



Aldersgate
United Methodist Church, Palo Alto
Our new website is online!
Go to aumcpa.org
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Masthead art: Shingo Nishiura

Heart Mountain, WWII

ALDERSGATE

SHARING

BUILDING

COMMUNITY

Changes to Sunday Signups

We would like to encourage you to continue to sign up in advance, if you wish to attend our in-person services on Sunday mornings. **You may now go to this link on our new website to sign up, instead of using the Google doc. Thank you for your continued patience!**

<https://www.aumcpa.org/what-s-happening>

NewThe Pandemic and Two Japanese Businesses in Northern CA.

San Mateo's Suruki Stays Busy

August 19, 2021 by DEREK TAHARA, Nichi Bei Weekly

SAN MATEO, Calif. — In the 1970s, the late Shuji Suruki started selling groceries out of his truck, driving from Sacramento, Calif. to Salinas, Calif. A decade later in 1980, he opened the first Suruki Supermarket in Burlingame, Calif. In 1990, he moved the store to its current location in downtown San Mateo, Calif.

“All of his brothers and his dad were landscapers and he just wanted to do something different,” Ken Suruki, who co-owns the market with his sister, Misako, sister-in-law, Mindy and his mother, Ryuko Suruki, said of his father to the Nichi Bei Weekly in a phone interview.

Suruki Supermarket is known for its fish, specifically, its sashimi, Ken Suruki said. The market currently employs more staff cutting fish than it did prior to the pandemic, Suruki noted. The market once had “about only four people cutting fish, now on the weekends, we could have up to eight or nine people cutting fish at a time,” he said.

In addition to selling sashimi and other fish, the supermarket sells a variety of bento, including karaage, chicken and salmon teriyaki, among others, Suruki said.

Unlike many businesses during the coronavirus pandemic, the supermarket has thrived. Suruki believes it is because “everyone is eating at home rather than going to restaurants.” He added, “the last year-and-a half has been really busy,”

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and estimates the supermarket's sales have increased by 50 percent. Additionally, the supermarket has increased the number of employees from 30 to 40, he said.

Suruki Supermarket is located at 71 East 4th Ave. in San Mateo, Calif. Its hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. For more information, including to order items online for pick-up at the store, visit <https://www.surukisupermarket.com> or call (650) 347-5288.

Watsonville 'Institution' Yamashita Market Announces Plans to Close

May 13, 2021 by TOMO HIRAI, Nichi Bei Weekly

In 2019, business at the Pajaro Valley Fish Market in Watsonville, Calif. was slow, and Goro Yamashita was thinking of closing. Yamashita, who runs the market commonly known as the Yamashita Market, tentatively decided to close the decades-old family business sometime in the spring of 2020. Business, however, picked up as the pandemic plunged the state into a shutdown.

As old customers returned, Yamashita decided to postpone his retirement and keep the market open through the year.

"Yamashita's Market provides a great service and contributed to the health of the Nikkei community," Mas Hashimoto, a longtime resident of Watsonville, wrote in an e-mail to the Nichi Bei Weekly. "There, we could buy Japanese delicacies without going to San Jose. You can buy rice and sake everywhere, but takuan koko (pickled daikon radish), nori (seaweed), miso (fermented soybean paste), kamaboko (Japanese fish cakes), maguro (tuna), senbei (rice crackers), ramen, natto (Japanese fermented soybeans) — our vitamins — only at Yamashita's."

The market plays a central role for Watsonville's Japanese American community, according to Hashimoto and other customers. Located between both the Westview Presbyterian Church and the Watsonville Buddhist Temple, the store was where locals would drop off their koden for funerals and stock up on staples. It was also where Nikkei farmers would come after work.

Hashimoto described a thriving 20th century Japantown and Chinatown. Japanese and Chinese lived around lower Main Street, while the rich white people lived up the hill away from the flood-prone Pajaro River. Hashimoto said three other markets served the Nikkei community in the area in the past, but Yamashita's store is now the last one standing.

"Back when I started, when there were a lot of Nihonjin around. This used to be the meeting spot," said Yamashita, who started working in the family business in 1976. "Farmers would come in and pass around the B.S. And the store would close like, 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock sometimes, until the wife would tell their husband, 'Let's go home.' It was really interesting — all the farmers come in, all the happy talk — there was a lot of laughing."

Since the new year, he said business once again has started slowing down and the 68-year-old proprietor of the market has decided to close his market. Once retired, he mused he will destroy his alarm clock and get back into shape. When word got out he was planning to close, however, he noted that business has once again picked up.

"People think we're going to close in a week or a month. No, it's not like that, it's going to be end of July-ish, so we still have time," he said.

Special Gifts!

Donations Aug 1 to Aug 31

In memory of Kiyo Nakamura

Jim Nakamura
Diane Nakamura
Elaine Nakamura
Steve & Denise Murata
James Takasugi & Mona Nakamura
Ruth Tsubota & Naomi Sakata
Brigida Pacelli

In memory of Sue Nakamura & Kay Befu

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In memory of Tak Nishiura & Bette Nakamura

James Takasugi & Mona Nakamura

In memory of Ruth Ishizaki

Mary Ishizaki-Schallock

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Robert & Marcia Yasukawa

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Covid Masks

Sachiyo Yamasaki
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Sam & Jeong Hong

Celebration of Rev Roger

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Marion Wake
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Russell Wong
Herb Gong
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