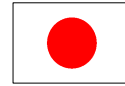




O.A.A. Newsletter



Okinawa Association of America, Inc., a Nonprofit Organization
16500 S. Western Avenue, #203, Gardena, CA 90247 (310) 532-1929

President's Message

Ken Kamiya

Haisai Gusuyo!

Thank you for electing me as your 25th President of OAA, Inc. I would like to thank Past President, Mr. Sadao Tome, and his cabinet for the great job they have done these past two years. The organization is in good shape and running smoothly. The next two years are very critical because of the upcoming 100th Year Anniversary of OAA, which will be held in 2009. We will need many

months to prepare for this gigantic event. Your help and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This year's Shinnen-enkai was a huge success. Approximately 600 members and guests attended and enjoyed a delicious and plentiful lunch and great entertainment. The "Chimugukuru" (Uchinanchu Spirit) was evident throughout the hall. Tell your friends and relatives who did not attend, to mark their

calendars for next year's party, which will be held on 1/20/08.

Hopefully by the time you are reading this article, the elevator at the OAA Center will be operational. The finishing touches are now in progress and a final inspection by the State of California inspector will be required.

Thank you for your patience and understanding these past months. We are still accepting donations to the Elevator Fund. Please send your donation to the OAA Office, if you wish to donate.

Let's work together to strengthen



OAA and spread the "Chimugukuru" (Uchinanchu Spirit). Ippee Niffee Deebiru!!!

Wanted - student for Jr. Study Tour

Date: July 18 - July 30, 2007

(Homestay from July 18 to July 22)

Place: Okinawa

Cost: All program expenses including airfare paid for by the Okinawan Prefectural Government (except homestay expenses)

Need relative or friend for homestay

Qualifications: - of Okinawan descent

- Between ages 13 to 18

- Family member of OAA

- in good health, friendly, socialable

* Someone who has never been to Okinawa is preferred

* Although Japanese language is not required, some ability of Japanese is preferred.

**For application form, call OAA office (310)532-1929

Deadline: Thursday, March 15, 2007 (postmarked)



行事予定表



Events



- 3月25日 第3回オキナワ・イン・ポップ・カルチャー・シリーズ
(映画: The Teahouse of the August Moon (1953)
(ヤング・オキナワーズ)
- 4月19日 パーラ カジノ ファンドレイジング
(ウチナーグチクラス・箏曲研究会)
- 4月20日 (予定) 上運天ウェスリー (文化部)
- 4月21日 婦人部 料理教室 (クープイリチー)
- 4月22日 ボーリング大会 (青壮年部)
- 4月29日 第4回オキナワ・イン・ポップ・カルチャー・シリーズ
(映画: Beat 1998 宮本亜門作)
- 5月5日 「こどもの日」イベント (ヤング・オキナワーズ)
- 5月6日 *ウーマン・オブ・ザ・イヤー・ランチオン
(南加日系婦人部) 真境名愛子
- 5月20日 芸能部20周年記念
- 5月27日 カジマヤ5周年記念パーティー
- 6月21日 サンタ・バーバラのガーデンズ・オブ・ザ・ワールド
見学1日旅行 (婦人部)
- 7月15日 県人会園遊会
- **当県人会以外の行事
- 第1火曜日: ボランティア・デー
- 第1土曜日: カラオケ・クラブ



- March 25 "Okinawa in Pop Culture Series #3"
(Young Okinawans of So. CA)
Movie: The Teahouse of the August Moon (1953)
- April 19 Pala Casino Fundraising
(Uchinaguchi Class/Sokyoku Kenkyukai)
- April 20 (Tentative) Talk by Wesley Ueunten (Culture Committee)
- April 21 Fujinbu Cooking Class "Kubu irichi"
- April 22 Bowling Tournament (Seisonenbu)
- April 29 "Okinawa in Pop Culture Series #4"
(Young Okinawans of So. CA)
Movie: Beat (1998), Director: Amon Miyamoto
- May 5 Children's Day Activity (Young Okinawans)
- May 6 **Woman of the Year Luncheon (Aiko Majikina)
- May 20 Geinobu 20th Anniversary Luncheon
- May 27 Kajimaya 5th Anniversary
- June 21 Gardens of the World, Santa Barbara field trip (Fujinbu)
- July 15 OAA Annual Picnic

**Denotes related events other than OAA events

Note: The first Tuesday of every month is Monthly Volunteer Day.
The first Saturday night of every month is Karaoke Club.

若い次世代への継承
新役員就任式典及び新年宴会

北米大陸四十一都道府県人会中最規模を誇る北米沖縄県人会(ロサンゼルス)二月二十一日モンテベロ市クワイヤットタウン・レストランにて、役員就任式と新年宴会を開催、これまでにない大盛況で六百人以上が参加した。

第一部は退任する役員と功労者にたいする感謝状の授与がおこなわれ、マンオブザイヤーにペドロ安慶名さん(ベルー一世)、ウーマンオブザイヤーにナオミ遠藤さん(三世)が表彰された。退任する当銘貞夫会長は「ボランディアのたゆまぬ協力のおかげで二年間にわたり県人会の全ての行事スケジュールを成功裡に完了、今後は県人会歴史書の作成と理事の一人として会運営に協力して行く所存」と役員一人一人に労をねぎらった。そのあと新役員就任式に入新会長ケン神谷さん(ハワイ三世)以下二十人の役員が宣誓をした。今年度南加県人会協会の会長に就任した沢岷安さんなど招待客

どから祝辞が述べられた。仲井真知事の祝辞が日英両語で披露された。神谷新会長は向う二年のテーマは「若い世代への継承」となっている、と強調した。

第二部開幕と同時に舞台はフアツシヨシヨール化した。デザインナーの山内光子さんが三山のモデルをとまないわざわが沖繩からかけつけ、当地のモデル十五人と合わせオキナワシウエアが紹介された。モデルの中には女優のタムリン富田さんも出演、さかんに愛敬を振りまいて踊り、続いて日本舞踊、県人会芸能部の皆さんにより琉球舞踊、琉球民謡、祭太鼓、空手、琴の演奏などを披露、沖繩色を出して観客を魅了した。最後は全員が輪になって手を合わせ、芭蕉布のシーを踊り、来年の再会をきいて散会した。(当銘貞夫写真、新役員宣誓式、左か四番目ケン神谷新会長)



Presenting our 2007 Board of Directors and Officers

- Ken Kamiya -- President, Board of Directors, Building/Fundraising
- Chogi Higa -- Advisor, Board of Directors, Uchinaguchi Class
- Sadao Tome -- Advisor, Board of Directors, History, Website
- Pedro Agena -- Vice-President, Board of Directors, Karaoke Club
- Aiko Tokunaga-- Vice-President, Chief Financial Officer, Culture
- Helene Shimane -- Secretary, Board of Directors, Young Okinawans
- Ethel Asato --Treasurer, Board of Directors
- Katsuko Arakawa -- Auditor, Board of Directors, Geinobu
- Naomi Endow -- Auditor, Board of Directors, Membership
- Haruo Yamashiro -- Public Relations, Board of Directors, Kajimaya
- Tomiko Akamine -- Board of Directors, Hospitality
- Sachiko Arakaki -- Board of Directors
- Masanobu Ajifu -- Board of Directors, Seisonenbu
- Shigecko Yamauchi -- Board of Directors, Membership
- Kimiko Goya -- Board of Directors, Fujinbu
- Dan Ashimine -- Board of Directors

Geinobu New Year Kick-off

To start off the new year with a great boost of excitement we held our first Geinobu meeting/dinner at the Sea Empress in Gardena on Sunday, February 11, 2007. It was wonderful to see familiar faces as well as new ones. Once everyone was settled, the ceremony began with greetings from M.C. Naomi Endow. In recognition of the past chairperson, Haruo Ishihara, and other Geinobu officers, appreciation plaques were awarded for their hard work and effort. Ishihara-sensei stated that without the support of all officers and Geinobu members he wouldn't have successfully completed his term. Thanking all members, Ishihara-sensei passed the torch to Katsuko Teruya, the new Geinobu Chair for 2007-2008. Katsuko Teruya takes over as the Geinobu enters into its 20th year of existence. In her speech, she expressed that while preserving the past Geinobu events she would like

to further expand and relay the importance of Okinawan culture to the younger generation as well as the older generation through new ideas. Ishihara-sensei and Teruya-sensei started off the entertainment portion of the ceremony with a duet. M.C. Naomi Endow and Geinobu advisor, Chogi Higa did a wonderful job while reaching out to all members speaking in multiple languages--English, Japanese, and Okinawan. Special thanks to Yoshimichi Shinjo for setting up the audio system; Chogi Higa and Yuko Yamauchi for their help. Thank you very much to all members for attending this event. (Translated by Janet Akiko Yamauchi)



The OAA New Year's Party and New officers Installation



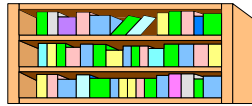
Geinobu Officers for 2007 (From right to left): Chairperson-Katsuko Arakawa, Vice Chairperson-Akiko Kaneshiro, Treasurer-Michiko Numata, English Secretary-Akiko Yamauchi, Dance Chairperson-Yoko Kono, Vice Chairperson-Richiko Nakashima, Japanese Secretary-Itsumi Jacomo (Missing: Vice Chairperson-Atsushi Gushi, Music Chairperson-Steve Matsumoto)

KAMIYA LIBRARY UPDATE

How time flies! We're already into the third month of 2007. OAA, Inc.'s Charles M. & Yoshiko Kamiya Library continues to serve our membership, young and old. With the completion of our elevator, we're anticipating more use by our seniors. A great, big thank you to our dedicated volunteer, Eileen Yorizone for creating a data base of all the books we have in English as well as the abundance of video tapes we have available. Other volunteers who have given of their valuable time are Ruth Loo, Betty Oshiro, Charlotte Gibo, Kay Goda, Margaret Oshiro and others. We are still in need of volunteers who can read Japanese to work in the Japanese Section. Volunteers are so valuable to us!

Six months of the year, yours truly travels back and forth to Hawaii to care for her 90 year old mother who has advanced Alzheimer's disease. I have gathered some information on that topic as well as what a care-

taker must be aware of in caring for a loved one. You may find them in our library. Also, for parents with young children, there are lots of Disney videos, favorites such as Lion King, The Little Mermaid, Jungle Book and many, many more. Please come in and check them out. Our library bulletin board theme this year is: OAA, INC./MEMBERS in the NEWS. We'll need your help in gathering articles/photos in newspapers or magazines about OAA, Inc. or any of its Members. Please submit them to our OAA Office. Our library hours are: Mon.-Fri., 10:00 AM-4:00 PM and the LAST Saturday of each month. Please call in advance if you wish this service at (310) 532-1929. Thank you to all the volunteers who have donated to OAA, Inc.'s Charles M. & Yoshiko Kamiya Library. (Jane H. Kuniyoshi)



北米のウチナンチュー調査 白水武蔵大教授

文部科学省からの援助を受け、グローバリゼーションとエスニック文化の変化という大きなテーマを掲げ、海外ウチナンチューの調査のために白水繁彦武蔵大学社会学部教授がロサンゼルス入りした。五年プロジェクトの三年目として取り組んでおり、ハワイ・ウチナンチューの調査に多くの時間を費やしてきた。北米にも目を向けたいと十四日には県人会役員と懇談会を持ち同時に体験談を聴き、インタビューをした。

さきの調査で白水さんは「特にハワイのウチナンチューは、沖縄との関係において三回の大きな精神の高揚を経験した」という見方をしている。今年からは、

比較の意味を込めて北米のウチナンチューの運動も見てみたい、とリーダー(指導者)や活動的メンバーと次々に面談。得た結論は「当然ながら、最初の調査ですから十分なデータを得ることはできませんでしたが」と前置きして、ロサンゼルス近在のウチナンチューも戦後の救援活動、会館取得をめぐる運動など何段階かの高揚期を経験していることを見いだした。また、リーダー層の活動がそうした高揚と強い関係を持っており、メンバーの関心を引き続けるために様々な手を打っているという感触も得た、と表現した。

ハワイ宜野湾市人会員でもあ

Lost and Found

New Year's Party Raffle Prize Missing! Someone went home with the wrong raffle prize on Jan 21! If you took home a box of Noritake China (4 dinner plates) repacked in a red quesadilla-maker box, please let us know so we can get the complete set to the right people and the CORRECT prize to you! A brand new humidifier is

at the OAA Center waiting to be exchanged for Noritake dinner plates. Please help get the prizes to the right people!

Items left at the Quiet Cannon Jan 21: Angel pin, Pair of zoris (slippers) with initials MY, Red Hawaiian print tote bag with change of clothes and iron, Ladies silver watch found in Yamauchi Building.

Atsumi "Ats" Akamine's Chibariyo Party

Over 60 people came to show their Uchinanchu love and support to Ats Akamine before he left on March 4th for an 18 month tour in Iraq. He has been in the National Guard for 18 years and has helped in disaster areas such as the Northridge Earthquake, LA Riots and El Nino flood relief. But now he will be deployed overseas to Iraq. Ats, his Mother (Tomiko) and brother (Tatsuo) were overwhelmed by the many friendly people in at-

tendance and the delicious potluck dishes for everyone to enjoy. The OAA presented Ats with a quarters lei and Tomiko with a red fuzzy fur lei. Helene prepared a scrapbook of well wishes and love with photos to support Ats whenever he reads the messages. Sam took a video as a memory of this wonderful "Chibariyo" party for Ats to share with the rest of his family who could not be there. Ats - we'll keep you in our thoughts and prayers.

(Helene Shimane)

Keiro Senior Health Care Charity Drive

During the weekends of December 2 & 3, 9 & 10 and 16 & 17 of 2006, OAA participated in the annual Keiro Senior Health Care Charity Drive sponsored by the Japanese Chamber of Commerce. This was one of our coldest winter weather, but our OAA volunteers were bundled up at both entrances of Mitsuwa Marketplace in Torrance ringing their bells for donations - "Onegai itashimasu".

On December 27, 2006, Chogi,

Tomiko and Ethel went to the JCC office in Little Tokyo to count the money box collected by OAA. Our collection was \$1,578.00. The Japanese Chamber of Commerce donated \$10,324.46 to the Keiro Homes which was the total from all the participating organizations. Special thanks to all our OAA volunteers for their time and effort. We're going to need more of you to volunteer this year in December. "Onegaishimasu and Ippee Niffee Deebiru!" (Ethel Asato)

る白水教授は「海外のウチナンチューが、自らの文化に誇りを持ち、ウチナンチュー・アイデンティティーを獲得していく課程を明

らかにしていきたい」と抱負を述べた。(当銘貞夫)



芸能部便り



顧問の比嘉朝儀氏、事務局の山内優子さんに役員一同お礼申し上げます。芸能部会員各自のご活躍に乾杯！(芸能部書記 ジャコモ五美)

沖縄県人会芸能部主催、新旧役員交代式及び親睦新年夕食会が去る、二月十一日・日曜日にガーデナ市にあるシーエンプレスで開催されました。何かと行事の重なる時期にもかかわらず芸能部会員、県人会関係者計八十名余りが参加した。

この日、過去二年間にわたり芸能部長を務めた石原春雄氏を中心に活躍された各役員、顧問の方々に感謝状が寄与されました。石原部長は遠方に住む私が二年間の役職を無事に終えることができたのは、役員をはじめ会員一人一人のおかげだとお礼の言葉を述べた。

引き続き、新部長(照屋勝子)により二〇〇七年、二〇〇八年に向けての新役員が発表され、照屋勝子新部長は、旧部長石原氏の労をねぎらい、「今年二十年を迎える芸能部のこれまでで築き上げられてきた業績を大事

に生かしながら、新しい試みも考慮、各芸能教室の連帯を大切にしそれぞれの分野で皆様方会員が琉球伝統芸能保存継承、発展の為、役員一同協力していきたい。更に、若い芸能部会員の参加を促すという事で、英語書記に冠千会与那嶺恵子琉球道場門下生山内亜希子さんを起用し、芸能部における若い世代の活性化に力を入れていきたい」と話した。夕食後は、新旧芸能部長二人の息の合ったデュエットでカラオケが進められ、会員それぞれ楽しい時間を過ごしました。司会の遠藤なおみさん、比嘉朝儀さんは、それぞれ日本語、英語そして、沖縄方言で理知に富んだ進行で宴会を滞りなく終えることができました。開催するにあたり、オーディオを担当してくださった新城義道氏、いろいろな雑用を引き受けてくださった

婦人部便り

平成十九年二〇〇七年の年頭に当たり会員の皆様に謹んで新春のお慶びを申し上げます。

今年「イノシシ」年でございます。猪は「猪突猛進」という様に兎に角前へ突き進むイメージが強いです。十二支では「亥」と表していました。後、「猪」が割り当てられる様になったそうです。猪は、子作りが上手なので子孫繁栄を象徴し勇敢な動物とされています。さて、二ヶ年のつもりで引き受けました婦人部長の役ですが後任がおらず後一年私が任務を果たす事になりました。今年も各部の御協力を得ながら横との連携を深め婦人部の更なる活性化をめざして楽しい婦人部にしたいと願っております。

今年の役員の皆様をご紹介致します。

顧問ー安里エソル、部長ー吳屋君子、副部長ー島美恵子、モリス恵子、国吉ジェーン、書記ー島根ヘリオン、会計ー儀保シャロット、比嘉レイラ、手芸工芸調整者ー島根ヘリオン、料理教室調整者ー安里エソル、赤嶺トミ子

二月十五日(木)フアンド・レージングとして恒例になりましたたハーラス・インディアン・カシノ行ディアン・カシノ行きも無事に終了致しました。今年は定員五十四名以上の申し込みがあり早めに締め切らせて頂きました。次の会員から寄付を頂きました。百ドルー安慶名ペードロ、五十ドルー金城トシエ、八幡シェリー、二十五ドルー照屋勝子、山内繁子、呉屋ジェーン、比嘉レイラの皆様方そして当日は沢山のフード・ドナーションもあり、すでに紙上を持って御礼とさせて頂きました。当日は運転手へのチップを差し引いて純益は千四百四十二ドルとなりました。皆様

の御協力に対し心から感謝申し上げます。

三月四日(日)婦人部新年親睦会が開催されました。舞踊は宮城能松先生にお願い致してあります。婦人部では益々楽しく充実した親睦会をめざして頑張っておりますので会員は万障お繰り合わせの上、御出席下さいませ。当日は十二時迄で現在、お弁当代としてお一人様十ドルを徴収中です。御主人同伴で早めにお申し込み下さい。尚、定員に達し次第締め切らせて頂きますので御了承下さい。

婦人部の為にお使い下さいと次の会員から寄付がございました。伊波洋子百ドル、高野マリー二十五ドル、栗国ドロティー十五ドルそして小浦シゲ、小田イレイン様方から十ドルずつ頂きました。御厚情に対し衷心より厚く御礼申し上げます。婦人部で有意義に使わせて頂きます。

既に今年の婦人部年間行事予定表を郵送致しましたが、まだ届いていない会員は是非、県人会の事務局にお問い合わせ下さい。

最後になりましたが二〇〇七年の皆様にとりまして健勝で実り多き一年になりますよう心から祈念申し上げます。ご挨拶と致します。

(追伸)

第四十五回、日系市民協会並びに南日系婦人会主催の日系女性功労者を選出する二〇〇七年度の「ウーマン・オブ・ザ・イヤー」に婦人部推薦の真境名本流ロサンゼルス舞踊道場の真境名愛子先生が受賞者の一人として選出されました。授賞式及びランチオンは二〇〇七年五月

六日(日)午後十二時三十分からニューオータニ・ホテルにて行われます。真境名愛子先生、受賞おめでとうございます。詳細は後日お知らせ致します。婦人部長 吳屋君子

写真はフアンド・レージングのためのハーラス・インディアン・カジノ行きグループツアー参加者



南加県人会協議会 新会長に沢岷安和さん

南加県人会協議会の二〇〇七年度新役員就任式が二月十六日、ホテルニューオータニに日系社会の各界代表者約三百人(沖繩県人会から七十三人が出席)が参集して開催された。新会長に沢岷安和、副会長兼書記に比嘉朝儀、会計に当銘貞夫の各氏がそれぞれのポジションに就任した。沢岷新会長は就任のあいさつで「日本語教育活性化への支援と、各県人会独自の伝統文化を通して活力ある協議会を築いていきたい」と各県人会に協力を呼びかけた。来賓として出席された在ロサンゼルス総領事館の児玉和夫総領事は祝辞で「県人会の果たしてきた歴史を継承すると同時に、未来志向の役割が重要」と力説した。

北米沖繩県人会からの協議会の会長就任は、玉栄正一さんに

次いで二人目で三十年振り。同県人会からは協議会創立以来初めて。ほかに顧問の金城武男さん、会員部の山城春雄さんが活躍している。南加県人会協議会は、県人会同士の会長連絡会議として、一九六四年に創立。以来、紆余曲折を経て、現在は四十一の都道府県の県人会が加盟し隆盛の一途を辿っている。

夕食を挟んでの余興に入る前に、沖繩県人会から縁起をかつぐコイン・レイが沢岷新会長に贈られた。次いで同県人会・芸能部による「安里屋ユンタ」の歌・三線と踊りが披露され、満場の拍手を浴びた(比嘉朝儀・写真 山城春雄)

写真：向かって左から六番目が沢岷新会長、沖繩県人会員ら



世界のウチナンチュ大会「一校一国運動」参加者(左から)山城春雄、当銘貞夫、比嘉朝儀、天願愛子、島根ヘリー



南加県人会協議会2007年度新役員就任式並びに新年親睦会

第四回 世界のウチナンチュ大会 「一校一国運動」 北米沖繩県人会から七人が参加

「地域の国際化の推進、国際化に対応した。天願さんは「こ得る人材及びウチナーネットワークの担い手となる次世代の育成を図る」の目的で、沖繩の各地域の小、中、高校の児童生徒を対象に一校一運動は大会のブレイベントとして開催された。「移民の歴史や海外に在住するウチナンチュについて学ぶ」の内容。一校一国運動に海外のウチナンチュ六十人以上が参加し約五十校を訪問。沖繩の子供たちと講演を通じて交流を深めた。

北米沖繩県人会から七人が参加。母校やゆかりのある学校を訪れ、それぞれのテーマで講演を行った。天願愛子さんは、十月十一日、母校の知念小学校で児童たちとの交流会の後、同級生約三十人と担任だった宮里初江さんが天願さんに

会うために駆け付け、天願さんは「こんなに集まってくれなんて。本当にうれしい。知念村は私の唯一の古里です」と五十二年振りの再会を喜んだ。島根ヘリーさんは、十一日、南風原の南西中学校を訪問し「沖繩とアメリカの学校システムの違い」について説明。ホームルームでの児童生徒とアメリカの学校システムの違いについて説明。ホームルームでの児童生徒とアメリカの学校システムの違いについて説明。ホームルームでの児童生徒とアメリカの学校システムの違いについて説明。

市の珠算で名高い赤道小学校(長濱まさ子校長)で、三年生約五十人を対象に「少年よ、大志を抱け!夢と希望を持ち続けて頑張つて欲しい」と児童たちを激励した。国吉ジェーンさんは赤道小学校で児童たちにアメリカを紹介し喜ばれた。当銘貞夫さんは、十八日、母校の上本部中学校(崎濱秀宜校長)で、全校生徒の百十六人を対象に「プラス思考を忘れずに、夢を持ち続けてほしい」と熱く語り掛けた。比嘉朝儀さんは、同日、母校の城中中学校(内間安延校長)で、三年生の百八十七人に「世界のどこに行っても、ウチナンチュとして誇りをもって羽ばたいて欲しい。そして意思のあるところには、必ず道は開ける」と力強く語った。県人会代表の七人は、一校一国運動の重任を終え、無事、十月末、帰国した。(比嘉朝儀 記、写真 山城春雄)

World Karate Confederation Champs

On October 20 - 22, 2006, the World Karate Confederation held the 5th Jr. World Championships and World Cup for Children in Hannover, Germany. There were 20 countries and 48 federations with 1,200 competitors, 20 coaches and 70 referees in attendance. In the Junior division, the United States held the highest medal count with 10 gold, 4 silver, and 7 bronzes. The US team included our own OAA members and San Diego Okinawa Kenjinkai members, Tomotsugu (18 yr. old), Miya (16 yr. old) and Mutsuo (16 yr. old)

Arashiro. They felt fortunate to be a part of the team. The competition was fierce and very experienced. For Tomotsugu, this was his second time attending, taking 1st place in Kata in 2004 (15-17 yr. olds) and this year, repeating his success and taking gold (18-20 yr. old) once again. Miya took second place in Kata and fought her way to the top to take first in Kumite. Mutsuo made a great showing with his Kata Suparinpe to take second behind his teammate. Morning trainings, learning unity and the friendships that grow are



experiences that these competitors will never forget. (Tami Arashiro)
Congratulations from OAA to Tomotsugu, Miya, and Mutsuo

Arashiro and their proud parents, Tami and Tomohiro Arashiro!
(Photo: Arashiro winners-Tomotsugu, Miya and Mutsuo)

World Kendo Championships

My name is Fumihide Itokazu and I have been doing kendo for 19 years. Kendo was something I was thrown into by my father, and it just seemed to stick. Over the course of my kendo career, I have attained the rank of 3-dan, won the 2005 Goodwill National Championships, and have been a two-time US Team Member. For the past six years I have been doing the nito style, which is an unorthodox style that utilizes two shinai instead of one. I have achieved many of my accomplishments through the use of nito. In December of 2005 the 13th

World Kendo Championships were held in Taipei, Taiwan where 49 countries participated. Our team motto for these championships was "Believe." It was the simple concept to believe that we are capable of being the best. For 10 grueling months we practiced believing that we could do something no one had ever done before: defeat Japan. For the past 12 championships, Japan has won every single time, with Korea usually taking second. Everyone believed it would be Korea that would finally defeat Japan. We fought hard to make it to the

semi-finals to face Japan, but everyone was already anticipating the likely finals match between Japan and Korea. It was a very close match with the score going back and forth, and everyone began to imagine the impossible. When our 5th team member scored the final match point, the whole arena burst into cheers with a flurry of American flags waving in the US section. It was one of the most exhilarating moments of my life. A group of individuals who do kendo mostly as a hobby, defeated Japan's top players who are labeled as professionals. We did the impossible. After the initial excitement was over, we had to come back to reality, for our objective was not completed full circle. We still had one more match with Korea. Although we had defeated the best team, we were mentally and physically exhausted and did not have enough left to take on Korea. We lost two to zero.

Even though we did not win the tournament, we still held our heads high, for we were the first team to dethrone Japan. Through the eyes of many, we were the true winners that day. Personally, it was very difficult bal-

ancing work, life and kendo this past year. Almost every weekend, I would have to work at Disneyland until one or two in the morning, and then get only a few hours of sleep and go to practice at seven. As soon as practice was over, I immediately had to drive back to Disneyland to work another 10 or 11 hours. I also had to sacrifice Ryukyukoku Matsuri Daiko, which I enjoy doing very much. It would be impossible to perform, let alone practice, with this kind of schedule. However, it is something I would do all over again. I am now looking toward the next world championships that will be held in 2009 in Brazil. With more determination and conviction than ever before, I believe we can once again make history by winning it all. (Fumihide Itokazu) (Note: The OAA wishes to warmly congratulate Itokazu (25), who is the son of Setsuko and the late Fumio Itokazu of San Dimas, CA. He is a graduate of CSU Fullerton with a BA in Business Administration. He plans to enroll in a master's program this year.) (Photo: Fumihide competing at the 2003 12th World Kendo Championships, Glasgow, Scotland)



Our experiences at the 4th Worldwide Uchinanchu Taikai

After 40 years, I returned to my ancestral homeland, Okinawa. It was also my first Taikai Experience. Our top priority was for my husband, Kevin & his 2 older sisters to go "Ohaka Maeri" to pay homage to their family. "Okage Sama de" - because of them, we are here today enjoying a better life. We then visited with relatives & friends who Kevin & his sisters haven't seen for 60 years. It was truly an emotional "Homecoming!"

Sightseeing in Okinawa at all those places I only read about was wonderful! Truly, all the events at the Taikai from marching in the parade, the impressive Opening Ceremony, plays & through the spectacular closing ceremony were so memo-

orable. It was amazing to see so many Uchinanchus from 24 countries, all in one place! The Okinawan proverb: "Ichariba Chode" rang so true - "Once we meet, we are brothers & sisters."

I returned home even prouder to be an Uchinanchu. I truly believe that we need to "educate" our younger generation in the understanding and maintaining the rich heritage & culture of Okinawa. We're looking forward to our return trip to Okinawa at the next Taikai in 2011. At this time, we're taking our 2 children, so they too can experience the wonders & joy of their ancestral homeland, Okinawa. (Jane Kuniyoshi)

My Taikai Experience: "Is the Uchinanchu Taikai Geared for the Younger Generation?"

Greetings! I am Yuko Yamauchi, the OAA Office Manager. With the recommendation of the OAA, I had the honor of attending the Taikai as one of 15 Jisedai Daihyou (Next Generation Representatives) from kenjinkais around the world. In his opening ceremony speech, outgoing Okinawa Governor Keiichi Inamine addressed the need to mentor and develop young leaders. He pointed out the inclusion of the Jisedai Daihyou and Project Esperanza to the Taikai. At a separate meeting, it was inspiring to see the Project Esperanza presentations by the younger Uchinanchu. This was a world-wide competition for the promotion of Okinawan culture, to select and fund creative, innovative programs submitted by young Uchinanchu. Everyone was under 40; the three youngest presenters from two different countries were only 18! During the Taikai it was also nice to see that Okinawa proves competitive

in organizing international meetings, and I thought the simultaneous interpreting and translations in four languages were first-rate.

I have just a few observations and a suggestion to make to the organizers of the Taikai in Okinawa. Although the Jisedai Daihyou had the opportunity to attend all the formal events, there was no venue to meet the other Jisedai Daihyou representatives. On our own, we had to seek out each other and gather informally, to share our experiences and our young generation's point of view, coming from diverse countries. I was pleased to witness that the younger generation is willing to work and make things happen, instead of waiting for our elders to change things for us. Although we encountered a few other organizational problems, I am pleased to report that there was a significant effort put forth by the organizers. If the Taikai is to continue,

Increasing the local Uchinanchu IQ - YOSC's 2007 Challenge: What is your Uchinanchu IQ?

Question: What is the name of the village that Mr. Miyagi and Daniel-san visit in Karate Kid 2? Bonus Question: Where is it located? (Email youngokinawans@yahoo.com, if you know the answer--or want the answer!) If you attended the new "Okinawa in Pop Culture Series" put on by YOSC in January, you'd know the answer, for YOSC is committed to raise the local Uchinanchu IQ--one point at a time!

The new YOSC leadership (in the form of Mariko Walton, Eric Takamine, David and Eriko Kurashige, Amy Oshiro, Garrett Ginoza and Yuko Yamauchi) is committed to implementing new ideas to help spread Uchinanchu awareness and attract the younger Okinawans in the community to join. At time of print, the YOSC's Culture Committee was busy planning their first activity for the kids and young families on Girls' Day, on March 3. A larger family day activity is planned for Sat, May 5, Children's

Day. The Social Committee has already hosted two "Okinawa in Pop Culture Series" screenings of films (US & foreign) set in Okinawa and has revamped the group's website and



created a Yahoo! Group. There is also a new YOSC brochure. YOSC can use your help. Pick up a brochure, check out the website, or simply spread the word. We want to share our Uchinanchu heritage and pride with the local community. Invite someone to join us at our future events or to become involved. For more info, call the OAA Center or visit <http://www.yoscla.org> or email. Ready for the next IQ question? Stay tuned!

it has to more fully involve and inspire the younger generation.

If you have been uncertain about attending the taikais, for whatever reason, I can assure you, you will NOT REGRET going! I can attest to that. Also, thanks to Okinawa BBTV, you can still experience the 4th Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, including the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Naha Tug-of-War,

the Parade and the finale at the Seaside Park. Go to the website: www.okinawabbtv.com/chimugukuru/index.htm Although it's in Japanese, you can easily guess at the links for the various events. Enjoy!! (Photo: Edward (Brazil), Mary (Peru), Keith (Hawaii), Jack (Seattle) and Yuko at the Governor's reception)





From the Editorial Division

会報部



本誌は北米沖縄県人会の正式刊行物です。関係記事は理事会の承認を得た上で最終原稿をEメール(nijima@pacbell.net)でお送り下さい。締切期限を守るようお願い致します。次回原稿締切は**2007年5月31日**です。

*This is the official newsletter of Okinawa Association of America, Inc. Members' information, Committees' news, etc., are welcomed. Please e-mail your article, after having obtained approval of the Board of Directors, to nijima@pacbell.net no later than **May 31, 2007** for the next issue. Please meet the deadline.*

Staff: Writers, Editors & Proofreaders (編集スタッフ)

The Chief Editor: Helene Shimane

Proof Readers: Ethel Asato, Chogi Higa, Naomi Endow, Kimiko Goya, Ken Kamiya

Photos: Sadao Tome, Helene Shimane, Haruo Yamashiro, Chogi Higa

Writer (執筆・リポーター・記者)

Sadao Tome, Ken Kamiya, Helene Shimane, Ethel Asato, Itsumi Jacomo, Chogi Higa, Jane Kuniyoshi, Fumihide Itokazu, Akiko Yamauchi, Tami Arashiro, Yuko Yamauchi, Kimiko Goya, Desk Top Publishing (制作): Nancy Nijima

OAA Inc. では当会員のみならず、アメリカ国内外の各沖縄県人会及びその関係者、沖縄県庁等に本会報約700部を発送しています。

General Announcements:

* Don't miss: Wesley Ueunten, UC Berkeley scholar, former Kempri recipient and long-time friend of OAA will (hopefully) perform on sanshin and speak on recent research/experiences in Okinawa-related studies. Tentative date set for Fri, 4/20. Call OAA for more details.

* Library Hours: In optimistic hopes that the elevator will be completed, the OAA Library will be open temporarily on the last Saturday of each month. Please come by and visit! Next date: March 31. Call to confirm.

* Email Updates: OAA has begun sending out email updates to keep members and friends connected more frequently. If you would like to subscribe, please write to mensore@earthlink.net.



Okinawa Association of America, Inc.

a Nonprofit Organization
16500 S. Western Avenue, #203
Gardena, CA 90247
Tel: 310-532-1929
Fax: 310-808-9280
mensore@earthlink.net
www.oaamensore.org

Stamp



To:

.....
.....
.....