Comedian Tina Kim sells out shows on both coasts with her wit and charisma. So can someone please give her a sitcom?

By CAROLINE AYOAGI
Executive Editor

NORTH HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—"I see myself as the next Ellen DeGeneres or the next Rosie O’Donnell," said comedian Tina Kim, as she digs into her lunch of spicy Thai chicken and rice. It’s bold a statement by any up-and-coming comedian’s standards but the words role off of Kim’s tongue matter-of-factly as she continues to launch one rip-roaring joke after another during a recent interview. That’s because Kim has got the talent to back up her words and most importantly — she knows it. “I always wanted to be a star and I have the desire and the want to be a star,” said Kim, her words colliding into each other as she harries to complete her thoughts. “I want my own sitcom; I want to be in the movies. It’s already been developed and it’s ready to go. I’m ready.”

By JIM WASSERMAN
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO — Sounding themes familiar from her late husband’s 14-campaigns, Doris Matsui handily won a special election to fill his term and will become the newest member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

With all precincts reporting March 8, Matsui had 69 percent of the overall vote and 88 percent among Democrats in a race marked by a 24 percent turnout. She flew to Washington, D.C., the next day and was sworn in March 10.

With her win in a 12-candidate field, Matsui, a lobbyist and former staff of then-Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, said the new Congress should not take its re-election for granted.

At a recent jump on a campaign plane to fly the campaign plane to fly for a quick stop in a swing state, Matsui was joined by a steady stream of supporters and current members of Congress, including Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., and Rep. Richard Pombo, R-Calif.

By CAROLINE AYOAGI
Executive Editor

A longstanding injustice is about to be corrected in the state of Texas — that’s if Rep. Martha Wong, R-District 134, has anything to say about it.

Wong has introduced House Bill 1536, legislation that would help eliminate all “Jap” roads in the state of Texas and would prohibit the use of derogatory names and designations on public property.

“I think that when [these ‘Jap’ roads] were named, people didn’t think it was derogatory. But times have changed,” said Wong. “I thought that this bill would be a good way to end this business.”

Wong recently attended several meetings in Orange County, one of three Texas Counties that has had to deal with the issue of renaming roads that contain the derogatory word “Jap.” Neighboring Jefferson County and Fort Bend County recently renamed their “Jap” roads and Orange County is currently in the process of selecting a new name.

By CAROLINE AYOAGI
Executive Editor

An Historic First: Philadelphia’s Chinatown Gets Charter School

For the first time in its history, Philadelphia’s Chinatown has a public elementary school that it can call its own.

In an historic vote March 9, the Philadelphia School Reform Commission unanimously approved a new charter school for Chinatown as more than 100 supporters cheered and cried in celebration.

“We need this school. We want this school. We are entitled to this school,” said Simon Liu of the Fujian Association of Greater Philadelphia, which represents 20,000 Chinese Americans citywide. "For over 150 years this community has suffered without any public investment. It is past time for us to build a public institution in this community.”

“Approving this school sends a strong message that we value our immigrant communities,” said Neeta Patel, charter school coordinator.

The new Chinatown charter school — the Folk Arts Cultural Treasures Charter School (FOLKS) — will open this September in Chinatown North and will start as a kindergarten through fifth grade school and will eventually go up to the eighth grade.

FOLKS will be a diverse, multicultural school and will serve the needs of the immigrant and non-English speaking families throughout the city of Philadelphia. Classes will be taught in English and the school will offer Mandarin as an enrichment language course for all of its students.

In addition, folk arts and cultural traditions will be prominent throughout the curriculum as a way to help young people appreciate their culture and the cultures of other groups.

Supporters of the charter school in Philadelphia, Chinatown voice their support at the March 9 Commission meeting.

People need to realize that “the word ‘Jap’ does hurt people,” said Wong, whose district is in Houston, Texas. “It’s typical of Asian Americans to grin and bear it, but we need to let people know I think getting the counties to change [the roads] is good.”

HR 1536 prohibits the use of derogatory names or designations for public property, including buildings, streets, and parks. In addition to the word “Jap,” the bill prohibits derogatory words for all racial or ethnic groups.

The bill states in part: “In naming or giving a designation to public property, a governmental entity may not use a name or designation that is derogatory to a racial or ethnic group.”

The bill requires a two-thirds majority vote to take effect immediately. If the vote is less than two-thirds, but still passes, the bill would take effect Sept. 1.

Sandra Tanoumachi has spent over a decade battling for change in the
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NEWS/AD DEADLINE:
Friday, 5:00 p.m., 5 days before date of issue.

SCHOOL
(Continued from page 1)

funded by tax dollars and are inde­pendent public schools. The schools are run and designed by groups of parents, educators, and leaders in the community. FACTS will be able to serve 266 students and will thus be able to earn at least $1.8 million in taxpayer monies.

For over 150 years Chinatown has had only one school: Holy Redeemer, a Roman Catholic school that first opened in 1841. Those who cannot afford a private tuition usually attend McCaly Elementary School located about a mile south of Chinatown.

The successful effort behind the Chinatown charter school was lead by Asian Americans United and the Philadelphia Folklore Project but was without controversy. Opposing the Chinatown school was the Philadelphia Chinatown Community Development Corporation. They argued that the charter school was not necessary and would dilute students from Holy Redeemer and McCaly.

Cecilia Moy Yep, a board member of the Philadelphia Community Development Corp., accused mem­bers of AAU of creating contention in the community "with vague promises and misstatements of fact in a recent Philadelphia Inquirer article."

But AAU garnered a great deal of community support, including 1,200 petition signatures, pre-enrollment forms from 56 families, 30 local and national endorsements, and several letters of support. They were also able to gain the support of the vari­ous communities including Rev. Robert Shine, former president of the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and vicinity.

In the end the vote to approve the charter school was 286-0. The vote was a victory with yes votes from Commissioners Gallagher, Martin Bednarsh, Bundys, and James Novels. Commissioner Sandra Dunn Gee was absent from the meeting.

"Charters are not schools such as Joe Sestak," said Ellen Somekawa, AAU director. "They are about offering public school options. This case is not about a community that has limited choices."

CAMPAIGN
(Continued from page 1)

again this year.

In January, when the P.C. editorial board met in Los Angeles, we felt a palpable sense of relief. Last year it was a tough one for the P.C. It faced the same economic issues as the rest of JACL (which continue, of course, without express permission of the publisher). But it also liked this newspaper was in peril of facing the kind of cutbacks that would hurt its journalistic integrity, or even force it to become a membership newsletter instead of a viable, credible newspaper.

Instead, we came out of the Hawaii convention a strong, reliable source of APA news and a voice for the organization, and one that has a palpable sense of relief. Last year it was a tough one for the P.C. It faced the same economic issues as the rest of JACL (which continue, of course, without express permission of the publisher). But it also liked this newspaper was in peril of facing the kind of cutbacks that would hurt its journalistic integrity, or even force it to become a membership newsletter instead of a viable, credible newspaper.

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JACL Congratulates Doris Matsui on Election Victory

Doris Matsui was sworn in March 15 as one of the newest members of the U.S. House of Representatives in a ceremony at the capitol in an overflow voting chamber. Matsui takes over the seat of her late husband Robert Matsui who passed away Jan. 1.

Lawmakers Want Congress to Rein in Patriot Act

By KELLY KARASLEY
Associated Press Writer

OLYMPIA, Wash.—Some state lawmakers want to tell Congress they think the flag-bearer of federal anti-terrorism law should be changed so the law can make sure it doesn’t compromise people’s civil rights.

The state House and Senate judiciary committees heard a public testimony earlier this month on a measure that would urge Congress to pass a new federal law limiting some of the Patriot Act’s surveillance provisions.

Passed in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the Patriot Act expanded the government’s powers to investigate terrorism. But privacy groups have charged that the law is being used inappropriately to spy on law-abiding citizens.

“The Patriot Act was one of the biggest mistakes in the history of Congress,” said State Sen. Karen Keiser, D-Bellevue, who’s sponsoring the Senate version of the bill.

“OPPOSITION TO NATIVE HAWAIIAN RECOGNITION BILL SIMMERS IN ISLANDS

By RON STATON
Associated Press Writer

HONOLULU—When Gov. Linda Lingle testified before a U.S. Senate committee a few weeks ago, she refused to give Native Hawaiians political status similar to that of Native Americans.

In the islands, however, there is widespread opposition to the bill, even among some Native Hawaiians who do support the federal bill, which has stalled in Congress’s past three sessions.

Lingle told the Senate Indian Affairs Committee the bill is “just one more step in the yearning of some Native Hawaiians for an independent country for the Hawaiian people.”

The United States is a “strongly recommended” eliminating the Redskins nickname.

By ASSOCIATED PRESS
The JACL congratulated Doris Matsui on her victory.

Ken Iwuyee, JACL Nat’l President

"She is a woman of great strength and dignity, and we have no doubt that her service will continue the finest traditions of honor that are the legacy of Bob Matsui."

Sheidi Tanakatobu, "As a Japanese American woman, I am extremely proud to have such a capable and committed role model in the House of Representatives."

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi has already named Matsui to the House Rules Committee.

No stranger to public service, Matsui served on President Clinton’s Transition Team, where she helped formulate early policy initiatives and assisted in the formation of the President’s cabinet.

She also served in the White House as deputy assistant to the President and deputy director of public liaison.

and will represent the 5th District of California.

The JACL congratulated Matsui on her victory.

"We could not be more excited about Doris Matsui’s election victory," said JACL Executive Director John Tateishi. "She has a long history of working with the American, and she knows the issues well. We very much look forward to working with her in Congress."

Ken Iwuyee, JACL nat’l president, added, "JACL extends our heartfelt congratulations to Congresswoman Matsui. She is a woman of great strength and dignity, and we have no doubt that her service will continue the finest traditions of honor that are the legacy of Bob Matsui."

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"It’s not right, and it’s not American," Siddiqui said. "They are not serving as being innocent people."

Ian Spiers, a photography student from Seattle, told legislators about his finding: himself surrounded by armed law enforcement officers last May after he took photos of the Ballard Locks.

"It’s not right, and it’s not American," Siddiqui said. "They are not serving as being innocent people."

References to the Patriot Act, the officers told him it was illegal to photograph federal property, demanded his ID and told him he needed permission to return, he said.

After his case made headlines, the Army Corps of Engineers, which runs the locks, said such a rule does not exist.

The Patriot Act resolution has garnered support from both parties. Reps. Jim Moeller, D-Vancouver, and Toby Nixon, R-Kirkland, are co-sponsoring the House version of the bill.

But opponents of government’s role in law enforcement say lawmakers often call a “letter to Santa Claus.” Sen. Adam Kline, D-Seattle, is sponsoring the Senate version.

The state’s Republican attorney general, Rob McKenna, also supports the measure.

While most lawmakers acknowledge that such resolutions have no power to change anything, Moeller said letting Congress know about the state’s concerns is important.

"It’s not right, and it’s not American,” said Jafar "Jeff" Siddiqui, a Seattle real estate broker who immigrated from Pakistan 30 years ago. told committee members about a Hindu college roommate who once was arrested andＡwise to the fact that no hearings on the current version of the bill were held in Hawaii, saying it has been changed several times.

The subject of American Indian nicknames and mascots has been a contentious one in Michigan and nationally at the K-12 and college levels.

In June 2003, the state Board of Education approved a resolution recommending that all Michigan schools that use American Indian nicknames, mascots, logos and fight songs stop the practice.

The resolution said the board "strongly recommends” eliminating American Indian nicknames, but its passage did not require schools to make any changes.

In March, the question of whether the nickname is derogatory to American Indians resurfaced at school board meetings in 2000.

In 2001, the board decided it would look into a possible name change and, in August 2002, voted 5-2 to retire it.

Four of the five board members who voted to retire the Redskins nickname were recalled in June 2002 special election of four new members.

The new school board reopened the issue after receiving the civil rights complaint.

The Senate committee heard oral testimony only from bill supporters, Byrde, who was at the hearing, told the Associated Press that he and other opponents were refused permission to testify and were told to submit their testimony in writing.

"This is bad for Hawaii and bad for the U.S.,” said Byrde, who focuses his advocacy work on "the dysfunction of the Department of the Interior in serving its constituents over land, resources and other assets.

"The only ones supporting it are those receiving federal benefits," said Kai opu Byrde, director of the Kauai-based Kauai Foundation, an advocacy group which advocates for Native Hawaiians and others on "the real history of Hawaii and the current situation."

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By F.C. Staff and Associated Press

National Newsbytes

By C.F. Staff and Associated Press

Minorities Represent
Only 19 Percent of Top City
Policemen

NEW YORK—Minority groups say that they are locked out of high-ranking positions in almost every agency in city government.

City personnel records show that in top positions in most city agencies, Asians, Latinos, and African Americans make up about 44 percent of the city’s workforce but only represent 19 percent of its senior and executive staffs.

Meanwhile whites make up only 41 percent of the workforce, but are in 76 percent of the top jobs.

The study also acknowledged it could do a better job of minority recruitment.

Survivors of WWII's Bloodiest Battle Reunite on Iwo Jima

IW0 JIMA, Japan—Veterans, hundreds of Japanese and American families, politicians and other dignitaries recently marked the 60th anniversary of the battle of Iwo Jima.

Though held almost every year for the past decade, the number of veterans—most now in their 80s—able to come out to this remote volcanic island from both sides is dwindling.

Author's Suicide Reveals Mental Illness Stigma Among Asians

NEWARK, Calif.—The family of Iris Chang said her suicide could have been avoided if mental illness didn’t have such a strong stigma in the Asian American community.

Making their first public comments since the 36-year-old bestselling author died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in November, Chang’s parents and brother described the author’s shame after she suffered a breakdown and was diagnosed with “bipolar reactive psychosis” and possibly bipolar disorder.

Bill Would Make Hawaii an Expensive Place to Smoke

HONOLULU—Hawaii legislators are looking to almost double cigarette prices in the next three years. The bill, which cleared the Senate and is currently being considered by the House, would boost the tobacco tax incrementally higher through 2008.

Standing” Kim was the only female to appear on the show. TINA KIM

(Tina Kim, with a dramatic snap of her fingers.) “I don’t get really pissed off anymore. I can sit down and handle it anymore,” he said. “But if I’m wrong, I’ll snap out of it; I gotta keep going. I’m 57 years old, you know. I’ve got kids. ‘I want to get married and have a house and decorate it!‘” •

Kim, who has a third child on the way, moved to Seattle, Washington from Korea with her parents at the age of four. Much of her routine is adjusting to life on the West Coast but the Alaskan family and the dualities that naturally come about in a Korean American family and the qualities that naturally come about are something most Asian Pacific Americans can relate to.

As a female, Korean American comic the comparisons to comedian Margaret Cho are obvious and it’s something Kim has had to deal with her entire career. Although Kim has always admired Cho’s career, she notes that they are very different.

“I don’t get really pissed off because they only know Margaret Cho. My comedy is totally different from her’s,” said Kim. “So I tell them come and watch and you’ll see the difference. ‘That’s my obstacle.’”

In the next couple of months Kim will release her second CD, this time recorded in Los Angeles. "It’s become a star" and is adjusting to life on the West Coast where “the men never ask you out.”

As with all full-time comics waiting for their big break, Kim still worries about earning enough money to cover rent, car payments, and everything else that comes with big city living.

“Comedy is the hardest business ever. You can’t survive doing comedy—only the rich and famous,” she said. “They’re already famous so for them it’s fun to run up on stage. Obviously you don’t make anything in comedy.”

Unlike most comedians, Kim does not have a manager or agent. She books her own shows and has learned to do it all, including promotion, sales, producing, and artwork.

Yet, she admits to spending too much time in her second and 11th birthday.

Health Plans for Californians: JACL Members

Blue Shield of California offers health care coverage to JACL members age 18 and over who reside in California. Choose from 3 plans offering a wide range of benefits, including vision care, worldwide emergency coverage, dental care, prescription drug benefits & more. For more information about these plans, and how to become a member, call the JACL Health Benefits Trust at 1-800-400-6433 or visit www.jaclhealth.org

APAs in the News

By Pacific Citizen Staff

APA Author Makes Kiriyama Prize Shortlist

At 49, Hin, winner of the 1990 National Book Award, is the only American and the most senior of the five finalists on the shortlist for the fiction prize. Jin’s War Truth is up against the works of talented young writers from all over the world.

Two prize winners, one for fiction and one for non-fiction, will be named on Mar. 29. The winners will share the US $30,000 cash prize.

Jeb Bush Appoints Desai to Board of Governors

Sen. Thad Cochran (R-Miss), chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, has appointed Scott Desai to the board of the new Mississippi Economic Council. Desai, who heads the Keough Foundation, will serve a three-year term.

First Manzanar Pilgrimage Participants Sought

An intergenerational effort headed by Warren Furutani and Yonei film­
maker Toshiki Nakamura is being launched to conduct research that will
result in a documentary on how the First Manzanar Pilgrimage became one
of the major roots of the Asian American Movement.

On Dec. 27, 1969, the first of what will soon be 36 annual pilgrimages to
Manzanar, one of America’s World War II concentration camps, took place.
“Had we known what we were doing, we wouldn’t have gone at that time
—it was freezing,” said Furutani who, along with Victor Shibata, came up
with the idea.

In the late 60s Furutani and Shibata believed the AA movement needed a
large-scale political statement much like the United Farm Workers march to
Sacramento and the impact of the “Poor People’s March” in Washington,
D.C., and they decided to march to Manzanar.

The openness with which the camps are discussed today is opposite to the
incarceration. Still shied away from discussing it. But soon people like Edison Uno and
Sue Kamimori Ehrrey, who became the head of what is now the Manzanar
Committee, came forward to help open up the past.

Furutani and filmmaker Nakamura are urging people who attended the first pilgrimage or contacted Furutani at 305/552-8707 or Karen Ishimaka at karenishizuka@hotmail.com.

The theme of this year’s Manzanar Pilgrimage will be “Retrospection and
Relevance: Commemorating the First Manzanar Pilgrimage and its
Meaning for Today.” The pilgrimage will take place April 30 and there will
also be a tribute to Minidoka.

For information on this year’s pilgrimage, contact the Manzanar Committee at www.manzanarcommittee.org.

PACIFIC CITIZEN

National business and Professional Directory

Your businesses aren’t in each issue for 20 issues & $5 per line, three-line minimum. Large type (12 pt.) costs
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PACIFIC CITIZEN, MAR. 18-31, 2005
LAS VEGAS—Despite conflicting testimony from two witnesses and a claim of self-defense, a judge ordered a former Philippine basketball star to stand trial for murder in the fatal stabbing of another man in November.

"There are more unanswered questions than answered on what started this whole situation," Las Vegas Justice Court Judge Ann E. Zimmerman said Thursday before binding Rudy Distrito over for trial.

Authorities say Distrito, a defensive star during 15 years in the Philippines Basketball Association, stabbed Juan Amaya to death during a scuffle several blocks east of the Las Vegas Strip.

Distrito's defense lawyer, Robert Langford, called the Nov. 24 slaying self-defense.

"The burden is on the prosecution to prove that it was not self-defense and they have to prove that beyond a reasonable doubt," Langford said.

Distrito has been jailed since surrounding to authorities in December. He was scheduled for arraignment March 21 in Clark County District Court.

Distrito's aggressive play for Ginebra San Miguel earned him the nickname "The Destroyer." He was suspended in 1995, his final season, for a flagrant foul against an opponent.

Manny Duno, who is associated with the National Federation of Filipino American Associations, compared Distrito with former NBA star Dennis Rodman, also known for an aggressive style of play.

"He's one of the super players in the Philippines," Duno said of Distrito. "He was a star and a franchise player."

By JIM ARMSTRONG
The Associated Press

OYAMA, Shizuoka Pref.—Toyota Motor Corp. recently unveiled a revamped Fuji Speedway, a state-of-the-art racing facility the Japanese manufacturer hopes will be among the best Formula One circuits in the world.

A 4.6-km circuit, situated at the base of Mount Fuji, officially obtained a Grade 1 license from F1.

I'm going to body F1 last month. Honda holds a 93.99 percent ownership share in Fuji Speedway.

Fuji Speedway originally opened in 1966, Toyota, which is making a major push to get to the top of F-1, completed renovations on the new course this year.

Fuji Speedway could spell the end of F-1 racing at the aging Suzuka circuit in central Japan. Suzuka's contract to host F-1 expires after the 2006 season and Fuji Speedway is just over an hour's drive from Tokyo, while Suzuka is three hours from Nagoya by car.

Fuji Speedway boasts a 1.5-km main straight, the longest in the world. The last corner forms a hairpin turn, and will be the key point where drivers will showcase their competitive skills as they head into the main straight.

The main grandstand seats 22,000 spectators.

Sponsored by the JCCNC, San Francisco

KAMON (家紋) Exhibit

An opportunity to learn "visual" and through a Q&A about your KAMON (family crest) & MIZUYU (surnames)
April 10th, 2005 at the Japanese Cultural & Community Center of N. Calif., S.F., CA
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• The difference between a KAMON - MYOJI vs. MIZUYU (i.e., what the kanji writings reveal about their differences).

• The "name" is not necessary.

• The importance of having a "KAMON Genealogy.

• A "KAMON" at all times with deceased's family name.

• Uncovering the history of your MYOJI through your "J.A. KAMON"

• GOAL Alzheimer's disease. Here is a way to engage in brain training and the KAMON and its history.

Stories by Associated Press and P.C. Staff

SPEEKSKATING
Ohno Wins Two U.S. Short Track Titles

WEST ALLIS, Wis.—Apolo Ohno and Hye Jung Kim each won their two races recently to complete sweeps in the U.S. National Short Track Speedskating Championships.

Ohno, from Seattle, won his fifth straight national title and seventh overall, and the 16-year-old Kim of Fullerton, Calif., took her first.

Ohno won the 1,000 meters in 1 minute, 9.046 seconds and the 3,000 in 3:35.208. He finished with 170 points for winning two time trials and a heat and final in four races.

Kim, who moved to the United States from South Korea in early 2004, won the 1,000 in 1:08.586 and the 3,000 in 3:01.691. Allison Baver of Sinking Spring, Pa., finished second to Kim in every event to place second in the overall standings.

"I'm really excited," Ohno said. "I'm really happy about it."

Ohno said his sweep of the events was not as easy as he made it look. "Absolutely not," Ohno said. "It's never easy."

By JIM ARMSTRONG
The Associated Press

KALUHA, Hawaii—When Michelle Wie returned to high school recently for her algebra and physics classes, she could tell her friends how she nearly won an LPGA tournament.

"She's an amazing player. There's no doubt about it," said Filipino winner Jennifer Rosales. "She's going to give us a lot of challenges and make us work harder.

Wie, a 15-year-old second-year student, finished two strokes behind Rosales in the season-opening SBS Open last month. Wie was the only player to shoot under par for three rounds. She also was the lone amateur in the field.

She's still 15 years old and she's trying to do things that no other 15-year-old has done, he added. "That's certainly empowering all the young girls out there to say there are no limitations.

"We have to be patient. We can't get too ahead of ourselves," LPGA commissioner Ty Votaw said.

"I think what we have to look 25 years from now and look back on when she's accomplished, and not after any one week.

"She was second place with Cristie Kerr, would have earned $78,787 were she not an amateur. When told what she might have earned, she said "that's not too much," an assessment that should send chills down the spine of any future date.

Weie began drawing international attention in 2002. A seventh-grader with braces, she became the youngest player to qualify for an LPGA event at age 12. Wie will play seven more LPGA events this year, including all four majors.

"I've got a lot as a person and a golfer and I'm really proud of that," she said.

GOLF
Wie, High School Sophomore, is All Class

BY JIM ARMSTRONG
The Associated Press

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- Terrell T. Nagata, President of the National JACL Credit Union

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National JACL Credit Union membership requirements: The members or shareholders of this credit union shall be restricted to those persons who at the time of application are members of the National Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) or members living under the same household of the immediate families of members of this credit union and organizations of JACL with loans to such organizations not to exceed their shares and/or deposits.
Texas Counties where "Jap" roads exist. Although there has been a lot of hardship and disappointment in such areas as: youth, intergenerational degradation that "Jap" Road caused to relate our Nisei story that was viewed as a great insult by the Japanese consul general at the time the convention was held. As that was 20 years ago. The attendance of the prior JACL convention is practically nil today. However, Japanese nationals, who emigrated to the South American base colonies, are postwar Issei immigrants and the "shin-Iseit" comprise an essential part in the JACL's activities.

To exchange historical data has been a major project at PANA's plenary sessions. Bill Howkawa was the keynote speaker at the convention held in São Paulo to relate our Nisei story that was viewed as a great insult by the Japanese consul general at the time the convention was held. As that was 20 years ago. The attendance of the prior JACL convention is practically nil today. However, Japanese nationals, who emigrated to the South American base colonies, are postwar Issei immigrants and the "shin-Iseit" comprise an essential part in the JACL's activities.

Opening Shots From PANA-APN Convention in Canada

Inventions and Plans for the biennial PANA-APN Convention of Nikkei from North and South America in Vancouver, B.C., July 7-9, have been published for the past year on the Internet in English (http://english.apn.ca) and Spanish (http://espanol.apn.ca) and at www.njc.ca. Inventions have been extended to Nikkei representatives from Cuba and Venezuela to APN, which is comprised of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and USA.

The acronym stands for Pan American Nikkei Association/Asociacion Panamericana Nikkei, the Spanish equivalent being incorporated constitutionally two years ago at the convention held in Bolivia. The registered trademark was secured by the Los Angeles-based PANA-USA about five years ago.

This year's convention is being co-hosted by the National Association of Japanese Canadians and the Greater Vancouver ICVA, its theme: "Our Heritage and Health in the 21st Century.

Participants will explore historic sites, make new and renew friendships, learn about other communities, countries and gain knowledge in such areas as: youth, intergenerational and community health, business and industry, human rights, and social and community development.

Some of the delegate activities include the History Tour of Seattle - Japanese Canadian fishing community, and National Nikkei Museum and Heritage Center, karaoke, golf tournament, reception with the Consul General of Japan, and sightseeing tours.

The convention registration fees before May 20 are US$290 for adults, and US$145 for youth. The ratio at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Vancouver are US$140.

* * *

This column has been home to PANA since its birth 25 years ago, when Carlos Kasuga and Enrique Tabuchi, Yakov Shmimoff, Baldwinobers, founded TANAKA TRAVEL SERVICE.

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Even in Hawaii, Asian eyelids are the bane of a young girl's existence.

Growing up in Honolulu, Christine Frances Masaye Horii and her friend promised, folded, tucked, and even flirted with the possibility of cosmetic surgery in order to be beautiful. But when the reflection in the mirror did not conform to the "Cherlil Tlig" type beauty, the little Yonsei girl silently blamed her ethnicity.

She learned dance as a form of expression to communicate her pain and emotions through her fingers and the movement of her hips. Soon, she was dancing in music videos, the "Arsenio Hall Show" and at the Radio City Music Hall as one of the world famous "Rockettes." She was also doing musical theater ("Shogun," "Miss Saigon") and appearing on various television commercials. But even with all the success she felt empty.

Then she threw herself into dance. She met a "nice Jewish boy" named Todd Factor who only wanted to marry a nice Jewish girl and raise Jewish kids, so she searched her soul, found Judaism and her real calling in life. Now known as Rachel Factor, she headlines a national, one-woman theater piece cheekily titled "J.A.P.," which chronicles her unlikely journey from Honolulu to Hanakkah.

Pacific Citizen: Why was your childhood so tortured?

Rachel Factor: When I look back, my life wasn't so bad. I grew up in Honolulu and even in Hawaii, there is a big Japanese population, we were affected by the whole idea of identity, which was of course affected by the media. Basically, I was living up to society's ideal. And in my case, I blamed it on my Japanese American ethnicity.

RF: I thought it would be, but it wasn't because I was so goal-oriented. All of my friends left home at the same time, but they were in college. I was in a learning environment too, but it wasn't quite structured the same way.

PC: You describe the Broadway scene as 'gritty.' Do you have any horror stories to tell?

RF: A group of women from 'Miss Saigon' were sitting around frustrated about the rules that we were auditioning for, so finally we thought that if we don't do something for ourselves we're going to keep complaining! We called ourselves the 'Killer Geishas A Go-Go.'

Initially, we wanted to do something so radical and weird — we wrote pieces and combined them into a series. It was extremely theoretical where we would present the typical audience that it's not exactly what they expected.

RF: The whole J.A.P. thing was ultimately too good to pass up. Hopefully, it's tongue and cheek enough to not offend anyone. But it gave me a sense of dignity to be proud of who I was and to stop flustered body parts. The laws of modesty meant to accentuate what you truly want to accentuate. Instead of the bare breast, you always elevate yourself, which is beautiful because I was always looking for art to connect to something bigger than myself. I was looking for truth and I found it in a religious.

PC: Do you teach your children Japanese tradition?

RF: Not a whole lot. If it's something they want to explore, then I will definitely support it. I had the opportunity to travel to Japan several times and I would love to take them as young children. And for us, we're culturally connected to Hawaii. It's important for me to have them connected to Hawaii and their relatives.

PC: Where is home now?

RF: In the end, Jerusalem is my home. I now live in Jerusalem. We bought a home and can't wait to get back.

PC: Why are audiences women-only?

RF: The voice of a woman in Orthodox tradition is considered naughtiness; something private that's only shared with the husband or other women. It's marketed towards the Jewish audience, but it's also a story of an individual searching for herself. Part of the message that I want to communicate to mainstream audiences is that I kept an open mind.

PC: Can you explain the significance of your title?

RF: For me, modesty in modesty — to cover my hair and not dance in front of men — was something I had difficulty with. But it gave me a sense of dignity to be proud of who I was and to stop flustered body parts. The laws of modesty meant to accentuate what you truly want to accentuate. Instead of the bare breast, you always elevate yourself, which is beautiful. Because I was always looking for art to connect to something bigger than myself. I was looking for truth and I found it in a religious.

PC: Sounds like the groundwork to a greater project.

RF: It was through that theater community that my writing for this show (J.A.P.) kind of pieced together. Half of the show is about how I learned to love being Japanese American and realized that growing up, I suffered from internalized racism.

PC: I heard your mother had an interesting reaction when you told her you were dating Todd.

RF: I met my husband through a mutual friend. She was making a short film and we were both helping her on the project. I called my mom and told her that I met this nice Jewish boy who wanted me to convert to Judaism and how ludicrous it is and she said, 'I was just thinking that you should marry a Jewish boy!' She thought the Jewish values of family and money were in line with Asian values.

PC: What kind of ceremony is performed in order to convert to Judaism?

RF: I went through two conversions… we met with a rabbi for a period of time, which would determine if my intentions were pure. It was a yearlong process and the rabbi realized that we were working very hard and that my heart was in the right place.

PC: What has been most difficult about the conversion?

RF: For me, rules in modesty — to cover my hair and not dance in front of men — was something I had difficulty with. But it gave me a sense of dignity to be proud of who I was and to stop flustered body parts. The laws of modesty meant to accentuate what you truly want to accentuate. Instead of the bare breast, you always elevate yourself, which is beautiful because I was always looking for art to connect to something bigger than myself. I was looking for truth and I found it in a religious.

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JACL Establishes Shigeki 'Shake' Ushio Scholarship

National JACL is honoring Shigeki "Shake" Ushio, a true leader of Japanese American community in Utah, and a lifelong supporter and advocate for the national JACL. He was a member of the JACL Credit Union's board from its beginning in 1943, serving 30 of those years as chairman of the board. During his tenure, the national JACL Credit Union was forced to leave California to Utah and Ushio, the Intermediate Mountain District governor at the time, raised a yearly sum of more than $10,000 (an amount equivalent to more than $100,000 by today's standards) to keep the office running and JACL alive.

Ushio was also active with the Church Hosting from 1980-1983, and as assistant director of Church Hosting from 1993-1996. He was also a board member of the Utah Education for the Humanities.

Ushio passed away in 2002. He is survived by his wife, Momoko (née Tateoka), and their four children, Linda (Inouye), David, Shauna (Tateoka), and Ginny (Smith). The names of all JACL members who worked with the Ushio Family in developing this annual award, the emphasis will be on community service in addition to academic leadership achievement.

Ushio was born in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1914 and lived in Utah his entire life. He worked as a farmer, professional photographer, and insurance agent. One of his most significant contributions was during World War II, when people of Japanese ancestry had their bank accounts frozen or restricted. In order to alleviate the plight of these Japanese Americans, Shake helped found the National JACL Credit Union.

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tates, Florence (Richard) Tanaka and Joyce (Oscar) Fong; 14 gc; and 6 gc.

Higuchi, Tamotu "Tom," 83, San Barbara, Feb. 18; survived by daughters, Valerie Sugar and Jane Hig; son, David; and 4 gc.

Kakau, Shizuye Margaret, 84, San Jose, Feb. 19; survived by son, Richard; daughter, Dorothy (Yosh) Sator; 2 gc; brother-in-law, Harry Naito.

Kawasaki, Harumi, 85, Feb. 21; survived by sons, Ron and Paul; daughters, Pam (Gordon) Sakai, Diane and Jane (Erie) Kuroki; 6 gc; and 3 gc.

Kuramoto, Thomas Hidetomo, Torrance; survived by wife, Katherine; son, Kent (Allice); daughter, Donna (Dean) Hakuma; 5 gc; sister, Mariko Enami; and sister-in-law, Mary (Ted) Iwatsuki and Hatsumi Karamoto.


Murakami, Richard K., 90, South Bend, Wash., Feb. 7; Nacabata, born; survived by sisters, Adene, Cheryl, Irene and Diana (Larry) Magruder; and 1 gc. Predicated by wife, Setsuko.

Ohayashi, Kinuyo, 89, Garden, Feb. 15; survived by son, Hidoki (Jeanne); daughter, Akechi (John) Token; 4 gc; and sisters, Matsue (Jack) Okada and Oima Kiku.

Oshiro, Edward "Eddie" Shizue, 83, Los Angeles, Feb. 11; survived by wife, Nisie.

Oshita, Kyoko "Kebo," 78, Los Angeles, Feb. 23, Seattle; survived by brothers, Jack (Masako) and Mits (Hanako); and sister, Nellie (Harry) Sawada.

Otani, Cattlin, 84, Honolulu, Feb. 20; survived by parents, Carl and Jennifer; step-father, Steve Cattlin; and sister, Margeprah Oto and Roy Hamada.

Sakayu, Akito, 84, Midway City, Feb. 26; survived by daughters, Linda (Don) Morita and Lori (Kevin) Kousom; and 4 gc.

Sato, Yumi, 94, Santa Ana, Feb. 19; Okita, born; survived by sons, Tim (Keiko) Yasumatsu and Frank (Irene); daughters, Ruby (James) Kato and Mei (Suzie); and 9 gc.

Tanaka, Jack Tadashi, 85, S. El Monte, Feb. 19; Neko, born; survived by wife, Mary; sons, Darrell (Debbie), Wesley (Eric) and Brent; daughter, Jill; 3 gc; brothers, James and Fred (Joyce); and sister, Rose Nakamura; brother-in-law, Frank (Monroe); and Roy (Tina) Nakamura.

Tsuchida, Florence (Tazio) Kobuta, Janice (Nissy) Nishino and Jean Shimazu.

Uchida, Bill, 78, Torrance, Feb. 21; Venice-born Nisei; survived by wife, Michi; sons, Pat (Cherry) and Gary; daughters, Robi Yoshiwara; sisters-in-law, Nobu Iserti and Tanaka.

Okinawa, Tony, 89, Anaheim, Feb. 18; Beloved wife of Randy; loving mother of Andrew; daughter, Kristi (Dave) Marchand; grandson, Adam; granddaughters, Yutaka and Michelle; and great-granddaughter, Jamie.

Hatanaka, Hiromi, 89, Anaheim, Feb. 20; survived by son, Richard; daughter, Dorothy (Yosh) Sator; 2 gc; sister, Virginia Naito; and brother, Ruben "Buddy" Hatanaka.

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