



Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii  
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OGSH  
 FUN TIME  
 November 20, 2021

e-Newsletter  
 2022  
 January



Welcome the 2022 OGS Board Members

President	Donna Nakamura
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Kenneth Kamiya
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Jackie Toma
Corresponding Secretary	Heidi Shimabuku
Recording Secretary	Susan Ramelb
Treasurer	Clyde Higa
Assistant Treasurer	Dorothy Nakama
Advisor	Rodney Kohagura

The November 2021 elected positions were for the President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, and Corresponding Secretary. Congratulations to Donna, Jackie, and Heidi.

Chuishiijii

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS TOGETHER



Zoom Meeting on Saturday, January 22, 2022, 9AM

Donna's Word of the Month

*Tanushimun*  
 Vt. To take pleasure in; enjoy

Agenda:  
 Introduction of OGS Board Members  
 Treasurer's Report  
 Income: Dues, donations Expense: Bonenkai  
 Taikai Update  
 OGS Uchinanchu of the Year – Allen Toma

*Congratulations All*  
*Congratulations also to OGS members who were named UOY with the other clubs they are affiliated with. Janice Toma Shiira, Fred Shinsato, and Doreen Yamashiro.*

HUOA 72<sup>nd</sup> Installation of Officers and UOY Celebration will be on January 30, 2022, Sunday, 2PM, Hawaii time. Due to COVID-19 concerns it will be held virtually on the HUOA YouTube website. Google "HUOA youtube" and click on: [Hawaii United Okinawan Association-YouTube](#)



In memory of former OGS member Ronald Oshiro. He passed in August 2021. Condolences to his family.

*Message from Past President Joy Schoonover*



Year in Review: 2021

Covid-19 was the big story of 2021. Distancing requirements caused us to go virtual on all our events and activities. Unable to assist clients in-person, our Research Team carried on with their mission of assisting Uchinanchu in finding their roots by utilizing internet email and the U.S. Mail. Our monthly club meetings were held remotely utilizing Zoom technology. And thanks to Allen Toma (OGSH Uchinanchu of the Year), who developed our online Issei Immigrant Database, Uchinanchu all over the world have been able to research their ancestry over the internet right from their home computers.

Having our monthly meetings over zoom, instead of in-person, didn't keep us from recruiting interesting guest speakers. In 2021, we had: Dr. Charlene Gima (Asst Prof of Language Arts at Honolulu Community College), Eric Wada (Artistic Director of Ukwanshin Kabudan), Brandon Ing, William Doi (a 5th Degree Black Belt in Aikido and currently with the Kupuna Aikido Safe Falling Program), Dr. Mark McNally (Professor of History at UH Manoa), Gwen Fujie (a Communication Expert) and Reverend Shindo Nishiyama (Jikoen Hongwanji). I want to thank all of them for educating and entertaining us during this challenging year.

One of the highlights of the year was an episode of "Yuntaku Live" in September that featured OGSH. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to share our mission with the worldwide Uchinanchu community and it was very positively received. Many people learned things about OGSH that they never knew.

Finally, we concluded the year with a fun and lively virtual end-of-year celebration!

I am looking forward to another productive year in 2022. Hopefully we will be able to meet again in-person. Until then, stay safe and take care of each other.

Ipee Nifee Deebiru



*Message from Second Vice-President Jackie Toma*

Chuu wuganabira. Wanne Jackie Toma yaibin.

I am excited to be Second Vice- President on the Board of Directors for OGSH. Since joining in 2018, OGSH has helped me with the Toma side of my genealogy and enabled me to visit relatives in Okinawa for my first visit there in 2019. I have learned about Okinawan history and culture through the monthly presentations, made good friends, and enjoyed volunteering with past Okinawan festivals and Bonnenkais.

My goals are to help grow the organization, promote our activities, and meet the needs of current members. As part of the Education Committee, I welcome suggestions on topics and guest speakers, how to recruit new members, ways to engage participation of our current members, and new ideas for OGSH.

*Message from President Donna Nakamura*



Haitai! li soogwachi deebiru! This year's theme: **2022 Reboot . . . Our Journey Continues!**

Greetings to all of you . . . our fellow genealogy travelers and explorers. I am very excited about our new year and am looking forward to a year of new learning, new growth and new opportunities as we continue our journey together. These are some of the things to look forward to:

We have our newly established Education Committee headed by our 2 vice presidents, Ken Kamiya and Jackie Toma. We are in the early stages of defining goals and content. Also included in this committee will be finding guest speakers so if any of you have any ideas, please feel free to contact them.

We have a newly designed membership form that allows members to renew electronically. We will refine the process as needed.

We will also refine our Policies and Procedures for all of our standing and ad hoc committees to facilitate smooth transitions and defined execution. We will revisit our 5 year plan and update it as we also get input.

We will complete our long awaited web page redesign. Ongoing discussions with Jenn Kumura will continue as we pull the threads.

And, of course . . . we are hoping that the Worldwide Uchinanchu Taikai will come to fruition as we all do our part to stay safe and healthy in the midst of OMICRON!  
Ippee niffee deebiru!

Donna

*Message from Recording Secretary Susan Ramelb*

Happy New Year 2022!

Thank you for all your patience throughout the years.

If you have any comments, concerns, or questions, please email to [OGSHnews@gmail.com](mailto:OGSHnews@gmail.com).

Due March 6, 2022. Do you own a business? May it be selling a product or providing a service? If you would like to share your business to the OGS family, please submit a "camera ready ad." There is no charge to place your ad in the OGS newsletter. Your ad can be of your logo only; location and your business hours; or a full ad.

Are you having a garage sale after March 19, 2022? You may also submit at ad.

Ads submitted will be in the March 2022 OGS newsletter.

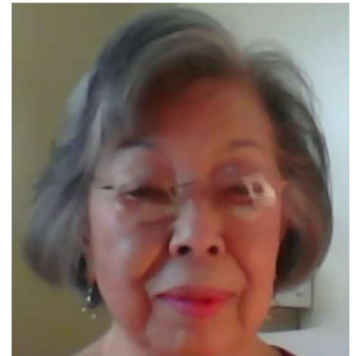
Have a wonderful year. Take care and stay safe.

Susan

2021 OGSB Year End Celebration on Zoom  
"fuN tIME"  
November 20, 2021  
Co-chairs Dorothy Nakama and Donna Nakamura  
Game coordinator David Shinsato



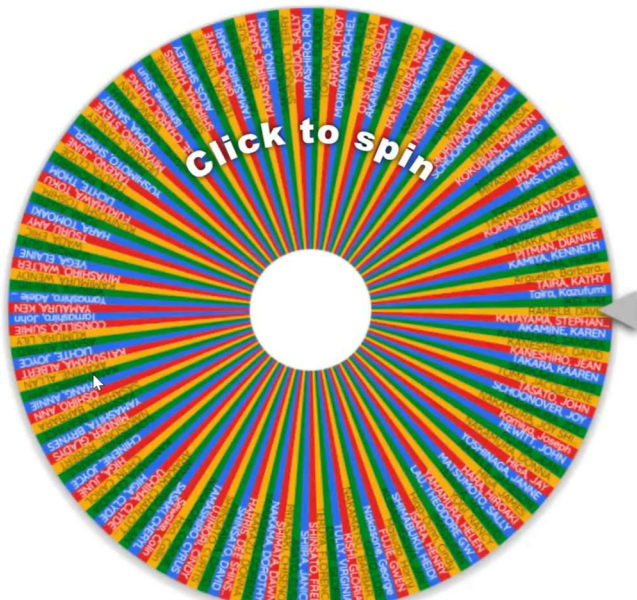
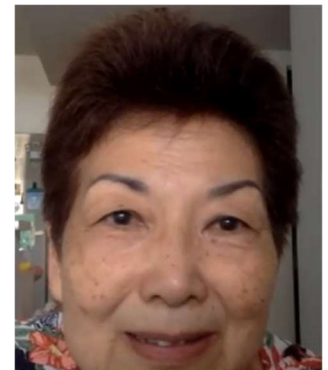
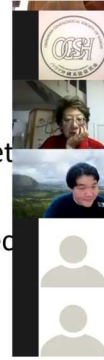
It was an hour filled with lip-syncing; a scavenger hunt; a spinner wheel to pick a random winner for a gift card; karii, a toast from the Board to the guest, a toast from the guest to the Board; and ending with a kachaashi with music and a video from a 2020 HUOA Virtual Okinawan Festival. The video is a collection of kachaashi clips from various years and events.

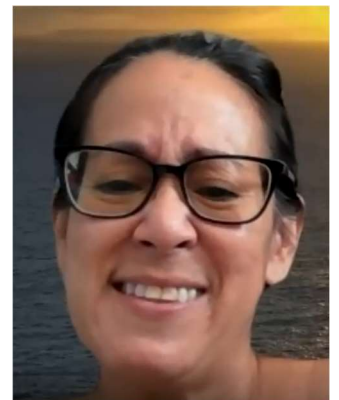
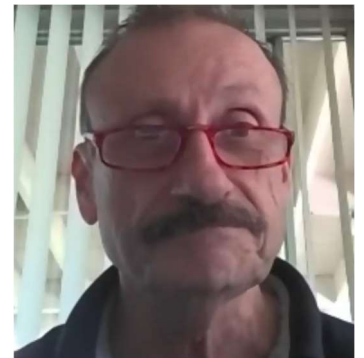
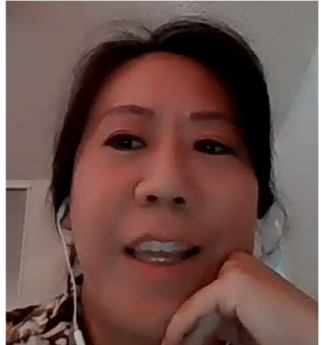
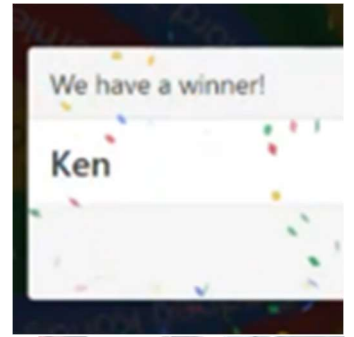




# Scavenger Hunt

1. Picture of an ancestor
2. Short story book #7
3. Okinawan Doll
4. Picture of Shuri Castle
5. Sand with Stars from Taketomi
6. Map of Okinawa
7. OGSB Logo
8. Shisa
9. HUOA Uchinanchu Newsletter
10. Okinawan sweet potato
11. Cookbook of Okinawan Recipes
12. Rubber slippers
13. Book: History of Okinawa
14. Okinawan music CD
15. OGSB: Guide to Genealogy Research









## Tradition: Okinawa Lunar New Year Celebration

Okinawa, Japan

by Rose Witmer

“Three. Two. One. Happy New Year!”

Fireworks illuminate the faces of Americans and locals as glasses are raised and toasts are made to another peaceful year on Okinawa, Japan. While the Americans’ New Years celebration is coming to an end, the Okinawans will continue on through the night until the first sunrise of the new year. Many eat the customary first bowl of soba and some walk to nearby shrines to read fortunes and pray for a prosperous year. No matter what traditions are being held, many Okinawans use this holiday as another opportunity to spend time with friends and celebrate life. However, the 1st of January is not the traditional Ryukyuan New Year. Instead, they use the Lunar Calendar, which is a system introduced from China that follows the cycles of the moon. The Lunar New Year, as followed by the Chinese, begins with the first day of the new moon, varying from year to year and generally tending to fall somewhere between January 21st and February 20th according to Western calendars.

Long before Okinawa became the southernmost prefecture of Japan, it was the ancient kingdom of the Ryukyus with a strong cultural identity that still stands proud today. In the 1300s, relations between the Ryukyu Kingdom and China were very strong. In fact, in an attempt to learn from the great nation to the West, Ryukyuan students were sent to study in China while the Chinese Emperor sent technical and cultural advisors to help develop the Ryukyu Kingdom. Traits of Chinese culture were molded into the developing Ryukyuan culture. One of these many traits, was the Lunar Calendar. Not long after its introduction, traditional Ryukyuan festivals were based according to the phases of the moon.

Hundreds of years later, the Japanese descendants of the Satsuma clan, Shimazu Tadatsune, with the support of the Tokugawa Shogunate, assumed power over the Ryukyu Kingdom. As the Ryukyu Kingdom became part of Japan, certain cultural practices and traditions were restricted. One of many things to be banned was the Lunar Calendar and especially the Lunar New Year, as this was seen as a Chinese celebration and therefore anti-national. Despite the attempt to expel the Lunar Calendar from Okinawan culture, after hundreds of years’ practice, it has become an inseparable part of their culture. Even though recent years have seen less and less people celebrate the Lunar New Year in favor of the more modern Western New Year on January 1st, certain traditions are still followed.

Okinawa is a place where past and present blend through the practice of ancient traditions, especially during the cycle of the lunar new year. It all begins on New Year’s Eve, or Toushinuyuru. One traditional tool of Toushinuyuru is garlic, which is believed to banish evil spirits. The use of garlic varies based on the village. For example, in Nakagusuku, families take the garlic roots to family shrines and offer it to their ancestors, while in Tamagusuku villagers can be seen hanging the garlic on their ears when leaving the house. In Itoman, many families will chop the garlic up and place small piles in the dining room to prevent epidemics. Wakamiji, the name given to the first water drawn from the well in the new year, is often made into tea and offered to the ancestors. This water can also be used to cleans the body and on some islands, is believed to help rejuvenate the spirit and restore youth. On the morning of the New Year, known as Shogatsu, or Sougwachi, Priestesses of the district will hold the first rite of the year.

*CONTINUE... GO TO <https://travelthruhistory.com/tradition-okinawa-lunar-new-year-celebration/>*