



Dear GVJCI Family,

I hope you and your families are staying safe and well. Our Board and Staff send our well-wishes to all of you, and our sincere gratitude to those who are in the front line providing necessary services to the public, and those who are helping the vulnerable population. As the world has changed drastically during the COVID-19 pandemic, GVJCI had to make swift critical decisions to keep our community safe while receiving services, and keeping staff safe while providing services. On March 13, we temporarily closed GVJCI doors to the public, however, our staff worked quickly to provide services we could while working remotely and think creatively in new ways amidst these uncertain conditions. Here are some of the ways we've been connecting with our community:

In This Newsletter...	
GVJCI News.....	3
GVJCI Calendar.....	6
Tomo No Kai Corner.....	8
Community News.....	10

Senior Bento - Through our partnership with Healthy Food for Kids, our seniors have been able to receive bento delivered to their homes.

Tomo No Kai Senior Check In - We started a phone-calling program with 17 volunteers calling over 500 TNK members to see how they are doing and if they are in need of any assistance, or just want a phone buddy during GVJCI's closure. Here's what Matthew shared with us during his recent TNK Senior Check In: "Thank you for checking, we are doing well. Miss playing ukulele on Thursday." Here's a comment from Spencer, "I received a couple of calls regarding my health and well-being as a member of GVJCI-Tomo No Kai Senior Citizens group and would like to report that I am well and healthy at the moment. Please thank your staff for checking in on us seniors." Comments like these make our day!

LA Food Bank in April - We conducted a drive-thru pick up of donated senior food boxes to 130 cars, and 40 boxes delivered to JCI Gardens with the help of 9 volunteers and LTSC staff. The next distribution will be May 6, 9am to 10am, drive-thru only, one box per car.

GVJCI Instagram and Facebook - Now more than ever, we are able to connect through social media. It's our turn to show love to the many local small businesses who have supported us for many years through our #takeouttuesday and #supportsmall-business posts. Please help us support our local businesses while practicing safe social distancing.

Online GVJCI Classes and Services in progress

Please make sure you are following us on social media Instagram and Facebook if you aren't already, and invite your family, friends and colleagues to follow us too! This will help expand our reach and supporters will stay up to date with the latest information, including virtual matsuri updates from us.

This is GVJCI's first online-only newsletter reaching our 2,500 subscribers and more through our growing social media followers. We apologize to those who are not able to receive our electronic communications, but we wanted to distribute our Spring issue as scheduled. We look forward to being back at the GVJCI in full operations soon! We miss everyone and we thank you for the unconditional support you give, especially now, as many nonprofits are facing major impact due to the closures. We received so many kind emails, letters, and phone calls of support and thanks, and we even received many donations. All of this means so much to us...thank you!

We will get through this together and come out even stronger!

Stay safe and well.

With kansha,

Alison Kochiyama
Executive Director



2020 GVJCI MATSURI UPDATE

By: Cathy Lee, Director of Development and Marketing

As you may know, it is with a heavy heart that we have decided to cancel the 2020 GVJCI Matsuri Fundraiser in June. These are unprecedented times and your health and safety is our priority. GVJCI is deeply grateful for the support you give us each year.

We need your help and support even more now that the 2020 GVJCI Matsuri Fundraiser, our largest annual fundraiser, has been cancelled. The \$100,000+ raised at our annual Matsuri helps keep our organization going each year. In our busiest months, 3,000+ people come to the GVJCI for classes, public programs, meetings, services, activities, and social/recreational gatherings. Thank you for utilizing the GVJCI and keeping it an active community center.

With that said, we are excited to share that we are planning a 2020 GVJCI Virtual Matsuri Fundraiser! Our goal for the 2020 GVJCI Virtual Matsuri Fundraiser is to raise 40% or more of our annual Matsuri income. Even though we are temporarily closed, we still have fixed operating expenses where funds raised from our virtual matsuri will be a huge help.

You will receive further information in the coming weeks about what to expect and how you can help. You can also visit our website, Instagram and Facebook for updates. We are committed to bringing the experience of the 2020 GVJCI Virtual Matsuri Fundraiser to life, are working out the details and look forward to sharing them with you!

Thank you again for helping us get through this challenging time - we couldn't do it without you!

We would also like to thank our current 2020 GVJCI Virtual Matsuri Sponsors: Gold - King's Hawaiian & Bronze - JINS for their support!



JINS

FUNDRAISERS & EVENTS UPDATE



Normally we would include information about upcoming fundraisers in our Spring Newsletter. Due to Covid-19, we made the decision to postpone our fundraisers and events. Our 2nd Annual GVJCI Signature Event: Oysters, Bites & Biiru is one of them. We hope to bring this event back in the future. Until then, please visit our website where you can enjoy photos from our inaugural event last year. And we'd love to hear from you! Please share your favorite GVJCI fundraiser memories and photos by email info@jci-gardena.org, you just might see your memory on an upcoming GVJCI Instagram or Facebook post!

We are experiencing challenges like never before, but this too shall pass. And when it does, we'll appreciate being together so much more!



STAFF UPDATES

We want to introduce you to Chikako Roper, who joined our staff in February as the Bilingual Programs Coordinator. GVJCI was recently awarded a grant by Keiro which helps fund a new part-time position enabling us to offer more programs, services, and communications in Japanese. Thanks to Chikako, we now can share bilingually important information on our website, publications, and online communications! Chikako grew up in Japan, and she shares, "I am bilingual and bicultural. I love working with people and am looking forward to being part of the community".



BE A 2020 FRIEND OF THE GVJCI!

By: Bryce Ikemura

On warm summer days, the sun can really beat down on you here in Southern California. It can be hard to leave the comfort of any cool, air conditioned room, but every year, for two days during these sweltering summers, the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute always somehow manages to draw me out for its Matsuri. Hula, ukulele, and martial arts students get to show off what they learn over the course of the year as family members pack audience seats between performances. Game booths with children laughing and enjoying the simple games add to the jovial atmosphere amid the kendo group famously yelling "yakisoba!!!" I can fondly remember the many years I walked down the aisles of food and drink booths that line the GVJCI parking lot, picking up on the scent of freshly fried andagi. It's always a bit sweaty during the summer, but it's always a good time.

Because I grew up in Montebello, my exposure to the GVJCI as a child was minimal. I went there maybe only a few times every year, but when I did go, I was happily accompanied by family and friends. Starting in 2014 and again in 2015, I served as a summer camp counselor for a couple of years, using the GVJCI as a facility, and that's when I began to not only appreciate, but also grow to love the facility as a focal gathering point in the South Bay Japanese American community.

The memories I have at the GVJCI are unique to me, and that's something that makes it so special: it's a space that allows its visitors to create unique memories that are carried for a lifetime. This is why I'm a Friend of the GVJCI, and why I am honored to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. This organization carries lifetimes worth of history on its shoulders and truly serves as an invaluable institution in the community.

Even now, during an unprecedented time with COVID-19 redefining our definitions of normal, the GVJCI and its incredible staff remain dedicated to providing its stakeholders with a sense of normalcy from decentralized home-offices. The GVJCI is central to some of my youngest memories, and is representative of so many more memories to be had - not just by me, but by others like me and like you who call this place home. I'm a proud Friend of the GVJCI, and I want to invite you to become a Friend of the GVJCI, too. We'd love to get to know you! Please visit our website under the "How to Help" tab for details on how to become a Friend of the GVJCI!



Melissa F. Okabe

Real Estate Agent, CIPS, FTBS

License #02036508

Phone: 310-245-2564

Email: melissaokabe.re@gmail.com

Website: melissaokabe.com



GVJCI BOARD UPDATES

The GVJCI Board of Directors proudly announces two new members joining us in February!

Michelle Hirano was born and raised in the South Bay. After attending the University of California, Irvine (UCI), she went on to earn her Master of Arts in Teaching at the University of Southern California (USC). Michelle's first experience working in non-profit was at the Gardena Valley JCI (GVJCI). The GVJCI offered her the opportunity to apply her teaching skills and create programs and social services available to the South Bay community. After her time at the GVJCI, she contributed to the curriculum and program building at Kizuna, where she served as Program Director and then Interim Executive Director. Currently, she uses her background in education and strategic planning to help create new resources and systems with Hirano Homes Real Estate. She looks forward to serving the GVJCI.



Bryce Ikemura is a Partnership Specialist at TDW+Co, a full-service, multicultural marketing agency with a focus on Asian audiences. Based in the company's Los Angeles office, Bryce is invested in community building through accurate representation and national visibility for Asian American communities. His work has helped him gain a wider perspective on the national Asian American landscape as he continues to connect with organizations across the country. Prior to his role at TDW+Co, Bryce also worked for Keiro as a Program Analyst, an experience which further impassioned him to the Japanese American community.

Bryce grew up in and around the community playing basketball, practicing karate, and learning soroban but as he became more involved, the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute continued to appear as a constant in his professional and volunteer work. In 2019 Bryce was placed at the GVJCI as a board fellow through the Kizuna Board Fellowship program where he grew his appreciation for the community center and now continues to serve on the board of directors. Bryce graduated from Chapman University with a B.A. in Political Science and a minor in English. In his spare time, Bryce serves as a member of the board-at-large for Kizuna and enjoys basketball, photography, and hanging out with his dog.

The Trusted Choice for In-Home Care



Home Care Assistance is proud to have partnered with **Millennia Personal Care Services** to bring customized home care to the **Japanese Community**.

Our exclusive approach to wellness for older adults, the **Balanced Care Method™**, is based on the scientifically studied lifestyles of the long-living elders of Okinawa, Japan. This approach is focused on nutrition, physical activity, social engagement and purpose and aims to enhance your loved one's overall health and quality of life.

Call us today! 日本語でどうぞ! ケアギバー募集! 未経験者歓迎!
各医療保険、年金など福利厚生が充実

888-285-4913 | HomeCareAssistance.com/Millennia

*The Japanese Community's Premier Provider
of In-Home Senior Care*

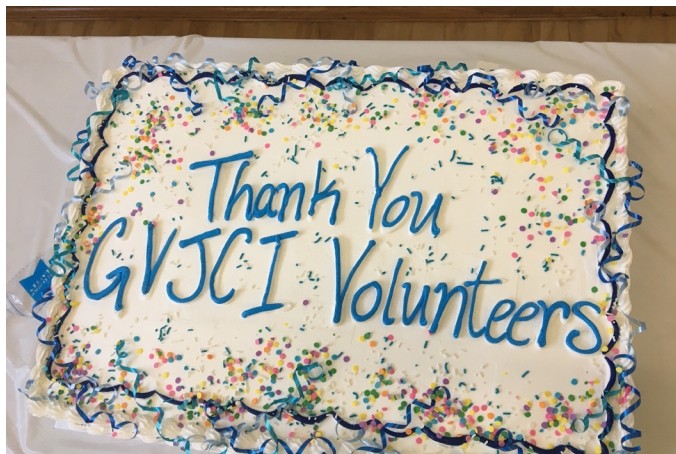
VAL: A Day of Thanks and Kansha

By: Stephanie Mayeda, Program Manager

It's pretty fair to say that the GVJCI runs the way it does because of the generosity, care, and support of our many volunteers. They do so much amazing work, both seen and unseen. And it's just impossible for us to put into so many words how deeply we appreciate their efforts, but we always try! Every year, we hold a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon (affectionately called VAL, for short) to thank the many wonderful people who give their time to help make GVJCI the wonderful organization that it is!

This year, it was held on Saturday, February 8th, and we had about 100 people in attendance, which included staff, high school volunteers, and entertainment. To start the luncheon, we started with a game of "Getting To Know You" BINGO! The GVJCI has so many different volunteer areas which means some volunteers don't get the chance to meet or get to know one another. The game was a great opportunity for everyone to mingle, have tons of fun, and hopefully make new friends too! For lunch, our volunteers we're treated to a delicious and beautifully prepared bento from @Home Kitchen as well as a tasty cake made by Torrance Bakery.

As our guests enjoyed their lunches, our staff each took turns thanking each volunteer group. Administration, programs, fundraising & development, and facilities all stepped to the stage to give thanks and show appreciation for those who gave their time and support in 2019. To top off the afternoon, the LA Men's Glee Club performed a medley of nostalgic Japanese songs; some even sang along! This being my first Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, I felt incredibly lucky to be able to work for an organization that brings so many amazing people together, and it was truly gratifying to be able to give back to our hard-working and caring volunteers. We would also like to thank all of the volunteers who were not able to attend the luncheon for all their hard work throughout 2019! The GVJCI truly appreciates each and every one of you, and we're looking forward to seeing you all again hopefully soon!



Delicious custard-filled marble cake from the wonderful Torrance Bakery in Gardena that helped make our VAL luncheon extra special!



One of our lucky volunteers shows her winning "ticket" for her table's center-piece. A special note was placed underneath one snack box at each table.



Entertainment LA Men's Glee Club perform a medley of Japanese songs for luncheon guests.



Bento from @Home Kitchen: Ground mix beef & Pork Hamburg w/ Teriyaki Sauce, Grilled salmon, Egg omelet, Arare crusted shrimp, Potato salad, Chirashi sushi, Pickles, Simmered Asian vegetable. Mmmm!

MAY

LA FOOD BANK FOOD BOX DISTRIBUTION

WED, MAY 6 & JUNE 3, 9-10AM
GVJCI Parking Lot

10-12 lb boxes of shelf stable items for seniors 60 years and older. 1st come, 1st served. Due to extremely high demand, **only 1 box per car. NO RSVP.**

To maintain social distancing, this distribution is drive-thru only; no walk-ins. As a courtesy to neighborhood residents, please do NOT line up your cars prior to 9AM. Lot entry opens at 9AM. Once distribution begins, all cars must enter coming east through the 162nd street entrance.

Please do NOT get out of your vehicle and be ready to open your trunk. A volunteer will place the box in your vehicle for you. There will be no hand-to-hand distribution.



ALZHEIMER'S LOS ANGELES - MEMORY LOSS & ALZHEIMER'S FRI, MAY 8, 10-11AM VIRTUAL (ONLINE/PHONE CLASS)

Memory Loss & Alzheimer's: Let's Talk! What is the difference between dementia and Alzheimer's disease? What is the difference between normal aging and signs of dementia? These questions and more will be answered. Join us and we will discuss the latest information about memory loss as we age. Registration is required. Please RSVP to info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611. You will be provided with an online link and/or phone number to call to join the workshop remotely.

JULY

SMARTPHONE/TABLET CLASS

THU, JULY 9-AUG 20 (NO JULY 16 CLASS), 9:30-10:30AM

GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 205

\$10 per class or \$50 for the entire series, paid in advance. Registration is required. Sign up by calling or emailing us at info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611.

Learn how to use your smartphone or tablet from the basics or come drop in on the weeks you want to brush up on! Don't have a smartphone/tablet but still want to learn? No problem! We have rentals, free of charge, both iPads and Android tablets.

Week 1 - July 9

Components, Symbols

Settings - display, volume/sounds, etc.

*Week 2 - July 23 (*no class July 16)

Adding contacts

Phone calls, Text messages, Email

Using the camera

Week 3 - July 31

Apps - Already installed & Adding New Apps

**Please bring your Apple App Store or Google Play passwords

Week 4 - Aug 6

Apps - Useful Emergency Apps

Week 5 - Aug 13

Wi-Fi/Data Usage/Storage

Week 6 - Aug 20

Questions & Answers

MEMORY WIRE BRACELET CRAFT CLASS

WED, JULY 22, 9:30-11:30AM

GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

Join us in this senior-friendly workshop! We're making a one-of-a-kind bracelet using memory wire and beads! It's easy and fun to do. Materials are provided. Class fee is \$5. For adults 50yrs+ only.

Registration is required. To RSVP call (310) 324-6611 or email info@jci-gardena.org.

ALZHEIMER'S LOS ANGELES -

HOME SAFETY

FRI, JULY 31, 10-11:30AM

GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 207/208

Find out what you can do to make your home safer while caring for someone with dementia. Learn about safety issues and how to use the latest knowledge and products to keep your loved one at home with less worry.

Registration is required. To RSVP call (310) 324-6611 or email us at info@jci-gardena.org. Admission is FREE but donations are appreciated.

COMING SOON

初心者、和菓子クラス

BEGINNER WAGASHI

(JAPANESE SWEETS) CLASS

日本語でお教えます。

和菓子を作ったことがない、そんな方にお勧めのクラス。代表的人気の和菓子を作ってみましょう。場所/日時、材料費/参加費は後日お知らせします。

Conducted in Japanese.

For people who have never made Wagashi before. Let's make the most popular Japanese sweets. Details will be announced later.

初心者お裁縫クラス (ニットソーイング) BEGINNER

SEWING CLASS (KNIT

SEWING)

日本語でお教えます。

ロックミシンでフレンチ袖チュニックをお体に合わせて作ることができます。

初めての方でも簡単に縫えます。

材料はご用意します。

手ぶらでご参加ください。

場所、日時、材料費/参加費は後日お知らせします。

Make your own French sleeve tunic using overlock sewing machine.

No sewing experience needed, beginners welcome! Material & supplies provided.

No need to prepare anything, come and join us! Check our next newsletter or our website for details.

SAVE THE DATE!

2020 GVJCI ART SHOW

SAT, SEPT. 19, 10AM-5PM, SUN, SEPT. 20, 11AM-4PM

GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall

Dear Artists,

On Saturday, September 19th and Sunday, September 20th 2020, the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute will be having an art exhibit. This year the theme of the exhibit is "Social Isolation Art". What did you create, while we were social distancing to avoid spreading the Coronavirus? The artwork can be in any media: paintings, photos, sculptures, etc. Our interpretation of this theme is broad. It doesn't have to be about social isolation. It's whatever you were inspired to do, on any subject, while you were spending extra time at home. It can be realistic or abstract.

The show is open to all artists. There is no fee to enter. However, artwork submitted needs to be approved. Size and number of art pieces are limited by the GVJCI's ability to display the work within the GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall. Acceptance into the show is at the discretion of the GVJCI. Please send one photo of each artwork and the submission form (available on the GVJCI website) in order to participate in the event. Email submissions to smayedajci-gardena.org, or deliver or mail it to Stephanie Mayeda c/o Gardena Valley JCI, ATTN: Art Show, 1964 W. 162nd St., Gardena, CA 90247 by August 28, 2020. Notification of the acceptance of artwork will be given by September 4, 2020.

Delivery and pickup is the responsibility of the artist. It is preferred that artists install and remove their own work. The space, primarily on 4'x8' panels, along with hooks, and labels will be provided. If you'd like to provide a biography or special information about your art, that can also be printed for display in the show. Any work requiring special handling or installation should be brought to the attention of the GVJCI and overseen by the artist.

The GVJCI does not conduct sales of artwork during the show, however artists are free to share contact information with anyone interested in their work.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Alvin Takamori
GVJCI Board Member
(310) 941-1866
alvintaka@att.net

Stephanie Mayeda
Program Manager
(310) 324-6611
smayedajci-gardena.org



Wakare no Isochidori 別れの磯千鳥

By: Pam Momoko Yan, Program Coordinator

Thirty years ago, George Isaka joined the GVJCI Senior Ukulele group led by Ken Kanomata. The group would meet on Tuesdays in the GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall and play Japanese and Hawaiian songs. In 2015, Ken retired and George took over leadership duties of the group. Eventually the group name changed to "Japanese Ukulele."

On February 25th, 2020 George and the members of Japanese Ukulele group had their last class. Ever since I started working here, I would be lulled by strumming and singing wafting its way through the hall to my front desk window. I miss those afternoons. They would play well-loved Japanese favorites like Hamabe no Uta 浜辺の唄.

Unbeknownst to George though, one of the Diet Coke planes (that he made over 20 years ago) is now hanging above my desk. I will think of the Ukulele class every time I open or close for the day.

George told me the one performance the Japanese Ukulele group did was at the funeral of a member's sibling. The song they performed was Wakare no Isochidori 別れの磯千鳥.

会うが別れの始めとは
知らぬ私じゃないけれど
切なく残るこの想い
知っているのは磯千鳥

Au ga wakare no Hajime to wa
Shinaru watashi jyanai keredo
Setsunaku nokoru kono omoi
Shitte irunowa isochidori



Our current TNK membership is at 595.

Established on May 31, 1979, the GVJCI Tomo No Kai or Senior Citizen Friendship Society was formed to promote and support programs at the GVJCI for the senior community, as well as, to provide recreational and social activities, such as, bus excursions and annual Christmas parties. Your membership dues, class participation fees, and donations support the senior programs and GVJCI facility operations. Thank you very much for your participation and support.

New Tomo No Kai Class: Chair Aerobics

Coming soon! Please check our website for updates!

Thursdays 2-3pm - GVJCI Upstairs Classroom 202/203
Aerobics exercise while sitting on a chair. The class will build endurance, and strengthen the heart and lungs. This class will include exercises for arms and abdominals, and stretching. Please wear exercise clothes and shoes, and bring water.

新しい友の会のクラス: 椅子エアロビクス
近日実施予定。毎週木曜日 午後2-3時 二階の教室
202/203

椅子に座ってエアロビクス運動。

このクラスは心肺機能の向上を促します。

更に腕や腹筋のストレッチも兼ねています。

エクササイズ用の運動着、靴、それと水をご用意ください。

"STOMP, KICK, TRIPLE STEP..."

By: Pam Momoko Yan, Program Coordinator

Fifteen and a half years ago, Terri Swimmer agreed to temporarily fill-in for Marian Yoshiyama who had just retired from teaching Line Dancing at the GVJCI. A few months turned into many years, and on March 30th, 2020, Terri finally put up her Line Dancing boots.

Terri had been attending as a student of the Line Dancing class already and was subbing now and again, so teaching the class was comfortable for her. In addition to teaching this new class, Terri was already teaching Line Dancing at the YMCA and also teaching water exercise 4 days a week. Her schedule was being pushed to the max.

Now that her husband is retired, she's decided to tone down the work and start traveling. Last year for April Fool's Day, she showed up to class and announced that she was retiring. After the shock set-in, she exclaimed, "April's Fools!" Now, it's for real.

Terri's message to her class is: "Keep on dancing. Our paths will cross again. Change is always good."

**Chris Mori will be taking over as the new Monday Line Dance instructor. Classes are in the GVJCI Main Hall weekly from 1-3:15pm.*

Protect Your Assets

Medi-Cal | Living Trust | Probate

- Medi-Cal Planning
- Estate Planning
- Trust Administration
- Probate



Judd Matsunaga's
ELDER LAW SERVICES OF CALIFORNIA
A Professional Law Corporation

310-348-2995
elderlawcalifornia.com

Multiple locations throughout California



Judd Matsunaga
Attorney at Law

YOUR JAPANESE HOME CARE PROVIDER



carelife

Caregivers can assist with:

- Cooking
- Driving
- Light Housekeeping
- Home Exercise & more

Doctor of Physical Therapy(DPT) on staff

310.373.6030

carelifeinc.com

facebook.com/CarelifeHomeCare

ADVENTURERS CLUB NEWS

By: Tim Toyama

Next stop: Okinawa and Kyushu!

There will be two tours; each tour will spend half of the time in each area.

Fall 2020: Nov. 11 – 22 \$3,800 per person (land cost only); \$685 single supplement.

This tour will cover Okinawa, including the southwest islands, Naha, Manza Beach, Peace Memorial Park, Churaumi Aquarium, and Gyokusendo Cave; Kyushu will include: Kumamoto; Nagasaki; Arita; Fukuoka.

Spring 2021: March 26 - April 6
\$4,200 per person (land cost only);
\$750 single supplement.

This tour will cover Okinawa, including the southwest islands, Naha, Manza Beach, Peace Memorial Park, Churaumi Aquarium, and Gyokusendo Cave; Kyushu will include: Kagoshima; Nagasaki; Arita; Karatsu; Yufuin; Beppu.

Please note that these are tentative destinations, and that they are subject to change based on availability at the time of booking.

Despite the ongoing current health crisis, we are hoping that by this Fall, it will be safe for people around the world to travel and have the opportunity to enjoy visiting their vacation destinations.

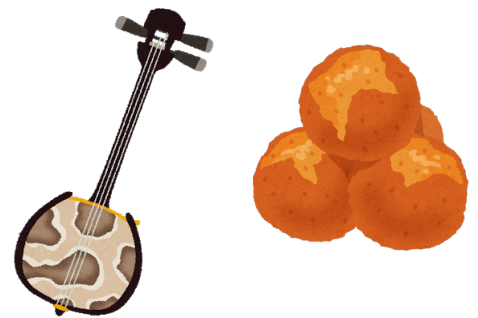
The itineraries for the two proposed Okinawa/Kyushu tours are tentatively in place. We are working directly with a tour operator in Japan, who will keep us apprised of all the most up-to-date information regarding travel restrictions. We are expecting the next month to be critical in terms of gauging how safe it will be to travel, and will decide how to proceed with these proposed tours. As of the date of this newsletter, we are still assuming the tours will take place as originally planned. In the event global travel bans are announced after people have already paid, then of course, we will do our best to provide a full refund.

Airfare is not included in the tour fee; cancellation policy will be determined by airline.

Travel insurance is also not included, but we can provide recommendations, if you are interested.

The confirmation deadline and deposit (\$600) for the Fall 2020 Tour is June 15.

For questions or further information on tour conditions and cancellation policy, please send an email to Tim Toyama at Timtoyama@gmail.com



Please note that the Adventurers Club is a non-sponsored GJVCI activity. For more information, contact Tim Toyama at timtoyama@gmail.com





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.

MISSION STATEMENT

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

VISION STATEMENT

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.

Board of Directors

Ray Shibata, *President*
Alan Kita, *Vice President*
Miles Akiyama, *Treasurer*
Marilyn Tsuge, *Secretary*
Richard Ames
Gail Doi
Lawrence Hada
Juan Hernandez
Michelle Hirano
Bryce Ikemura
Grant Nakaoka
Charles Oyagi
Alvin Takamori
Airi Takashima Oye

Emeritus Board of Directors

Dan Ashimine
Bob Horii
Helen Kawagoe
Paul Koshi
Helen Nakano
Glenn Tachibana
Terry Terauchi

Staff

Administration & Programs
Alison Kochiyama, *Executive Director*
Cathy Lee, *Director of Development and Marketing*
Debbie Oba, *Administrative Manager*
Stephanie Mayeda, *Program Manager*
Pam Momoko Yan, *Program Coordinator*
Chikako Roper, *Bilingual Programs Coordinator*

Facilities

Dayton Lee, *Interim Facility Operations Manager*
Brian Hoshiko, *Maintenance Custodian*
Bob Seki, *Maintenance Custodian*
Gerald Mayewaki, *Facility Assistant*

Japanese Language School

Lawrence Hada, *Principal*
Masumi Sasaki, *Vice Principal & Teacher*
Mayumi Fuchino, *Teacher*
Shizuka Marinakis, *Teacher*
Asaka Morita, *Teacher*
Chiaki Suzuki, *Teacher*
Naoko Tran, *Teacher*
Eriko Yamamoto, *Adult Class & Conversation Class Teacher*

For the latest updates on COVID-19, please visit the LA County Department of Public Health's website:
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>



@GVJCI



@gardenavalleyjci