



UCHINANCHU

THE VOICE OF THE HAWAII UNITED OKINAWA ASSOCIATION

www.huoa.org

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2023 HUOA Leadership Tour

Intro by Jon Itomura

Included within the purposes of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association (“HUOA”) is to promote, preserve and perpetuate the Okinawa culture here in Hawaii. Given that Okinawa descendants in Hawaii are now 4th, 5th and 6th generations, maintaining close family ties with relatives in Okinawa has become challenging. Therefore, *How can we establish and maintain connections between Hawaii Uchinanchu and their Okinawa roots?*

The HUOA Leadership Tour seeks to address this challenge through face-to-face meetings with prefectural and municipality (*shi – cho – son*) leaders in Okinawa. In 1980, Okinawa Governor Junji Nishime invited 36 young HUOA leaders to Okinawa for an Okinawa Prefectural Government funded Friendship Tour. This group experienced the Naha Festival and used their excitement and renewed passion to create the first HUOA Okinawan Festival. Subsequent HUOA Leadership Tours followed the model of the Friendship Tour to produce many new leaders for HUOA clubs, committees and HUOA executive officer positions. The Leadership Tour reflects the time and financial commitments of three entities: 1) HUOA, 2) the participating HUOA club, and 3) the Leadership Tour participant. Each party is responsible for a third of the tour participant’s expenses.

Following a 16-year hiatus, HUOA President Clarisse Kobashigawa worked tirelessly to organize numerous fundraising events to fund HUOA’s share of the Leadership Tour. Tour participants attended several pre-trip workshops to share and learn about their Okinawa ancestral club. In addition, each participant prepared goals that were shared with their respective municipalities.

After surviving over 12 hours of travel, weary tour participants arrived in Okinawa at 11 p.m. and were greeted by Hawaii Uchinanchu currently liv-

ing in Okinawa and members from the Okinawa Hawaii Kyokai (Hawaii support group in Okinawa). For the next 10 days, Leadership Tour members Lisa Kaneshiro (Aza Gushikawa), Kat Duran-Higa (Shinka), Jacob Higa (Nakagusuku), Kelly Higa (Kitanakagusuku), Kori-Jo Kochi (Shuri-Naha), Marcie Moribe (Young Okinawans of Hawaii), Amanda Nitta (Chatan-Kadena), Kylie Sato (Bito, Okinawa City), Shari Tamashiro (Itoman), Tris Tanaka (Ginowan), and Tristen Tasato (Ginowan), met with the governor of Okinawa, Okinawa Prefecture assembly chair, mayor and council chair of Naha, and their respective mayors and deputy mayors.

Their tour culminated with participation in an exhilarating Hawaii-Okinawa Goodwill Celebration - which involved over 130 Okinawan residents singing and dancing with the HUOA Leadership Tour and Heritage Tour participants - and the Naha City Festival and Great Tug of War.

HERE ARE A FEW OF THEIR STORIES:

Kelly Higa – Perpetuating the Uchinanchu Legacy

Haitai gusuyo! Chyuganabira! Wannee Hawaii nu Higa Kelly yaibiin. Wan uyafaa fujiya Kitanakagusuku nu nmari yaibitan. Yutasarugutuu unigee sabira!

In October 2023, I represented my club, Kitanakagusuku Sonjin Kai, and the HUOA on a Leadership Tour to Okinawa. The foremost reason for attending this Leadership Tour was to carry on the Uchinanchu legacy of our ancestors to the next generation – my daughter’s generation and beyond. (*Nifee deebiru* Stanley and Christine Higa, Yoshimori and Marisa Oshiro, and my parents, Clyde and Elizabeth Higa, for encouraging and sup-

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Leadership Tour enjoying final evening at Urashima

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President's Message

By Clarisse Kobashigawa



Haitai Gusuyoo and Happy Holidays HUAO family and friends! On behalf of our Executive Council, I wish you all health and happiness during this 2023 Holiday Season!

Between our Winter Craft Fair and Evening Craft Fair in Waipio, the HUAO once again provided multiple shopping and dining opportunities to our community! I can't thank the respective clubs enough for taking up the reins this year and making each of these events a huge success, especially during this busy season! For those of you who don't know, our member clubs rotate the responsibilities of chairing and executing these annual events. Although not as big as the Okinawan Festival, it still takes a lot of manpower and coordination to work with the various vendors and silent auction, and to ensure that we have oishii food to munch on and perhaps the most arduous of tasks – making sure that people know where to park their cars safely!

Hats off to the following clubs for bringing out your members to host these two events:

1. Winter Craft Fair – Ginowan, Ginoza, Gushichan, and Gushikawa Shijin Kai
2. Evening Craft Fair in Waipio – Haebaru, Haneji & Hawaii Sashiki-Chinen

We also want to thank the additional clubs that continue to supplement our winter and evening craft fair with their expertise: Hawaii Shuri-Naha, Hui O Laulima, Ginowan, Oroku Azajin, Wahiawa Kyo Yu Kai and Urasoe.

LEADERSHIP TOUR 2023

In the spirit of our joyful holiday season, at the top of my mind is the recent return of our 11 Leadership Tour participants from Okinawa. I want to personally congratulate them on completing their tour and commend them for the hard work that they put into it – attending several workshops to learn *uchinaaguchi*, working on their individual goals in connection with their respective clubs and even being courageous enough to dance the hula together in front of 130 local Uchinaanchu that turned out to support them at our HUAO-Okinawa Goodwill Celebration in Okinawa on October 9! It was quite a treat!

Looking to these new leaders, we seek not just to fill a gap or an immediate need. This community/our HUAO family is extremely special – there is nothing else like it and we have a responsibility to steward our community in a deeply respectful and grateful manner. So, we felt that it was imperative not just to grow and cultivate new leaders, but to do our best to instill within them the uniqueness of our culture; the richness of our history and the depth of the relationships forged and maintained across the seas for 120 plus years. Our organization is not solely comprised of the events that we put on each year. More importantly it's the way we execute these events, as a united community, with *chimugukuru* spirit in our hearts and putting values like *chibariyoo*, *ichariba choodee* and *yuimaaru* in action.

These trips to Okinawa are critically important because it is only there that one can truly experience the depth of those relationships with the most profound sense of gratitude and *ukaji deebiru* ("I am what I am because of you"). In understanding and knowing our past, we have a better and keener sense of where we need to head with our future.

But this Tour was not just about what we ask of these new leaders. In asking these new leaders to step up and lead, we as a community need to support them with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the futures of their clubs and this organization. Indeed, we have a deep sense of commitment to ensuring the success of these new leaders, which means giving them the opportunities to grow and evolve in a supported environment and to equip them with the tools they need to be truly meaningful and impactful leaders – to be the risk takers, the change makers, and difference makers of our future. It means showing them that failure is not fatal and success is never final. But what matters most is to show up for your community, to persevere, and keep trying, especially in times of need.

By all accounts and based on the lively presentation our tour participants provided for our audience during this year's Uchinaanchu No Hi, I know they did extremely well representing our community and fostering the ties between Hawaii and Okinawa. We are so excited to see what plans they have for their clubs and this organization!

I want to extend an extra special *ippee niffee deebiru* to our Executive Director ("Uncle Jon") Jon Itomura; HUAO Past President Courtney Takara for serving as the 24-hour, mother hen and tour chaperone; Riko Higa for serving as our HUAO-Okinawa liaison and interpreter, HUAO Past President John Tasato for also attending and affectionately referred to by

the group as "Grandpa John" and to Tomomi Shimabukuro of N&K Travel for their tireless efforts at executing on this very special project. With so much going on this year, I was relieved to know that once the effort to bring back this Tour began, there was a more than willing and capable team that could see the Leadership Tour through in Okinawa.

2023 HERITAGE TOUR

We began this year with the theme, 'Alohi Akatsichi or "Radiant New Beginnings." It was a nod to all that we have experienced as a community, successfully emerging out of the pandemic to get to where we are today – stronger and more united because of it – immensely grateful for each new day that we are given to be better, stronger, and wiser.

After recently returning from the Heritage Tour, and thanks to our very knowledgeable tour guide, Yukari ("Kari") Marsh from JTB Okinawa, I'd like to close out the year, focused on the saying "Nuchi du Takara" – life is a treasure.

The phrase Nuchi du Takara, "originated in a poem written by a former ruler of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Sho Tai, forcibly removed from his throne by the Japanese government in 1879, offered the following parting words:

The time for wars is ending/
The time for peace will come soon/
Do not despair my subjects/
Life itself is our treasure (Life is the most precious thing to us.)**

**bit.ly/phrase-

The Heritage Tour merged with the Leadership Tour in Okinawa for two fun-filled days as we experienced the Naha Tsuna Hiki ("Great Tug of War" Festival), HUAO-Okinawa Goodwill Celebration, and Aloha Party on October 8 and 9. While in Naha we were delighted with "ring-side" seats to this giant tug-of-war battle that drew approximately 250,000 people from all across the world. I extend a sincere *ippee niffee deebiru* and aloha to Naha Mayor Satoru Chinen for this wonderful treat and also to my uncle Jinkichi Uezu (President of WUB Okinawa and Chairman of the Board of Director, "Naha Giant Tug of War Preservation Society"), who held special seats on reserve for all of the participants of the Leadership Tour and Heritage Tour. We even got to see Okinawa's Governor Denny Tamaki, Naha Mayor Satoru Chinen, and Naha City Council Chairman Nohara in full Hatagshira dress just before the opening ceremony. The event was an exciting blend of pure majesty, physical fitness, and vigor to the maximum. It was truly mesmerizing to watch the skilled groups from various towns and villages march down Kokusaidori in the Hatagashira Parade and watch them come together at the center of the record-setting giant rope.

While we experienced so much during this tour, one of the best parts was getting to know the 21 tour members that made up our tour (aka "Best Tour Group Ever"). Of the 21 participants, the majority of them were first-timers to Okinawa. It was a wonderful mix of uchinaanchu and uchinaanchu at heart and a mixed plate of ethnicities. Interestingly, we had four mother-daughter duos. So, it was truly special to see, experience, and learn about Okinawa through that lens.

Several of our members were able to connect with their family members in Okinawa for the first time. Making these family connections, no matter where you are from or what ethnicity - it fills in the missing pieces of the family puzzle and helps us all to have a better understanding of ourselves, our families, our community, and those around us.

Again, I am so very grateful for Governor Tamaki's support of both the Leadership and the Heritage Tour. It meant a great deal to us, knowing that he made time to meet with members of both tours. Time, as we all know is the most precious commodity.

In that same vein, I am extremely grateful to all of the Okinawan prefectural leaders, dignitaries, and collaborating partners, especially to the leaders and members of Okinawa Hawaii Kyokai. Thank you all for making the time to see us, meet with us, welcome us, and deepen our connections. So again, the fact that so many of our friends and supporters in Okinawa took the time to meet with each of our groups speaks volumes and shows each of these members just how very special and important the connection is between Hawaii and Okinawa.

CONTINUED ON – PAGE 5



(L-R) Dave Arakawa, Naha City Mayor Satoru Chinen, Governor Denny Tamaki, and Naha City Council Chairman Nohara in full Hatagshira, Clarisse and Jon Itomura.

2024 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The year at a glance!

- Jan 6 UJSH Shinnenkai, Honoring Aaron Muraki as HUOA's Young Achiever, JCCH
- Jan 20 Uchinanchu of the Year & Installation Celebration, HOC
- Feb TBD Aisatsu trip
- Feb 12-26 Hawaii-Okinawa Student Exchange Program - students from Okinawa
- Mar 8-10 Honolulu Festival, Hawaii Convention Center
- Mar 10 Honolulu Festival Parade, Kalakaua Ave.
- Apr 7 Karii, HOC
- May TBD Kauai Okinawa Dance Festival
- May TBD Goodwill Golf Tournament, Pali Golf Course
- June 4-7 Children's Cultural Day Camp, Oahu
- June 7-9 Pan Pacific Festival
- June 9 Pan Pacific Festival Parade, Kalakaua Ave
- June 21 Senior Health & Wellness Fair
- June 22 Irei No Hi Remembrance, HOC
- July 24 Hui Makaala Fashion Show Luncheon, Hilton Hawaiian Village
- Aug 31-Sept 1 Okinawan Festival, Hawaii Convention Center
- Sept 2 Aloha Party, HOC
- Sept 20 Autumn Matsuri, HOC
- Oct TBD Study Tour to Okinawa
- Oct 29 Uchinanchu No Hi Celebration, HOC
- Nov 30 & Dec 1 Winter Craft Fair, HOC
- Dec 11 "An Evening in Waipio" Craft Fair, HOC

Events are subject to change. Visit www.huoa.org/events for more information.

Save the date
January 20, 2024

Uchinanchu of the Year & 74th Installation Banquet

Please mark your calendar and join us for HUOA's Uchinanchu of the Year & 74th Installation Banquet.

Show your support for your club's Uchinanchu of the Year, meet the new officers and advisors, and express gratitude to the current officers and advisors for their dedication. This is always an entertaining and memorable event.

See you there!

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HUOA President Clarisse Kobashigawa
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UCHINANCHU

Ippee Niffee 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 Niffee Deebiru* to the following donors. Mahalo for keeping *Uchinanchu* alive and thriving.

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porting me with this endeavor.)

To create a legacy, I planned three objectives that were all achieved: 1) Meet with the Kitanakagusuku Mayor, Takanori Higa, and Vice Mayor, Shigeru Oota, to strengthen our leadership ties and connections between Okinawa and Hawaii. 2) Connect to the land of our Okinawan ancestors. I visited my family's hometown of Kitanakagusuku, and the hometowns of other participants. I also visited three castles of cultural and historical significance – Nakagusuku-jo, Katsuren-jo, and Shuri-jo. These castles connect the past to the present and to the future; they lasted centuries before us and will last centuries after us. 3) Networking with other Leadership Tour participants.

Fellowship remains essential in our Hawaii Okinawan community today, as it did back in 1975 when artist Seikichi "Chick" Takara created the HUOA logo with the "U" for "unity and Uchinanchu" and its "calabash shape" to signify "kinship; that all Uchinanchu are calabash cousins" (HUOA Adaniya, 1983). All the objectives were necessary for continuing the legacy of our Okinawan ancestors. As Rimi Natsukawa sings "Tinsagu nu Hana": *Takara dama ya tin, Migaka niba sabisu. Asayu chimumi gachi, Uchi yuwatara*. If you do not take care of what you have whether it be tangible or intangible, including cultures, it will be lost forever. Therefore, malama what you have because it is with the help of God and your ancestors that you will succeed. Chibariyo!

Kylie Sato – Taxi Adventure to Nakagusuku Castle

On Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023, Kelly Higa and I decided to go on an adventure with the help of Jon Itomura. We found ourselves taking a taxi to explore the Nakagusuku Castle Ruins. From our hotel to the Nakagusuku Castle ruins it was about a 30-minute drive. Our taxi driver was very nice and pointed out various places on our way to our destination. When we got to the



Kylie at Nakagusuku Castle

entrance of Nakagusuku Castle ruins, our driver also got out to show us where to pay and stand to receive a free ride to the beginning of the tour. It was at the top of a big hill. As we got on to the free ride, our taxi driver said that he was going to wait for us until we finished our tour of Nakagusuku Castle ruins, which was really nice of him.

When we got to the top, Kelly and I were confused because we thought we were touring the castle ruins on a mobile cart. At the first stop Kelly and I could not believe how big the castle ruins were and how much we would have to walk. I started to complain about how Uncle Jon could have given us a heads up about what this tour was like and any tips like bringing an umbrella or even water. You also have to realize that Kelly and I were touring the Nakagusuku Castle ruins in the midday of late September when the humidity was at its highest. Kelly could not stop laughing at me because of the disbelief I was experiencing. As Kelly and I started our tour of the castle ruins I began to feel sorry for our taxi driver because the tour of the Nakagusuku Castle Ruins was HUUUGE.

I really enjoyed exploring Nakagusuku Castle Ruins as well as the nice views we were able to see. When I got to the end of the tour, I appreciated our taxi driver a lot because he even kept the car running so that we could cool down faster after all that walking we just did. Our taxi driver then drove us to the Rycom Mall where we then parted ways. After paying for the ride we gave him some Mauna Loa chocolate covered macadamia nuts to enjoy as a token of our appreciation.

Tris Tanaka – Family Reunion in Ginowan

This was my first trip to Okinawa, and the first time I've met my relatives who live there. Many of them still reside in the same city (Ginowan) that my great grandparents emigrated from.

While I was there, I felt connected to my roots, whether that was by attending the city's Matsuri, walking around the neighborhood, playing at Kakazu Park, or eating delicious food. This experience would not have been possible without my family that welcomed me with open arms and made the trip one that I will never forget. My favorite memory was teaching my niece and nephew how to play Egyptian war and Foo (card games). Every time I saw them, they cheerfully asked to play again and again. And they continued to play after I left and even taught the games to their cousins. I am already planning and looking forward to the next time I can see them. I would also like to host them when they visit Hawaii and show them around and feed them local kine grindz.

I'm grateful that the homestay was a part of the leadership tour and I want to be a leader that exemplifies the welcoming Okinawan culture through the HUOA and Ginowan Shijin Kai.

Marcie Moribe – Visit to Her Ancestral Yomitan Village

I was looking forward to visiting the Yomitan-son Yakuba to see the friends I made there during my 2014 Kenshu Program.



Tris (in blue polo shirt) with his family



Kelly Higa with Kitanakagusuku Mayor Takanori Higa and Vice Mayor Shigeru Oota

Upon arrival, we felt like celebrities because there were video cameras from the FM Yomitan radio station. We met the Deputy Mayor Mamoru Furugen.

Among the people who came to see us were my former Kenshu-Program advisors and my family member who works in the Yakuba.

Also in attendance was Masaji Matsuda, a major supporter of the HUOA in Okinawa (Hawaii Kyokai) and prominent Yomitan resident. He made special arrangements for sanshin to be available to Jacob Higa and Courtney Takara so they could play for everyone during the meeting.

They played "Asadoya Yunta," and we made the spontaneous decision to do the Hawaii bon dance alongside them. As a representative of the Young Okinawans of Hawaii, I grew up dancing the Hawaii-style eisa bon odori. I helped lead the group of seven participants alongside Kylie Sato, who also frequents Bon Dances. We sang along and cheerfully *heishi*-ed "sa-yui-yui" and "iya-sa-sa" to accompany the sanshin players.

I think that the people in attendance were surprised to see us play sanshin and dance eisa bon odori and introduce ourselves in Shimakutuba. They seemed happy to know that we are perpetuating Okinawan culture in Hawaii.

Another amazing thing that happened at the Yomitan *yakuba* visit was that Kori-Jo was reunited with students she taught English to during her JET program tenure. My friend Tetsuya was one of her students, and he said she remembered her, which made Kori-jo tear up.

Courtney Takara – Leadership Tour Guide

Feeling a deep sense of pride, it was an honor and privilege to escort the 2023 HUOA Leadership Tour. While a few participants were older than myself, I felt like the mother hen to eleven children. During their various meetings, it was impressive to hear the participants give their *jikoshoukai* (self-introduction) in *Uchinaaguchi* and share their goals on ways to strengthen the bonds between Hawaii and Okinawa.

I watched as they cheered and supported one another for their respective mayor meetings and had insightful discussions sharing ideas for club development and sustainment. Not to mention the conversations on the bus filled with friendly banter and the late-night *nijikai* (after-party) gatherings, it was heartwarming to watch this group evolve from mere acquaintances to friends. As a former HUOA Leadership Tour participant, it was full circle witnessing the group bond and grow collectively as leaders.

As for their future, we already see fruits of labor with the participants volunteering at HUOA events and stepping into leadership positions within their respective clubs. These are the change-makers, the next generation (regardless of age) of leaders, and let me tell you – we are in good hands! *Chibariyo* to the 2023 HUOA Leadership Tour.

While one purpose is to instill excitement and passion about their homeland, another important purpose is to create a bond of friendship and fellowship among themselves that will enable these young leaders to continue to work together in promoting, preserving, and perpetuating their Okinawa culture and heritage here in Hawaii. *Ippee Niffee Deebiru* to N&K Travels, Tomomi Shimabukuro (agent), Courtney Takara (guide), and Riko Higa (HUOA Liaison in Okinawa). 🌺

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FROM - PAGE 2



Rachel Lahela Ka'aihue, performed an oli for Governor Tamaki on his birthday. Her chant speaks of a lei to wear around your neck. We, as participants of the 2023 Heritage Tour come together as one lei. The lei must always be made with good feelings and a good heart and comes from the warmth of all of us here.

Finally, I wish to extend the greatest *ippee niffee deebiru* to JTB for their endless patience and flexibility. From the creation of the tour to the planning and execution, they went above and beyond to ensure that each of our tour members had a truly unforgettable experience.

In wrapping up our tour, we were all heavily touched by our visits to the Haeburu Town Cultural Museum, the Okinawa Peace Memorial Park and Museum, and the Himeyuri Peace Memorial and Museum. In visiting these sites, Kari prepped our minds and hearts by educating us on the phrase, "nuchidu takara".

In closing, thank you to all of our many members and supporters, both Uchinanchu and Uchinachu at heart. Every one of you has contributed to making this year a truly unforgettable one.

Wishing you all the very best and merriest of holidays! *Ippee niffee deebiru!*



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Thank you, to the many members and businesses that have supported our 2022/2023 Annual Giving Campaign. Since the beginning of the campaign in November 2022, we have received a total of 941 donations, translating to \$232,318.98, making it the best Campaign so far.

We are deeply grateful for the confidence you have shown in us by giving us your donation dollars. It has been the support of our members that allows our organization to succeed. From the Uchinanchu of the Year and Installation Banquet to the Okinawan Festival at the Hawaii Convention Center, and finally to our Evening Craft Fair in December, you have volunteered and contributed towards the success of each event. We are forever grateful.

Please join us in 2024, in helping our culture thrive and grow. It is through your continued contributions we are able to have successful cultural programs and upkeep our home - the Hawaii Okinawa Center. *Ippee Niffee Deebiru!*

The following list combines contributions to the Annual Giving Campaign and all other non-specified monetary donations. Thank you again for your support! *Ippee Niffee Deebiru!*

Contributions from September 1 to October 31, 2023

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We pause for a moment to remember and stand in solidarity with those still hurting and recovering from the devastating fires on Maui. Through the Yuimaaru Maui fund and with the extremely generous help of our friends, family, and collaborating partners in Okinawa, more than \$80K is expected to pass through the Yuimaaru fund from Okinawa alone, which will then be turned over to the Hawaii Community Foundation's Maui Strong Fund. We are extremely humbled by their generosity and will be working on a special project to recognize their support in the coming year, 2024.

Our campaign will be making our first Hawaii-Okinawa collaboration donation by the end of 2023. This donation will include contributions received between August 8th and October 31st. Any donations received after November 1, 2023, will be distributed early next year.



Yuimaaru Maui Donation privately from Okinawa Prefectural Assembly Chairman Akamine

Thank you, Kafuushi Deebiru to each one of you who donated to the Yuimaaru Maui Fund.

Contributions from September 1 to October 31, 2023

- | | | |
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In Memoriam: Emi Kuniyoshi

On November 3, 2023, HUAOA was informed that our very dedicated and positive role model for all Hawaii Okinawa Center volunteers had passed. Emi Kuniyoshi was a Kin Chojin Kai member who followed in her uncle's footsteps as a volunteer landscaper for the Issei ("Kin") Garden. Emi was a passionate and dedicated volunteer overseeing the weekly cleaning and maintenance of the Kyuzo Toyama bronze statue, the 100th Anniversary of Immigration Commemorative Boulder, the Five Continent Marble Map, and all the landscaping for the Issei Garden. Emi and her husband Mamo (a Monday Gardener team member), were recognized as Uchinanchu of the Year for the year 2015. Her love and compassion for Okinawa, the Hawaii Okinawa Center, and HUAOA will forever be reflected in the beauty of the Issei Garden.





Morimasa Kaneshiro's grandfather and cousin



Morimasa Kaneshiro



Yoshino with parents Jiro and Kamei Nakasone after returning to Hawai'i February 1948

An Unsung Humanitarian - Battle of Okinawa

By Dan Nakasone, Wahiawā Okinawa Kyo Yu Kai member

Morimasa Kaneshiro was born and raised in Hilo where his family ran a barbershop. After graduating from Hilo High School in 1944 Kaneshiro volunteered for the Army. He was stationed at Schofield Barracks on O'ahu after completing his infantry basic training on the mainland.

He did not attend the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS), but he developed Japanese language skills while growing up with Japanese speaking parents. Because of those skills he was assigned as an interpreter to the U.S. Navy. His unit was given orders to serve in Okinawa in a humanitarian capacity. Kaneshiro assisted medical officers in carrying conversations with civilian patients. He also served in the "Mop Up" phase of the battle helping to call out civilians and Japanese soldiers hiding in caves.

First Glimpse of Okinawa

"They came by the thousands weary and hurt. Rest only brings horrid memories." These were the haunting captions 19-year-old Morimasa Kaneshiro's wrote on a page with his photos titled "First Glimpse of Okinawa." The caption on the bottom of the page from his photo scrapbook read: Evacuation of natives from the front - May 17, 1945. That's over a month before the battle ended. The actual number is not known but the line of people stretched into the distance. The elderly and young women and children who walked single file into the camp were the fortunate ones. According to the caption they were spared from the oncoming ground battle and the death and destruction it would leave in its wake. The evacuation essentially saved many of their lives because of Kaneshiro and his fellow soldiers.

The core mission of his unit was to provide the initial humanitarian needs of food, medical supplies and care, clothing, housing, and police protection for the civilian population. Their story is significant for it tells the side of providing aid and saving lives not taking them.

Like the vast majority of interpreters who served during WWII Kaneshiro remained silent about his good deeds amidst the trauma and devastation. Kaneshiro's photo scrapbook with captions captures just a small portion of his war time experience. There is more to his story that only oral history can reveal.

Finding Morimasa Kaneshiro

Kaneshiro took part in saving many lives but there was one life that he personally saved that shined a light on his story.

I stumbled on that story while working on a video documentary on my family's Battle of Okinawa story. Yoshino Nakasone, my father's younger sister was born in Hawai'i but living in Okinawa with their grandparents during the battle. Yoshino survived the relentless bombing by hiding in a cave with her grandparents and a few others from their village.

While interviewing her daughter Alice for the video documentary she mentioned that a Nisei soldier named Kaneshiro from the Big Island had called her out of the cave. Alice said Kaneshiro told her mom his name and that they were going to take care of her and the others. I believe he shared his name to let Yoshino know that he was a fellow Okinawan to build trust. It's extremely rare to make the connection between a Nisei soldier and a person he called out of a cave. And both being from Hawai'i is unheard of.

It is well documented that Japanese Imperial soldiers had spread propaganda that women would be raped, tortured, and killed if captured by American troops. Alice said, "the plan was that my mom's grandparents would come out of the cave, and she would stay behind." When Americans exhausted all attempts to call out people, they would either apply flamethrowers to the cave or ignite explosives to seal its entrance.

Yoshino's grandmother told the Americans that her granddaughter was still in the cave. Kaneshiro calling her out literally saved her life. What makes Kaneshiro's story even more remarkable is that he also called out his paternal grandfather and young cousin also named Morimasa Kaneshiro from another cave.

Because of Kaneshiro, Yoshino was able to return to her family in Wahiawā, Hawai'i. She would marry a wonderful man Robert Toguchi from Pepe'ekeo on the Big Island and together they raised five children.

I had to find Morimasa Kaneshiro. I reached out to Karleen Chinen, former editor of The Hawai'i Herald and she contacted her friend Drusilla Tanaka who sourced Seiki Oshiro's research on the Nisei MIS soldiers. In an email Tanaka identified four Kaneshiro MIS soldiers who served in Okinawa and only one from the Big Island, Morimasa. After a few calls, my Cousin Norman Nakasone former president of the Hawai'i United Okinawan Association led me to Charles Kaneshiro, Morimasa's eldest son. (Although Morimasa Kaneshiro did not attend MISLS he is listed on the MIS roster.)

Charles said when his late father fell ill with Parkinson's he started to share his Battle of Okinawa stories with his family. One of the stories his dad shared was that he found his "calling" because of his life changing experience in Okinawa. "My dad had an ambition to become an engineer, but he decided to pursue a life as a social worker instead. Through the "G.I. Bill" he and a friend attended Drury College in Springfield, Missouri where he got a degree in social work. And through a referral he attended Seabury Western Theological Seminary," said Charles.

Rev. Kaneshiro began his ministry by serving in various churches in Kohala, Honolulu, Kauai before becoming chaplain of the lower school of Tolani School where he was affectionately known as "Father K".

Rev. Kaneshiro was a true Uchinanchu who loved to play ukulele and sanshin and singing with his karaoke group. And although his wife Myrtle is not Okinawan, she is Uchinanchu at heart. She was a member of the Okinawan women's organization Hui o Laulima for nearly 40 years and served as its president from 1990 to 1992. Together they raised three sons and a daughter.

Sadly, Rev. Kaneshiro passed on in 2009 due to his illness.

A Story that Binds Two Families

Knowing that the Kaneshiro and Toguchi families shared an extraordinary connection I felt the two families should meet face-to-face. The expression of warmth and gratitude by all that day was palpable. But on a deeper level, family members on both sides understood the profound circumstance that brought them together.

"It was overwhelming. I've never read any stories that identified an MIS soldier and a person he called out of a cave. And to have both from Hawai'i is so significant." —Mrs. Myrtle Kaneshiro

"It's humanizing. To meet the family members of someone my dad called out of a cave was life changing." —Charles Kaneshiro (Sansei)

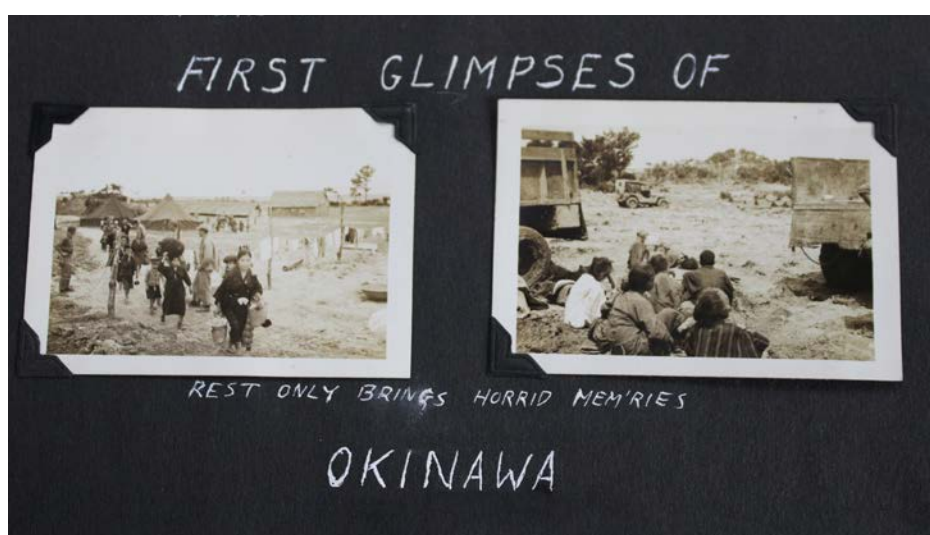
"The warm and inviting Kaneshiro family was a reflection of the kind of man Mr. Morimasa Kaneshiro was. All the information we learned made me realize that because Mr. Kaneshiro was such a kind and compassionate person and being Okinawan American, my mom and her grandparents felt safe." —Elaine Toguchi Chun (Sansei)

"We would have never imagined that we would meet the family of the man who saved my mother's life. What happened was nothing short of a miracle." —Alice Toguchi Matsuo (Sansei)

"I can't help but wonder if they would have come out of the cave if it had been someone else. I imagine it was his demeanor and compassion that led my grandma and her relatives to trust him." —Carianne Matsuo (Yonsei)



THEY CAME BY THE THOUSANDS WEARY AND HURT



FIRST GLIMPSES OF

REST ONLY BRINGS HORRID MEMORIES


OKINAWA

“From everything I learned through this journey, I feel closer to Grandma Toguchi than I ever have. To uncover the missing pieces of the Nakasone Family story helped me develop a stronger sense of our family history and understand how much the early generations endured and persevered. I am proud to be an Uchinanchu!” —Kristen Toguchi Ishii (Yonsei)

Closing Reflection

Countless stories like Kaneshiro’s are lost for eternity for one reason or another. MIS Soldiers having sworn to secrecy, enryo the Japanese manner of restraint, or not wanting to relive the horror of war are reasons they remained silent. Although later in life there are few who would share their stories and others only when asked. My late dad Seiei Nakasone served in the Military Intelligence Service, and he kept his stories to himself. Until this day I regret not asking him questions while I had the chance.

It’s been over 78 years since WWII ended. Finding Morimasa Kaneshiro’s Battle of Okinawa story and his connection to my family’s story is like finding the proverbial needle in a haystack. I would venture to say that divine intervention may have had a hand in it.

The hope is that future generations of the Kaneshiro and Toguchi families will learn the story of that faithful day when Morimasa saved Yoshino. 



Kaneshiro and Toguchi families | Photo by Roy Kimura



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Mensore WELCOME!

Haebaru Middle School



10 STUDENTS FROM Haebaru Middle School and 3 members from the Haebaru Town Board of Education visited the Hawaii Okinawa Center on Wednesday, October 18.

OIST President Karin Markides



ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24, Okinawa Institute of Science Technology's president Markides met with Clarisse Kobashigawa and Brandon Nakasone for lunch at Moku Kitchen and then with Jon Itomura and Norman Nakasone later that evening. They were all inspired by her energy and resolve to put Okinawa on the map globally.

Japan Real Estate & Inheritance Consultation Event Held at HOC

By Jodie Chiemi Ching

On Thursday, Nov. 2, 2023 a rare opportunity to learn about Japan's procedures for buying/selling real estate and inheritance was presented by ROACC, a judicial scrivener corporation in Okinawa. Held at the Hawaii Okinawa Center Legacy Ballroom at 10 a.m. and later at 6 p.m. ROACC's Judicial Scriveners Osamu Uehara and Shinichi Yogi were the presenters, and Yukari Kawabata from Tomato Housing (*tomato-okinawa.com*) – a real estate company in Okinawa – were there to present and consult.

Uehara said the number of people from Hawaii seeking his services regarding real estate and inheritance in Okinawa and other parts of Japan has been increasing. Additionally, during the last Uchinanchu Taikai held in October of last year, several Hawaii residents came to seek his advice. Uehara thought it made sense to bring this valuable information by holding a consultation event in Hawaii.



There were two informational presentations – 1) buying/selling real estate in Japan; 2) Japan's inheritance procedures – followed by free consultations for attendees.

The comprehensive presentation about real estate procedures included information about where to find real estate on the internet (*suumo.jp*, *homes.co.jp*, *athome.co.jp* and *realestate-tokyo.com/buy/*), step involved in a sale/purchase, how to remit payment from abroad and taxes incurred after a purchase.

The inheritance portion of the seminar included information and definitions for how people inherit property (legally, by will or "agreement of division"), and the required affidavits for foreign nationals and overseas residents who inherit property.

Overall, attendees were grateful for the information. It's common for Hawaii residents to have parents and siblings who live in Japan. When a family member passes away, they will need to know who the legal heirs are and what comprises the inheritance. Communication and execution of these procedures can be frustrating and complicated, and that's where ROACC is able to assist.

For more information visit the ROACC website roacc.jp or email roacc.hawaii@gmail.com

HUOA Softball

The HUOA Softball League had another exciting season with 10 teams participating (Gushikawa, Gushikawa Blue, Gushichan, Haneji, Hui Makaala, Itoman, Nakagusuku, Nishihara, Urasoe, Wahiawa).

Following a regular season where every team played each other once, the playoffs were divided into two divisions with the top 6 teams playing in an upper Championship Bracket and the bottom 4 teams playing in a lower Consolation Bracket.

In the Championship Bracket, Urasoe defeated Wahiawa 7-6 in a very exciting game to claim its second consecutive Championship! In the Consolation Game Hui Makaala defeated Gushikawa Blue 5-4.



Members of the Urasoe Champion team are (top row, L-R): Mark Kelsom, Alex Matsumami, Dane Kaneshiro, Gray Haynie, Carson Tsuruda, Kai Kaulukukui, Sean Amorozo, Takeshi Okada...(bottom row, L-R): James Miyashiro, Shanon Arnold, Jacob Wong, Ryan Murakami, Jarvis Nohara, Kelan Hashimura

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Congratulations to 2023 Konkūru Artists

The HUOA congratulates the following musicians and dancers from Hawaii for their sterling konkūru achievements.

Konkūru sponsored by the **Ryūkyū Shimpo Newspaper Company**

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· Dennis Nishiguchi
· Clay Asato
· Neil Nakagawa

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Yagi Seiichi Sanshin Kenkyu Sho
Dō sho (Children Shorei Sho)
· Keahi Ingram
· Keanu Ingram

Congratulations to all of you! The HUOA extends its heartiest best wishes for your continued success as you and your respective sensei pursue higher goals of achievements and continue to preserve, perpetuate and promote our beloved Uchinaanchu culture.

HIMEYURI WORKSHOP

Presented by Himeyuri Peace Research Center



Himeyuri students and teachers in 1944



NORIKO KOGA
curator at Himeyuri Peace Museum

A curator from Himeyuri Peace Museum will facilitate this workshop and help participants better understand the history of the Battle of Okinawa and Himeyuri Students Corps. Activities include group works and discussion.

JANUARY 12TH, 2024

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CLUB NEWS

Our Clubs, Our Future

OGSH Celebrates 30th Anniversary

The Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii (OGSH) celebrated its 30th anniversary and Bonenkai at the Hawaii Okinawa Center on Saturday, November 18, 2023. OGSH's mission is "to promote, preserve and perpetuate our Okinawan family heritage through education, research, and networking."

The theme, *Uyafaafuji nu Hanauyi, Tapestry of our Ancestors* was provided by Sensei Norman Kaneshiro. He made the analogy that genealogies and family histories are often complicated networks of story threads that do not seem to make much sense at first but help us to create identities and narratives that make sense to us.

President Donna Nakamura's stated, "I see this celebration as a shot of respite to renew our energy and fill us with heightened hope as we grow in appreciation for who we are and what OGS has grown to embrace about our heritage and legacy and what we will become in the future!"

Honored guests included some of the OGS's founding members: Ron Miyashiro, June Takeno, Louise Tamashiro, John Tasato, Nancy Tome, and Nancy Yogi. A special tribute video of the members who have passed was shown.

Lunchtime entertainment was provided by Yuttai Kwattai consisting of musicians Brandon Ing, Jesse Shiroma, Noah Kutaka, and Derek Fujio. Ukwanshin Kabudan, performed the musical accompaniment for the entertainment portion of the program. Members include Norman Kaneshiro, Keith Nakaganeku, Brandon Ing, and Eric Wada.

Before each performance, Sensei Kaneshiro provided an explanation of the key words of the songs and meanings of the dances. The dances were performed by the Tamagusuku-Ryu Shosetsu Kai directed by Eric Wada and the Shoshin Dance Company directed by Yukie Shiroma.



OGSH Bonenkai Attendees



Giant Oroku group photo (Aloha Party)

Oroku Aza Jin (Club Update)

As part of the 2023 Heritage Tour, Oroku Aza Jin members or those with an affiliation to Oroku Village were treated to an 18-site in-depth tour (a combination of walking and microbus riding) of two of the 12 aza that comprised Oroku-son, which is now consolidated with Naha-shi. We also had many members from our sister club, "Aza Oroku do Aza Tabaru of Brazil" from Sao Paulo, Brazil visiting for the Naha Tsuna Hiki at the time. This tour was memorialized in a special booklet, complete with photos and explanations that each of the tour members got to keep! More impressive was the coordination of the two aza (Aza Oroku, Aza Tabaru) to put together this tour. At each of the 18 sites, was a team of community members (of all ages) waiting to guide all of the visitors to each site – several of them *utaki* (sacred sites). They provided written and verbal explanations in English, Japanese, and Portuguese. Altogether approximately 180 volunteers coordinated this tour which culminated in an exciting aloha party at a nearby hotel. We all had so much fun and thoroughly enjoyed the food and entertainment – especially since we were able to finally hear Kenton Odo sensei of Afuso Ryu perform in Okinawa!

More touching was the generous monetary donations presented by Aza Oroku and Aza Tabaru to assist with the relief effort for those still recovering from the devastating fires on Maui. These donations were received by HUOA's Yuimaaru Maui Fund and will be sent to the Hawaii Community Foundation - Maui Strong Fund.



Clarissee Kobashigawa at the Oroku dinner party with Naha City Mayor, Satoru Chinen; and President of WUB Okinawa and Chairman of the Board of Director, "Naha Giant Tug of War Preservation Society", Jinkichi Uezu

Nago Club Cleans Up HOC



Front row (L-R): Alicia Rogan, Chani dela Torre, Cynthia dela Torre, Jane Martin, Emily Preis, Julia Preis, Jennifer Yamanuha; Back row (L-R): Robin Matsukawa, Linda Nakamura, Rod Martin, Henry Higashi, Gabe Preis, Samantha Preis, Cyrus Tamashiro, Tyler Kon

CLUB NEWS

Our Clubs, Our Future



Group photo of all the attendees at our Ginoza 75th Anniversary Celebration!

Hawaii Ginoza Sonjin Kai Turned 75 This Year!

On Saturday, November 4, 2023, Hawaii Ginoza Sonjin Kai celebrated the 75th anniversary of its inception with a luncheon at the Hawaii Okinawa Center Legacy Ballroom I in the presence of over 180 members and guests. Eight guests from Ginoza Village were present for the festivities, including representatives from the Ginoza Village, and four of the six wards within Ginoza Village, Ginoza-ku, Kanna-ku, Matsuda-ku, and Sokei-ku. The Ginoza guests attended our anniversary celebration after attending Argentina Ginoza Sonjin Kai's 70th Anniversary celebration and also visiting the Ginoza Sonjin Kai Peru and Brazil.

The first half of the program opened with opening remarks from Ginoza Sonjin Kai President, David Shinsato, and followed by congratulatory speeches and a commemorative slideshow. The first speech was delivered by Jon Itomura, HUOA Executive Director, who shared a story about how he received his favorite Shishimai conch shell from someone in Ginoza Village. Next, Tetsuyuki Shimozato, Ginoza Village Vice Mayor, delivered a speech on behalf of Mayor Atsushi Touma, followed by Tsuginobu Touma, Ginoza Village Council Chairman, who offered congratulations on behalf of the Ginoza Village Council. The Ginoza Village speeches were followed by a special presentation of congratulatory gifts from Ginoza Village and the four wards represented the Hawaii Ginoza Sonjin Kai. In return, the Hawaii Ginoza club presented customized commemorative letter openers to the officials as a token of appreciation for their support.

Up next was 2023 HUOA President, Clarisse Kobashigawa, who also offered her congratulations to the Ginoza club. The club was treated to two slideshows prepared by Advisor, Rene Nakama, one highlighting the "past and present" of our club, and the second highlighting a story about

how Hawaii Ginoza members helped to start up the pineapple industry in Okinawa after the war. To wrap up the formal half of the program, current President David Shinsato delivered a message describing how past Ginoza Presidents, Yukio Toguchi, Bobby Toguchi, Vince Watabu, and Rene Nakama inspired him to serve the club as president since 2018. David also expressed his gratitude to all of those who kept the club thriving for the past 75 years, and how he is confident that we will have many more great years ahead with the support of Ginoza members. Then, after an invocation from 2023 Hawaii Ginoza Kenshusei, and John Shinsato, we had lunch!

During the second half of the program, we were treated to wonderful dance and song performances. Hawaii Ginoza members Linda Tanimoto, Dazzman Toguchi, and Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser performed Okinawan dance with the accompaniment of Ryukyu Koten Afuso-Ryu Ongaku Kenkyu Choichi Kai U.S.A. Hawaii Shibu under the direction of Grand "Masandu" Murata. The dance performances included 'Kajadifuu' (Dazzman), 'Chimuganasa' (Linda), 'Ichubigwa' (Phyllis), 'Hatuma Bush'i (Dazzman), and 'Ashibina' (Linda). The next part of the entertainment was delivered by HUOA Past President, Tom Yamamoto, who performed two hula dance pieces ('Aia ka Maui' and 'Ku'u Hoa'), and two songs ('Hanohano O Maui' and 'Tahiti Tahiti'). The semi-finale of the program was a group dance, 'Ginoza Sonmin Ondo', where audience members all stood up and danced with instructions delivered by Ginoza member Lara Shinsato. And finally, of course, no Okinawan function would be complete without a final Kachashii!

The Hawaii Ginoza Sonjin Kai is very grateful to everyone who made this event a success. Only through the generous monetary support of Ginoza Village and the four wards in attendance, along with the donations received from club members (and non-club members!) were we able to have such a successful anniversary celebration. Thank you for everyone's support of the Ginoza Sonjin Kai over the past 75 years, and here's to many more to come! 🍷



Ginoza Village Delegation(L-R): Manabu Oshiro (Matsuda Ward Chief), Tomoyuki Shinzato (Kanna Ward Chief), Katsuya Igei (Sokei Ward Chief), Satoru Nakama (Kanna Administrative Officer), Masanori Nakama (Matsuda Administrative Officer), Tetsuyuki Shimozato (Ginoza Village Vice Mayor), Tsuginobu Touma (Ginoza Village Council Chair), and Osamu Touma (Ginoza Village Planning Section Chief)



Host families and other Ginoza members greeting the Ginoza students at the Hawaii Okinawa Center on the day of their arrival.

Ginoza Sonjin Kai – Summer Picnic and Homestay

Ginoza Sonjin Kai held its annual picnic this year on Sunday, August 6, 2023, at Kapiolani Park. This was the second year back to an in-person summer picnic after COVID, and we were happy to see many members make the effort to come out and join us (around 100 people!). Special thanks to Monica Hatori, 2023 Ginoza Advisor, who served as Picnic Chair this year. Monica and her family brought many new games this year that kept everyone having fun all day!

This summer, Ginoza Sonjin Kai also welcomed eight students from Ginoza Village who participated in a three-week-long language training program here in Hawaii from July 27–August 9. The students stayed with Sonjin Kai host families (Hatori, Hayes, Hiramatsu, Nakama, and Toguchi families) during the weekend. They spent their weekdays at



2023 Picnic Chair, Monica Hatori, explaining one of her new games!

Hawaii Tokai International College where they learned about Hawaii's culture and practiced their English. The Ginoza host families took the students all over the island, including Jikoen Bon Dance, a pool party, shopping, and of course our summer picnic!

This was the first year back to an in-person homestay program after the pandemic (we conducted an online exchange last year with Hawaii Ginoza students). At the farewell party on August 8, 2023, the Ginoza students all expressed how much they enjoyed their stay and how grateful they were to their host families for making their experience unforgettable. We are all looking forward to summer 2024 for our next club picnic and the next batch of Ginoza students! 🍷



Zentoku Foundation Requests Your Support

A Response to the Recent Closure of The Hawaii Herald

Aloha Friends and Family,

As most of you may know, from about 2017 to 2022, I worked for The Hawaii Herald, A Japanese-American Journal, first as a contributing writer, then as a full-time staff writer, and finally as the paper's editor until I left for Gov. Ige's office.

It has been announced publicly that the last issue of The Hawaii Herald will be printed on Dec. 1. Many have expressed to me and the current editor, Kristen Nemoto Jay, how much they depended on this little community newspaper for information, history, stories, events, and more. For me personally, the Herald helped me connect the dots of my identity as well as with the community. It gave me a sense of purpose, especially during the pandemic. It was a vital source of news for the local community.

In about 2019, our paper formed a friendship with the Zentoku Foundation. When President Mark Nakakihara caught wind of the Herald's closure, he reached out and let us know that there were other endangered newspapers on the West Coast, and perhaps we could "morph" these endangered publications into a vehicle that could better sustain the challenges they all face in the modern-day media landscape.

To give you some background of my connection with the Zentoku Foundation, I am a contributing writer and have written stories profiling individuals and families in Hawaii who are Japanese and/or Okinawan Americans. When I became editor of the Hawaii Herald in 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Zentoku provided support by sharing content and advertisements. This relationship also connected me with other AJA communities abroad like the Rafu Shimpo and the Go For Broke National Education Center in Los Angeles. Their leaders and I brainstormed ideas and shared resources to keep our publications running through the pandemic. Therefore, when the Zentoku Foundation learned of the closure of The Hawaii Herald, President Mark Nakakihara reached out to help find a way to continue to share stories vital to the community.

To help Hawaii's Japanese-American stories continue, I am humbly requesting your support if it is viable for you to do so.

I am very excited about what Zentoku (zentokufoundation.org) and those of us who contributed to The Hawaii Herald can accomplish together. Kristen Nemoto Jay, Summer Nakaishi, and I have expressed our desire to continue editing and writing for the new vessel -- we are still in the very, very early stages to know exactly what that will look like. But I do know other West Coast publications in Washington and California will also work with us. The current plan is to publish once a month and funds raised will provide the publication's website, software, and content.

Please don't hesitate to ask me questions or send your questions directly to the Zentoku Foundation. Please help spread the word.

*Mahalo and Yoroshiku Onegai Shimasu,
Jodie Chiemi Ching*

Here is the recent post from Zentoku that went out on social media recently.

URGENT: We need your help. As we noted in our documentary, Paper Chase, the glue that has connected the Japanese-American community through the years has been the Japanese-American community newspapers.

The Hawaii Herald announced earlier this month that they will be closing their doors at the end of December and others will soon be following. This plea is urgent, if this is important to you, please donate today to help keep our community connected. Read more and donate here: www.zentokufoundation.org/save-the-papers-donation-page



Bud enjoys sharing his garden with the community. He and his wife, June, have been selling plants to support HUOA for many years, always with a smile and wise advice. In the picture, Bud and his daughter, Colleen.

Holidays Craft Fairs at the Hawaii Okinawa Center

Holiday shoppers filled the Hawaii Okinawa Center during Thanksgiving weekend for the annual Winter Craft Fair. The event hosted more than 140 vendors, and welcomed over 1,200 visitors, with the longest Early Entry line of the past few years. Customers were able to shop local crafters and small businesses, and treat themselves to bento, shave ice and andagi!

Niffee deebiru to Ginowan, Ginoza, Gushichan and Gushikawa clubs for overseeing the various responsibilities. And thank you to the following clubs for helping every year: Hui O Laulima, guarding the doors, Hawaii Shuri-Naha volunteers for showing up first thing in the morning to help vendors unload, and HUOA's dear Monday Crafters who offer all their precious creations for sale to support the organization.

This year, andagi was in the expert hands of Gushichan, Ginowan, Wahiawa Kyo Yu Kai and Urasoe. Fresh andagi is always a best seller at HUOA events. Lastly, the Museum hosted the "Himeyuri and Hawaii" exhibit, to educate about the horrors of the Battle of Okinawa and help reflect on our history.

The last Craft Fair of the year, took place on Wednesday, December 6. Small but mighty, "An Evening in Waipio" Craft Fair is a long time favorite of many in the community. Haeburu, Haneji and Hawaii Sashiki-Chinen Clubs were in charge of the organization, and many other HUOA clubs were involved to make this a success.



CLINT doesn't need an introduction. If you've been to our craft fairs, you know him.

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HAWAII OKINAWA CENTER CALENDAR

Important notes for our calendar entries:

- All events may be subject to change.
- EC and BOD meetings will be held in a hybrid format, combining Zoom video conference and in-person attendance, until further notification.

January 2024

- 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! New Year's Day Observed, HOC Office Closed
- 8 HUOA Okinawan Festival Core meeting, Chaya, 7pm
- 10 HUOA Executive Council meeting
- 20 HUOA Installation Ceremony and Uchinanchu of the Year Banquet, HOC
- 22 HUOA Okinawan Festival General mtg, Legacy I, 7pm
- 24 HUOA Board of Directors meeting, 7pm, HOC

February 2024

- 5 HUOA Okinawan Festival Core meeting, Chaya, 7pm
- 13 HUOA Executive Council meeting, Chaya, 7pm
- 19 PRESIDENTS DAY, HOC Office Closed
- 26 HUOA Okinawan Festival General mtg, Legacy I, 7pm

Classes • Other Meetings at Hawaii Okinawa Center:

- HUOA Sanshin: every Thursday, 7pm*
- Ichi Go Ichi E: 1st class in 2024: 1/16/24; 1st & 3rd Tuesday, 7pm*
- Ikebana: 2nd Tuesday, 7pm*
- HUOA Karaoke: 3rd Thursday, 10am to 2pm
- Monday Crafters: every Monday, 9am*
- Okinawan Genealogical Society mtg: 4th Saturday in January only, 3rd Saturday, 9am*
- *For more information, please call 808-676-5400 or email info@huoa.org

HOT 'HAWAII OKINAWA TODAY' SCHEDULE

Our new episodes premiere on the first and third Saturday of the month at 7pm and repeat the following Thursdays at 5pm on 'Olelo Community Media Channel NATV 53. No Hawaii Okinawa Today (HOT) show is aired on the fifth Thursday of a month.



huoa.org/watch-and-listen

All 'Olelo shows are concurrently streamed on the Internet at www.olelo.org. Our latest shows are available on-demand on the 'Olelo website: select Tune In, then 'OleloNet On Demand, then type in "Okinawa" in the Search Archives box. The HUOA website www.huoa.org also has links to the site.

JAN 6 SAT 7PM AND JAN 11 & 18 THURS 5PM Show 2 of the 41st Okinawan Festival held on September 2 & 3, 2023 at the Hawaii Convention Center. Featured in this show are Ryusei Honryu Ryuko Kai, Hawaii Okinawa Shorin-ryu/Shinden-ryu Karate Association, and Yaima Kai.

JAN 20 SAT 7PM AND JAN 25 AND FEB 1 THURS 5PM Show 3 of the 41st Okinawan Festival held on September 2 & 3, 2023 at the Hawaii Convention Center. Featured in this show are Hooge Ryu Hana Nuuzi No Kai Nakasone Dance Academy and Ryukyukoku Matsuri Daiko Hawaii.

FEB 3 SAT 7PM AND FEB 8 & 15 THURS 5PM 2022 Cultural Fusion hosted by Tamagusuku Ryu Senju Kai Frances Nakachi Ryubu Dojo. The event presented Okinawan dances, and was held on Dec 3, 2022 at the Hawaii Okinawa Center.

FEB 17 SAT 7PM AND FEB 22 THURS 5PM Show 4 of the 41st Okinawan Festival held on September 2 & 3, 2023 at the Hawaii Convention Center. Featured in this show are Tamagusuku Ryu Kansen Atae No Kai and Shorin-ryu Hawaii Seibukan. 🇺🇸



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2023 CLUB SHINNEN ENKAI LISTING

| CLUB NAME | DATE | LOCATION | TIME |
|--|---|------------------------------------|----------|
| Aza Gushikawa Doshi Kai..... | 1/27/24-Saturday..... | Jikoen Hongwanji Hall..... | 5:00 PM |
| Aza Yogi Doshi Kai and Bito Doshi Kai..... | 3/17/24-Sunday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | 10:00 AM |
| Chatan-Kadena Chojin Kai..... | 3/2/24-Saturday..... | Hawaii Okinawa Center..... | 5:00 PM |
| Gaza Yonagusuku Doshi Kai..... | 2/4/2024-Sunday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | 11:00 AM |
| Ginowan Shijin Kai..... | 2/25/2024-Sunday..... | Hawaii Okinawa Center..... | 10:00 AM |
| Ginoza Son Jin Kai..... | 1/28/24-Sunday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | 11:00 AM |
| Gushichan Sonjin Kai..... | 2/24/2-Saturday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | 6:00 PM |
| Gushikawa Shijin Kai..... | 3/2/24-Saturday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | 5:00 PM |
| Haeburu Club..... | TBD..... | | |
| Haneji..... | 2/18/2024-Sunday..... | Hawaii Okinawa Center..... | 5:00 PM |
| Hawaii Sashiki-Chinen Doshi Kai..... | 2/18/2024-Sunday..... | Hawaii Okinawa Center..... | 10:00 AM |
| Hawaii Shuri Naha Club..... | 2/25/24-Sunday..... | Hawaii Okinawa Center..... | 10:00 AM |
| Hui O Lailima..... | (No Shinnen Enkai; observes Bonen Kai)..... | | |
| Itoman Shijin Kai and Motobu Club..... | 3/3/2024, Sunday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | 10:00 AM |
| Kin Chojin Kai..... | 2/3/24-Saturday..... | Hawaii Okinawa Center..... | 5:00 PM |
| Kita Nakagusuku Sonjin Kai..... | TBD..... | | |
| Kohala Okinawa Kenjin Kai..... | 2/24/2-Saturday..... | Hawaii Jodo Mission Hall..... | 5:00 PM |
| Maui Okinawa Kenjin Kai..... | 2/18/24-Sunday..... | Maui Okinawa Cultural Center..... | 11:00 AM |
| Nakagusuku Sonjin Kai..... | 1/28/24, Sunday..... | Hawaii Okinawa Center..... | 10:00 AM |
| Nishihara Chojin Kai..... | 2/3/24-Saturday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | 4:00 PM |
| Okinawan Genealogical Society of HI..... | (No Shinnen Enkai; observes Bonen Kai)..... | | |
| Onna Sonjin Kai..... | 2/3/24-Saturday..... | Natsunoya Teahouse..... | 5:00 PM |
| Oroku Azajin Club..... | 3/3/2024, Sunday..... | Hawaii Okinawa Center..... | 10:00 AM |
| Shinka Hawaii..... | TBD..... | | |
| Tamagusuku Club..... | 2/25/24-Sunday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | |
| Wahiawa Okinawa Kyo Yu Kai..... | 2/24/2-Saturday..... | Wahiawa Ryusenji Soto Mission..... | 5:00 PM |
| Yonabaru Chojin Kai..... | TBD..... | | |
| Yonashiro Chojin Kai..... | 2/17/24-Saturday..... | Masa's Cafeteria..... | 5:00 PM |
| Young Okinawans of Hawaii..... | TBD..... | | |

2023 HAWAII OKINAWA CENTER

Volunteer Luncheon



On Thursday, December 14, volunteers, staff, members of the Executive Council, and Board of Directors gathered at the Legacy Ballroom to celebrate the end of the year and welcome 2023. HUOA President Clarisse Kobashigawa and President-Elect Brandon Nakasone joined and had a chance to talk story and play games. Thank you to the following individuals for their donations that made this a very special celebration: Aolani Yamasato-Gragas, Brandon Nakasone, Cheryl Kurashige, Chris Iwamura, Clarisse Kobashigawa, Courtney Takara, Gladys Tokunaga-Asao, Dave Arakawa, David Shinsato, Eric Nitta, Ford Chinen, Gail Watanabe, Greg Kuwazaki, Gwen Fujie, Jeannene Oshiro, Jon Itomura, John Hewitt, Keiko Kawaharada, Laura Ajimine, Myles Nakasone, Norman Nakasone, Pat Miyashiro, Rodney Kohagura, Ron Hattori, Roy Arakaki, Sandra Yanagi, and Yagaji Doshi Kai. 🍷