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Nisei recall auto insurance bias

By PAT TASHIMA

Los Angeles
There was a time when the burdensome cost of auto insurance fell most heavily on the shoulders of the Issei and Nisei in California.

Following the war, several insurance companies levied higher premiums on evacuees trying to resettle in the state and were still suffering from the discrimination which prompted Evacuation of Japanese from the West Coast.

In extreme instances, Japanese were required to buy shares of the company before acquiring their policies.

To combat the problem, the Japanese pooled their capital and formed the Western Pioneer Insurance Company, the first and only automobile company organized by Japanese in California. And the discriminatory practice of setting premiums was remedied.

That was in 1949. Today, the circumstances surrounding high car insurance may be different, but the dilemma still exists. Skyrocketing insurance premiums have reached far beyond the Japanese community — now a good number of people living in the state's urban areas bear the financial burden of high premiums.

The issue has become a rallying point for Los Angeles County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn and his deputy Mas Fukai, who claim inner-city drivers pay substantially higher insurance premiums than drivers in outlying, suburban areas.

Sparked by their arguments, the County and City of Los Angeles have filed a

law suit against the state's major insurance companies — specifically, it seeks to stop companies from figuring rates based on where a driver lives.

"There's no question about it, that people who live in inner-city and urban areas are being ripped off," Fukai said.

"An inner-city driver travels three or four miles to work and pays \$900 in insurance. Compare this to the driver from Orange or Ventura County, who only pays \$350, yet drives 40 miles to work. There has to be a complete overhaul of the system."

Fukai, who recently represented Hahn at an insurance hearing in Boston, said the problem has become nationwide and believes other cities will follow L.A.'s footsteps and begin filing suits against the larger companies.

Hahn goes so far to say automobile insurance has developed into "the biggest rip-off in the United States" and costs inner-city drivers about \$900 million annually in excess premiums.

Both men dispute the insurance companies' practices of considering a driver's age and occupation in figuring rates. They also believe the companies should make public statistics that support their contentions inner-city drivers have more accidents, higher litigation and poorer driving records.

"We've disproven everything they've (the insurance companies) have come up with," Fukai said. "They say inner-city drivers are worse drivers, but



Los Angeles County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn (center) goes over automobile insurance statistics with his deputy, Mas Fukai, who represented Hahn in Boston at a major hearing on automobile insurance practices.

the California Highway Patrol says this is not true. We are the better drivers.

"I really believe this could be aired out and cleaned up if the companies could come up with the right statistics to show inner-city drivers are the bad drivers," he continued, "but their figures are strictly confidential."

Minority interests are yet another matter in the tangled insurance web.

"We have a lot of Japanese and other minority groups in the inner-cities," Fukai said. "The companies have definitely stereotyped minority groups."

"In East Los Angeles, obviously, you have a lot of Chicanos who cannot purchase insurance because there is no one there to sell to them. In Watts, which is predominantly black, no insurance is available.

"The best minority dri-

ver in the inner-city will pay more than the driver who is caught drunk, has been in an accident, has received two or three tickets and who lives in San Diego County."

The higher risks of the inner-city driver are not so exaggerated however, according to Frank Iwama, a Sacramento attorney, formerly with the state attorney general's office working on consumer affairs.

"Insurance costs go up as everything else goes up," he said. "It costs a tremendous amount just to represent people in litigation."

"In the inner-city, you have a lot more vehicle damage, more theft, more crowded conditions. In San Francisco, you can't leave your car in the street without expecting damage. It's logical that when you have

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36 WEEKS TO GO

Salt Lake City site of 25th Biennial

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — The newly built Little America Hotel is the site of the 25th biennial National Convention of the Japanese American Citizens League to be held next year during the third week of July (July 17—22).

Convention co-chairman Shake Ushio noted the JAACL gathering will coincide with the annual Utah Pioneer Day festivities being held the same week, including a huge parade, rodeo competition in the air-conditioned Salt Palace and many other special events.

Adding to the exciting convention week is the geographic factor making Salt Lake City the hub of gorgeously scenic vacationland of the Intermountain West as well as being within easy traveling distances to Topaz, Minidoka, Heart Mountain and Amache, the sites of "our despair and degradation some 35 years ago". Post-convention or pre-convention trips to these points of interest are being suggested for Nikkei families.

Booster delegates will be encouraged to participate in many of the official convention activities, such as the seminars and workshops now being planned, exploring areas of vital concerns for all Japanese in America.

"Successful businessmen, political leaders and eminent people from the field of arts and science and letters are being sought to share with us their views and expertise," Ushio explained. "The project under personal direction of Municipal Judge Raymond Uno will require the help and cooperation of JAACL leaders from around the country."

The Convention Board, mindful that JAACL is celebrating its golden jubilee, is aiming to involve all 30,000-plus members in the spirit and proceedings of the national convention.

To accomplish this concept of "total involvement", according to Ushio, the Board has proposed to print enough convention booklets

filled with pertinent facts, historical data of all the chapters, districts and the national organization, biographical sketches of all National JAACL presidents, demographic insights of the Japanese in America, etc., for distribution free to each JAACL household.

Copies will also be distributed to members of Congress, state officials, local leaders and to friends. "Most importantly for the membership," Ushio added, "the booklet will also contain the action minutes of the 1978 convention proceedings so that members will know immediately following the convention what the JAACL is doing and is committed to do in the following biennium."

(The last time this occurred was when the first National JAACL Convention booklet of 1930 had integrated convention resolutions and the new constitution. The booklet went to all delegates after the convention.—Ed.)

The National JAACL Board and the District Governors Caucus have endorsed this attempt to extend convention activities to the entire membership. But this ambitious undertaking requires a great amount of preparation, adequate financing and cooperation, Ushio continued.

The booklet committee, under leadership of Ted Nagata, trusts that the cooperation will be forthcoming. "To help finance this project, we are asking each chapter to pledge at least \$1 per member on its roster," Ushio announced. The pledge can be met by an outright grant, selling advertising space in the booklet or contributing through other fund-raising activities sponsored by the Convention Board.

Action memos to the chapters are forthcoming, Ushio said, asking for a short sketch about the chapter and its unique accomplishments. To date, two district councils and several chapters have formally pledged to support this project. □

The curious marriage of Osaka and Arkansas

FORREST CITY, Ark. — In this pleasant country town about midway between Little Rock and Memphis, the Warwick Electronics Co. plant faced with falling sales and rising losses cut its work force from 1,400 to less than 400 last year.

Today, the same plant has 1,300 full time workers; productivity is at an all-time high and sales & profit growing monthly. The reason: Sanyo Denki Kabushiki Kaisha, the Osaka firm and its small managerial and technical team, which came earlier this year to set things straight.

In addition, the curious marriage of Osaka and Ar-

kansas seems to be a striking social success, notes Washington Post reporter T. R. Reid who said the newcomers have been overwhelmed by the local hospitality though not by its cuisine. Arkansas is known for its hogs and the local delicacy, pork barbecue, has found little favor with the Japanese palate. Neither has "kattofishu".

The language problem has been trying at times because of the particular brand and pronunciation in the Deep South. For instance, "we had a terrible time asking people how to get to 'Burokshi' (Biloxi)," Mrs. Kazuo Watanabe (wife

of a Sanyo vice president) recalled as the visitors study Southern culture and visit the leading tourist spots. We are having wonderful trips through Mississippi and Tennessee."

The Arkansans here seemed equally pleased with their new neighbors. "Even if they weren't giving us all jobs, I'd have to say they were real good people," a local union leader at the Sanyo plant said.

Although the Japanese takeover came as something of a thunderbolt here in the northeastern corner of Arkansas, the Forrest

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BEING MISQUOTED

Price of Being a Columnist

LOS ANGELES — An irate George Yoshinaga now knows the success and pitfalls of being a columnist — he's quotable and also misquotable.

Yoshinaga, a columnist for the Kashu Mainichi, confronted the Committee to Preserve Property Rights (CPPR) at a Gardena city council meeting last week, challenging the group's use of a quote he says was taken out of context.

The anti-redevelopment group made it appear he was opposed to redevelopment in its literature mailed to 15,768 registered

Gardena voters, Yoshinaga said.

In reality, he supports the formation of a community redevelopment agency, whose fate will be decided in a special election Nov. 15.

The CPPR used a statement from one of Yoshinaga's columns, "Horse's Mouth", published eight months ago. It read: "When the original idea of redevelopment was proposed, everyone was for it. It sounded great, but because of false promises from the CRA and those involved in it, people are becoming very leery about the whole

idea."

The statement, according to Yoshinaga, had nothing to do with redevelopment in Gardena, but represented his views toward redevelopment in Little Tokyo.

Yoshinaga said he was upset the statement wasn't attributed to his column of several months ago and said it "looked like an endorsement."

"They (CPPR) have enough solid arguments without stooping to this," he said. "I guess they needed a Japanese name and they used me."

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INSURANCE

Continued from Front Page

more people on the road at the same time, there are more possibilities of vandalism and theft. Then, once an accident does occur, there's the cost of litigation."

In spite of the added risks, Iwama said he doesn't believe the higher premiums are proportionate to the companies' claim costs and agrees with Hahn that insurance is presently a major "consumer rip-off."

From his work in consumer affairs, Iwama found a good number of letters were received from people complaining about companies trying to cancel or

hike rates after an accident occurred.

"I really think a lot can be done. Insurance companies are like any other business. They have to be regulated. The situation should be remedied."

But the cost of insurance isn't a "cut and dry" issue, according to Paul Tsuneishi, of Tsuneishi Insurance Co. in downtown Los Angeles. To him, insurance is simply "being priced out of the ability to pay."

"Even in affluent San Fernando Valley, there's going to be 20% who can't pay their premiums," he said.

"Insurance is the transfer of risk to an insurance company for consideration and that is called a premium. It's a system of

transfer of risk from an individual to a company and that system is in serious trouble, whether it's auto or health."

While admitting the industry's pricing strategy is debatable, Tsuneishi said an "open rating system" in use in California makes it possible for companies to file rates based on its own experiences in certain geographic areas without obtaining prior approval.

"If you have proportionately more accidents and claims in certain areas, you can file for higher rates in that area. Any company is free to do whatever it wants to within 'reasonable limits,'" he said.

Like others, Tsuneishi doesn't have a concrete answer to the insurance dilemma, but knows Hahn's proposal to eliminate geographical ratings is not the answer.

"I understand the proposal will set a flat rate for everybody. If you did like Hahn says, then rates of all good drivers in California would be substantially higher — you're spreading the risk across the total population. That means whether you're 19, 49, or 99,

you all have the same risk. The good drivers' risks would go up substantially and I don't think they'll stand for that in the San Fernando Valley and Orange County."

For both sides, answers are hard to find.

In 1949, the solution was proven workable by the Japanese. A new company was formed to serve the interests of the persecuted group.

Today's inner-city insurance struggle, however, involves several groups — one solution is not likely to serve the diversity in interests. Loopholes can be found in any plan suggested.

"If the government gets involved, you get added costs," Iwama said. "The industry has to police itself. If it doesn't, it will have to be regulated like telephone companies. The whole insurance industry has to be looked at — automobile, home, life, accident, hospital. It all adds up.

"If you look at the average annual household budget, I would imagine insurance premiums would take up a good part of it." □

Central Cal chapters slate emergency life saving classes

FRESNO, Calif. — Tulare County JACL and Fresno JACL chapters are planning to sponsor classes in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), an emergency procedure whereby a properly trained person is able to assist someone whose heart-beat or breathing has stopped due to heart attack, fainting, drowning, suffocation, electrocution, choking or any similar emergency situation.

Mrs. Setsu Hirasuna (431-4348) has information on the

Fresno class.

Norman Otani, Central California youth commissioner, who attended the course in early September, found the course was designed to allow anyone — student, parent or grandparent — to understand the information and be confident to provide emergency CPR.

Those wishing more information on CPR may call, in Fresno:

Ernest Kazato MD (264-2682); or Bruce Hasegawa (255-6166).

WW2 PWs seek legal ground to sue for illegal treatment

SAVANNAH, Ga.—A group of U.S. veterans held prisoners of war during World War II has been formed to determine whether there are any legal grounds to sue the Japanese government and certain Japanese industries for alleged inhumane treatment and illegal use of prisoners as slave labor to aid the Japanese war effort.

An advisory council — American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor — was formed during a recent reunion here by members of the 27th Bomb Group who fought as infantrymen on Bataan and surrendered April 9, 1942.

John R. Wood, the group's attorney from Sarasota, Fla., and a former PW, said, "A fundamental question is whether international law will permit such an action as the suit we are proposing. We hope to establish tort liability on behalf of warring nations for inhumane treatment. Also we want to see if the companies the prisoners worked for can be held liable.

"We were the only POWs in history ever sold by a government as slaves to factor-

ies," said retired master sergeant Samuel D. Moody, a member of the advisory committee. "The Japanese used American workers in their factories so they could send their own workers to war."

"We believe there is a difference between treatment that takes place in an act of war and in treatment as a consequence of war," Wood said.

The group said it would bring suit either in Japanese courts or the World Court in Geneva.

All former prisoners of Japan, who served with the American troops on Wake Island, Guam, the Philippines or in China during World War II are being asked to file a claim, Wood said. □

Asian Caucus and Carter aide meet

LOS ANGELES — Director Joji Konoshima of the Asian-Pacific American Affairs unit of the national Democratic committee, in town from Washington, D.C. for a dinner honoring the President, was guest of honor at a luncheon Oct. 21 hosted by George Doizaki, president of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, Inc. Attending were:

Asian Democratic Caucus members—David Woo, pres; Sue Embrey, Les Hamasaki, Kats Kunitsugu, Chun Y. Lee, Lani Sakoda, Kaz Umemoto, France Yokoyama and Toshiko Yoshida.

The Caucus has endorsed the JACCC and supports its efforts to get funding from the Japan-U.S. Friendship Fund.

items per inch

Alcoholism Action Week
LOS ANGELES—Alcoholism Action Week, a statewide program of information and education on alcoholism and alcohol abuse, will be observed throughout the state of California Nov. 14-20. The announcement came from Dr. Jokichi Takamine, board chairman of the Alcoholism Council of Greater Los Angeles.

70th anniversary
MARYSVILLE, Calif.—The Marysville Buddhist Church marked its 70th anniversary Oct. 22. First services were held in 1908 at the home of Buntaro Nakamura on Oak St. Its present temple was dedicated on Oct. 23, 1938. The multi-purpose hall built in 1972 and a social hall completed in 1970 comprise the church complex.

Laguna school reunion
MONTEBELLO, Calif.—Nisei who attended Laguna School prewar will have their second reunion Nov. 5, 5:30 p.m., at Sportsman Restaurant, 1500 W. Washington, according to Rosie Kakuuchi (722-0566).

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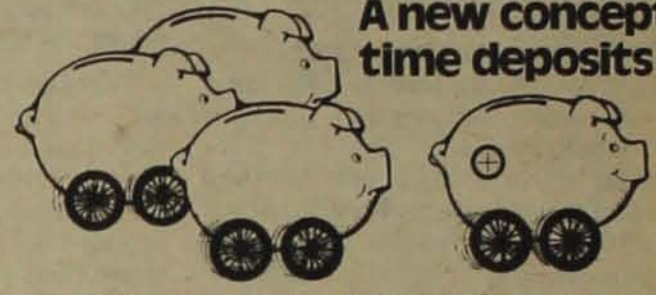
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U-no Bar: Raymond S. Uno

An Uncut Diamond

Salt Lake City

It has often been said, it is not how long one lives, but the quality of the time involved in one's life. A week ago, our neighbor's son passed away at the age of 14, the same age as one of my sons. I don't think that I am too emotional or sensitive to death; however, when an outgoing, beautiful, intelligent human being dies, it makes one's heart ache in pain at the loss. We ask, why? Why so young? Why this boy? Why now?

Although he seemed to have struggled like other young boys through adolescence and youth, he exuded a warmth and love for life that glows and helps brighten others in quest for happiness. That warmth and love for life is no more. We who knew the boy feel this vacuum; it is this makes tears surface which we strain to hold back vainly.

Having five sons, all growing and facing an uncertain future, I especially find such tragedy a shocking and grim experience. It makes me realize that every moment of one's life is important. That although each passing day may not reveal the value of each hour that has transpired, those hours are but memories of what we have or have not done.

Some very fortunate people are able to fill each moment of each hour with an abundance of love for life—the quality mentioned above. We envy these people

for they are rare, indeed.

However, we all can strive to do the best we can for ourselves and our families and sometimes, this is all we can ask of anyone. This I strive for as I try to help my five sons grow to maturity.

My oldest boy has a poster taped to the wall of his room. On the bottom of a picture serenely depicting the passage, the poignant phrase from William Blake reads as follows:

To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
An eternity in an hour.

Only a poet can put in a nutshell what for the rest of us will take pages. I hope all of us and our children have the opportunity to feel life as poetic as these words.

This is a long way to get to the 1978 National JAACL Biennial Convention in Salt Lake City. Somehow, I wish to make this convention and the workshops bring out the best we have in JAACL and all of the prospective participants in the workshops and other activities.

In our own way, we have been blessed with rich experiences and happenings. If we can somehow share these so we each can grow and mature to higher levels yet unknown, but waiting for our arrival.

We have tremendous opportunities to enrich our

lives and our children's lives with the resources we have available. We need but to marshal those resources and utilize them for the best good we know how.

At various places and times, I have talked to many people about workshops on politics, education, writers, and business/employment. They appeared enthusiastic and intrigued by the possibilities. Because we Salt Laker's are burdened with the success of such a venture, multitudes of thoughts constantly pass through my mind of what can be done. I get overwhelmed because I see the world in a grain of sand, heaven in a wild flower, infinity in the palm of my hand and eternity in an hour. Believe me, I get obsessed and shaken with the potential.

I hope there may be some or even more of you who feel the same way. Time is short, each moment is precious, each thought like an uncut diamond waiting for us to shape it to bring out its beauty and value for all to see.

I hope you will share the enthusiasm I feel and you will share it with me by writing to me and helping our formative committee develop these ideas into an exciting and memorable convention format.

Judge Raymond Uno would like readers and members to share ideas about the 1978 Convention. Write to him at 1135 Second Ave., Salt Lake City, Utah 84103.—Editor.

YOSHINAGA

Continued from Front Page

Yoshinaga, in appearing before the council, said he was never notified about the quote being used.

"Opponents of the measure submitted their argument to city hall and the city printed it without verifying its contents," he wrote in his column last week.

He explained at the meeting that he "was talking about personalities

within the Little Tokyo redevelopment agency, people within the agency promised things they should not have promised.

"I wasn't knocking redevelopment (in Gardena), I was knocking individuals in the Little Tokyo CRA."

Yoshinaga charged the CPPR with trying to "deceive the voters by clever manipulation of words."

He has urged the Gardena city attorney to notify Sacramento legislators about groups using state-

ments without first obtaining verification.

"I am hopeful that all citizens can have their privacy protected by giving individual cities the right to exercise control of the materials which appear on taxpayer paid-for brochures mailed to the voters of the respective cities.

"In my case," he continued in his column, "the damage has been done because the pamphlets have already gone into the mail and all the voters have them in their hands." □



From the Frying Pan: Bill Hosokawa

The Bakke Case

Denver, Colo.

In the past few weeks it seems every newspaper pundit worthy of the name has commented on the Bakke case. Allan Bakke, you will recall, is a white man who filed suit against the University of California at Davis to require it to enroll him in its medical school. Bakke contends he was denied one of the 100 slots open at the school because 16 of them were reserved for racial minorities with lesser academic credentials than his. He charged this constituted reverse discrimination.

The Supreme Court of the United States has heard Bakke's plea. Now there will be weeks and probably months of waiting until the justices reach and announce a decision. Whichever way they rule, there will be a fresh outburst of newspaper comment for the Bakke case poses one of the knottiest dilemmas in the history of the civil rights movement.

I have read a substantial number of the commentaries and the preponderance seems to support the position of the University which is what the JAACL's brief also does. In fact, many of the questions asked by the justices during oral argument indicate a tilt toward Bakke. The prevalent rationale seems to be that discrimination in favor of disadvantaged minorities is necessary in these times to help overcome past injustices. Many of the writers argue that society is race-conscious, and we must recognize this fact in promoting the efforts of racial minorities to improve themselves.

These commentators, unfortunately, do not concern themselves with the difficulty of determining race.

When, for example, is a black a black? Will his status be determined by his appearance? Would a relatively light-skinned person with a black great-grandmother be black or white under the rules? Would it come to minorities having to carry pedigree papers to establish their eligibility for special minority programs? These are not frivolous questions.

It can also be asked whether a student

with a Mexican-born father named Gonzales, and a tenth generation white American mother named Johnson, would be a Hispanic under the racial ground rules. And what if his parentage were the other way around, with his mother a Hispanic and his father an Anglo. Would that make a difference?

There is a disturbing similarity between the current preoccupation with race, and what happened to Japanese Americans in 1942. Back then the U.S. government decided all persons of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast were automatically, by reason of race, a danger to the national security. (Oddly enough this doctrine did not hold true in Hawaii.) The evacuation was conducted on a racial basis, much to the distress of Japanese Americans, and even a fraction of Japanese blood was ruled to be reason enough for locking people up. In the present case it is argued we should assist a minority, again on a racial basis.

Back in 1942, it was reasoned that something bad (the suspension of civil rights and imprisonment on a racial basis) was acceptable because something very important (national security) was at stake.

Now it is being argued by some that something bad (discrimination against Bakke) must be accepted because something very important (affirmative action, helping the disadvantaged, etc.) is also at stake. If we condemn evacuation, can we accept discrimination against Bakke and still be consistent?

This, of course, is a simplistic argument and there probably are many holes that could be picked in it. But the parallel is close enough to be worrisome.

Special consideration for the aspirations of disadvantaged minorities is a desirable goal, but somehow the idea of declaring race to be the criteria for extraordinary treatment—either friendly or hostile—is disturbing, particularly in light of our experience as a discriminated-against minority. Discrimination on account of race should be recognized as a barrier to social and economic progress, but as only one of several. □

Ye Editor's Desk: Harry K. Honda

Our New 'By-Liner'

A new by-line appears on our front page this week and we would like to welcome her to the Pacific Citizen staff. Patricia Hatsuye Tashima is a Cal State-Fullerton honor graduate in journalism, class of 1977, who has just finished an internship with our colleagues a few blocks west of us—the Los Angeles Times. She first came by the PC office (when it was on Weller St.) looking for leads on a Little Tokyo feature to which she had been assigned.

And during the course of conversation (we often try to "home in" or "get a handle" on visitors who stop by), it was found that we have mutual friends in her uncle, Mas Tashima of Cleveland JAACL and other Tashimas who have been and are helping JAACL here and there. So Pat will not be a complete stranger in the JAACL family.

Since the PC ranges nationally, we rely on the telephone to dig the latest or to check out stories. The promptness of calls she had

made being returned from out-of-town or nearby has impressed her. In reality, she is starting a new trend: PC will be calling more frequently than in the past.

As we welcome Pat on staff, we regret the absence of circulation manager Yuki Kamayatsu, who is on sick leave after being hospitalized a week due to high blood pressure. Her assistant Tomi Hoshizaki has assumed the task of keeping track of some 20,000 subscribers and the renewal routine (which has been thoroughly revamped) as the 1978 JAACL membership campaign commences.

While it's been a bit more hectic than usual inside the PC office, there were two happy Little Tokyo happenings providing us a change of pace: (1) the Little Tokyo Businessmen's Assn. luncheon with county supervisor Ed Edelman (college buddy of Contra Costa JAACLer and attorney Joe Yasaki), who

was dubbed the "governor" of Little Tokyo. That's a spin-off from the esteem city councilman Gil Lindsay has as "mayor" of Little Tokyo. (2) And the salute to Assemblyman Paul Bannai before 300 friends at New Otani Hotel, including Lt. Gov. Mervyn Dymally, Supervisor Kenny Hahn and the mayors of four cities within Paul's assembly district: Sak Yamamoto (Carson JAACLer), Ed Russ (Gardena Valley JAACLer), Guy Hocker and Jim Ramsey.

While Bannai commended TV star Greg Morris of *Mission Impossible* for his community work in drug abuse, Paul explained his personal bias for the show stemmed from the fact that he, as a Republican running in a heavily registered Democratic district, had stepped into his own "mission impossible" and wanted to learn a few tricks from Greg Morris.

A final word for both events should be added: they started and ended on time! □

calendar

- Nov. 4 (Friday)**
Salt Lake—Gen Mtg, Ramada Inn, 6 p.m.
- Nov. 5 (Saturday)**
West Valley—Box lunch sale.
Los Angeles—We Are One potluck-auction, Sumitomo Bank, Gardena, 7 p.m.
Los Angeles—SAAY plant sale, YB House, 1227 Crenshaw Blvd, 10 a.m.
- Nov. 6 (Sunday)**
NC-WNDC—Fall qtrly sess, San Jose JACL hosts: Hyatt House, 9:30 a.m.; Rep. Norman Mineta, lunch spkr.
Alameda—Fishing derby.
Sacramento—Henry Taketa testimonial dnr, Red Lion Inn.
- Nov. 7 (Monday)**
Fresno—Nikkei Sv Ctr mtg, 912 F St, 7 p.m.
- Nov. 8 (Tuesday)**
Alameda—Mtg, Buena Vista Methodist Church, 7:30 p.m.
Stockton—Bd Mtg, Calif. 1st Bank, 8 p.m.
Sequoia—Bd Mtg, Palo Alto Issei Hall, 7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 9 (Wednesday)**
Washington, D.C.—Bd Mtg, M. Yoshikami res, 7:30 p.m.
Orange County—Bd Mtg, Calif 1st Bank, 5th & Main, Santa Ana, 7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 10 (Thursday)**
Salt Lake—Bd Mtg, Jimi Mitsunaga res, 7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 11—13**
MPDC—Fall Mtg, Executive Tower, 14th & Curtis, Denver.
- Nov. 12 (Saturday)**
Riverside—Thanksgiving dnr, First Christian Church.
San Gabriel Valley—Inst Dnr, Great Wall Restaurant, West Covina.
- NISEI SKI CLUB, San Francisco Annual Pre-Season Kickoff Dance, Sat., Nov. 12, 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m., Stanford Holiday Inn, Palo Alto. Dance to the fantastic rock of "Hot Cider". Adm: \$4.50. (Members: \$2.50 if attending 8:30 meeting, \$3.50.)
- Nov. 12—13**
CCDC—Dist Convention, Sheraton Inn, Fresno; Sen S I Hayakawa, Sun banq spkr.
- Nov. 13 (Sunday)**
PSWDC—Fall qtrly sess, East Los Angeles JACL hosts: Little Tokyo Towers, Los Angeles, 9:30 a.m.
Pocatello—Chow mein dnr, JACL Hall, noon-6 p.m.
- Nov. 14 (Monday)**
Las Vegas—Mtg, Osaka Restaurant 8 p.m.
- Nov. 18 (Friday)**
El Cerrito—Eastbay Nisei retirement mtg, Sycamore Church, 7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 18—20**
Cincinnati—Internat'l Folk Festival.
- Nov. 19 (Sunday)**
West Los Angeles—Inst dnr, Airport Marina, Manchester & Lincoln Bl, 6:30 p.m.; George Knox Roth, spkr.
Chicago—Inst dnr-dance.
- Nov. 25—26**
IDC—Dist Conv, Wasatch Front North JACL hosts: Holiday Inn, Ogden; Sen Orrin Hatch, banq spkr.
Chicago—Asian American Art Fair, Midwest Buddhist Temple.

Japanese Americans rediscovering their roots

By **MARITA HERNANDEZ**
(San Jose Mercury)

San Jose, Calif.
Jan Kurahara, like most of his Japanese American contemporaries, grew up knowing little about his Japanese ancestry.

"Two years ago, I didn't give a damn about other Japanese Americans," he said candidly on a recent afternoon, sitting behind a neatly kept desk at his San Jose law office.

"And I don't speak Japanese," he would later interject.

This attitude, he explained, is a common one among Americans of Japanese ancestry. It's one that's taken several generations of hard times and prejudice to develop.

Today, Kurahara heads the San Jose chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, a national civil rights organization of about 30,000 that acts as an advocate for Japanese Americans and works to preserve the ethnic group's cultural heritage.

Along with his own recently sparked interest in learning about his cultural background, Kurahara has noticed a resurgence among other Japanese Americans in discovering their roots.

But, he added, "we're still in the minority among Japanese Americans."

Kurahara traces the loss of cultural identity among Japanese Americans to a

Plant, yard sale
LOS ANGELES, Calif. — A fundraising plant and yard sale sponsored by the Service for Asian American Youth will be held Nov. 5 and 6 at the "YB" House, 1227 Crenshaw. Sale will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days.

We Are One
GARDENA, Calif. — We Are One club potluck and white elephant auction will be held Nov. 5, 7 p.m. at Gardena branch of Sumitomo Bank with Kei and Rosie Oshiro in charge. Coordinating the potluck are Annabelle Lee, Lorrie Inouye and Rosie Oshiro.



JAN KURAHARA
... San Jose JACL leader

struggle for survival.
"Because of the beating Japanese Americans took during World War II"—loss of their hard-earned property and confinement to relocation centers — they realized that in order to survive they would have to take one of two courses.

"They would have to bunch together or assimilate," Kurahara said. "And they chose to assimilate."

This meant turning their backs on their cultural heritage and—"forcing white values on themselves and working at not sticking together," Kurahara said.

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Although Kurahara considers it "a shame" that so little of the Japanese heritage has been preserved, he is not one to point a finger at those who choose to ignore their Japanese American ancestry.

For he, too, was raised in a white middle-class neighborhood, with no Japanese American friends nor a desire to identify with the Japanese culture.

There are three distinct categories of Japanese Americans, he explained. He categorizes himself and his contemporaries as Sansei, third-generation Japanese Americans and beyond.

Assimilation to the American way of life has been almost total. "Very few of us speak Japanese," he said, adding that more than half

have married outside of their ethnic group.

"Other than the fact that we've had a lot of education stressed on us, our values are no different from the average middle-class American. We have the same likes and dislikes, the same taste in food and even the same prejudices," he said.

Continued on Page 8

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Ringside Seat: George Yoshinaga

Oyako Donburi

Los Angeles
Recently, when a group of Sansei boys were over my house to visit one of my sons, the discussion got around to football so I casually mentioned that in pre-war days they had a number of club teams made up of Japanese American players.

They seemed amazed by the revelation. "Hey," said one, "that sounds like a keen idea. Maybe we should start one. There are enough guys playing high school football to form some teams."

What I would like to see is a team of Japanese American prep players who could challenge an all-star prep team from Japan.

American football is the fastest growing sport in Japan. It would grow even faster if the cost of fielding a team wasn't so high.

In 1967—ten years ago—there were only 40 high schools which fielded teams. Today there are over 100 teams. And, they play a national championship game at the end of the season, much like the national interscholastic baseball championships which are so popular in Japan.

In addition to the cost of fielding a football team (about \$150 per player for equipment), the other reason the sport hasn't taken off up to now is that in Japan they have a "club system" in high school.

If a player joins the high school baseball team, he becomes member of the "baseball club" at the school and is expected to devote all of his time to the sport. Even if he wanted to try out for football, he would not be allowed to do so by the baseball club.

This is the reason there are no "two letter", or "three letter" athletes in Japanese high schools as we find them in the U.S.

Most U.S. high schoolers take part in two sports and some as many as four (football,

basketball, baseball, track and field).

As far as the cost is concerned, there is no special revenue put up by the schools because they cannot charge admission to the football games.

Players who participate now are financed by their parents, donation from the school alumni and well-wishers.

In addition, since the only pro sport in Japan is baseball, those who want to struggle up the ladder in sports, prefer to take a crack at baseball before any other sport.

Regardless of the obstacles, American football is making big inroads and it is predicted that maybe as many as 500 high schools would be playing the sport.

One of the ways to inspire youths to turn to football, in the absence of a professional career in the sport, is to offer a chance to go abroad to play.

A series between the Japanese high school all-stars and the U.S. Japanese American all-stars might be one of the most attractive "bowl" games offered.

One reason that such a game would be feasible is that while there are a lot of big JAs, the size factor will not be that dominant.

It shouldn't be too tough to finance such a game.

In addition to ticket sales, some of the major Japanese firms might underwrite the program.

At last count, I found enough Japanese American players right here in Southern California to field a representative team.

We might call it the "Oya-ko Donburi". Which, roughly translated, means "Father and Son Bowl".

Since it involves Japanese from Japan, the homeland of the immigrants to America, what could be more appropriate than "Oyako Donburi".



DORIS MATSUI

Doris Matsui, wife of Sacramento city councilman Robert Matsui, was elected board of directors president of the KVIE (Ch 6), community-supported educational TV station covering Sacramento-Stockton. She has been a board member since 1975 and served as secretary. She also has served on the boards of the Sacramento Symphony Assn., Sacramento Science Center, Junior Museum, Junior League of Sacramento and active with the Children's Home Guild and Sacramento JAACL.

Health

Daryl Kubotsu, formerly of Los Angeles, and a 1975 graduate of the Univ. of Nebraska College of Medicine, is president-elect of the Calif. Academy of Physicians' Assistants. He is currently at Travis AFB after completing his internship at the Air Force regional hospital at March AFB. Calif. Gov. Brown has appointed two Chinese Americans, San Francisco pharmacist Sam Ching and Dr. Ray Fay, practicing San Francisco physician and former UCLA assistant professor of urology and pediatrics, to the fourth district review committee of the State Board of Medical Quality Assurance. There are 14 review committees assisting what was formerly the board of medical examiners. District 4 covers San Francisco, Marin and San Mateo counties.

• Since the above column first appeared, Yoshinaga said response was good as some inquired, "Where do we sign up?" He had to acknowledge that it was only a story and not much more, though such a project would have "great potential".—Editor.

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Education
A total of 325 "gifted" seventh graders throughout Illinois was invited to take the Johns Hopkins SAT test (normally taken by 11th and 12th graders) in October at Niles West High, including Suzanne M. Oto, 12, of Fairview South School, Skokie.

Churches
His Eminence Kosho Ohtani of Nishi Hongwanji, who retired in April after 50 years as leader of the Jodo Shinshu (Buddhist) sect, and his wife were visiting from Japan with the Buddhist Churches of America holding testimonial dinners at Los Angeles (Oct. 20) and San Francisco (Nov. 1 at Miyako Hotel).

Entertainment
Elaine Kashiki was named administrative director of the Inner City Cultural Center with activities in Los Angeles and Long Beach. A former theater arts student at UCLA and with the East West Players, she joined the ICCA in 1967 as an assistant to C. Bernard Jackson, ICCA executive director.

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