
T-BALL	PEE WEE	MINORS	MAJORS
Pre-K - 1st Grade	Grades 2-3	Grades 4-5	Grades 6-8
Age 4-6 (as of June 2018)	Ages 7-9	Ages 9-11	Ages 11-14

ALL PLAYERS AND SKILL LEVELS WELCOME!
You can sign up individually or form your own team!
Age ranges for divisions will be dictated by grade/age.

NOV

**J-TOWN/BRONZEVILLE SUITE
SAT, NOV 4, 2-4PM
GVJCI Main Hall**

We will be presenting Dave Iwataki's "J-Town/Bronzeville Suite," his original composition inspired by "Bronzeville." In 1942, after the Japanese and Japanese Americans were removed to incarceration camps, Little Tokyo was a ghost town of empty houses and businesses. The abandoned neighbor soon became home for the influx of African Americans from the Deep South who migrated to Los Angeles for jobs and a new life. Little Tokyo became known as "Bronzeville." In addition to the performance of J-Town/Bronzeville Suite by Iwataki and his jazz ensemble, a panel of experts will talk about the Little Tokyo - Bronzeville phenomenon.

This program is free, but donations are appreciated. Seating is limited. Please help us out by calling or emailing at (310) 324-6611 and info@jci-gardena.org to give us a headcount.

DEC

**ELEMENTAL FUNK
SAT, DEC 2, 7-11PM
GVJCI Main Hall**

Do you miss listening & dancing to those old school LIVE bands? Well, you are in luck! Come join us and be entertained by the BEST live band in the South Bay.....Elemental Funk! It's a win-win situation. While you are being entertained with the smooth songs of Earth Wind & Fire, or with the upbeat pop songs of Bruno Mars, you are contributing towards our fundraiser! We are trying out something new this year (cross your fingers!), we are adding craft beers to the menu. The usual appetizers will be available for purchase as well. Pre Sale Tickets: \$10, @ the Door: \$15 For more information, please call the office at (310) 324-6611 or email Sharon Sawai at s_sawai@jci-gardena.org.



**NEW YEARS NENGAIYOU
PRINTMAKING WORKSHOP
SAT, DEC 9, 2-4PM**

GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

In Japan, *nengajyou*s, or New Years cards, are sent to friends and families wishing them a good year. We will be printing New Year Nengajyou cards using the technique of Monoprinting. Attendees will etch their designs into styrofoam then transfer with printers ink onto cards. Instructor Akemi Ki received her BFA from ArtCenter College of Design and was an artist for Disney Feature Animation for 8 years working on films like *Mulan*, *Emperor's New Groove*, *Fantasia 2000* and *Hercules*. She's also illustrated over 20 children's books. Printing will be a bit messy! Materials will be provided. Tools are not sharp and ink is non-toxic! All ages welcome! \$10 registration fee: please register at <https://gvjci.wufoo.com/forms/nengajyou-printmaking-workshop/> or come into our office.

JAN

**AFTERNOON OF PAWWW
SAT, JAN 20, 2-4PM**

GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall

Come join us as we present a unique and provocative program about a womens' writers' group called Pacific Asian American Women Writers West, otherwise known as "PAAWWW." PAAWWW began in 1976 as an informal gathering of writers, actresses, and artists, with the goal of providing support to Asian American women writers and other women writers of color. PAAWWW evolved into a dynamic group of writers from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. Its atmosphere of mutual respect attracted some of the most talented Asian American women writers in the Los Angeles area. PAAWWW members included Joyce Nako, Naomi Hirahara, Akemi Kikumura Yano, Amy Uyematsu, Jude Narita, Velina Hasu Houston, Momoko Iko, Diane Ujiiye, Miya Iwataki, and many others. This informative and fascinating program will shed light on this important and influential writers' group whose members went on to major accomplishments and lasting impact on our civic and artistic community. Admission is free but donations are appreciated.

If you are interested in volunteering at any of our events, please let us know by calling at (310) 324-6611 or emailing us at info@jci-gardena.org. Please note that not all events will need volunteers.

Thanks to all of the TNK members and their guest that supported ALL of the TNK fundraisers this fiscal year, it was a GOOD year.

TNK membership is at 720!

TNK Fundraisers

The next casino trip will be on November 10, celebrating Veterans Day.

Bingo

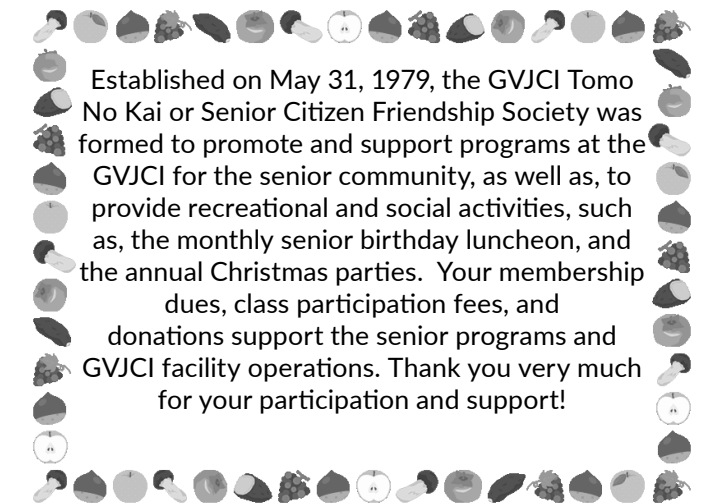
Reminder that TNK Bingo is every Monday and Wednesday 12:15-1:15!

FREE Flu Shots

Nov 21st, Tues 9AM~ Please call, email, or visit our office to reserve a spot. We will need your name, birthday, and insurance info.

Christmas Party

Annual TNK Christmas Party will be held Saturday December 2nd at 11:30AM. Be sure to buy your tickets early as supply is limited!



We've partnered with Amazon Smile.

Go to *smile.amazon.com* and type in "**Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute**" and they'll donate a part of your purchase. No cost to you.

It's that simple.



ELEMENTAL FUNK
a fundraiser concert
december 2, 2017 | 7-11pm

-  Limited Seating! Reserve ASAP
-  \$10 postmarked by Nov. 24
\$15 at the door
-  Craft Brewed Beer and appetizers available for purchase
-  Please, no outside food or drinks

CONTACT
Sharon Sawai
310. 324. 6611
s_sawai@jci-gardena.org

**GARDENA VALLEY
JAPANESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE**
1964 W 162nd St.
Gardena, CA 90247

