



New England Chapter News

Japanese American Citizens League

January 2021

Visit our web site: www.nejacl.org

Akemashite omedetou!

Have to confess we had to use Google to get this “Happy New Year” greeting in Japanese. According to Google, we’re using the “casual” form by not adding *gozaimasu* at the end. However, as you look further into other sources for the same information, you find you are only supposed to use this greeting after the New Year begins on January 1. Before January 1, when you say goodbye to friends or colleagues, you say *Yoi otoshi o*. It is used as a parting salutation and, roughly translated, wishes you a good past year and a happy coming year. Whichever way it’s said, we wish you all the best in 2021 and we’re hopeful it will truly be a better new year.

January, 2021, is beginning to look like a busy month for us. There are two local events that, under normal conditions, would have been “live”, but be virtual this year. You won’t want to miss either one. Full details are in this newsletter. Save these dates: **January 16** and the annual **New England Kenjinkai Oshogatsu** celebration. **January 23** is a **cooking class on making Okonomiyaki with Debra Samuels**, cookbook author and culinary educator. Because both events will be via Zoom, so pre-registration will be necessary.

By now the Covid vaccine should have begun arriving in Massachusetts. We hope all of you are following the updates in your communities will soon know when to expect it. Until then and after, please stay safe and stay masked. ***Yoi otoshi o!***

New England Kenjinkai Oshogatsu Celebration

Saturday, January 16 at 1:30 pm, via Zoom **registration required**

Every year the New England Kenjinkai has hosted a New Year celebration that attracted more than 100 Nikkei and their families from all over New England. Everyone contributed their best Oshogatsu dish to a tremendous community potluck meal. This year, because we are not able to meet in person, the New England Kenjinkai is offering the event via Zoom. To quote their invitation: “The coronavirus pandemic may change the way we gather, but it cannot change our deep-rooted traditions.” This year’s program will include a storyteller, trivia contest, a slideshow, community sharing, and more.

Deadline for registration is January 13. You will receive Zoom information by return email.

To register:

Email: newenglandkenjinkai@gmail.com

Call: Cindy Atoji at 617-458-1809

Cooking *Okonomiyaki* with Debra Samuels

Saturday, January 23, at 4 pm, via Zoom

registration required

Debra Samuels will introduce you to *Okonomiyaki*, a Japanese savory pancake-like dish that is a popular street food in Osaka, Japan. She will teach you how to make two kinds of pancake as well as the savory sauce that goes on top. Basic ingredients are available in your local supermarket. When you register, we'll send you an ingredient list and preparation instructions so you can cook right along with Debra. This program is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is required.

Okonomiyaki



Debra is familiar to many of us as a cookbook author, culinary educator, and former contributor to the Boston Globe Food pages. She was recently honored by the Boston Japan Society with its John E. Thayer Award for her “outstanding contributions to further understanding and friendship between the people of Japan and the US.” Her book *My Japanese Table* is full of traditional and new Japanese recipes and reflect her experience from the more than 11 years she lived in Japan. Debra is a member of the New England JACL and this class is a generous gift from her to our JACL membership and friends.

To register for this cooking class:

email your request to yamamoto@nejacl.org
Write **Cooking** in the subject box

***The View from MemChurch* by Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro**

A short audio play by Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro, a NE JACL member, is featured in the Huntington Theatre Company's *Dream Boston* series. Rosanna's play is set in Harvard Yard with a cast that includes Emily Kuroda, Alberto Isaac, and Calley Chase. To listen to the play, go to:

https://www.huntingtontheatre.org/season/upcoming/dream-boston/memchurch/?utm_source=wordfly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBLAST_12.8_DreamBoston&utm_content=version_A

JACL 2021 National Scholarship program

JACL's National Scholarship program offers \$70,000 in approximately 30 scholarships for incoming freshmen, undergraduates and graduate students. This year the application process will be online with deadline for freshmen scholarships March 1, 2021. All other categories of scholarships (undergraduate, graduate, law, creative/performing arts, and financial aid) are due by April 1, 2021. For full scholarship details, go to:

<https://jacl.org/jacl-national-scholarship-program/>

Oshogatsu at the JANM

Sunday to Friday, Jan. 3 to 8, a virtual celebration **some registration required**

A week of virtual, family-friendly activities are planned by the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) to celebrate the Year of the Ox. Activities include a scavenger hunt, raffle, crafts, storytime, shared photos, and an introduction to *Oshogatsu* food. For more information go to: <http://www.janm.org/events/2021/oshogatsufest/>

Tsuru for Solidarity plans a busy 2021

In January, 2021, Tsuru for Solidarity is joining with Japanese Americans for Justice and 24 other social justice, community, labor, and faith groups at the Yuba County Jail (CA) to organize the ***Oshogatsu Protest to Close the Camps*** to have the jail end its contract with ICE and call attention to the inhumane conditions there. Information:

<https://tsuruforsolidarity.org/oshogatsu-yuba-county-jail/>

As part of their **Day of Remembrance** commemoration, Tsuru is organizing a direct action at the Northwest Detention Center (WA) in partnership with La Resistencia, Densho, and Seattle JACL. Information: <https://tsuruforsolidarity.org/day-of-remembrance-day-of-action/>

Anti-Semitism, Anti-Hate Discussion on YouTube

The conversation between David Inoue, JACL Executive Director, and Alan Rankin, Director of the DC office of the American Jewish Committee, on "Anti-semitism, Anti-Hate and the Need for Education" is now available on YouTube. The two civil rights leaders met on December 16, 2020, to discuss what their two communities can do to combat growing hate incidences and work together to push for necessary changes in education about Asian American and American Jewish histories. To access the program go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jguPUu6O2w&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=5a269534-96de-43dc-8f3e-fd2a775101b5>

Books to consider

We often receive notification about books that might be of interest to our membership. This listing is not a review of these books.

Facing the Mountain: A True Story of Japanese American Heroes in WWII

by Daniel James Brown with forward by Densho's Tom Ikeda

The book is based on research and interviews with 442nd veterans and will be published in May 2021.

America for Americans: A History of Xenophobia in America

by Erika Lee

A historical overview tracing the issues of racism and exclusionary practices in America.

Setsuko's Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration

by Shirley Ann Higuchi

The story of the experiences of Higuchi's family during their WWII incarceration.

Distant Islands: The Japanese American Community in New York City, 1876-1930s

by Daniel H. Inouye

A narrative history of the Japanese American community in NYC between America's centennial year and the Great Depression.

Easy Home Cooking for Non-Chefs - *Yosenabe*

Saturday, January 30, from 5 to 6 pm, via Zoom **registration required**

Yosenabe is a combination Japanese hot pot made with just about any kind of meat, seafood, or vegetables. It's easy to make and a great way to stay warm in winter.

The class is taught by Masayo Kawaguchi, a Boston Japan Society volunteer. Cost is \$10 for Japan Society members and \$15 for non-members.

Information and registration: <https://www.japansocietyboston.org/event-4090976>

A Little Gem of a film in hiding – but easy to find!

I discovered a wonderful little film by accident. It's called *Shofuso and Modernism* and tells the story of a Japanese house and garden in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park. The Shofuso was designed by Junzo Yoshimura, the first in a line of Japanese architects to find success in both Japan and the United States. Yoshimura was a close friend of Japanese American woodworker and architect George Nakashima. An interview with Nakashima's daughter Mira, is featured in the film. To find it, go to: <https://www.shofusoandmodernism.com/> Click on the word "OPEN". Then go to the story on the right with the headline: EXHIBITION 02 Sept.-29 Nov. 2020. In the first paragraph of the story find the words "documentary film". Click on the underlined word "film." It will take you directly to the film.

The Shofuso House and Garden was completed in Philadelphia in 1954 and was closed in 2020 due to the pandemic. They are hoping to reopen in 2021. In the meantime, the film offers a preview.

Learn Japanese with Boston's Japan Society

Winter classes are beginning in January for all levels of Japanese language, from Beginner 1 through Advanced. The 12-week classes are offered online and will cover essential communication skills including speaking, vocabulary, grammar, and hiragana/katakana.

Tuition is \$290 for Japan Society members and \$340 for non-members. For information:

<https://www.japansocietyboston.org/Group-Lessons>

Kimono Couture: The Beauty of Chiso

Virtual Exhibition through Feb. 6, 2021

The **Worcester Art Museum** is partnering with Chiso, the distinguished, 465-year-old, Kyoto-based kimono house to present a view of the world of traditional kimono design and artistry. Over the course of 10 weeks, the virtual exhibit provides a rare, behind-the-scenes look at the creation of the *Worcester Wedding Kimono*, the first kimono ever commissioned as a work of art by an art museum. For updates on this exhibition, go to:

<https://www.worcesterart.org/exhibitions/kimono-couture/>