

EDEN  
JAPANESE  
COMMUNITY  
HISTORY

## History of The Eden Community

### INTRODUCTION

When you were sixteen or seventeen years old, would you have even considered journeying into a foreign country without any knowledge of the language, customs or people? Can you imagine allowing your son or daughter to leave home without sufficient funds and with no skills? This is the unbelievable background of our early Issei pioneers who arrived in America in the late 1890's and early 1900's hoping to strike it rich. Little did they realize the hardships and adversities they would face in the days ahead.

In the following pages Eden's chapter of Japanese history will be told from information gathered from interviews and conversations. Much valuable history has been taken to the graves of our Issei pioneers and time has dimmed the memories of our remaining Issei (first generation Japanese) and our older Nisei (second generation).

Although this history is written in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of the Eden JACL, it could not be written without talking about the Eden community. Therefore, whatever affected the Eden community had an effect on the JACL. What follows will be some of events that transpired in the Eden community.

### EARLY DAYS

With their hearts filled with hope of striking it rich but with empty pockets, a large number of Japanese arrived in America in the late 1890's and early 1900's. Most of them arrived with little education and with no skills because almost all of them were sons of farmers. A few had worked in Hawaii in sugar plantations before making their way to California. Led to believe that they could pick up gold in the streets, they found only vast miles of open land and no gold.

After working at menial jobs and saving a little money, some Japanese settled in a part of East Oakland called the Elmhurst district. Here is where many started as laborers in the flower growing business and where many got their start after moving to other areas. One such area was the Eden area, which covered Castro Valley, Hayward, Ashland and Cherryland areas, Mt. Eden, San Leandro, the area later called San Lorenzo, and parts of Alvarado that later became Union City.

With the shadows of World War I hovering in the horizon, many decided that it was more profitable to farm than to grow flowers. Outdoor flower growers started growing tomatoes and cucumbers. A few started raising chickens in Castro Valley. (Chicken ranching was short lived when disease wiped out most of the chickens.)

Since Japan was allied with the United States some of the Issei volunteered for the US Army. War bond drives were common in all the Japanese communities.

The earliest known Japanese to live in the Mt. Eden area was a man named Saito, great uncle of Tamo Saito. He owned a boarding house, barber shop, and pool hall and became a labor contractor for the Japanese. It is believed that Mr. Saito lived there from the years 1878 to 1920 and that he had prospered so well that he was able to take his family to Japan, never to return.

Mt. Eden in those days was the intersection of Hesperian Boulevard and Jackson Street. Hesperian Boulevard was known as Telegraph Road and Jackson Street was known as Landing Road in the late 1890's. The name Mt. Eden was given to this area by a blacksmith who was asked where his shop was. Since he came from the small town of Mt. Eden, Kentucky, he told people that his shop was in Mt. Eden. The name has remained to this day.

In due time as the Japanese community grew, the activities around Mt. Eden increased. Japanese movies were shown in Wigwam hall. There, the usually stoic Issei let their hair down and cried unashamedly when there was a sad scene. The "benshi", who was the commentator for the movies did such a good job of imitating all of the voices of the various characters that one could not help but get carried away with the plot and the emotions of the actors. These were the days of the silent films, and the Japanese movies were the next best thing to the "talkies."

A number of men were hired by the Leslie and Oliver salt works nearby. The Leslie Salt Works was located in Newark, and the Oliver Salt Works in Union City. For the men, it was a lonely existence because there were few Japanese women in America. Some had left their wives and children in Japan and could not afford to send for them. Some men were known as "funa agari", or illegal aliens. Recreation was very minimal for the single people both at the salt works and on the farms.

Medion  
Newark  
Leslie  
Oliver

Single men who wanted to get wives sent away for "picture brides." It took as long as three months to get from Japan to San Francisco. Arranging for the picture brides' trip over was also very expensive, so men sent away for their brides via the "picture bride method". Some men sent pictures of their better-looking friends so upon getting their first glimpse of their husbands, many disappointed picture bride wished they could go back to Japan. However, they had already been married by proxy in Japan so there was no turning back. It was amazing how both the Japanese men and women in those days persevered through some very trying times.

The "yellow peril began to rear its ugly head in 1908 with the signing of the Gentleman's Agreement". Japan agreed to restrict the number of immigrants to America. In 1913 California passed the Anti-Alien Land Law forbidding any Japanese alien from buying land. The Japanese countered by purchasing the land in the name

of their Nisei children who were citizens, or setting up corporations within the family. In 1920 California passed another law which forbid any Japanese alien, corporation or company from buying or leasing land in California. Finally in 1924 the United States government passed the immigration quota act which closed off immigration from Japan. Total discrimination aimed at the Japanese was complete.

One of the Mt. Eden properties confiscated in 1920 was the Shibata Mt. Eden Nursery. The original deed was in the name of Yoshio Shibata, oldest of the Shibata family. Unfortunately, in 1920 at the age of six he died of head injuries sustained when he was playing with a Caucasian playmate. He mistakenly thought a large rock was a ball thrown by his playmate and tried to catch it.

In an attempt to transfer the deed to a newly formed Shibata corporation the land was confiscated by California officials on the basis that the land was illegally placed in the name of a minor with intent to bypass the law. Fortunately for the Shibatas, they found a lawyer named Guy Calden who volunteered to the case and fight it in the courts. After several court appearances, Guy Calden was successful in winning back the land for the Shibatas. If the Shibatas had lost the land, it would have been a loss they could never recover from, since their nursery covered many acres of land and had cost as much as two thousand dollars per acre.

As more families moved into the Mt. Eden area, a Japanese association was formed. In order to have their children maintain some of the Japanese culture, the Mt. Eden Gakuen or Japanese language school was founded. The Issei were constantly stressing the need for a good education and a Japanese language school was a must. Some families hired a private tutor to teach their offspring reading and writing Japanese. Activities during that period were Japanese dramas with local actors, Japanese movies, Kenjinkai picnics and various meetings. With the exception of the Mt. Eden Nursery, the Japanese living in the Mt. Eden area were farmers or sharecroppers.

Flower growing became popular in and around the Ashland area. This area was primarily in the San Lorenzo and south San Leandro area. As the Japanese population began to grow in this area, they began to feel a need for local activities in a centralized area. They had to journey to the Mt. Eden area to join in whatever activities they were interested in. In those days transportation was slow and road conditions also were very difficult.

In 1931 Minoru Okada donated a parcel of land next to his nursery in San Lorenzo. His intention was to preserve the ethnic ties of Japan. With the support of the community and with donations from various individuals and businesses, the Ashland Gakuen was built. A resident building was also built on the same plot where a caretaker lived. Japanese movies, Japanese language school

graduation parties, Japanese plays, kendo tournaments, Buddhist church services and all types of meetings were held in the Gakuen hall. The community has been forever grateful for the generosity of the Okada family.

Around the time the Ashland Gakuen was being built, the Nisei were coming of age. The depression was affecting most of the businesses so the whole family had to become involved in the business. Many Niseis took on the responsibility as head of the household since their English was more suited to deal in business matters and most of them were able to drive their parents to the flower market.

The Issei men in the very early days were transporting their flowers to the San Francisco market in wicker baskets carried on their backs. They had to walk to catch the street car, or the train to the ferry at the Melrose station in East Oakland, ride the ferry to San Francisco, then take the street car to the flower market. Not being able to speak English well, they sold their flowers by gesturing, using fingers to indicate price. Much of this burden was lifted when the Nisei drove their fathers and their flowers to the market. The role of the Nisei was gradually changing from a carefree student to a responsible person in the family structure.

A group of dedicated Nisei met in the early 1930s to discuss the formation of a national organization to unify Nisei in the United States. They formed an organization and called it the Japanese American Citizens League. One of the leaders, Saburo Kido met with a group of Nisei of the Eden-Ashland community on April 9, 1936. The meeting was for the purpose of forming a local chapter in the Eden area. After several meetings, a constitution was drafted and approved. On May 16, 1936 an election was held at the Ashland Hall and Kan Domoto was elected the first president. Thus was born the Eden Chapter of the JACL.

Between the years of 1936 and 1941 the JACL was involved in the usual social activities. The JACL maintained regular membership and fund drives to sustain their operations but with dues at one dollar a year, JACL was not able to sponsor many activities. Sports-minded Nisei formed baseball, basketball and football teams with their own money. The Eden Cardinal football team under the management of Shig Akagi was replete with complete uniforms. The girls basketball team in those days were known as the Comets. Where travel was limited in the early days, Nisei who could drive traveled up and down the coast for athletic contests and for different activities. This was the era of great freedom for the Nisei.

Qualified Nisei college graduates began searching for jobs but discrimination and prejudice kept them from obtaining jobs in their field of study. Methods of farming and growing flowers were changing when Nisei college graduates became involved with family businesses. For the Japanese in the Eden area, business was just beginning to prosper. December 7, 1941 changed the

lives of the entire Eden community.

#### AFTER PEARL HARBOR

Rumors were flying fast after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. A few days after the bombing, three Issei were taken from their families by the F.B.I. Minoru Okada, Mosaburo Shinoda and Mr. Yoshioka were whisked away without notice. Rumors about every alien Japanese being rounded up began to circulate. California was divided up into zones so that people who wished to voluntarily relocate would be able to escape being evacuated to relocation camps.

Many families in this area loaded up their valuables in trucks and started out for the interior of California to zones designated as safe areas. Some of these families included the Domoto, Hasegawa, Kakimoto, Nomura, Shibata, Sugano and Tanisawa families. Their valuable property had to be either burned, sold or given away. Documents, photos and many artifacts went up in smoke for fear of punishment if they were found in their possession. Most nurseries were leased to their trusted friends or acquaintances.

In the eyes of the racists and propagandists, the safe zone in California was not far enough away. The Japanese families who had moved from Zone One along the coast to Zone Two were given orders to move once again to assembly centers on county fairgrounds or racetracks.

On May 3, 1942, General DeWitt gave orders to all Eden Japanese residents of Japanese ancestry to report to the Civil Control Station on 920 "C" Street in Hayward. The area included Castro Valley west to the bay and from the north end of San Leandro south to Warm Springs. From the Control Station they were transported to the Tanforan Race Track in San Bruno. Converted horse stables awaited their arrival.

A curfew was imposed on all Japanese, regardless of citizenship in California. One who refused to heed the curfew was Fred Korematsu of San Leandro. He was jailed for several months and was eventually sent to Tanforan and later Topaz, Utah.

The Eden JACL suspended operations for the duration of the incarceration of Japanese, but the national JACL office was moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. Mike Masaoka later spoke to a group saying that if the JACL had \$10,000 in the bank, they would have fought the evacuation. The National JACL had only a few hundred dollars in the bank and was not well organized.

War time romances and camp romances were in full bloom. Couples who were going steady were getting married either before leaving for camp or while in camp. It seemed that the uncertainty of the times was leading many to the altar. This was the start of the "baby boom."

All Niseis over the age of eighteen who were put in camp were reclassified 4C- or "unfriendly alien." To many this reclassification was a slap in the face for they felt that they were always loyal Americans. As soon as they left camp and went to work in the cities, they were again reclassified, this time as 1A, and were draftable. Many of our Eden boys were already in the service prior to the outbreak of the war, and some were drafted after they left the relocation camps. Many Eden boys served in the US armed forces at home and abroad. Fortunately, none of the Eden boys were killed in action while serving in the US Army.

The loyalty oath created much furor in all of the camps. Two questions causing much unrest were Questions 27 and 28. These questions, if answered "yes" by the Issei, would have made them people without a country. Most of them refused to answer the questions. The Nisei who answered "no" to both questions were sent to Tule Lake and were considered undraftable. On the other hand, some who wanted to prove their loyalty volunteered for the army from the relocation camps.

Life in the relocation had mixed blessings. For the Isseis who had worked so hard to make a living on farms and in nurseries, it was the first time they had time to rest. For the Nisei who were in school, it was fun time because the families were not able to discipline the younger people. The uncertainty of their future was beginning to take its toll and many of the older people were anxious to leave camp to prove they were of worth.

Three National JACL leaders, Mike Masaoka, Mas Sato and George Inagaki having permission to travel to the Midwest and East finally received approval for students to study at certain universities. Following the decision, war production plants asked the government to allow them to use people in camps to fill job openings. Since camp life was of monotaneous regularity, most Eden Nisei left for the larger cities such as Chicago, New York, Cleveland and Detroit.

## POSTWAR

In the allied victory over Europe, the all-Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team had proven to be the best fighting regiment in the history of American warfare. Some of our Eden boys were members of this highly decorated "Go For Broke" outfit.

As the war in the Pacific was winding down to an end, a few of the Niseis were allowed to return to California. Toichi Domoto and Yoshimi Shibata were two who had leased their nurseries to trusted friends so were able to resume normal operations. They were warned to keep a low profile so some understanding Caucasians bought necessary supplies and groceries for them. However, it was not without incident. Yoshimi Shibata had problems ousting some undesireables who refused to move from his property. He finally had to resort to asking the help of the

sheriff's department to remove them.

At the close of the war in August of 1946, the camps began to close. Some of the "diehards" still remained in camp but again were forced to move. Some drifted to the Eden area where they sought employment. The Ashland Gakuen was opened as a hostel for the homeless Japanese. It was not much different than camp life but many found employment and quickly moved out. The hall and resident house were filled to capacity for many months and the actual number who took advantage of the Ashland hostel is not known. Many who had relocated to the eastern states returned to escape the harsh weather conditions.

Most of the nurseries, though operational, had been neglected. Much work was necessary to return them to normal. Families were eager to make up for over three years of lost time in their lives. Fortunately the economy had an upswing and Japanese businesses began to prosper. Flower growers in particular expanded their operations and local flowers began to be shipped nationwide. Living conditions for the Japanese were improving as compared to pre-war days.

Although very little is known of the Civil Rights Defense Union (CRDU), two of our local nurserymen were very active in its formation and its activities. Toichi Domoto's primary concern was to ask for reparation for losses incurred during the evacuation. Shimi Shibata's concern was to regain land confiscated by the state during the evacuation. Representatives from different parts of California met to discuss plans on strategy. Unfortunately, most Japanese did not file for reparation because they were asked for proof of loss. Those who did file got only ten cents on the dollar.

Most of the confiscated land was regained after much legal hassle the grounds that citizens rights had been violated. Since there was no Asian Law Caucus at the time, two lawyers, Piersell and Riordan worked without pay to help the Japanese cause. JACL not wanting to become active in legal matters were not involved but sat in all the meetings to take minutes and notes and help in any way possible. Shortly thereafter, the Anti-Alien Law was repealed.

With the passage of the Walter McCarran Act in 1952, a surprising number of Japanese aliens responded to enroll in citizenship classes. In the Eden area, Masako Minami who herself was an alien, urged the Isseis to enroll and set up classes in and around the Eden area. On March 11, 1953 close to one hundred native born Japanese became American citizens at a graduation ceremony.

#### **EDEN TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER**

After the Ashland Gakuen was condemned because two fires gutted the building, a few concerned local Nisei met to discuss plans



to build a community center. After a fund drive and pledges from various businesses were collected, a loan was obtained from Sumitomo Bank. Construction began in 1962.

The completion of the building was not without problems. The mortgage and taxes had to be paid and since there was little income, door-to-door donations again had to be solicited to meet the payments. Since it was located on a blind street, vandals broke in on several occasions stealing and breaking whatever was their fancy. Whenever meetings were held in the large social hall space became inadequate, for only one activity at a time could be held.

With the help of bazaars and with the sale of part of the parking lot to BART, the mortgage was paid off in 1966. A sigh of relief could be heard from all the board members ... it was a cause for celebration.

Additions were made in 1969 and 1983 for a larger meeting room and a second floor for storage. The restrooms were updated to accommodate the handicapped and cyclone fence installed to prevent vandalism.

Classes in karate, Japanese language, Japanese singing, bonsai and flower arrangement are held on a regular schedule. It is used as a polling place for San Lorenzo site and a food distribution program for senior citizens regularly. Movies and parties are often held there as well as meetings for the Junior JACL, Senior JACL, the Community Center and for the newly arrived Japanese. At one time the Community Center sponsored a Boy Scout troop which at the present time has disbanded. The Eden Senior Center, sponsored by the Eden Community Center and the JACL, meets twice a month at the center. During the basketball season, meetings are held there for the youth league.

#### **SAN LORENZO JAPANESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

San Lorenzo Christian church was known as the San Lorenzo Holiness Church in previous years. Since there were no Japanese Christian churches in the area, Mr. Kumaichiro Shinoda of San Lorenzo Nursery felt the need to fulfill the needs of Christians. Since there was no church to gather, they had attendance in the homes.

Mr. Shinoda donated an acre of land and an old house adjacent to his nursery in October, 1929. For many years Sunday School and church services were held in the old house. Plans to build a church building on that property were curtailed when World War II began.

In 1944 during the war, Mr. Shinoda died in camp. Before he passed away, he made his son Daniel promise to build a church on the donated property on his return to San Lorenzo. In 1949, the four Shinoda brothers with the help of many volunteers donated

their time and money to help build the San Lorenzo Japanese Holiness Church.

An ongoing building program saw the final stages completed and the old house demolished in 1962. The church has gained considerable membership today.

### **EDEN ISSEI CENTER**

As the Japanese elderly population increased there was a need for some organization to keep their mind and body active. Widows were living alone or with one of their offspring and not wanting to be obligated to them, were leading a lonesome life. Many have physical impairments but need to have a change of environment to forget their aches and pains.

At the time when the Eden Community Center was thinking of opening the doors for the Issei to socialize, three Sansei from the East Bay Japanese for Action (EBJA) asked for the use of the building for the purpose of bringing Issei in the area together not only for socializing but for information on health care and help when needed. The three Sansei were Tom Okamoto, Grace (Nagata) Yotsuya and Dennis Yotsuya.

Masako Kinami was chosen from a list of applicants as a paid coordinator to develop programs for the elderly Issei. Funding for the project was at first from the State but was taken over by the Eden JACL and the Community Center.

Health screening, flu shots and many information programs for better health have been instituted at the meetings. Entertainment, crafts, singing and field trips have also enhanced the program. Lunch at bi-monthly Thursday afternoon meetings have been served for a nominal sum and much joy is shared each time they meet.

Since the Eden Issei Terrace opened in nearby Hayward, the attendance is nearing 70 people, including 15 to 20 Nisei volunteer helpers.

### **EDEN ISSEI TERRACE**

A few blocks from where the first Japanese settled in Mt. Eden, a senior citizens' housing complex was built primarily for Japanese elderly. Spearheaded by the East Bay Issei Housing Project (an extension of the EBJA), and underwritten by a dedicated group of Nisei/Sansei and 22 JACL chapters and churches in Alameda County and Contra Costa County, the Eden Issei Terrace was completed in 1986 with funding from the Housing and Urban Development Department.

Some of the elderly had lost their zest for life but found that others in the same condition could gather together. As one Issei

lady said, "This is a heavenly place." The location of the Terrace is near the intersection of Jackson and Cypress streets on Fagundes Court.

The complex was built with the health and well being of the seniors in mind. In order to have the elderly socialize, it is compulsory to dine for lunch each day. Instead of a high rise, it was decided that three stories should be the maximum height so that seniors would want to get out more often to walk around the spacious grounds and meet with others. Volunteers drive some seniors for doctor visits and for various errands. A block away on Cypress Street, some Nisei investors started a convalescent home for the bed-ridden Issei. Those who become immobile at the Terrace could have the opportunity to be moved to the Cypress House. At this writing negotiations are going on so that the Cypress House will be purchased and be part of the Eden Issei Terrace.

### YELLOW PERIL

Because the industrious Japanese began to prosper in California especially in farming and in nurseries, the "yellow peril" was rife in rumors. Not only were laws aimed specifically at the Japanese but there were acts of racism against them also.

Japanese nurserymen found it was less expensive to grow plants in gallon cans instead of clay pots. They could sell them for less and make more profit. The non-Japanese nurserymen started rumors that the plants grown in gallon cans were inferior because they were identified as grown by the Japanese. The Japanese were the first to recycle cans since they picked them up at restaurants and garbage dumps for next to nothing.

Discrimination was also common in the laundry business. In order to update laundry equipment, the Chinese and Japanese laundries were anxious to put in machinery for more efficient and faster service. The machinery was scarce and the Asian laundry owners were told they were not purchasable by them. The Japanese were able to purchase their machinery through Caucasian friends who sided with the minor. Despite the depression of the thirties, Japanese laundries were doing well.

Discrimination followed them to the grave as well. In 1947, the Shibata family wanted to purchase a family lot in the Mt. Eden cemetery since their father Zenjuro Shibata had just passed away. Shimi Shibata was told that the only plot available to the Japanese was a designated area where the paupers were usually buried. After he asked how many plots were left in the area he bought the remaining forty-four. He then asked which plot he could buy since there were no more plots in the designated area. They had no alternative but to sell him a plot of his choice. However, Shimi Shibata found himself in the cemetery business selling off the forty-four plots he had purchased in the designated area for many months thereafter.

Most of the markers in the designated area had rotted away with time since they were made of wood. The Eden Fujinkai (Women's Club) under the direction of Mrs. Shibata placed identifiable markers on each plot. They had searched the records to make sure each plot was properly marked.

Fred Korematsu was jailed in 1942 for violating the curfew law of 1942. Without trial, he and two other Nisei were found guilty of a crime they felt was illegal. After a brief jail stay he was sent to Topaz he was unable to get a trial until almost forty years later at which time the Asian Law Caucus pushed for trial in US Federal Court. He was exonerated and at an Eden JACL installation, he was honored for his courageous stand. The United States had finally admitted to treating him unfairly after forty-one years.

### THE PRESENT

The flower growing industry in the Eden area had experienced a number of years of prosperity but times were changing. They were faced with competition from other countries and labor has become increasingly expensive. With the demand for more housing in the Eden area, real estate brokers were offering large sums of money for nursery land. To sell property seemed the thing to do. Today some of our largest nurseries are now shopping malls and apartment complexes. The Shinoda San Lorenzo nursery is the Greenhouse shopping mall and the Nakashima and Nomura nurseries are apartment complexes. In due time many other nurseries may follow suit.

The education that the Issei insisted on has paid off. So much so that the Nisei are considered a model minority. In the eyes of many they are no longer considered a minority. They are holding managerial jobs and have entered politics. We have a mayor in Union City, Tom Kitayama, as well as other Japanese Americans who have held State legislative positions.

On the other hand, there are those who still believe all Japanese are Japanese nationals and are not to be trusted. The jobless blame the Japanese for their situations because of the many Japanese imports. With the influx of many Asian refugees from Southeast Asia who are so visible now, many think they are all from Japan. Killings have taken place in several cities because Chinese and Vietnamese were thought to be Japanese. Here's hoping the redress issue does not fan the flames of racial prejudice.

### CONCLUSION

Because of the fortitude and perseverance of our Issei forefathers who faced prejudice and much adversity, we Nisei have been their beneficiaries. They came to a foreign land with nothing and left a legacy that would forever leave a mark for

their children and grandchildren to follow. The blood lines of the Japanese Issei are being thinned out with the trend toward mixed marriages.

The hope is that the traditions of our Japanese heritage will die hard and that the value system of the Issei pioneers will continue to be instilled in our future generations. History if unrecorded will be lost forever. In the hope that continued research into the history of the Eden area will continue, the Sansei and Yonsei should take on this task. This history as brief as it is already twenty years too late. We have a history to be proud of and people should be informed of the strengths of our Japanese "bamboo people" who would bend but not break. Nowadays the questions arise will there be a JACL twenty-five or thirty years from now? Will the Eden JACL be celebrating their 100th anniversary fifty years from now?

### JUNIOR JACL

Little has been written or known about the first Eden Jr. JACL formed in 1959 by Mas Yoshioka. He felt there was a need for young Sansei to gather together and to get to know each other. Since his daughters were teenagers, he called together other teenagers of other schools. The emphasis was for social purposes to entice the Sansei to join. Some of the activities included dances, beach parties, and car washes. At Christmas time they performed skits and presented gifts to the little ones. As members of the Jr. JACL went to college, the organization disbanded due to lack of interest. In 1962 the Oakland Jr. JACL disbanded for lack of members. Molly Kitajima, adviser for the group, joined forces with Masako Minami to establish the Alco Jr. JACL. Members came from all parts of the East Bay so the name "Alco", short for Alameda County, was used. With a membership of seventy-five, activities increased until they became the most active Jr. JACL group in the Bay Area. Activities, such as visits to Sneidegars Cottage for neglected children and visits to various wards at Napa State Hospital, were included. It was a learning experience for many of the young teenagers. Dances and socials were numerous. Membership was composed of almost every ethnic race in the world. This was truly a socially concerned organization of the sixties which also loved to enjoy life.

When the ALco Jr. JACL needing funds for a basketball team initiated a mochi (rice cake) sales in order to purchase uniforms for team members. They imposed on the generosity of Tets Sakai whose nursery they used to make the mochi. This tradition continues even to this day with the Eden Basketball Club.

As the years have gone by changes in names and personnel have changed. The name was changed from ALco to JAYS for Japanese American Youths. As more Asians joined the name was again changed to AAYs for Asian Americans Youths. As with every organization, it has had its ups and downs. As many leave to attend colleges in different parts of the state, leadership

changes occur. The Eden JACL seniors are hopeful that some of that leadership will join to continue the legacy of the Eden chapter.

## POSTSCRIPT

My apologies to anyone who finds discrepancies in this history report. My findings were based on conversations and interviews with various people in the community who have lived here longer than I. I make no claim to being a writer but did my best to present a history as simply and as honestly as I could. My thanks to those who took the time to allow me to interview them. Also to those who took the time to meet on several occasions in order to compile information on this history project. It gave me a chance to know some of you better. As a former resident of Oakland and Detroit, I was not familiar with much of the history in the Eden area. It was an interesting and a learning experience for me but was physically draining. It should have been written by someone who is more experienced in writing but as they say "I gave it my best shot".

YO KASAI

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