



JAPANESE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF OREGON



SUMMER 2022 | VOLUME 22 | ISSUE 1

LAUNCH OF LIVING ARTS PROGRAM



Chisao Hata speaking at Oregon Rises Above Hate. Photograph courtesy of Kendra Farber

The Japanese American Museum of Oregon is thrilled to announce the launch of the Living Arts Program, designed by Creative Director Chisao Hata. Chisao, a former board member, current docent and community organizer, has a long career in the arts, activism, education, and arts advocacy. Through her vision and leadership, the roots of this program will continue to grow.

The Living Arts Program is focused on themes of **People, Place and Land**. *Creative Living and Aging* strengthens and heals intergenerational and multicultural relationships; *Remembering and Reimagining Nihonmachi* recognizes the richness of Nihonmachi and explores ways to uplift a Japantown history today in historic Old Town ; and *INAKA-Back to the Land*, is designed to recognize the contributions of Japanese farming in Oregon.

To introduce the program, we're sitting down with Chisao to ask her about the work she is doing and what else she has planned.

How did the Living Arts Program come to be?

I wanted to offer my years of experience and passions to design a program that would infuse artful practices, creative conversations, and programming to heal and build a wider community for our new museum. My own search for identity has been inspired by community and our Japanese American history as told, or not told, in American history. Our legacies are deep with resilience, trauma, intergenerational connections, and societal challenges. It is a critical time to come together.

Who else is involved so far?

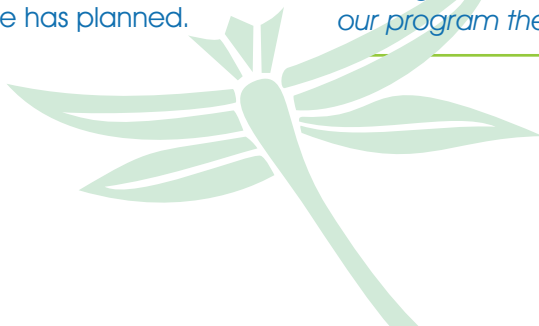
We are currently involved in an outreach process that began with a few artists and activists who were inspired by conversations, visioning, and dreaming what could be. Artists Lynn Yarne, Amisa Chui, Yukiyo Kawano, and Candace Kita were in on the ground floor. Nobuko Miyamoto gave me inspiration to name our program the Living Arts.

People, Place, Land—can you explain a little bit more about these three aspects?

People are the intergenerational connections—how can we bring people together, bring in new audiences, and connect them with those who have been here. **Place** is Nihonmachi—in Portland, there is nothing but the museum that exists now. Only 5–6 Japantowns still exist on the West Coast today, where before WWII there were up to 37. We want to remember what was, but we also want to bring aspects of our spirit back. **Land** is the program *Inaka-Back to the Land* that focuses on the history of Japanese American farming. How much land did we lose, how much produce did we provide in the state, and how much remained after the war? We're talking about the impact of erasure and the loss of economic and generational wealth.

What do you have coming up that readers will want to know about?

The Living Arts Program needs YOU! We want to engage, activate and widen our circles of connection and creativity. Together we can accomplish more than we can imagine!



A MESSAGE FROM JAMO'S DEPUTY DIRECTOR



It's hard for me to fathom that I have served as JAMO's Interim Deputy Director for six months. Every day I get to be a firsthand witness to the dedication and generosity that has sustained this community and continues to guide us into the next exciting chapter of our history.

Our museum and our work occupy a significant role in Pacific Northwest culture. We are continuing a national fight for resources for Japanese American community preservation and education, and we're partnering with an increasing number of local and regional organizations and communities that share our values and struggles. We see our impacts growing.

Coming out of the pandemic and challenges in Old Town, we've nevertheless had the most well-attended and successful Cherry Blossom Bazaar in the organization's history. We received recognition and support from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for virtual and in-person tours of Nihonmachi (Japantown) to be launched in

2023. We're engaging with Metro and other stakeholders to ensure that plans for the Portland Expo Center respect and recognize our community's detention and history there. We're partnering with leaders from Ikoi No Kai to create a Japanese American Cookbook and storytelling project. Chisao Hata, performer, educator, and community weaver, has launched our Living Arts Program, foregrounding stories of JA farming and agricultural contributions, remembering and reimagining Portland's Nihonmachi, and convening programs for elders and youth.

We've strengthened partnerships with Oregon Historical Society, Architectural Heritage Center, Lan Su Garden, Portland Chinatown Museum, Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, Vanport Mosaic, Minoru Yasui Legacy Project, Oregon Rises Above Hate, and many others.

As we embark on this next phase for our young museum, I feel grateful to have been entrusted with the legacy and hope that have animated the work of so many for so long.

—Mark Takiguchi

COLLABORATIVE PROJECT REMEMBERS NIHONMACHI

Portland's historic Nihonmachi will be getting renewed attention in the next year due to a collaboration between the Japanese American Museum of Oregon and the Architectural Heritage Center. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has awarded the joint project a \$25,000 grant to create an interactive digital storytelling map and walking tours of



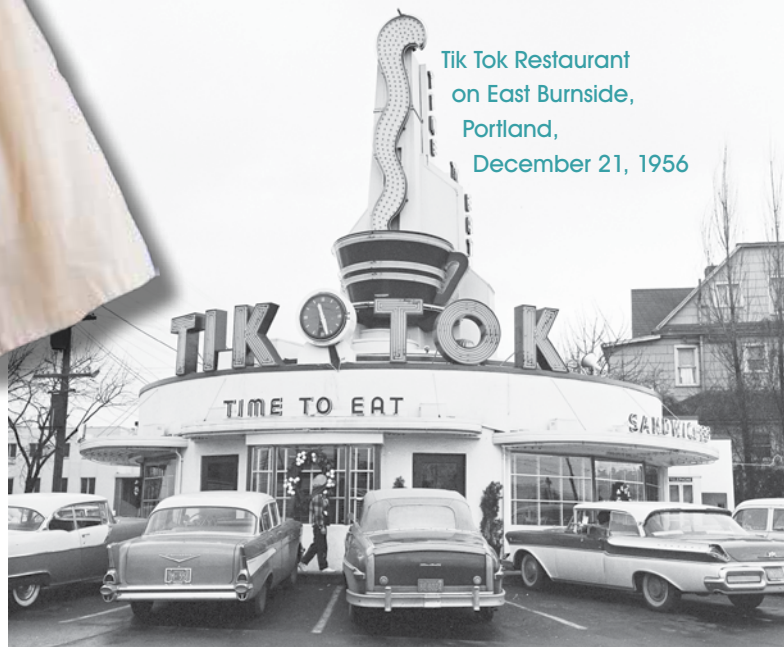
Yabuki Laundry, c. 1940. Gift of Jimmy K. Yabuki & Grace Y. Yabuki

20th-century Japantown. For the museum, this will be a crucial resource for our Remembering and Reimagining Nihonmachi initiative, which seeks to bring to life the history of the neighborhood and remember what was lost when the community was forced to leave. Planning for the project is currently underway; expect to hear more in 2023.





Mikados Car Club Jacket.
Gift of Janice Okamoto



Tik Tok Restaurant
on East Burnside,
Portland,
December 21, 1956

THE MIKADOS JACKET

Janice Okamoto donated this car club jacket to our permanent collection in 2019. It belonged to her older brother Robert H. Matsunaga. Both Janice and Robert grew up in Portland, attended Roosevelt High School, and were incarcerated at Minidoka as young children.

After WWII, young Japanese Americans adopted all aspects of American pop culture, holding dances, going to drive-ins, and forming social clubs. Boys em-

braced American car culture, and car clubs sprang up all along the West Coast. Robert Matsunaga was a member of Portland's Mikados Club. Ed Tamiyasu, another member, recounts that car clubs were a loosely organized group of guys who would gather at each other's houses on weekends and work on cars. Chevys or Fords were "souped-up" with added horsepower, painted custom colors like candy apple red, and embellished with "flipper" hubcaps.

According to Tamiyasu, "On weekends a number of guys would gather in their cars at the local hangout, the Tik Tok Drive In, located at the intersection of East Burnside and Sandy Boulevard, then cruise downtown and Broadway so we could 'see and be seen' with our hot cars, then go back to the Tik Tok where occasionally one would challenge someone or be challenged to a drag race on the newly constructed Banfield Freeway late at night."

SAVE THE DATES

July 7, August 4, September 1: MOVE ON Creative Movement Class, a Living Arts program, before Ikoï no Kai lunch

August 13: Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway sign unveiling, Hood River

August 21: Nikkei Community Picnic, Oaks Park

October 1: *Resilience — A Sansei Sense of Legacy* exhibition opens at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon

October 2: Artist talk with Tom Nakashima, University of Oregon, Portland



EDUCATION



WELCOME ELISSA We are thrilled to welcome our newest staff member, Elissa Dingus, to her role as the Education and Engagement Director. She brings a wealth of experience, including a strong teaching background in Oregon Public Schools, leadership in equity advisory committees, and specific research and curriculum development relevant to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during

WWII. She attended the Heart Mountain NEH Landmark Workshops and the Minidoka Pilgrimage in 2019. Elissa will help us expand our resources for educators and learners of all ages.

We want to give a big thank you to Cynthia Basye who has stepped up to support our tours and educational outreach while we were without this position and to Chisao Hata who has also served as a docent and guide for school visits.

The Japanese American experience is a critical and often overlooked piece of our local and national history. Teaching it alongside other stories of oppression and resistance allowed my students to notice patterns throughout history and develop an understanding of how stereotypes affect individuals, communities, and laws. I strongly believe that education plays a vital role in creating a future that upholds the ideals of justice, liberation, and solidarity with and for all people.

—Elissa Dingus

2022 CHERRY BLOSSOM BAZAAR



accommodate all the shoppers.

Such an event would not have been possible without the extensive support and knowledge of our core team of Bazaar volunteers: Jere Okada, Marilyn Sholian, Cherie Yokota, Lynn Fuchigami Parks,

Carolyn Woody, Chisao Hata, and Toyoko Oguri. This event is no easy task and takes months of planning and hundreds of hours of volunteering to pull off. We owe all our volunteers an immense debt of gratitude for their hard work, perseverance, and dedication.

Nothing stops an intrepid bargain hunter —not even a global pandemic. After a multi-year hiatus, nearly 1,000 people made their way through the doors of the former Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center to peruse five rooms of generously donated material from the com-

munity. Every available space, including the former archives, was lined with tables and shelves filled with kimonos, kitchen goods, books, ikebana supplies, antiques, and other Japanese-related items. The three-day event was even extended a further two days to

MINORU YASUI DAY



We partnered once again this year with the Minoru Yasui Legacy Project for the annual student contest and celebration of Min Yasui's life and work. The theme this year was **Taking a Stand Against Racism and Discrimination**; the essays submitted covered a wide variety of civil rights heroes and connected their battles against discrimination with the work of Min Yasui. The Committee co-hosted an essay workshop with Lynn Yarne and the Grant High School APIA student organization. We had a record number of entries, and we thank the educators who encouraged students to apply, each student for their hard work, and the judges who carefully read each entry. Congratulations to the contest winners!

Junior Division

First Place: Anushruti Ram, Renfroe Middle School,
Decatur, Georgia

Second Place: Vishaka Priyan, Oregon Episcopal School,
Portland, Oregon

Senior Division

First Place: Veda Yama, Aragon High School,
San Mateo, California

Second Place: Nina Takahashi, Southridge High School,
Beaverton, Oregon

During this year's Minoru Yasui Day event, held online March 26, we also paid tribute to Holly Yasui, who we lost last October. We thank Alan Zhou, member of the Min Yasui Student Contest Committee, for creating a video tribute to his friend and mentor who worked tirelessly to carry on her father's legacy.



Top: Min Yasui
Photograph courtesy of Holly Yasui

Bottom: Peggy Nagae and Holly Yasui, Founders of the Minoru Yasui Legacy Project, at the 2018 Min Yasui Day event.
Photograph courtesy of Curtis Suyematsu

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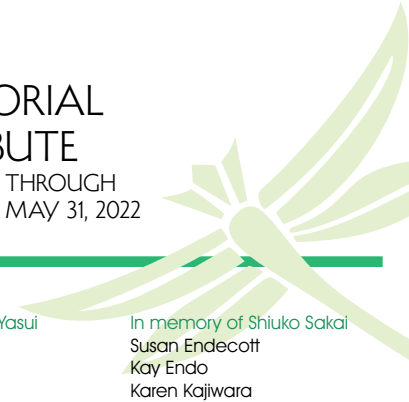
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OREGON NISEI VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY

In March of this year, the Oregon House and Senate passed a resolution proclaiming Highway 35, the 41-mile scenic roadway from the Columbia River to Mt. Hood, be dedicated as the Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway. This effort was led by numerous veteran and Japanese American organizations, and the dedication ceremony will be held in Hood River on Saturday, August 13th.

Art and Akira "Ike" Iwasaki of Hillsboro, Oregon, served in the 442nd RCT during WWII

The History Museum of Hood River County, in partnership with the Japanese American Museum of Oregon, will develop an exhibit opening in August 2022 in Hood River exploring themes of courage and commitment and stories surrounding these American heroes. This exhibition will move to the Japanese American Museum of Oregon in spring of 2023. JAMO will also create educational resources dedicated to this historical era that will live on beyond these exhibitions.

EXHIBITIONS

DREAM REFUGE FOR CHILDREN IMPRISONED



ON VIEW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 4

Bay Area artist Na Omi Judy Shintani's installation brings together sculpture, fiber arts, painting, and sound to tell the stories of children across cultures who have been imprisoned in the United States. Figures drawn on cots and laid over metallic space blankets represent Japanese American children that were held at concentration camps during WWII, Native American children who were denied their culture at boarding schools, and Central American children separated from their families and currently living in unsafe conditions at the border. As you walk among the cots, you can hear audio of interviews the artist collected from people who experienced these injustices.

Shintani has transformed the temporary gallery into a sacred space of meditation on these children's experiences. Once you've heard their stories, you are welcome to leave comments or small objects at the community altar that is part of the exhibition.

RESILIENCE—A SANSEI SENSE OF LEGACY

OCTOBER 1–DECEMBER 22, 2022

Told from the point of view of Sansei (third generation) Japanese Americans, *Resilience—A Sansei Sense of Legacy* is an exhibition of eight artists whose work reflects on the effect of Executive Order 9066 as it resonated from generation to generation. Each in their own way, the artists in this exhibition express moments of deeply-felt pain and reluctant acceptance—emotions which were often withheld by their elders. Exhibition artists are Kristine Aono, Reiki Fuji, Wendy Maruyama, Lydia Nakashima Degarrod, Tom Nakashima, Roger Shimomura, Judy Shintani, and Jerry Takigawa.

Join us October 2 at 2:00 pm for an artist talk with Tom Nakashima at the University of Oregon in Portland.

Resilience is a Program of Exhibits USA, a national division of Mid-America Arts Alliance and The National Endowment for the Arts.



The Enemy #2, Roger Shimomura, 2016, acrylic paint on canvas. Courtesy of the artist

OKAGE SAMA DE

On Sunday, March 27, 2022, at the Merchant Hotel located at 121 NW 2nd Avenue, the community gathered for Okage Sama De, “because of you, we are,” to honor and say farewell to this hotel. The Merchant Hotel was one of the central buildings in Portland’s Japantown—it housed the offices of the Japanese language newspaper *Oshu Nippo*, a laundry and bathhouse, medical offices, and Japanese dry goods store. The hotel itself was at times managed by Japanese.

Most importantly, for over a decade it was the home of the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, now the Japanese American Museum of Oregon, newly reopened at 411 NW Flanders. Rev. Ikenaga, from the Nichiren Buddhist Temple, led the opening ceremony and shared a historic overview of our relationship with the Merchant Hotel.

In honoring the history, we remembered the beginnings. It started with a vision. The Japanese American Historical Plaza came first, envisioned by Bill Naito and landscape architect Robert Murase. Joe Wahl, one of the founding board members shared, “We want to thank those founding individuals who gave breath to the idea that the Nikkei community needed a place and space to honor our history. We should thank those who took the seeds of our imagination forward to create the wonderful Japanese American Museum of Oregon.” Erica Naito-Campbell spoke about the important work of her grandfather, Bill Naito, and the passion and commitment he had to build the Plaza. She reminded us of his vision and the importance of protecting and remembering our Japanese American history in the heart of Portland’s Old Town. Connie Masuoka also spoke of the leadership of Henry Sakamoto, and June Schumann helped us remember the beginnings of the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center. Rich Iwasaki brought photos of the work many did to build the original museum space and the “bucket move” next door. Jean Matsumoto told us her deep emotional connections and shared her sacred stories of Nihonmachi.

Before our toast many of us shared stories, including Kenji Spielman, son of artist Valerie Otani. Lynn Fuchigami Parks brought forward memories of the events and hard work that laid the foundation to build our new



Top: A community thank-you toast

Bottom: Memorabilia and photos from over the years

museum: “We proudly stand on the shoulders of those who came before us.” In our celebration we remembered many who helped build the plaza and museum, we shared good food and community memories and created new ones in a photo booth brought to us by photographer and community artist Julie Keefe. Special thanks to JAMO board members Ted Takamura, Raynette Yoshida, Karen Nashiwa, Matt Tsugawa, Rich Iwasaki, and Connie Masuoka and to the JAMO staff led by Interim Deputy Director Mark Takiguchi.

On March 30, we permanently moved from the Merchant Hotel. We continue to share the spirit, leadership, and vision of all who built this organization at our new Japanese American Museum of Oregon.



Photographs by Kendra Farber

OREGON RISES ABOVE HATE

Founded by Anne Naito-Campbell to address the rise in Anti-Asian hate, Oregon Rises Above Hate organized a day-long celebration of Asian creativity and resilience co-sponsored by the Japanese American Museum of Oregon and the Lan Su Chinese Garden. We want to thank the Coalition of Communities of Color for their support this year, the many cultural organizations that participated, and the over 50 organizations and businesses that have stood up for Oregon Rises Above Hate's mission.

On Saturday, May 14, the event kicked off with AANHPI dances and performances, speeches from elected officials and community leaders, and resources from AANHPI-serving organizations. JAMO and other area museums opened our doors for free in the afternoon, and the day concluded with an evening vigil and music at Lan Su Garden. Hundreds of participants created an atmosphere of hope and joy with a commitment to a more positive, shared future.

Visit oregonrisesabovehate.com for more information.

BENEFACTOR

Eisaku & Alice Hiromura
Jenna Yokoyama

PATRON

Cynthia & Jack Basye
Susan Endecott
Martin Igarashi
Kristine Kimura
Taka Mizote
Jere Okada
Charles & Carol Ouchi Brunner
Raynette Yoshida
& Ted Takamura
Linda & Bill Tanaka
Victor Yamada

FAMILY

Alice & Mel Aikens
Lani Arakaki-Schaad
Winston & Jan Asai
Carol & Don Barnes
Elaine & Marc Betts
Lorraine Crooks
Allen Cutler
Naomi Diffely
Lynne & Donald Dravis
Kathryn Fong Stephens
& John Stephens
John Forsgren
William Fujimoto
Kay Fujita
Scott & Ellen Guptill
Marcia Hara
Jeffrey Heyamoto
Judy Asato Hittle
Robert & Racheal Inouye
Ellen Iwasaki

Fred Iwata
Kimberly Jensen & Todd Jarvis
Hazzen Jette
& Chieko Sone Jette
Mary Anne Joyce
& Catha Loomis
Robert Kaneko
Ben Kasubuchi
Doug & Valerie Katagiri
Robbin Kawabata
& Carl S. Gutekunst
Ken & Katie Kawazoe
Ken & Betty Kinoshita
Carole & Kent Lindell-Ross
Yoji & Martha Matsushima
Annie & Gerry Migaki
Lisa Minakami
& Matthew Kertesz
Scott Muramatsu
Neva & Suf Oishi
Pam & Mike Oja
Glenn Okawa
& Kathy Andreas
Alfred Ono
Marci Ozawa
Amy & John Peterson
Lynne & Loree Sakai
Naomi Sanchez
Ann Shintani
Marilyn Sholian
Doug Smith
Mary Speaker
Patricia Stanton
Bill & Ida Sugahiro
Katie Tamiyasu
Dinah Teramura
Carlos Tokunaga
Ernest & Ruth Ann Tsukuda

Betty & David Walters
Dale Watanabe
May Watari & Duane Watari
Judy Yamauchi
Cathy & Jeff Yarne

COUPLE

Irene Foster
Lori & Ray Fukunaga
Nancy & Brian Furumasa
Tamara Gilbert & Surja Tjahaja
Jana Iwasaki & Brett Waner
Mark & Janet Kakishita
Wayne & Karen Kanemasu
Joni Kimoto & Rod Reeves
Charlie Kirihara
Tom & Angela Lancaster
John & Jackie Loomis
Dan & Julianne Miura
Richard & Jean Miyahira
Roger Miyaji
Julie Nakao
Raymond & Janis Onchi
Phyllis & Warren Oster
Peter Pappas
Sheila & Earl Reeves
Ken & Bea Saito
John & June Schumann
Amanda Shannahan
& Charley Zimmerman
Karri Somers
Curtis & Mary Ann Suyematsu
Glenn Tanaka
Roy & Tracey Yotsuuye

INDIVIDUAL

Jo Ann Burch
Tyler Carlson

WELCOME TO NEW AND RENEWING FRIENDS OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF OREGON

OCTOBER 1, 2021 TO MAY 31, 2022

Ben Chaney
Janice Dilg
Joi Dai
Kay Endo
Lynn Geis
Diana Hinatsu
Lincoln Hirata
Mae Hirata
Charles Jenkins
Karen Kajiwara
Sharon Kuroda
Charmaine Lindsay
Kathryn Longstreth-Brown
Jean Matsumoto
Nana Ochiai
Frances Sumida Palk
Cathy Shikatani
Lisa Tamura
Miyuki Yoshida

SENIOR

Teruko Arima
Shunji Asari
Carla Basom
Steve Bauer
Barbara Bellus

Donald Bourgeois
Raymond Chong
Margo Erickson
Robert & Peggy Fujimoto
Joyce & Ray Gee
Tamie Goranson
C. Michael & Rose Gray
Yoko Gulde
Beth Harrington
Betty Jean Harry
Mel Huie
Linda & Mike Ignowski
Rich Iwasaki
Sandra Iwasaki
Dana Kakishita
Karen Kimura
Chris Lazarus
Patty Locke
Mitzi Asai Loftus
Amy Losordo
Don Maekawa
Marlene Moro
Frank Nakata
Martha Neumann
Toyoko Oguri
Yasuko Oiye

Lillian Okazaki
Sue Oshiro-Zeier & John Zeier
Carole Remme
Helene Rippey
Ed Sakai
Naomi Sakamoto
Vincenza Scarpaci
Deborah Schallert
Jo Shannahan
Anne Shinoda Mettler
Barbara Surovell
Karen Takao
Sandra Tashima
Bill & JoAnne Treuhaff
Carol van Dyke
Betty Ann Wantroba
Alice Watanabe
Arlene Watkins
Candee Wilson
G. Kimi Yamashita
Minnie Young

EDUCATOR

Leslie Batchelder
Eileen Begley
Susan Glosser

YES, I WANT TO JOIN!

My support will help ensure that the history, art and culture of the Nikkei are preserved and shared with the community for generations to come.

- Student \$30
- Senior (62+) \$35
- Individual \$50
- Couple \$75
- Family (up to 5 members) \$100
- Patron \$500
- Benefactor \$1,000
- Special Educator Rate: \$35
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Have you considered putting the Japanese American Museum of Oregon in your will?

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- Check Enclosed (Please make payable to JAMO)
- My Company Will Match My Gift

Visa | MasterCard | AmericanExpress | Discover Expiration CVV#

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Friday through Sunday
11 AM to 3 PM
By Reservation

Adults: \$8
Seniors (62+): \$6
Students: \$5

Children 11 & under and
Friends of JAMO: Free

Telephone: 503.224.1458

E-mail: info@jamo.org

Website: www.jamo.org



Connie Masuoka repairs
ID tags on *Remember Us*,
by Chisao Hata, at the 2022
Vanport Mosaic Festival