



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 May 6th, 2025 at 7 PM on zoom

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

ABSENT: Nancy Davlin, Andrew LeMarQuand, Amy Wakayama,

- I. Call to Order - 7:04pm
- II. Personal Appearances - none
- III. Approval of the March minutes as distributed - approved by unanimous vote
- IV. Approval of the April minutes as distributed - approved by unanimous vote
- V. Approval of the Agenda - Addition: Phyllis- under New Business: possible SSU interest in Japanese cultural activities
- VI. Announcements -
 - A. Bay Area Premiere of THIRD ACT - *May 8th starting at 6:30 pm* 📍 1881 Post Street AMC Kabuki 1
 1. If you would like to purchase tickets please use this [link](#)
 - B. Chinese Calligraphy & Brush Painting - *May 10th from 10 am to 12 pm*
📍 Petaluma Historical Library & Museum
 1. There is a \$50 fee which includes materials
 - C. Your Rights: What Your History Teacher Never Taught You - *May 10th from 1:00 to 2:00 pm*
📍 Petaluma Historical Library & Museum
 1. This is a free event, please reserve your space online
 - D. Ripples from the Chinese Exclusion Acts - *May 10th from 2:00 to 3:00 pm*
📍 Petaluma Historical Library & Museum
 1. This is a free event, please reserve your space online
 - E. AAPIC - Potluck in the Park, May 10, noon, Rincon Valley Park
 - F. Manju Making Party - *May 17th from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm*
 1. This will be at Bruce Shimizu's house in Windsor (see email for information) & all board members are welcome to attend.
 - G. This is Our Home: Voices of North Bay Asian Americans - *May 18th from 6:00 to 8:00 pm*
📍 Petaluma Historical Library & Museum
 1. This is a free event, please reserve your space online
 2. This is a digital storytelling event with delectable food provided
 - H. Unearthing Chinatowns - *May 22nd from 6:30 to 8:00 pm* 📍 Petaluma Historical Library & Museum
 1. This is a free event, please reserve your space online
 2. Discussion with former SRJC President Frank Chong, Council Member Jack Ding, David Lei, Bill Roop, Tom Whitley
 - I. Oakland Ballers Game - *May 24th*
 1. Please see the [attached flyer](#) if you are interested in going, as it includes a discount code.
 - J. Zoom in with Donald Tamaki and NCWNP District Civil Rights Committee - *May 27th at 6:00 PM*

K. Unearthing Chinatown Walk - *June 1st from 2:00 to 3:30 pm*

📍 *Petaluma Historical Library & Museum*

1. This is a free event, please reserve your space online
2. This is the last event of the series

L. 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*

1. Please RSVP
2. If you are not able to make it in person they also have a Virtual Workshop/ Webinar that will be held on *June 11th from 12:00 to 1:30 pm*, and you can RSVP for that one using the same link above.

M. Pilgrimage

1. Amache - *May 16th to 18th* 📍 *Amache National Historic Site*

a) [Registration Link](#)

2. Jerome Rohwer - *May 21st to 24th* 📍 *Little Rock*

a) [Registration Link](#)

3. Heart Mountain - *July 24th to 26th* 📍 *Wyoming*

a) [Registration Link](#)

VII. Correspondence -

A. Enmanji Buddhist Temple Letter

1. Received correspondence from Enmanji regarding use of facilities

VIII. Long Range Planning -

A. Schedule of Events/ Calendar

B. Responsibilities and Task Follow Up

IX. 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) Sam Brabo (our property manager) is no longer with Tombe, working to establish a property manager.

c) Tenant at 511 Petaluma Av would like to end their lease.

(1) One of our tenants in the Uyeda Building, 511 Petaluma Ave, Sebastopol, has requested to terminate their lease of said property.

(2) **Motion by JanetTajii/2nd Bruce Shimizu, Approved: For the tenant at 511 Petaluma Ave, once the tenant has completely vacated the property, we will collect from either the security/cleaning deposit and/or an additional payment, a total that will be equal to 2 months worth of rent, at which time we will terminate the lease, pending approval from the property management company. If not approved by the property management company, then we will charge 2 months worth of rent and terminate the lease.**

3. Treasurer's Report, *Nancy Davlin* -

a) Financial Reports

4. Funding Requests, *Janet Tajii* -

B. Board elections, Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation -

C. Membership -

1. National Membership is doing a Children's Day Membership Campaign - May 1st through May 9th

D. Programs, Civil Rights and Social Justice, *G. Yamamoto Seymour* -

1. Community Outreach, *G. Yamamoto Seymour* -

a) Update from Gail -

Sonoma County JACL Civil Rights/Social Justice Committee Report for April 2025
(Submitted by Gail Yamamoto Seymour on May 4, 2025)

- (1) Phyllis Tajii organized and conducted a meeting with Flora Lee Ganzler, Ron Tajii, Janet Tajii, Cecelia Shimizu and Gail Seymour to discuss how our chapter might actively help immigrants who are targeted and threatened by ICE and the Federal Administration's policies. We discussed the possibilities of becoming trained on dispatching for those who call in for assistance and advice; becoming trained on how to help as a bystander if someone is being threatened; and organize a public informational workshop based on the AAPIC immigrant workshop held on March 29.
- (2) Phyllis organized a meeting with Sonoma County FANHS (Filipino American National Historical Society) to discuss conducting an immigrant informational workshop, this summer. Janet, Ron, and Gail participated. Phyllis will submit a full meeting report to Cecelia.
- (3) Phyllis, Janet, Ron, Henry Kaku, Gail and other members are attending Lina Hoshino's "Petaluma Chinatown Unearthed" events (April through Early June). Phyllis has been active on the committee that initiated, planned, and is now conducting the events.
- (4) Gail continues as a member of the NCWNPD Civil Rights Committee. We hope the Board is reading our bi-monthly newsletter.

b) Los Cien Immigration Update Forum - *May 15th from 10:30-1:00 PM*

📍 *Sally Tomatoes Catering & Events*

- (1) Phyllis has registered and will be attending the forum.
- c) Phyllis took part in a small AAPI focus group regarding access and the barriers to obtaining mental health services in the AAPI community. It was held in the SRJC APASS (Asian Pacific American Student Success) office.
 - (1) Counselor Jerry Thao and the students she serves would be a good group to connect with.

d) May Day

- (1) Members, Lina Hoshino, Jody Hottel, and Gail Seymour, joined AAPIC President Laurie Fong and VP Grace Cheung-Shulman at the May Day rally and march in support of immigrants and to denounce the Federal Government's immigration policies and the Sonoma County Sheriffs' collaboration with ICE.

e) General Environmental and Climate Justice Activities (outside the JACL CR/SJ Committee)

- (1) Representing Sonoma County NAACP, Gail Seymour continues to provide environmental justice feedback to the SCTA/RCPA (Sonoma County Transit Authority/Regional Climate Protection Authority).
- (2) Gail continues to work on an Environmental/Russian River caucus that provides environmental feedback to the County on the well ordinance revisions; and to the North Coast Regional Water Board on the draft Vineyard Wastewater Regulations.

- (3) Gail has been active in reviewing and commenting on the Sonoma County General Plan

Update — Environmental Justice Element and Safety Element. She has submitted her comments to the North Bay Labor Council rep who sits on the General Plan's Equity Working Committee (EWC). Gail will also submit written comments directly to Permit Sonoma, the Department that is overseeing the General Plan updates.

- (4) SB 601 (Allen) - The Right to Clean Water Act

(a) This was brought to the board's attention by Gail a few months ago. I just received notice that this passed the Senate Judiciary with a 10-3 vote! The next step is that this will move on to the Senate Appros for the fiscal analysis.

- f) Gail attended (did not table) the South Park Neighborhood Resource Fair. The agencies and organizations that tabled were very relevant to the resident's needs — physical and mental health, jobs, climate change, safety, emergencies, etc. The South Park Neighborhood Coalition is active and effective in promoting services for the residents of this marginalized community in Santa Rosa.

(1) Gail will start attending the Coalition's quarterly meetings as a representative of Sonoma County NAACP and if ok with the Board, can also represent Sonoma County JACL. **General poll of the board: Okay to participate on behalf of JACL, with the condition that she is not allowed to endorse any political candidates (because of our 501(c)(3) status and to inform the board on controversial topics before voting on them.**

2. United in Kindness, *Phyllis Tajii* -

a) Mohammad Jabbari, chair of United in Kindness, organized the Interfaith Council Harmony of Faiths concert on April 27. It was well attended

3. AAPIC, *Phyllis Tajii* -

a) Another Immigration Rights seminar is scheduled for *May 11, 12:00 to 2:00pm*,
 ♡ Santa Rosa Chinese Christian

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

E. Programs, Community and Culture -

1. Scholarship Committee, *Janet Tajii* -

a) Brief Scholarship Update: no high school applications this year. One application received for renewal of Faye Uyeda scholarship.

b) Committee will be meeting to review scholarship criteria for the future. Cecelia will join the committee.

2. Enman No Tomo, *Nancy Davlin* -

We had 43 people who came on April 5th to enjoy the spring weather. Sachi Shimizu decorated the tables with lovely cherry blossoms on a wonderful bamboo setting. Thank you, Sachi, for bringing moments of peace for our members to enjoy.

We then introduced our newest segment with Sachiko Knappman presenting a Japanese theme. Today she talked about the significance of rice mentioning different types as well as mentioning that historically in Japan, rice was used like a monetary exchange for goods. Thank you, Sachiko, and we look forward to our next segment on May 3rd at 10:15 for more interesting references to the Japanese culture.

We then proceeded with exercises with Kiki LeSeed, who volunteered to fill in for Diane Ono. Kiki presented easy to follow exercises and showed a video of a Japanese morning exercise routine for the members to follow as well as Japanese music to make it livelier. Thank you, Kiki, for helping us stay in shape, and starting our morning like they do in Japan.

Next, we were honored by having Lance Lew come and show how he arranges flowers and the process and artistic design behind it. He then made a lovely arrangement to be used at church on Sunday that we all admired. Thank you, Lance, for your wonderful demonstration.

For lunch, we had meatloaf in many styles which was a nice treat and a delicious basis for our potluck luncheon. Thank you, Donna Fujino, for thinking of this, and thanks to the others who made meatloaf too. We enjoyed all the delicious dishes that everyone brought.

After lunch we were back with the “always fun and I only needed one number” bingo games which are very fun. This time we had three winners for the blackout bingo game! Darryl Yagi did the calling in both English and Japanese so that we could all play this fun game.

We are thinking of all of you, and wish you good health, good spirits, peace, and happiness. See you on Saturday, May 3rd, when we will have a tea ceremony demonstration with MaryAnn Goodman and students, and a catered lunch by Dang Luong and family.

3. Education Committee -
 - a) Commission on Human Rights
 - b) Kamishibai -
 - (1) Nagasawa Kamishibai
4. Cranes for Ukraine/ Tsuru for Solidarity - *Ron Tajii/ Phyllis Tajii* -
 - a) There is more activity on the District and National levels. Is anyone interested in reviving this as a chapter committee? Feelings about chapter reactivating activity in Tsuru for Solidarity. Not forming a committee for this yet.
5. Speakers Bureau, *Henry Kaku* - **No Report**
6. Tea Plant Subcommittee, *Bruce Shimizu* -
 - a) Funding/ Donation Update- **no report**
7. Paradise Ridge Winery - Japanese Garden with LACO, *Bruce Shimizu* -
 - a) Donation from Friends of Kagoshima in the amount of \$4,538.11 to be used solely for the Japanese Garden project at Paradise Ridge Winery. Will be requesting donations from landscaping companies. Think of groups who would like to help with installation. Possible work dates in late summer/early fall.
8. Peace Crane Project, *Phyllis Tajii* -
 - a) Will be participating in Matsuri
9. Children’s Program, *Ron Tajii* -
 - a) Update on the Culture Class
 - b) Flora Lee is offering her house for a meeting
- F. Communications Committee, *Meg Mizutani* -
 1. Newsletter Committee, *Amy Wakayama* -
 - a) Newsletter Updates **due 5/7/2025**
 2. Social Media Committee, *Meg Mizutani* -
 - a) Website Subcommittee, *Meg Mizutani* -
 - b) Facebook, Becky Sugiyama -
 3. Communication Policies and Guidelines -
 - a) What is the board's obligation to report board meeting minutes in the newsletter and website according to the Bylaws? *Per the bylaws “The Newsletter Committee shall solicit*

or write articles of general interest to the members and shall report the minutes of the Board to the members.”

- (1) Should we have a link where people can request information from the board such as financial documents and meeting minutes?

OR

- (2) Should we have a link where members can access all the documents in a google folder that is open to the public and we just keep it updated?
- (3) **Board decided to: Post in the newsletter and on the website a short list of board action highlights with links to an abridged PDF version of minutes, without hyperlinks, available for additional information from the minutes. After minutes have been approved by the board, Janet has offered to read and edit minutes before it's posted to the newsletter and website. Financial report will be available upon request to members.**

4. Chapter Logo -

- a) Cecelia is working on an article for the newsletter to let the community know what we are planning on doing and what kinds of inspiration we would love to have submitted.

G. District Council, *Cecelia Shimizu* -

1. District GALA

2. District Council Meeting Update - May 4th

- a) Would we like to host a District Council meeting for May 3rd, 2026? Cecelia is checking but our chapter is coming due with hosting one. Suggestion to have it at Paradise Ridge Winery. Can do the Nagasawa kamishibai, tour the tea plants and Japanese garden.

- b) **Straw poll to host: approved by board. Responsibility of chapter: Furnish continental breakfast, organize lunches and speaker for about 40 attendees. A stipend will be given to the host chapter to help cover costs. Each chapter is covered for 2 lunches by the district. Additional chapter attendees beyond first two representatives will have to pay for their own lunch. Will look into Paradise Ridge Winery as venue. With alternate/companion site of Nagasawa Park.**

c) Meeting Notes:

- (1) National Membership staffing changes that impact us. New membership chair.

- (2) We should send an email to national letting them know that we are not happy with the staffing changes that they have made.

- (3) Carol went over “Know your Rights” and shared the following links

- (a) Know your rights cards

- (b) Know your rights resources

- (4) Carol will be working on youth programming as she starts to transition out of her position as Governor, she is planning on doing 1 per quarter and scheduling the events across the district so that the programming is spread evenly.

3. National Convention for 2026 has been confirmed to be in Las Vegas in July 2026.

4. Amicus Brief Sign On Update

- a) An email was sent by David Inoue the Executive Director of the JACL and he let us know that only National JACL can sign on to any briefs as it might cause confusion with multiple chapters signing on.

- (1) If we would like to sign on to anything we have to let national know and they will decide what amicus brief is most appropriate for JACL to sign-on to.

- H. District JACL Civil Rights Committee -
 - 1. Civil Rights Committee Newsletter [May/June](#)
- I. National Convention
 - 1. Early Bird Registration extended to May 7th - Program has not been released
 - 2. Purchasing an Ad for the 2025 Program Book Tabled to next meeting
 - a) Full Page - \$2,000
 - b) Half Page - \$1,000
 - c) ¼ Page - \$500
 - d) ⅛ Page - \$250
- X. 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
 - E. Petaluma Old Chinatown Project - *Phyllis Tajii*
 - 1. Monday, May 5th the Petaluma City Council approved a proclamation to declare May 2025 AANHPI Heritage Month for the City of Petaluma and they approved the park name change from Center Park to the Historic Chinatown Park.
 - 2. At the opening of the Chinatown Unearthed exhibit on April 17th, Phyllis met Petaluma High School Teacher/advisor for their new Asian Club. They currently have about 40 members and could be a resource for helpers at future events.
 - F. Proactive actions about Immigration rights in 2025 - *Phyllis Tajii & Gail Seymour*
 - G. Joint event with FANHS and AAPIC
 - 1. Please see the notes that Phyllis and Grace Cheung-Schulman put together about this event and what would be needed to make this happen.
 - H. JACL Fundraiser Breakfast
 - I. Sebastopol World Friends Ambassador Scholarship Circle - *Ron Tajii*
 - J. Matsuri Preparations - *Ron Tajii*
 - 1. There is a Manju Making party on 5/17
 - 2. Need to work through the timeline and what is needed to make this happen
 - K. Letter to the Editor - *Gail Seymour*
 - L. Enmanji Teriyaki-Bazaar - 70th Anniversary
 - 1. We have been asked to take care of the remote parking which entails directing traffic to park efficiently and answering questions about the shuttle stop that will bring them to the temple. They are requesting 3 people, with at least one over the age of 18 years old to oversee the lot and take charge of the parking team. (The three people do not have to be board members, just anybody who can do it.) Possibly reach out to the Petaluma HS Asian club to help.
 - a) There will be a canopy, chairs, and a cooler with refreshments available for their usage.
 - M. Use of JACL Office
 - 1. Sebastopol World Friends use of JACL office - MOU to be written
 - a) Per our March meeting we decided that as long as a JACL board member is present then the use of the office is okay.
 - N. Community Organizations - *Phyllis Tajii*
 - 1. Does JACL as an organization want to become a member of another organization (i.e.-NAACP, Sebastopol World Friends)? JACL is registered as a member of the Petaluma Community

Relations Council. Do we want to become a member of any others? Might be one way of becoming more visible to the community.

XI. New Business

A. Bob Fuchigami passed away

1. He donated his extensive collection of Sonoma County Japanese American photographs and notes to JACL when we were collecting the oral history stories from the community. Nancy Davlin will notify us when she learns more about memorial services and/or address.

a) Board would like to send a condolence card and koden.

B. Letter from Enmanji

1. Would we like to respond to them in regards to the letter?
 - a) Going forward we will follow their cleaning recommendations and request that someone from the hall gives it the okay before we leave so that we are not in this situation again.
 - b) Cecelia will be asking for a clean up checklist that we can follow for general events to make sure that nothing is forgotten and we know the expectations for cleaning. Cecelia will respond to the letter.

C. Justin Gill, founder/CEO of Bachans BBQ Sauce

1. He is on the cover of the April 18th Pacific Citizen
2. Could we approach him about becoming a JACL member?

D. SSU professors in Criminology and Criminal Justice have students who visited Japan and might be interested in some JACL activities; i.e.: Mochitsuki, PRW Nagasawa Japanese Garden.

Adjourned: 9:47pm