

Commission Faces Uncertainty as it Urges Bush to Meet Needs of APis



PHOTO: TRACY UBA
Stewart Kwoh, executive director of APALC, holds up the commission's report detailing the needs of APis.

By TRACY UBA Writer/Reporter

With Census 2000 numbers showing Asian Pacific Islanders as the fastest growing minority population in the United States, the unmet needs of this diverse community have never been so apparent.

That's why members of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders gathered in Los Angeles on April 18 with community leaders to urge President Bush to ensure that APis nationwide have access to federal health-care resources and social services.

Hosted by the Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council (A3PCON), a federation of over 40 health and human service agencies in Southern California, the event allowed the commission to highlight its interim report on APis, "A People Looking Forward."

"The report addresses many of the issues that we are so concerned about in the Asian Pacific American community, and it does so from

a national and a federal perspective," said Stewart Kwoh, executive director of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center. "We are usually very much at work at a local and regional, sometimes a statewide, level, but rarely has the Asian Pacific American community at a national level been pulled into a major initiative to get some major issues addressed."

Among those issues, according to Kwoh, are immigrant rights, hate crimes, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, gay and lesbian rights and Pacific Islander concerns.

The report also contains formal recommendations to the president on how to address these issues, including boosting API participation in federal programs, fostering research and data collection on API populations, and increasing public and private sector community involvement.

Approximately two million APis lack health insurance today, while 40 percent of APis are limited English speakers and 35 percent live in linguistically isolated homes, said A3PCON executive committee member Miya Iwataki, who noted the report's call for more culturally sensitive language and interpretation services.

But even as the commission attempts to bring more awareness to

the report and to underserved API communities, it is facing two big hurdles: lack of an executive director and uncertainty over Bush's support.

The 15-member commission was first formed in June 1999 under President Clinton's Executive Order 13125. The commissioners, all Democrats, come from various fields including health, education, economic and community development, civil rights and business.

With a new Republican administration, however, some fear Bush may eventually dismantle or replace the current commission before the recommendations in their report are even addressed.

"At this point, we have not heard from the [Bush] administration that we are not going to be able to continue our work, and so for all intents and purposes we assume that the commission stays intact," said commissioner Tessie Guillermo.

"We haven't met with the current Cabinet, but I don't think it's something that anyone should take as [a] pessimistic sign," said commissioner Jacinta Titiāli Abbott. "The new administration is young. There's a lot that they have to do in terms of appointments and focusing on key issues that affect all Americans, not just Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. All of the commissions that have been established by executive order [Hispanic, Native American, African American] are in the same kind of limbo that we are."

"The positive aspect is that we still have our staff in place," Abbott said. "We're short an executive director, which is key to keep the momentum that we have in place going, and so that is of concern to us."

But even with these concerns, commissioner Jonathan Leong stressed that it's really up to the community to begin implementing these recommendations and finding sources of funding.

"Our commitment to this is not time-limited," added Guillermo. "So whether it's officially or non-officially, we do still continue to see ourselves as members of the commission. Our job is to promote the report, work towards the implementation of the recommendations and work in partnership with all the different community groups." ■

Congressional Fellow Program Seeks Applicants

The Mike M. Massoika Fellowship Fund has announced requests for applicants for its 10th Annual Congressional Fellow program. The selected fellow will serve in the office of a U.S. senator or member of the U.S. House of Representatives. The deadline for applications is June 1.

The three-and-a-half month fellowship includes a stipend of \$7,500, and roundtrip airfare is provided to Washington, D.C. The term served will be the fall (September through December 2001) or the spring (February through May 2002). The choice of fall or spring term will be arranged with the congressional office and the award.

Candidates must be American citizens who are in at least their third year of college or in graduate or professional programs. Preference will be given to those with a demonstrated commitment to Asian American issues, particularly those affecting the Japanese American community.

The most recent Mike M. Massoika Fellows were Nicole Akemi Inouye of Huntington Beach, Calif., who served in the office of Rep. Paty T. Mink, D-Hawaii, and David M. Namura of Arvada, Colo., who worked in the office of Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii.

Interested candidates should call National JACL Headquarters at 415-921-8225 for application forms, or e-mail jacl@jacl.org. Information is also available at the JACL website: www.jacl.org/massoika.html. ■

Group Protests Actions of Japanese Government

By MARTHA NAKAGAWA
Assistant Editor

A multicultural group of more than 200 people rallied outside the Japanese Consul General's office in Los Angeles on April 17 to protest the recent approval of newly revised textbooks for Japanese public school students and a March court ruling denying compensation to women forced into sexual slavery by Japanese Imperial troops between 1910-1945.

A petition signed by 130 organizations and a letter addressed to the Japanese government was delivered to the Japanese Consulate

yen (approx. \$2,440).

Although Japan has supported the establishment of a private fund (the Asian Women's Fund) to compensate former sex slaves, Chikashita's ruling was the first requiring the government of Japan to take responsibility.

In referring to the high court's reversal of Chikashita's ruling, Haena Cho, with the Young Koreans United of Los Angeles, said, "The recent court decision is a brutal slap in the face to the 'comfort women.' The Japanese government's continuing refusal to redress these women for what they have suffered during World War II



PHOTO: MARTHA NAKAGAWA

Bong Keon Kim, president of the Korean Association of Korean War Veterans in U.S.A., leads the crowds in demanding an apology from Japan.

General's office by representatives from five organizations.

Among those showing their support was Martha Matsuoka with the Okinawa Peace Network of L.A. Matsuoka said the Okinawan people were also impacted by the recent textbook revisions since references to the Japanese Imperial Army's role in killing or forcing hundreds of Okinawans to commit suicide during the Battle of Okinawa at the tail end of World War II were shortened. An estimated 25 percent of Okinawa's civilian population perished during that time.

"The recent textbook controversy shows that the Japanese government is increasingly favoring nationalist and pro-military interests who ignore, distort and revise important histories of women, children and victims of militarism who continue to live the daily legacy of World War II," said Matsuoka.

Matsuoka also decried Japan's support of keeping 75 percent of the U.S. military facilities on Okinawa.

The Okinawan governor has repeatedly called for a pull-out of U.S. military bases, pointing to crimes such as assaults and rapes committed on civilians by American troops. Studies have also shown that the bases contribute to environmental pollution, birth defects and high rates of cancer.

Court Ruling

On March 29, a Hiroshima High Court overturned a landmark April 1998 ruling made by Judge Hideaki Chikashita of the Yamaguchi District Court. Chikashita had ruled that the Japanese government must compensate three South Korean women with 300,000

demonstrates the ongoing nature of their oppression."

Textbook Revision

On April 3, Japan's Ministry of Education approved eight controversial textbooks to be used next year in their public junior high and high school systems. The revised textbooks were based on a draft submitted by the right-wing Atarashi Rekishi Kyokasho wo Tsukurukai (Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform).

According to the coalition made up of the Association for the Victims of Japanese War Crimes, GABRIELA Network of L.A., Okinawa Peace Network of L.A., and Young Koreans United of L.A., the revised textbooks do the following:

- Five of the books eliminate all references to "comfort women," the euphemistic term coined by the Japanese military to refer to the estimated 200,000 women who were forced into sexual slavery.

- All the books make no reference to Unit 731, the infamous army unit that specialized in biological warfare experiments on Chinese citizens.

- The books justify the actions of the Japanese Imperial Army as a campaign to free Asia from Western intervention and downplay the atrocities of the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, where an estimated 340,000 people were killed in a three-month period.

- Shortens references to Japan's role in killing and/or forcing Okinawan families to commit suicide during the Battle of Okinawa, which ultimately took the lives of an estimated 25 percent of the island's civilian population. ■

Survey Reveals Negative Attitudes Toward APis

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK—A quarter of Americans have strong negative stereotypes of Chinese Americans, and 23 percent would be uncomfortable voting for an Asian American president, according to a survey sponsored by a Chinese American group.

Thirty-two percent of those surveyed believe Chinese Americans are more loyal to China than to the United States.

"We found these findings startling," said Henry Tang, chairman of the Committee of 100, which sponsored the survey. "Asian Americans are not the model minority with no issues. The study shows that they face negative stereotyping among a significant proportion of this country."

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said the survey results indicated "that prejudice continues to be a part of the American landscape."

The study also found some positive attitudes toward Chinese Americans. Of those surveyed, 91 percent said that Chinese Americans had "strong family values," 77 percent said they have "honesty as businesspeople," and 67 percent said they place a high value on education.

The survey was conducted March 1-14 by Yankelevich Partners in collaboration with The Martilla Communications Group and the ADL using phone interviews with 1,216 Americans age 18 and older. The margin of error was 3.1 percentage points. ■

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National Newsbytes

By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

□ Hate Crimes Bill Passes Texas House

AUSTIN, Texas—The Texas House of Representatives gave preliminary approval on April 23 to a bill that enhances penalties for crimes motivated by hate.

The James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Act, named for the black man dragged to death behind a pickup in 1998, strengthens penalties for crimes motivated by race, religion, color, disability, sexual preference, national origin or ancestry. The 87-60 vote came after a two-hour debate.

In the state Senate, however, the bill's sponsor, Sen. Rodney Ellis, D-Houston, has been unable to gather support to bring it up for debate. It died in the Senate in 1999, when critics complained it created unnecessary distinctions for homosexuals.

Rep. John Shields, R-San Antonio, who opposed the bill, said he would have voted against it even if it didn't include protections for gays and lesbians.

Shields said he opposed all crime but feared the legislation threatened free speech and unnecessarily and unfairly protected certain people.

Ellis said that "the bill would have passed both houses of the Legislature many years ago if we'd been willing to take sexual orientation out of it," but that would send out a signal that "it's open season on a certain group of people."

The House voted closely along party lines, with all 77 voting Democrats supporting the bill and all but 10 Republicans opposing it.

□ Searching for Ancestors Gets Easier With Ellis Island Database

SALT LAKE CITY—On April 17, Ellis Island officials and the Mormon church introduced a new database containing arrival records for the 22 million immigrants who entered the port of New York from 1892 to 1954.

When fully operational, the database, which includes 70 percent of all U.S. arrivals recorded during that period, will be available both to Ellis Island visitors and on the Internet.

The searchable database includes immigrants' names, their port of origin, age, nationality, hometown and marital status.

Visitors to the new American Family Immigration History Center at Ellis Island can take

home printouts of the information and purchase a copy of the original immigration records and a photo of the ship that brought their ancestors to the United States. Online visitors will be able to order the records and photos in about a month.

Until now, Ellis Island information was only available on microfilm at the National Archives in Washington, or at the Mormon Church's Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

Over the past several years, church volunteers have worked with the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Foundation to compile the information from manifests immigrants filled out on board ship.

Stephen Briganti, president and chief executive of the foundation, said, "There's great interest now in finding one's family history, where they came from, what their life was like, what diseases they might have had. This is certainly going to help that process along."

□ Alaska Governor Calls for Hate Crime Legislation

JUNEAU, Alaska—In response to a January paintball attack against at least a dozen Alaska Natives by three white youngsters, Gov. Tony Knowles said he would propose a hate crimes bill and create a commission to combat what he called "a dangerous corrosion of Alaska's social fabric."

Police confiscated a videotape that was made during the attacks in downtown Anchorage. "I shared with Alaskans across our state the shock, the sadness, the anger we all felt as we witnessed these hate-filled young men as they went hunting for Eskimos," Knowles said April 16.

The governor created a cabinet-level task force in March to make recommendations on fighting racism. Suggestions included prohibiting the suspension of sentences in hate crimes cases; allowing victims to file civil lawsuits; and mandatory minimum sentences.

The panel also recommended that the Department of Public Safety incorporate courses on hate crimes and intolerance in statewide police training and that the state encourage schools to adopt guidelines to protect students from harassment and hate crimes.

With less than three weeks left in the legislative session Knowles acknowledged the bill would probably not get very far this year, but he said he thinks it will

result in final action next year.

□ Monterey Park: Ground Zero in U.S. Asian Growth Boom

MONTEREY PARK, Calif.—Known at the beginning of the 1970s as an aging but respectable postwar suburb, Monterey Park provided an affordable bedroom community lifestyle to thousands of working-class families, almost all of them white or Hispanic.

Thirty years later, it is a bustling regional business and banking center of 60,000 residents; 61 percent of them Asian.

Its nickname, "The Chinese Beverly Hills," may have done more than anything else to turn Monterey Park into America's first Asian-majority city in the 1980s.

Frederic Hsieh, known as the father of modern-day Monterey Park, was a promotion-minded young real estate agent from Hong Kong when he approached the Chamber of Commerce in the 1970s and suggested that thousands of highly educated, upwardly mobile Chinese were poised to move there if the place were marketed properly.

He translated the city's name into the Chinese equivalent of Lush Green Valley and played up the city's area code, 818—a lucky number in Chinese—and declared Monterey Park "Asian friendly," noting that 15 percent of the city's population was already Asian in 1970, although most of those residents were Japanese Americans.

Today, it is said, "Everybody in Taiwan has heard of Monterey Park."

Not everyone in the city was happy about the rapid change. At one point the City Council passed a non-binding resolution declaring English as the official language, and there were battles over whether to allow Asian books in the library or even Asian letters on the storefronts of Asian-owned businesses. But the Asians kept coming and the whites and Hispanics who stayed began to adapt.

APA Elected Officials to Attend Leadership Academy May 10-12

The Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) and the UCLA Asian American Studies Center have selected 13 outstanding elected officials to participate in the third annual leadership academy for Asian Pacific American elected officials.

The leadership academy, a nonpartisan training program, will be held in Washington, D.C., on May 10-12.

The APA elected officials will attend sessions on staff and consultant selection and management, fund-raising, public speaking, media relations, online campaigning, and interview techniques.

Speakers at the leadership academy will include Norman Y. Mineta, Secretary of Transportation; Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii; Rep. Patsy Mink, D-Hawaii; Delegate Robert A. Underwood, D-Guam; and former California Treasurer Matt Fong.

APAICS Chairman William H. "Mo" Marumoto said, "According to the 2000 Census, there are at least 3.5 million more Asian Pacific Americans now than there were in 1990, an increase of nearly 50 percent. We want to see our population growth reflected in political representation. At the leadership academy, we will develop the rising stars among our elected officials by providing them with the skills they need to become more effective leaders and to run successful campaigns for higher office."

Among the leadership academy participants are Democrats and Republicans of Filipino, Japanese, Vietnamese, Chinese, Indian, Korean, and Pacific Islander descent, from Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Colorado, Texas, California, Washington and Hawaii.

The leadership academy participants are: Christopher Cabaldon (D), councilmember, City of West Sacramento, Calif.; Colleen Hanabusa (D), vice president, Hawaii Senate; Daniel Lam (D), selectman, Town of Randolph,

Mass.; Tony Lam (R), councilmember, City of Westminster, Calif.; Neng Lee (D), councilmember, City of Eau Claire, Wis.; Stan Matsunaka (D), president, Colorado Senate; Donna Mercado Kim (D) member, Hawaii Senate; Alan Nakanishi (R), mayor, City of Lodi, Calif.; Gordon Quan, (D), councilmember, City of Houston, Texas; Scott Saiki (D), member, Hawaii House of Representatives; Vini Samuel (D), councilmember, City of Montebello, Wash.; Van Tran (R), vice mayor, City of Garden Grove, Calif.; Velma Veloria (D), member, Washington House of Representatives.

"We are pleased to be bringing such a diverse group of elected officials to Washington," said professor Don T. Nakanishi, director of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center. "They will have an unparalleled opportunity to learn from each other as well as from the faculty of the leadership academy."

Patrick Gaston, executive director of strategic alliances at Verizon, said that Verizon is proud to sponsor the leadership academy for the third straight year. "We are committed to supporting an expanded role for Asian Pacific Americans in public office, policy making, and the political process," he said.

Daphne Kwok, APAICS executive director, said, "APAICS is extremely fortunate to have the continued support of Verizon as our corporate partner, enabling APAICS to meet the tremendous needs of our community."

APAICS is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization dedicated to increasing the participation of APAs in the political process and the formation of public policy. The seventh annual APAICS gala dinner, with Secretary Mineta as a featured speaker, will be held in Washington, D.C., on May 10. A political education conference will be held on May 11. For information, call 202/296-9200 or see the APAICS website at www.apaics.org. ■

Poston on Arizona's Most Endangered Properties List

The Poston auditorium in La Paz County, Ariz., was one of 11 sites named by the Arizona Preservation Foundation (APF) in their "Most Endangered Property List 2001."

Every year, APF releases a list prioritizing Arizona's most urgent prehistoric and historic preservation sites in critical condition or in jeopardy of destruction.

The list includes archaeological sites, historic landscapes, as well as architectural structures and buildings. Nominated properties are evaluated according to criteria that consider the individual importance or historical significance, the specific threats to its existence and the feasibility for preservation.

The Poston auditorium is an adobe brick structure built in 1943 by some of the 17,814 people of Japanese descent interned at the Poston War Relocation Authority camp during World War II. Since the building, which was part of an elementary school, sits

on Colorado River Indian Tribal land, it is protected from development threats, but weathering, lack of maintenance and vandalism have left gaping holes in the walls, making it susceptible to further deterioration.

The other 10 sites on the list include: Harrison G. Yocum home and botanical gardens; Yuma/Southern Pacific Railroad settling tanks and sand mounds; Mesa Grande Archaeological Park; Phoenix Union High School; Montgomery homestead; Grace Court School; Phoenix Seed and Feed; Pennington house; Williams Grammar School; and the Gold Spot Market.

The APF is the state's only non-profit statewide historic preservation organization. The private group is dedicated to preserving Arizona's historical, archeological and cultural resources through education and public outreach programs and rehabilitation projects. ■

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JACL Corner

Spokane Chapter Hosts Annual Nikkei Appreciation Luncheon

The Spokane chapter recently held its annual Nikkei Appreciation Luncheon at Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute with approximately 150 attendees. The event was headlined by speakers Floyd Mori, national JACL president; Harry Honda, editor emeritus, *Pacific Citizen*; and Cherry Tsutsumida, executive director of the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation.

Dean Lynch, Spokane city council member, delivered greetings from the city of Spokane. Additional greetings were offered by the Hon. Yoshiharu Araki, senior consul from the Consul General's Office of Japan; Dr. Hiroshi Takaoka, executive vice president of Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute; and Karen Yoshitomi, JACL Pacific Northwest regional director.

Silver Pins were awarded to Susie Uyeno and Sue Shimizu for their outstanding contributions to the community over the years. The Spokane Taiko Drummers provided entertainment.

Denny Yasuhara, past JACL national president, and member of the Spokane chapter, presented Cherry Tsutsumida with a \$7,500 check for the National JA Memorial Foundation. This was the second half of the chapter's \$15,000 pledge.

Arizona Chapter Sponsors Trip to Laughlin, Nev.

Thirty-one members of the Arizona chapter-sponsored Chojukai made their annual bus trip to Laughlin, Nev., on April 19-20, staying overnight at the Colorado Belle Hotel Casino. The fun-filled trip was arranged by Sadyoshi Sasaki, Chojukai president, assisted by Toshiko Chavers, Gladys Sallas, Uta Eto and Kaye Minato.

Talking Books' Topic at Arizona Japanese Senior Center

The April monthly meeting and luncheon of the Japanese Senior Center hosted guest speakers from the Talking Book Library. Jill Bartlett spoke on "talking books" and Angela Ac-



(L-R) Dean Nakagawa, Cherry Tsutsumida, accepting a check from the Spokane chapter JACL to the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation from Denny Yasuhara; Floyd Mori.

erno spoke on "news via telephone." The event included birthday celebrations, a white elephant sale and cash bingo. Mary Tadanu was chairperson, Marian Matsumoto vice chair, Barbara Ishida secretary and Helen Y. Tanita treasurer. The Arizona chapter operates the Japanese Senior Center jointly with the Area Agency on Aging-Region One and the YWCA of Glendale.

Gila River Cleanup Planned by Arizona JACL

Cleanup detail is planned by the Arizona JACL at the former Japanese American Gila River Relocation Center for May 21 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The cleanup will be primarily at the Butte Camp #2 site, which is visited by many and trashed by some. The camps are within reservation lands of the Gila River Indian Community. Annual right-of-entry permits are obtained by the Arizona chapter to provide maintenance for the two sites, and the Land Use Officer must be notified of names of all participants, and all vehicles involved, 24 hours in advance of the planned trip.

Persons interested in participating should contact either Mas Inoshita at 623/937-8890 or Joe Allman at 602/942-2832.

Merced, Calif.-based NSRCF Awards 34 Scholarships

The Nisei Relocation Commemorative Fund, Inc. (NSRCF) will hold an awards cere-

mony from 3 p.m. on Sunday, May 20, at the Golden Valley High School theater to recognize this year's 34 scholarship recipients.

This year marks the first time that NSRCF will present special scholarships named in honor of a particular person or persons. The scholarships are named after the following people: Nobu Kumekawa Hibino Scholarship (established by family and friends of Hibino); the Koh, Mitsuo and Dr. Kotaro Murai Scholarship (established by the Murai family); the Naka Endowment Scholarship (established by Dr. Fumio Robert Naka); the Lafayette and Mayme Noda Scholarship (established by Walter N. Frank); the Gladys Ishida Stone Scholarship (established by Stone); the Kay Yamashita Scholarship (established by Yutaka Kobayashi).

The NSRCF was established in 1980 by thankful Nisei as *ogoshi* (to return a favor) to those who helped them during World War II.

The NSRCF awarded their first grant to the American Friends Service Committee for assisting Nisei students relocate during WWII.

In 1983, NSRCF gave out their first scholarships to high school seniors in the San Francisco area.

Since then, NSRCF has awarded annual scholarships to students and communities throughout the United States, and NSRCF national board members come from as far away as Connecticut and Portland. ■

South Bay JACL to Host Forum With California Assemblyman George Nakano

The South Bay chapter of JACL will host a community forum featuring California Assemblymember George Nakano on May 10. The forum will begin at 6:30 p.m., at the Torrance Airport Meeting Room, 3301 Airport Drive, in Torrance.

Nakano represents the 53rd Assembly District encompassing the southern coastal region of Los Angeles County, stretching from Venice, Westchester, Marina del Rey, Playa del Rey and the Beach Cities, into Torrance, Lomita and the northern tip of Palos Verdes Estates. He will discuss issues that affect the communities he represents — especially how the electricity crisis and recent energy rate hikes will affect business and residents, the reapportionment of the assembly districts, the creation of the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus, as well as other topics

that are of interest to the local Asian American community. Nakano will also address constituent questions and concerns.

The community forum is co-sponsored by the South Bay chapter, JACL, Greater Los Angeles Singles chapter, JACL, Nikkei International Association, Asian Pacific American Democratic Club, Gardena Valley Chapter, JACL, Carson chapter, JACL, and the Korean American Coalition.

The Torrance Airport Meeting Room is located in the Torrance Zamperini Field Administration Building, at the intersection of Airport Drive and Aero Way. The nearest cross street is Pacific Coast Highway between Hawthorne and Crenshaw boulevards. For information, call Diane Tanaka at 213/489-8251 (day) or e-mail: tanaka@teishman.com. ■

Educational CD-ROM Available to California JACL Chapters

An educational CD-ROM made possible through a grant from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program (CCLPEP) is now available to JACL chapters in California.

The purpose of the CD is to provide teachers, school administrators and school board members with information about the JACL Curriculum and Resource Guide, "A Lesson in American History: The Japanese American Experience." The CD will help to promote the guide, assist in the development of teacher training workshops, and encourage teachers to incorporate the material in their classroom work.

The CD was produced by Diane Fukami and includes a presentation

by Jan Matsuoka, who provides a brief background about the need to incorporate the Japanese American experience in the classroom. It contains portions of the current guide; photos and footage from other sources are used to highlight the guide material.

Because the CD was produced with CCLPEP funds, the primary focus for its distribution is in California. Therefore, a supply of the CD is being distributed by national JACL to the regional staff of the three California districts, NCWNP, CC and PSW.

The CD, along with computer requirements and instructions, can be obtained from the district National Education Committee representative. ■

JACL National Youth/Student Council to be Held July 13-15 in Seattle

The JACL National Youth/Student Council (NYSC) recently announced that they will be holding a youth conference this summer at Seattle University, July 13-15.

The conference will include workshops dealing with such topics as: taiko; Hapa issues, API Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender issues, AIDS and HIV in the APA community, college organizations and the importance of graduate school, generation gaps, APAs in entertainment, and women's history, among others.

Participants will also hear various keynote speakers, network with other young JAs, and attend an "Off Tha Hook" party Saturday night.

The NYSC is a governing body within the JACL. The NYSC de-

velops programs encouraging youth and students to actively serve the community. The council has adopted a program for action to reach their goals. These include recruiting youth and student members into JACL, creating programs to meet the needs of these members, and fostering leadership development and preparing members to assume leadership roles in the JACL and the community.

For registration forms or more information, contact: Gerald Kato, 213/626-4471, <youth@jacfpw.org>; Matthew Nakata, 206/720-3049, <Nakata_Ma@hotmail.com>; or Amy Matsumoto, 301/460-5584, <camatsu@hotmail.com>.

The conference website is: <http://www.jacl.org/youth>. ■


National JACL Singles Convention to be held Aug. 31-Sept. 2

The ninth annual JACL Singles Convention will be held Labor Day Weekend, Aug. 31-Sept. 2, at the Torrance Marriott Hotel in Torrance, Calif., 310/316-3636.

Activities will include a Friday night mixer with line dancing, a computer matching game and karaoke. Workshops, a luncheon and panel presentations, will take place on Saturday, with a dinner dance and a live band in the evening; a couples panel discussion will follow brunch on Sunday.

Workshop/panel topics will include: "You and Your Message: Communicating in the Workplace" with Sol Gordon, producer, director, writer, "Before You Say I Do," Know What You're Getting Into" with Robert M. Kawahara, family practice attorney; "Hot Feng Shui Tips for Love and Romance" with Angi Ma Wong; and a bonus seminar in investment strategies. Optional activities include golf, bowling, a raffle, trips to the Getty Center, Las Vegas and Little Tokyo.

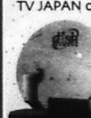
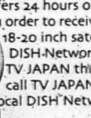
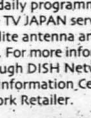
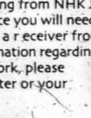

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Honda Keynoter at Calif. Tri-District; Addresses Controversial Issues

By MARTHA NAKAGAWA
Assistant Editor

Although tri-district keynote speaker U.S. Congressman Mike Honda focused his speech on the importance of maintaining JACL membership, he did not shy away from discussing more heated subjects, such as a controversial bill that he recently co-authored.

Saying that JACL is a great training ground for those interested in entering politics, Honda encouraged would-be politicians to participate in the organization. But aside from learning parliamentary procedures, the more critical reason to be involved in JACL today is to help combat the national rise in hate messages/racism, particularly on the Internet, said Honda.

"There is no other time than today... to be a part of JACL," said Honda. "We're not only going to the national level, but because of technology, our issues are becoming global. Make no mistake about it, information and reactions are going to be instantaneous because of technology. ...What happens in China, Taiwan, Latin America, the Middle East — we're going to have to stay on top of it and be prepared

to give a response, so this is why I think JACL is going to be critical."

"To help combat hate crimes in all mediums, Honda stressed the importance of speaking up.

"If people don't hear from Japanese Americans, they'll think it's okay to commit hate crimes," said Honda. "We have to learn to speak up."

One immediate proactive measure that the JACL could do to combat potential hate crimes in light of the upcoming opening of the movie, "Pearl Harbor," is to start an education campaign, said Honda.

"The anxiety is rising again," said Honda. "I hope you are vigilant and making sure that the communities are well informed about who we are and what our roles are. ... Now, if you're not worried about the movie, if you're not concerned about it and you have not a grain or thread of anxiety in you over this, you ought to revisit the experiences we had as a country. The residue is still here, the poison is still here. It's been passed on from generation to generation by misinformation."

Honda shared about how his JACL chapter held a press conference prior to Dec. 7 in 1991, the

year marking the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, to help ease tensions. He recommended similar action before the opening of the movie later this month.

Honda also suggested contacting educators when an emotional audience member stood up and shared an experience her 17-year-old son had in a movie theater after viewing a preview to "Pearl Harbor." The woman said her son came home scared after hearing hateful comments about "those Japs" from movie-goers sitting behind him.

"As parents, it may not be a bad idea to go to your county office of education or superintendent meeting or school board meeting, and say to them something like, 'We have concerns about a movie coming out. We don't know what the movie is going to look like but that's not the issue. The issue is the kinds of comments coming from the kids and how this affects our kids and how it frightens me. It frightens me because based upon other hate crimes in other schools, we don't want to see that happen again,'" said Honda.

In discussing Honda's controversial proposed bill titled, "Justice for American World War II POWs Act

of 2001," Honda said the bill does not name Japan in an effort to prevent backlash against JAs.

"In the bill, we talk about the target, and it's not Japan, the Japanese government or the Japanese people," said Honda. "This is about the people getting their day in court."

If passed, the bill would allow former American military prisoners of war to sue companies in U.S. state or federal court for losses or injuries sustained during the time they were imprisoned and forced to perform slave labor.

Honda said he also discussed the need to be sensitive to the Asian American community with the bill's co-author Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Huntington Beach.

"My co-author Dana Rohrabacher is known to be pretty outspoken about Asians, and I told him that this is not about bashing Asians or Asian Americans or the Japanese government or the Japanese people," said Honda. "He understands this so I believe he'll be a good partner in this. He'll be outspoken in making sure that people are not anti-Asian."

Reactions from his fellow elected officials have been positive, said Honda.

"We've had good reactions," said Honda. "In fact, we had something like 29 Republicans sign onto the bill. Plus, the leadership on both sides of the party have signed on as well. We've also gotten good support from the Veterans of Foreign War and the veterans office."

As for reaction from the JA community, Honda said he has not received any directly.

"I haven't heard any reaction yet," said Honda. "But it may be mixed because I think there may be a lot of concern about backlash."

In a separate move, the freshman congressman also signed on to H.R. 619, the redress bill authored by Rep. Xavier Becerra.

"I think what happened to the Japanese Latin Americans needs to be addressed," said Honda. "The process of a bill moving through Congress is a process where you have debate and discussion, and therefore, an airing of the issues, which it needs more of. And like our reparations, at the final end, it produces a much more educated public, and I believe this will also create a higher level of understanding of what happened and also a higher level of expectation of what we do as a government in times of stress and war." ■

MEMBERSHIP

(Continued from page 1)

shop session with a plenary session focused on membership to emphasize the importance of increasing membership for JACL's future.

"We wanted to talk about membership and come up with ideas so you can take them back to your chapters," said Teruya. "In a way, we're talking to the choir because all of you obviously are interested in JACL to come to this tri-district. Well, as a choir, I want you all to go back and sing to your chapters."

The plenary session was led by Edwin Endow, Stockton JACL member, Gary Mayeda, national vice president of membership, and Alan Teruya. Lucy Kishiue, JACL's new interim membership coordinator, was also introduced.

Mayeda discussed membership recruitment from a national level, while Teruya focused on the district level and Endow from a chapter perspective.

National Level

According to Mayeda, since 1966 (the year JACL began tracking membership) to the present, membership peaked around 1977 with close to 32,000 members. He attributed this increase to JACL's involvement in the redress movement. But since that time, the numbers have been declining at a steady rate of about 350 members per year with a current total of about 21,000, according to Mayeda.

Demographically, a large part of JACL's current membership — close to 6,000 JACLers — are aged 75 or older.

"To recruit more members at the national level, Mayeda recently formed a national membership committee, consisting of a representative from each district. From this, Mayeda hopes each district will form their own membership committees that can coordinate local membership drives tailored to each chapter.

"The goals and focus of the national membership committee is to really reinvigorate membership issues, organized through national, but carried on with more personal contacts on a district level," said Mayeda. "And it is my vision that the districts would hold workshops on a district level to help out the chapters in membership."

Mayeda's goal is to increase JACL's membership by 2,000 people by the 2002 national convention. He said increasing membership was critical due to some of the following factors:

- key advantage when applying for grants;
- membership dues fund about 1/3 of national's operations budget;
- larger pool of donors, contacts and volunteers; and
- more influence on public policy.

To get people interested in

JACL, Mayeda encouraged JACLers to focus on the benefits provided by the organization such as the scholarship program, the JACL credit union, health benefits and a subscription to the *Pacific Citizen*.

He also emphasized JACL's recent activities such as helping to get the former Minidoka War Relocation Authority camp site named as a national monument, and protesting the various racist incidents that have occurred following the sinking of the Ehime Maru and the collision between a U.S. spy

was up to the chapters to let their districts know what their needs are. "It is incumbent upon all the chapters to let the districts know what we can be doing to help you, to let us know where to focus our energies and to do the things that are most helpful to you," said Teruya.

To facilitate the recruitment process, Teruya pointed to two resources at the district level: the regional offices and membership committees.

As for what roles the districts

"Everything we do in our community makes us more visible," said Teruya. "It makes people more interested in us and makes them want to join and stay a member."

Chapter Level

Endow emphasized the importance of chapter involvement and cautioned against an "us vs. them" mentality between national and the chapters. He compared the JACL to a tree where the chapters were the roots.

"If you don't have good roots, that tree is not going to stay green long," said Endow. "So we have to remember to keep those roots strong and that means all of us."

He encouraged chapters to take advantage of the benefits and tools available through the districts and from the national office.

Endow also noted that recruiters had to be more aggressive in publicizing the contributions of JACL as well as be prepared to "politely answer the tough questions," and to not be afraid of rejection.

On the question of where to seek potential members, Endow suggested starting close to home with

family members. He drove home his point when he asked how many attendees had their entire family in JACL. Very few hands went up.

"If everybody asked their brothers, sisters, moms and dads or sons and daughters, we would have 40,000 people right now," he said.

"We don't even ask our own family." Other ways to find potential new recruits included approaching:

- friends and acquaintances;
- professional/business contacts;
- other Nikkei organizations (with their permission);
- phone book; and
- through events (i.e., pass around a sign-up sheet to gather names).

Other suggested tools to help attract members included:

- being visible at events;
- offering gift memberships;
- invitation to join through newsletters and the *Pacific Citizen* with member benefits listed; and
- pass out membership brochures at every activity.

The bottom line, Endow said, was to get involved. "Do something," he said. "Have a plan and do it. There's no set way. Even if it's a simple plan, just do it." ■



PHOTO: MARTHA NAKAGAWA
Grace Kimoto (third from left) encourages the young JACL members (l-r) Tiffany and Megan Ikeda and Marcia Chung.

plane and a Chinese fighter jet.

"JACL has had hundreds of accomplishments in every single decade it's been in existence," said Mayeda. "We need to focus on that. Start making a list of things that you've done that you could be proud of, that you could say 'I'm proud to be a JACL member and these are the things we've accomplished.' And take that back to your community events."

To streamline the membership renewal process, Mayeda encouraged chapters to follow the centralized procedure set up by national. When chapters create their own procedures, renewals may be delayed, he said.

To assist chapter membership chairs, Mayeda noted that membership handbooks are available. An electronic version is also being prepared so that it can be e-mailed. Brochures are also available but he encouraged each chapter to create one tailored to the needs of their local residents.

District Level

Teruya noted that since JACL is a chapter-based organization, the districts must support chapters in recruiting members.

"No one enters JACL as a member of a district or from national," said Teruya. "They start in at the chapter level so the districts' job should be to help the chapters get the people in."

At the same time, Teruya said it

can play, Teruya gave the following suggestions:

- Foster communication between the chapters and national.
 - Get chapter profiles — "Find out what the chapters are doing," said Teruya. "Some are issue-oriented. Others are cultural or social. If we can get profiles, we can get chapters together so those with similar interests can work together."
 - Update chapter rosters — "This may sound like a trivial thing but it really is important," said Teruya. "As we were planning this tri-district, we were trying to send material to all the chapters to get Mings into the newsletter. However, we were dealing with outdated chapter rosters so the information was getting sent to the wrong people."
 - Publicize events and activities through district newsletters, e-mail and district websites.
 - Workshops — Teruya encouraged districts to sponsor workshops for new chapter presidents and membership chairs on how to effectively fulfill their roles.
 - Help chapters identify opportunities to fulfill needs in their communities.
 - Look at changing demographics to find possible communities to start new chapters.
- To be more visible in the community, Teruya encouraged districts to create brochures highlighting their accomplishments, involve JACL in local events and sponsor regional or district-wide events.

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FORUM

(Continued from page 1)

erans and which are not. **Mori:** In general we had a 15 to 16 percent loss in membership this past year although we had originally projected an 8 percent decrease. In terms of the veterans, we have been open to holding dialogues and have met with those who have concerns about the resolution. "As a board we are open to whatever we can do to amend the bad feelings created by the resolution." We need to follow through with the resolution but we also know how important the veterans are to the organization.

Q: What is the JACL doing to recognize the World War II veterans? Perhaps JACL can do something during the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation's official opening in June.

Mori: At JACL's recent convention in Monterey, a dinner in honor of the veterans of all wars was held. JACL played a large role in last November's dedication of the National JA Memorial in Washington, D.C., and also took part in the Medal of Honor ceremonies in Hawaii and Los Angeles. We will also be attending the NJAMP official dedication in June. "We're trying to show our presence in recognizing the role the veterans have played."

Teruya: JACL has recognized the vets. If the members want to honor the vets, a resolution should be put in front of the national council at the next convention. "I don't think there's a problem in the JACL that would vote against it."

Q: What is the Blue Ribbon Committee? What is their purpose, who is on the committee and what is their timeline?

Mori: I identified people in the community who could look at JACL and see what can be done to make it an organization that will be effective in the modern era. With the declining membership numbers and the realities of today's Japanese American community, JACL can no longer afford to operate as it did in the 1980s and must become a relevant organization for the year 2001.

Because of our current budget constraints, I chose people from the Southern California area. The members are: Thomas Iino, DeLoitte & Touche; Bill Imada, Imada Wong Communications Group, Inc.; Alan Kumamoto, Kumamoto Associates; Henry Ota, Kelley Drye & Warren LLP; Beth Renge, Renge Securities & Co., Inc.; Sandy Sakamoto, Pacific Bell; and Tritia

Toyota. These people are highly qualified in the non profit area and have experience in organizational restructuring.

The committee's recommendations will be forwarded to the JACL national board and then on to the national council. Members of the Blue Ribbon Committee will be at the next national board meeting in May to begin discussion with the board. We are hoping to have a final report from the committee at the November board meeting.

Q: What is the financial status of JACL as of Dec. 31, 2000?

Koga: I don't have the actuals but it's in the range of between \$150,000 to \$200,000 as far as a deficit from a cash flow perspective.

Q: What is the outlook for 2001 and 2002?

Koga: The outlook for 2001 is "not very good." The early months of the year are usually when membership revenues come in but this year the monies have not been coming in at the rate they have in the past. This will increase our deficit till the end of the year, and we may have to tap into the endowment fund.

Q: With the adjustments to the 2001 budget, when will the membership have a chance to look at the new budget?

Koga: Slight adjustments have been made and more adjustments are likely to be made still. But those are the decisions of the national director. We are still trying to maintain our current staff, and the cuts that have been made are in the area of programs. There are still some areas that we can look at, like travel, before we make any cuts to staff.

Q: How much has been taken out of the endowment fund and what are the plans to return the monies?

Koga: So far \$100,000 has been taken out of the earnings portion of the endowment fund. Approximately \$200,000 is left in the earnings portion of the fund. Currently, there are no plans to return the money that has been used.

Q: When will the 1999 audit for JACL be available?

Koga: The 1999 audit will be presented at the next national board meeting in May.

Q: Are there any current plans to replace the fund-raising/development position left vacant by the departure of former staff member Donna Okubo?

Mori: Lucy Kishiuwe was recently hired as interim, part-time membership coordinator but her position does not involve any fund-raising. Fund-raising will be up for John Tateishi and the national

board since there are no monies to hire a fund-raiser. Many nonprofit board members are required to raise monies, but this is not currently the case for JACL national board members. This idea is currently being explored by the Blue Ribbon Committee.

Teruya: When choosing a board, many non profits follow the three "W's," which are "Wealth, Wisdom, and Work." Add if you can only have one, it better be wealth. Perhaps JACL should look at forming some sort of auxiliary board of

er chapters had many applications from which to choose only a few applicants. With the current application process, all applicants will be looked at.

Q: In terms of U.S.-Japan relations does the board feel that the organization needs to develop dialogue in this area? And if so, how and what?

Koga: The Honolulu chapter received a number of phone calls from the media after the Ehime Maru incident and we had a difficult time developing a response



National board members: back row (l-r)—Karen-Liane Shiba, Floyd Mori, Craig Osaki, Reiko Yoshino, and Art Koga; front row (l-r)—Bob Taniguchi, David Kawamoto, Ryan Shin, Alan Teruya, and Gary Mayeda.

high-profile people who have a lot of connections.

Q: Members are not getting their renewal notices or receiving them even though they have paid in full. Is there anything that can be done about that?

Mayeda: I've noticed that some of the chapters are sending in their renewal notices in a way that doesn't work well with the process set up at national. Some chapters wait to collect a bunch of membership checks and then send them up to national all at once. That doesn't work well for national and will delay the process. Checks should be sent directly to national, which automatically go into a mailbox. There are three renewal notices that go out, one two months prior, one when it's due, and the last one one month after the due date. There's a lot of time in between so sometimes renewal notices will go out as the paid memberships come in and we apologize.

Q: The national JACL scholarship applications now go directly to national JACL and not to the chapters. Why was the process changed?

Shiba: In the past, students were joining smaller chapters to better their chances, since the larg-

er chapters had many applications from which to choose only a few applicants. With the current application process, all applicants will be looked at.

Q: What is being done to see that the redress history project is being accomplished?

Shiba: With the recent passing of Mae Takahashi who was spearheading the project, I will need to talk to others to obtain the various records. I may ask chapters to start doing the oral histories. The project was sponsored by soft money so we will need to start looking for donations.

Q: How does the rest of the country feel about JACL headquarters being in San Francisco, and the West Coast influence on the organization?

Yoshino: Members outside the West Coast area feel excluded because everything is about the West Coast. There are many chapters east of the Rockies. Having Bill Yoshino in MDC and Kristine Minami in Washington, D.C., has been great. The MDC and MPDC make a large geographical area so getting together as a district is almost impossible financially. Some people aren't even aware that MPDC and MDC are two separate districts.

Q: How is JACL going to get youth to join?

Mayeda: I've found that the JA youth are very much interested in Japanese culture as well as civil rights. Youths are adults and our equals. It's important to keep that one-on-one approach. **Mori:** We need to instill pride in who we are and that pride will turn into a desire to carry on our rich heritage. Being grateful and

thankful for who we are and taking what we have learned and passing on our rich heritage.

Taniguchi: Students usually consider themselves Asian American first more than JA JACL needs to take this into consideration.

Q: Why does JACL take on controversial issues if it causes a loss in membership?

Mori: We need to take positions on issues if we want to be a visible organization. I also feel that JACL has not taken on enough positions on issues.

Osaki: I think it's great that JACL has been on the forefront on many issues. I'm proud of JACL's accomplishments of protecting the civil rights of people. Controversy should not be looked on as a bad thing but rather as providing an opportunity to talk about the issues.

Q: With the new goal of raising JACL membership by 2000 members by the next national convention, what kinds of programs can we develop under planning and development to attract people to join, considering our current financial situation?

Shiba: We must keep in mind our current financial constraints. We are lucky that Gary and I live in Southern California so that we are able to get together. Gary and I will be trying to explore various options and ideas.

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Hate Crimes and Lobbying Just Some of the Workshop Topics at Calif. Tri-District

By CAROLINE AOYAGI Executive Editor

RENO, Nev.—Resisting the temptation of the slot machines and blackjack tables, attendees at the recent California Tri-District managed to make their way over to the numerous conference workshops.

Topics as wide and varied as hate crimes, lobbying, and interpersonal conflict were joined by care-giving, understanding our cultural values and effective leadership, and planned giving. There were also workshops on senior medication awareness and training, and the legacy of the Nisei veterans.

Hate Crimes

With the recent U.S. spy plane incident sparking a number of anti-Chinese slits, cartoons, and radio talk show topics, Tom Shigemasa, former San Jose assistant police chief, leads a "growing anti-Asian movement," making the need to be educated about hate crimes even more important.

Speaking at the hate crime workshop held during the PSWNCWNP/CC Tri-District, April 20-22, Shigemasa asked the attendees if they had ever experienced or knew of someone who had been a victim of a hate crime. He was surprised to see quite a few people raise their hands, for in the past this wasn't the case.

But with the recent media coverage of an NBA basketball player making anti-Asian sentiments, radio talk show hosts mocking a Chinese basketball player, and the

soon to be released "Pearl Harbor" movie, hate crimes against Japanese Americans and other Asian Americans are likely to increase, said Shigemasa, and "as JACLers we need to be prepared to respond." As a former member of a police department, Shigemasa stressed the importance of reporting hate crimes to the police. It's also important to report any hate incidents, he added, for though it may not yet be a crime, incidences of hate can turn into hate crimes and may eventually be prosecuted. In fact, most police departments have hate crimes policies in place.

Although the trend among Asians and Asian Americans has been a reluctance to report crimes, it's absolutely necessary to get the police involved, said Shigemasa. If we don't, "we don't count." He added, "If you speak out we'll all be better for it."

Along with the police, the community also needs to get involved. "Hate crimes are not only the responsibility of the police department but it is the responsibility of the community," said Shigemasa. And that's where groups like JACL, that has been fighting hate crimes for several years now, can work in tandem with the police.

Ken Kamei, joining Shigemasa on the hate crimes panel, introduced the audience to how the Internet plays a role in the proliferation of hate crimes, providing a 24-hour, seven-day presence readily available for both adults and youth.

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The House on Lemon Street: Only This One Is in Riverside, Calif.

RIVERSIDE, Calif.—Several weeks ago (April 19), Dr. Harold Harada, 77, headed the dedication of the house on Lemon Street, where he was born, as a National Historic Landmark; along with Mark Rawitsch, once a history student at nearby UC



By HARRY HONDA

Riverside. Harold reminded me of having received a small check for his 1976 Pacific Citizen Holiday Issue feature on the historic Harada House. Harold, a retired dentist,

Very Truly Yours

active in JAACL and a combat 442nd medic veteran, was the youngest of six children of pioneer Issei parents, Jukichi and Ken Harada, who bought a two-story wooden frame house on Lemon Street in the downtown residential district in 1913 after their five-year-old son Tadao had contracted diphtheria and died. Jukichi blamed the tragedy on the living conditions at the boarding house where they had been living since the fall of 1905. The Haradas also opened a restaurant in the booming citrus town. The father met and served the customers, mother did the cooking, and the children helped. The two businesses were patronized by farmhands, packers and crate-makers.

Aware of the 1913 California Alien Land Law prohibiting aliens ineligible for citizenship (Japanese, Chinese and Koreans) from owning property, Jukichi purchased the house in the name of his citizen children as a logical solution to the problem and had daughters Mine, 9 (eventually Mrs. Saburo Kido), Sumi, 5, and 3-year-old son Yoshizo holding title. Soon neighbors orga-

nized to prevent the Haradas from buying the property. They even offered \$2,000 for the house — \$500 more than he had paid the price for it," writes Maria Fleming in the Southern Poverty Law Center publication, "A Place at the Table." Jukichi was determined to put his children in a better living environment that included a backyard, but the neighborhood demanded the family be evicted.

But one prominent businessman, Frank Miller, known for his strong interest in Japanese art and culture, came to the aid of Jukichi when he was sued in 1916. It was the first test case of California's Alien Land Law. Miller arranged to have his brother, an attorney, defend him. In 1918, the superior court in San Bernardino County held in Harada's favor, citing the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. [Two years later, the loophole enabling citizen children to be named in purchase of land was closed. The 1920 law would encounter further challenges. It finally was found unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in the Oyama Case in 1948.]

During World War II, the Issei Haradas, in their 60s, were evacuated to Topaz. In ill health, both died in camp. The house was placed in care of a good restaurant customer, a blacksmith. Harold noted a scrawling on the wall upstairs: "Evacuated on May 23, 1942; Saturday, 7 a.m." In a nearby dresser he found a tiny Italian-English dictionary and some Italian coins, mementos of his duty as a combat medic in the last battle routing the Germans from Italy in 1945. They are currently on display along with other artifacts and pictures at the Riverside Museum in the section devoted to Frank Miller's Seattle Inn.

Onetime Mission City Treasurer Lloyd Hara, in town for a business seminar, was an unexpected visitor at the museum. He was attracted by the banner out front with a Japanese name. Mrs. Edison (no of San Francisco) daughter Roslyn, of the Saburo Kidos) introduced me to her grandchildren.

The Japanese contingent from Riverside Sister City, Sendai, embellished the turnout, making the dedication a fabulous occasion.

Only Sumi returned after the war to the house on Lemon Street. She opened the house to other Riverside families who found their own homes had been confiscated by the government. What was the veranda on the second floor was thus boarded up to add two more rooms.

The house today doesn't look like it once did and I was told that purists want to restore the veranda for the sake of history. That it served as a postwar hostel is an integral part of the Harada House and a part of Riverside's history. As Rawitsch noted at the plaque dedication: "It's a story that goes beyond Lemon Street and beyond Riverside. It's a story of struggle for the American dream."

The Harada family still owns the house. Harold, who lives in Custer City, said he is thinking of donating the house to the city. He wants it to be maintained as an historic landmark. On this point, some furniture appears to be of World War I vintage.

The landmark status is not the same as the National Registry of Historic Places, a federal list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. A proud civic fact: the All-American City of Riverside has two National Historic Landmark plaques — the other being the Mission Inn.

To put a perspective spin on the Harada House, the whole of Orange County has but two national landmarks — Richard Nixon's birthplace in Yorba Linda and the Modjeska House in Santiago Canyon. The oldest building in California (which could be #3 in Orange County) is not a National Historic Landmark: the San Juan Capistrano Mission dating from 1776, which has been nominated. The cable cars of San Francisco and the Mission Beach roller coaster in San Diego are among the 100-plus national landmarks in the state. ■

REDRESS

(Continued from page 1)

ese Americans but a violation of the spirit of all Americans to have Japanese Americans treated in such a racist way."

Kennedy, known for his support of global human rights, in particular his call for independence in East Timor, noted that human rights violation within our own country must also not be ignored. He acknowledged that the history and contributions of all people of color in America have been largely "under-reported" and was therefore particularly supportive of the education component of H.R. 619.

"I think there ought to be a proper foundation like we're putting together in this Becerra bill for education and dissemination of information regarding the injustices of the past," said Kennedy. "Unfortunately, I don't think many people understand the whole notion of putting Japanese Americans into concentration camps during World War II and I think fewer understand the role that our government played in taking Latin Americans of Japanese descent from Peru and elsewhere and holding them as hostages, as ransom basically, for American prisoners of war. He added, "I think this (bill) is one more step we need to take to acknowledge the painful past of this country so that we never repeat it again."

In assessing the bill's future, Kennedy was optimistic, saying "I don't think there should be any partisanship over this bill."

Kennedy, who sits on such boards as the Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation and who met with African American leaders while in Los Angeles, was also aware of the stirrings of a redress movement within the African American community, and acknowledged that

America's past history of slavery and discrimination against African Americans had to be dealt with.

Among Kennedy's fellow co-sponsors of H.R. 619 is Congressman John Conyers Jr., D-Mich., who recently introduced a bill to examine the effects of slavery and the feasibility of reparations to African Americans. Conyers, who supported the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, had raised the issue of African American redress 12 years ago but it was only recently that the concept began receiving widespread support with such events as the first National Reparations Convention, which was organized by African American leaders in Chicago this past February.

Reflecting on this latest redress movement, Kennedy said, "We cannot take it for granted the historic and grinding discrimination that this country has been a part of and the affects that it has had on African Americans. We still have the same segregation that we had 40 years ago when my uncles were fighting overt segregation in this country. Now it's much more insidious. Its segregation by socio-economic class, as well as race, so I think it's important to recognize historic prejudices, biases and racism for us to be able to overcome them in today's world."

Kennedy praised such educational institutions as JANM, the Holocaust Museum and the currently under construction museum to Native Americans at the Smithsonian Institute as essential tools in educating the younger generation about the impact of racism on today's society.

"Museums like these are important vehicles to help us come to a better understanding of each other," said Kennedy. "We still have many scars in our own history that are important to remember because to this day, there is still bigotry and racism, and we won't be able to tackle the problems of today unless we learn from our past history." ■

Hollywood Stories

The story of Japanese Americans in mainstream Hollywood movies is generally not a happy one. It's kind of sad that the greatest JA movie star was at his peak in the silent era some 85 years ago. There have been some



By BRIAN NIYA

Troubled in Paradise

high points to be sure, but they have generally been few and far between. Strangely, this year marks major anniversaries for two of them. It was 50 years ago this month

when "Go For Broke" premiered. And it was 25 years ago in March that the made-for-television movie "Farewell to Manzanar" was nationally broadcast on NBC. Both were major events in their time. "Go For Broke" had its world premiere at the Waikiki Theater in Honolulu on March 4, 1951, and its Hollywood premiere at the Egyptian Theater five days later. The movie put a Hollywood spin on the story of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and starred six JAs — five of whom were actual World War II veterans — in the six major Nisei roles. The storyline centers on Lt. Michael Grayson (played by Van Johnson), a Texas native assigned to the 442nd against his will who eventually becomes their biggest booster by the end.

The good points of the movie can be summed up quickly: it is a "message" movie with an important and

brave message of tolerance: that JAs had displayed bravery and patriotism in the face of prejudice during WWII and deserves to be treated like other Americans. In 1951, this was no small thing.

The movie's negatives are pretty much everything else. There is little in the way of story line, the battle scenes look phony even by 1950s standards; and the Nisei themselves are mostly just window dressing. Essentially, the Nisei soldiers are not so much the subject of the movie as the objects of it. The movie is less about them, than about how others view and react to them. As such, the Nisei characters themselves are underdeveloped and mostly indistinguishable from one another.

"Go For Broke" turns up pretty often on television (mostly on TNT) and was issued on video, so it is pretty easy to see. This is not the case with "Farewell to Manzanar," which has been very difficult to see since its NBC premiere on March 11, 1976. Thus, I won't give you my detailed impressions of the film, since I haven't seen it in a few years.

The film is based on the book of the same title, which is probably the most widely read book ever written on the mass internment of JAs during WWII. Based on the childhood memories of Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, the book was written by her and her husband James Houston. The book was adapted for the movie by the Houstons and by director John Korty.

The important news about "Farewell to Manzanar" is that you may have a chance to see it again. Late last year, while brainstorming for ideas for the 2001 Day of Remembrance, members of the Martin chapter of JAACL came up with the idea of screening "Farewell" since it

would be the 25th anniversary of its original airing and since it was actually filmed mostly in Marin County. Thanks to the detective work of Lewis Kawahara, the film was located in the Universal Studios archives and a screening was arranged. Kawahara also suggested that surviving cast and crew members be invited to the screening as well.

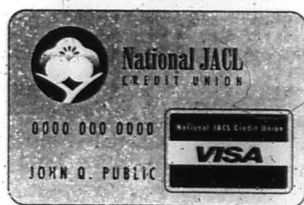
The San Francisco and Sacramento chapters found out about it and wanted to join the program. The result was a three-day event, where the film was screened to sold-out houses in all three places on consecutive days this past February. Many surviving cast and crew members turned up, including director Korty, the Houstons, and cinematographer Hiro Morita, along with actors Clyde Kusatsu, James Saito, Akemi Kikumura, Vernon Kato, and Nobu McCarthy, among others.

Given the interest generated by the screening, efforts are underway to secure a re-release of the film for educational purposes along with restoring the original print. Another screening is set for Los Angeles, as part of the VC FilmFest 2001: The Visual Communications Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film & Video Festival. The film will be screening to close the festival on May 24. If you get a chance, check it out.

Of course we have made great progress since 1951 and 1976, OK, maybe not. The list of succeeding Hollywood films that tell JA stories can be counted on the fingers of one hand. And now that it is 2001, we will be greeted with the gala premiere of the movie "Pearl Harbor" later this month. Are you looking forward to this as much as I am? I guess that's progress for you. ■

Brian Niya is a member of the Honolulu chapter of the JAACL.

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WORKSHOPS

(Continued from page 7)

Today, there are more than 3,000 hate-based sites that can be accessed on the Internet, with groups like the National Alliance, National Observer, American Knights and World Church of the Creator spreading their hate messages.

Most of these sites are sponsored by White supremacists, militia groups and anti-abortionists groups. According to Kamei, the state of Alabama has the most hate groups followed by California and Florida.

"It all starts with dehumanizing and victimizing," said Kamei of the hate sites.

The difficulty for law enforcement in policing these sites is that issues of freedom of speech and censorship make hate crimes on the Internet almost impossible to monitor and prosecute. In fact, many of these hate sites cater to the young and inexperienced, offering games, crosswords and puzzles to get their hate messages across.

And often times these sites look authentic, seemingly safe and informative, but they include false and misleading information, leading to a rewriting of history. "When on the Internet it's hard to monitor where people go," said Kamei. But "you need to be aware of [misleading websites] and do your own research."

Lobbying

"Lobbying is like being a salesman," said JAACL National Executive Director John Tateishi, who, prior to joining JAACL, worked for several years as a professional lobbyist. "You're selling an idea, a concept, not a product."

When Tateishi led JAACL's redress campaign in the '80s as its national chair, "we were selling the idea of injustice," he said at the tri-district's lobbying workshop. "That something happened that shouldn't have happened."

There are two types of lobbyists: professional lobbyists and citizen lobbyists. Professional lobbyists are expected to have certain relationships in place and a certain level of professionalism; citizen lobbyists usually have an interest or passion in a bill or issue and are not expected to be experts.

The success of selling your idea as a lobbyist starts with how you frame it, said Tateishi. You've got to develop a strategy by looking at who is going to support your idea and who is not. The people left in the middle are the ones you start to lobby.

Most of the time lobbyists will not be meeting with the elected representative but rather with his or her staff members. Usually the legislative assistant is the person you end up talking to. And often it's the assistants who end up helping you the most with your idea for they have the ear of the representatives they work for.



LOBBYING WORKSHOP — JAACL National Executive Director John Tateishi (l) and panelist at the recent Tri-District's lobbying workshop with fellow panelist Elaine Yamaguchi and Paul Bannal, a workshop attendee and the first Asian American California State Assemblyman.

Tateishi's first rule of lobbying: don't ever lie. If you lie, you lose your credibility. "All you have is your credibility," he said. The second rule of lobbying is "the two-minute rule." Always go into a session thinking that you have to convince the legislative aide of your idea in two minutes, for that is often the amount of time you are given.

The success rate of lobbyists is not very good, for the chance of a bill making it all the way to the White House and being signed into law is minimal. That's why lobbyists can never be discouraged, said Tateishi, who readily admits that all of the bills he worked on as a lobbyist for civil rights and environmental issues failed. "But I loved every minute

of it," he said. "It's the only job I had where failure felt good."

The same rules of lobbying apply at the state level, said Elaine Yamaguchi, assistant to Calif. Speaker of the Assembly Robert Hertzberg, who joined Tateishi on the lobbying panel.

"God members [of the legislature] want to hear from you. Bad members need to get to know you," she said.

Yamaguchi emphasized the need to vote and to get further involved in the legislative process. She encouraged people to get to know their district staff members and to send letters because, she said, they are in fact read by the elected representatives.

She also emphasized the importance of the "two-minute rule" and advised people to have all relevant information ready when meeting a legislative aide. And make sure that whatever issue or bill being lobbied is known in intricate detail because often the aide and representative are relying on your information to decide whether they will or won't be giving their support.

But above all, "remember that they are really just people working for you," said Yamaguchi. ■

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Politics and JA Basketball Leagues Were Some of the Workshops Offered at Spectrum

By **LYNDESEY SHINODA**
Writer/Reporter

Nikkei and Politics

With more Asian American representation in government in the 21st century than ever, the workshop titled "Nikkei and Politics" was very relevant to today's youth.

Workshop leaders were Nicole Inouye, a former Mike Masaoka fellow who currently works in the Office of Congresswoman Juanita Millender McDonald; Keith Kamisugi, of Neihaus Ryan Wong, Inc.; and Mariko Nakanishi of Campaign for Justice. The three talked about their diverse interests in politics.

Kamisugi explained that while many consider politics a necessary evil, he thinks otherwise. He passed out an action planning list called, "The Science and Art of Getting Chit Done."

His advice to the workshop attendees included communicating well and often, expecting to succeed but planning for failure, having a positive attitude, and doing a lot of networking.

Stanford University student Miho Tanaka questioned the panel about what could have been done differently at her school regarding a recent rash of anti-Asian graffiti. Because Stanford is a private university, the administration has a lot of pull, but workshop leaders said that contacting the JACL among other civil rights organizations was the right thing to do.

"Politics is not the end game, it's a way of getting things done," said Kamisugi. "It's a vehicle to do good things in the community."

Inouye and Nakanishi have shown just that. Inouye got her start as a heavily involved youth who grew up in JACL, eventually working in Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink's office in Washington, D.C. Inouye encouraged participants to look into getting involved with their local governments.

Nakanishi looked for support for Campaign for Justice, which seeks



Workshop leaders for Nikkei and Politics were (from left): Nicole Inouye, Keith Kamisugi and Mariko Nakanishi.

to provide redress for former internees of Japanese Latin American descent. She gave attendees form letters to send to their respective government officials, and presented a video about the JLA experience.

"These issues are not specific to just one group; just Japanese Americans cannot accomplish what we can as a larger group," said Nakanishi. "Visibility is so important, as is the potential for students to get involved. Don't disappear, it's important that you keep coming back."

All three workshop leaders expressed the need for more activism among youth and said that everyone has a different talent which can be used in a positive manner.

Japanese American basketball leagues have been a prominent fixture in many of our communities over the years. If we didn't play in them ourselves, we have a cousin, friend, or sibling who is somehow involved in JA basketball. This workshop dealt with the changing status of the leagues, who should be allowed to play, and the future that lies ahead.

Workshop leaders were Jesse James, a founding member and past president of the Orange Coast Optimists; Marcia Murata, a legend in JA women's basketball and current coach of the Cal State Los Angeles women's basketball team; and John Saito Jr., who coaches a JA boys team, and continues to play himself in the Nisei Athletic

Union league. The workshop turned into more of a small discussion group of about 10 people, with high school to college-aged youth represented. Each gave his/her take on why JA leagues are even in existence, and what eligibility concerns should be addressed.

"Basketball is something that sustains life," said Saito. "Our culture is sustained through basketball."

So the question was raised: What defines culture? "The ideas, customs, skills, arts, etc. of a people or group, that are transferred, communicated, or passed along, as in or to succeeding generations."

Workshop attendees were presented with questions like: Should those of other cultures be denied from learning about JA culture? Then aren't we practicing reverse racism? Rules of eligibility ultimately vary from league to league, so there isn't one universal rule in existence.

James said that to be on an OCO team, one must be an active member of the Optimists, that is, if one is not JA. Otherwise, being active is not a necessary requirement.

"The Number One reason parents bring their kids to J-leagues is so that they'll be with other JA kids," said James. "There are blacks, whites and Samoans that play, but we are a Japanese league."

Still, James doesn't believe in

turning anyone away. Participants voiced concerns of teams that had players who were non-JA and deemed "ringers." But when Saito asked which players were on teams that had ringers, the majority sheepishly responded with nods of the head.

James wondered if a team had a non-JA who was not a ringer, if they were a threat as well. Most said "no."

In a time where Division One collegiate basketball players stem from JA leagues, people wonder if the leagues are still serving the same purpose. Do we want to have a league that's just for fun or one that serves as a base to develop fundamental skills for the future? With the recent backlash from those who feel the league discriminates based on race, there is talk of lawsuits from outside parties.

The JA leagues seem to be turning into something much more competitive than ever before. Teams that used to have only JA players are now very diverse in their racial makeup. Some consider this a good thing, but others believe it defeats the purpose of having a league for kids who would normally be sitting on the bench.

What is the future of the JA leagues? Maybe they will continue to thrive and grow, turning into a multicultural breeding ground. Or maybe the lawsuits will drive the league beneath the hardwood floors. Only time will tell.

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