



## SONOMA COUNTY JACL BOARD MEETING AND MISSION STATEMENT

The Sonoma County Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League is committed to the protection and advancement of civil rights and community development for Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry.



### BOARD MEETING MINUTES June 3rd, 2025 at 7 PM on zoom

ATTENDANCE: Cecelia Shimizu (president), Phyllis Tajii, Bruce Shimizu, Flora Lee Ganzler, Ron Tajii, Janet Tajii, Meg Mizutani, Amy Wakayama

ABSENT: Nancy Davlin, Andrew LeMarQuand

- I. Call to Order - 7:05, by Cecelia Shimizu
- II. Personal Appearances - none
- III. Approval of the May minutes as distributed - approved by unanimous vote
- IV. Approval of the Agenda - Additional information added to VIII. A.2. c) (1) and VIII. F. 3. a). Also, Meg Mizutani added an item - under New Business-Nagasawa item. Agenda approved with additions
- V. Announcements -
  - A. Demystifying Digitization: Planning a Digitization Project from Start to Finish - *June 4th from 1:00 to 5:00 pm* [📍 211 E Street / Central Santa Rosa Library Meeting Room](#) - Cecelia will attend to see if JACL can digitize minutes from the past.
    1. Please RSVP here
  - B. Museum of Sonoma County - AAPI Introductions - *June 4th from 4:00 pm*  
[📍 Museum of Sonoma County](#)
    1. Phyllis will be attending, this is an introductory meeting with the Director of Programs at the Museum of Sonoma County. They are wanting to do an Asian American and Pacific Islander festival museum next year.
  - C. Eden Township 2025 Bazaar - *June 7 1:00 to 7:00 pm & June 8th 11:00 am to 3:00 pm*  
[📍 710 Elgin Street](#)
    1. [See Attached Flyer](#)
  - D. Demystifying Digitization: Planning a Digitization Project from Start to Finish - *June 11th from 12:00 to 1:30 pm ZOOM*
    1. Please RSVP here
  - E. Write the Wrongs - Neighbors Not Enemies Learning and Letter Writing Event - *June 14th at 2:00 pm*  
[📍 1285 66th St](#)
    1. Join Berkeley JACL for an afternoon of tea and homemade dessert while learning about the repeal of the Alien Enemies Act and other social justice advocacy efforts, followed by letter writing and petition signing! Bring your smart phone or laptop!
    2. RSVP here
  - F. Enmanji Teriyaki BBQ - *July 13th*
    1. Updated Flyer
    2. Imagawayaki Pre-order Form
  - G. Obon Odori - *July 19th at 7pm*
    1. Dance Practice: Wed, July 16th through Friday, July 18th from 7 to 9 at Enmanji
  - H. Pilgrimage
    1. Heart Mountain - *July 24th to 26th* [📍 Wyoming](#)
      - a) Registration Link

- VI. Correspondence -
- VII. Long Range Planning -
  - A. Schedule of Events/ Calendar
  - B. Responsibilities and Task Follow Up
- VIII. Committee and Subcommittee Reports -
  - A. Finance, *Janet Tajii* -
    - 1. Meeting with Edward Jones, *Janet Tajii* - **No Report**
    - 2. Uyeda Center Building, *Ron Tajii* -
      - a) Statements for Uyeda Center
      - b) Tenant at 511 Petaluma Av has vacated as of May 19, 2025. Modified lease agreement for early termination in google drive. All financial obligations for early lease termination are complete.
      - c) Possible new tenant has been found. New tenant has submitted a “Letter of Intent” which describes the nature of use of the property, financial plan, modifications wanted, and term of lease.
      - d) Tombe is doing a background check.
      - e) Need directions from the board on proceeding/agreeing in negotiations- Tombe will be responsible to make sure the construction work/repairs to the unit is done properly and follows code. **The board authorizes Ron and Tombe to negotiate terms with the new tenant.**
    - 3. Treasurer’s Report, *Nancy Davlin* -
      - a) Financial Reports
    - 4. Funding Requests, *Janet Tajii* - **No Report**
  - B. Board elections, Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation - **No Report**
  - C. Membership -
    - 1. We need to update our membership categories on the website
    - 2. Amy and Cece to work on email and physical renewal project
    - 3. Phyllis would like to be trained on membership processing
    - 4. Will work on changing passwords
  - D. Programs, Civil Rights and Social Justice, *G. Yamamoto Seymour* -
    - 1. Community Outreach, *G. Yamamoto Seymour* -
      - a) Links from Gail to check out
        - (1) [How Volunteer Patrols Are Working to Protect San Diego Immigrant Communities From ICE - BOLTS](#)
        - (2) [Japanese American who fought for prison camp survivors now fighting for reparations for Black community - NBC News](#)
        - (3) [ICE Sparks Chaotic Fight After Trying to Arrest Mom Holding Her Baby - The New Republic](#)
      - b) Update from Gail -
        - (1) Los Cien Immigration Update Forum -  
Phyllis attended on May 15th. The keynote speaker was Bill Ong Hing, professor of Law and Migration Studies and associate dean at USF School of Law. He is the founder of the Immigrant Legal Resource Center in San Francisco, has written numerous books on immigration and helped win the case for asylum before the Supreme Court in 1987. He has a wealth of knowledge about the

immigration system and how racism has played a part in shaping its policies. Highly recommend attending his talk if given the chance. Phyllis sat with AAPIC members at the event and was able to talk about the upcoming JACL-FANHS Immigration Seminar with them.

- (2) Under Phyllis' lead, Sonoma County JACL and the local Filipino American National Historical Society met to plan the immigration seminar in late July or August or September on immigrant rights and protection. Discussion included using JACL Civil Rights Committee funds to pay for food. Janet Tajii, Ron Tajii, and Gail Seymour attended. Next meeting is June 3rd.
- (3) Phyllis, Henry, Janet, Ron, and Gail have attended Lina Lin Hoshino's "Petaluma Chinatown Unearthed" events which have been informational and inspirational. With the weeks-long program coming to an end, Lina is organizing meetings to determine how to move forward with educational programs. Additionally, the Petaluma City Council voted to rename Center Park to Historic Chinatown Park and also issued a proclamation honoring the celebrating historic contributions of the Chinese community in Petaluma particularly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. See: [CityofPetaluma.org](http://CityofPetaluma.org). "We are Petaluma Proud of Lina Hoshino!"
- (4) South Park Neighborhood Coalition -  
Gail attended the South Park Neighborhood Coalition monthly meeting representing the Sonoma County JACL and Sonoma County NAACP. This Coalition is impressively serving the neighborhood which is one of the most marginalized communities in the County — mostly Hispanic residents. Some of the Coalition's activities include: a resource fair, potluck meals, Day and Night Festival, and assistance for low-income residents (Attendance is low due to fear by Hispanic residents of exposure to ICE at public events). A new facility of Section 8 housing/Burbank Housing called "South Park Commons" is opening this month. The Coalition will provide gifts for the new residents. The Coalition also has an active newsletter and FaceBook site. Gail contributed info on the South Park Sanitation District and no-cost electronics and other recyclable bulky items by the Conservation Corps of the North Bay. Gail became involved with South Park as an environmental justice issue due to the renovation of the City's Martin Luther King Jr. Park which is the only park that serves the neighborhood. The City has an \$8 million State grant and was due to complete planning, design, and implementation in summer 2026. Now the City says it needs another year and there is only enough funding to renovate 50% of the park. There will be a public meeting regarding this delay and cost overrun and Gail/NAACP will participate.
- (5) Phyllis and Gail attended the JACL Northern CA, Western NV, Pacific District (NCWNPD) Civil Rights Committee meeting in May (Gail is a member of the committee). Attorney Don Tamaki, who served on the CA Reparations Task Force (Assembly Bill 3121), presented the Task Force's recommendations and is asking JACL Chapters and Districts to write letters supporting reparations bills that are currently coursing through the CA Legislature. Gail and Phyllis submitted a draft letter and informational bullets to the Sonoma County JACL Board for approval.

c) General Environmental and Climate Justice Activities (outside the JAACL CR/SJ Committee)

- (1) The North Coast Water Board is finalizing its Waste Discharge Regulations for commercial vineyards. Gail has been working on the Environmental Technical Advisory Committee (five of us) for the past few years. The Committee believes the regs are not protective enough of water quality but we have concluded that before the regulations are “watered down” further by the wine industry, Farm Bureaus, and their powerful lobbies (at least 30 of them), that we support the final draft. The NAACP- Sonoma County Branch along with environmental and social justice orgs has signed the letter of support. The purpose of the regulations is to prevent the discharge of pollutants (fine sediment, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers) into surface water and groundwater. Surface waters (creeks and rivers) and groundwater provide our drinking and domestic water uses. The wine industry and allies are against regulations.
- (2) Gail is following the challenges to the CA Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), endangered species act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act and other vital environmental laws that are essential to our health and well-being.

2. United in Kindness, *Phyllis Tajii* -

- a) Working with the City of Santa Rosa on a Proclamation endorsing the UIK mission.

3. AAPIC, *Phyllis Tajii* -

- a) Mixer at the Flamingo Hotel in Santa Rosa, well attended and a great time to meet new people
- b) Immigrant Rights Seminar with Kirk Lok on June 16, concentrating on small business owners who employ Asians
- c) The Ad Hoc committee of JAACL and FANHS is collaborating with AAPIC to put on a Protecting Immigrant Rights Seminar in the summer

4. Community Festivals, *Phyllis Tajii* - **No Report**

E. Programs, Community and Culture -

1. Scholarship Committee, *Janet Tajii* -

- a) Bruce Arao has been awarded the renewal of the Sonoma County JAACL Faye Uyeda Memorial Scholarship for graduate students in a health field

2. Enman No Tomo, *Nancy Davlin* -

We had 60 people who came on May 3rd to enjoy all the many spring activities. Donna Fujino decorated the tables with lovely kalanchoe plants along with the cute springtime gnomes which were later raffled. Thank you, Donna, for bringing fun and brightness for our members to enjoy. Sachiko Knappman then did a presentation on Japanese culture, and pointed out that May 5<sup>th</sup>, besides being Cinco de Mayo, is also a Japanese festival for Kodomo no hi or “Children’s Day”. It used to be Boys’ Day, but modern times have combined Girls and Boys days into one celebration. Thank you, Sachiko, for helping us to celebrate this fun festival event.

We then proceeded with exercises with Diane Ono, who presented easy to follow exercises, and had everyone doing simple Latin dance steps to the lively music. Next month, Diane will teach us some of the Japanese folk dances that are done at Obon Odori time.

Next, we were honored by having MaryAnn Goodman and her students come and present a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. They explained the process and the significance behind the ceremony. Then they prepared tea and snacks, and presented them individually to all our members and guests. It is a very moving ceremony that we appreciated and enjoyed. Thank you, MaryAnn, for setting everything up, and for arranging this wonderful ceremony

For lunch, we had a special lunch, prepared by Dang Luong and family and friends, which was a lovely spread of several delicious courses for everyone to enjoy. They even made individual special desserts that were as tasty as they were pretty. Thank you, Dang, and family, for the special treat enjoyed by all and that even gave our kitchen crew a welcome break.

After lunch, we were back with the “always fun and where is my number” bingo games, called by Darryl Yagi and assisted by Tien Luong. We still feel lucky every time we win and get a prize.

We were very happy to see Marian Ishizu come to our gathering this month, as it is always nice to see and visit with her. She is amazing, so thank you, Janel, for bringing her.

We are thinking of all of you, and wish you good health, good spirits, peace, and happiness. See you on Saturday, June 7th, when we will have a presentation on Manzanar and other historic places by George Thow.

3. Education Committee -
  - a) Commission on Human Rights - **No Report**
  - b) Kamishibai - **No Report**
    - (1) Nagasawa Kamishibai
4. Cranes for Ukraine/ Tsuru for Solidarity - *Ron Tajii/ Phyllis Tajii* - **No Report**
5. Speakers Bureau, *Henry Kaku* - **No Report**
6. Tea Plant Subcommittee, *Bruce Shimizu* - **No Report**
7. Paradise Ridge Winery - Japanese Garden with LACO, *Bruce Shimizu* -
  - a) **Fundraising** – Met Consul General Yo Osumi at Matsuri and he expressed great interest in the Japanese Garden Project. He had Ryan Okada, Coordinator of Cultural Affairs, reach out and we spoke at length about the history of the project and its importance to the JA community in Sonoma County. We will be meeting within the next two weeks to discuss how the Consulate can assist in making contact with Japanese organizations and companies that might be interested in being Garden sponsors.
  - b) **Public Relations** - Martin Espinoza, reporter with the Press Democrat stopped by the booth and we talked about the Garden project and he is very interested in writing an article for the Press Democrat newspaper.
  - c) **Construction** – The plan is to start site work in July (clearing & grading), and to have volunteer work groups assist in the installation of the garden elements on weekends in August and September. The goal is to have the garden completed by the end of September. If board members have anyone in mind to come out and help, let Bruce know.
  - d) **Sonoma County Library — “Demystifying Digitization: Planning a Digitization Project from Start to Finish”**
    - (1) Cecelia will be attending the full workshop on June 4th , and
    - (2) Bruce will be attending the webinar on June 11th . The timing of this workshop is good, in that we could use some technical assistance in planning and implementing the digital media element of the Garden Project’s interpretive signage in linking portions of “Giri” interviews with QR codes.
8. Peace Crane Project, *Phyllis Tajii* -
  - a) There will be a meeting with SSU in July to discuss the Hiroshima Trees planting on campus.
  - b) One of the two Peace Trees planted in Sebastopol has been vandalized and chopped down.
9. Children’s Program, *Ron Tajii* -

- a) Spoke to Carol Kawase who would like to sponsor culture class programs throughout the Nor Cal district starting in the fall. Tentatively agreed for Sonoma County to sponsor a class in October. (11th or 25th???)

F. Communications Committee, *Meg Mizutani* -

1. Newsletter Committee, *Amy Wakayama* -

- a) Newsletter Updates **due 6/5/2025**, please send to [amy.wakayama@gmail.com](mailto:amy.wakayama@gmail.com) . **A new newsletter email address will be created to send Amy newsletter articles.**

(1) Make sure that any newsletter items you send in have the following information:

- (a) Emails - if you are wanting people to contact somebody
- (b) Links - if you are directing them to go somewhere
- (c) Title
- (d) Wording how you want it to appear
- (e) Photos - if you would like a photo included

2. Social Media Committee, *Meg Mizutani* -

- a) Website Subcommittee, *Meg Mizutani* -

(1) Need to update the Membership page and the board members page

- b) Facebook, Becky Sugiyama - **No Report**

3. Communication Policies and Guidelines -

- a) Following the decision that we came up with at the last board meeting, about adding an abridged PDF version of the minutes without hyperlinks. I know that Janet said she is willing to read and edit minutes before it's posted. What does the timeline look like on getting the May minutes submitted to Amy so she can add it to the newsletter?
- b) Cecelia will look where a page can be added to the website for the edited newsletters.

4. Chapter Logo - **No Report**

G. District Council, *Cecelia Shimizu* -

H. District JACL Civil Rights Committee -

1. Civil Rights Committee Newsletter [May/June](#)

2. CA Reparations Task Force -

- a) Gail and Phyllis attended the meeting with Attorney Don Tamaki and were told that the Task Force is recommending Chapters to write letters in support of reparation bills that are currently going through the CA Legislation

(1) Please see the attached draft letter and the informational points that have been submitted for board approval

- (a) Draft
- (b) Information:

Background on Reparations for African American descendants - for Sonoma County JACL Board - June 2, 2025

“Today, 160 years after the abolition of slavery, its badges and lingering negative effects of the incidents remain embedded in the political, legal, health, situation of slavery on descendants financial, educational, cultural, environmental, social, and of persons enslaved in the United economic systems of the United States of America.” (CA Reparations Task Force Executive Summary, [exec-summary-ca-reparations.pdf](#))

“ ARRT believes that reparations should bring about transformative, systemic, and long-lasting policy solutions that change the lives of Black Californians and that address all five of the United Nations reparations

principles and be aligned with the recommendations provided by the California Reparations Task Force Report.” (ARRT) Alliance for Reparations Reconciliation and Truth, <https://alliancefor.org>

- The Task Force documents 2.5 centuries of enslavement, 100 yrs of Jim Crow exclusion, and subsequent decades of discrimination in the U. S.
- Donald Tamaki, SF Attorney was the only Asian and non-Black member of the CA Reparations Task Force. He presented the following at the JACL NCWNP District Civil Rights Committee meeting on May 27, 2025. (Gail and Phyllis were in attendance).
- Twenty to 30 lawyers worked on the Task Force recommendations. Ph.D. experts and college professors authored it.
- Black and Japanese reparations are parallel; anti-Black and anti-Japanese sentiments are intertwined.
- The JACL was an early supporter of the Task Force.
- The origins of systems that lead to JA incarceration began in 1619 when the system that propped up slavery started.
- CA was complicit with slavery. There was no CA law in 1849, the start of the Gold Rush, to outlaw miners from bringing their enslaved people to the State. Fifteen hundred - 2000 Black people were enslaved in CA during the Gold Rush.
- In the 1920s, CA was a signature KuKluxKlan State.
- Considering the last two bullets above, incarcerating JAs in 1942 was not surprising.
- CA’s role in the harm to Black citizens include redlining during the 1940s and 1960s
- During the 1950s to 1970s, eminent domain caused the displacement of one million people with 70% being Black people.
- Redevelopment/urban renewal in 1966-1967, razed Japan Town in the Fillmore District of SF. It was reduced from 44 blocks to 4 blocks. Many Black people were driven out of their neighborhoods due to urban renewal.
- Black people and other people of color were deprived of generational wealth and many were forced into poverty.
- A 2021 report found that Black mortality is five times greater than that for Whites.
- The Task Force recommends what CA should do to ameliorate the centuries of harm.
- Some people state that this will take too long. It took 20 years for JA reparations. Reparations for Blacks will take longer but that should not deter us from the movement.
- The movement needs allies. The JACL has credibility and many voices and we can help drive the movement.
- Reparations are not a separate issue from all efforts to challenge the current U.S. administrations efforts to end democracy. Reparations are part of the entire playbook.

- There are 115 Task Force recommendations; 15 are for direct compensation. Recommendations include the subjects of healthcare housing, education, policing, and labor.
- Currently there are 15 new reparations related bills coursing through the CA Legislature.

Below is a list of the measures ARRT is prioritizing during the 2025-2026

Legislative Session; Don has recommended we write a letter of support:

**Budget Request – Reparations Public Education Fund**

This budget request seeks an \$8 million one-time general fund allocation to establish a grant program to fund education efforts for Californians about civil rights and liberties violations against Black American Californians both historically and in the present.

Position: Sponsor

**AB 57 (McKinnor) – Home Purchase Assistance Program: descendants of formerly enslaved people.**

This bill seeks to require that, upon establishment of the Bureau for Descendants of American Slavery, which is tasked with determining whether an applicant qualifies as a descendant of a formerly enslaved person, at least 10% of the money in California Dream for All Fund to be made available to applicants who meet the requirements for a loan under the home purchase assistance program and are descendants of formerly enslaved people, as specified.

Position: Support

**AB 62 (McKinnor) Agency: racially motivated eminent domain**

This bill seeks to require the Office of Legal Affairs within the Bureau for Descendants of American Slavery, to review, investigate, and make certain determinations regarding applications from persons who claim they are the dispossessed owner, as defined, of property taken as a result of racially motivated eminent domain.

Position: Support

**SB 437 (Weber-Pierson) California State University: claim eligibility: genealogy and descendance.** This bill seeks to require the California State University to independently research and report on scientific methodology to determine an individual's genealogical fingerprint for the purpose of verification as a descendant of an enslaved person in the United States.

Position: Support

**SB 518 (Weber-Pierson) Descendants of enslaved persons: reparations.**

This bill seeks to establish the Bureau of Descendants of American Slavery within the Department of Justice, under the control of the director, to be appointed by the Attorney General and confirmed by the Senate. The bill would require the bureau, as part of its duties, to determine how an individual's status as a descendant would be confirmed and require proof of an individual's descendant status to be a qualifying criterion for benefits authorized by the state.

Position: Support

3. The board approved the letter as written to submit in support of the reparation bills going through the CA legislation.

I. National Convention

IX. Unfinished Business

A. JACL/THSP Retreat, *Flora Ganzler, Phyllis Tajii & Gail Seymour* -

B. Kintsukuroi Movie screening, *Gail Seymour* -

C. Cultural and History Sharing Outreach Group, *Sachiko Knappman* -

D. Many Moons Festival -

1. Things have been moving smoothly, our booths have been paid for

E. Petaluma Old Chinatown Project - *Phyllis Tajii*

1. May 18, for the "Petaluma Chinatown Unearthed" event, "Our Home: Voices of North Bay Asian Americans" Phyllis Tajii presented a digital story about her family's hardships during their relocation and internment during WWII. It was tender, yet heart-rending, and a story that cannot be lost.
2. The Chinatown Unearthed event series has been completed
3. The Ad Hoc committee is meeting to plan next steps, such as redesigning the park that was renamed Historic Chinatown Park

F. Joint event with FANHS and AAPIC

1. Another planning meeting is on June 3rd.
2. Immigration seminar is planned to take place in late July, August or September, specifically on immigrant rights and protection. First choice date is July 26, Saturday morning.
3. Funds from the Civil Rights Committee may be used to pay for food. **Motion by Janet Tajii/2nd-Flora Lee Ganzler: to spend up to \$400 on food, printing costs and a donation to Rohnert Park library for use of their room. Approved**

G. JACL Fundraiser Breakfast

H. Sebastopol World Friends Ambassador Scholarship Circle - *Ron Tajii*

I. Matsuri -

1. The festival was very well attended . . . it seemed like the largest crowd ever. The booth contained JACL flyers, information on various Chapter sponsored activities, information on the Japanese Garden Project, and our Manju sales. The booth was visited quite often and the Manju sales started slow, but picked up after lunch and in the end there were 20-30 Manju left over. These were donated to Sonoma County Taiko, who were very appreciative. We made approximately 300 Manju, which sold for \$3.00 each or two for \$5.00. After expenses, the Chapter's net profit is \$254. If we make Manju next year, we'll use different packaging (more visually appealing) and maybe experiment with other fruit fillings i.e., apple, strawberry.

J. Letter to the Editor - *Gail Seymour*

K. Enmanji Teriyaki-Bazaar - 70th Anniversary

1. Volunteer Situation - *Ron or Janet Tajii*- Parking volunteers are needed to work that day. Need one of the parking volunteers to be over 21 years old. Bruce will take a shift to work with volunteers that day. Will ask AAPIC Next Gen young people to volunteer and JACL will buy teriyaki lunches for them if JACL volunteers do not come forward. **Motion made by Bruce Shimizu/2nd-Amy Wakayama: Buy lunches for parking volunteers (total \$200-\$300) who are not members of Enmanji or JACL. Approved.**
- L. Use of JACL Office
1. Sebastopol World Friends use of JACL office
    - a) There was an amendment after it was sent out to the board. There are insurance requirements that have been added.
    - b) Updated MOU to be approved, once approved it will need to be sent to SWF. **Board approved to send the amended MOU listed above to SWF.**
- M. Community Organizations - *Phyllis Tajii*
- N. Letter from Enmanji - *Cecelia Shimizu*
- O. Bob Fuchigami passed away
1. A condolence card and koden have been sent to Bob's Family
- X. New Business
- A. Farm to Pantry -
    1. A non-profit gleaning organization, is offering to donate produce to any groups that JACL works with (Enman No Tomo?). Some of the produce they pick may appeal to Asians, such as persimmons. Schedules can be discussed with the group if we are interested. Phyllis will ask about pick up location or if delivery is available, if any cost or donation is expected, scheduling timeline, quantity
  - B. Ideas for JACL General Meeting and/or Day of Remembrance
    1. Screening of "This is my home"
      - a) 8 immigrant story vignettes with Q&A with Lina
    2. Presentation by Donald Tamaki about the intersection of Black and JA experiences and why it's important to support reparations
  - C. Kanaye Nagasawa- *Meg Mizutani* - Kagoshima University professor of agricultural dept contacted Meg. The school was given grapevines that Nagasawa started. Would someone like to plant them back in America? The professor had contacted SWF about the grapevines. Meg will get more information about this proposed project.