



UCHINANCHU

THE VOICE OF THE HAWAII UNITED OKINAWA ASSOCIATION

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First International Ancestry Symposium Held at Uchinanchu Taikai

By Steve Miyashiro, OGSB

The wise amongst us have said, "There are two lasting bequests we can give our children: One is roots and the other is wings." The Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii (OGSH) was established to ensure that our Okinawan roots continue to provide a powerful influence in defining who we are. To generate interest in Okinawan genealogy, the OGSB coordinated the first International Ancestry Symposium on October 15 during the Fifth Worldwide Uchinanchu Takai at the Okinawan Prefectural Museum and Art Museum.

The Symposium began with Gov. Neil Abercrombie, who praised the contributions of the Okinawans in Hawaii and whose presence acknowledged the important work of the OGSB. He was followed by other speakers from Hawaii, Okinawa and Brazil whose unique stories reminded all of us that the past has much to teach us as we face the challenges of today and the future.

The next speaker, Ms. Tokiko Yamamoto Bazzell (UH Manoa) stressed the importance of recording and preserving documents for future generations. She noted the positive impact of protecting history and cited the OGSB short stories project which capture memories of growing up as Okinawans in Hawaii, to the newly restored Uchima family documents with ties to the historical Ryukyu to Edo procession in the 1700s.

Professor Masayuki Dana (Okinawa International University) and Mr. Masaaki



Tokiko Bazzell, Prof Masayuki Dana, Masaaki Hokama and Shinji Yonamine.

Hokama (Museum of Naha Civic Culture) described the history of Okinawan genealogy and what they are doing now to assist families with the restoration and preservation of their family genealogies. Individual family efforts such as these not only safeguard family history but, collectively, these efforts provide an insight into the Okinawan presence in Hawaii. Our final speaker was Mr. Shinji Yonamine (Association Okinawa Kenjin Do Brazil) who recently completed a large Okinawan community center dedicated to genealogical research in Brazil.

This symposium was an important first step in establishing a Hawaii Okinawan genealogy network where resources can be shared. Eventually, the OGSB hopes to assist the global Uchinanchu community reconnect with their families who have emigrated to other parts of the world.

Ultimately, the act of restoring and preserving documentation of the past gives all of us a greater understanding, respect and pride in the previous generations. It is this sense of our roots that can give future generations the wings to fly. 🇺🇸

First Worldwide Eisa Festival - Team Hawaii Ichariba Chode

By Jon Itomura, Hawaii Coordinator

The First Worldwide Eisa Festival was a dream come true for Daiichi Hirata and a unique experience for Team Hawaii Ichariba Chode.

Hirata-san, as many of you may recall, directed the play, "Kimutaka No Amawari," which celebrated its 10th Anniversary performance here at the Hawaii Okinawa Center in 2008. His personal mission, to instill pride for the Okinawan culture and heritage throughout the younger generation, is reflected through the

high energy choreography in the student kumi-odori performances as well as the performances witnessed by many at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies at the Fifth Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival. Upon recognition of Hirata-san's influence on the younger generation, Okinawa's Governor Hirokazu Nakaima appointed Hirata-san as the Director for Culture and Tourism for the Okinawa Prefectural Government this past March 2011. *Continued on Page 6*

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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President's Message

By Norman Nakasone



*Hana Nuu'zi –
Magnificent Rainbow...
Connecting Our Precious Past
to a Bright Future.*

As 2011 rapidly comes to an end, I find myself reflecting on HUOA's many accomplishments during the past 11 months. As is the case from year to year, 2011 was filled with many activities and events that helped HUOA foster the Okinawan culture throughout the state. And, as I reflect, I think about how none of it would have been possible without the help of so many. So, in my final President's Message, please bear with me as I express my appreciation to those who have had a hand in making 2011 another successful year for HUOA.

First and foremost, a big mahalo goes out to HUOA's member clubs and all of their respective members. The things we do throughout the year would certainly not be possible without the volunteer help of the many dedicated and committed Okinawans and Okinawans-at-heart who so willingly give from their hearts to help HUOA pursue its mission of promoting, perpetuating, and preserving the Okinawan culture. Based on the great participation we had this past year, I think it's safe to say that the Uchinanchu Spirit is alive and well and continues to thrive here in Hawaii.

Thank you to the members of the 2011 Executive Council, Board of Directors, and HUOA's various standing committees. It has been a pleasure working with all of you on the business matters we had at hand. There were several key issues we had to deal with this year (including a few difficult ones) and some major discussion that took place as we addressed each. I truly appreciated how we were able to work together to arrive at a consensus on each through a spirit of collaboration and a genuine respect for one another.

Thank you also to Jane Serikaku and the entire HUOA office staff. They do much more than many of us can ever imagine in supporting the organization and all of its events, functions and meetings that go on throughout the year. From early morning set-ups to meetings that last late into the night, someone from the HUOA staff is always there lending whatever help is necessary.

In closing, I'd like to thank, once again, the HUOA clubs and its members for allowing me the honor and privilege of serving as your 2011 president. It's been a year that I will remember always. What I said in a speech at the Fifth Worldwide Uchinanchu Taikai in Okinawa a couple of months ago – "I look forward to making new friends, encountering life-changing experiences, and making many, many memories that I will cherish a lifetime." – has turned into a reality here back home. I can honestly say I have done each of these many times over during the course of the year.

My only hope is that I was able to represent HUOA in the most positive of lights as is deserving of this great organization. While my role will obviously be scaled back in 2012, please be assured that my involvement in HUOA will not. I remain committed to being part of the Hana Nuu'zi team that will continue to help bridge our precious past to a bright future.

Ippee Nifee Deebiru!

Cyrus Tamashiro To Be Installed As 2012 HUOA President

On Saturday, January 14, 2012, HUOA President Norman Nakasone will hand over the president's gavel to Cyrus Tamashiro at HUOA's 62nd Installation Banquet.

A special recognition of Uchinanchu of the Year from 32 different clubs will be the highlight of the day, as we salute the many individuals who have dedicated their time, energy and Uchinanchu spirit to their own clubs and to HUOA.

To see the list of Uchinanchu of the Year, please check out our website: www.huoa.org



UCHINANCHU

Ippee Nifee Deebiru... Mahalo!

Uchinanchu is our voice – the voice of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association, its members, and the "home" we all built together, the Hawaii Okinawa Center. By sharing information and experiences, *Uchinanchu* keeps us connected as a family, dedicated to preserving, sharing and perpetuating our Okinawan cultural heritage.

Every dollar donated – along with the valuable income from advertising - helps offset the cost of publishing *Uchinanchu*. HUOA sends a sincere *ippee nifee deebiru* to the following donors. Mahalo for keeping *Uchinanchu* alive and thriving.

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UCHINANCHU SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight: Jane Sakima



Regardless of current religious beliefs, in the past Okinawans were nature and ancestor worshippers. Elements of nature were respected and in our reverence of fire, water and so forth, we developed a sense of identity with our ethnic culture. Perhaps this is the reason why we often hear that after having visited Okinawa and having had the opportunity to sip the water of our homeland, there is an immediate connection that is made with our homeland, Uchinaa.

This has a direct connection with the life of this issue's Spotlight, which shines brightly on Jane Sakima. As the eldest of the five children of Seiko and Tsuru Asato, Jane was taken to Okinawa by her father at the tender age of 8. It must have been an enjoyable sea voyage because she shared that the "haole" sailors

kept her occupied and played with her the whole time. The main reason for this trip was to introduce Jane to her paternal grandparents and assure them that indeed another generation of the Asato Family had begun.

When it was time to return to Hawaii, Jane apparently said that she wanted to remain in Okinawa. She attended a local elementary school in Ginowan, visiting her cousin everyday after school. Jane said she became fluent in Japanese and lost her English abilities. Meanwhile, the scene in Hawaii and the Asato household was not calm. Her mother, Tsuru, never imagined that her firstborn would be left behind and lamented every day to her husband for what had happened.

Two years later, Jane decided that it was time to return to Hawaii and did so with a fellow Jinonchu who was voyaging back to Honolulu.

Her love for and participation in the Okinawan performing arts were influenced by her parents. Father Seiko played the sanshin and Mother Tsuru played the koto. In her youth, entertainment at their Ginowan New Year's parties was "homegrown." Weeks before the party, middle and high school aged girls gathered at Mr. Yogi and Mr. Mijo's house, where they were taught how to dance.

This is about the time when a young man, also of Ginowan ancestry, began frequenting the nightly practices to watch the young ladies. It became known later that this was the beginning of the lifelong courtship of Akira Sakima, who was smitten

by the loveliness and grace of Jane Asato. Years later, they married, and Mr. Sakima led a very busy career in the community, business, political office, church and a variety of Okinawan organizations.

Wherever Mr. Sakima traveled or served on this or that committee, Jane was always at his side, but hardly just an onlooker. Jane could be seen providing her support and helping out. As a charter member of the Hui O Lualima, senior member of Ginowan, and avid member of the Hui Makaala, Jane fulfilled many leadership roles. She also continues to serve as a senior instructor of the Paranku Clubs of Hawaii. Mr. Sakima was probably Jane's greatest supporter who never held back any recognition he could announce in Hawaii or Okinawa about his "tujigwa."

When asked why she was so involved in these groups, her foremost reply was that many years before, she had the opportunity of living in Okinawa as a young girl. That experience combined with watching her parents pursue their Okinawan activities were the main reasons for her active role in the community—not to mention the water she drank in her ancestral homeland.

Now 88 years young and as the matriarch of the Sakima Family, Jane is happy as she sees that the young generations are becoming more involved with Okinawan activities. Daughter Ellen Higa is nicknamed the "Andagi Lady" for her many years of mixing the batter and cooking the tasty treats for a wide range of events. This past year, Ellen's son, Dave, attended all of the Festival Food Committee meetings and took an active role in andagi matters. Also, Jane is truly delighted that her great-granddaughter, Amanda, is taking formal Okinawan dance lessons and her great-grandson, Slate, is learning to play the sanshin.

The HUOA extends its heartfelt appreciation to Jane Sakima for her many years of service to her personal affiliations as well as our organization. *Ippee Niffee Deebiru* as we continue to rely on your expertise, guidance and experience!

"Her love for and participation in the Okinawan performing arts were influenced by her parents. Father Seiko played the sanshin and Mother Tsuru played the koto."

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Congressional Gold Medal Pays Tribute to Nisei Soldiers

By Arnold Hiura

The entire Nisei experience during World War II could well be one of the most fascinating chapters in American history—and nowhere does that story grow more dramatic and inspirational than in the legacy forged by thousands of Nisei soldiers who served their country in a time of uncertainty and distrust.

America recently honored that legacy, as the U.S. Congress bestowed the Congressional Gold Medal on members of the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT), and Military Intelligence Service (MIS).

More than 300 veterans of those units, along with some 1,500-plus family members, friends and admirers, converged on Washington, D.C., to attend three days of activities highlighted by the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to the three predominately Nisei military units.

Approximately 60 Hawaii vets, including a number of HUOA members, made the journey to the nation's capital to participate in the ceremonies. One of them was Dr. Yoshinobu Oshiro, an active member of the Haeburu Club. Oshiro, who served with a counter-intelligence unit of the MIS in post-war Japan, was accompanied on his trip by his wife Anna and daughter Ann Wong. His son, Earl, met them in Washington, D.C.

Oshiro and his family arrived in Washington on October 31 and got to meet and socialize with veterans from across the country. The next day, inclement weather caused organizers to move the Bronze Medal ceremony—originally slated to be held at the World War II Memorial Monument—indoors to the ballroom of the Washington Hilton Hotel, where Oshiro and many of the other vets were staying. At that event, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno presented the Bronze Star to 31 veterans and posthumously to nine family members of the 442nd RCT and 100th Battalion.

The Congressional Gold Medal ceremony itself was held November 2 at Emancipation Hall. “They needed 28 buses to move everyone,” Oshiro reports. “It was very impressive—there were some 200 honor guards assigned to take care of the vets over the entire three-day period. They helped people board the bus, folded and took care of the wheelchairs.... all of us really appreciated it, as it helped to make the



Oshiro and his daughter, Ann Wong, visit with Congresswoman Mazie Hirono, who was a student of his at Koko Head Elementary.

offered their congratulations to the veterans and their families. “There was a choral group and band,” Oshiro states. “They played one verse of the ‘Go For Broke’ song. It was a very impressive ceremony.”

At the gala dinner that evening, the crowd heard speeches by newscaster Ann Curry and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki. The next day, a free day, Oshiro and his family went to visit Congresswoman Hirono, who was a sixth grade student of his at Koko Head Elementary.

The Congressional Gold Medal is awarded to an individual or unit who performs an outstanding deed or act of service to the security, prosperity and national interest of the United States. Since the American Revolution, Congress has commissioned gold medals as its highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions. Its first recipient was none other than George Washington. The original medal issued to the Nisei vets is held at the Smithsonian Institution; bronze replicas are available for purchase from the U.S. Mint for \$55 (w/shipping).

Hawaii followed suit with a local “Salute to the Congressional Gold Medal Veterans” parade and banquet at the Hawaii Convention Center on December 17 and memorial service at Punchbowl on December 18. The Hawaii celebration also honored the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion stationed on Oahu during World War II.

“It took the Nisei so long to receive this recognition,” Oshiro’s daughter Ann observes. “The Nisei are so humble. They came back from the war and didn’t really say what they

did, or tout themselves.” She said she often lost sight of her father in the sea of white-haired veterans in the lobby of the hotel. “Some of them hadn’t seen each other since the war ended.... It was a very memorable experience.”

Her father, the man others know simply as “Doc,” still tries to deflect credit from himself. “I graduated from high school in June 1946, completed basic training, was sent directly to Japan and was assigned to a Counter Intelligence Corps Unit in Kobe and Maizuru,” he explains.

His late involvement, however, does not diminish Oshiro’s postwar contributions overseas and at home. As the youngest of five brothers, and a brother already serving in Europe, Oshiro went against his parents’ wishes by insisting to volunteer for military service when he did not have to. “I was young and all my friends were going into the Army,” he says. “There were no jobs and I thought I could take advantage of the G.I. Bill,” he adds with typical candor.

In Japan, Oshiro was based in Kobe, but went to Okinawa while on leave to look for relatives in Haeburu. “It was difficult moving around Okinawa, even for an American soldier more than two years after war’s end,” he recalls. Even with an address in hand, it took two days to locate his grandmother amidst the confusion of destroyed, thatched and makeshift homes. He succeeded, however, and took pictures of his grandmother. “They had pictures of my family that my older sister had sent to them. When I sent pictures home, they were so happy,” Oshiro reports. Those experiences served to personalize his heritage and, perhaps, fuel his strong commitment to the Haeburu Club and the HUOA in the future.

After the war, Oshiro accepted an Air Force Commission and served as a Military Dependent Schools Officer, which involved making visits to schools in Japan, Okinawa, Philippines and Korea. He also served a distinguished career with the state Department of Education, retiring as principal. He served stints with the state Department

of Agriculture and Hawaiian Homelands. He matriculated at U.H. and Missouri, earned his Master’s degree from Cal State University and his Ph.D. from Utah State. He also edited a book on the “Nisei during the Occupation” written by Yuki Kikuchi.

Yoshinobu “Doc” Oshiro need not defend his part in the recognition of the Congressional Gold Medal, given his remarkable lifetime of accomplishments in both military service and in civilian life. Still, of the Gold Medal, he insists, “There are many who are deserving... But the most deserving are those who didn’t come back.”



(L-R) Daughter Ann, son Earl and wife Anna pose with Oshiro in front of a display showing the design of the medal.

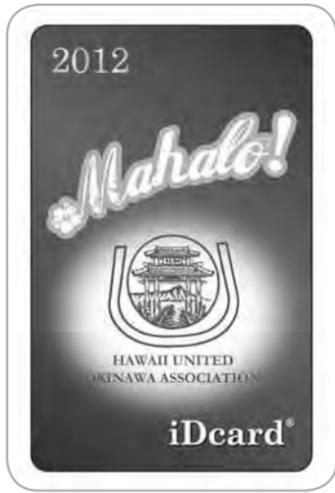
ceremony a once-in-a-lifetime kind of thing.”

Presiding over the ceremony were House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio), Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.).

Three Nisei veterans were invited onstage to represent each of the three units being honored. Hawaii Sen. Daniel K. Inouye spoke after accepting the Congressional Gold Medal on behalf of all the veterans. Sen. Daniel K. Akaka, Congresswoman Mazie K. Hirono and Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa also attended the ceremony and

'The Purple Card' (IDcard) HUOA Fundraiser

By Valerie Kubota



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The card costs \$20 (\$30 for those purchasing it at retail locations). HUOA receives \$10 and grants your club \$1.50 for each card sold! The purchaser receives discounts all year round! With all of the many participating merchants, they'll get over \$20 in value in no time while helping your club and HUOA! Everyone wins!

The iDcard has App's on the iPhone, Android and BlackBerry phones. Once your card is registered, you'll receive updates through email on new participating merchants. Shawn, the CEO and creator of iDcard, is currently in Japan, where it's already being sold. He is working on securing merchants there, so once merchants are secured, you will be able to use your current card at participating merchants in Japan!

If you aren't able to get cards from your club president, please call the HUOA office to arrange for pick up of cards. The 2012 cards are being accepted at merchants effective today through Dec. 31, 2012!

The iDcard is a gift that keeps giving all year around, with discounts statewide and, soon, international—all the while benefiting the Hawaii United Okinawa Association!

Mahalo to JTB Hawaii and JTB Cultural Exchange Corporation!



Naoki Nitta, General Manager of JTB-USA, and David Asanuma, Director of JTB Hawaii Community Relations, present HUOA President Norman Nakasone with a donation of \$2,000 from their JTB Cultural Exchange Corporation.

Winter Craft Fair Prevails Over Strong Winds

By Karen Kuba-Hori



Every Thanksgiving weekend for over 19 years, the Hawaii United Okinawa Association has produced its annual Winter Craft Fair at the Hawaii Okinawa Center. Shoppers converge on the Center on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in order to shop and shop, eat andagi, and shop some more. This year was no exception - but, it posed an interesting challenge that no other Winter Craft Fair faced. We have had parking challenges, forgetful grandparents wandering away, unsold andagi, dust clouds, but this is the first time we were faced with the threat of 50 mph winds whipping through the craft fair on Saturday evening.

To some of you, this may not have seemed to be a serious challenge. But, when you have over 90 tents located in your parking lot, including our andagi cooking and selling tents - it is a major concern. Clubs Tomigusuku, Urasoe, Wahiawa and Yagaji met the challenge in such an impressive manner. The decision was made quickly to take



down the tents for the safety of the Center and our equipment. All equipment outside the Center were secured or moved inside. Vendors were notified, and they in turn secured or removed their tents and merchandise. The amazing part of this story is not how quickly the Center was prepared for the Saturday winds, but how efficiently the Craft Fair was readied for sales on Sunday morning.

From 5:30 a.m., the Craft Fair committee reassembled



and tents. This job normally takes about four-five hours with the help of about 20 volunteers. Normally, after going through the stress of "will the Craft Fair run okay" Saturday - by Sunday, we are all experienced volunteers, we just have to put out a few things and we can enjoy our tasks and the Fair itself. So, to "put together" the grounds on Sunday - "impressive."

Events like this Craft Fair are managed through the dedication and the skill of its volunteers. Craft Fair Chairman Dale Nakasone (Yagaji Doshi Kai), his



Executive Committee: Alan Kakazu, Annette Kakazu, David Nakasone and Jean Ige (Wahiawa Okinawa Kyo Yu Kai); Larry Nishihara, Susan Kanemoto, Kathleen Mew, George Miyashiro and Laura Nakasone (Urasoe Shijin Kai); Dean Oshiro, Tavia Shiroma



the Craft Fair in record speed. By 7:30 a.m. the grounds and the HUOA was again ready for another fantastic sales day. For many of you that have volunteered at a Craft Fair, you know this is not an easy task. You give up your Black Friday shopping day to come to the Center to mark the hall and put up tables



From our heart, ippee niffee deebiru!

Continued from Page 1

Team Hawaii Ichariba Chode

Back in 2008, Hirata-san shared his vision with me, to draw the energy from the new generation, whether Shimanchu or Shimanchu at heart, from across many countries and continents, and bring them all together with a common passion specific to Okinawa. He actually was considering Hawaii as a possible venue, but the realization of his idea was this Inaugural Worldwide Eisa Festival in Naha. It was a perfect opportunity to initiate this event together with the Fifth Worldwide Okinawa Festival as both events represented the homecoming of so many Shimanchu from around the world. He specifically requested that Hawaii be represented with a team because of the special relationship between Okinawa and Hawaii.

Team Hawaii Ichariba Chode came together for the first time a couple months before the Worldwide Eisa Festival. Though many others were interested in participating, there were ultimately only seven Hawaii eisa participants able to represent Hawaii in the First Worldwide Eisa Festival. Although a mixed team representing all of Hawaii's eisa groups was the ultimate goal, the inaugural team consisted of myself and six Chinagu Eisa members, including a couple of members who had been doing eisa for less than six months. This team truly reflected Hawaii's



mixed cultures because, except for only one of its members being full Okinawan, yours truly, all other six members represented a truly diverse ethnicity including Japanese, Filipino, Guamanian and Spanish.

"Sousaku eisa," or "contemporary/creative eisa," typically attracts the young, agile and energetic youths in Okinawa. Here in Hawaii, however, numerous Hawaii eisa clubs have attracted members of all ages and that was also reflected in this small group as its members range in ages from 10 years old to "almost" 50 years old. Lisa Tamashiro, head of Chinagu Eisa Hawaii, unfortunately had just returned from Okinawa and was not able to join the team, but she worked tirelessly with members of the group to choreograph entirely new routines just for this Eisa festival. The final routine conveyed the idea of uniting two prosperous kingdoms, Ryukyu and Hawaii, and demonstrated the similarities between the two nations by combining the beauty of hula and the energy of eisa to reflect the spirit of Ichariba Chode.



has been performing eisa for 5 years and got married a few weeks before the trip! Gina Furuike Mier is 4th generation and was raised in Naha/Shuri for 17 years. She has been performing eisa for only 6 months prior to the competition and also recently got married...to Ray so they sacrificed a romantic getaway to go to Okinawa for their eisa honeymoon! And then there was me, the slowest learner in the bunch! A warm Mahalo to the Team Hawaii group for putting up with the "ole fut."

The First Worldwide Eisa Festival was designed to involve two days of competition including both "traditional" and "contemporary" divisions. Heavy and steady rain caused the cancellation of the first day of competition. This forced organizers to stage the entire competition on the day of the Closing Ceremonies indoors at the Naha Budokan which was adjacent to Onoyama Stadium, the site of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. The change benefitted the audience, as they were able to view the performance from comfortable indoor arena seats at floor level and above. Those who attended experienced terrific eisa performances from many Okinawa teams, including an all-female team who came in second place in the Championship Division. There were also teams from South America, mainland Japan, and California. Many said that Team Hawaii Ichariba Chode received the loudest and longest ovation due to the creativity, including some hula elements and movements within the choreography. Immediately after the competition, we all rushed over to the Stadium for the additional thrill of joining all the other groups for the Closing Ceremony finale down on the field.

The members were: Taylor San Juan - 10 years old; 5th generation, 4th grade, speaks English and Japanese, performs Hula. Her mother is from Naha. Nathan San Juan - Taylor's dad is 4th Generation Japanese/Filipino/Spanish. He jumped in and learned eisa a mere two weeks before the competition! Kei Sakamoto is a

Japanese citizen from Fukuoka, Japan. She studied Okinawan folklore and has worked for the Okinawa-Miyako newspaper agency but currently loves living in Hawaii and studies Hula. Nikki Hori is 4th generation, daughter of Karen Kuba-Hori. She is Okinawa-American, an Okinawa-City Goeku Club member, who recently graduated from the University of Hawaii with a Biology degree. Ray Mier was born in Okinawa on an American base. His mother is from Ginowan and

has been performing eisa for 5 years and got married a few weeks before the trip! Gina Furuike Mier is 4th generation and was raised in Naha/Shuri for 17 years. She has been performing eisa for only 6 months prior to the competition and also recently got married...to Ray so they sacrificed a romantic getaway to go to Okinawa for their eisa honeymoon! And then there was me, the slowest learner in the bunch! A warm Mahalo to the Team Hawaii group for putting up with the "ole fut."

The true value of the experience was witnessing and participating in an event that represented an international bond through Okinawa eisa. Eisa is traditionally performed to welcome our ancestors during the days of Obon and guide them to and from their destinations. For the First Worldwide Eisa Festival, I would hope that these same ancestors looked favorably upon the fellowship of international teams who traveled back to Okinawa in order to demonstrate their passion for the sounds and energy of the drums, which annually guide their ancestors to and from their families.

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Oroku Restaurant Legacy Celebrated at Taikai

By Gene Kaneshiro

Hawaii Okinawans have long been associated with successful restaurants. Amazingly, 75 of those restaurants can trace their roots to Oroku Aza, once a small village but which today is a part of greater Naha. The contribution of these Okinawan restaurant owners to Hawaii was celebrated at the Fifth Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival in Naha, Okinawa.

The Hawaii Okinawan Restaurant Exhibit, which presented a chronological listing of Oroku Aza descendants who opened restaurants in Hawaii, was included at the Okinawa Prefectural Museum as part of the Emigration Documents and Materials Exhibition and Emigration Symposium. The Exhibit generated enthusiastic interest and was visited by several thousand people from around the world including Okinawa, Hawaii, U.S. mainland, Brazil and Japan. Surprisingly, many Taikai attendees from Hawaii saw this exhibit for the first time, although it has been displayed at several venues in Honolulu. Influential visitors from Hawaii included Gov. Neil Abercrombie, UH President M.R.C. Greenwood, and HUOA President Norman Nakasone.

The Exhibit was also displayed at the Oroku Aza Community Center in Naha during a special reception hosted by the people of Oroku Aza and all of the Oroku festival participants from around the world, including 33 members from Hawaii. Our gracious host, Dr. Chusei Takara, accepted our exhibit and plans to display it at future events in the Oroku Aza area.

The Hawaii Okinawan Restaurant Exhibit traces its beginnings to 2000, when the Hawaii United Okinawa Association and the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii requested a compilation and documen-



Oroku Azajin Kai members Gene Kaneshiro and Howard Takara greeted the many visitors to their exhibit during the 5th Worldwide Uchinanchu Taikai.



tation of Hawaii restaurants that were owned by Okinawans who immigrated to Hawaii.

A committee was formed and met once a month for over 10 years to work on this project. When families in our Oroku Azajin Club were contacted, the committee discovered that many prominent Honolulu restaurants, both large and small, were owned by first, second and third generation families from Oroku Aza.

Eventually, the committee discovered and documented an astonishing 75 restaurants that were owned by families with roots to Oroku Aza. Today, the detailed list includes the name of the restaurant, the location, the owner's name and yago (family name in Okinawa). The list also identifies the year the restaurant was opened and how long it was in operation. One of the earliest of these restaurants is the famous American Cafe, owned by Mr. Ushi Takara, yago, Amiku, which opened in 1923

on King Street near the Alexander Young Hotel. The finalized list includes other famous and familiar Hawaii restaurants. It also includes restaurants that are now gone but still missed and nostalgically remembered by those lucky enough to have been regular patrons.

Besides the exhibit, an oral history of 11 people who were interviewed by the University of Hawaii, Center for Oral History, was presented to the Oroku Aza Club in Okinawa, thanks to Warren Nishimoto.

The Exhibit was a complete success and the committee felt that its mission to share its findings was accomplished. Equally important, the Exhibit celebrated the contribution of Oroku Aza to Hawaii's restaurant landscape. And while it may not have been one of the intentions of the original study, the Exhibit established irrevocable ties between the Hawaii Okinawan community and Oroku Aza.

Thanks to HUOA Executive Director Jane Serikaku, Karen Kuba-Hori, Bob Nakasone (WUB), Liz Teruya, Laverne Higa, Vince Watabu, and Brian Niiya (JCCH) for their hard work to make the Exhibit a successful display in the Okinawa Prefectural Museum. Without their contacts and expertise the project would not have made it to Okinawa.

The second phase of the Hawaii Okinawan Restaurant Project is continuing. The committee currently has a list of over 250 more restaurants owned and operated by Okinawans in Hawaii who have roots in all other areas of Okinawa. Of course, the most prominent restaurant is the Zippy's Restaurant chain owned by the Higa family from Nago.

The committee is actively searching for a university student who is willing to conduct a scientific sociological study to help document the reasons for the success of the Okinawans in Hawaii's restaurant business.

In closing, the committee would like to thank the Hawaii United Okinawa Association and the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii for their continued support and look forward to discovering more facts about the Okinawan owned restaurants in Hawaii.

Author's note: Gene Kaneshiro (yago, Menokanagushiku, member of Oroku Azajin Club) is a sansei who attended his second Taikai. His father, Fred Toshio Kaneshiro, and his older brother, Frank Gentaro Kaneshiro, were in the restaurant business in Honolulu, operating the Columbia Inn.

One of the earliest of these restaurants is the famous American Cafe, owned by Mr. Ushi Takara, yago, Amiku, which opened in 1923 on King Street near the Alexander Young Hotel.

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Pigs From The Sea – Okinawa Photo Exhibit at Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival

By Jon Itomura

On the morning of the Worldwide Festival Opening Ceremony, Oct. 13, 2011, the Executive Committee of the Fifth Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival (Taikai) held a presentation ceremony at the Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum in Naha City. This Taikai-related event sought to recognize the efforts of the seven Hawaii Uchinanchu who brought 550 pigs to Okinawa in 1948 to assist their families and countrymen suffering from severe food shortages.

With the simple expectation of a short ceremony with a handshake, the customary certificate and picture taking, I entered the exhibit room with my mom and cousin. To our surprise, it was filled with journalists, camera crews, and interested museum patrons, seemingly intent on capturing a high profile news story. As it turns out, coverage of this event was provided on the Japan national morning news broadcast. The Executive Committee and the Pig Farming Development Association presented the four family representatives with certificates of appreciation, commemorative gifts, and items of Ryukyuan craft. A representative of the committee was quoted in the local newspaper, saying, “We consider their achievements to be an essential piece of the history of the worldwide Uchinanchu network. We must not let this be watered down by the passage of time.”

The presentation was held to mark the beginning of the photo exhibition, “Pigs From The Sea (Umi Kara Buta ga Yatte Kita).” Representatives from pork-industry related companies and organizations such as Okinawa Ham, the Association for Hog Raising, Okinawa Prefectural Livestock Industry Promotion Foundation, Ganaha Husbandry, Ryukyu Kyodo Feed Mfg., Naha Meat, Okinawa Hormel and Okinawa Prefectural Feed Manufacturers Cooperative Union were among those in attendance.

Unfortunately, the last survivor of the seven men, Yasuo Uezu, passed away a few months prior to the presentation, on July 20, 2011. The four individuals representing four of the seven families were Evan Uezu (grandson of Yasuo Uezu), Keith Tonaki (son of Genbi Tonaki), Narissa Uyehara (granddaughter of Shohei/Heisho Miyasato), Keith Shimabukuro, Jon Itomura (grandsons) and Eleanor Itomura (daughter of Shinyei Shimabukuro). Family members for Ushikichi Nakama, Dr. Yoshio Yamashiro and Paul Ryoshin Agena were unable to attend.

Hidenobu Chinen, Secretary-General of the Executive Committee of the Fifth Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, and Akira Ganaha, President of the Pig Farming Development Association, presented the certificates and commemorative gifts and relayed Okinawa’s appreciation for the efforts of all of the men and the people of Hawaii who supported the fundraising to enable the transportation of the pigs.

On behalf of the family members present at the event, I relayed our appreciation, but sincerely noted that all the families had previously commented upon the fact that none of the seven men sought recognition nor spoke much of their journey. It seems very clear to me that my grandfather would not have welcomed the recognition, as they were united in one purpose, to be the chosen representatives of the true sentiment of all who were here in Hawaii... Help Okinawa.

Collectively, they also confirmed one of many reasons that Toyama Kyuzo fought for emigration to new lands—to seek success and prosperity on behalf of those they left behind. Their journey arguably served as the inaugural Worldwide Uchinanchu Taikai as they returned to Okinawa with a purpose. I sincerely believe that the true happiness for my grandfather was not seeing the fervor of recognition for their efforts but, rather, seeing this commemorating event bring together his descendants



Family representatives connecting with each other (L-R): Narissa Uyehara, Evan Uezu, Jon Itomura and Keith Tonaki.

and those of his friends to stand together, hand-in-hand, on Okinawa soil, the same soil he once traveled to with perhaps the thought that he hoped that I would also return there one day. Perhaps...one day soon, I’ll be fortunate to have a similar opportunity to serve such a purpose. *Shimabukuro ojisan, ippei nihwe debiru.*

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2011 TO 2012-ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

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Mr. & Mrs. Lance Yafuso
Raymond & Hisae Yamada
Ronald & Michie Yamane
Kathleen Yamashiro
Yasuo & Irene Yamashiro
Thomas I. Yamauchi
Kenneth H. Yonamine
Tommy & Arlene Yonamine
Harriet Yoshida
Russell J. Yoshimoto
Tom Yoshizawa
Frederick A. Zukeran
In Memory of Riysei & Kamato Arakaki by Morris Arakaki
In Memory of Yonega & Fujiko Arashiro by Cyrilla Yonehara
In Memory of Kiyoko & Hiroshi Chinen by Frederick Chinen
In Memory of Sanra & Kama Chinen by Bob & Nancy Okuda
In Memory of Shigeo & Usa Chinen by Sakaye Nomura
In Memory of Ellen Masako Chuck by Wilfred Chuck
In Memory of Susanne Y. Date (Tsuha) by Brian Date
In Memory of Doris Funakoshi by Dale Yoshizu

In Memory of Kwanko & Kana Goya by Betsy S. Han
In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. George Y. Horikawa by Barbara E. Horikawa
In Memory of Zensei & Kama Isa by Mr. & Mrs. Richard Isa
In Memory of Beatrice Sadako Kaneshiro by Jennifer Kaneshiro
In Memory of Irene K. Kaneshiro by Tim & Darlene Kaneshiro
In Memory of Lily Yasuko Matsumoto by Harry & Ginger Miller
In Memory of Mary L. Miyashiro by Richard S. Miyashiro
In Memory of Yoshio Miyashiro by Ivan Miyashiro
In Memory of Isamu & Harue Nakama by Hozen Shimabuku
In Memory of Hisao Nakamura by Hannah Nakamura
In Memory of Choko Oshiro by Jean Oshiro
In Memory of Masaichi Oshiro by Sadako Oshiro
In Memory of Tokuzo & Gose Oshiro by Charles T. Oshiro
In Memory of Raymond Sakumoto by Alice Sakumoto
In Memory of Takeo Shimabukuro by Matsue Shimabukuro
In Memory of Tokio Shinsato by Haruko Shinsato
In Memory of Seiyei & Kame Shiroma

In Memory of Ushi & Yukiko Takara by Joyce Ganeko
In Memory of Genei & Shizu Toguchi by Velma T. Yokoyama
In Memory of Kame & Ushi Uehara by Garret & Ruby Yip
In Memory of Henry Y. Uyeshiro by Rhonda Sagisi
In Memory of Richard Yamaguchi by Paul Yamaguchi
OTHER
Haruko Chun
Pearl Fernandez
Doris Higa
Toshio Higa
Mr. & Mrs. James Honma
David M. Kaneshiro
Jean M. Kiyabu
Ethel Milner
Clyde S. Miyashiro
Jack Musick
K & I Sakima
Kimiko Shimabukuro
In Memory of Fusako Ikehara (Grandma) by Janice Shitanaka

Our Home is the Five Continents

By Grant "Sandaa" Murata (Hawaii Coordinator)

Although the Fifth Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival's various events captured the attention and focus of most of the overseas participants and general public in Okinawa, the performance titled, "Our home is the five continents," held October 15 and 16 at the National Theater in Urasoe City, was one of the most important performances of the whole festival. The performance brought together young Uchinanchu sansei, yonsei and perhaps some gosei performers of traditional Okinawan performing arts from Hawaii, North America, Brazil, Peru, and Argentina who contributed their talents to make this performance a great success.

The concept of this performance was the brainchild of Hajime Ikemiya of the Japan National Theater Okinawa. As our Uchinanchu forefathers set forth onto the five continents of the world, so went their pride in and love of the performing arts and culture of their homeland. Faced with many adversities, they made sure that their passion for their Uchinanchu traditions was passed on to the future generations. This performance was a testament to the efforts of our forefathers who kept the performing arts traditions alive on the five continents of the world.

The theme, "Warera Ga Sumu Wa Godaishuu," is an excerpt of a phrase used by Kyuzo Toyama, who is considered the father of Okinawan immigration. "Iza Yukan Warera Ga Ie Wa Godaishuu, Makoto Hitotsu U No Kin Sekai Ishii" was the original phrase uttered by Toyama when he sent the first wave of Okinawan immigrants forward into the five continents. "Let us go forward to the five continents and embrace them as our home. Hard work and diligence will surely be rewarded, and you will see rocks like the ones in my village of Kin turn into gold!" (This expression is a play on words, as the word gold is called "Kin" in Japanese.) Translated, the theme says, "We live on the five continents!" This was a fitting title for this performance that brought together performers from all over the world.

The contingent from Hawaii was the by far the largest group, consisting of members representing several Okinawan music and dance schools: Cheryl Nakasone of the Kin Ryosho Geinou Kyoshitsu, Frances Nakachi of the Tamagusuku-ryu Senju Kai accompanied by two of her students, Anna Tshako-Lewis and Mina Tamashiro, Eric Wada of the Tamagusuku-ryu Shosetsu Kai and from Maui, Chihiro Macknight a member of the Majikina Honryu in Okinawa, who has been residing in Maui for the last nine years. Darcy Gibo, a member of Afuso-ryu Ongaku Kenkyu Choichi Kai Hawaii shibu who is presently teaching English in Okinawa participated as a dancer representing Oyadomari-ryu Yae no Kai, Higa Izumi Ryubu dojo.

The musicians, or Jikata, for this performance were headed by the members of the Ryukyu Koto Afuso-ryu Ongaku Kenkyu Choichi Kai Hawaii-shibu: Grant "Sandaa" Murata (Chapter president) Kenton Odo, June Uyeunten, Sean and Lisa Sadaoka, Chikako Shimamura, and Tom Yamamoto. Representing the Hawaii chap-

Kenkyu Choichi Kai also joined us in this performance, as well as several dancers representing various Okinawan dance schools from the US mainland.

The performers from South America were sansei and yonsei who were either longtime residents of Okinawa or had permanent resident status. A majority of the South American performers were dancers; there were two Jikata performers from Peru, Angel Sashiki of the Nomura-ryu Dentou Ongaku Kyokai and Lucy Nagamine of the Nomura-ryu Ongaku Kyokai, who both performed flawlessly. It was truly an honor to perform with all of these highly talented individuals from both North and South America, and to see that same passion in their eyes that we have for Okinawan performing arts. This created an indescribable camaraderie between one another and that warm tingly feeling still lingers in our hearts till today.

Onstage, we were honored by having two National Living treasures of Japan, Choichi Terukina (Afuso-ryu) and Tokutaro Shiroma (Nomura-ryu), performing with us in the welcoming number, or "Kaimaku." The various Iemoto of each of the dance schools who were represented onstage, also honored us by performing in the opening numbers on both days. Being in Hawaii sometimes we don't realize how great an honor it is to have the opportunity to perform on the same stage with Senseis of this stature. I am sure I can speak for all the performers in saying that we were all very appreciative to have the honor be a part of this performance and to represent Hawaii.

The performance was coordinated in two parts, part one featured Kotoen, or classical Ryukyuan dance numbers, and an excerpt from the *Kumi udui*, "Shuushin Kaneiri," featuring the Jikata from Hawaii and South America performing solo pieces. Featured soloists for this portion of the program were Kenton Odo and Sean Sadaoka of Afuso-ryu and Norman Kaneshiro and Brandon Ng from Nomura-ryu, all from Hawaii. Angel Sashiki from Peru also performed a solo in this portion of the program. The second part of the program showcased *Zo-wudui*

and *Sosaku Buyou*, or "newly choreographed" dance numbers set to a "Mo-Ashibi" theme. The dance participants performed beautifully in both the 1st and 2nd parts of the program and were given rave reviews by the people that attended the performance. The performers from Hawaii and around the world are to be commended for representing the performing artists from around the world superbly, and showcasing the talented dancers and musicians in a very positive manner. And, especially to the contingent from Hawaii, a big Mahalo and job well done! To the Taikai participants who took the time out to attend the performance, a big "Ippe-nihwe-de-biru!"

In retrospect, to whomever viewed this performance, it is obvious that Kyuzo Toyama has realized his dream of Uchinanchu going into the "Five continents" and making a better life for themselves, their children, and future generations. Whether or not his vision included the spreading of Okinawan performing arts is uncertain.

"Let us go forward to the five continents and embrace them as our home. Hard work and diligence will surely be rewarded, and you will see rocks like the ones in my village of Kin turn into gold!"



ter of the Nomura Ongaku Kyokai was its president Keith Nakaganeku and Norman Kaneshiro. Norman's student Brandon Ng, who is presently studying in Okinawa, also participated and represented Hawaii. Representing the Nomura-ryu Dentou Ongaku Kyokai from Hawaii was Allison Yanagi on the Kuchō; she performed on the sanshin for one of the Jikata numbers as well. We were very fortunate to have three koto senseis accompany us to Okinawa for this performance. Representing the Ryukyu Sookyoku Ko-yo- Kai of Hawaii and L.A., Grandmaster Katsuko Teruya of Los Angeles (formerly from Hawaii), her protégé Yasuko Arakawa, and Lisa Sadaoka who is a member of the Miyashiro Soohoo Kai and newly certified Shihan. Lisa sensei was especially busy as she wore two hats for this performance as she performed as a jikata on the sanshin and also had a "solo" performance in one of the numbers. Members of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Ryukyu Koto Afuso-ryu Ongaku

However, it is very evident that because of the passion and diligence for Okinawan performing arts that our Uchinanchu forebears had, we now enjoy the fruits of their labor. Performances like these and others done in the homeland bring a sense of pride and reassurance to those in attendance and the Uchinanchu performing arts forefathers who look down from the heavens. Seeing that the seeds that they sowed have grown and flourished must make them especially proud. The Okinawan performing arts are alive and well all over the world, and those who attended this performance witnessed it first hand. As mentioned at the beginning of this article, "Not much attention or spotlight, but the most meaningful!" to all in attendance from heaven and earth.

To Hajime Ikemiya of the Japan National Theater Okinawa a big "Mahalo and Aloha!" for a job well done. 🍷

CLUB NEWS

Our Clubs, Our Future

Thank You for Making Hawaii Okinawa Center Shine!

Throughout the year, HUOA clubs come early on Saturday or Sunday for HOC Clean Up. In two short hours, clean up volunteers scrub, wipe, disinfect and polish the ballroom stage and dressing rooms, restrooms, trash cans, windows and mezzanine! Although HOC has contracted janitorial services, we still need volunteers to help us give HOC that extra shine. Let your young ones know that this also fulfills a community service project for those active in service organizations.

Ippee nifee deebiru to the following Clubs who volunteered this year:

- Awase Doshi Kai
- Chatan Kadena Chojin Kai
- Ginowan Shijin Kai
- Haeburu Club
- Hawaii Shuri Naha Club
- Kitanakagusuku Sonjin Kai
- Kochinda Chojin Kai
- Okinawa-City Goeku Son
- Oroku Azajin Kai
- Urasoe Shijin Kai



Gordon Yamasaki of Hawaii Shuri Naha Club tirelessly sweeps steps to the Mezzanine.



Hawaii Shuri Naha Club clean up crew came on November 5.

Special Mahalo to Ginowan Shijin Kai and Urasoe Shijin Kai for coming twice this year!

Many thanks also to Hawaii Sashiki-Chinen Doshi Kai, which has a crew that faithfully cleans up the Serikaku Chaya every month.

Clubs can sign up for a Saturday or Sunday morning clean-up project throughout the year, starting at 7 a.m., and ends at 9 a.m., with coffee and pastries to follow. Club Presidents can contact HUOA at 676-5400 or email laura@huoa.org to schedule a clean up date.

The Young Okinawans of Hawaii 2011 Senior Luncheon

By David Miyashiro, President

On Sunday December 4, hundreds of senior members within our Okinawa community gathered at the Hawaii Okinawa Center as guests of the Young Okinawans of Hawaii (YOH). This annual luncheon marks our 31st continuous year of giving back to our kupuna with delicious bento and refreshments, first-class Okinawan entertainment, and an overall appreciative experience for both hosts and guests.

This free luncheon is our way of giving thanks and acknowledgement to our senior guests for paving the way for this and future generations of our Uchinanchu heritage. From our opening Meekata to the closing Atchame, the YOH members and volunteers enjoyed the camaraderie and energy with our special guests and everyone left the hall with big smiles and hugs. Our YOH members worked hard throughout 2011 with various fundraising, EISA performances, and your generous donations in order that we may be able to again support this event. Of course we could not have made this luncheon possible without the talents and assistance of the following:

- Hawaii Taiko Kai – Terry Higa Sensei: for their signature Christmas sata andagi
- Rev. Shindo Nishiyama of Jikoen Hongwanji Mission: for his blessing of the food and fellowship
- Urizon Minyo Group – Derek Shiroma Sensei: for providing our luncheon music
- Ryusei Honryu Ryuko Kai – Mitsuko Toguchi Nakasone Sensei
- Chimugukuru Eisa – Van Shimabukuro
- Jane Higa – Lanakila Nenchosha Club
- Ukwanshin Kabudan – Sensei's Keith Nakaganeku, Norman Kaneshiro and Eric Wada, for providing Jikata and Atchame music.
- Jon Itomura - MC

Last but not least, Jane Serikaku for her support of our YOH Senior Luncheon and HUOA for allowing YOH the use of the Legacy Hall for this year-end event.

From the members of the Young Okinawans of Hawaii to you all, a big and hearty *Ippe Nifwe Debiru!!*

If you have any family members or friends that are at least age 65 years young and above and who may be interested attending next year, please feel free to contact us via our website: <http://youngokinawans.org/> and we will put them down on our contact list for our 2012 YOH Senior Luncheon. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!  Photos on Page 15

If At First, You Don't Succeed...Try, Try Again!

Team Katsuren has been trying for 20+ years...and they finally made it! On November 12, they were finally able to caress the coveted HUOA Mixed Handicap Bowling Championship Trophy and challenged themselves for a repeat performance during the next bowling season. Teams Dushi Guata and Onna Sonjin Kai #2 came in second and third place, respectively.

Top keglers were recognized at the recent Awards Banquet at Natsunoya Tea House:

Women's

- High Average w/handicap**
205.32 Ellen Ishikawa
- High Series w/ handicap**
773 Darcie Inagaki
- High-1 w/handicap**
286 Rachael Milliora
- High Average**
179.45 Liane Yoshitsugu
- High Series**
590 Ashley Shimabukuro
- High-1**
223 Beatrice Hara



HUOA President Norman Nakasone with the elated champs of the HUOA Mixed Handicap Bowling League: Germaine Kiyomoto-Isara, Carl Nakata, Kay Smith and Robert Kansaki (missing: Richard Uchima)

Men's

- High Average w/handicap**
203.89 Lance Inagaki
- High Series w/ handicap**
771 Garon Hamasaki
- High-1 w/handicap**
297 Roy Nakamasu
- High Average**
201.24 George Tamashiro
- High Series**
707 Clement Virtudes
- High-1**
277 Paul Shinagawa

Bowling season began on December 4 at Leeward Bowl in Pearl City. If you are interested in joining us as a substitute bowler or perhaps even as a regular bowler if needed, call Germaine Kiyomoto-Isara at 284-0148...or come to Leeward Bowl and visit us on Sundays from 1 – 4:30 p.m. 

HOC Hosts the World Premier of “The Cocktail Party”

By Dr. Joyce Chinen, Director Center for Okinawan Studies

Over 200 individuals turned out at the Hawaii Okinawa Center’s Legacy Ballroom on October 26 to view the world premier of Oshiro Tatsuiro’s play, “*The Cocktail Party*.” They were welcomed at the door by Afuso Ryu Gensei Kai Hawaii Shibu’s musical tribute to this event. Now 86 years young, Oshiro-sensei journeyed from Okinawa to witness the play-reading performance of his work, an updated and newly formatted version of the novella, “*Kakuteru Pati*,” for which he was awarded the Akutagawa Prize in 1967. Although the Akutagawa Prize, Japan’s highest literary award for short fiction, had been in existence since the 1935, this honor had eluded Okinawan writers for over 35 years. Oshiro’s “breakthrough” shed light on other Okinawan writers, such as Takara Ben and Medoruma Shun, who received similar recognition of their creative work in quick succession.

Under the direction of Professor Tim Slaughter, the actors of the Manoa Readers/Theater Ensemble, the sparse “stage” of seven chairs, and the creative manipulation of lighting, Oshiro-sensei’s playscript came to life. Actors Dann Seki, Fay Ann Chun, Doug Kaya, Dennis Nishihara, Ben Moffat, Nyla Fujii-Babb, and James Phelps carried the audience through time and space – from Washington, D.C., in the midst of the 1995

“Set in both Okinawa and America, but with flashbacks to Manchuko and other spaces in the Japanese empire, the play revolves around the struggles of an Okinawan man...”

Smithsonian Institution controversy over the representation of the Enola Gay, back to Okinawa on the eve of Okinawa’s reversion to Japan, back to Washington, D.C., exploring through various human interactions, Okinawans’ and others’ contradictory experiences of “citizenship.”

Set in both Okinawa and America, but with flashbacks to Manchuko and other spaces in the Japanese empire, the play revolves around the struggles of an Okinawan man coming to terms with his own past military service, events from his family’s past, and his explorations of the personal and social accountability for violence

and atrocities humans commit on behalf of “society.” Negotiating this within the confines of an American occupied (USCAR) Okinawa, confronting memories, his own as well as those of various Americans, bumping up against other Asian national memories – all of this made for a fast-paced exploratory study of the complexities of individual and institutional memories, and a questioning of historical and contemporary geo-politics.

Hosted by the Hawaii United Okinawan Association, the play was followed by a short question and answer period between the audience and author/playwright, Oshiro Tatsuiro, with the assistance of Professors Yamazato Katsunori (University of the Ryukyus) and Frank Stewart (University of Hawaii at Manoa). HUOA



Mr. Oshiro with cast of “*The Cocktail Party*” (photo credit: Furugen, Ryukyu Shimpo)

President Norman Nakasone and Executive Director Jane Serikaku then recognized and presented Oshiro-sensei with a certificate of appreciation from HUOA for sharing his work and accomplishments with the local community. Both the Ryukyu Shimpo and The Okinawa Times covered the event, as did the local The Hawaii Hochi and the Hawaii Pacific Press.

Audience reactions to the play were positive, but given such complex thematic



Mr. Oshiro was elated to see his family from Hawaii and the mainland at the World Premier.



Mr. Oshiro with Stan Higa and Howard Asato, Presidents of Kita-Nakagusuku and Nakagusuku clubs, and Professor Yamazato Katsunori

material, also quite varied. A mother of one of my colleagues stated, “My overall opinion of the play is that it is a good thing that some of these issues can be brought to light so that people can think about the social, and moral issues being portrayed.” Overall, while the material contained in the play was quite complex, audience reception was mostly positive.

The playscript is one of the pieces included in “*Living Spirit: Revitalization and Okinawan Spirit*,” the latest volume of Pacific and Asian literature collected by the MANOA Journal. It is co-edited by Professor Yamazato Katsunori of the University of the Ryukyus and Professor Frank Stewart of the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Since Mr. Oshiro is a child of the Nakagusuku area, both Nakagusuku and Kita-Nakagusuku clubs took the opportunity of his visit to join forces and co-host a reception for him. Both clubs showered him with gifts and island hospitality. In the midst of the feasting and festivities, a much appreciative Oshiro-sensei took the opportunity to provide the two clubs with some background on how administrative designations during the American Occupation of Okinawa had divided what had once been a single Nakagusuku area.

HUOA’s co-sponsoring this play reflects its continuing organizational commitment to promote and perpetuate Okinawan culture in Hawaii – traditional, as well as modern/contemporary. Through strategic partnerships with organizations such as the Center for Okinawan Studies and other UH units, the Hawaii Council for the Humanities, and others on projects of mutual interest, HUOA will continue to be a vital force in promoting and perpetuating Okinawan culture in all of its forms in Hawaii. 

Youth Uchinanchu Conference Held During Taikai

By David Jones

When Jane Serikaku of HUOA told me I was nominated to be the Youth Uchinanchu Conference representative for Hawaii, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Yet, being involved with this conference and its members ended up being the most memorable experience for me from the Fifth World Uchinanchu Festival (Taikai.)

The Youth Uchinanchu Conference was one of many events held during the Taikai and was hosted by the Youth Uchinanchu Network. The Youth Uchinanchu Network is a group comprised of young Okinawans from around the world in an effort to strengthen the relationship and communication amongst each other. The group has a Facebook social media page with members exceeding 800 members from all over the world.

The Conference was held during the Taikai and the main discussion was how to get the young Uchinanchu more interested in their own Okinawan identity and culture.

With that in mind, the objective of the conference was to invite young Okinawans from

all over the world, put our heads together, and come up with a proposal for the next Taikai to promote the importance of Okinawan identity to the younger generation. As a Young Okinawans of Hawaii member, this has been my concern along with many others on how to inspire the younger generation to embrace their identity and keep our culture alive. As I discovered, this is also a major concern in Okinawa and Okinawans around the world.

My first meeting with the group was held at the Kanpo No Yado Hotel, where the Okinawa Prefectural Government generously sponsored all of us to stay overnight. There, I was introduced to the Youth Uchinanchu Network core members from Okinawa and other representatives from Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, England, Philadelphia, Seattle and Texas. The meeting was primarily to prepare us for the conference, which was to be held the following day. Later, our group ended up discussing about preserving Okinawan identity and I had a chance to hear stories of what's being done in Okinawa and around the world. There was so much camaraderie among us that we ended up discussing, laughing, and weeping until 5 in the morning!

Some of us were able to sneak in a couple hours of sleep before heading to the Youth Uchinanchu Conference. The conference had over 150 in attendance and it was good to see so many young faces interested and concerned for the survival of their Okinawan identity. At the conference, I had a chance to speak to the audience about my group, Young Okinawans of Hawaii, and our efforts in trying to generate interest in the Okinawan culture here in Hawaii. I also discussed with the audience a little about myself and how I became interested in my own Okinawan identity.

The idea of the conference was to break us up into three different discussion groups, brainstorm, come up with our own proposals, regroup, and vote on the best proposal to present to the Governor. The three discussion groups were: Promoting the use of Uchinaaguchi (Okinawan Language), Promoting Okinawan Culture, and How



Youth Uchinanchu Conference attendees



Talking about Young Okinawans of Hawaii

to Maintain a Strong Youth Network. I was involved with the Uchinaaguchi discussion group and some great ideas were mentioned such as: introduce Uchinaaguchi as a Language Class in the Okinawan Education system and use popular media like "Yujin Mabuyer," a popular kid's Okinawan show which utilizes some Uchinaaguchi, to make speaking Okinawan "cool." Following the group discussions, proposals (or ideas) were decided on and presented to the Prefectural Governor of Okinawa, Hirokazu Nakaima. Some of the proposals presented to the Governor included: 1) Uchinanchu Film Festival 2) Uchinanchulympics (Festival to promote Uchinaaguchi) 3) Youth Uchinanchu Festival to be held every year in different parts of the world to maintain a strong network around the globe. (It was seriously discussed that Hawaii would be a strong candidate for 2013!) 4) Yuimaru collection Fashion Show to promote Okinawan culture. 5) Manga or Cartoons written in all Uchinaaguchi. Governor Nakaima was very impressed with some of the ideas presented by the Youth Uchinanchu Network and expressed that he will highly consider sponsoring and implementing some of these proposals.

I have to say that I was very impressed with the Youth Uchinanchu Network and to meet so many young Okinawans who are passionate about their own identity and working really hard to spread that feeling. For example, I had a chance to meet Sho Miyagi who is a Ryukyu University student and member of the network. He gave me a ride from the conference center and I asked him: "What made you so passionate about your Okinawa identity?" He explained to me that he was living in Vancouver, B.C., where the host family asked him the difference between Okinawans and Japanese. He explained to the family that he was Okinawan, but was unable to explain what made him Okinawan. Sho explained to me that the family ended up concluding he was Japanese and Okinawan was one in the same because



David with Youth Uchinanchu Network President Minami Tamamoto and Texas Representative Itsuki Yokoda.

Okinawa is part of Japan and he speaks Japanese. Sho felt that his failure to explain what makes him Okinawan triggered him to study and search for his identity. Since then, Sho has been very passionate about his culture, speaks Uchinaaguchi fluently, and has no questions about discussing the pride of his identity. To hear his story and similar stories from many others really inspired me to want to go back home to Hawaii and work harder to spread that feeling of Okinawan identity.

The Youth Uchinanchu Network has made some strides since the Taikai and some of their proposals such as the Youth Uchinanchu Festival and the Uchinanchu Film Festival are slated to become a reality. The same group of individuals have also started a "Communicate Only in Okinawan" Facebook group where members from all over the world speak in a common language, Uchinaaguchi. Their ultimate goal is to be able to speak Uchinaaguchi by the next Taikai in 4 to 5 years! Wouldn't it be great if the Taikai was spoken in Uchinaaguchi where all of us Uchinanchu can mutually understand?

In closing, I want to express how important it is that we get our younger generation interested in their Okinawan identity and keeping that feeling alive. Otherwise, that identity is going to disappear within the near future. When you see your grandson or granddaughter, encourage them to get involved by joining a Hawaii Okinawan community. There's so many great clubs catered to the young such as Eisa groups, Okinawan drumming, dance, sanshin classes, and Uchinaaguchi classes. Let's do our part to keep Okinawa strong among our youth here in Hawaii!

Search: "Youth Uchinanchu Network" or "Communicate Only in Okinawan" on Facebook to find out more about these great groups. 



Youth Uchinanchu Conference World Representatives from different countries including David (in the middle with the aloha shirt and doing the shaka).

Order of Sacred Treasure Bestowed on Dr. Hijirida



HUOA proudly congratulates Dr. Kyoko Hijirida, UH Manoa Professor Emerita of East Asian Languages and Literatures and former Director for the Center of Okinawan Studies on her receipt of the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon from the Government of Japan. Hijirida Sensei was bestowed the honor at a formal awards ceremony held at the Japanese Consulate of Japan in Honolulu on December 1.

Hijirida Sensei was recognized for her many contributions in promoting Japanese language education in the United States and for advancing academic exchange between

Japan and the United States.

Hijirida Sensei also founded the Hawaii Association of Teachers of Japanese in 1975. Through her strong commitment to further Japanese language education, Hijirida Sensei has made contributions that have strengthened the academic connection between Japan and the United States.

Since 2009, Hijirida Sensei has conducted HUOA's monthly Okinawan language classes. HUOA is very honored to have such a wonderful teacher assist our organization meet its goal to preserve, perpetuate an important part of the Okinawan culture—*Omedetou Gozaimasu!*

“Hijirida Sensei was recognized for her many contributions in promoting Japanese language education in the United States...”

Continued from Page 12

Seniors at the Young Okinawans Luncheon



Hundreds of Seniors arrived very early, but waited patiently for the doors to open.



Seniors from Kaneohe enjoying themselves.



Kumejima Mayor Chouko Taira, with his delegation (adorned with lei), enjoyed a wonderful exchange with Hawaii members who have ancestral ties in Kumejima.

Uchinaa-guchi (Okinawan language) Word of the Month

November

tuuru, n. [tooroo] A lantern; a paper lantern, usually of traditional style, made of wood, bamboo, and paper. See also ishiduuru, utuuru, miguiduuru.

December

fiitaa, n. A winter coat, usually lined or padded with cotton, used by both men and women. Also hittaa.

(Excerpted, with permission, from the *Okinawan-English Wordbook*, by Mitsugu Sakihara, edited by Stewart Curry, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2006)

OKINAWA FAIR AT SHIROKIYA January 16-30, 2012

Celebrating Okinawa's New Year, which falls on January 23, our friends from Okinawa who displayed their products from Tomigusuku at our Okinawan Festival Cultural tent will be bringing their wide assortment of sugar cane dyed products, Hotal "Firefly" Glass accessories, Okinawan sweets, and CDs/DVDs of Okinawan music to Shirokiya's Okinawa Fair. Live Uta sanshin performances will be featured on Opening Day and during the weekends.

Traditionally, families gathered together for Okinawa soba on New Year's Eve. Therefore, Okinawa soba will be the featured Okinawan dish on the second floor, while all Okinawan product specialties will be downstairs. We'll see you there!

HUOA SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Mark Your Calendar!

January
2012

- 3 Executive Council meeting, 7pm
- 14 Installation Banquet & Recognition of Uchinanchu of the Year, 9:30 am
- 23 Communications & Information Committee meeting, 7pm
- 24 HUOA Board of Directors meeting
- 25 Administration Committee meeting, 7pm

February

- 1 Club Development & Member Sustainment Committee meeting, 7pm
- 6 Executive Council meeting, 7pm
- 22 Administration Committee meeting, 7pm
- 25 Arrival of High School Students from Okinawa, 10:50am, JAL
- 27 Communications & Information Committee meeting, 7pm

Classes · Other Meetings at Hawaii Okinawa Center:

- HUOA Sanshin: every Thursday, 7pm*
- Ichigo Ichi E: 1st & 3rd Thursday, 8-9pm*
- Ikebana: 3rd Wednesday, 7pm*
- Karaoke nite: 3rd Tuesday, 6:30pm*
- Kobudo Taiko: every Monday, 7pm, contact Calvin Nakama 224-7374
- Monday Crafters: every Monday, 9am*
- Okinawan Genealogical Society meeting: 3rd Saturday, 9am*
- Uchinaaguchi: every 4th Thursday, 7pm*

*for more information, please call 676-5400

Subject to Change (entries as of 12/5/11)

HOT

"HAWAII OKINAWA TODAY" SCHEDULE

REMINDER: Since January 2011, the regular airtime for our HOT shows has been changed to Saturday at 5 p.m. In addition to this time slot, we also premiere (new) shows on the first and third Mondays of each month at 7 p.m. These premiere shows are reshown on the Saturday of the same week. Our shows will still be aired on Oceanic Channel 53.

Jan 2, Mon, 7pm (Premiere) & Jan 7, Sat, 5pm — Part Three of Kariyushi XVI held at the Hawaii Okinawa Center on May 1, 2005. Featuring the 4th Annual Red and White Kariyushi Karaoke Taikai. Also performing are Yoshiko Onaga Okinawa Buyo Club; Kilauea Okinawa Dance Club; Nidaime Teishin Kai-Hawaii Shibu; Ryusei Honryu Yanagi No Kai Hawaii Shibu; and Nakasone Seifu Kai (jikata).

Jan 14, Sat, 5pm — HUOA End of Year Show 2001. Featuring interviews with President James Iha and his officers, and activities for year 2001- mochi pounding; blood drive at the HOC; Evening in Waipio Craft Fair; Young Okinawans of Hawaii Senior Holiday Luncheon.

Jan 16, Mon, 7pm (Premiere) & Jan 21, Sat, 5pm — Part Four of Kariyushi XVI, held at the Hawaii Okinawa Center on May 1, 2005. Featuring the 4th Annual Red and White Kariyushi Karaoke Taikai. Also performing are Yoshiko Onaga Okinawa Buyo Club; Kilauea Okinawa Dance Club; Nidaime Teishin Kai-Hawaii Shibu; Ryusei Honryu Yanagi No Kai Hawaii Shibu; and Nakasone Seifu Kai (jikata). Also in this episode is video footage from NHK Okinawa TV coverage on the ancestry symposium at this year's Uchinanchu Taikai in Okinawa.

Jan 28, Sat, 5pm — Part One of "Hokori" - A special performance by Hooge Kai, Nakasone Dance Academy at the Okinawa Prefectural Dance Theater in Naha, Okinawa on June 15, 2001, in celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan.

Feb 4, Sat, 5pm — Part Two of "Okinawa Dance: The Beauty of Tradition" by Lynne Yoshiko Nakasone and Hooge Kai, Nakasone Dance Academy, held at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Orvis Auditorium, on July 29, 2000. Also in this episode are highlights of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association's 50th Anniversary Celebration held at the Hawaii Okinawa Center on September 22, 2001.

Feb 6, Mon, 7pm (Premiere) & Feb 11, Sat, 5pm — Part One of "Miruku Yu Nu Nauri" - Blossoming Petals of Peace; presented by Tamagusuku Ryu Senju Kai - Frances Nakachi Ryubu Dojo at the Neal Blaisdell Concert Hall on November 3, 2003.

Feb 18, Sat, 5pm — Part Two of "Shima Uta" - 45th Celebration of Sadao China at the Gushikawa Geijutsu Gekijo in Okinawa on March 24, 2002. The show includes performers from Hawaii.

Feb 20, Mon, 7pm (Premiere) & Feb 25, Sat, 5pm — Show #8 of the 28th Okinawan Festival at Kapiolani Park, September 4 & 5, 2010, featuring Kilauea Okinawa Dance Club; Okinawa Minyo Kyokai with Urizun Minyo Group; and Jimpu Kai USA, Kin Ryosho Ryukyu Geino Kenkyusho.

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