

What A Beautiful Day - New Jersey's Golden Age Club Annual Banquet

Carol Pobanz
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Photo credit: all photos from Graeme Carmichael

What a beautiful day – the weather was perfect and the company even better! On this late summer afternoon, nearly 80 brothers and sisters entered our backyard to celebrate yet another year of giving and the welcoming in of more brothers and sister reaching the golden age of 60.

As was explained by Eriko Endo the initiator of the Golden Age Club (GAC) annual banquet. “It’s been 14 years (2010) since we began this gathering to celebrate another “golden” year completed and to welcome all new 60-year-olds to our ever-growing Golden community. We honor our faithful elder community members, take pride in all continued efforts, and celebrate the wisdom they have accrued through aging!”



The Golden Age celebration began as an end-of-the-year banquet. However, in 2020, because of the Covid-19 epidemic, we rethought the event and so began the annual GAC BBQ held in the Pobanz family back yard. This year a photo line was created in one corner of the yard displaying photos from each of the past events beginning in 2010 to the present. What great memories of many lifelong friends, some of whom have passed on to their spiritual home, many funny moments together, raffles, BINGO, entertainment, testimonies and delicious meals, including generously donated salmon and sushi.

This year, the program began with a welcome and prayer from our pastor Naokimi Ushiroda expressing gratitude and appreciation for the many years of service from our elder members. Then, as usual, a few of our beloved youth members barbequed the chicken and salmon, and set up the buffet of grilled vegetables, salad, fruit, sushi donated by Sakurabana and the salmon donated by Ocean Providence. Coffee and tea, pies and a birthday cake were offered for dessert, and much appreciated Melona fruit bars were distributed.



One table was specifically dedicated to the age 80 years and above participants. This table was served by the second-generation members, allowing those seven individuals a reprieve from the line of attendees eager to enjoy the meal. A testimony was given by Mrs. Sawamaki, who was one of the eldest members in attendance (87 years old).



Peter Lewis organized the entertainment, including a prepared repertoire of oldies, as well as an open mic for Karaoke. Also, much to our surprise and enjoyment, Mrs. Toshiko Sato (from the 80+ years table) favored us with an exquisite dance. I think many observers had to admire her agility and spirit, when many of us even in our sixties are challenged with simply getting up off the floor, with some sort of grace, to standing position!



Though we prepared a wonderful program, I think the thing almost everyone enjoys the most is simply being together to reminisce and to catch up with each other. Please enjoy the photos taken by Graeme Carmichael www.graemecarmichaelphotography.com/FFWPUNewJersey/Golden-Age-Club-BBQ-2024-09-14/n-B9LZPN



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