MID-YEAR CAMPAIGN
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TAIKO CRAZE
Taiko art form continues to increase in popularity.

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PC's guide to Michael Bay-alternative films for the summer.

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JAZZING IT UP
Hiroshima to perform at the Long Beach Jazz Festival.

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The National Publication of the Japanese American Citizens League

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MUSICAL PRODIGY Hits All the Right Notes
Marc Yu can capture the beauty of classical music like a pro even before he turns 7.

By LYNDA LIN
Assistant Editor

MONTEREY PARK—Six-year-old Marc Yu is like any other child his age. He likes to kick soccer balls, sweat ping pong balls and demolish opponents in a mean game of Hang Man. But with cells in hand, Marc is transformed. Eyes softly shut, his fingers dance fluidly across the strings and floods the room with music by Johann Sebastian Bach and Vivaldi. His repertoire also includes piano concertos. He conjures Bach and Mozart with ease, but needs a special extender for his little legs to reach the pedals. One of his goals, he said, is "to grow" his hands to reach the piano's octave.

Marc is a musical prodigy.

For a recent performance in a Monterey Park, Calif. elementary school auditorium, Marc arrived through the back door dressed in a tiny elegant tuxedo complete with tails. Pre performance, he bounded across the room packed to capacity with an excited, mostly Asian American audience. On his hands, he wore red gloves. On his feet, red socks.

"Marc is a very adorable boy and he is so cute that I wouldn't think of him as a prodigy when I play with him," said Pamela Lam, his first piano teacher.

Marc is also a consummate performer. Every note and musical crescendo is accompanied with the perfect emotional facial expression. His mom, Chloe, said he studies the expressions of his favorite musical idols — Yo-Yo Ma and Lang Lang — from his vast collection of concert DVDs.

Musician Marc Yu started playing at 3 years and 10 months. He was memorizing concertos at 4. See Marc on the " Jay Leno Show" Aug. 9.

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AFGHANISTAN'S Soybean Solution
Using his own money and time, Nutritionist Steven Kwon brings soybean production to aid the people of Afghanistan.

By CAROLINE AOYAGI
Executive Editor

Steven Kwon may be thousands of miles away from Afghanistan but his heart is near. On his recent trip to Afghanistan, he landed in a forest of smiles and green fields.

"My job is to put stuff out there and see what gets a reaction," said DeGuia, who led a youth workshop on community organizing during the Midwest and Eastern Bi-District Conference July 21-24. "And it has to be the youth that step up."

As a world studies teacher and active youth speaker, DeGuia knows all too well the often delicate balance of power between the different generations in the APA community — especially when it comes to determining who has possession of that power, often ending in an elder vs. youth dilemma.

It's the same ongoing discussion JACL members have had for years now: membership numbers continue to decline as aging Nisei pass on but why can't the JACL attract more youth members to help increase membership numbers? See PAGE 10

As JACL's stalwart Nisei membership decreases, many say a stronger voice for the youth is the solution.

BY CAROLINE AOYAGI
Executive Editor

CHICAGO—For Filipino American Vanessa DeGuia, 25, gaining a greater voice for Asian Pacific American youth in the community is all about power — and it's there for the taking.

"We need to give youth more power. ... to gain a greater voice," said DeGuia, who led a youth workshop on community organizing during the Midwest and Eastern Bi-District Conference July 21-24. "And it has to be the youth that step up."

As a world studies teacher and active youth speaker, DeGuia knows all too well the often delicate balance of power between the different generations in the APA community — especially when it comes to determining who has possession of that power, often ending in an elder vs. youth dilemma.

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By LYNDI LIN
Assistant Editor

Producer Rick Delgado's radio broadcast career has been filled with controversy. He was fired from New York's MIX 102.7 (WNEW-FM) in 2002 for his role in the radio station's sex in a church stunt. He was also fired from HOT 97 (WQHT-FM) earlier this year for mismeasuring the tsunami parody song filled with anti-Asian slurs. Now Delgado has landed another controversial job as the new producer at WILD 94.9 (KYLD-FM) in San Francisco, a diverse city with a large Asian Pacific American population.

Despite expressed outrage from APA groups over his new gig on the "Strawberry in the Morning" show, Delgado told a Bay Area newspaper that he would not change his ways. "My job is to put stuff out there and see what gets a reaction. Hopefully, people will get a kick out of it," Delgado told the San Jose Mercury News.

Some former co-workers who call Delgado "Over the Top Rick" are also confident the producer will inevitably be back to his old tricks of offending people. "He's in your town now," said AM Satellite Radio Personalities Greg "Opie" Hughes and Anthony Cumia in a July 14 broadcast of their "Opie and Anthony Show." Radio Hughes and Cumia were fired along with Delgado from MIX 102.7.

See RADIO/Page 12

ANNE JACOBY
Assistant Editor

The radio producer has landed in a firestorm of protest since coming to a city with over 33 percent Asians. Many ask, is "edgy" radio becoming hateful for ratings?

Recall Rick Delgado in the San Jose Mercury News

"My job is to put stuff out there and see what gets a reaction. Hopefully, people will get a kick out of it," Delgado told the San Jose Mercury News.

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See RADIO/Page 12

The radio producer has landed in a firestorm of protest since coming to a city with over 33 percent Asians. Many ask, is "edgy" radio becoming hateful for ratings?
REDRESS
(Continued from page 1)
become the JACL national president at a time when the JACL’s redress effort needed a perfect leader. He had led the fight for the exom-
ination of Iva Toguri, wrongly accused of being the infamous “Tokyo Rose,” and the campaign against the Farr Church’s boycott of JACL merchants in J-Town as retaliation against Japan’s refusal to join the moralatories on the killing of whales. Clifford was the lone JA who sat with the tribal councils of the Navajo and Hopi Nations in their fight against the U.S. government’s plans to relocate them. He was knowingly passionate about the injustices of all these issues and he was also passionate about redress. Although a critic of the JACL, he was recruited to run for the JACL national presidency for one reason: to lead the fight for redress. I was asked to run Clifford’s campaign against a formidable candidate from the Central Valley: Judge Miyoko Ushiyama. Most people would not have given Clifford a snowball’s chance of winning against someone as revered and respected as Miyoko, but I had worked with Clifford and knew of his dedication and his ability to make him an equally impressive candidate. People would come to realize that he had the courage to do what he wanted, the courage to take us down the path to redress. At one time he agreed to be a can-
didate for the national presidency. Clifford was the chair of the National Redress Committee, a posi-
tion he accepted when Edwin Uno unexpectedly died while undergoing heart surgery in December 1976. I’d always felt Clifford accepted the position as much out of respect and admiration for Edwin’s remarkable achievements as a civil rights activist as he was his own personal commit-
tment to redress. Looking back on it now, I don’t know if anyone else could have stopped in to such a big void and not fallen through. As the 1978 Salt Lake City con-
vention approached, I often talked to Clifford about strategies both for his presidency and for redress, for the two went hand-in-hand. Shortly before the convention, he told me he was not sure he wanted me to accept the chairman-
ship of the national redress committee and asked what my goals would be. I told him I wanted to accomplish two things. First, to take our fight to the public arenas because we needed to con-
vince the American public. Convince the public first, I told him, and we can convince the Congress. We would use and exploit the media just as they would try to use us. Second, to focus on legislation, and if we were lucky, maybe get some thing introduced in the Congress. I agreed to take on the development of the Salt Lake City Guidelines, and so I felt legislation had finally become solid enough to demand that he wanted him to have the honor and satisfaction of a redress bill in the ace of the election and asked what my goals would be. I told him I wanted to accomplish two things. First, to take our fight to the public arenas because we needed to con-
vince the American public. Convince the public first, I told him, and we can convince the Congress. We would use and exploit the media just as they would try to use us. Second, to focus on legislation, and if we were lucky, maybe get some thing introduced in the Congress. I agreed to take on the development of the Salt Lake City Guidelines, and so I felt legislation had finally become solid enough to demand that

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Letters to the Editor

HR 2616
Your excellent article about underprivileged Asian American students explained the issue very well ("Rep. Wu Introduces Legislation To Address APUSH stu-
dents"). However, it failed to mention that his bill is HR 2616 and that it is currently referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Your readers who wish to contact their Congressmen or Senate representatives should refer to HR 2616, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize grants to institutions of higher education for serving Asian American and Pacific Islanders.

Lauri Sekamaki
Chicago JACL

the weeds!

JACL Membership: Remember the Weeds

By Edwin Endow

JACL President

Picture this in your mind for a moment. You are on the sidewalk looking out of a window. The house is immaculate. It isn’t a man-


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Creating a Pathway to Political Participation

By CAROLINE AOYAGI
Executive Editor

CHICAGO—For years, Chicago native Sandra Otaka worked as a waitress — some of which she spent working on the Amtrak railways crisscrossing the country — just happy to be making a good living with no career ambitions.

Today, she is Judge Otaka who sits on the Cook County Circuit Court in the state of Illinois. She also has the distinct honor of being the first Asian American ever elected to this esteemed position.

Otaka’s path from hard-working waitress to honored judge is filled with enlightened anecdotes, lucky happenstances, and admitted failures. And she wants members of the Asian American community to not only learn from her life experiences but to demand a place in the American political arena.

"When Judge Patel read her opinion vacating [Korematsu]’s case, everyone was crying in the courtroom. I was crying, and Ken Inouye, JACL national president, was crying too," said Otaka, who noted that her mother, a Nisei who had been interned at Minidoka during World War II, always emphasized the importance of working hard to achieve your goals. "I got into UCLA because of affirmative action."

Even after graduating from UCLA, Otaka admits she never had her skills at fundraising, bringing in almost $90,000 during her 2002 campaign.

Otaka's early scholarly accomplishments are impressive: a graduate of UC Berkeley with a GPA of 3.979 and a straight A student at the UCLA School of Law. But she is humble about her achievements. "I’ve never been particularly gifted... it came from hard work," said Otaka, who noted that her mother, a Nisei who had been interned at Minidoka during World War II, always emphasized the importance of working hard to achieve your goals. "I got into UCLA because of affirmative action."

Even after graduating from UCLA, Otaka admits she never had an interest in political life and the idea of pursuing a judgeship had never crossed her mind. But one thing she learned quickly was the power of the community.

Otaka had been working as a volunteer for Judge Marilyn Patel during the historic Fred Korematsu case and recalls vividly the day Judge Patel ruled in favor of Korematsu who had been vilified by the U.S. government for his decision to fight the WW II evacuation orders.

"When Judge Patel read her opinion vacating [Korematsu]’s case, everyone was crying in the courtroom, including me," she said, recalling how the courtroom had been packed with Japanese Americans who had supported the case and were anxious awaiting the judge’s ruling.

It was shortly after Korematsu’s court ruling that Otaka slowly became involved in political issues, but largely from the outer edges. She worked on several different campaigns, always for people she "truly believed in," including current Cook County Clerk David Orr.

She was also selected to lead various Asian American advisory commissions including one for former Sen. Paul Simon. It was during her work for Simon that she helped to get a bill for minority student scholarships amended. Although the bill was written to support minority communities, it only included African American and Hispanic students.

"No one thought to include us. Why? Because we weren’t at the table," said Otaka. "Those things made it clear to me, we were not included. We are not included because we are not there, we are not aware, and we are not monitoring. It was our fault as a community."

She also discovered that there had never been any AA judges appointed in the state of Illinois even though the state was home to the fourth largest Asian Pacific American population in the country during the late 1990’s.

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National News

PACIFIC CITIZEN  Aug. 5-18, 2005

MD/CDC BI-DISTRICT

Circuit Court Judge Sandra Otaka uses her own experiences to encourage AAs to become more politically active.

By YUMI SAKUGAWA
Special to the Pacific Citizen

For many college students, summer means getting a part-time job in an air-conditioned mall or taking summer school classes at a community college.

For Conrad Ohashi, a Shin Nisei and a fourth year history major at UC San Diego, summer means interning at the Little Tokyo Service Center, a non-profit organization that offers community and social services within Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo. He is currently helping conduct a housing survey that will determine the future population of Little Tokyo in light of new housing developments that will create luxury condos within the area.

Ohashi is one of the 12 interns selected to participate in the Nikkei Community Internship (NCI) program, in which college-aged students who show an interest in the Japanese American culture or non-profit community work are paired up with a community organization within Little Tokyo or San Francisco’s Japantown.

Their job descriptions, depending upon where the intern is placed, can be anything from working with middle-school kids at a Japanese culture day camp, writing news articles for the Nichibei Times or doing behind-the-scenes work at the Japanese American National Museum.

The NCI program, which is now in its fourth year, was created in response to a statewide conference in April 2001 called Spectrum, which was run by and for JA youth.

One of the main points addressed within the conference was the pressing need for the Nikkei youth to become more active participants in shaping the future of the community.

In response, the California Japanese American Community Leadership Council (CJA CLC) funded a statewide summer internship program in 2002.

Amy Miyako Phillips, who has been the internship coordinator for the Southern California aspect of NCI since it began in 2002, said the main goal of the NCI program is to give the youth an opportunity to directly participate within the community.

"Young people want to be involved in the Nikkei community," Phillips said. "I think that a lot of community leaders assume that young people don’t care because they don’t see young people showing up at the community events. But these students are already putting big events at their respective colleges all by themselves; they’re
Taiko Continues Phenomenal Growth in North America

By AMY E. IKEDA
Special to the Pacific Citizen

With over 200 taiko performing groups in North America and Hawaii, the art of taiko drumming seems to be all the rage these days. While the rhythmic art of taiko has grown phenomenally among young Japanese Americans, it has also exploded in the American mainstream, and today people of all backgrounds are involved with the Japanese originated folk art.

"Many people who do not speak Japanese, are choosing taiko over western instruments," said Kelsey Ikeda, a player with the group Taiko Of San Jose, "I think taiko is a connection with their cultural roots. "I don't think about Japanese culture when I am drumming, it is a large part of why I hold it so close to me," said Kelsey Ikeda, who has performed with Taiko Of San Jose for eight years.

"It's something that these community institutions have ever been exposed to," said Otaka, who has performed for eight years with the group Kinnara Taiko in Seattle. "I've never been political in my life," she said. "But if I can do it, anyone can."}

"We have a long way to go," she added. "Sometimes I think I'd like to sit on the Cook County Circuit Court. I've never been political in my life," she said. "But if I can do it, anyone can."
PRODIGY
(Continued from page 1)

and for a single mom like Chloe, 32, that means a lot of sacrifices.

"Money is needed for music lessons, art supplies, special summer programs, private schools etcetera," said Ellen Winner, professor of psychology at Boston College. She also points out that if a child were truly a prodigy, scholarship funds would be plentiful.

Marc has won his share of awards including being the youngest ever Davidson Fellow with a cash prize of $10,000. But even with his award-winning raw talent, Chloe is feeling the pinch in the pocketbook.

"I don't have much time to myself, especially now that he graduated from kindergarten. I'm struggling," she said, adding, "He's very intimidating. He asks me a lot of musical questions and other questions too."

Marc's latest query was about American history, specifically World War II. He asked how many people died and what happened at Pearl Harbor. He comes up with these questions not through TV or radio (he doesn't partake in either), but from the many mommy-and-me field trips to the library and museums.

In order to quench his never ending thirst for knowledge, Chloe wakes up at 4 a.m. daily to prepare his musical lessons and research questions he asked the day before. This fall, Chloe plans to start home schooling him. Marc reads at a fifth grade level and his math skills are at a sixth grade level. He has also written ten of his own musical compositions.

Chloe does not work and relies on child support checks to survive. They want to start a non-profit organization to help fund Marc's musical education.

And more help is coming soon. Some family friends are moving into their back house to help baby-sit, but not all have been supportive. Marc's father and some family members have criticized Chloe for not allowing Marc to have more "normal" pastimes, namely video games and TV.

"A lot of people think he's good because he practices so much, but what people don't know is that he's going out and taking breaks," she said.

But the long term risks and concerns are high when it comes to child prodigies, said Winner, because not many make a successful transition to adulthood.

"What is a prodigy to do when all the attention and applause stop?"

Many [prodigies] also have difficult stressful lives, and feel like failures when the attention and applause stop, said Winner, adding that parents should be careful not to live vicariously through the child.

Chloe was an aspiring musician herself, but her parents weren't supportive of her musical dreams. She has also been helping the Chicago Philharmonic express interest in Marc.

Ed Yim, LA Philharmonic director of artistic planning, said engaging Marc in the philharmonics will happen organically, but they need to make sure Marc is ready.

"We need to get to know him and his musicianship and his maturity level," he said. "It's all about protecting the artist."

But for now, Chloe said Marc is not ready. He's given his last performance and will take some time off to learn a new repertoire.

"He's flattered that they call him a prodigy. But he's told me that he would rather people remember him by his real name, Marc Yu," she said.

Chloe and Marc Yu.

YOUTH
(Continued from page 1)

those numbers?

Some of the answers to JACL's diffculties in establishing a strong youth base may be ingrained in an APA "culture clash," said DeGuia. APA youth are taught to respect their elders but often deny their own voices at the same time, she said. In JACL's case, as elders continue to hold a majority of the leadership positions, the relatively small youth presence is still largely in the background.

"We need to try to negotiate the power within the group," she said, emphasizing the need to focus on specific issues of importance for youth and creating a structured action plan. "The conversation needs to be had ... it's not a power struggle."

Winner's concerns as a mother are natural — she wants to support Marc's dreams. He wants to play with the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics. He wants to become a composer and a conductor.

It's a dream that may not be far off with the LA Philharmonic expressing interest in Marc.

And what attracts young people today are issues and concerns that directly impact them. DeGuia noted their needs to be recognized that the issues affecting APA youth today are vastly different from the youth who grew up in the 1940s or 1950s.

For older members of the JA community, issues surrounding the World War II internment are prominent. Although the internment is important for JA youth today they are also dealing with new and different identity issues.

So what can JACL do to encourage the youth to take an active interest and stay interested? For John Tateishi, executive director, the answer is simplistic: JACL's mission.

"JACL has a notable mission: We help take care of people," said Tateishi, who helped lead a membership workshop during the Bi-district. "We make sure everyone has a chance. As an organization we can do an incredible amount of good."

"We're off to a great start," added Tateishi, who noted that almost two full tables were filled with youth during the conference's banquet dinner. With the help of JACL staff members, he plans to soon launch a youth leadership program which will bring the organization to various college campuses across the country.

Ken Inouye, JACL president, echoed Tateishi's sentiments. "The youth deserve the time in the sun and we need to help them," he said.

"Young people today are just as committed to social justice. Young people want to be engaged. The JACL will continue to attract the younger generation that wants to make a difference."

To stop the downward trend in membership, Ed Endow, JACL vice president of membership, knows all too well the importance of encouraging the next generation to continue an interest in the organization.

"JACL can't rest on its laurels," he said. "It's our time to be stepping up."

As DeGuia led her youth workshop, she was impressed with the intergenerational interaction of the participants. "There's a bright future for APA youth," said DeGuia.

"JACL is necessary ... it's important to claim our space."

But she also noted JACL needs to continue reaching out to youth and encouraging full participation in the organization. "There's always room for improvement; room for rebuilding."

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National JACL board members Larry Oda (far left), Carol Kawamoto (second from left), and Edwin Endow (fourth from left) help welcome Bi-district attendees.

Attendees at the Chicago MDC/EDC Bi-district enjoy the event's gala dinner.

MDC Youth Representative Leilani Savitt gives her youth report during the Midwest Council meeting.

MDC Youth Representative Leilani Savitt gives her youth report during the Midwest Council meeting.

Megan Nakano, Chicago chapter president, takes part in the youth workshop on community organizing during the recent MDC/EDC Bi-district conference.

Lary Schectman, longtime member of the Chicago JACL chapter, was presented with a sapphire pin by JACL President Ken Inouye during the Bi-District. Schectman was honored for his dedication and work with the JACL and the larger Asian American community.

Megan Nakano, Chicago chapter president, takes part in the youth workshop on community organizing during the recent MDC/EDC Bi-district conference.

Lary Schectman, longtime member of the Chicago JACL chapter, was presented with a sapphire pin by JACL President Ken Inouye during the Bi-District. Schectman was honored for his dedication and work with the JACL and the larger Asian American community.

Gerald Sakuma of New Jersey and member of the Seabrook JACL chapter was the big winner of a JACL membership contest and will soon be on a cruise to Ensenada, Mexico donated by the National JACL Credit Union. Silvana Watanabe of the Credit Union presents the cruise prize to Executive Director John Tateishi (left) and Edwin Endow, national vice president of membership.

Congressman Mike Honda (second from right), D-Calif., stops by the Chicago MDC/EDC Bi-district conference. Welcoming him are (L-R): JACL National President Ken Inouye, JACL Executive Director John Tateishi, and Bill Yoshino, MDC regional director.

A table of JACL youth members enjoy the Chicago Bi-district's gala dinner. Youth members held their own conference during the recent four-day Bi-district conference.
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OKINAWA-KYUSHU HOLIDAY TOUR (17 days)
OCTOBER 17 to NOVEMBER 3
CHINA HOLIDAY TOUR (14 days)
SEPTEMBER 3 to 17
ALASKA HOLIDAY CRUISE (9 days)
JULY 12 to 20
HOKKAIDO WINTER FESTIVALS HOLIDAY TOUR (8 days)
FEBRUARY 5 to 13
NEW YORK CITY GETAWAY TOUR (8 days)
NOVEMBER
MUSIC CITIES HOLIDAY TOUR (8 days)
DECEMBER
AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND HOLIDAY TOUR (11 days)
NOVEMBER

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South Korea, who was six strokes ahead at the turn and had led each round at Royal Birkdale, beat runner-up Sophie Gustafson and left Annika Sorenstam with just two majors for the Grand Slam she had aimed for.

Sports stories by P.C. Staff and the Associated Press

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SPORTS

HOCKEY

Sharks Surprise Setoguchi with First-Round Pick

By GREG BEACHAM
AP Sports Writer

SAN JOSE, Calif.—Devon Setoguchi had no idea the San Jose Sharks would trade up in the NHL draft July 30 to select him with the eighth overall pick—and that’s just how the Sharks wanted it.

Setoguchi, a multidrafted forward from the WHL’s Saskatoon Blades, was the top selection in a hectic draft for the Sharks, who traded three picks to Atlanta to move up four spots in the first round.

“Once I got drafted, I was like, ‘San Jose, where is that? California?’” Setoguchi said with a laugh. “I wasn’t expecting this one bit. Obviously, I was as shocked as my family was when they called my name. That’s just a great feeling to see that a team has that much trust in a player.”

Though the Sharks became interested in Setoguchi during the intensive scouting done by all teams during the canceled NHL season, they conducted only one extensive interview with him at the draft combine. When Setoguchi played well for Canada’s under-18 team at the world championships last spring, the Sharks knew they had found a player.

South Korea’s Jeong Jang holds the trophy after winning the Women’s British Open golf tournament at the Royal Birkdale course near Southport, in northwest England. Jang finished the tournament at 16-under par to win the trophy.

MARTIAL ARTS

Penn ‘The Prodigy’ Defeats 2 Gracies

HONOLULU—B.J. “The Prodigy” Penn has accomplished what few fighters have been able to do: defeat two Gracies.

Penn, of Hilo, won a unanimous decision over Renzo Gracie July 30 at the K-1 World Grand Prix in Hawaii. The win comes nine months after defeating Gracie’s cousin, Rodrigo.

Both Gracies are members of the legendary family who pioneered Brazilian jiu-jitsu and all forms of martial arts. Penn is a former student of the Gracie family.

“IT means a lot, but it was just another tough fight,” Penn said. Penn showed his versatility and ability to control the final stages of the three-round match. He fought standing up in the second and used his ground attack when he took Gracie to the mat in the third.

With the crowd on its feet and chanting his name, Penn got the best of an exchange of punches in the second round, bloodying the nose of Gracie.

“He definitely won this battle, but not the war,” Gracie said, who is seeking a rematch. “If I have time to train, I’ll beat him easily.”

QuickStats

From: Hilo, Hawaii Height: 5’9” Weight: 155 lbs Discipline: Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu DOB: 12/27/78 History: Nominated "The Prodigy" B.J. was introduced to Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in Hilo at 17. Opponents Beal, Din Thomas, Calif Uno, Paul Creighton, Takanori Gomi, Rodrigo and Renzo Gracie

South Korea’s Jeong Jang holds the trophy after winning the Women’s British Open golf tournament at the Royal Birkdale course near Southport, in northwest England. Jang birdied the last two holes for a 69 and finished at 10-under 287 to win the Women’s British Open by four strokes.
I spent a Friday night recently watching an open mic at a Vietnamese cafe in Westminster, a city in Orange County, Calif., known for hosting a large Vietnamese American community. I went there by myself to support the birthday of a friend who was both new to the community and a passionate activist in the Vietnamese American community. It's interesting to immerse yourself in a small ethnic community, at least for one evening, to be the lone outsider looking in, I silently wondered if people within the Vietnamese American community would recognize me as a Vietnamese American, or like me, but then I figured the fact that I had a blank expression on my face when everyone else laughed out loud at Vietnamese jokes was a pretty dead giveaway.

Although this may seem like an awkward experience to some people, I found it was enjoyable. True, did not understand a word of Vietnamese, but it was lovely and intriguing to immerse myself in strange customs and traditions that are so different from the silgy symmetries of our own.

I knew nothing about the allure they made to their homeland, the universal phrases their mothers used, and the many good dishes they wore poetic about, but I could understand how a love for your cultural heritage so strong you feel compelled to write poetry and sing songs about it. In going to see a play, to see a parallel Asian community so linked to their history and culture gathered for an intimate evening of poetry, music and spoken word.

Thanks to the civil rights movement, the rise of ethnic studies, and the media coverage, we are all clung together under the great umbrella of the pan-Asian American identity. But then going to something as small as an open mic in a Vietnamese cafe makes me realize we are still so much we don't know about each other. Sometimes, I think we get so immersed with the struggle in our own communities that we forget the bigger picture. Hopefully, Asians will always remain curious about their own ethnic festivals, the legacy of immigration camps and the small JAs businesses that have sprung up to accommodate them.

Avoid the Terri Schiavo Mess

The Florin, Lodi, Stockton and Pacific Citizen, Aug. 5-18, 2005

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Oct. 15 Queen of Bosphorus plus Seoul & Taipeii

Nov. 3 Southern Japan - Okinawa & Kyushu

Nov. 30 The Best of South America - Brazil, Iguassu, Argentina & Patagonia

Dec. 6 Holiday Season in San Antonio

2006 (Partial listing of trips to come)

Jan. 2 New Year New Beginnings

Feb. 7 Panama Canal Cruise plus Costa Rica & Caribbean on Crystal Symphony

July Asia Cruise and Land Tour on Coral Princess

Aug. 11 Treasure of the Rhine

Sept. 4 Istanbul to Athens on Radioson Seven Seas Navigator

Dec. 15 Egypt - Land of the Pharoahs plus Nile River Cruise

JACIL Urges Caution in Lodi Terrorist Investigations

In a letter to U.S. Attorney McGregor W. Scott, JACIL expressed concern over the recent handling of alleged terrorist-related cases in Lodi, Calif. Noting that the FBI’s investigation has all the appearance of a “witch hunt,” John Tateishi, JACIL executive director, expressed concern that the government’s actions against the Arab and Muslim communities in Lodi are reminiscent of the government’s treatment of Japanese Americans in 1942. Last month, Lodi residents Umer Hayat and son Harro Hayat were arrested on charges of having ties to Al Qaeda terrorists. JACIL, Tateishi noted, “are only too familiar with the way in which a climate of suspicion can so easily feed upon itself and result in the stigmatization of an entire community.”

Since 1942, the “entire Arab and Muslim communities in Lodi are being stigmatized and viewed with suspicion as a result of your agency’s actions.” JACIL wants to ensure history does not repeat itself. The Florin, Lodi, Stockton and SACRAMENTO JACIL chapters are monitoring the situation in Lodi.

“This isn’t about guilt or innocence,” said Tateishi. “This is about due process and the Constitutional protections afforded to all who reside in this country.” The JACIL, he added, will continue to vigilance to ensure that the federal law enforcement do not overstep its bounds, “especially those brought under suspicion simply by virtue of their race and religious beliefs.”

\begin{flushright}
\textbf{BRACE YOURSELF, HERE COMES GRAN’PA, WE’RE GONNA HEAR ALL ABOUT HOW HOT IT GOT IN THE WRA CAMPS DURING WWII.}
\end{flushright}
Would you rather wander into the angsty mind of a gay APA teenager or hop the train to the surreal world of ‘2046’? Read the reviews & make your educated selection. By LYNDALIN

**Summer Film SIZZLE or FIZZLE?**

Bad, Bad Black Sheep

In “Ethan Mao,” loss of innocence begins with online chatting and ends with anonymous sex in a pickup truck — and that’s just the opening sequence.

As the family drama spirals down into a ridiculous hostage situation, the movie’s director/writer, Quentin Lee, steeps the story with what seems to be every Asian parent’s worst nightmare: a gay son with a lot of angst and a loaded gun.

A movie like this makes clear that APA antiheroes have bad streaks, a spate of recent APA films like Georgia Lee’s “Saving Face” have followed up with the model minority myth still artfully aired out in “The Wedding Banquet” (1993).

Except this time, we get a visual feast of fast-moving, MTV style montages complemented with pulsating music to usher in a new kind of APA antihero: Ethan, 18, (played by newcomer Jun Hee Lee), whose state of mind seems dictated by his hairstyle (combed means obedient and spiky signifies rebellious). According to Ethan’s voiceover, he was at one time a sober suburban high school student working in his father’s restaurant. But when his stepmother (Julia Nickson) discovers his gay magazine and tells his traditional father (Raymond Ma), Ethan immediately leaves home to become a street hustler.

His only salvation is Remigio (Jerry Hernandez), a drug dealer with such a kind spirit that he offers Ethan a place to stay and free drugs with no strings attached. He even offers to help Ethan break into his former suburban home on Thanksgiving while the family is away to steal the diamond necklace so beloved by his mother before she died.

When the robbery goes awry, like it always does because like most other Asian families, the Maos keep their jewelry in a safety deposit box at the bank) Ethan is forced to take the family hostage for 24 hours until the bank opens. From there, the Maos and Remigio form an unlikely bond filled with misplaced moments like a family dinner where Ethan’s younger brother (David Tran) teaches Remigio how to use chopsticks.

The characters are all so poorly developed that it’s difficult to even sympathize with Ethan who acts more spoiled than misunderstood. He screams, “You don’t just get it, do you?” more than once, but we do because we’ve seen it before.

Lee’s directorial style has moments of genius, but the plodding story is too over-the-top to work.

**Love and Loss in ‘2046’**

With numbers like “In the Mood for Love” heartbreak. He is now a newspaper columnist penning erotic stories inspired by real life dalliances with women in his seedy hotel room — number 2047.

A steady stream of beautiful women perfumes his life, especially the women who live and love in room 2046. Former occupants include Lulu/Mei (Carina Lau Ka Ling) and a fragile prostitute (Zhang Ziyi). And as he shares fleeting moments with his lovers, he’s always reminded of his past love. The ruffle of a skirt, a girl’s innocent ability to complete his sentences or a simple black glove all have the ability to remind him of what he could not have.

Chow falls for women who remind him of his former lover Su Li Zhen (Maggie Cheung, who makes a cameo in this film). Every memory can be connected to someone you loved at that time and lost.

All the characters in ‘2046’ have experienced the loss of love and desire to recapture a memory. They all live parallel lives with alternate identities and their stories span across several countries, three different languages (Cantonese, Mandarin and Japanese) and three time settings including a fictional future filled with androids.

It doesn’t get more complicated than this, but the mystery in this film is its beauty. Wong is the master of making simple love so haunting and sublime.

Wong triumphs with “2046,” his most sophisticated work to date.

Since 1947 the JACL HEALTH TRUST has offered Health Care coverage to JACL members.

To protect you and your family from even common accidents and illnesses the JACL HEALTH TRUST offers Blue Cross of California health care coverage. Blue Cross of California has been providing health coverage to Californians for over 65 years. Blue Cross is committed to keeping you connected to quality health care services.

To learn more about the Blue Cross plan and how to become a member, please call the JACL Health Trust at 1-877-848-4875.
**Picture Bride’ Director Dies in Drowning Accident**

By Associated Press

Kayo Hatta, an independent filmmaker, won an audience award for "Fishbowl" at Sundance. She completed a 30-minute documentary-style film called "Fishbowl." The film was made in Japan and distributed in English. The film was about the story of a poor Japanese woman who emigrates to Hawaii to work in a sugar plantation. She had an exchange of photographs. The film was released in Japan and has become part of the curriculum in some of the older American, was interned during WWII.

**Loved Ones Remember London Bombing Victim**

By P.C. Staff & Associated Press

Family and friends continued to celebrate Mike Matsushita’s life on July 7, the day before the London terror bombings.

From Sydney to New York, "Matsushita's Matte" gathered to feast, watch videos and thumb through photos of the 37-year-old American tourist guide and globe-trotter. They remembered the sense of humor and readiness to hand a spare shirt to a stranger and they recorded the adventures with Matsushita in an online tribute.

They all agree that the attacks took a toll on their wonderful mate.

Matsushita was last seen leaving the London apartment where he was living with fiancée Rosalee Cowan.

**Respected Landscape Architect Dies after Heart Attack**

By Associated Press

Robert K. Murase, one of the nation's most respected landscape architects, died July 18 in a Seattle hospital from heart attack complications. He was 66.

In the Northwest, Murase's projects can be found in the gardens at the Oregon Garden Center and the "Garden of Remembrance" in downtown Seattle. He created the settings for several Japanese American museums, including the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

Internationally, it was one of his earliest designs for a garden of the Miyoko Kyo Kai Buddhist Temple in Japan that in 1975 earned him an American Society of Landscape Architects Honor Award.

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Internationally, it was one of his earliest designs for a garden of the Miyoko Kyo Kai Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles. Murase's signature material, stone, was used in his designs. He was interred during World War II at Tule Lake. After the war, he returned to the United States and founded Robert Murase Associates, a landscape design firm based in Portland, Oregon.

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May 2003 where he led seminars on share the same vision and heart.” achieved what it has thus far is diet which mostly consists of naan Kwon introduced milk-based and the nutritionally depleted Afghan health and nutrition for Afghan community leaders in Mazare-Sharif. Kwon introduced milk-based and his first visit to Afghanistan and for the past two years he has been rack­ ing up air miles flying back and forth to Afghanistan to work with local farmers in the development of soybean production. Currently he is working to develop soybean fields in 12 Afghanistan provinces in collabora­tion with the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. “The Afghanistan people and the government are aware of the malnu­ trition problem among Afghan women and children who need an increase of proteins in their diet to retain their health. With that under­ standing, they are fully supportive of NEI’s nutrition initiative,” said Kwon. There are approximately 21-26 million people who live in Afghanistan and most suffer from a lack of nutrition. Sadly, one out of six women die during childbirth and one out of five children do not live to reach the age of five. Most of these deaths are due to a lack of protein in their diet and will likely be avoided in the future with the help of Kwon’s soybean cultivation. Although tensions between the Muslim world and the United States are currently high after the recent London terrorist bombings, Kwon has learned much from his work in Afghanistan. “No matter the religion or the eth­ nic background of people, their basic needs and will to live are essentially the same,” he said. “The differences are certainly there, but we must be more tolerant of each other to over­ come these differences and live har­ moniously together.” “In my own experience inter­ acting with many Afghans who are Muslims, I learned that they are wholeheartedly welcoming me when I approach them with under­ standing and a caring heart,” added Kwon. “If we can respect that, then we can have a society that is more tolerant of each other.” Kwon’s dedication to the people of Afghanistan and to NEI has extended to his immediate family. Although his wife Annie and daugh­ ter Sonia were at first worried about Kwon’s safety in Afghanistan and skeptical of his decision to spend their savings, they have come to understand the importance of his mission. “In the beginning, all of my fami­ ly members were concerned about my safety and financial investment, and even tried to persuade me not to go to Afghanistan,” said Kwon. “However, after learning about the grave situation of the women and children, they became strong sup­ porters of NEI. They share my extra­ concern and care for the women and children.” Annie now works as a volunteer executive secretary for NEI after selling her art school business in Pasadina to help supplement their income and provide funds for NEI. Their daughter Sonia, a recent UC Davis graduate, currently works as a part-time staff member and volun­ teer coordinator for NEI until she returns to school for her graduate degree. The Kwon’s are now waiting to harvest the soybean plants in late September and mid-October. If the harvest is successful, Afghan leaders will test the soybean plants in all 32 provinces. Although the past harvest was done by hand due to the lack of funds and equipment available in Afghanistan, NEI is hoping to raise about $25,000 to purchase threshing equipment in time for the upcoming harvest. Once soybean production is estab­ lished in Afghanistan, Kwon hopes to establish a soybean factory to process the raw soybeans for national distribution. Eventually, he hopes to start a soybean university in Mazare-Sharif to educate future leaders in nutrition and health. So far NEI has spent $70,000 on the Afghan soybean endeavor and Kwon has personally tapped his resources and network of friends and acquaintances. He hopes to raise additional funds to continue NEI’s work in the country and seek volunteers who are willing to help with NEI’s non-profit work. “We have received a few generous donations, yet additional support is greatly needed,” said Kwon. “NEI will be delighted to accept any con­ cerned citizen who would like to aid in these long-term goals … volun­ teers are helping to make all these things possible.”