Conquering the Floating World

By LYNDA LIN

The Southern California native broke into kabuki. Now other traditional actors are bobbing their heads to MP3s and hip-hop.

With every furrow of his brow and fiery sidelong gaze, porcelain-skinned Nakamura Gankyo infuses new energy into the ancient art of kabuki. As Sawaichi, the blind man tortured by the question of his wife's fidelity, he is alternately despondent and remorseful—every inch the epitome of regal theater idol. Except his real name is Ken Kanesaka, a 25-year-old native of Huntington Beach, Calif., who was swallowed up into the world of kabuki as a toddler and reborn as a dancing kabuki actor—the first Japanese American to break into this cloistered theater world.

Nisei-han (2.5 generation) blood flows in his veins, which some critics call an affront to the deep-rooted traditions of kabuki. For centuries, kabuki star begat other stars through a direct bloodline; giving the art form—which uses classical Japanese language—an air of mystery. Then Ken entered their world from stage left not speaking a word of Japanese and loving, of all things, golf and hiking. "I think children always love a fantasy world or a world of make-believe where they can disappear into," said Ken via e-mail from Japan. His earliest memory of the ancient theater art came from videotapes, which he studied, intently. While his peers made fruitless jaunts at cultural activities, Ken studied the comprehensive lines of kabuki and lived the characters he portrayed.

Looking at the Entire Legacy of a Man, Even the Tarnishes

A veteran Congressman and beloved alumnus of the University of Washington lives on through a bronze monument modeled in his likeness. Does present day context absolve Scoop Jackson from his WWII legacy?

By LYNDA LIN

Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson's image etched in stone contains dual identities. The late Washington state senator's bust crowned with a laurel wreath, was recently brought out to the open air of his state's capitol. But Scoop's bust now stands outdoors. University of Washington. One part of history illuminates his hard-line position against Japanese Americans during World War II, another calls attention to Jackson's softened feature as a man who later atoned and championed civil rights.

Above all, many say, the bust is modeled after a human being. University officials hope Jackson's transformation in the context of social justice will find a more prominent location in students' minds. In a leafy area in front of the school of international studies, also named after the late Democratic senator, Amund Yang stopped a few students breezing by to ask about Jackson's identity.

Amache Camp Gets Formal Landmark Designation

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

GRANADA, Colo.—The pilgrimage to the Granada Relocation Center was exceptionally poignant this year as it marked the former internment camp's designation as a national landmark.

The site was formally dedicated May 20 as a National Historic Landmark by Ken Snyder, regional superintendent of the National Park Service. "This is an important day for all—it's a culmination of more than 20 years of work from the Japanese American community in Denver and the town of Granada," said Derek Okubo, the son of an Amache detainee. "It's a story I hope will continue the
SPRING CAMPAIGN
Staying Connected in an Interconnected World
By SHERON AKAKAI

This past January, I had the opportunity to visit the Pacific Citizen's new home in Little Tokyo as the new PWN district representative at the annual advisory board meeting.

There I met a very committed and incredibly hardworking four-person award-winning newspaper team who publish a 12-page issue every two weeks except for December, when they produce a hummingbird-sized Holiday issue. Like the rest of the JACL, they do so with much tight budgets and resources.

I saw and heard first hand how much effort goes into producing this editorially independent but national publication of the Japanese American Citizens League. And I can only say after this experience that I appreciate the P.C. ever more when it arrives in my mailbox.

The staff receives hundreds of unsolicited stories and press releases each week. Caroline and Lynda have to sort through these and keep track of top stories and breaking news to produce an issue that follows the P.C.'s vision to report and educate on "national issues affecting the JACL, the Japanese American community and the larger Asian American community."

You see this with recent stories ranging from the JACL signing onto amicus briefs in lawsuits challenging the domestic spying program, to the story about two veterans of different wars — one Nisei and the other Yomei — and their reminiscences, to APA groups rallying against immigration bill HR4437, to controversy at Yale University regarding the April edition of Rampur and its depiction of APAs and the APA students fighting back. And just as the JA community, now in the midst of demographic changes, sees demographic forces changing the face of the community, the P.C. too has evolved over the past few years, changing its design, covering stories that other AA publications haven't covered, adding the "Memoirs of a Non-Geisha" column written by a voice from a younger generation and running more in-depth full-page arts and entertainment features.

And last year, the P.C. took another step forward and used the funds raised from the 2005 Spring Campaign to extend its reach and audience by establishing the P.C. Web site (www.pacificcitizen.org).

This year the P.C. wants to take its outreach even further by taking the P.C. Web site to the next level and adding more functionality and features. If you are like me and read newspapers from all over the country and the world on the Internet, you know the P.C needs to address content and design issues and channels in this ever interconnected world of ours to remain relevant — especially with the younger generations, our future.

So if you haven't given before to the P.C. Spring Campaign, send a $25, $50, or $100, make a check for $25, $50, or join me on the Wall of Fame at $150. And if you have given in past campaigns, but haven't yet given in this campaign, please consider adding an extra $25 over your last donation.

But hurry, Summer solstice is just around the corner. Thank you for your support.

Sheron Akakai currently serves on the P.C. editorial board representing the PWN district.

LIKE WHAT YOU SEE?
Launch the Web site into the next online journey

www.pacificcitizen.org

$50 $100
$200 $20 $Other

NAME:

ADDRESS:

STATE: __ZIP: __

EMAIL: __

CHARGE: __

MAIL TO: PACIFIC CITIZEN, 250 E. FIRST STREET, SUITE 301, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

Be a Wall of JAMEL! Donate $150 or more

Dear Editor

I have read the Pacific Citizen on Saturdays and Sundays for several years, and it is a source of inspiration to me. I would like to share my experience with the Pacific Citizen.

My name is [Name], and I am a [age] year-old [gender] from [city, state]. I have been reading the Pacific Citizen since [year], and it has had a significant impact on my life. I have learned about the history of the Japanese American community, as well as the challenges they face today. The articles and columns in the Pacific Citizen have helped me understand the importance of diversity and inclusion in our society.

I would like to volunteer my time and skills to help promote the mission of the Pacific Citizen. I have experience in [area of interest, e.g., writing, editing, design, etc.], and I would be happy to contribute to the newspaper in any way that I can.

Please consider my offer to volunteer. I am confident that I can contribute positively to the Pacific Citizen and help it continue to be a valuable resource for the Asian American community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
New Orleans' APA Community Protests Landfill

By P.C. Staff and Associated Press

Residents try to rebuild their homes in March. The new landfill near their community will be yet another battle for the downtrodden.

"The arguments against Chef Meurent's first site are grounds to keep the site closed," said Honda in a letter. "Arguments in favor of the site seem far less compelling. "The site may or may not be nontoxic. What is clear is that these shaky foundations on which to ground a controversial and potentially hazardous policy decision without extensive environmental studies or public input."

For now, New Orleans' Vietnamese Americans are gearing up for another battle after the storms.

JACL Continues to Criticize Adidas Over Racist Sneakers

The JACL sent a May 15 letter to Rob Langstaff, president of Adidas America, expressing the organization's concern about Adidas' response to the marketing of its Y-1 Huf sneaker, the Ray Fong sneaker, which caricatured an Asian face. The Portland JACL brought the matter to the attention of national JACL.

Calling Adidas' response to the outcry of protest from the Asian Pacific American community a "cavalier." JACL Executive Director John Tateishi noted that nearly a month passed before Adidas made a decision to withdraw the sneakers from stores. Initially refusing to remove the shoes when the APA community protested the racist image, Adidas announced 27 days later that it had made a decision to withdraw the shoes in response to the community's protests. Tateishi accused Adidas of being "disingenuous" by its comments that they were pulling the shoes from the shelves in response to the community's protests.

Adidas Y-1 Huf with Ray Fong.

Pelosi and Woolsey Secure $250,000 for Historic Angel Island

By Pacific Citizen Staff

Angel Island, the "Ellis Island of America," was received federal funding to supplement needed revitalization work.

House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, and Congressman Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., secured $250,000 in federal funding for the renovation of the Angel Island Immigration Station. The funding, awarded through the Save America's Treasures program and included in the fiscal year 2007 Interior Appropriations bill, will be used to rehabilitate the historic hospital building, which served as an immigration and medical research facility.

The hospital building was transformed into barracks for the U.S. Army during World War II. The hospital renovation is part of a larger effort to preserve the Angel Island Immigration Station. Last year, Woolsey and Pelosi led a successful effort to pass legislation (H.R. 600) authorizing $15 million for the preservation of the Angel Island Immigration Station.

"From 1910 to 1940, Angel Island was the first stop for many immigrants who came to the West Coast. On the island these immigrants, most of Asian descent, were not greeted with open arms. For many, it was like a prison - the windows were barred, sleeping quarters were overcrowded and interrogations were a way of life," said Pelosi. "The story of Angel Island is one that is too often lost between the pages of our nation's history," said Pelosi.

"I am proud to be part of restoring the "Ellis Island of the West," because it helps preserve the rich history of immigration to America for future generations," said Woolsey. The spending bill was approved by the House last month and must now be approved by the Senate before a final version is passed by both chambers and then sent to the President for his signature.

QUICK FACTS

• Angel Island was officially incorporated into the California State Park system in 1963.

• In 1967, the Angel Island Immigration Station was designated as a National Historic Landmark.

• In 2000, Angel Island was placed on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "11 Most Endangered Historic Places" list and became an official project of Save America's Treasures, the federal program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

• The White House Millennium Council.
KABUKI
(Continued from page 1)
before quitting altogether, young Ken Kanesaka would practice act-
ing out plays with very adult themes of love, betrayal and suicide.
“...When my wife was younger, was also a world of kabuki. I could be a
villain, or a hero, and I think that is what
attracted me to the most,” added Ken.
The cultural seed was planted at
an early age for Ken who started
dancing lessons in Los Angeles at
two while accompanying his sister
to classical Japanese dance classes.
Through the sea of female students,
who she knew would abandon
dance to start families and careers,
Madame Bando Mitsurou saw
longevity and passion in Ken.

Was the Real Kabuki Actor
Please Stand Up?
“Kabuki was known to be the ‘flying world’. It was a place where
cosmonauts could escape to, and it was a world of dreams. It is
this floating world that still gives hope and a place to escape,”
said Ken.

For awhile, his “real” world was
dictated by a linear path and chore-
graphed with a steady percussion.
A drum band and a good student, he entered
his rugh school inarcrung his teacher’s dressing room
and cleans props and make-up.
Between performances, he squeezes
money to work.
“...As far as I can recall, he has
always been motivated,” said Kari
Kanesaka, his mom. “When he was
little, he would practice by himself
for hours. Even in college, he would
practice at least one hour a day
in his studio.”
“I believe Ken’s vision is to make
[...]
JACKSON
(Continued from page 1)
ney and legacy.
“...One thing I can’t do is love
and that is what is the purpose of
learning it to begin with,” said Ken. “Japanese
American heritage is about creating
and traditions for the next generation.”

The senator also championed higher
education and social welfare pro-
grams ... but that doesn’t mean we’re
going to gloss over history.”

University officials also plan to host a
classroom discussion about
Jackson’s personal transformation.
“We didn’t have a problem with
the sculpture lists Jackson’s “com-
mitment to quality education,
human rights and the importance
of creating new generations of
leaders and specialists in international
affairs.”

The ‘human rights’ part sticks
unfortunately. “...I have no qualms about honoring
Henry Jackson for his contribution
to the University of Washington,
but to expel his commitment to human
rights is ignorant and disrespectful,” said
Yamazaki. Jackson, who himself earned the
nickname “Scoop” from a then popular
cartoon character, also has a U.S. Navy submarine,
a high school and wilderness area named after him.

For a brief time after his death,
the Seattle-Tacoma International
Airport was renamed after him, but
then even fear of economic loss
forced airport officials to change it
back.

A celebration of Henry “Scoop” Jackson at the University of Washington is slated to take place June 3.

JACKSON
(Continued from page 1)
the House of Representatives and
the Senate. He even made two
terms in the House dealing with
WWII.
Jackson strongly supported
the wartime removal and internment
of JAs, he opposed JAs in the Armed
Services and later resisted the
turn of JAs after the war, said Yang.

In 1943, Jackson and the Seattle
Chamber of Commerce expressed
interest in potentially using
Japanese internees as forced labor
to address the wartime shortage
in farm labor.
Later, a close friend of Sen.
Daniel Inouye, Jackson
came around and was part of a group who
supported the Senate bill for repara-
tions.
Jackson, a University of
Washington alumus, was also crit-
icized for his hawkish position on
the Vietnam War and Central
America in the Iran Contra Affair.
His Congressional career ended in
1983 when he died from an aortic
aneurysm, but his tarnished legacy
kept the overspent, but a gift from
the Jackson Foundation in 1964, in
the shadows of a fourth floor
two over for two decades.
In more recent years, Jackson’s
dao. For a brief time after his
death, the Seattle-Tacoma International
Airport was renamed after him, but
then even fear of economic loss
forced airport officials to change it
back.

A celebration of Henry “Scoop” Jackson at the University of Washington is slated to take place June 3.

If nothing is more important than protecting your family, JACL understands. That’s why JACL sponsors affordable insurance plans available exclusively to JACL members and their families. So no matter what your stage of life, JACL offers these plans to cover all your needs.

- Long Term Care Plan
- Customized Major Medical Insurance (available to non-California members)
- Comprehensive Major Medical Insurance Plan
- Short Term Medical Plan
- Term Life Insurance
- Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance
- Medicare Supplement Insurance Plans
- Group dental

For your FREE, no-obligation information kit (including costs, exclusions, limitations and terms of coverage) on any JACL-sponsored Insurance Plan,

CALL TOLL-FREE 1-800-503-9230 OR VISIT www.jaclinsurance.com

Administrated by MARSH
550 California Avenue, Suite 900
Palo Alto, CA 94304

3136416 546917 (04) 04
All plans may vary and may not be available to all states.

AG0254 316608

JACL HAS THE RIGHT PROTECTION PLAN FOR YOU

Nothing is more important than protecting your family. JACL understands. That’s why JACL sponsors affordable insurance plans available exclusively to JACL members and their families. So no matter what your stage of life, JACL offers these plans to cover all your needs.

- Long Term Care Plan
- Customized Major Medical Insurance (available to non-California members)
- Comprehensive Major Medical Insurance Plan
- Short Term Medical Plan
- Term Life Insurance
- Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance
- Medicare Supplement Insurance Plans
- Group dental

For your FREE, no-obligation information kit (including costs, exclusions, limitations and terms of coverage) on any JACL-sponsored Insurance Plan,

CALL TOLL-FREE 1-800-503-9230 OR VISIT www.jaclinsurance.com

Administrated by MARSH
550 California Avenue, Suite 900
Palo Alto, CA 94304

3136416 546917 (04) 04
All plans may vary and may not be available to all states.
The best thing about Wild Horse Pass is the Native American influence: Jay Feldman's "Suitcase Delphine Hirano's "Art of Gaman," Toshi Yo's "Endure," Cynthia Katohbash's "Weedflower," Kimberly and Rulgar Komatsu's "In America's Shade," and Joan Loversedge-Sanbonmatsu's "Imperial Valley Nisei Women: Traversing Phoenix." Several workshops related to the Southwest. The latest change may involve substituting Native Americans for a Western-style cooking class.

The youth Luncheon will be extra special as there will be twice as many people attending this year's Youth Luncheon and the youth are working extra hard to prepare a great event and have selected an excellent recipient for their annual Vision Award. Remember the theme for JACL 2006 is "Phoenix Rising: Leadership for a New Generation."

Awards Luncheon will be spectacular as everyone wants to know who will receive the George Inagaki Citizenship Award and JACLer of the Biennium Award. You will be dazzled by all the cool, free stuff you will receive at convention. This year's goodie bag will be one of the best ones ever! Also, Arizona chapter members have donated gifts for everyone attending the Youth Luncheon, Awards Luncheon and Sayonara Banquet. This in addition to the usual corporate gifts presented at these events.

The Welcome Mixer will surely be memorable with local Arizona authors who have written terrific books about the JA convention experience: Jeff Fieldman's "Suitcase Seisen and the American Dream," Delphine Hirano's "Art of Gaman," Toshi Yo's "Endure," Cynthia Katohbash's "Weedflower," Kimberly and Rulgar Komatsu's "In America's Shade," and Joan Loversedge-Sanbonmatsu's "Imperial Valley Nisei Women: Traversing Tornendo." Unique workshops related to the Southwest. The latest change may involve substituting Native Seeds with a Southwestern Style cooking class.

The youth Luncheon will be extra special as there will be twice

As many people attending this year's Youth Luncheon and the youth are working extra hard to prepare a great event and have selected an excellent recipient for their annual Vision Award. Remember the theme for JACL 2006 is "Phoenix Rising: Leadership for a New Generation.

7. The Arizona premiere of "Camp Dance." I shall smile to myself when I recall seeing "Camp Dance." In San Francisco last June. This is a truly wonderful musical that will be even more special since this live performance will be presented at Gilas, less than 15 miles from one of the ten internment camps was located.

6. The Awards Luncheon will be spectacular as everyone wants to know who will receive the George Inagaki Citizenship Award and JACLer of the Biennium Award. You will be dazzled by all the cool, free stuff you will receive at convention. This year's goodie bag will be one of the best ones ever! Also, Arizona chapter members have donated gifts for everyone attending the Youth Luncheon, Awards Luncheon and Sayonara Banquet. This in addition to the usual corporate gifts presented at these events.

5. You will be dazzled by all the cool, free stuff you will receive at convention. This year's goodie bag will be one of the best ones ever! Also, Arizona chapter members have donated gifts for everyone attending the Youth Luncheon, Awards Luncheon and Sayonara Banquet. This in addition to the usual corporate gifts presented at these events.

4. The Welcome Mixer will surely be memorable with local Arizona authors who have written terrific books about the JA convention experience: Jeff Fieldman's "Suitcase Seisen and the American Dream," Delphine Hirano's "Art of Gaman," Toshi Yo's "Endure," Cynthia Katohbash's "Weedflower," Kimberly and Rulgar Komatsu's "In America's Shade," and Joan Loversedge-Sanbonmatsu's "Imperial Valley Nisei Women: Traversing Tornendo." Unique workshops related to the Southwest. The latest change may involve substituting Native Seeds with a Southwestern Style cooking class.

3. Shopping at the silent auction prior to the Sayonara Banquet will be as fun as the JACL National Youth/Student Council is working hard to make this a special event.

2. So far, they have received some beautiful artwork, clothing, sports memorabilia, and baseball cards autographed by Jerry West and Steve Nash, a Brooks Robinson bat and much more.

1. Remember that all proceeds from this silent auction go directly to benefit JACL youth so make sure you take the time to check out the auction items the youth have collected. If you would like to contribute an item for this special auction, please contact a National Youth/Student Council member or your district governor to arrange delivery of the item to convention.

The Gila Monument will be a special visit as we have a chance to remember our past. We must understand that the Gila Monument is located on the reservation so it is not possible to go to this site unless one has a permit. Being out at the Gila Monument site with Ms Inouhi and Jim Kubota will be a priceless experience for everyone.

1. The Sayonara Banquet will be the highlight of convention as the Alabam Ballroom will be gorgeous, dinner will be excellent, the program will be special and we will all remember how we connected with old friends, made some great new friends and say farewell to one another until JACL 2008 in Utah, where my friend, Silvana Watanabe, will be one of the ten internment camps was located.

Honorable Harry Saada said it best in a recent email to me: "you will remember the Sayonara Banquet at JACL 2006 Convention! See you at convention!" Ted Namih is the chairperson of the 2006 national JACL convention in Phoenix. For Hershey Tax deductible contributions should be made out to "JAWK," and mailed to: Mario Shigemichi 12557 Allis St. Los Angeles, CA 90066

Ted Namba is the chairperson of the 2006 national JACL convention in Phoenix. For Hershey Tax deductible contributions should be made out to "JAWK," and mailed to: Mario Shigemichi 12557 Allis St. Los Angeles, CA 90066. This was recalled into active duty and sent to Korea as a machine gun squad leader in Company H, 7th Regiment of the 3rd Infantry Division.

Honorable Harry Saada said it best in a recent email to me: "you will remember the Sayonara Banquet at JACL 2006 Convention! See you at convention!" Ted Namih is the chairperson of the 2006 national JACL convention in Phoenix. For Hershey Tax deductible contributions should be made out to "JAWK," and mailed to: Mario Shigemichi 12557 Allis St. Los Angeles, CA 90066.
SB 2611 (Continued from page 1)

World War II have already made extreme sacrifices. They should not be forced to endure the further sacrifice of life without their loved ones,” said a joint senate report on 2010.

SB 2611 also includes money to better secure the borders, provides a new guest worker program and gives an eventual shot at citizenship for many of the estimated 11 million to 12 million immigrants in the country illegally—estimated 1.5 million are undocumented Asian immigrants.

More than 71 percent of Korean Americans are recent immigrants and 51 percent of them, according to the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC).

NakaseC called the bill "deeply flawed." 

"Congress cannot, with one hand, provide a shot at citizenship and, with the other hand, drive others further into the shadows. This is the moment to produce truly humane immigration legislation that does not force communities to choose between legalization for some and criminalization of others," said Fum Sook Lee, NAKASEC executive director.

Karen Narasaki of the Asian American justice center, who criticized provisions of SB 2611 that would undermine the immigration challenges facing America today by delivering in each of the three critical areas of reform: better border security, increased access in-language information, and visa reform. Without all three, reform is meaningless, because it will be incomplete and ineffective.

Some APIA groups say the legislation is not comprehensive enough. NAKASEC is calling for legislation that protects basic rights and due process for all.

This now moves into a conference committee with HR 4347, the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, which passed the U.S. House of Representatives Dec. 16.

YOSHINO (Continued from page 1)

Mr. Pleasant, South Carolina.

During WWII, we were justified that Kenji Tamaki and his Boy Scout troop from Atlanta visited Patriots Point in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.

Point to earn their citizenship and distinction between the actions of Japan and that one result of these characterizations is not tolerated and we public doesn't always make the distinction between the actions of Japan and the JA community.

"... the deeds of the Yorktown crew are not the legacy of others such as the JAs who fought bravely during WWII are ennobled by exhibits that reinforce racism."

Bill Yoshino

Oursmartest decision in organizing this meeting was to ask Sam Otsuki to join us in making the case to Burnette. A year Chicago high school principal, Sam served in the 442nd during WWII. He is a community treasure who frequently makes presentations about the internment in school classrooms and elsewhere.

Though he would downplay the value of the internment during the meeting, Sam's description of the exploits of his wartime buddies and the receive they served made all the difference. Sam wondered out loud whether his wartime service was worth it. He said that he is offended by the use of the word "Jap," that it isn't a term he fought to preserve, nor is it a term that would be approved of by his buddies who died. His remarks visibly moved Burnette.

Burnette conceded that the film is "horrible." In fact, he said that a member of his staff had raised concerns about the slurs. Burnette told us that they are in the process of producing another film about the Yorktown, because this may be the only way to convince the Yorktown Veterans Association that a change is needed. He thought that the flight simulator exercise using the Japanese warplanes had been discontinued even though we told him that it was used as recently as February. He said that he would check it out and let us know.

We underscored that the USS Yorktown should be displayed as a symbol of patriotism for the men who served her every accolade for their heroism. Our point, however, was that the deeds of the Yorktown crew are the legacy of others such as the JAs who fought bravely during WWII are ennobled by exhibits that reinforce racism.

Burnette displayed the sensitivity to understand that impressive volunteer youngsters should not be expected to do more. He also promised that we will remain in contact with him to reach this goal.

Bill Yoshino is the JAACL's MDC regional director.

On the Web: A complete back issues index is available at www.pacificcitizen.org

Kokusai Tours & Travel

Kokusai Tours and Travel 4415 Cowell, Suite 110, Concord, CA 94518 Tel. (925) 887-4959, Calif. Toll Free 1-800-886-2868

Kokusai Tours & Travel Presents:

Escorted Tours & Cruises for 2006

July 17 Japan - Highlights of Japan

Aug. 11 Treasures of the Rhine River - a river boat cruise through Germany

Sept 2 Tahiti Cruise on the "Paul Gauguin"

Sept 21 Japan - Hokkaido and Tohoku

Oct 5 New England - Fall Foliage

Oct 16 Treasures of the Rhine - a river boat cruise through Germany

Oct 28 Greek Isles Cruise on the Golden Princess

Nov 9 Japan - Shikoku and Kyushu

Nov 29 Australia - Sydney, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia

Dec 1 Egypt - Land of the Pharaohs (Including Nile River Cruise & Jordan)

Coming up in 2007:

Jan. 19 South Africa: Cape Town, Kruger Nat’l Park, Victoria Falls

Feb. 3 Cruise the Hawaiian Islands: Oahu, Maui, Kauai & Hawaii

Mar. 29 China - Shanghai and Hong Kong

Apr. China: Beijing, Xian, Shanghai plus Yangtze Cruise
SB5-519 Japan - Bikaku #2
May Charleston, SC & Savannah (a Tauck Tour)

6/13-6/20 Alaska Cruise on Regent Seven Seas Mariner

Kokusai Tours and Travel

Alaska Holiday Cruise NEW DATE/RATES AUG 27-SEP 2

Australia- New Zealand Holiday Tour NOV 1-18

Australasian Holiday Tour OCT 21-29

New Zealand Holiday Tour OCT 29-Nov 12

New Zealand Holiday Tour DEC 7-19

We can also assist you with:

Low-cost airline to Japan, Japan Individual Tour Packages, Japan Railpasses, Hotels, Cars, Cruises, Hawaiian arrangements, Individual Tour Packages, Organizations/Clubs/Family group tours and cruises.


Kokusai Tours & Travel 4415 Cowell, Suite 110, Concord, CA 94518 Tel. (925) 887-4959, Calif. Toll Free 1-800-886-2868

American Holiday Travel

2006 TOUR SCHEDULE

ALASKA HOLIDAY CRUISE NEW DATE/RATES AUG 27-SEP 3

Australasia- New Zealand Holiday Tour NOV 1-18

Australasian Holiday Tour OCT 21-29

New Zealand Holiday Tour OCT 29-Nov 12

New Zealand Holiday Tour DEC 7-19

We can also assist you with:

Low-cost airline to Japan, Japan Individual Tour Packages, Japan Railpasses, Hotels, Cars, Cruises, Hawaiian arrangements, Individual Tour Packages, Organizations/Clubs/Family group tours and cruises.

For information and reservations, please write or call to:

AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL

312 E. ST. #401, SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

Tel: (213) 625-2223, Fax: (213) 625-4347

Elegant tours, individual packages, group and cruise travel.

KOKUSAI-PACIFIC

2006 TOURS

July 3 Summer Japan Classic "Family Tour" - SOLD OUT

July 18 Glacier National Park & Rockies - 7 Day - 12 Meals - $1195

Aug. 16 Glacier, HAUSF, Lake Louise & Columbia forklifts - $1195

Aug. 13 Eastern Canada & Niagara Falls - 9 Day - 17 Meals - $1195 - 2 Days in Montreal - Quebec - Ottawa - Toronto + Niagara Falls

Aug. 30 Central & Eastern Europe - 12 Day - 26 Meals - $3995 - Prague - 7-Day Danube River Cruise - Nuremberg - Vienna - Salzburg - Budapest

Sept. 22 Hawaii for the Crus SOLD OUT

Oct. 9 Hokkaido/Tohoku "Fall Foliage" - 11 Day - 24 Meals - $3695


Oct. 16 Urashima "Otherside of Japan" - 11 Day - 25 Meals - $3595

Tokyo, Sado Island, Kannawa, Amatahoshihade, Kinokuni, Tatsumi, Mariko, Izumo, Daizen & Kyoto.

Oct. 29 Fall Classic "Family Tour" - 11 Day - 24 Meals - $3295

Tokyo, Kamakura, Tenjin, Koyasan, Miyajima, Hiroshima, Inland Sea Cruise. Shodo island & Kyoto.


"Early Bird savings - call for brochure"

INCLUDES - flights, hotels, sightseeing & most Meals.

KOKUSAI INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, INC. 4911 Warner Ave., Suite 221, Huntington Beach, CA 92649 714/490-8455 - FAX 714/490-8457 [1006444-10]
SPEED SKATING
Ohno ‘Taking a Break’ from Skating, Says He May Never Return

SEATTLE—Short track speed skating world and Olympic champion Apolo Anton Ohno said May 24 he may be done with competitive skating.

“No world championships. I’m taking a break,” Ohno said minutes before he threw out the ceremonial first pitch at a Seattle Mariners game.

Ohno was flanked on the mound by five fellow winter Olympians from Washington state.

“I’ve accomplished everything I wanted to in my sport. And it’s been great,” said Ohno, a Seattle native.

He said if he does return for this third Olympics, to be held in 2010 in nearby Vancouver, British Columbia, it may be as something other than a competitor.

“I’d like to go as a goodwill ambassador, to represent my country and my sport, to do something bigger than winning medals,” he said.

“To reach more people’s hearts, you know,” he said.

Ohno, who celebrated his 24th birthday recently with family in Seattle, said he has been living in Los Angeles since the end of the Turin Olympics in February. There, he won a gold medal in the 1,000 meters, and two bronze medals, in the 1,500 meters and on the 3,000-meter relay team. That gave him five medals in the last two Olympics.

He opted out of the recent short track world championships in Minneapolis.

His recent Southern California living is a contrast to the previous seven years Ohno spent living in the dorms of the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs.

A welcomed contrast, that is.

“I am living in L.A., exploring the entertainment industry. I love being on film,” he said.

“I have no acting skills — but I’ve never had training in acting either,” he said, laughing.

Ohno received the lowest ovation from the 21,991 in attendance at Safeco Field among the Olympians who took the field before the Mariners’ game against the Baltimore Orioles. He then threw a good pitch to Seattle’s Willie Bloomquist.

Ohno said it was his second time throwing out a ceremonial first pitch before a Mariners game, the other time being in 2003.

Bloomquist then joined Ohno, downhill skier Scott Macartney of Redmond, Iraq-born Christian Nicaem of Woodinville, women’s hockey player Kelly Stephens of Shoreline, speed skater Kristine Holzer from Gonzaga University in Spokane, and cross-country skier Sarah Konrad from the University of Washington on the mound for picture taking.

GOLF
Hew-On Han Beats Meena Lee in Four-hole Playoff at Corning

CORNING, N.Y.—Hew-On Han just shrugged and smiled.

“They times second place, that’s pretty good, but I don’t like that,” she said. “I wanted to win.”

After tying for second the previous two weeks on the LPGA Tour, Han finally won one May 28. She parred the fourth hole of a sudden-death playoff after Meena Lee made bogey and captured the Corning Classic.

It was Han’s first win of the year and fifth overall, and three have come in six playoffs. Lee, who finished second here for the second straight year, lost it when her second shot at the par-4 eighth hole bounded badly away from the green and she couldn’t recover.

“I never thought about winning. I just didn’t think of that at all,” said Lee, who gained the lead with birdies at 16 and 17 en route to a 6-under-par 66, then watched Han tie her with a pair of birdies on the final two holes of regulation. “I’m satisfied with how I played. It’s just that I think I made one big mistake.”

With Han safely on the green in two and starting at par, Lee played an aggressive chip onto the green that bounced twice and nearly hit the flag before rolling 18 feet past. When she missed the putt coming back, Han two-putted from 15 feet to win the fourth playoff in Corning’s 28-year history.

“I was pretty nervous out there,” said Han, who shot a career-low 62 here on the third round last year. “I really wanted to win something.”

The victory was worth $180,000, boosting Han to third place on this year’s money list at just over $700,000.

And it dealt Lee a critical setback. Because she won the Fields Open in February — in a playoff over rookie Seon Hwa Lee — Lee was exempt from qualifying for the U.S. Open in late June. But she did not submit her application prior to the deadline for one of the four majors on the schedule and now must win one of the next three tournaments to get in.

Lee declined to discuss the matter.

“Though Han and Lee are close friends — they practiced together last week and Lee considers Han her mentor — this remained strictly business because Han was aware of Lee’s plight.”

“I’m not that good of a person,” Han said with a smile, “really need a green.”

Both parred the first extra hole, No. 18, Han with a nice-up-and-down after her second shot landed in a greenside bunker.

After both parred No. 8, they went back to 18, and Han got a lucky break when her tee shot struck a tree on the right side of the fairway and caromed back onto the fairway.

Lee drove under the right trees but managed to save par.

“I just kept it positive,” Han said.

Lee, who self-destructed last year with a double-bogey 18 at 17 and lost to Ximena Gago, lost another when her tee shot split the middle of the fairway but instead of going left like the other two, came from six shots behind third-round leader Jeong Ju Kang and appeared to be a winner until Han rallied.

“I kind of figured that somebody might be coming after me,” Lee said.

Han, who started the round at 11 under, rolled in a putt from 12 feet that briefly seemed to stop at the lip before dropping softly into the hole to get to 14 under at 17. She then used driver on the tough par-4 18th hole, hit her second shot to 3 feet and made birdie for a 68 to force the playoff just moments after Lee had finished her 66.

“I got a little lucky,” Han said. “I just started the last two weeks to play pretty good.”

BASEBALL
Giants Call Up Ishikawa from Double-A Connecticut

SAN FRANCISCO—The San Francisco Giants called up infielder Travis Ishikawa from their Double-A team May 26 to add another infielder with first baseman Lance Niekro on the disabled list.

Ishikawa was in the starting lineup at first base and batting eighth for the May 26 series opener against the Colorado Rockies. He is expected to stick around until Niekro returns this week.
By ASSOCIATED PRESS

At 17, Heayeon Lee’s thoughts often wander to her impending high school graduation, trendy fashions and the latest object of her affection.

Lee also worries about her grades. At 17, Heayeon Lee’s thoughts often wander to her impending high school graduation, trendy fashions and the latest object of her affection.

Lee also worries about her grades.

"You’re Asian, how could you not know that?" Lee said a teacher once blurted out when she admitted not knowing the answer to a math problem. Lee, who also uses Michelle as her first name, said she is more fond of art than of numbers. She wants to be an art teacher someday.

Members of Tucson’s Asian community know that the "model minority" label doesn’t apply to everyone in their diverse population, and they work to dispel misconceptions through programs aimed at young people such as Lee.

In the Tucson Unified School District, which enrolls most of the city’s schoolchildren, 1,600 APA students, combined, speak more than 20 languages. Among these languages are Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Filipino.

Although APAs make up just 2.7 percent of Tucson Unified School District’s more than 60,000 students, their needs are no less serious, said Maria Hooker, director of the Pan Asian Studies Department. "There are a lot of students who succeed, but there are a lot of students who have trouble making it."

Hooker’s department acts as an advocate for students and works with community groups to tackle some of the obstacles that keep the youngsters from thriving. Most of the hurdles are related to family language and culture, Hooker noted.

Some APA children, including some who were born and raised here, have a difficult time in school because they speak an Asian language at home and their English vocabulary is limited, she said.

And students who struggle academically can’t count on parental help with homework and other school-related matters, because their school system is foreign to the adults.

Many Asian immigrants stay away from schools because they see their involvement as interfering with teachers, said Hooker, who is Korean American.

Hooker often explains to parents that here they are expected to get involved in their children’s education. But not all can, said, particularity recent immigrants who must hold two jobs to survive.

As Hooker and others work to change cultural perceptions, APA youths who need a little extra help get it from the Pan Asian Community Alliance of Tucson.

The group operates a center where students of all ages get homework help after school.

Lee, who moved from South Korea to this country seven years ago, is among the students who stop in frequently. The teen said she tries not to be bothered by the misperceptions that many have of her community. "I just laugh it off," she said.

The oldest of three children, Lee faces all the youthful angst of most people her age. And being an immigrant child who learned English as a second language has posed other challenges as well.

Dorothy Lew, the alliance’s executive director, said that as the American-born child of Chinese immigrants, she can identify with the struggles of Lee and the other youths she has met over the years.

Lee recalled that as a young student, like many of the Asian youths who visit the center, she lacked a rich English vocabulary because she always spoke Chinese with her parents and grandparents. And she still remembers the parental pressure that pushed her to work hard in school.

"My family used to say, ‘If you fail, you will embarrass yourself and you will embarrass your family.'" Lew said.

APA Youths Cope with Studies — and a Model Minority Myth

The Rincon High School senior is often woken up before daybreak to help with homework and other school-related matters, because her school system is foreign to the adults.

"Often I wake up before daybreak and I’m still learning how to do some of this stuff at home."

Lee’s major subjects are literature and English, and she is considering a theater arts major in college. Lee is applying to colleges and has taken several advanced placement classes. But Lee still worries about her grades before.

"I want to do well. I want to do well in school."

Lee also worries about her grades. At 17, Heayeon Lee’s thoughts often wander to her impending high school graduation, trendy fashions and the latest object of her affection.

Lee also worries about her grades.

"You’re Asian, how could you not know that?" Lee said a teacher once blurted out when she admitted not knowing the answer to a math problem. Lee, who also uses Michelle as her first name, said she is more fond of art than of numbers. She wants to be an art teacher someday.

Members of Tucson’s Asian community know that the "model minority" label doesn’t apply to everyone in their diverse population, and they work to dispel misconceptions through programs aimed at young people such as Lee.

In the Tucson Unified School District, which enrolls most of the city’s schoolchildren, 1,600 APA students, combined, speak more than 20 languages. Among these languages are Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Filipino.

Although APAs make up just 2.7 percent of Tucson Unified School District’s more than 60,000 students, their needs are no less serious, said Maria Hooker, director of the Pan Asian Studies Department. "There are a lot of students who succeed, but there are a lot of students who have trouble making it."

Hooker’s department acts as an advocate for students and works with community groups to tackle some of the obstacles that keep the youngsters from thriving. Most of the hurdles are related to family language and culture, Hooker noted.

Some APA children, including some who were born and raised here, have a difficult time in school because they speak an Asian language at home and their English vocabulary is limited, she said.

And students who struggle academically can’t count on parental help with homework and other school-related matters, because their school system is foreign to the adults.

Many Asian immigrants stay away from schools because they see their involvement as interfering with teachers, said Hooker, who is Korean American.

Hooker often explains to parents that here they are expected to get involved in their children’s education. But not all can, said, particularity recent immigrants who must hold two jobs to survive.

As Hooker and others work to change cultural perceptions, APA youths who need a little extra help get it from the Pan Asian Community Alliance of Tucson.

The group operates a center where students of all ages get homework help after school.

Lee, who moved from South Korea to this country seven years ago, is among the students who stop in frequently. The teen said she tries not to be bothered by the misperceptions that many have of her community. "I just laugh it off," she said.

The oldest of three children, Lee faces all the youthful angst of most people her age. And being an immigrant child who learned English as a second language has posed other challenges as well.

Dorothy Lew, the alliance’s executive director, said that as the American-born child of Chinese immigrants, she can identify with the struggles of Lee and the other youths she has met over the years.

Lee recalled that as a young student, like many of the Asian youths who visit the center, she lacked a rich English vocabulary because she always spoke Chinese with her parents and grandparents. And she still remembers the parental pressure that pushed her to work hard in school.

"My family used to say, ‘If you fail, you will embarrass yourself and you will embarrass your family.'" Lew said.

Gay or Asian? All of the Above

I know a Filipina lesbian my age who invites her long-term girlfriend to family events, where her extended family openly jokes about sexually transmitted diseases and the logistics of lesbian sex. Unfortunately, attitudes like this are more the exception than the rule. As Asian American movies, literature and personal anecdotes have taught us, homosexuality and Asian parents usually do not mix very well.

In my A’s literature class, we read a good deal of short stories about unhappy, repressed Asian families who are bad at expressing affection for each other. As my professor rhetorically asked several times during lectures, "Why is it that relationships between Asian fathers and sons are always so problematic?"

Add homosexuality to the relationship and you have a whole new can of worms to deal with.

For some reason or another, I’ve come to befriended a lot of Asian male friends. While I clearly suck at having any meaningful romantic connections with hetero men, I seem to be really good at forming long-lasting friendships with gay Asian males. As horribly cliché as it sounds, these boys are my confidants for stupid boy talk, great shopping advice and late night boba runs. I would venture to say that life without them would be a little less fabulous.

Add homosexuality to the relationship and you have a whole new can of worms to deal with.

For some reason or another, I’ve come to befriended a lot of Asian male friends. While I clearly suck at having any meaningful romantic connections with heterosexual men, I seem to be really good at forming long-lasting friendships with gay Asian males. As horribly cliché as it sounds, these boys are my confidants for stupid boy talk, great shopping advice and late night boba runs. I would venture to say that life without them would be a little less fabulous.

Add homosexuality to the relationship and you have a whole new can of worms to deal with.

For some reason or another, I’ve come to befriended a lot of Asian male friends. While I clearly suck at having any meaningful romantic connections with heterosexual men, I seem to be really good at forming long-lasting friendships with gay Asian males. As horribly cliché as it sounds, these boys are my confidants for stupid boy talk, great shopping advice and late night boba runs. I would venture to say that life without them would be a little less fabulous.

Add homosexuality to the relationship and you have a whole new can of worms to deal with.

For some reason or another, I’ve come to befriended a lot of Asian male friends. While I clearly suck at having any meaningful romantic connections with heterosexual men, I seem to be really good at forming long-lasting friendships with gay Asian males. As horribly cliché as it sounds, these boys are my confidants for stupid boy talk, great shopping advice and late night boba runs. I would venture to say that life without them would be a little less fabulous.

Add homosexuality to the relationship and you have a whole new can of worms to deal with.

For some reason or another, I’ve come to befriended a lot of Asian male friends. While I clearly suck at having any meaningful romantic connections with heterosexual men, I seem to be really good at forming long-lasting friendships with gay Asian males. As horribly cliché as it sounds, these boys are my confidants for stupid boy talk, great shopping advice and late night boba runs. I would venture to say that life without them would be a little less fabulous.

Add homosexuality to the relationship and you have a whole new can of worms to deal with.

For some reason or another, I’ve come to befriended a lot of Asian male friends. While I clearly suck at having any meaningful romantic connections with heterosexual men, I seem to be really good at forming long-lasting friendships with gay Asian males. As horribly cliché as it sounds, these boys are my confidants for stupid boy talk, great shopping advice and late night boba runs. I would venture to say that life without them would be a little less fabulous.
With ‘Americanese,’ One Step Back, Two Steps Forward for APA Film

By STEWART DAVID IKEDA
Special to the Pac

Much has been made about a recent upwelling of almost-breakthrough indie films by or about Asian Americans, receiving ever-increasing general notice and fair distribution to find their way onto our local Blockbuster shelves.

Now, kicking off almost the flurry of spring AA film events after its triumphant debut at a leading industry festival, the newest film by Eric Byler may be poised to propel APA film several steps forward into the ever-multicultural mainstream of U.S. film.

For its world premiere at Austin’s famed South by Southwest (after Sundance, SXSW is the major, indie multimedia smorgasbord), Byler’s “Americanese” hit the ground running, capturing both the audience award for narrative film and the grand jury prize for outstanding ensemble cast.

This dual recognition at a non-festival ethics speaks volumes about what may be in store for “Americanese,” as well as its strengths. The strong, mostly non-Asian cast is adopted (somewhat awkwardly, with the author’s blessing) from Shawn Wong’s novel, “American Knees,” which had enjoyed some literary crossover success itself. The ensemble cast led by Chris Tashima is nothing short of stellar.

Tashima plays Raymond, a handsome, successful but brooding ethnic studies professor wrestling with a mid-life crisis and trapped at the center of a steamy, tormented love triangle. Joan Chen, as the haunted Betty, is a standout.

The ensemble’s jury prize is notable not only given the packed competition, but for decades now one of Hollywood’s main rationales why AA films have been kept from breaking through has been a supposed dearth of acting talent, and a presumption that general audiences couldn’t identify with them.

The film’s popularity is also a triumph for Byler, whose first film, “Charlotte Sometimes,” was a rich and skilled but quiet art house film. “Americanese” features an exploration of same-similar thematic and tonal ground to that debut film, but augmented. Focusing again on a tormented love triangle including a Hapa love interest, it makes that interrogation of Hapa/APA schisms in our community explicit.

AUTHENTIC ENOUGH FOR YOU

At the same time, its pedigree — its authenticity (a dubious criterion as that is) — is unassailable. Based on a contemporary classic of AA fiction, “Americanese” may in fact be the most “authentic” and authoritative representation of “APA consciousness” ever to be filmed in a feature.

Raymond’s role as an AA studies professor, the professional situations, the settings, and the thorough multiculturally backwards reflects the reality and social flavor of the “new California” and its “American Asian cities” better than any film I can recall seeing.

Not to put too fine a point on it (because it’s far from the film’s most impressive achievement), but on the new APA studies professor as the hand­some, romantic lead who “gets, loses, and gets the girl.” Rather than slow the dramatic action with pédiatric dialogue, the film’s smallest references and details of mis­conception represent volumes about the history and diversity of “the community.” There’s a plausible “Where’s Waldo?” aspect, in picking up on little background references and objects, canonical and contemporary — No-So-No and Making Waves here, posters and jewelry and Secret Asian Man comics here.

ONE STEP BACK

One of the most refreshing things about “Americanese” is that it’s about and features AA grown-up. It portrays and stars APAs who are in that middle distance — neither the ultra-bip (hep), young, annoyingly gorgeous, fashionista tweens through 20-somethings targeted by MTV, nor the crusty old FOBs of more old-school, historical “grandpa and the railroad plantation, concentration camp, laundry” stories.

Rather, the film takes a step back to reflect a bit on the roots of Asian America. And like some of the film’s younger characters, many AAs today take for granted the political history, not to mention things like now commonplace ethnic studies classes. This “generation gap,” along with the “(Hapa gap),” play out radically in the world of the film, as they do in our everyday lives.

TWO FILMS, TWO MARKETS

“Americanese” as Byler insists, “first and foremost a romance,” and one fought with real tension and problems, just like ours — whoever we are and whomever we love. As such, it nudges APA film another step beyond simplistic ethnic representation and race identity explorations that our young filmmakers have long considered a burden on creativity and teaching wider, general audiences like those at SXSW.

It’s an interesting side-note that although the SXSW success and the upcoming APA festivals will keep him hopping with “Americanese,” Byler is in fact touring simultaneously with two films. What was supposed to be his second feature, “TRE,” was half-finished when financing came through for American Knees and “TRE” was temporarily put on the backburner.

Maybe, maybe not, “Americanese” will attain that most elusive of AA’s artistic and social aspirations: to break through with a great story, deep drama and populate a world of lead characters, round and real, who just happen to be AA.

Who happen to be, in short, normal.

On the Web:
www.americanesethemovie.com
Stewart Byler is the author of What the Scarecrow Said and vice president of IMDiversity, Inc.
Start Saving Now!

Members have full access to a complete line of mortgage loan programs with exceptional rates. Let us help you save money and build equity through homeownership.

Need to consolidate your debt?
Remodeling?
Seeking to refinance?
Need some cash?
Want a new house?

Gordon Yamagata
National JACL CU
Mortgage Consultant

800-288-2017
M-F 8:30AM - 5:30PM

Loans may be processed in AZ, CA, OR, NM and UT. Void elsewhere. Omni Funding Services is a DBA of Omni Funding Group, Inc. 415/921-5007, in AZ as #0905547, in OR as license: 3866878-2194, ext. 2710 or www.objp.com/njui.

Gordon Yamagata
National JACL CU
Mortgage Consultant

800-288-2017
M-F 8:30AM - 5:30PM

Loans may be processed in AZ, CA, OR, NM and UT. Void elsewhere. Omni Funding Services is a DBA of Omni Funding Group, Inc. 415/921-5007, in AZ as #0905547, in OR as license: 3866878-2194, ext. 2710 or www.objp.com/njui.

Gordon Yamagata
National JACL CU
Mortgage Consultant

800-288-2017
M-F 8:30AM - 5:30PM

Loans may be processed in AZ, CA, OR, NM and UT. Void elsewhere. Omni Funding Services is a DBA of Omni Funding Group, Inc. 415/921-5007, in AZ as #0905547, in OR as license: 3866878-2194, ext. 2710 or www.objp.com/njui.

Gordon Yamagata
National JACL CU
Mortgage Consultant

800-288-2017
M-F 8:30AM - 5:30PM

Loans may be processed in AZ, CA, OR, NM and UT. Void elsewhere. Omni Funding Services is a DBA of Omni Funding Group, Inc. 415/921-5007, in AZ as #0905547, in OR as license: 3866878-2194, ext. 2710 or www.objp.com/njui.
Mirror every day, sadly they'll have no such luck.

Since the American Girl company introduced their historical doll collection, a collection that purports to tell the history of America through its dolls, an African American doll, Mexican American doll, and a Native American doll have been added to the 10 doll collection. Now some AA parents and activists are asking: isn't it about time that an AA doll was added?

"Most Americans are unaware that Asian Pacific Americans have been in what is now the United States since the 1500s. Had American Girl done their homework, they would have learned how justified it is to produce an APA doll," said Christina Pu, a Sacramento activist and pediatrician who is part of a group of AAs pressuring American Girl to add an AA doll to the collection.

Sumia Williams, a Vietnamese adoptee currently living in North Carolina, like many mothers heard the calls to buy an American Girl doll from her then 10-year-old daughter. She logged onto the company's Web site but noticed the glaring lack of an AA doll, and decided not to let her daughter have an American Girl. She's still glad she didn't give in.

"I also wasn't about to be sucked in by an 'American Doll' that so poorly represented part of my heritage," said Williams whose daughter is half Vietnamese and half Lebanese. "Though she doesn't understand now, I would hope that she later becomes more aware and concerned for Asian American issues. Buying American Girl dolls as they are now teaches her nothing about her empowerment as a consumer, as an Asian American or as a woman but to accept what the market has to offer."

So far American Girl's historical collection features ten 18-inch fictional heroes that portray significant moments in America's past, events that helped shape the United States and brings history to millions of children. The collection includes: Addy, an African American slave from the Civil War era, added in 1993; Josefina, a Mexican American doll from the 1800s, introduced in 1997; and in 2002 Kaya appeared, an American Indian doll from 1764.

So where are the AAs? "Having a line of historical character dolls, with their own backstories ... leads to seeing the dolls ... as archetypical at best and stereotypical at worst," said Jason Sperber, of Bakersfield, Calif. who is the father of a multiracial AA daughter. "So, when the question of adding an Asian American doll to the line arises, one part of me says, of course! We all want representation, and I'm the father of a young Asian American daughter. But I worry, will a corporate entity like a toy company think that one is enough, that one experience is representative, that they don't have to do more, have more?"

So far there are no plans in the works to add an AA doll, said Stephanie Spanos, spokesperson for American Girl.

"We literally get hundreds of requests each year to add dolls to our collection. An Asian doll is just one of many requests," she said, adding that any new doll can take two to three years to develop. The current top requested doll is a Jewish boy doll. "We look at those requests and appreciate the enthusiasm but as of now we can't promise anything,"

American Girl, a company founded in 1985 and currently owned by Mattel, Inc., is one of the most popular doll companies in the United States. In addition to their contemporary doll collections and accessories, the company produces books and the American Girl magazine. Last year the company sold 11 million dolls.

Although there are no current plans to add an AA doll, Spanos noted that in their contemporary doll collection, there is a biracial doll named "Jess" who is half Japanese American and half Irish American. "Jess" was selected as this year's "American Girl of the Year" and was featured recently on the cover of the American Girl magazine.

"Jess is very popular. She's a reflection of what's going on in the country," said Spanos.

And in response to the numerous requests to add new dolls that come in each year, the American Girl Company also introduced a "Just Like You" doll line, she said, where girls can select from 23 different combinations of skin, hair, and eye choices to make their own customized dolls.

But having a biracial doll does not change the need for an AA doll, say activists and parents.

"While I feel Hapa (my daughter being one) are an important and legitimate part of the Asian American community, it still poorly represents its diversity," said Williams.

"I noticed that the Jess doll was made the doll of the year. In the back of my mind, I wonder if that wasn't a weak attempt to appease the Asian American community. Is it possible that they heard some of the complaints? Surely, they can do better than that," she added.

"Of course, a part of me is like, yes! A Hapa doll!" said Sperber but added, "I wonder why her mixed-race background didn't figure more. And as far as the actual look of the doll ... I wouldn't have known the doll was Hapa."

"As far as 'should we embrace the doll goes - it's still a corporate commercial product. Shouldn't the question be, why should we want one? Do we need validation from a giant corporation that is only interested in figuring out how to get our market share?"

In addition to the criticisms from the AA community, in 2005 the Mexican American community vocally protested a Mexican American doll in the contemporary collection that they believed included demeaning references to the neighborhood she is from.

And so far AA parents and activists say American Girl has not responded appropriately to their requests and will continue to demand that an AA doll be added to the historical collection.

"American Girl's response remains superficial and insensitiv," said Fa. "They call themselves a different kind of doll company, but are just like the others when it comes to racism."

"I think there should definitely be not only an Asian doll, but a Hapa, Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean and Chinese dolls. Why should we settle for 'generic Asian' when specific ethnicity's have made contributions to American history?" said Williams. "The lack of recognition is an insult to Asian immigrants who helped to build America into what it is today."