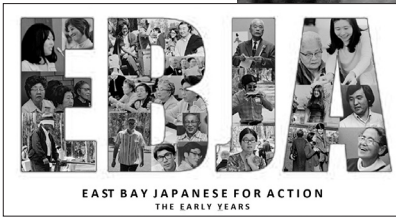




# J-SEI

Summer 2021 | Volume 50 | Issue 2



HISTORIC PHOTOS OF EAST BAY JAPANESE FOR ACTION ARE COURTESY OF THOMAS OKAMOTO.

## ON JA COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

In celebration of 50 years, J-Sei hosted a panel with early founders Dennis Yotsuya and Reiko True of East Bay Japanese for Action (EBJA) and Robert Sakai of East Bay Issei Housing. The two community organizations merged to become Japanese American Services of the East Bay (JASEB), that is now known as J-Sei. Here are some of the reflections of the early organizers. Many thanks to Lauren Kawana for moderating the panel. The program can be viewed on the J-Sei YouTube channel.

### Reflecting Back



**Reiko** In 1974, when the JA community was coming together to demand reparations, we organized to take the Issei to a photo exhibit. The Issei, mostly women, were tremendously moved. Some started to cry, not just a painful

memory but a moving experience. They wanted to talk about their experience, out of which came “Our Recollections.”



**Bob** My fondest memory is about the Grand Opening of Eden Issei Terrace. It had taken so long and it had come to fruition. It was everything that I and everyone who had worked on had ever dreamed of and I’m thankful for that.



**Dennis** We were all young idealists, thought that we could change the world, the group of Sansei... EBJA tried to involve community organizations... It was the coming together of all these talents, staying focused. The community was evolving and we needed to stay with it.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

## J-SEI REOPENS



J- Sei is very excited to announce that we have reopened our Emeryville facility on June 21. We are following the Center for Disease Control, State of California and Alameda County health guidelines. These guidelines are ever changing so please be prepared for adjustments in our protocols and operations as we try to create the safest environment for seniors, visitors, volunteers and staff. The most updated news will be posted on our website [www.j-sei.org](http://www.j-sei.org).

A gradual re-opening approach has begun in phases and requirements may change in the future but at this time we are asking all visitors to:

- Show proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test taken within the last 72 hours.
- Wear a mask at all times.
- Keep socially distanced by at least six feet.
- Wash and/or sanitize hands frequently.
- Pre-register for classes online or by phone.
- Complete a COVID-19 health screen for symptoms upon arrival.

Preventative Measures in place at J-Sei:

- Directional signs
- Spacing indicators that keep people six feet apart



- Air purifiers in all classrooms
- Open windows (as much as feasible)
- Sanitizing of bathrooms, high touch areas and furniture used in class

We are currently in Phase 1.0:

- Nutrition lunch delivery has expanded to Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- A limited number of the wellness and cultural education classes have begun in-person and/or as a hybrid class (in-person and virtual). These first classes to return in-person will be the smaller classes with attendance less than 10 or 25% room capacity; and classes that benefit from in-person instruction.
- Friendly Visitor/Caller continues by phone or computer. If both senior and volunteer are fully vaccinated, in-person indoor visits may resume with mask wearing and social distancing. If only one party has been fully vaccinated or no individuals vaccinated, in-person visits may resume outdoors with mask wearing and social distancing.
- Caregiver Registry staff continues to primarily offer assistance by phone and email. However, in-person appointments can be scheduled.

# J-SEI CLASS LISTING

Check out [www.j-sei.org/classes](http://www.j-sei.org/classes) for the latest updates and changes.



## IN-PERSON CLASSES

Pre-registration is required for all in-person classes: <https://tinyurl.com/JSei-InPerson>

### Weekly

Tuesday – Tai Chi (1-2:30 pm)

Wednesday – Sogetsu Ikebana, intermediate (1:30-3 pm, hybrid)

Thursday – Watercolor Painting (1-3 pm)

Friday – Intro to Tai Chi (1-2 pm, hybrid)

### Monthly

1st Tuesday – J-Sei Sings (10-11:15 am)

3rd Wednesday – Kimekomi Doll (10 am -1 pm)

## VIRTUAL CLASSES

### Mondays

Tanoshii Japanese (10-11:30 am)

Tai Chi (1-2 pm)

Staying Healthy (2:30-4 pm)

### Tuesdays

Gentle Yoga (10-11 am)

Community Ukulele (1-2 pm)

### Wednesdays

Qi Gong (10-11am)

Aging Together (1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 10-11:30 am)

J-Sei Sings (3rd Wednesday, 10-11:15 am)

### Thursdays

Strength & Balance (10-11 am)

Minyo no Odori (11 am-12:30 pm),

Mah Jong Club (12-2:30 pm)

Family Caregiver Support (1st Thursday, 4-5:30 pm)

### Fridays

Men's Club (1st Friday, 10-11:30 am)



# J-SEI PROGRAMS

## J-Sei Connect

J-Sei Connect offers a variety of virtual workshops and community forums to engage individuals in reflection, dialogue and creative expression. To see what is upcoming, visit [www.j-sei.org](http://www.j-sei.org) and sign up for our eBlast news.

## Virtual Book Club

Join J-Sei's Book Club, an opportunity to delve into a new book each season. Share your

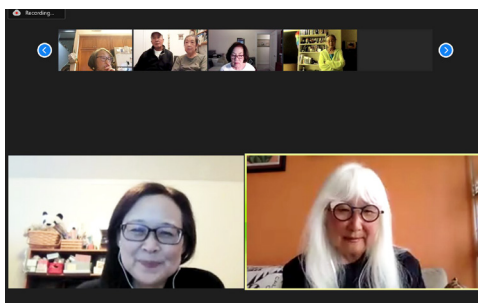


questions, thoughts, and personal reflections on what you are reading on a protected book club webpage. Engage in a Book Club

meeting to discuss the latest book and share your discoveries. Our summer book read is *Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning*, by Cathy Hong Park.

## J-Sei At the MOVIES

Fridays, July 16 and August 13



J-Sei At the Movies meets monthly on a Friday evening to discuss Japanese and Japanese American films of different genres and subjects. Adapting to virtual programming has allowed us to invite guests outside of the Bay Area. Most recently we've hosted Desmond Nakano and

Tom Gorai of "American Pastime," Emiko Omori featuring "Then Becoming Now," and Rea Tajiri screening "Yuri Kochiyama: Passion for Justice." The video recordings are available for viewing on J-Sei's YouTube Channel. Sign up for the Movie Night email list or visit our website for the latest announcement. Upcoming Movie Nights will feature Yuriko Gamo Romer of "Mrs Judo, Be Strong, Be Gentle, Be Beautiful" and "Diamond Diplomacy" on July 16, and Kerwin Burk of "Infinity and Chashu Ramen" and "Kikan: The Homecoming" on August 13.

## Simple Japanese Cooking

Thursdays, July 15, August 26, Sept 23, 3 pm

We continue to try new recipes and learn to create heart-warming, soul-satisfying dishes with tips and techniques taught by Azusa Oda. You are invited to cook alongside Azusa, or log in to



see the demonstration. The best part is in the tasting which can be enjoyed when you try out the recipe.

Upcoming classes: Football Sushi (Inarizushi), July 15; Japanese Curry from scratch, August 26; Tendon and Kakiage, September 23.

Suggested donation is \$10-\$15 per class. RSVP to [jill@j-sei.org](mailto:jill@j-sei.org) and indicate "Cooking" with the date of the class you plan to attend.

Azusa Oda, author of *Japanese Cookbook for Beginners*, is an avid home cook, food blogger of [HumbleBeanBlog.com](http://HumbleBeanBlog.com) and designer. *Japanese Cookbook for Beginners* is available for \$20 at J-Sei.

## J-SEI PROGRAMS

### Ningyo Pouch Craft Workshop

Friday, August 13, 9 am to 3 pm

Spend a day with us handcrafting a Ningyo (Japanese doll) small bag to carry your phone, small necessities or shopping list. Instructor Carolyn Hayashida has been sharing her sewing and creative crafting skills with J-Sei for the past 20 years. She will share her stash of fabrics for you to choose from as well as most other



supplies—including cotton for pouch and lining, felt, embroidery and invisible thread, and pattern. Please bring one package of “Extra wide double fold bias tape, 1/2” wide” in a color of your choosing for the kimono front of the pouch.

Workshop fee: \$30 (includes material fee of \$5) RSVP to [jill@j-sei.org](mailto:jill@j-sei.org) with “Ningyo” in the subject line. A J-Sei To-Go lunch can be reserved, or bring your own lunch. A mask must be worn and social distancing is observed. Pre-registration information will be sent with your confirmation. Space is limited, sign up early.

### Book Event: *Clark and Division*, a new mystery by Naomi Hirahara

Saturday, August 21, 2 pm

Join us as we welcome back Naomi Hirahara and embrace her newest mystery. We will host a hybrid book reading and in-person Meet the Author and book signing to follow at J-Sei.

Twenty-year-old Aki Ito and her parents have just been released from Manzanar, where they have been detained by the US government since the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, together with thousands of other Japanese Americans. The life

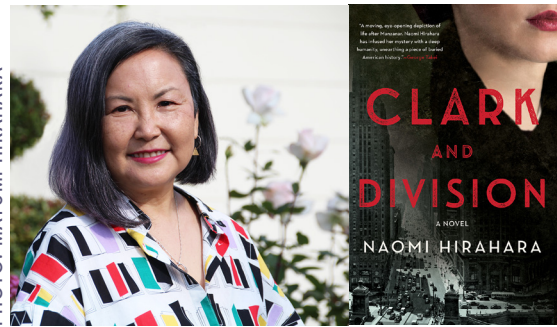


PHOTO: MAYUMI HIRAHARA

in California the Ito's were forced to leave behind is gone; instead, they are being resettled two thousand miles away in Chicago, where Aki's older sister, Rose, was sent months earlier and moved to the new Japanese American neighborhood near Clark and Division streets. But on the eve of the Ito family's reunion, Rose is killed by a subway train.

Aki, who worshipped her sister, is stunned. Officials are ruling Rose's death a suicide. Aki cannot believe her perfect, polished, and optimistic sister would end her life. Her instinct tells her there is much more to the story, and she knows she is the only person who could ever learn the truth.

Naomi Hirahara is the Edgar Award-winning author of the Mas Arai mystery series, including *Summer of the Big Bachi*, which was a Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year and one of *Chicago Tribune's* Ten Best Mysteries and Thrillers; *Gasa Gasa Girl*; *Snakeskin Shamisen*; and *Hiroshima Boy*. She is also the author of the LA-based Ellie Rush mysteries. A former editor of *The Rafu Shimpo* newspaper, she has co-written non-fiction books like *Life after Manzanar* and the award-winning *Terminal Island: Lost Communities of Los Angeles Harbor*.

RSVP to [jill@j-sei.org](mailto:jill@j-sei.org) with “Naomi Hirahara 8-21” in subject line.



# 10th Annual J-SEI Family Festival



(510) 654-4000  
[www.j-sei.org](http://www.j-sei.org)  
[info@j-sei.org](mailto:info@j-sei.org)



Sunday, September 19, 2021

1285 66th Street, Emeryville  
 time to be announced

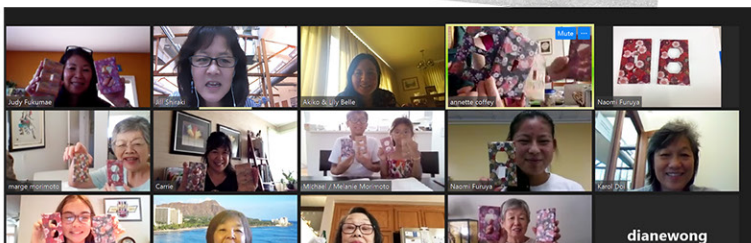
## Save the Date!

for our annual family festival celebration and recognition of our legacy of 50 years. A hybrid

**Watch online or enjoy in person! Stay tuned for more details.**

event is in the works with music, food, cultural demonstrations and interactive

activities to enjoy together. Take part in our intergenerational annual event in honor of Keiro no Hi, Respect for the Aged Day. Invite your elders, family, neighbors and friends to



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESIDENT: THANK YOU, AKI NAKAO; WELCOME, PAM HONDA

Aki Nakao has served on the J-Sei board for six years and ably steered the board as president for two years. He reached his maximum board service at the end of June



2021 and J-Sei is incredibly grateful for his steadfast leadership and guidance through a most difficult period. His high-level executive management experience and calm approach encouraged a highly

“It has been an honor... to lead a dedicated group of board members, staff and volunteers whose hard work carried us through the worst period of the Covid pandemic.”

—AKI NAKAO

collaborative and cohesive board that benefitted J-Sei’s overall operations and stability.

“It has been an honor to serve on such a caring, active and creative board and a distinct privilege to lead a dedicated group of board members, staff and volunteers whose hard work carried us through the worst period of the Covid pandemic. There is no doubt that this work will continue under the new leadership of Pam Honda who has demonstrated her commitment to J-Sei these past several years.”



Fortuitously, Pam Honda has agreed to take over the helm and will work closely with board members and staff to assure that J-Sei’s programs continue to thrive and further the mission of supporting

older adults and connecting generations. J-Sei’s expansion of home delivered meals to Hayward, San Lorenzo and San Leandro was possible thanks to Pam’s initiative and partnership with Eden Community Center, where Pam serves as their board president as well.

“After more than a year, I look forward to working on the safe reopening of our onsite services while continuing to enhance our programs and strengthen our outreach.”

—PAM HONDA

“As a board member and volunteer, I have seen first-hand how dedicated and committed the Board, the staff and the volunteers are to the J-Sei effort. You are my inspiration in accepting this new role. After more than a year, I look forward to working on the safe reopening of our onsite services while continuing to enhance our programs and strengthen our outreach. All this and more in support of J-Sei’s mission to ensure our resources, information and services remain relevant to those we serve.”



## TRANSITIONS

### **Program Coordinator: Lisa Tsubouchi and Natsumi Imura**

J-Sei is sad to say goodbye to Lisa Tsubouchi who filled in as Program Coordinator during the pandemic. But now she is off to continue her ventures with her wedding planning, floral and ceramics businesses. We were so lucky to have her care and outstanding organizational skills operating the friendly visitor/caller and caregiver registry programs during the pandemic. We won't have to miss her too much as she will continue her connection at J-Sei as a friendly visitor. Thanks for everything, Lisa!

Join us in welcoming Natsumi Imura who



you might have seen volunteering in the nutrition program. Natsumi brings experience in program planning and team building to this part-time position. She is fluent

in English and Japanese and has extensive business management and nonprofit program coordination experience.

Natsumi describes, "Almost 30 years ago, I was chosen as a recipient of the Cherry Blossom Community Service Scholarship where I pledged my commitment to bridge the Japanese American and Japanese community here in the Bay Area. Growing up as a 1.5 generation Japanese person, I was always aware of the enormous contributions and sacrifices made by the Japanese American community. It was due to this that my family's and my life were made possible in the States. At every vital juncture the Japanese American community showed up in our lives, as teachers, doctors, dentists,

landlords, accountants, people in civic offices, grocery stores, fish markets, neighbors. It was this community that always shared so generously, saw, heard and advocated for my family and I in a fundamental way.

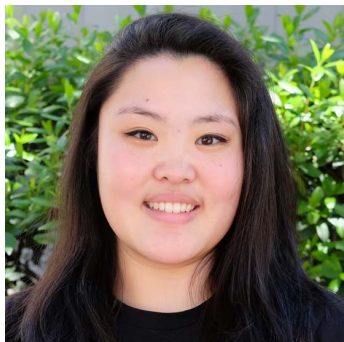
"I am so grateful to Yuji Ishikata for introducing me to the J-Sei community during this past year as a volunteer in the kitchen. His passion and dedication to the community that raised him has been a grounding source of energy for me during this challenging time and a reminder of what healthy systems can look like. I am also thankful to Diane for giving me this opportunity to participate with a community that I have longed to be a part of. I hope that I am able to bring my past experiences in connecting people, creating beauty and striving for justice to my work at J-Sei. I am deeply humbled, honored and perhaps most importantly, so excited to begin this work!"

### **Senior Services Manager: Tara Kawata and Kathleen Wong**

Tara Kawata, Senior Services Manager, joined J-Sei directly out of graduate school three years ago. During that period she helped to more than double the size of the nutrition program, implemented critical infrastructure and guided the staff and volunteers with all the required adjustments during the pandemic. She has always treated people with kindness and patience. Now she will be leaving J-Sei to spend more time with her family. While we feel the loss of her wonderful attributes, we know how important family is.

Luckily, Kathleen Wong, current Volunteer and Nutrition Assistant, has agreed to take over the responsibilities of the Senior Nutrition Manager position where she will oversee the meal programs.





Kathleen's three years of experience at J-Sei will be a tremendous help in this transition and we know the program is in good hands. Every organization experiences change and

evolution and we are glad to have excellent people that help us move forward.

## J-Sei Home: Seeking Staff and Volunteers

J-Sei Home in Hayward is a quaint family style licensed residential care home for the elderly. An average of nine seniors live in the warm supportive environment with dedicated multi-

lingual staff and Japanese meals.

As many of our residents prefer to speak Japanese, we are searching for Japanese speaking caregivers. Part-time and full-time positions are possible and we welcome nurturing people to contact [Mary@j-sei.org](mailto:Mary@j-sei.org) for more information. Training and orientation are provided so please email to learn more!

With covid infection rates declining and vaccination rates increasing, J-Sei Home is making plans to welcome back volunteers. Volunteers bring fun outside energy and can engage seniors in one-on-one conversations, simple crafts, musical entertainment (drumming, ukulele, singing (when safe), and stories of travel and life. Share your time and experiences with the seniors at J-Sei Home. Email [Mary@j-sei.org](mailto:Mary@j-sei.org) home with your interest.

## ON JA COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### Looking Forward

**Bob** There's always something you can do to help the community. Go out there and do it. You'll be greatly satisfied with your involvement.

**Dennis** Find a cause and go for it. Don't be discouraged.

**Reiko** Don't hesitate to speak up and don't give up. Continue...When there is a need, when there are issues, when there is injustice, we need to speak up. And the more we bring people together, then there is a strength.

### On Becoming J-Sei

**Dennis** The joy and camaraderie of working with others and the Issei. They imparted lots of knowledge from their experiences...Planting a seed and everything grew to what it is today and that's a great thing.

**Reiko** Now I am in my 80s, I just love the programs at J-Sei. It is so wonderful that J-Sei has expanded its mission and rightfully as our community in the East Bay is so dispersed. The leadership is so welcoming of all people, including the Shin-Issei. I am so glad that it has evolved and continues to serve our community.

### WE ARE COMING BACK TO J-SEI

SOME TRANSPORTATION IDEAS TO J-SEI, BY VETA JACQULIN

**D**uring the past year the City of Emeryville installed parking meters on Hollis and surrounding streets. While parking on 66th street remains free, spaces fill up quickly as people avoid paying for parking. You may be fine paying for parking about a block away and can add parking time from your phone. Here are some alternatives to driving alone.

**Car pool**—Know who is in your class, who is coming to J-Sei around the same time you are. Exchange phone numbers and plan to car pool.

Many advantages: easier to find one available parking space, share the expense of paying for parking, and what a nice way to get to know each other, or spend time with a friend. Carpooling is also good for the environment AND helps non-drivers.

**Uber/Lyft**—A smart phone is necessary to use these ride services. You can arrange pick up via your smart phone: can ride alone, arrange multiple pickups with friends or use the group rides option. You need to register before your first use. [www.uber.com](http://www.uber.com); [www.lyft.com](http://www.lyft.com).

**GoGo Grandparent**—Makes all arrangement with Uber/Lyft for you if you use a regular phone. There is a monthly membership fee (first month is free) and small fee per use. For more information (855) 464-6872; [gogograndparent.com](http://gogograndparent.com). FYI: membership fee is less expensive if ordered on the phone vs. internet.



**East Bay Paratransit**—If you have a disability which affects your use of public transportation (maybe the bus stop is too far to walk). (510) 287-5000; [www.eastbayparatransit.org](http://www.eastbayparatransit.org). They require an interview to determine eligibility. Fee is charged by distance, first 12 miles is \$4. Once registered with Paratransit, taxi scripts are available.

**Emery Go-Round**—Runs 7 days/week and provides a free shuttle as a last mile trip connector between MacArthur BART Station and Emeryville. Take BART to the MacArthur station, then

transfer to the Go-Around; it stops at Berkeley Bowl and Hollis at 65th Street. (510) 451-3862; [www.emerygoround.com](http://www.emerygoround.com).

**BART**—Call from 8am-6pm Monday thru Friday. (510) 464-6000; [www.bart.gov](http://www.bart.gov).

**AC Transit**—(510) 891-4777, option 2 for travel information; [www.actransit.org](http://www.actransit.org).

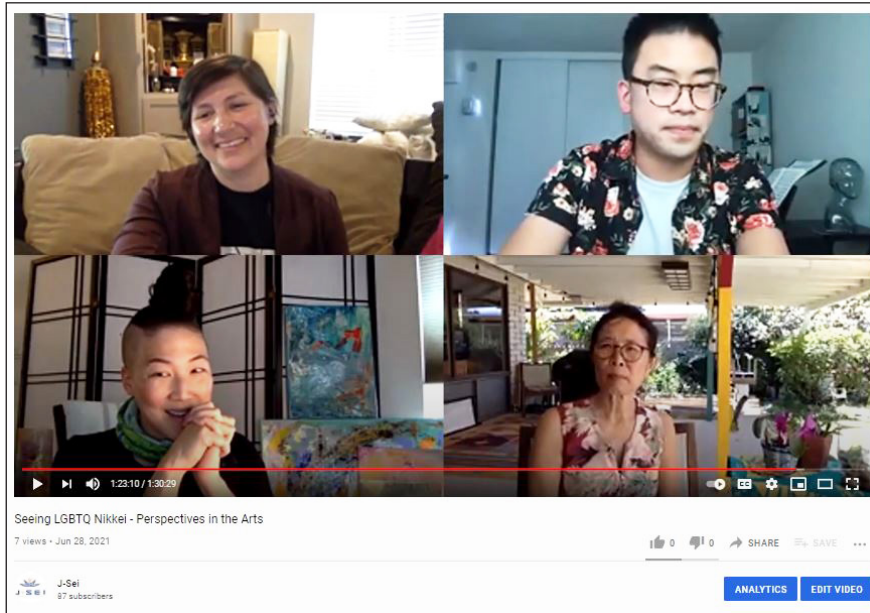
REMINDER: make sure you have an active senior clipper card for discounted rides on the bus, BART, ferry and Caltrain. (877) 878-8883; [www.clippercard.com](http://www.clippercard.com)

If you are a driver, it is useful to recognize our driving is affected by the many changes that occur as we age: our reaction time, vision, hearing and attention. AAA suggests taking AAA's RoadWise, a senior online defensive driving program designed to positively affect driving behavior and help you learn about and adjust to age-related physical challenges.

# J-SEI RESOURCES

## J-SEI'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Search “J-Sei on YouTube” to find videos of past events, classes, conversations and more.



“Seeing LGBTQ Nikkei: Perspective in the Arts” April 2021

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NIKIKO MASUMOTO, MICHAEL MATSUNO, JILL GUILLERMO-TOGAWA, TRACI KATO-KIRIYAMA

Find J-Sei on YouTube to watch this and more.

## SENIOR CENTER PARTNERSHIPS

Please contact the senior center partner for details on their operations.

### Berkeley Nikkei Center

1901 Hearst Street  
Berkeley  
(510) 809-5202  
Director: Kayo Fisher

### Extending Connections

Buena Vista United Methodist Church  
2311 Buena Vista Avenue  
Alameda  
(510) 522-2688

### Eden Senior Center

Eden Japanese Community Center  
710 Elgin Street  
San Lorenzo  
Contacts:  
Pam Honda (510) 676-3820,  
Janet Mitobe (510) 760-7186

### Sakura Kai Senior Center

5625 Sutter Street  
Richmond  
(510) 778-3406  
ecsakurakai@gmail.com  
Coordinator: Yasuyo Floyd





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hannah@j-sei.org

### **Kathleen Wong**

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kathleen@j-sei.org

## SAVE THE DATES!

- Jul 5** July 4th Holiday observed (J-Sei closed)
- Jul 15** Simple Japanese Cooking
- Jul 16** J-Sei Movie Night
- Aug 13** Ningyo Pouch Craft Workshop
- Aug 13** J-Sei Movie Night
- Aug 21** Book Event: *Clark and Division*
- Aug 26** Simple Japanese Cooking
- Sep 6** Labor Day (J-Sei closed)
- Sep 19** Family Festival
- Sep 23** Simple Japanese Cooking

### **J-Sei**

1285 66th Street  
Emeryville, CA 94608  
P: (510) 654-4000  
F: (510) 654-4011  
info@j-sei.org  
www.j-sei.org

### **J-Sei Home**

24954 Cypress Avenue  
Hayward, CA 94544  
P: (510) 732-6658  
F: (510) 732-6633