

# BERKELEY-SAKAI SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION



**Celebrating over 50 years of Friendship**



**バークレー・堺 50年超える友好**

**Annual Membership Meeting and Potluck.**

**Friday, March 14 at 6:00 pm**

**Berkeley Methodist United Church**

**1710 Carleton Street. Berkeley**

We would like to invite you to the 2025 Annual Membership Meeting and Potluck, which will be held at the Berkeley Methodist United Church, 1710 Carleton Street, Berkeley. The Berkeley-Sakai Association Board members will supply main courses, dessert and beverages. Please bring a salad, side dish or dessert to serve 6.

Come and vote in our new Board, hear reports from the BSSE 2024 students, see the Sakai Kindergarten Art display, experience Tatsumaki Taiko perform, have a great dinner and conversation, and buy nice things at the Silent Auction!

## **Proposed 2025 Board of Directors**

Kathryn Lucchese	<i>Chairperson</i>	Amani Meleis
Carolyn Rising	<i>Interim Secretary</i>	Paula Meleis
Robert Lucchese	<i>Treasurer</i>	Don Rising
Brad McCullough	<i>Auditor</i>	Atsuko Morse
Forest Borie		Jay Sordean
Gary Gibson		Sally Stevens

Note that we are looking for a Board Secretary, and more Directors at Large. To volunteer or make a nomination, please contact us at [info@berkeley-sakai.org](mailto:info@berkeley-sakai.org).

The Berkeley-Sakai Association is a non-profit organization, established in 1967, to promote goodwill and friendship between the citizens of Berkeley and our sister city, Sakai, Japan. We have been active and successful in arranging student exchanges since 1968, as well as goodwill visits, school visits and programs, marathon runners, artist exchanges, kindergarten art exchanges, and individual visits and home stays. Donations can be made by check made out to the Berkeley-Sakai Association using the enclosed envelope or through PayPal on our website at: <https://berkeley-sakai.org>

We could not do this without your support and contributions. Thank you for making all this possible.

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dr. Kathryn “Kate” M. Lucchese (BSSE 1973)

2024, the Year of the Dragon, my second year as Chair of the Berkeley-Sakai Association Board of Directors, saw our first two large-scale visits since COVID. In late July was BSSE 2024 – Julius Braun (sophomore BHS), Julio Gonzalez (sophomore BHS), Joseph Hegarty (sophomore BHS), Marianne Mah (Junior BHS), Amani Meleis (freshman BHS), Alice Sinclair (sophomore BHS) – and in October

nineteen wonderful visitors came to Berkeley from Sakai, ranging in ages from 15 to 83. Your donations, quietly accumulating, covered expenses of both events, and Board members and friends stepped up to provide energetic leadership and hospitality.



In April, our fab six marched in the Berkeley-Sakai contingent near the front of the NorCal Cherry Blossom Grand Parade in San Francisco, carrying the banner or riding in Brad’s MG, while fifteen parents and Board members walked alongside in our new matching happi-coats and Juri – with help from Joseph – waved the *koinobori*.

Attendance at this year's California-Japan Sister-Cities Network workshops taught us new strategies as well as strengthened our ties with other sister-city programs. Saying farewell to Mayor Jesse Arreguin as his term ended last fall meant the loss of a big backer, but new Mayor Adena Ishii is already planning to attend this year's Annual Meeting.

As one of eleven curators of the Berkeley Historical Society's exhibition, "Roots, Removal, and Resistance: Japanese Americans in Berkeley," I learned more about one of our founders, Tad Hirota, curated the Incarceration Wall, and made new friends in the local J-A community.

2025, the Year of the Snake, will be a time of transition, with long-time Board members retiring, new Board members coming on, the excitement of new Alumni Club leadership, and the sadness of old friends passing away. Let's work together to keep our delightful task of peace through friendship alive and flourishing, long years into the future.

### **Robert Lucchese, Board Treasurer**

My name is Robert Lucchese, although I usually go by Robin. I am currently working as a Senior Scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, and have been nominated to be Board Treasurer for 2025-2026. My history with Berkeley Sakai Sister City dates back to 1974, when my family hosted a student on a Sakai-Berkeley exchange. I then participated in the Berkeley-Sakai Student Exchange of 1975. These early experiences with Japanese culture facilitated my professional involvement with Japanese scientists, including a sabbatical spent at Tohoku University in Sendai in 2006. Concerning my qualifications to be Treasurer, while Kate and I lived in College Station, Texas, I served as Treasurer for our church and later was the Treasurer for the Episcopal day school where Kate was Headmistress.

### **Amani Meleis, Alumni Club Chair**

Hello! My name is Amani Meleis, and I'm a Sophomore at Berkeley High who is also Dual-Enrolled in the Paralegal program at Berkeley City College. I took part

in the most recent student exchange to Japan. I loved going there, and it taught me that people can connect with others even when they don't speak the same language. I text my host sister Hana a lot and we share updates. When I heard about the opportunity to host a student this October, I got so excited and wanted to do it. I loved showing Meisa around the Bay Area, and taking her to meet my friends at the homecoming dance.

I play trumpet in my school's jazz band. As part of that, I mentor a group of 6th grade trumpet students each week. This year, I'm the president of Academic Choice, a program at Berkeley High with over 1300 students. As President, I plan and organize field trips, and have planned events where I helped manage volunteers and food deliveries for feeding over 400 students. I want to become a lawyer, and I participate in Youth and Government, a model legislature and court program for the state of California. I'm a student attorney in the 2nd Appellate Court program, where I analyze court cases and deliver arguments, and I will go to the Capitol Building in Sacramento to argue a case.

Over the past year, I have loved becoming more involved with the Berkeley Sakai Association. I want to support this organization and its mission, deepen the ties between Berkeley and Sakai, and to help other people have the same experiences that I did. As President of the Alumni Club, I think it would be great to bring alumni together because they have so much to offer to the organization, including things like fundraising and events to connect through their shared experiences in Sakai and to think about the organization moving forward. I look forward to joining the Board!

### **Paula Meleis, Board Member**

Paula is thrilled to have the opportunity to serve as a new member on the board. She has been an educator for over 25 years, during which time she has taught middle school humanities, English language learners in grades K-5, and has had her own tutoring and educational consulting business for middle and high school students with language-based learning differences. Paula is also an artist and nature lover whose interest in ancient spiritual traditions connected to plants and herbs inspires both her artwork and her garden.

She is an unashamed Japanophile, with a decades-long love of Studio Ghibli productions, Japanese artists ranging from Yayoi Kusama to Kawakami Sumio, and numerous Japanese novels and films, including the essay “In Praise of Shadows” by Junichiro Tanizaki, which has been a source of inspiration throughout her adult life. Paula first traveled to Japan in the summer of 2024, and one of the most meaningful experiences during her visit was completing a portion of the Higashiyama Teramachi Temple walk in Takayama, Gifu.

Paula believes that there is much to be learned in the quietude of Japanese Shinto and Buddhist practice, and looks forward to fostering connections, goodwill and understanding between Berkeley and Sakai.

## **THANKS AND BEST WISHES TO OUR OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS**

### **Maria LaForge**

I joined in 1980 after my daughter Laura went on the 1979 Student Exchange. My sons David and Clark went on later Exchanges. I have worn many hats: Secretary , planner of numerous Student and Goodwill Exchanges, Newsletter editor and Treasurer. It has been a joy to work with everyone and to host many adults and students through the years.

### **Linda and Jüri Komendant**

Being a part of the Berkeley-Sakai Association for 30 years has been a truly unique experience. Although it entailed a great deal of work, it was life-changing in many ways. We plunged into leadership roles on the Board without any background or knowledge of how to organize groups, arrange goodwill visits, or manage a student exchange program for 12-13 year olds. The Japanese culture, language and customs were all new to us.

We grew as individuals and learned as we went along, forming lifelong friendships within our Association and with people in Sakai. As a Co-Chairperson, I (Linda)

was initially terrified of speaking in front of Japanese dignitaries and group gatherings, but the people in Sakai made me feel safe and I learned to relax and speak from my heart.

The Japanese people that Jüri and I have met over the years have been so kind, so caring, so hospitable when we have visited Sakai. Being members of the Berkeley-Sakai Association has allowed us to return that kindness and hospitality. Friendship and goodwill are contagious.

But it is time for us to move on. We have kids and grandchildren we want to spend more time with. We have retired from the engineering world as well and wish to travel. We have more than enough things to do to keep us busy for a very long time.

It's also time for the younger generation to take over and have the opportunities we have had. They are more familiar with the digital world and we encourage them to incorporate their expertise to enhance and continue our wonderful sister city relationship with Sakai for generations to come. Sayonara and hugs!

### **Noriko Nishikawa**

I have been on the Board for 27 years since 1997. My daughter Tami took part in the Student Exchange Program that year. I was one of the chaperons and a translator to the group. I was impressed with how well Sakai treated us and in spite of the students' young age (12-13), everyone got something out of the trip.

I thought I could help continue the program by being on the Board as the only Japanese in Berkeley-Sakai Association at that time.

I enjoyed meeting with other members of the Board, discussing, and planning events for BSA. However, time has come for some new ideas and energy in the organization. I am glad Atsuko and Minami can take over translations.

I will remain a contributing member so please keep mailing me the annual news letters.

## **Steve and Cheryl Rego**

After 12 years of sterling service, Steve and Cheryl Rego will be going off the Board. They are going to miss participating in something which has been such a big part of their lives.

Steve started their relationship with Berkeley-Sakai as a Senshu Marathon entry in 2012, when he and Cheryl both joined the Board. In 2015, Cheryl spearheaded a return to high school student exchange and co-led BSSE 2016 – in which their daughter Gaby participated. Since then, Cheryl has been Student Exchange Coordinator. Steve co-led BSSE 2018, and Cheryl co-led BSSE 2024, when she particularly enjoyed their beautiful day on Miyajima Island and was much moved by the testimony of Hiroshima survivor Teruko Yahata.

This fall, as we ready BSSE 2026 for their visit to Sakai, we will sorely miss Cheryl's skills, and hope that Alumni and parents will step up to help. Many thanks also to Steve for leading our Goodwill Visitors all over the Berkeley Police Department last fall – a fascinating and memorable tour, ending with his own office, decorated with shoulder patches from all over the United States, and of course from Sakai.

The Regos are planning on traveling a lot more, starting this summer. Also, their son is getting married in Nashville in May, and Cheryl has been very busy with long distant wedding planning. They have to be out of town the day of the Annual Dinner, but will continue as members.

## **ALUMNI CLUB REPORT**

Amani Meleis, Alumni Chair

More than 200 BSSE alumni have been located so far, with 90% living in California and 40% living in the East Bay. An idea is to create a Bay Area Alumni Network to connect student exchange alumni across different cities with shared experiences. This would make it so alumni would have a larger community, and could come together and learn from different cities.

I am working on starting up the Berkeley-Sakai Student Exchange Alumni Club. This would allow us to expand our network in order to learn from the past and to fundraise.

## **HELP WANTED**

With Linda Calvin stepping down after years of hard work and reliability, we are in need of a BOARD RECORDING SECRETARY. You do not need to have been a Board member in the past. Interim Secretary will be filling in until a permanent replacement is found. Please volunteer at [info@berkeley-sakai.org](mailto:info@berkeley-sakai.org) today!

Anyone with grant-writing skills and local business connections is needed to head up the FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE. Please volunteer at [info@berkeley-sakai.org](mailto:info@berkeley-sakai.org) today!

DONATIONS for SILENT AUCTION at the ANNUAL DINNER needed! See article further along...

One or two more HOST FAMILIES needed for AUGUST 1-6 SAKAI-BERKELEY STUDENT EXCHANGE visit, especially those with high-school-aged kids who want to go to Sakai in 2026. Please inquire at [info@berkeley-sakai.org](mailto:info@berkeley-sakai.org) today!

## **REPORT on BSSE 2024**

Clare McCullough, Student Adviser

Wow! Japan was such an incredible experience. We split our trip into 3 main parts: Sakai, Kyoto, and Hiroshima.

First, we flew to Sakai. From the moment we touched down, we were in awe of how different life in Japan was. We marveled at the neatness of the airport and the kindness of the security (as well as how cool the airport toilets were!). We approached the meeting of our families with excitement and just a bit of jet lag. The students left with their host families to explore the wonders of Japan from a native perspective.



The following day we met the mayor, the city council chair, and the vice chair. We exchanged gifts and stories, us asking questions about life in Sakai and them asking about life in Berkeley. We even got to sit in the Chair's chair! We then traveled to Senboku High School, ate lunch with Japanese students, showed off our presentation, and saw an epic concert from their rock band. We also visited the keyhole-shaped tombs and a knife and textile museum! We gathered together for dinner, hosted by the Sakai-Berkeley Association.

While the students were with their host families, they visited the Shimano Bicycle Museum, explored life as a Japanese teenager, and saw the similarities and differences of Japanese homes, travel, food, and more.

After teary goodbyes to the host families, we traveled to Kyoto! We stayed in the beautiful Ryokan. While seemingly in a more residential neighborhood, it was walking distance to Nishiki Covered Market and so many other shops and experiences. We learned all about the teas of Japan at a tea tasting experience in the Ryokan. Our sensei, Jason, explained the history, the growing process, the names, the colors, the smells, the tastes, and the occasions in which to drink each of four different teas that are popular in Japan.

Kyoto was also one of our big tour spots. Our guide, Katsue, led us around 5 spots over two days. The Heian Shrine and Gardens had a giant Torii gate and vast grounds. The Kiyomizu-dera Temple had amazing views. The Fushimi Inari Shrine had so many torii gates!!! The Kinkakuji Temple, or Golden Pavilion, was gorgeous. The Arashiyama Bamboo Forest was so vast.

While in Kyoto, we also visited the Samurai and Ninja Museum (we got to throw shuriken!), the Nishiki Covered Street Market (so many things to buy and to eat), the Arashiyama Monkey Park Iwatayama (we even got to feed the monkeys!), and a really cool light show at Kodai-ji Temple.

After so much walking and sightseeing, we took a break on the Shinkansen to Hiroshima. What a difference! Hiroshima was much more of a built-up city than Kyoto, despite having a smaller population.



We had another eventful day with our guide, Taeko Watanabe, who led us around where the atomic bomb dropped in 1945. We saw the A-Bomb Dome Peace Memorial Park, the hypocenter of the A-Bomb, and the A-Bomb Dome. Our students left cranes at Sadako's Memorial. We saw the Memorial Tomb, and walked through the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. We heard a heart-wrenching testimony from Teruko Yahata, a survivor who was 8 years old when the atomic bomb went off only 2.5 km away from her home. Everything we saw and heard and experienced was life-changing. We also visited Hiroshima Castle and were able to see 360-degree views of the city that has grown so much.

The next day, we took a ferry to Miyajima Island and spent the entire day exploring the shops and amazing views of the island with the floating shrine and friendly deer.

The day before we left, we took the bullet train to Himeji Castle. In the blazing heat, we climbed a mountain to get to the castle and countless steps once inside. Luckily for us, Japan had plenty of vending machines to quench our thirst. The castle was gorgeous, and had almost 700 years of history to explore.

This trip was such a special opportunity for everyone. We ate so much good food - homemade dinners with host families, Yakatori, Shabu Shabu, all-you-can-eat Habachi-style Yakiniku, fresh sashimi, beef and chicken karaage, noodles, oysters and conger eels on Miyajima Island, Okonomiyaki in Hiroshima - the list could go on. The little hole-in-the-wall restaurants were especially loved. The memories and friends we made along the way will last a lifetime, and the gifts will be cherished forever.

## **GOODWILL VISIT 2024**

Linda Calvin Komendant

A Goodwill Delegation from Sakai visited Berkeley in October. Twenty visitors, ranging in age from 15 to 83, arrived on October 17, 2024 and stayed a mere 4 days. Transported from SFO by charter bus to the Live Oak Community Center, they met their host families and had a light lunch. Our 14 host families greeted them with open arms and took them home for a hot meal and a soft pillow to lay their head.

The next day they were up early to visit Mayor Jesse Arreguin at City Hall where they presented him with a letter and gift from Mayor Nagafuji and the Sakai-Berkeley Association. The mayor greeted them, gave them gifts and spoke with them about mutual interests. After photo ops on the steps of City Hall, they were off to the Berkeley Police Department for a wonderful tour by Lieutenant Steve Rego (Board member), getting a glimpse of the workings of the police department and even sitting in a patrol car.





Chef Amy at Revival opened her restaurant for lunch for us and presented a lovely assortment of deliciousness (gourmet pizza two ways, beef sliders, butcher cut steak and french fries). She once lived in Tokyo, loves everything Japanese, and spoke with our visitors in Japanese at the very end. We then visited the Japanese exhibit at the Berkeley Historical Society and were given a tour of

the Berkeley Art Museum. And this was only Day 1.

Saturday was host family day and our visitors went in various directions with their host families and some visited old friends in Berkeley. On Sunday there was a Farewell Luncheon at the Pier 29 restaurant in Alameda for all our Sakai friends and their respective host families. It was a lovely afternoon.

Host families spent their last night with their guests, some quietly having dinner, or going to In & Out Burger (a favorite eating spot for Japanese baseball star Shohei Ohtani), and others frantically doing last minute shopping. Very early Monday

morning we all met at Kate's home for coffee and doughnuts and to meet the CharterUp bus to take them to SFO and their flight home. It was a very short, but very sweet visit.

## BERKELEY-SAKAI KINDERGARTEN ART EXCHANGE

Carolyn Rising



Many thanks are due to Mrs Tia Warren, a kindergarten teacher from Harding Elementary School in El Cerrito, and her culturally diverse class of students which happen to include several students with a Japanese heritage. Her students used a collage technique to make pictures of themselves considering what they want to be when they grow up. I then asked them to tell me a story which reflected this prompt. I want you to check out this special artwork when you attend this year's dinner. The stories are very inventive.

Tia Warren is first and foremost the daughter of Kate and Robert Lucchese. She has been teaching at her present school for three of her ten to twelve years in the classroom. In her spare time she enjoys singing with the Sacred and Profane *a capella* Group. She visited Japan in 2006 with stops in Tokyo and Kyoto. We are delighted to have her support.



**APRIL 2025 MINI-MISSION to SAKAI**

Kate Lucchese, Chair

Inspired by the renewed friendships fostered by the robust and invigorating Goodwill Visit of our twenty-some visitors from Sakai in October of 2024, four of us will be traveling to Japan this April for a “Mini-Mission” to Sakai.

Chef Amy Murray of Revival Bar & Kitchen (Shattuck at Addison St. in downtown Berkeley) so enjoyed hosting the Goodwill Ambassadors in her restaurant on their day in downtown Berkeley, and so missed Japan, where she had been inspired to cook in the first place, that she, Kate Lucchese, and Brad McCullough hatched a plan to go there this April. Brad, in all his long years of service to the Board, had never seen cherry blossom (*hanami*) season in Japan and also wanted to visit Expo 2025.

The fourth will be Steve Farnum, BSSE 1973, an antiquarian, bookseller, and photographer who likewise has never experienced *hanami*. Kate, who lived in Sendai for roughly a year, including its beautiful *hanami* season, is happy to take Amy and Brad and Steve there, and to return after 50 years to visit new and old friends in Sakai, see the amazing Shimano Bicycle Museum, and meet Mayor Nagafuji.

Amy will explore local produce and will join us in a visit to a traditional knife-making atelier in Sakai. Steve looks forward to climbing the stairs at Yama-dera, west of Sendai.

We will be in Japan from April 9-18<sup>th</sup>, starting our visit in the Sendai area at the height of cherry blossom season and seeing Matsushima Bay, then taking the train to Sakai in time for the opening of Expo 2025. Watch this space for a report!

**PLEASE DONATE/BUY at the ANNUAL DINNER's  
SILENT AUCTION ON MARCH 14**

Back this year is the SILENT AUCTION, traditionally featuring Japanese items, antiques, wine, nice kitchen ware, fine coffee, and restaurant coupons, all to raise money for the upcoming student exchange and add to the Fern Harger Student Exchange Scholarship Fund. IT'S EASY! To donate items, just email a photograph of



each item, the estimated value, and a description to [info@berkeley-sakai.org](mailto:info@berkeley-sakai.org) by WED. MARCH 5 and bring the items to the Annual Dinner.



**COME MARCH in the NorCal  
CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL  
GRAND PARADE in SF on APRIL 20<sup>th</sup>!**

Come Join Us! We will once again be walking in the San Francisco Cherry Blossom Festival Parade on April 20, 2025. This is a lot of fun walking the parade route waving to all the people on the sides of the streets, talking with the others in the parade, and at the end they announce us and everyone cheers!! We also have a carp kite and our banner announcing the Berkeley-Sakai Association. We have a car in the parade so if someone doesn't feel they can do the whole walk, they can ride instead. We assemble at noon by City Hall, the parade starts at 1:00 and ends at the Japantown Peace Plaza just over a mile and a couple of hours later



## **YPSO visits Sakai as part of a 9-DAY TOUR OF JAPAN**

By Satoko Stroud, VP of YPSO Board of Directors

The Young People's Symphony Orchestra (YPSO) based in Berkeley and under the leadership of David Ramadanoff for 36 years, embarked last summer on a 9-day international concert tour of Japan. They performed at the Fenice Sacay in Sakai, and Itabashi Cultural Hall and Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre in Tokyo with the local choir and orchestra.

On June 21, 2024, before the concert, YPSO musicians visited public elementary schools in Sakai for a cultural exchange. Our chamber groups performed and YPSO's Japanese speaking musicians gave presentations about Berkeley, while the students in Sakai shared about their city and performed—either singing or playing instruments.



The visit concluded with a joint performance, and it was heartwarming to see how quickly our musicians and the Japanese students bonded—they truly didn't want to say goodbye.

The concert at the beautiful new Fenice Sacay concert hall was a sold-out event, where we shared the stage with the brass band of Tomioka High School. Once again, our musicians and the Japanese high school students formed meaningful connections in such a short time.

In addition to the musical performances, the musicians learned about Japanese history and culture by visiting the Atomic Bomb Dome and Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima, the Hamamatsu City Musical Instrument Museum, the Fushimi Inari Shrine and Golden Pavilion in Kyoto, and many of Tokyo's rich cultural districts.

## **THE BERKELEY-SAKAI WEBSITE**

Gary Gibson

The Berkeley-Sakai Association (BSA) website <https://berkeley-sakai.org> provides information about our organization, current and past exchange programs, and Japanese related events of interest to our membership. In addition, you can view images from previous and current exchanges and events on our website. It also provides an easy way to join our organization, renew memberships, send us a donation, and contribute to the Fern Harger scholarship fund. The Fern Harger scholarship fund provides financial aid to help economically disadvantaged students participate in our student exchange program.

The BSA website owes its existence to the pioneering efforts of board member Roy Nierenberg (1945-2025) who first proposed the idea of having a web presence and creating a website for the association in 2007. Over the course of the 2007-2008 fiscal year Roy, and fellow board member Gary Gibson, designed and implemented the first BSA website, writing the code for it by hand in raw [HTML](#)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See the HTML Wikipedia article [\[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML\]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML)

Shortly after the website went live in 2008, a web committee was formed to maintain it and add new content. The initial members of the BSA web committee were: Roy Nierenberg, Gary Gibson, and Juri Komendant. Over time, the web committee added new members Don Rising and Brad McCullough. This core group has shepherded the BSA website through many changes.

As web standards have changed and new types of devices have appeared, the BSA website has evolved from its humble beginnings to keep pace. These days the website is built on top of an open source [content management system \(CMS\)](#)<sup>2</sup>, which allows us to easily add new articles, images, and multimedia content. In addition, it allows the BSA website to automatically reconfigure itself to display on different types of mobile and desktop devices.

In addition to our main website, we are also active on Facebook and Instagram. You can find our Facebook and Instagram pages via the respective icons on any page of our website, or from the Links page.



We are continuing to add historical content about past exchanges and events to the website. If you have information or pictures related to our association or our exchange programs, we are interested in hearing from you! Please contact us at [bsawebinfo@berkeley-sakai.org](mailto:bsawebinfo@berkeley-sakai.org).

**IN MEMORIAM**

**REMEMBERING ROY  
NIERENBERG**

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<sup>2</sup> See the CMS Wikipedia article [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Content\\_management\\_system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Content_management_system)]

by Mimi Sheiner

Early Friday morning, January 24<sup>th</sup>, long-time Board Member Roy Nierenberg passed away after a stroke. He had been ill with Huntington's disease for more than fifteen years, but was active with Berkeley-Sakai as recently as the YPSO Concert in Berkeley last spring, before their visit to Japan. His daughter Jovia had been a member of the 1990 6<sup>th</sup> Grade BSSE led by Rick Herbert and a consortium of parents. Roy's ashes were laid to rest on Sunday, February 2, at Fernwood Cemetery, at 301 Tennessee Valley Rd, in Mill Valley, CA 94941.

In accordance with his wishes, Roy's brain has been donated to Huntington's disease research, conducted by Biswa Ramani, MD, PhD, Pathology, at The University of California San Francisco Medical School, associated with UCSF Medical Center. In lieu of flowers or other gifts, friends are encouraged to make a donation in Roy's name, to one of his many interests, Cure Huntington's Disease Initiative (CHDI), The Huntington's Disease Society of America, The Berkeley Community Chorus and Orchestra, The Berkeley-Sakai Association, or the political movements Contest Every Race, or Movement Labs. The family requests no phone calls.

**REMEMBERING  
BARBARA  
STEVENS-  
STRAUSS**

by Kate Lucchese



We are sad to report that, after nearly a decade of inspired membership on the Berkeley-Sakai Board and a valiant years-long battle with cancer, Barbara Stevens-Strauss passed away last August. An acknowledged expert in the art of *ikebana* –

her creations often graced the halls of the Asian Art Museum – Barbara had an abiding passion for all things Japanese. She wore *kimono* with grace and skill, and was an artist not only in flowers but also *chirigami* and *raku* pottery, spearheading out COVID-era online film festival showing of “The Harimaya Bridge” and facilitating our Art Bridge Exchange. She had planned to spend last September in Kyoto, improving her pottery skills. A sweet personality and an inspiration, she will be missed.

## REMEMBERING JUDITH SANDERSON

by Linda Calvin Komendant

Judith Sanderson passed away December 20, 2024 after a long battle with cancer. She was a long-time supporter of the Berkeley-Sakai Association - a former Board member and a member of several Goodwill Delegations to Japan.

Judith was born on the Vernal Equinox 1954 and passed on the eve of the Winter Solstice 2024. She grew up in Long Beach and Livermore, graduated from Granada High School and attended UCB. She received her Registered Nurse license at Chabot College and her MPH in Health Care Management at the University of San Francisco (1993-1995). She worked for over 18 years at Kaiser Permanente as a Care Coordinator and then as a Screening & Tracking Coordinator.

Judith loved traveling and took many trips over the years with family and friends - camping trips to Grover Hot Springs each summer with her family, several road trips with Linda and Juri, trips to Japan, Russia, Peru, Italy, France, Spain, Bali, New Zealand and India. She had many friends from Livermore and a large family with whom she gathered with often.

Judith was heroic in her battle with cancer and her attitude toward life. She held herself with grace and dignity, always facing each day with humor and a big beautiful smile.

