

August 2022

Berkeley JACL Newsletter

SERVING THE BERKELEY, OAKLAND, AND ALBANY COMMUNITIES

Coming Events

- TBD **Berkeley Nikkei Seniors Group** at the West Berkeley Senior Center, 1900 Sixth Street, Berkeley. This group normally meets every 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month. For information about restart, please contact Howard Fukuda (howardfukuda@gmail.com)
- Aug 26 Young Professional Committee of the Berkeley JACL hopes you can join us starting at around 6pm at [Two Pitches Brewing](#); see article inside
- Sep 11 **Berkeley Lions Club Pancake Breakfast**; see article inside
- Oct 1 **2022 Grant Applications are due.** Grant Applications are available at the Berkeley JACL website, www.berkeleyjacl.org/endowment-fundgrants/; see article inside
- Nov 1 **PC Ads are Due**; see article inside

Making Noise is a means to exercise your right to express your views, humor, concerns, or anything else of interest. We will be happy to print it in our Newsletter. Please write to the JACL Berkeley Chapter newsletter, c/o Berkeley JACL, P.O. Box 7609, Berkeley, CA 94707-0609. **MAKE SOME NOISE!!!**

E-mail the Berkeley JACL at: berkeleyjacl@gmail.com
Visit our Website at www.berkeleyjacl.org
www.facebook.com/BerkeleyChapterJACL/



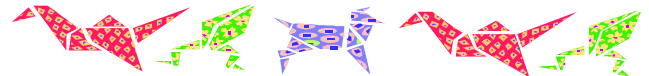
B E R K E L E Y

Endowment Fund Grant Application Deadline Extended to October 1, 2022

By Ryan Matsuda

The Berkeley JACL has extended the Endowment Fund Grant application deadline to October 1, 2022. Grants up to \$2000 may be awarded. Grant Applications are available at the Berkeley JACL website, www.berkeleyjacl.org/endowment-fund-grants/.

The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to support Japanese American community-oriented projects or programs that further the Chapter's goals and purposes. The Chapter's goals include: upholding the human and civil rights of Japanese Americans and all other people; promoting understanding, respect and appreciation of all cultures; and strengthening community ties and fostering coalitions with other groups sharing similar interests as the Chapter.



Takeo ("Tak") Shirasawa, Longest Serving Board Member in Berkeley Chapter History, Passes Away

By Karen Kiyo Lowhurst



It is with profound sadness that the Berkeley Chapter of the JACL shares the news of the passing of a cherished leader and friend in our community. Takeo ("Tak") Shirasawa passed away on June 23, 2022. Tak

was a member of the Berkeley Chapter since 1955, nearly seventy years. He served as a Board member for almost sixty years, including for almost three decades as the meticulous Treasurer. Well into his 90s, Tak reliably attended Board meetings and delivered the Treasurer's Report upon which our Board could always confidently rely. To date, our chapter records indicate that Tak was the longest serving Board member in our chapter's history.

A recipient of the 2003 Pioneer Award for dedicated and distinguished service, Tak was the kind of elder who made us feel proud to be Japanese American. He survived the incarceration with courage and dignity, had a successful career in public service, and had beautiful family who he was proud of.

An only child, Tak was born in San Francisco, and spent his youth in Visalia, where his parents were prominent members of the Japanese American community. Tak and his family were sent to incarceration in Poston III, Arizona. After high school graduation in Poston, Tak left "camp" to move to Iowa to work on a farm. The American Friends arranged for his enrollment at William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo. in the Fall of 1943. Tak first transferred to the University of Illinois in 1944 and then later to Michigan where he finished in 1948. Tak met his future wife, Maye, during a visit to California in 1946. After graduation, he came back to work in San Francisco, where he and Maye were married in 1949. The young couple lived in San Francisco for five years before moving to Berkeley.

Tak worked for the Navy for 20 years and for the Alameda County of Public Health for another 24 years. When he arrived at the County, Tak was a pioneer as there were very few Asian Americans in County service at that time. Once Tak was assigned by his manager to be in charge of hiring chemists, he proudly brought the qualified Asian American employee representation up, toward parity with County population percentage numbers.

It would not be an overstatement to say that Tak was universally loved. "Tak was a legacy, a link to the Nisei generation," said Board member, Gordon Yamamoto. "I know I loved sitting by him when we were meeting at the temple and we would always kid about how close I parked next to him... 'You better have a good report, or you may find a dent in your car' He had a quiet but very good sense of humor. 'He shall be missed,'" said Board member Kaz Mori.

For the younger members of our community, Tak served as an anchor, a role model, an example of what it means to lead a long lifetime of integrity, modesty, and good will. At all times, "Tak embodied what it meant to lead with a moral compass, remain dedicated to your commitments and show up day in and day out for your community," said Amelia Huster, who served alongside Tak as a student rep. on the Board from 2014-17. "He made me feel at home (on the Board) with his warm smile, thoughtful questions, and witty yet soft sense of humor," Huster continued.

"He was a true gentleman, one of a kind," said fellow Pioneer Award recipient and Board member, Al Satake.

"Gentle, kind, integrity and caring are the qualities in describing Tak whom I've known for over 30 years. He wasn't one to get excited, but we recall when the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 granted reparations to Japanese Americans imprisoned in concentration camps during WWII, Tak gave a Tiger Woods "fist pump" during a board meeting, a fitting gesture because of his love of golf. Tak will always remain in our hearts," said longtime chapter members and former Board members, Ken and Ann Yabusaki.

"He consistently added wisdom, insight, compassion, and grace to all of our Board meetings and decisions. His work as treasurer was crucial to the success and vitality of the Berkeley Chapter. Tak was respected and admired by the community and the many Board members who were privileged to serve with and learn from him. His impact upon our Board, chapter and members will never be forgotten," said longtime board member, Vera Kawamura, who, along with both her adult children, served on the Berkeley Chapter Board alongside Tak.

"He loved to talk story," said Neal Ouye, a longtime friend and fellow Board member who delivered Tak's Pioneer Award speech, and for whom, in turn, Tak delivered in 2019. Neal continued: "My wife, KG, and I enjoyed many times with Tak. Family meant so much to him, from the Sunday dinners to Hawaii holidays. He was a gentleman, generous, loyal and lots of fun. His tales of doing the right thing and moving toward a fairer equitable world continued throughout his life of overcoming obstacles. We enjoyed all kinds of food and music together, but those occasions were just the vehicle to chat with a dear friend. We will miss Tak."

"Tak was on the Board for so many years that he told me that my mother was on the Board, which I

didn't even know," reflected Board member Nancy Ukai. "I'll miss him a lot. Riding back and forth to the Board meetings was always a pleasure. Horrible Covid ended that," Ukai added.

Even the global pandemic could not dampen Tak's spirit. Though many of his social opportunities – and Board meetings – were longer safe to attend, he spoke of his great pleasure of being chauffeured by his granddaughter and her regular laundry visits. He was a deeply loved and valued father, grandfather, and great grandfather whose family made sure that his all needs were lovingly and safely met during quarantine.

For all who had the privilege of knowing him, Tak's life will be remembered as a great blessing. The Berkeley Chapter remains forever grateful for the honor of our association with such an extraordinary person. Tak is survived by his two daughters, Susan Muranishi (Aaron) and Leslie Yamada (David); three grandchildren, Scott, Mark, and Allison, and even some great grandchildren.

Tak's family will schedule a celebration of his life when it is safer to gather. They have also suggested donations be made to either J-Sei (1285 66th Street, Emeryville, CA 94608) or the JACL Berkeley Chapter (P.O. Box 7609, Berkeley, CA 94707-0609).



JACL Convention 2022

By Karen Kiyo Lowhurst

Ushering in what is hopefully the first of a long and renewed tradition of in-person Conventions, with a theme of **Strengthening our Community Through Action**, the 52nd Annual JACL National Convention kicked-off on August 3, 2022 at the Bally Hotel in sparkly Las Vegas. This five-day event drew 228 in-person attendees, 53 remote attendees, 41 speakers, 10 organizers and 2 sponsors from all over the country and Japan.

Important Resolution - Delegates unanimously approved resolution to support Congressional ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. The Resolution Committee gave a cogent summary of the history of the Equal Rights Amendment ("ERA"), and set forth persuasively the argument in support of ratification.

Legacy Fund Revisited. Upon Review, Will Remain the Same- The Legacy Fund was developed following the passage of the 1988 Civil Liberties Act. After

President Reagan signed the Act into law, the JACL solicited donations from the JA community to establish this fund for future generations. Proceeds from the Legacy Fund are disbursed annually in the form of Legacy Fund Grants and annual disbursements to chapters. A proposal was made to amend Legacy Fund management to allow the transfer of Legacy Fund monies to General Operations under certain circumstances. The debate was robust and respectful. Ultimately, this motion did not pass.

Terrific Presentations and Workshops

Conventiongoers were treated to myriad presentations on a wide range of topics, including LGBTQ+ Lives, Laws, and Allyship; Situational Awareness Workshop (response to the rise in hate and harassment against Asian American and marginalized groups); Preserving the History of Your JACL Chapter; Political Action, and Career Networking.

World Class Performances: Highlights

Academy Award winner and Berkeley native Chris Tashima (John Muir Elementary, Willard Middle, St. Mary's, and CPS), star of the short film *Lil Tokyo Reporter*, participated in a panel discussion following a screening of the film, alongside Director Jeffrey Gee Chin and Co-Star Keiko Agena (*Gilmore Girls*, *Better Call Saul*). The film, about Issei journalist and civil rights pioneer, Sei Fuji, was a welcome mix of Los Angeles Little Tokyo history combined with a lush, gorgeous period film with beautifully computer-generated scenes of Obon dancing in the streets of downtown Los Angeles.

Conventiongoers were also awestruck by two separate and unique performances by Karate Olympian Sakura Kokumai, who first performed her amazing *kata* (literally, "form," kata is a detailed pattern of movements), only to return shortly thereafter with a stunning *koto* performance alongside beautiful classical Japanese *buyo* dancing.

National Board Elected

Larry Oda, President

Dominique Mashburn, VP of Membership Services
Sheera Tamura, National Youth Student Council Chair
Mika Chan, National Youth Student Council Representative

Seia Watanabe, VP of Public Affairs

Positions for Secretary, Treasurer, and Vice President for General Operations remain vacant. They will be filled by appointment of the President. If YOU

are interested in learning more about these positions and possibly being considered, please contact JACL President Larry Oda at Loda@jacl.org.

Ruby Pin Awardees - The Ruby Pin represents the highest honor given by the National JACL. It was awarded to two worthy recipients this year, The Honorable Dale Ikeda and Mr. Chip LaRouche.

The Honorable **Dale Ikeda** (ret.), hailing from the Fresno/Clovis area, has served the JACL for over 45 years. In addition to his “day job” as a Judge of the Superior Court of Fresno County and a local community leader, Judge Ikeda served the JACL in myriad roles in his Clovis chapter, as Central California District Governor, as a National Board member, as legacy Fund Review Chair, Elections Committee, National Legal Counsel, and multiple times on the Resolutions and Amendments Committee, including as the Chair. Upon receiving his award, Judge Ikeda reflected upon the fact that he met his wife in the JACL. He quipped, “You might find your spouse, too!” as another reason to remain involved. Judge Ikeda’s daughter, Tiffany Ikeda, serves on our Berkeley chapter board.

Mr. **Chip LaRouche** has been a valued and active member of the Portland chapter of the JACL for over 20 years, including serving two terms as the Chapter President. Mr. LaRouche and his wife, Setsy, have been deeply involved in the JACL at the Local, District and National Level. Mr. LaRouche served as the District Governor of the Pacific Northwest District, as well as the Governor’s Caucus Chair. Mr. LaRouche also served on the JACL Finance, Strategic Planning, and Personnel Committees. He was the National JACL Vice President of Planning and Development in 2015-2016.

JA of the Biennium Awardees - The two recipients of this year’s JA of the Biennium awardees were Sam Mihara and Dianne Fukami.

Sam Mihara has made an indelible impact on the educational and legal communities worldwide with his educational programs about the incarceration. Mr. Mihara’s first-hand accounts and observations of his experiences as an incarcerated at Heart Mountain have reached over 90,000 people at over 330 presentations, including those at College Preparatory School in Oakland. Berkeley Chapter members were particularly moved by Mr. Mihara’s talk, at the former hospital site at Heart Mountain, at the Annual Pilgrimage, in 2018. Thanks to Mr. Mihara, Berkeley Chapter member, Joyce Parks, learned new facts about her own birth as

her late mother, Jane Sakauye Uyeda, became a mother for the first time at that site. Mr. Mihara donates 100% of his speaking fees to projects that will enable others to continue telling the story.

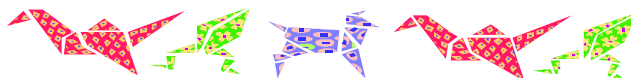
Dianne Fukami, an Emmy-award winning journalist, co-founded Bridge Media, which produces media on a multitude of Japanese American experiences. Ms. Fukami’s most recent film, co-produced with Debra Nakatomi, followed the life of the late US Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta. Ms. Fukami generously delivered a screening and film talk at J-Sei in Emeryville shortly after its national release. This event drew attendees from all over Northern California. Ms. Fukami is also a founding member of the Regional Asian American Journalists Association. Locally, she teaches video storytelling at the Academy of Art University. She is also a Berkeley JACL Chapter Thousand Club Member.

Time Flies! Next Year’s Convention Details Coming Soon

Believe it or not, we can soon expect the announcement of the location and dates for next year’s National Convention. National Convention is open to you! If you are interested in attending, the Berkeley Chapter has funds available for which YOU can apply. Attending Convention is a wonderful way to meet our JA community members from all over the USA, to make new friends, learn about the latest developments in the JACL, and make your voice heard.



Former US Representative Mike Honda and former California State Assemblymember Floyd Mori get “fangirled” by Berkeley Chapter co-president, Karen Kiyo Lowhurst, during a break in proceedings.





Hooray for the NCWNP District Delegates!

Berkeley JACL Young-Mid Career Professionals Happy Hour on August 26th!

By Tiffany Ikeda, Tara Umemoto, and Beth Uno

The Young Professional Committee of the Berkeley JACL hopes you can join us on Friday August 26th starting at around 6pm at [Two Pitchers Brewing](#) in Oakland for a young-mid career professionals' happy hour. Please come, enjoy our private lounge, and have a beer and some apps on the Berkeley chapter of the JACL (Japanese American Citizens League). All are welcome! Feel free to spread the word and invite others.

J-Sei Celebrated it's 50th Anniversary

Postponed from 2021 due to the pandemic, the gala anniversary event was held on June 25 at BLOC 15 in Oakland's Jack London Square hosted by Ryan Takemiya. The 50 year journey of this incredible community organization is inspiring. Their many support services include delivering hot Japanese lunches, case management, friendly visitors (via phone calls), caregivers and health/educations programs, to highlight just a few. The evening included incredible entertainment, wonderful friends and neighbors and delicious food in a beautiful venue. Honorees recognized were Board President Robert Sakai, Bruce Hironaka, Pam Honda, Ned Isokawa, Aki Nakao and Ben Takeshita.

Although most of our Nikkei community is familiar with the services J-Sei offers, here's a bit history.

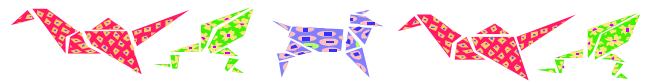
In 1970, a visionary East Bay Sansei Students Assn. formed with the purpose of providing and fostering educational, social and cultural development for the JA community. Incorporated in 1971, the new organization was named East Bay Japanese for Action (EBJA). During those years, 23 organizations focused on senior

housing and launched East Bay Issei Housing, Inc. (EBIH). In 1978 they developed a 100-unit building subsidized by Housing and Urban Development and called it Eden Issei Terrace. Later, J-Sei Home was obtained, as well as a house that served as offices on Channing Way in Berkeley. The merger of these two entities in 1986 formed Japanese American services of the East Bay (JASEB) and in 2010 changed its name to J-Sei.

We appreciate the hard work of the Planning Committee, J-Sei Board of Directors and J-Sei Staff for this memorable milestone gathering. Berkeley JACL was proud to honor J-Sei's legacy as a Hayabusa (Falcon) sponsor. We raise a toast to their future as they continue to meet the needs of our community.



Some Berkeley JACL members at the JSei Celebration



Japanese American and Queer: Raising the Pride Flag in San Francisco Japantown

By Tara Umemoto

On Friday, June 3, 2022, for the first time ever, the Progress Flag (a new version of the Pride Flag adding representation of the Trans community and people of color) was raised in San Francisco Japantown's Peace Plaza. It flew next to the Japan Flag and United State Flag representing both the Japanese American identity and Queer identity. The flag was raised during Queer Trans Asian Pacific Islander (QTAPI) Week leading into Pride month to represent the intersecting identities of the Queer and Japanese American community, showing that our LGBTQ+ Japanese American friends and family can be who they are in all of their identities.



This was the work of the Japantown Rainbow Coalition (JRC) who also held a ceremony on Saturday, June 4, 2022 to honor and commemorate the raising of the flag. The JRC are a group of S.F. Japantown community members who were brought together by Elena Nielson of the San Francisco Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). The coalition included representatives from Japanese American Religious Federation (JARF), Omusubi, National Japanese American Historical Society (NJAHS), Japantown Task Force, Berkeley Chapter of the JACL, and other community members. The JRC worked with the local Japantown businesses, many community organizations, as well as the S.F. City's Department of Recreation & Parks to raise the Pride Flag for the first time in S.F. Japantown, making it one of the first cultural districts to raise the Pride Flag.

The ceremony included performances from Jiten Daiko (taiko group) and Kristi Yummykochi, prayers by Japantown religious leaders, and speakers including - S.F. District 5 Supervisor Dean Preston, S.F. District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman, S.F. Assessor Joaquín Torres, S.F. JACL president, and Marsha and Aiden with [Okaeri](#), a Japanese American LGBTQ+ support organization. All shared meaningful messages and stories recognizing both the struggles and joy of being a Japanese American LGBTQ+ individual.

Raising the Progress Flag was a physical, visible, and emotional show of love and support for LGBTQ+ individuals within S.F. Japantown as well as for the larger LGBTQ+ community in San Francisco and beyond.

The Berkeley JACL was proud to be part of the planning of such a momentous event and was thrilled to provide support to the wonderful NJAHS "[We are LGBTQ+ Nikkei](#)" art exhibit which was shown throughout the month of June and through July 15th. Being part of these meaningful events — raising the Progress Flag and the exhibit — was another way to express our support, love, and appreciation for the

diverse Japanese American community and continue to share with the community the importance of accepting each person as they are with all of their identities.

Berkeley Lions Pancake Breakfast

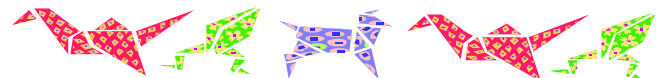
By Mark Fujikawa

The Berkeley Lions Club will be hosting its 40th annual Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, September 11th from 8 am until noon, in front of the Veteran's Building in Albany Memorial Park. The Berkeley JACL is once again a sponsor of this event and has complimentary tickets available for its members. If you are interested in attending, please call Al Satake at 510-697-0195 or Mark Fujikawa at 510-232-0724 for complimentary tickets.

Baseball and Bento

By Mark Fujikawa

The Berkeley JACL held its annual Baseball and Bento event at the June 3rd Oakland A's baseball game. In addition to delicious Bento dinner from Musashi Restaurant, the 37 attendees were treated to spectacular fireworks show following the game. And the kids were treated to an up-close appearance by the A's mascot, Stomper the Elephant, who made a visit to our section.



November 1 Deadline for Holiday Ads in the Pacific Citizen!

Holiday Ads in the Pacific Citizen -- will kick off in early October. Please support the Berkeley JACL by submitting a "Season's Greeting" or advertisement in this year's Pacific Citizen Holiday Issue. This is our chapter's largest (and only) fundraiser for the year.

Your support helps us continue awarding grants and scholarships, support activities for our seniors,

sponsor youth involvement in the Nikkei community, host culturally sensitive events, and print our wonderful newsletter. Of course, at the forefront is our attention on civil rights, especially this year when we co-sponsored several Anti-Asian Hate awareness events.

We count on your generosity to assist us in these worthy endeavors by placing a holiday ad in the Pacific Citizen. If you have supported us in the past, please consider maintaining or even upping your commitment to allow the Berkeley JACL to continue to fight for justice for our community.

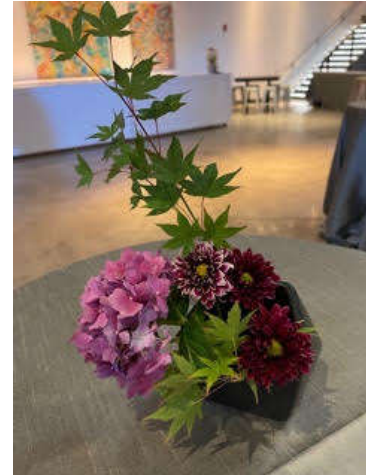
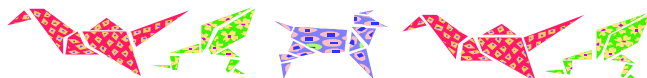
The ad rate remains unchanged at \$25 per column inch. A 2-column x 2-inch (business card size) ad costs \$100. There are a variety of ad sizes to choose from. Each column is approximately 1¾" wide. Please consider increasing the size of your ad – the additional income for the chapter will be appreciated! The deadline for the holiday greetings is November 1. However, if you need additional time, please give one of us a call and we'll work with you to ensure your submission appears in the Pacific Citizen Holiday Issue. The Berkeley JACL receives a percentage of our sales proceeds (based on total column inches sold) and your participation is a reflection of our fundraising success – for our chapter as well as the Pacific Citizen!

New ads are especially encouraged and welcome! Renewals are as simple as (1) sending us your approval via email OR (2) calling by phone to give us "the go ahead" OR (3) returning the ad form to the address noted below. Please let us know if you have any changes (new graphic, change greeting, update year, etc.). It's OK to submit in color. Renewal forms will be emailed/snail mailed to you very soon. If you wish to place a new ad, please email us your ad copy or business card and graphics, if any.

Payment: Your check should be made payable to Berkeley JACL and mailed to PC Holiday Ads – Berkeley JACL, ATTN: Sandra Doi/Val Yasukochi, P.O. Box 7609, Berkeley, CA 94707-0609.

Unfortunately, we are unable to accept credit card payments at this time, but PayPal payments can be made by contacting Sandra Doi at the email below.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to email Sandra Doi, sdoi.bjacl@gmail.com or call or email Valerie Yasukochi, vyasukochi@gmail.com, 510-336-3371.



Co-Presidents	Karen Kiyo Lowhurst, Tara Umemoto
Secretary	Tiffany Ikeda
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Newsletter

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Moving and changing your address?
Send us a *Change of Address* card at:

Japanese American Citizens League
Berkeley Chapter
Membership
PO Box 7609
Berkeley, CA 94707-0609

Berkeley JACL Membership Application

Names(s) – primary and spouse/partner _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone# and Email _____

<u>Membership Category</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Description</u>
Regular/Individual	\$70.	National dues \$65+\$5 Chapter dues
Couple/Family	\$115.	National dues \$110+\$5 Chapter dues
Student/Youth	\$35.	National dues \$30+\$5 Chapter dues
Thousand Club	\$100.	Annual contribution
Thousand Club Life	\$3,000.	One-time payment for lifetime membership
Century Club	\$175.	Annual contribution
Century Cub Life	\$5,000.	One-time payment for lifetime membership
Millenium Club	\$1,000.	Annual contribution

Your tax-deductible check payable to Berkeley JACL can be sent to our PO Box 7609, Berkeley, CA 94707-0609 or JACL National Headquarters, P.O. Box 45397, San Francisco, CA 94145-0397.

Your membership includes a digital subscription to the Pacific Citizen (be sure to include your email address). If you prefer a hard copy, please check the box below and include your check for an **additional** \$17/year.

☐ **MAIL** me the Pacific Citizen – enclosed is my check for an additional \$17.

For more information, contact JACL National Membership in San Francisco at 415-921-5225 x25.

Payment by credit card can be made at <https://jacl.org/member/>. Please specify you want to be a member of the Berkeley Chapter

**Japanese American Citizens League
Berkeley Chapter
P.O Box 7609
Berkeley, CA 94707-0609**

Support the Berkeley JACL by placing an ad in the PC