Notice: Japantown for Sale

With two malls, two hotels, and a theatre up for sale in San Francisco's Japantown, many worry about the historic area's survival.

By CAROLINE AOYAGI-STOM
Executive Editor

When Aaron Kitashima thinks of "home," he doesn't talk about a house or the city where he lives. For Kitashima, home is San Francisco's Japantown, an historic area where he grew up and where his family has deep roots in the local Japanese American community.

With the recent announcement that several properties in Japantown are up for sale — including two malls, two hotels, and a theatre — Kitashima, a 22-year-old San Francisco State University student, worries about the survival of Japantown. The timing couldn't be more ironic: this year Japantown is celebrating its 100th year anniversary.

"We're losing three-quarters of Japantown, it's a real eye-opener," said Kitashima, who is the grandson of local icon Sox Kitashima who recently passed away. "If [my grandmother] was still here, she would do practically the same thing."

"We're trying to preserve the heritage and culture of Japantown for all Japanese Americans," he added. "We need to make sure the later generations remember the history of Japantown."

In late December Kitasetsu of America Corporation announced that financial difficulties had collected over 11,000 signatures, some from as far away as England.

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Tule Lake, Granada/Amache Are Officially Named National Landmarks

By JASON STAFF and Associated Press

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Naomi Harada can still remember the change in her father Harold's voice every time he would speak about the two-story house located on the quiet, pepper tree-lined street in Riverside, Calif. For the Harada family, the house represents so many memories; stories that span a century of Japanese American history.

This is the house where Naomi's grandfather Jukichi Harada fought for a better life for his wife and six children, taking on a historic battle with the U.S. government and its anti-Asian Alien Land Laws of the time. Although Jukichi, a restauranteur, as a Japanese immigrant could not own land, he bequeathed the Riverside home to three of his children, U.S.-born citizens.

Jukichi's actions in 1915 would encounter the wrath of his White neighbors and would eventually land him in court in the landmark case California vs. Harada. The case was unprecedented and in 1918 the Riverside County Superior Court would side with Jukichi, allowing his children ownership of the property.

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COMMENTARY

The Home Stretch for Minidoka

BY JOHN TATEishi
JACL Executive Director

In December 2003, in the week before Christmas and New Year’s Day, I got a call from Dan Sakura, a Sansei who worked in the Clinton administration as liaison in the office of environmental affairs. With only a few days left in the year, Dan had what I thought was an interesting thought, which held that Bill Clinton was about to leave office and hand the government over to George Bush. Dan’s idea was to find a way to designate one of the World War II internment camps as a historic landmark. Dan was excited and said he had come up with an idea to accomplish what we had discussed a month earlier. At that time, I was skeptical because of memory of how long it took to get a designation for Manzanar was still fresh in my memory. But Dan, ever an optimist, was determined to do something while he was in a position to help. So on that day, just a couple of days before the New Year, his call was to tell me he had found a way to do this: the Antiques Act, which was completely unfamiliar to me. We quickly assessed the nine remaining camps and agreed that Manzanar might be getting a historic landmark designation.

TULE LAKE
(Continued from page 1)

As a well-established national park, it is notable for its complete and coherent interpretation of the internment experience. The Granada/Amoche Relocation Center was the smallest of the 10 relocation centers and the only one to be date-stamped when the first evacuees began arriving in August 1942. It housed 7,597 internees, and about two-thirds of whom were U.S. citizens.

“We’ve waited a long time for this day to happen,” said John Doolittle, Pacific Citizen’s assistant editor and spokesman for the Tule Lake preservation effort. “I’m sure the Antiques Act is unfinished business there... but those who spent the war years there.”

The purchase of this acreage would support the preservation of Minidoka as a tribute to those who spent the war years there. It offers a great opportunity to leave a lasting memory for our children and grandchildren. The purchase of this acreage would complete the restoration of the old camp site.

Two weeks later, Bill Clinton signed a presidential order designating, among other things, Minidoka National Historic Site, as an Antiques Act property. And that eventually authorized the National Park Service and JACL to work together to plan the preservation of Minidoka for the future.

I am now with the Conservation Fund as the Director of Government Relations and still working on preserving Minidoka for those who spent the war years there. The Conservation Fund has raised or committed funds to purchase over 60 acres of lands adjacent to Minidoka, but there is unfinished business.

The Japanese Ancestral Society of Portland is appealing to former Portlanders to send contributions for the purchase of this acreage. The purchase of this acreage would complete the restoration of the old camp site.

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National News

Inouye Wants Panel to Probe WWII Internment of Japanese Latin Americans

By P.C. Staff and Associated Press

HONOLULU—Sen. Daniel K. Inouye has introduced legislation to create a commission to study America's World War II and post-war internment of Japanese Latin Americans and to recommend appropriate remedies.

The panel would also determine how the actions of the United States affected Latin Americans of Japanese descent.

Inouye, a member of a task force Inouye introduced legislation to mark Feb. 19, 1942, the day Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the internment of about 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry.

"Each year, on the anniversary of this date, the internment is remembered both for what it did and for what lessons can be learned," Inouye said in a Feb. 16 statement.

"For less known—...the story of Latin Americans of Japanese descent taken from their homes in California, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho and placed in concentration camps during World War II—was one of the most shameful episodes in our nation's history."

Inouye's legislation would create a bipartisan 12-member task force similar to the one that studied the country's efforts to recover from Hurricane Katrina.

The task force would include several lawmakers from California, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, as well as representatives from the Democratic Task Force on LEP communities in the hurricane-affected Mississippi, who will chair the task force.

Inouye, a key supporter of the legislation, said it would be "a logical and necessary follow-up to the Katrina task force." He added that the task force would be "tasked with determining the appropriate remedies for Latin Americans of Japanese descent."
By Pacific Citizen Staff

Inada Named Oregon Poet Laureate
Lawson Pansio Inada, a famed poet whose “Before the War” became one of the first books of poetry by an Asian American to be released by a New York publisher, was recently named the poet laureate of Oregon.

Inada, 66, was born in Fresno, where his father was a dentist. His internment experience is the subject of many of his best-known poems. Inada has taught at Southern Oregon University since 1966. His appointment as poet laureate is a two-year term that pays $10,000 a year with an additional annual grant of up to $10,000 for program activities.

He is the fifth person to hold the position and the first since William Stafford resigned in 1989.

Pioneering Ethnic Studies Scholar to Receive Honorary Doctorate from Whitman
Ron Takaki, a pioneering scholar in the field of American ethnic studies, has been chosen as the keynote speaker for Whitman College commencement ceremonies May 21. He will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree during the commencement ceremony.

Takaki, a professor of ethnic studies at the University of California, Berkeley, has taught more than 10,000 students in a 32-year career. The grandson of immigrant Japanese plantation workers in Hawaii, he is the author of 11 books, including “Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans.”

Post Office Renamed for Late Congressmen
A Temeccula, Calif., post office on Feb. 21 was renamed after former Congressman Dalip Singh Saund, the first Asian Pacific American in Congress. Born in a small village in India, Saund came to the United States at age 20 to study at UC Berkeley, where he earned a Master’s degree and a PhD in mathematics. He became a citizen in 1949 and was elected to Congress in 1956, where he served three terms in a district that was in both Riverside and Imperial counties. It was during the campaign for his fourth term that he suffered a stroke. He died in 1973.

MUSEUM

(Continued from page 1)

cultural pride in their children with annual trips to Japan to visit family members and balance after school activities like origami with the Boy Scouts, the reason why Kenji visited the museum.

He said he would never use that type of language in today's world.

"I understand it's about patriotism," said Kenichi Tanaka, a first generation Japanese American who accompanied son Kenji to Patriots Point as a chaperone. "I think it's okay to show [the film and flight simulator] to adults but children who are in the fifth and sixth grades? They don't have the same level of comprehension. It's not good exposure.

"There was no explanation that this was part of World War II... they just showed the movie and moved on," he said, adding that the film seemed like wartime propaganda, filled with the racial epithet, "Jap."

Museum officials contend that they are giving students a hands-on account of the true events during WWII.

"The mission of the museum is to teach the sacrifices and courage during World War II," said David Burnette, Patriots Point executive director. "The point here is to learn a little about World War II and what happened during the war.

He said there is not enough time in the program to include other aspects of history.

The film, "The Fighting Lady," is a 1945 Academy Award winning documentary about the USS Yorktown directed by William Wyler, who made the film while serving as a lieutenant colonel in the armed forces. The museum has been screening the film for the past 25 years, and occasionally interacts with it the 1970 film "Ford Tora! Tora! Tora!" which was shot aboard the ship, said Burnette.

Although this doesn't remember the word, "Jap" being used in "The Fighting Lady," he said it wouldn't be a surprise because the documentary reflects America of the 1940s and the language of the time.

"Even if the particular film that show is an award winning documentary, it doesn't excuse the use of a film that uses racially objectionable language in today's world. Essentially, they rationalize their own racism and racist views, and what's particularly bothersome about it is that thousands of kids have gone through that museum and have learned, perhaps innocently on their part, to view anyone who's Japanese in derogatory and demeaning terms," said JACL Executive Director John Tateishi, who called the museum's program "outrageous.

"Growing up in my family we would never use that type of language," said Elizabeth who is Korean. She called the museum to complain about the program and charges against her for her support," said Carolla.

"I wouldn't support it. We are recording encouraging riders to shoot "the enemy."

There are five programs used in the simulator, one of which is the WWII scout mission which gives the impression of launching off of a battle ship and getting attacked by a Japanese fleet, said Betty Floyd, the museum's flight simulator supervisor.

"It's a warship. You can't alter history," Floyd said.

But Tateishi said there is a hidden danger in telling history this way. Their brand of racism is disgusting but because they hide behind the label of telling the truth to promote their racist views, he said.

Burnette said he has heard no complaints from visitors about the program and charges parents and chaperones with the responsibility to teach their kids the right thing to make people hate people.

She called the museum to complain about the film and the flight simulator, a 15-seat motion simulator that gives riders the sense of being on a combat mission. Kenji did not volunteer to go on the ride, which showed a Japanese pilot getting into a plane with the Japanese flag undulating in the wind, said Elizabeth.

Banzai Returns to TV G4
"Banzai!" the game show that APA groups heavily protested in 2003 will be a part of G4 TV's program lineup starting in March. Hosted by "Mr. Banzai," the show spoofs game shows and was criticized for being racist. FOX Television pulled the show after protests mounted.

The show is set to premier March 7 at midnight, according to the G4 Web site. The television network did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Carolla Apologizes for Offensive On-Air Remarks
LOS ANGELES—Adam Carolla, the radio host who was criticized for his anti-Asian comments, made an on-air apology Feb. 22 for a "Ching Chong" skit mocking the Asian Excellence Awards.

"A quick on-the-spot decision to take care of. An apology to the Asian community. We did a bit a few weeks back that offended many people. It was unintended to offend these people. We do a show here that is a little irreverent and sometimes we cross the line and we definitely crossed it this time. And it was not meant to offend. It did. And for that we sincerely apologize to the good people of the Asian community. So we apologize and we thank you for your support," said Carolla.

National Newsbytes
College Names Street After JA Artist, Alumnae

A California college that Mine Okubo once attended honored the Japanese American artist posthumously in a three-part celebration Feb. 22, which included a street-renaming ceremony, reception and the debut of a new play based on Okubo's life.

During the ceremonies, Riverside City College's (RCC) interior campus portion of Riverside Avenue was renamed to honor Okubo who was the college's 1974 alumnus of the year.

A performance of "Mine: A Name for Herself," was also debuted. The play written by Mary Curtin and Theresa Lukins traced the life of Okubo using a performance salon set in the artist's New York apartment.

Okubo, a native of the city of Riverside, graduated from RCC in 1935 and went on to fame as an artist and author depicting her family's internment at Topaz during World War II. Since cameras and photographs were not permitted in the camp, Okubo began to sketch, draw and paint her bleak world.

Her book, "Citizen 13660," which contained 206 drawings, garnered rave reviews when it was published in 1946. She gained international recognition as an illustrator whose work was featured on covers of several major national magazines.

Okubo passed away in Manhattan February 2001 at the age of 88.

JACL Chapters Observe Day of Remembrance

JACL chapters across the nation commemorated Day of Remembrance last month.

The Boise Valley JACL and the Friends of Minidoka were among 25 participants at the DOR ceremony held in Idaho Gov. Dirk Kempthorne's office. For the past five years, Kempthorne has hosted a proclamation signing to recognize Feb. 19 as the anniversary of Executive Order 9066. Three Utah JACL chapters sponsored "2006 Day of Remembrance: Through a Woman's Eyes." The Mt. Olympus, Sahu Lake and Wazuch Frontier chapters screened "Words, Weavings, and Songs," a film that highlights the lives of three Nisei women during World War II. Following the film, Jeannette Misaka moderated a panel discussion featuring seven local women who told personal stories about their wartime experiences.

GLAS Scholarship Calls for Scholarship Applicants

The Greater Los Angeles Singles Chapter is calling for applicants for their annual Hana Uno Memorial Scholarship of $1,000.

The scholarship was established in 1992 as a memorial to Hana Uno Sheperd, who before her death in 1987 was an ardent GLAS/JACL member for many years and active in the redress movement. The annual scholarship is given to students who have become acquainted with some of the goals of the JACL. The history of the scholarship itself helps youth connect with their historical past.

To qualify, applicants must be college bound seniors with a good academic achievement record from single-parent families. The student should be of Japanese descent and a resident of L.A. or Orange County. Application forms are made through the students' high school college counselors. If their school has not received application forms, the counselor should request them from the scholarship chairperson.

To qualify for review by the GLAS Scholarship Committee, applications must be postmarked by May 8, or faxed by that date to the scholarship chairperson at 310/855-4024. Please call 310/859-1194 for application forms or information.
The Harada House was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1990 and in 2004 the home was donated to the Riverside Metropolitan Museum for preservation. Currently the museum is working on a long-term plan to raise funds for the historic house’s preservation and to ensure the story of the Harada family is not forgotten.

"The importance of the site, its significance puts me in awe. The multilayer stories of the site are phenomenal," said Lynn Voorhees, the Museum’s curator of historic structures and collections. "The story is so much larger than the Japanese American story. It is a story about what it means to be an American, so much larger than the Japanese American story.

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"The house symbolizes the heart or foundation for fighting for what one believes, that it is one’s right to have shelter, and that right was questioned by the state of California in 1913, and my immigrant grandfa­ther, Jukichi Harada, fought for that for the sake of his children," said Naomi. "The house also symbolizes our protection of those rights by the United States Constitution. Our society needs continual reminding of this. Physical structures such as the Harada House can serve as a learning tool."

Today, the saltbox cottage house is almost exactly the same as when it was built in the 1880s and in dire need of repair, especially after the recent rainstorms in Southern California. A new roof needs to be installed and the chimneys are in such bad condition they had to be removed. The foundation of the house is crumbling and recently support pylons were installed temporarily. P plaster throughout the house is also crumbling and the museum is working hard to stabilize the structure.

The Harada House is a literal time capsule, a treasure trove of information on the Harada family and the history of the JA community. Thanks largely to the efforts of Jukichi’s youngest daughter, Surni, the only Harada to return to Riverside full-time, everything saved..." said Voorhees. "It shows the continued experience of Japanese American history in the United States. It expands the entire 20th century."

Many of the documents from Jukichi’s historic court battles have been collected. The Harada family also documented their forced incarceration in Topaz during World War II and after the Harada house during the war and his correspondence with the family has also been preserved. Also, the Harada family has also been preserved. Also, the Harada family has also been preserved. Also, the Harada family has also been preserved. After the Harada house during the war and his correspondence with the family has also been preserved. Also, the Harada family has also been preserved. Also, the Harada family has also been preserved. Also, the Harada family has also been preserved.
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PACIFIC CITIZEN, Mar 3-10, 2006
SPORTS

SPEEDSKATING
Another Win for the Goateed American, Plus a Bronze

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP National Writer

TURIN, Italy — A perfect race from start to finish for Apollo Anton Ohno.

He made this another Olympics to remember on the final night of short track speedskating Feb. 25, winning his second Olympic gold medal — and even crossing the line first for a change.

Unlike his second-place victory in Salt Lake City, Ohno didn’t have to wait for the judges to disqualify the skater in front of him.

Sensing victory was in the 500-meter race, he threw up his arms and screamed, “Yessss!” A look of pure joy and relief spread over his face.

“Told from start to finish doesn’t happen very often,” he said. “For me, it was the perfect race.”

Well, this being short track, nothing is ever quite perfect.

Ohno got to the final on a disqualification, moving up when a Japanese skater was called for Colony shaving.

They, after two false starts by other skaters in the final, Ohno either got the ultimate start — or got away with one. Television replays showed shaving for everyone else, and getting to the crucial first turn with a clear lead.

The soul-patched American was in it half that much, if anything, in the evening, the 5,000-meter relay, he surged past the Italians on the next-to-last lap to grab the bronze medal — the first U.S. medal in that event since 1994.

Ohno’s eyes widened when he crossed the line in the 500, if he couldn’t believe he had another gold. He leaped into the arms of a U.S. coach and grabbed a U.S. flag for the victory lap.

American fans rocked the arena, just as they did for Arakawa when he was around 3 years old.

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Well, this being short track, nothing is ever quite perfect.
Twenty Years, and We're Still Going Strong

If someone asked you, a busy college student, to spend several consecutive weekends constructing and painting elaborate backdrops for a scene that only lasts 15 minutes, or for several months, without pay, to disable your social and academic life to plan logistics for an evening event that will be over in about three hours, you would think that most rational people would say no.

You would be surprised. Just very recently, the Nikkei Student Union at UCLA had their twentieth Nikkei Student Union Cultural Night show. It is a huge event that always takes place on the weekend closest to February 19, which any Japanese American should know is the anniversary of Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066.

For those of you who don’t know, cultural night shows are elaborate productions put on by student-run ethnic organizations that showcase various aspects of the culture that the organization represents. In the case of NSU, our main showcase are traditional odori dancing, taiko drumming and modern hip-hop dance, all interspersed within an original storyline involving the JA community.

This has been my third year being involved in it and my second year as the scriptwriter. Every year, I am amazed just how much work and time goes into something that only lasts for a single night.

Why do we do it?

Good question.

Being involved with an NSU Cultural Night production means that for the majority of your winter quarter, your entire life revolves around Cultural Night, whether it means having odori dancing, taiko drumming and modern hip-hop dance, all interspersed within an original storyline involving the JA community.

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S Sanders spent over a year shooting the film and following the exonerates, chosen to represent diversity in geography, social economic background, family and recovery situations.

"All of the subjects are so provocative — how do you survive prison when you're wrongly convicted? Then I met the people and they were all so positive. There was just something about them ... I knew I had to do something to make this film," said Sanders, who had just returned home to her native Southern California after a weekend trip to Santa Fe, New Mexico for her film's premiere.

She "co-opted" the film together by assembling a group of filmmakers who just as passionate about telling the stories and slowly garnered attention and funding until Showtime Television came aboard and announced it would premiere the documentary later this year.

Now, she says the film is being used by politicians, schools and civic groups to shed light on the little-known plight of exonerees.

"People come up to me and say, 'You've really changed my views on the justice system ... I think it's great,'" said Sanders, who also won an Academy Award for her work on "Twin Towers," a 2003 short documentary about two brothers during the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks.

DNA, she said, is the window to the flaws in the judicial system. "Now they can see that there is a problem," said Sanders. Both are multiple Academy Award winners.

"Maybe it's from having to be in the world of criminal justice" while she was "already in the world of criminal justice" as an associate producer of a 2002 NBC television documentary, evolved into a compelling scrutiny of the system. "After Innocence," Sanders' first feature-length documentary won the 2005 Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and is currently in full theatrical release.

"I just thought the subject was so provocative — how do you survive prison when you're wrongly convicted? ... I knew I had to do everything it took to make this film,'" Sanders said.

In Sanders' family, telling a good story seems to flow in the bloodline. She comes from a "family film," with "a lot of strong Asian women role models." Her mother, Frieda Lee Mock, worked on the documentary "Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision," with her father Terry Sanders. Both are multiple Academy Award winners.

"Growing up, my family had more films in the fridge than food," she said with a laugh. "When I made my first student film, my parents were the only ones who really understood the difficulties and the process."

She gained experience working with her parents on various projects, but says there was really never any handholding from her mentors.

At Sundance last year, when "After Innocence" won the coveted jury prize, Sanders' parents teased her in a way that is perhaps too familiar to other Asian Pacific Americans — they asked her why she didn't become a lawyer instead. "I had to tell a dramatic story and the story couldn't be the people in the film," said Sanders.

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"I didn't go to law school because his body had grown accustomed to recycled air, "Strange," he says quietly while driving in a car with the window down.

"The key to their release was located in the DNA left at the crime scenes." The list of the innocent is diverse: a police officer from Boston, a congenital Pennsylvania man who in 1985 voluntarily waited on a street corner for his ex-lover to arrive, a young English woman who married and moved to America, a man who was released after spending 21 years in solitary confinement.

In the film, Yarris talks about being allergic to fresh air because his body had grown accustomed to recycled air. "Strange," he says quietly while driving in a car with the window down, "because his body had grown accustomed to recycled air.

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In Memoriam - 2005-2006

All the towns are in California except as noted.

Makoto Akutagawa, 85, Los Angeles, Jan. 21; survived by sons, Floyd and Brian (Ann); daughters, Pearl (Herb) Aguirre, Isma (Osman); Lawrence (Agnes), Patrick (Yoelinda) and Satoko (Katsumi); and sisters, Mabel (Shinso) Tanahara, Dora Jahara and Susan Chang.

Ryoichi Arai, 82, Los Angeles, Jan. 27; survived by brother, Sdeki; and sister, Miki (Eki) Yoney and Norei (Masa) Takeda.

Nakamura, Tsunehiro, 78, Los Angeles, Jan. 28; survived by companion, Tenryo Chouman; sister, Ichyo Takashiba; brother, Toshiharu, and sister, Yoshiko (William) Nishimura.

Kawaguchi, Tad, 74, Torrance; Korean Conflict veteran; survived by wife, Mary; sons, Mark and Glenn; 2 sons, David (sister, Kamiko); and sister, Floyd Yamasaki; brothers-in-law, Mas (Dot) Yamasaki; brother Kiyoshi; and sister-in-law, Irene Miyasak.

Kido, Lawrence T., 65, Los Angeles; survived by wife, Bill; sons, Scott; brother, Edwin (Nora); sister, Gladys Wanden; mother, Masuko KImuku-Nakashima; brothers-in-law, Wayne (Hub) and Robert (Izumi); and sisters, Roberta and sister-in-law, Gloria (Way) Sekai.

Minamidate, Yosuke, 86, Jan. 26; survived by sisters, Venon (Robert) Arimoto, (Doree) Pheils and Karen (Edward) Beem; and fanmce, Patricia (Richard) Tachte.

Nakatsura, Shizue, 77, Orange, Jan. 28; survived by husbend, Joe; and sons, Shigeki, Michael; daughters, Patti (Gordon) Ackley; and sister, Toshi (William) Nishimura.

Nakasuk, Alan Masuro, 46, Jan. 26; survived by sisters, Venon (Robert) Arimoto, (Doree) Pheils and Karen (Edward) Beem; and fanmce, Patricia (Richard) Tachte.

Nakatsuru, Shizue, 77, Orange, Jan. 28; survived by husband, Joe; and sons, Stephen, Edward, and Lance.

Ninuma, Takamori "Pee," 85, Hollywood, Jan. 28; survived by brother, Michi; sons, Toby, and Richard Wada; nephews, Ted (Gin) Hayamizu; great-grandchildren, Anthony and Aiko; daughter, Toshi (Tak) Shigenaka; and sister-in-law, Ikue (Aki) Shigenaka.

Noguchi, Manshirh, 61, Garden Grove: Jan. 27; survived by wife, Chieko; sons, Ken, and Katsuko Tatsui; and daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Okumura, Shozaburo, 78, Huntington Beach; Jan. 24; survived by wife, Yoko; daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Park, Seiwo, 74, Los Angeles, Jan. 28; survived by brother, Jan; two sisters, Mabel (Shinso) Tanahara, and Doris (Mike) Sakata.

Sadakane, Michael, 62, Los Angeles; survived by wife, Grace; he was a long-time resident of Capitola and more recently, in Senior Living Village at Capitola. He is survived by his brother, George Fukuda; and sister-in-law, Joanne Shiba.

Sakai, Eimei, 68, Los Angeles, Jan. 28; survived by brother, George (Tad) Katayama; and sister, Laura; and Debra (Michael), Cox; sons, Roy Tetsuo, 87, Pacheco, Feb. 28; gc.; brother, George Fukuda; and sister-in-law, Laura; and Debra (Michael), Cox; sons, Roy Tetsuo, 87, Pacheco, Feb. 28; gc.; brother, George Fukuda; and sister-in-law, Joanne Shiba.

Shinmyo, Shigeki, 86, Los Angeles, Jan. 28; survived by companion, Tenryo Chouman; sister, Ichyo Takashiba; brother, Toshiharu, and sister, Yoshiko (William) Nishimura.

Takahashi, Atsuko, 96, Los Angeles, Jan. 15; survived by sons, Ralph (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Takahashi, Shizuko, 89, Los Angeles; survived by wife, Takeko; sons, Masahiro, and Shibue (Nancy) Kauzlarich.

Takai, Roy, 84, Dec. 28; survived by wife, Yoko; daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Tokashiba, Hiroko, 78, Los Angeles; survived by wife, Chieko; sons, Ken, and Katsuko Tatsui; and daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Wada, Masato, 86, Los Angeles, Jan. 27; survived by sons, Robert and Glenn; 2 sons, David (sister, Kamiko); and sister, Floyd Yamasaki; brothers-in-law, Mas (Dot) Yamasaki; brother Kiyoshi; and sister-in-law, Irene Miyasak.

Yamada, Tohru, 76, Gardena; Jan. 28; survived by wife, Yoko; daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Yamamoto, Seiko, 84, Jan. 20; survived by wife, Chieko; sons, Ken, and Katsuko Tatsui; and daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Yamanaka, Masatomo, 87, Gardena, Jan. 25; survived by wife, Yoko; sons, Ken, and Katsuko Tatsui; and daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Yokoyama, Shiritsu, 81, Torrance; survived by wife, Chieko; sons, Ken, and Katsuko Tatsui; and daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Yoshida, Kenzoku, 78, Tustin; Jan. 26; survived by wife, Yoko; sons, Ken, and Katsuko Tatsui; and daughters, Sheryl (Chieko), and Mary Hayama and (John) Sadakane; sons, Don, 2; and brother, Chieko.

Yoshida,Shigeki, 71, Torrance; U.S. Korean Conflict veteran; survived by wife, Mary; sons, Mark and Glenn; 2 sons, David (sister, Kamiko); and sister, Floyd Yamasaki; brothers-in-law, Mas (Dot) Yamasaki; brother Kiyoshi; and sister-in-law, Irene Miyasak.
JAPANTOWN
(Continued from page 1)

Festival, is also up for sale. AMC Entertainment recently merged with Loews Cineplex and due to an anti-
trust agreement the State Attorney General’s office has forced AMC to sell the Japantown theater.

Kintetsu is hoping to finalize the sales of its properties by the end of March and the AMC is aiming for
the middle of April. When the sales are finalized, Japantown will see a change in ownership in three-
fourths of the area.

The sale of the Kintetsu properties has so riled the local Japanese American community that a meet-
ning was held Feb. 21 with San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi, and
Kintetsu representatives. Close to 200 Japantown merchants, resi-
dents, and community leaders attended the meeting to ensure their message was clear: any new owner
must respect the unique history and culture of Japantown.

“I hope we get a good neighbor that’s committed to the communi-
ty,” said Linda Jotkus, executive director of the Japantown Task
Force, Inc., a non-profit organiza-
tion that works to preserve and
develop the historic area. She noted
they want to avoid what happened in 2000 to the Kintetsu owned Japantown Bowl when developers
converted the historic site into con-
dominiums even after community
protests. “This neighborhood is
important to preserve and revitalize
what we have left,” said Jotkus.

“I know the properties will likely
be sold but I am expecting the own-
ers to find people who will ensure
the integrity of the culture and
neighborhood will remain the same,” said Kintetsu.

Community members believe the
best way to do this is to keep the
property in the hands of the JAPAN-
community. Allen M. Okamoto, a promi-
nent realtor in San Francisco, is cur-
cently working on a deal to buy
the Kintetsu properties. The deal would
involve a pooling of pension funds which would mature in 5 to 7 years at
which time a new buyer from the
JA community would be sought.
But the offer may be too little too late since Okamoto admits it is still
“in a work in progress” and the short
time frame set by Kintetsu to sell the
properties leaves him “caught
between a rock and a hard place.”
They are also working in the dark
since Kintetsu has not revealed an
asking price for the properties.
Still, many believe Okamoto is
going in the right direction.

“We would like to see Kintetsu
consider the offer from the com-
nunity, to allow the community to have
ownership in its own community,” said Paul Osaki, executive director of JCCNC (Japanese Cultural and
Community Center of Northern California). “The community wants to
direct its own future. If we lose the
land, we’re eventually going to lose
the community.”

“If we get an outside buyer and
they decide to unload the property,
15 years later we’re going to go
through the same thing again,” said
Patty Wada, NCWMP regional direc-
tor. “The best thing is to put it into
the community’s hands. If we care
about the community, why not con-
sider it? We’re talking about the
future of Japantown.”

Many believe the current situation in Japantown is placing stress on
current U.S.-Japan relations, es-
specially if Kintetsu, a Japanese owned
company, does not seriously consid-
er an offer from the JA community.

“If the sale leads to the demise
and loss of the community, it will set
back U.S.-Japan relations 100
years,” said Osaki. “It’s an unfortu-
nate thing.”

“In my view it’s not just about a
sale. In the long run it will impact
the way we view each other,” said
John Tateishi, JACL executive
director. “JAs are not going to forget
this if this turns out badly for us. Our
concern is preserving the
Nihonmachis that are left.”

But Tamaki believes Kintetsu has
been open with the community. In
addition to disclosing the property
sales, Kintetsu is making a concert-
ed effort to find buyers who are
interested in holding the properties
long-term and have rejected any
buyers who want to flip the prop-
erty.

“Kintetsu is being sensitive to
the community and they are work-
ing with the city. They are not going
to turn it into a Walmart,” said
Tamaki. “Change is difficult but
they want to manage the change so
the culture and vision of Japantown
continues.”

Makoto Yamamuka, consul gener-
al of Japan, supports the current
efforts to preserve the history of
Japantown. “I sincerely hope that
negotiations concerning the sale of
a large portion of Japantown’s com-
mercial facilities, involving
Kintetsu, community leaders, and
other parties, will result in the cultur-
al preservation and development of
Japantown as a vibrant landmark in
this community,” he said.

City officials are working to
ensure Kintetsu and any new buyers
it selects will work with the
Japantown community to preserve
and develop the historic area. Mayor
Newsom and Supervisor Mirkarimi
have already come forward in sup-
port of preserving Japantown.

“Any future owner should be put
on notice that the City will require
the preservation of the cultural sig-
nificance of Japantown,” said
Newsom in a letter to Kintetsu. “The
importance of preserving San
Francisco’s Japantown is even more
significant given that only three
Japantowns remain in the United
States.”

Jotkus believes the current prop-
sity sales are a reality check for the
community and shed a harsh light on
the current economic realities of the
area.

“I think it’s good that people heard everything today but I don’t
think it’s going to change anything,” she said. “We need to take a good
look at what this means — every-
thing can’t stay the same forever.
Kintetsu has been bleeding red for
years — they have to sell.”

In the early 1980s and 1990s JAPANtown numbered around 4,000 to 5,000 in Japantown where many community
members lived, worked, and played.

The area has gone through a number of changes including the World War II internment and redevelopment in the
1990s to make way for the Geary
Expressway. Today, JAPANtown only num-
ber around 1,000 and many of the
area businesses are no longer JA
owned.

Although weekend traffic in the area continues to be brisk, es-
specially when planned events are held like the Cherry Blossom Festival and the Asian American Film Festival,
weekend traffic is slow and many businesses continue to struggle to make ends meet.

And with the end of March around the corner, reality is settling in.
Many believe the pending sales of the Kintetsu properties will play a vital role in determining the future
direction of San Francisco’s Japantown.

The properties are “the core of Japantown. If that falls, it will be a
dominio effect,” said Okamoto.

“These properties represent so much of Japantown, so much of our
economic revenue,” said Osaki. “Its loss can devastate the community, devestate Japantown.”

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