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SEPTEMBER 2025  
VOLUME 26, ISSUE 4

# Long Beach JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER NEWSLETTER



## President's Message

Flo Kojima, President 2025

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Hello Everyone!

How have you been faring in this Summer weather... it was nice and cool, then all of a sudden, the temperatures have jumped into the high 80's - low (?) 90's. I personally can't take this heat...cold you can layer and layer but the hot heat and humidity...you can take off only so much clothes (unless of course you're at home).

My daughter, husband and Bebe came for a 2-week visit. They sort of wanted to escape the hot, humid temperature and heavy rain happening in Japan. Well, before she arrived, we had been having very nice cool weather. Almost cold during the morning and evening hours. The minute she stepped off the plane, it seemed like she brought the heat and humidity because during her 2-weeks stay, almost everyday was high 80's ~ low 90's. And she's complaining as we don't have an air conditioner in our house. So the portable fans were at full blast. And the baby - thought I'd enjoy her, which I did when she wasn't crying for her mommy (constantly) to be carried or because she was hungry. About the only way to keep her from crying, mostly, was to let her see my poor 16 year old Flynn. She stops crying and then starts chasing after him around the house, even climbing stairs after him. Both Grandma and Flynn are now de-stressing. But I'm missing her already...

To think that we've passed the half-way point of this (crazy) year - 2025. How time flies (?)....

The LBJCC Summer festival was again, a great success. Thank you to all those who participated.

All the LBJCC Organization members and their families, friends and volunteers. Most who are behind the scenes people. These are the people who do the running around for those who do the actual interacting with Festival goers. So a Great Big Mahalo to you all...

Continued on page 3

Long Beach Japanese  
Cultural Center  
1766 Seabright Ave  
Long Beach, CA 90813

[www.lbjcc.org](http://www.lbjcc.org)

LBJCC is a 501c3 organization and  
your donations are tax deductible  
as the law allows.

Fed Tax ID: 95-3416426

**Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center  
2025 Board of Directors  
Executive Committee**

**President – Florence Kojima (310) 997-4470  
1st Vice President – Anthony Tanaka (562) 455-7470  
2nd Vice President – Ole Nervik (562) 533-2994  
Treasurer – Joanne Leivici (310) 994-0553  
Secretary – Atsuko Yomogida (562) 715-3949**

Organization	Contact	Phone	Meeting Time/Other Info
Beikoku Shodo Kenkyukai	Hiroko Ishiguro	(562)431-0820	Classes: Mondays 10am-1pm
Grace First Presbyterian Church	*Danny Nakagi	LBtunstrops@hotmail.com	Services: Sundays 9am & 11am
Kimekomi Doll-Yukari Kai	*Atsuko Yomogida	(562)715-3949	Classes: 3rd Sat of the month, 1:30pm-3:30pm at LB Buddhist Church Instructor: Mrs. Yukari Kanesaka
Kokoro Taiko Kai of Long Beach	*Joann Matsunaga	(310)387-8163	Practices: Saturdays 1-3pm
Long Beach Buddhist Church	*Keiko Shibata	(562)533-6431	Services: Sundays 10am at 2360 Santa Fe Ave Long Beach
Long Beach Ikenobo Ikebana	*Izumi Minamitani	(310)292-0179	Classes: 2nd, 3rd & 4th Saturdays 1:30pm (call to confirm)
Long Beach Japanese Language School	*Ole Nervik	(562)533-2994	Classes: Saturday 8:45am-12:30pm
LBJS Alumni & Friends Assoc	*Nancy Kobata	(562)896-9537	
Long Beach Ondo Group	June Donovan	(562)708-3633	Practices: May-June Mondays & Wednesdays 7:30-8:30pm @LBJCC Ondo for exercise October-May, Friday 7:30-8:30pm @ LBBC
Long Beach Judo Dojo	*Anthony Tanaka	(562)455-7470	Practices: Tuesdays & Fridays 7pm-9pm
Long Beach Kendo Dojo	*Hayato Okawa		Practices: Mondays & Thursdays 7:30-9:30pm
Long Beach Shotokan Karate	Osamu Nichimura		Contact: James Watkins (562)417-0584 Practices: Wednesdays 7-8:30pm
			*Denotes Voting member organization
Website/Newsletter	Jay Shaheen	(562)305-8982	
Membership	Joanne Leivici	(310)994-0553	
Building Superintendent	Osamu Nishimura	(562)644-1443	
Scholarship Committee	Jeffery Inui	(562)666-1004	
Senior Luncheon	*Keiko Shibata	(562)533-6431	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month, call for reservation

## The Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center Mission Statement

The Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center has served as the primary facility in the Long Beach Harbor area in furthering an understanding and appreciation of the Japanese culture and the Japanese American experience through its offerings of cultural and visual arts instruction, as well as Japanese language classes, events and activities for the benefit of citizens of all ages, ethnicity and religious affiliations.

**Our Mission is:**

- To enhance the lives of the citizens of the Long Beach/South Bay area through accessible, quality instruction in the various Japanese cultural, visual, language and martial arts.
- To serve as a cultural resource of civic and community events, thus adding to the already rich cultural diversity of the area.
- To preserve and further the timeless cultural traditions which are our legacy by generations past.
- To collect, document and establish an archives library of historical artifacts, data, visual images and an oral history of the Japanese American experience in the Long Beach and surrounding areas to serve as a unique educational resource.

## **President's Message** **continued from page 1**

We tried our best to improve our Festival every year so that things run smoother/smoothly from the previous year. The stage area for our martial arts group - Kendo, Karate, Judo-I believe, got a little more padding.

It's too bad that we can't do something about the hot sun bearing down on the demonstrators. But they all did a great job of showing off their skills.

The Ikebana demonstration was as always wonderful to watch. Seeing the students show off what they learned by arranging different kinds of florals. And the flower arrangements inside the classrooms looked beautiful. Those fortunate enough were able to learn to make their own arrangements to take home.

The game booths were a crowd gatherer. Kids trying to win prizes while trying their skill at the respective game booths.

The food booths were of course the winners. All the yummy food being offered - Shave Ice, I'm quite sure was a winner because of the hot heat. The Teriyaki booth tried something different this year. They were very Eco friendly with their paper products. And some said this year's beef, chicken and the accompanying veggies were very tasty. They ran out of: first the beef, then the veggies. And even ran out of Take Out boxes. By the end of the festival, the last of the customers, who were fortunate (?) to get some food ended up with rice and chicken - no veggies, no tsukemono - served on paper plates. I was helping inside the booth but I didn't even get to order and take home our famous Chicken teriyaki. But I was able to 'munch' on some chicken scraps so I got to at least taste the food.

As I was inside the booth, I didn't get to watch the Ondo and Taiko performance. But heard there was a very large crowd, larger than previous year. It's nice that people outside of our own community will come and join in our Great Summer Festival. Looking forward to next year's festival. Hopefully I'll get to try all the foods.

It was also great to see those of you that attended the Long Beach Buddhist Church Obon on August 23rd. I heard they did 32 dances! A new record!

Keep safe. Keep cool. And see you all around the Center.....



- **Sept 13 to Jan 31<sup>st</sup> - Fall Semester at Long Beach Japanese Language School**  
**[www.lbjls.org](http://www.lbjls.org)**
- **October 10<sup>th</sup> - Ondo for Exercise at LB Buddhist Church, Fridays 7:30-8:30 pm @2360 Santa Fe Ave Long Beach**
- **December 20<sup>th</sup> - LBJLS Holiday Program - Pancake Breakfast & Craft Fair**
- **December -New Year's LBJLS Mochi Sale-order deadline December 20<sup>th</sup> & Pick on the 28<sup>th</sup>. More information to follow**



Long Beach Judo Demonstration at the  
2025 Summer Festival



## Ninjutsu Expert Guest Lecturer at the LB Japanese Language School Summer Program

On August 9, the Long Beach Japanese Language School had the pleasure of welcoming Dr. Kacem Zoughari for a special talk on the theme of Japanese colors, titled “Beyond the Sword: Exploring the Cultural Depth of the Bushi through Colors.”

The Language School was first introduced to Dr. Zoughari almost two years ago by Dr. Alison Heney, VP of Learning and Public Programs at the Museum of Latin American Art. Last summer, he was a guest lecturer in our program themed “Unknown Story of the Ninja.” He gave a fascinating talk with a sword demonstration on the history of the ninja.

Dr. Zoughari holds a Ph.D in Japanese History and Culture from the National Institute of Oriental Civilization in France. His lifelong studies of martial arts have recognized him as an expert in classical martial arts. He has studied Ninjutsu for over 34 years. He has also published many articles and books and continues to give lectures and seminar tours in many countries.

This year marked his second visit, and the Language school was delighted to have him back.

For this lecture, Dr. Zoughari brought a 300-year-old picture scroll from the Samurai Museum in Berlin, where he is affiliated, and shared its fascinating history. Our students were especially amazed by the scroll’s vibrant colors, which looked so fresh that it was hard to believe they were painted more than three centuries ago.



Dr. Kacem Zoughari, Guest Lecturer



Dr. Kacem Zoughari, presenting ancient Japanese scrolls.



Ancient Japanese Scroll



Dr. Kacem Zoughari, presenting ancient Japanese scrolls.



# Locust Ave: Stories of Solidarity and Resistance

By: Karen Harper, Linda Nishida Gager, Reina Avila

We invite everyone to attend the Historical Society of Long Beach Cemetery Tour at Sunnyside and Municipal Cemeteries Saturday, October 25, 2025.( <https://hslb.org>) The intriguing story of the Japanese American families who owned homes on Locust Avenue during World War II is our topic this year. The Walkers of Farmers and Merchants Bank helped the Sugiyamas, Yomogidas, the Odagiris, Ishiis, and the Shirioshis save their homes during incarceration in Manzanar, Jerome, and other camps. How did this happen when so many lost everything? Did the bank help save other homes? What compelled the bank owners to choose to stand up to rampant prejudice and hostility towards Japanese Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor? How do these events inform today?

We have some answers with many missing pieces. For years Mas and Aiko Takeshita were our first source. Now we are asking you. If any of you have more pieces of the story or photos, please let us know soon. You might also know about others who lived on Locust before WWII: Toshi Kawaii, Ida Sugi, and Mas and Francis Yoshimoto.

A little background: Every year for the last 20 years or so Linda and Karen have presented local Japanese American stories at the Cemetery Tour to preserve and celebrate that precious community history. We are proud of telling about many people such as Hideo Tsuchiyama, a Terminal Islander, a 442nd Regimental Combat soldier, and an early computer expert; or Hisa Fuji Ishii who wrote a diary at Santa Anita Assembly Center and later broke segregation barriers as a volunteer; or Tom Hamade who became a tugboat captain; or the Takahashis and their exquisite bird pins.

We have learned so much and fallen in love with all the people we have celebrated, but we may retire soon from this volunteer labor of love.

Would any of you like to work with us and take over presenting some of the many Long Beach Japanese American stories waiting to be told? Another opportunity: Purchasing an ad in the Cemetery Tour Program to support our work. (<https://hslb.org/29th-annual-historical-cemetery-tour-sponsorship/?v=0b3b97fa6688>) Thank you, Karen Harper: 562-673-3605, Linda Nishida Gager: 562-881-3371, Reina Avila: 562-338-2846.



Photo1: Kimi Sugiyama, son Raymond, daughter-in-law, and the new puppy at 1863 Locust circa 1950s, home built by the family in 1929.



Photo 2: Yomogida home, 1857 Locust Ave circa 2025.

# National Day of Action at JANM

On August 23rd, a crowd of young, old, different nationalities and backgrounds, gathered for the National Day of Action community rally in front of the Japanese American National Museum. The rally was titled “Never Again: People and Places will not be erased”, focused on defending the accurate history and truth of the WWII Japanese American incarceration. The rally was part of a nationwide action confronting President Donald Trump’s plan to cut funding for the National Park Service, that currently preserves interprets many World War II internment camps as national historical sites, such as Manzanar, Minidoka, Tule Lake, Amache and Honouliuli.

At the rally, survivors were honored and spoke sharing their experiences, such as Dr. Takahashi Hoshizaki, 99, who was interned with his family at Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Another survivor from Tule Lake, Kyoko Oda, spoke of how her father was confined in the camp’s segregation stockade without due process. Oda drew similarities between her father and family’s experiences during WWII and the present ICE raids devastating immigrant communities today.

The significance of the location of the rally, at JANM in the Mineta Democracy Plaza, was not lost, as it is the same place where Japanese Americans were gathered in 1942 when they were forcibly removed from their homes and taken to internment camps without due process. During the rally, Ann Burroughs, president of JANM, said, “What happened to the Japanese Americans in 1942 was a miscarriage of justice then, and what we’re seeing happening to our brothers and sisters in immigrant communities is a miscarriage of justice now.”



Survivors from WW II Japanese internment camps at the National Day of Action in Little Tokyo.

Other speakers included a National Parks Service worker, who spoke about the detrimental effects of the continued cuts that the Trump administration has instituted to the National Park Service. A member of the Manzanar Committee, Glenn Kiayama and Nikkei journalist James Omura also spoke about the dangers to free speech and free press that is resulting from the censorship of American history. Ann Burroughs, also warned of the Trump administration’s cultural purge and “attempts to sanitize and reshape history fit a narrow ideological narrative that amounts to nothing less than the erasure of history.”



Supporters and signs at the National Day of Action in Little Tokyo.

**Congratulations**  
To all of the recent Graduates!



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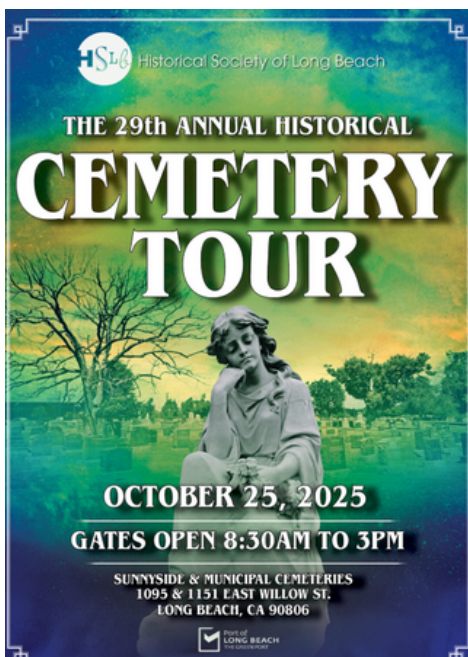
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**Check out our video of the  
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**January 1 through December 31, 2025**

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Your annual membership and donations enable us to carry out various program throughout the year.

Thank you for your continued support!

The LBJCC is a 501c3 charitable organization and all donations are tax deductible as the law allows. Federal Tax ID: 95-3416426



# LBJCC Summer Festival 2025



**Photo Credit**  
**@theshootist365**





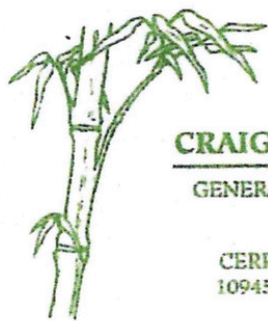
# LBBC OBON 2025



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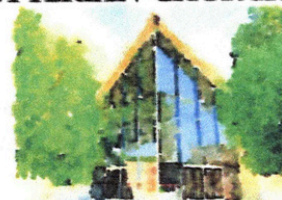
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# LONG BEACH JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER 2025 MEMBERSHIP AND DONORS LIST

All listed have paid their membership for 2025. Donors have the following after their names: NB (New Building or Construction Donation), BM (Building Maintenance) and/or G (General) as of September 1, 2025

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2. Akashi Kazuye -G	52. Hernandez, Jessica	102. Morales, Jorge	151. Sanchez, Brenda
3. Alcazar, Gisella	53. Hideshima, Atsuko Heidi-NB	103. Morris, Melina & Anthony	152. Sarmiento, Danison
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44. Guan, Sarah	94. Mason, Stephen	144. Ruth, Susan-G	193. Yamasaki, Tak
45. Hachiya, Don-G	95. Matoi, Donna & Craig-G	145. Sahagun, Celina	194. Yomogida, Atsuko-BM
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47. Harper, Karen	97. Matsushita, Vernon & Claire-G	147. Sakaida, Donna-G	
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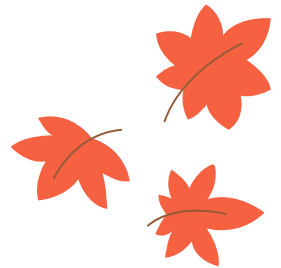
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SOUTH BAY

Saturday, October 25, 2025  
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute  
1964 W 162nd St, Gardena, CA 90247

#### Registration

Register for FREE by scanning the QR  
code or by visiting [keiro.org/CC25](http://keiro.org/CC25).  
Registration is required and closes on  
Friday, October 10, 2025.



Keiro.

## Long Beach Japanese Language School

This is your invitation to join  
our community!



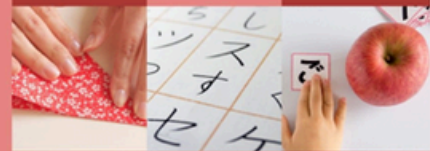
### Saturday class hours

8:45 AM to 12:30 PM

TEACHERS

TEACHER  
ASSISTANTS

PARENTS



VOLUNTEERS

ALUMNI

FRIENDS

For more information,  
please contact:  
Mihoko Tanabe, Principal  
email: [info@lbjls.org](mailto:info@lbjls.org)  
phone: (562) 285-3816

Long Beach  
Japanese  
Cultural Center

## Seeking Teachers

Visit us at  
[www.LBJLS.org](http://www.LBJLS.org)

Facebook.com/LBJLS





