



The real story. Japanese American History told by those who lived it.

Ms. Susan Uyemura, CEO
(657) 278-4483
suyemura@jalivinglegacy.org

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 2012

62nd California State Nisei VFW Reunion

Sands Regency Hotel in Reno, Nevada was selected as the host of the 62nd California State Nisei Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) Reunion. Over 100 veterans, spouses, widows, friends and family gathered there to, once again, honor those who served our country. Northern California Nisei VFW posts sponsored this event. Co-chairs Loren Ishii and Jim Suzuki managed the event and along with Bill Omoto who kept registration running smoothly.

Sunday was busy to and from the airport, buses arriving from Northern California as well as Southern California not to mention the selected individuals who chose to drive in. Hospitality was set up by hosts Harry Wadahara and Jim Suzuki. Appetizers such as sashimi, poke, tako, char siu, and other ono foods that 'broke da mouth' were plentiful. There was so much food, no one bothered to go downstairs and eat dinner. Bartender Val Soto poured the drinks with a smile while the crowd enjoyed the atmosphere.

Visitors from Hawaii Harry Wadahara, Henry and Elaine Ikeda and Florence Miyata as well as Joan and Joe Anello from Colorado joined the main crowd from California.

While the Nisei posts continue to struggle to keep their independence, having this annual reunion shows everyone that it is vital to keep it going. This year's reunion crowd continued the tradition of fun and fellowship. Most of the Nisei VFW posts were represented including: Post 1629 Monterey – Jim Suzuki, Post 1961 Gardena – Low Dong, Post 3670 Kazuo Masuda – Bob Wada, Post 8477 Fresno – Donald Wakida, Post 8985 Sacramento – Kent Nakashima, Post 9879 San Francisco – Glenn Akagi, and Post 9970 San Jose – and past State Commander, Henry Wadahara. Other special guests included VFW National Commander and Chief – Richard De Noyer, State Commander – Bobby Price, and Cootie Grand Commander – Glenn Wilson.

Monday continued the fun with a slot tournament. Hospitality was filled with ongoing entertainment and local food.

Professional photographer, Tom Graves captured Monday evening's banquet attendees by systematically posing each post's members together. State Commander Bobby Price thanked the Sacramento Nisei Post for hosting a dinner each year honoring the Voice of Democracy students and, sharing the Nisei story. Commander and Chief De Noyer talked about declining memberships in VFW across the United States and how National is looking out for our veterans as well as our active duty members. Christine Sato-Yamazaki, Chairperson of National Veterans Network, addressed the audience as the keynote speaker. San Francisco post along with members from Sacramento entertained the crowd with their ukulele and hula halau. The night ended with more fun in hospitality while some decided to "donate" funds back to the local economy.

The three day event concluded on Tuesday morning with the "Sayonara Breakfast" and Memorial Day service; a moment of silence honored post participants that had passed away this past year. The Commander in Chief, State Commander and all the Nisei Posts Commander or representative presented floral tributes in honor of their deceased Post members. This year, 65 names were honored. Closing prayer along with best wishes and a safe journey home ended the service.

As we parted our ways, we said our farewells and hugs were given to those we hoped to see at the next reunion. The organizers wish to express their appreciation to the attendees, volunteers and especially the Regency Sands whose staff works so hard to ensure the attendees have a wonderful time.

The 2013 63rd California State Nisei Veterans of Foreign Wars Reunion will be held in Reno, Nevada. More information will be released next year.

###