A group of multiracial boys torn apart by war lead extraordinary lives dappled with tragedy and mystery.

By LYUNDA LIN
Assistant Editor

On any given day patrons of the Sun Cafe in San Diego's historic Fourth Avenue during the 1930s and 1940s could explore their city's vibrant community before World War II, comprising of boys with last names like Shizumura, Factor and a boy named Pancho whose last name no one can recall.

This wasn't the type of gang we think of in modern times but a bunch of neighborhood kids up to no good. Back then, teenagers could explore their city's boundaries without fear of predators or danger and the boys would go joyriding on the banks of the Los Angeles River and hitch rides on freight trains. See MOE GANG/Page 4

Beyond 'The Big Three' Japantowns

Today's J-towns may consist of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Jose but the 'Preserving California's Japantowns' project is uncovering 43 other J-towns that once existed across the state. By CAROLINE AOYAGI-STOM Executive Editor

On any given day patrons of the Sun Cafe in San Diego's historic Gaslamp District dig into their dishes of scrambled eggs and sausage and the occasional chow mein. Although the menu may have changed, Yuki Kawamoto, 80, can still remember the same Sun Cafe from the 1920s and 1930s when it was a part of a bustling San Diego Japantown.

The Sun Cafe was owned by the Obayashi family back then and it sat beside several other Japanese businesses — names like Nippon Shokai, Kawasaki Grocery Store, Miyako Restaurant, Kondo pool hall and Mamiya barbershop — that once lined the area around 5th Avenue and Market Street, but are all gone today.

The Kawamoto family ran and also lived in the Empire Hotel on Fourth Avenue during the 1930s and Yuki fondly recalls the once bustling Japantown where he and his four siblings grew up. Although some of the historic buildings like the Sun Cafe still stand amongst blocks of restaurants, night clubs, and clothing stores, most tourists and residents are unfamiliar with the area's Japanese American history.

Today, Yuki gives walking tours of the former J-Town area so its history won't be forgotten.

"Japantown was a thriving and vibrant community before World War II, encompassing many Japanese owned businesses," said Kawamoto. "I think it's important to preserve this part of San Diego history because it is part of our history and to know why it existed."

"We hope someday that we can ask the city council to put up flags or something designating that area as Old Japan Town or something to let visitors know that we were there once until World War II," said Mich Himaka, 74, whose family once operated the Himaka toy shop.

San Diego is one of 43 lesser known California Japantowns that organizers of the 'Preserving Japantowns' project are determined to document and preserve. Sponsored by the California Japanese American Community Leadership Council and funded by Asian Pacific American groups have filed amicus briefs in the United States Supreme Court to support two school districts' voluntary racial integration policies. The briefs filed Oct. 10 by the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) and over a dozen APA youth advocates contest that two districts in Kentucky and Seattle proactively 'combat residential segregation by using race and other factors to determine where students should go to school."

The case --- Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education, et al., and Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1 --- are scheduled to go before the Supreme Court Dec. 4. A ruling could determine what schools can and cannot do to promote diversity.

Groups Mobilize to Protect Schools' Voluntary Desegregation Policies

APAs file amicus briefs in support of two school districts' policies for achieving racial balance.

At risk is the future of diversity in schools, the schools' proponents say.

By LYUNDA LIN
Assistant Editor

Watasid Tour in Support of Their Son

1st Lt. Ehren Watada could face a possible court martial in January for his decision to refuse deployment to Iraq.

By CAROLINE AOYAGI-STOM Executive Editor

Bob Watada can still remember the phone call that would change his son Ehren's life forever. In one breathless moment Ehren, 28, a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army, announced to his father his life-altering decision to refuse deployment to Iraq because he believes the war is illegal and immoral.

"The moment he made his decision, it was like the weight of the world..."
SCHOOLS
(Continued from page 1)

in K-12 education. 

Since 1997, students in the Seattle Public School District could apply to attend school of their choice. Ballard High School is one of several schools in the district that uses race as one of the factors to determine school assignment and to achieve racial balance. Ballard, which is located in the more affluent northern part of the city, is the first choice for many parents and students, so the district relies on a series of fetters — first giving preference to students with siblings already attending the requested school, then second, looking at race. Now the state's highest court ruled that the district's student assignment policy does not violate equal protection rights, but parents of mostly Caucasian students in predominantly white neighborhoods are not satisfied. The Hamshiro’s are one of the few ethnic families in their predominantly white neighborhood. "We do not think all students are segregated by socio-economic status rather than race, as are public schools. If a student of color is excluded from a higher achieving school because of where she lives, then perhaps race should be used so that she has the same opportunities that wealthier students have," said Hamshiro. 49. "I'm sure that the parents who filed this lawsuit have their own students in mind, who think about the impact of the law on all parents. It does sadden me, though, that our public schools are not equal, that we have numbers of schools that people perceive as being better than others," she added.

Similarly the Jefferson County Public School District came under fire for their enrollment plans. To ensure schools didn’t have an overwhelming African American or Caucasian population, the voluntary integration plan directs the African American population at any school to be between 15-50 percent. These cases have already ignited debate within the APA community over race and public education. "These schools have chosen to take a proactive step in creating an integrated educational environment. Asian American students, just as all students, map the benefit of an integrated education and become better prepared to enter an increasingly diverse society," said Aimee Baldillo, AACJN’s director of programs in a statement.

Proposal of the schools’ integration plans say this isn’t just a black and white issue.

At right Phailo Poch (foreground) graduates from a GED program in Rhode Island. Program integrates language measurement by Seattle’s Ballard High School (above) promote diversity.

"We’re still contending with the model minority myth," said Kohri caru, director of the Providence Youth Student Movement in Rhode Island (PYSYM), a youth organizing and community support group for young Southeast Asians. The non-profit organization continually fights for funding that they usually go to aid other underserved ethnic groups, but every year, PYSYM struggles to guide young APAs toward the poverty line.

"Over half of our youth drop out of high school," said Ishihara. If the Supreme Court ruling changes policies of governmental diversity, APAs would be directly affected. "It’s not going to affect those who are doing well. The main threat is the underserved Asian Americans," said Ishihara.

"To be frank, we felt like we needed to share this idea that Asians, as a category, are hurt by policies that address racial inequality," said Helen Gym of Philadelphia’s "Asian Americans United (AAU), another amiuk group. "Claims that Asians benefit from the de-segregation of schools are in direct conflict with our experience in working with Asian children, and families."

In 2005, AAU founded the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School, which serves a large and diverse population including many immigrant children and families who call Philadelphia their home. "Philadelphia which is composed of neighborhoods long segregated by race have, a school system which reflects its neighborhoods. In our experience, we’ve found that segregated environments are often not welcoming, or, in some cases, safe environments for our youth. On the other hand, in systems where cultural and racial diversity is not just ‘tolerated’ but enforced, Asian American students benefit, just as all students do," said Gym.

Many organizations are planning a march on Washington, D.C. Dec. 4, when oral arguments are scheduled to be heard.

Letters to the Editor

Don Quixote

Ehren Watada reminds me of Don Quixote de la Mancha, a misguided duelist tilting at windmills. Bob Watada, brings to mind Sancho Panza, his loyal squire. Ehren made the mistake of voluntarily joining the Army before he studied the ongoing controversy about the Iraq war. So he sought to correct his error by disobeying orders to go to war with the Army unit that he had trained with and led. He deserted them and left them leaderless. This clearly constituted conduct unbecoming an officer, and demonstrated contempt for authority.

No amount of labeling as unethical or illegal the Iraq war in Japanese americans justify his desertion. That is a clear dismissal of his oath to uphold his military duties.

Contrary to his orders, Ehren refused to serve in Iraq but said he was willing to do anything else instead. I wonder what makes him think he’s so special. Maybe he just needs to grow up. It seems that he doesn’t realize or care that if he was so privileged then all soldiers might have to be allowed to serve wherever they wish, regardless of the Army’s needs. And create administrative nightmares. Imagine the chaos!

Incidentally, I disagree with the 121st Evacuation Hospital Unit in Korea. When I went in it was with reluctance but I had accepted the arguments supporting the war. What a load of crap. By the time I got honorably discharged I was pretty bitter. I joined all the demonstrations against the war without.

Well the Iraq war is clearly shaping up into a war that we also should not have gotten into. Our command personal or is this case being used as a vehicle to express a position on the war in Iraq?

If JACL members would like to support a position on the war in Iraq, I suggest they redirect their activities to getting out the vote in November. We live in a democracy and we have the freedom to elect our leaders.

With Tamsa Rehki

San Diego, CA

Vietnam Vet Stands With Ehren Watada

I have been already reading the various comments about 1st Lt. Ehren Watada. I can hardly stand it anymore. Most of the people I know seem to shun their shoulders and do not consider it their problem. Some are sympathetic but feel “shoogman.” Then there are those who are very occasionist, with the 121st Evac Hospital Unit in Ohio, which was ordered to drop out of Iraq because he wanted the war to continue. Is Lt Watada’s case about defining the rights of military
Topaz Accepted for Historical Landmark Designation

The Landmarks Committee of the National Park Service approved the Topaz internment camp site in Utah for designation as a national historic landmark on Oct. 10.

After hearing testimony from former internees and other representatives of the Japanese American community at its committee meeting in the nation's capital, Ronald James, a member of the committee, spoke about the archeological remains of Topaz being reminiscent of a battlefield—field because of the historical significance of the camp site during war time. The motion passed unanimously.

Kara Miyagishima of the Park Service Regional Office in Denver made a presentation about Topaz and championed the designation of Topaz as part of the Park Service landmarks.

New APA Curriculum Guide is Slated for Release

JACL worked for nearly three years to develop a curriculum about APA history. The next step is a 'bottom-up grassroots effort and a top-down political campaign' to get the guide into schools.

By Pacific Citizen Staff

JACL will release an Asian Pacific American curriculum guide this month with a goal to implement the lessons in classes with growing APA populations.

"The Journey from Gold Mountain: The Asian American Experience," a 92-page curriculum resource guide that covers APA history from the initial waves of immigration to the impact of today's political empowerment, is slated for national distribution Oct. 27. Approximately 2,000 copies will go to JACL chapters, teachers, curriculum specialists and educators.

The JACL has worked on this project for two and one-half years with grant money from State Farm in order to include APA history lessons at the high school and college levels.

"It felt it's important that we provide this kind of information to educators, so we've been developing this guide so that teachers can include these lessons to students in lessons on multiculturalism and diversity," said JACL Executive Director John Magpantay.

"This is the JACL's second curriculum guide. "The Japanese American Experience: A Lesson in American History" was released in the early 1990s and focused on JA history. This new guide casts a wider net from past to present.

A supplemental DVD by filmmaker Dianne Fukami, which will include personal stories and historic accounts of APA immigration, is also currently in the works.

"We wanted to make the guide as current as possible. Thus, we thought it would be critical to add the dimension of the post-Sept. 11th impact because this event has had a significant repercussion for Asian Americans, and to help them understand that not being white should never be a determination of who or what an American is," said Bill Yoshano, APA guide program director and JACL Midwest regional director.

"W hen Sept. 1 1th is discussed in class, we hope to start a more positive discussion on racial stereotypes and an elementary level lesson on diversity in Asian America were developed by teachers.

"This has to be both a bottom-up grassroots effort and a top-down political campaign. We'll need our chapters involved if this has any chance at all, and we need the guides in the hands of teachers because they can help push this from the local levels to their respective state political bodies," said Tateishi.

"My goal with this entire project has always been to reach students at an early age to teach them about the diversity of Asian Americans, and to help them understand that not being white should never be a determination of who or what an American is. The ultimate lesson, of course is tolerance and diversity, and knowing the values of that diversity help to make a better nation and certainly a stronger and better democracy," he added.

APA Groups Announce Election Protection

Groups will monitor voter discrimination at the polls.

By Pacific Citizen Staff

For the upcoming November elections, the following APA groups are stepping up protection and monitoring plans at the polls for APA voters.

Groups are becoming a large part of the electorate in key Southern California areas, according to a new study by the Asian Pacific American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AAALDEF). But APA voters continue to face barriers at the polls and groups are responding to a need for more assistance of the Hmong fighters' responsibilities, Yang Vang, said, along with high-end attacks on the North Vietnamese army, scouting, and protecting U.S. radar stations and other installations.

The organization, which was founded as a 'bot­tom-up grassroots effort and a top-down political campaign' to get the guide into schools.

The APACs will monitor voter discrimination at the polls. The protection will extend to the federal Help America Vote Act, to ensure that all eligible Asian American voters are able to participate in the electoral process in November without interference," said Margaret Fung, executive director of the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AAALDEF).

Under its Election Protection 2006 plan, more than 500 atomic, law, students, and volunteers will cover 150 poll sites in eight states where Asian language assistance is provided, where APA voters registration has increased, or where APA voters historically have experienced discrimination.

"With the dramatic increase in new citizens and first-time voters, as well as the introduction of new voting machines under the federal Help America Vote Act, we want to ensure that all eligible Asian American voters are able to participate in the electoral process in November without interference," said Margaret Fung, executive director of the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AAALDEF).

"In recent elections, voter identification requirements at polling sites and what voters need to vote included the number of voters, which numbered nearly half (46 percent) used something other than a driver's license to vote.

To report Election Day problems, call AAALDEF's Election Day Hotline toll-free at 800/965-3948 or e-mail at votingcomplaints@ aaaldef.org.

School classes, it will be noteworthy for students to know that Japanese Americans went through an experience some 60 years ago that parallels the trials of Arab Americans and Muslims today," Yoshano added.

In addition to a compre­hensive summary of each major ethnic group's expe­rience, the APA guide includes a directory of prominent APAs from politicians to fashion designers and even professional wrestlers, such as "The Rock" Johnson.

It has to be both a bottom-up grassroots effort and a top-down political campaign. We'll need our chapters involved if this has any chance at all, and we need the guides in the hands of teachers because they can help push this from the local levels to their respective state political bodies," said Tateishi. "My goal with this entire project has always been to reach students at an early age to teach them about the diversity of Asian Americans, and to help them understand that not being white should never be a determination of who or what an American is. The ultimate lesson, of course is tolerance and diversity, and knowing the values of that diversity help to make a better nation and certainly a stronger and better democracy," he added.

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MOE GANG
(Continued from page 1)

'Ve did good and bad things, mostly bad. We had a close-knit friendship.'

— Norman Shizumura, 81, original Moe Gang member

Guy, young and visibly moved, is flanked by Lane and Lyle, who both look dashing dressed in matching dark suits. Up to that point, they had not seen each other in 11 years and the last Guy had related, all the parts of the Moe Gang was reunited. "This is the most," said Guy, his voice choked with emotions.

The Nakano brothers told stories about their childhood antics - jumping out of second story windows on a dare and teaching Guy Japanese words like "origami." "Beginning from the time that Guy was about 11, he divided his time between spending his life with his family and ours," said Lane to host Edward Watts. "But one thing, Guy always stayed by his friends," said Lyle.

This moment, frozen in time, would make the larger picture seem all the more tragic. Guy last saw Lyle in 1976 when he owned a popular Hollywood nightclub called the Imperial Garden. Friends remembered Lyle as a generous host, but when he sold the business something changed. Lyle committed suicide. "It's a matter of seasons remaining shrouded in mystery. Guy's friendship with Lane imploded."

It was that time Guy tried to have contact with Lane Nakano, he was very ill and couldn't come to the phone," said Ohana from her Old Town, Fla. home. "I don't know what happened. I would like to know. I never asked either because obviously people change. Guy never said there was a reason. I don't know why. What happened?"

Kakaro, 83, said he thinks the falling out was the result of a misunderstanding, but he doesn't know the details. Some point out that the friends were "too close." Ohana was very conservative, said Ohana, adding, "They had very different views."

With Lane's passing last April, the Moe Gang faces extinction. In July, a month before his death, Guy met with Norman and Kakaro to share stories for the last time. "That was the best thing that ever happened," said Norman.

Sakata has barely been seen since their carefree days in Boyle Heights, but for Kakaro; it was a friendship unlike any other he would ever find again. "He's not the type to make new friends. He keeps old ones," said Sakata. "Ruth St. John tells me her husband, who is the president of a real estate company, doesn't like how he is working for a Japanese American."

**Religious Group to Give Watada an Award**

A religious group says it will give U.S. Army war objector 1st Lt. Ehren Watada an award for refusing to fight in Iraq with his unit. The Interfaith Alliance of Hawaii says it wants to bestow its Flame of Hope Award on the Honolulu-born officer at its 2006 Community Awards dinner later this month.

The alliance includes about 150 members from about 20 religious affiliations. Watada's attorney plans to receive the award for Watada since the Army won't allow him to travel to Hawaii for the ceremony.

**Bush Names APA as Administration Nominee**

President George W. Bush intends to nominate Curtiss S. Chun, of New York, to be U.S. director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of ambassador. Chun currently serves as managing director at Burston-Marsilier. Earlier in his career, he served as special assistant to the U.S. secretary of commerce. He also served on the Department of State's Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy.

Chun received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern University and his master's degree from Yale University.

**Hamaguchi Heads Up Japantown Task Force**

The Japantown Task Force, Inc. announced the appointment of Robert E. Hamaguchi as its executive director. Hamaguchi is a retired senior vice president of Bank of America where he served 33 years in real estate banking and corporate real estate. He is past president of the Bay Area Mortgage Association and a former member of the board of directors of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California.
Learn the Ropes in D.C. with APAICS Summer Internship

The Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) is now accepting applications for its 2007 undergraduate summer internship program.

Each year, APAICS selects up to 10 undergraduate students for a first-hand learning experience in American politics. Interns work in congressional offices, federal agencies, and non-profit organizations in Washington, D.C.

Through a series of seminars, interns learn about national Asian American advocacy organizations and network with peers from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF), collectively known as the Tri-Caucus.

"As an intern, I had the privilege of participating in meetings regarding an amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize grants for institutions of higher education serving Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders," said Heather De Guia, a 2006 APAICS intern for Congressman Mike Honda.

APAICS is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, educational organization based in Washington, D.C. that seeks to build a politically empowered APA community.

Interns will receive a $2,500 stipend to work from June 4 to July 27, 2007. Applicants must demonstrate an interest in public service and APA affairs.

APAICS Summer Internship
June 4-July 27, 2007
$2,500 to work in Washington, D.C.
Undergraduates including those graduating in Spring 2007 can apply.
Download applications at: www.apaics.org
For more info: 202/296-9200 or apaics@apaics.org
Deadline: Jan. 31, 2007

L.A. Bus Tour Focuses on History of Japanese Pioneers

The lives and struggles of Japanese settlers in Imperial Valley before and after World War II will be the subject of a tour Nov. 17-18 now being arranged by a group of retired Nisei ministers and the Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society (JEMS).

The tour will spend two days visiting towns where the Japanese and their families lived and farmed in an area largely known for intensely hot weather.

Traveling by bus, the group will leave Los Angeles on Nov. 17 morning and visit Indio en route. Participants will visit the Imperial Valley Pioneers' Museum to view the Japanese American gallery, an exhibition on the history of Japanese families pioneering and community life.

The tour is being arranged by the Retired Nisei Ministers Association and JEMS. One of the retired ministers, the Rev. Kei Kobukun, will be one of the guides. He is the son of the late Rev. Jingoro Kobukun, who founded the Calexico and El Centro Christian Churches in 1920 and pastored both until the churches were closed by the internment and never reopened.

Part of the JEMS Tour will include a visit to the Desert Tower.

Panetta Keynotes Angel Island Foundation's Annual Dinner

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta, director of the Panetta Institute for Public Policy, California State University, Monterey Bay, keynote the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation (AIISF) Annual Dinner recently.

While Angel Island was one of the ports of entry for hundreds of thousands of immigrants who came to this country seeking for the riches and opportunity of California, they confronted what Panetta calls the "Paradox of our democracy."

"Immigrants who came through Angel Island confronted the paradox of our democracy," he said.

"Confronted overcrowded facilities. Confronted humiliating examinations and interrogations. Spent days and months and sometimes years of waiting to determine whether they'd be approved or deported. "Angel Island and Manzanar are symbols not so much of freedom, opportunity and equality, but of isolation, confinement and discrimination that often took place in this country. In the end, these are symbols of the paradox of our democracy."

"On one hand, this country reaches out for opportunity, great promise to those who come, promise of equality. And yet, at the same time, it is obvious that we have a history of discrimination that prevails, going back to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. These documents said that all of us are created equal under God. The paradox of these documents is that this country accepted slavery at that time."

Panetta concluded his speech by emphasizing, "We also have an obligation to break the paradox to promise America to help those yearning to breathe free. We are a better nation because of those who followed the torch of liberty. That light and promise must never be broken."

Winners Swing for Justice

Nearly 100 golfers from around the country enjoyed the camaraderie and the good spirit associated with the 3rd National JACL Golf Tournament, held Oct. 2 at Harding Park Golf Course, San Francisco.

All the golfers were certainly "swinging for justice" as they completed 18 holes of golf. The funds raised will further national JACL's education, community service, anti-hate and civil rights programs.

Winners of the Mike M. Masaoka Flight (1-7) John Ichijuji, Fredo Cervantes and Jim Koshi show off their prizes.
JAPANTOWNS

(Continued from page 1)

the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program (CCLEP), the project organizers are currently researching these areas and outreach to members of the community for help.

"Japanese Americans were a part of the history of this state, an important part. This project is a way to tell their stories," said Donna Graves, a cultural historian helping to lead the project. "We are looking for physical memories so history won't be lost."

The project's 43 cities include: Alameda; Bakonfield; Berkeley; Brawley; Center; El Centro; Flushing; Fowler; Fresno; Gardena; Gilroy; Glendale; Gardena; Isleton; Livingston; Lodi; Lompoe; Long Beach; Marysville; Monterey; Mountain View; Oakland; Oxnard; Pasadena; Sebastopol; Petaluma; Riverside; Sacramento; Salinas; San Diego; San Mateo; San Pedro; Santa Ana; Santa Barbara; Santa Maria; Santa Monica; Sawtelle; Stockton; Terminal Island; Vacaville; Venice; Visalia; Walnut Grove; and Watsonville.

"It is amazing," said Jill Shiraki, project manager, who noted that even preservationists and historians they have talked to are surprised to learn there was once a Japantown in their communities. "They don't see it in their histories."

Monterey and Watsonville had a J-Town?

When the Monterey Bay Aquarium was building its Outer Bay Wing, a sign on the office door read "Seapilrds," a name most passersby would assume fitting but for Maki Oda it was a source of unexpected family pride. Her father's fish cannery business from 1926 had been named Seapilrd Cannery and today part of the Aquarium stands in its place. Monterey's miles of blue ocean along a rugged coastline of pine forests has made this area famous and is likely what attracted JA families during the early 1900s, a community that was a large part of the city's sardine fishing and cannery industry. Before long Monterey could boast its own burgeoning Japantown with businesses like Sunset Grocery, Mat's Barbershop, Higashih Hotel, and Azuma Tai Restaurant. The city also had its own JACL Hall. "The Buddhist Church used the JACL Hall for their services and I went to Sunday school every Sunday. I had Boy Scout meetings in the basement," said Larry Oda who recalled older Nikkei telling stories about his grandfather's canery. "I remember Mr. Torakichi Tabata at Sunrake would always give me a candy bar whenever we went to buy groceries." During the 1900s Watsonville was as famous as the three remaining Japantowns today according to longtime area resident Mas Hashimoto, whose father ran a restaurant, catering and take home in the heart of Japantown, a business that doubled as their home right next to the Buddhist Church. Like many of the early settlements, a large farming industry was the attraction for many of the JA families who owned a number of businesses in the Watsonville Japantown including bakershops, pool halls, a grocery store, manju store, photography shop, and a gas station. There was a baseball field and the Toyo Community Hall too. The Japantown also had its own whorehouse for both whites and non-whites.

Watsonville's red light district was famous, said Hashimoto. "After the war, many soldiers and sailors from Monterey would come knock on our door. As a child I would show them the whorehouses which was on the next block away. Bing Crosby and Bob Hope used to joke about it on their radio shows during the week of the Crosby golf tournament."

Not Just San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Jose

For many of these California Japantowns, the onset of WWII and the years of internment would ultimately cause their demise. For example, to leave everything behind after evacuating from the West Coast, many families did not return to their pre-War lives, preferring to resettle in other areas.

Today, the three remaining big three Japantowns still attract tourists and locals alike, but remnants of these long-forgotten J-towns still exist if you look closely enough.

On any given weekend, sounds of Tai Chi instruction, a waltz, or taiko drumming can be heard from the historic JACL Hall in Monterey that is still used by community members. On weekends the building is host to Japanese language classes and both Buddhist and Christian services.

Organizers of the "Preserving California's Japantowns" project know that most of what they hope to find will be found in the memories of those Nisei who lived and grew up in these once-thriving communities.

For historians like Graves, their knowledge is priceless. "The only thing non-Nikkei know about Japanese Americans is the internment. They have no physical picture. We want people to stand where Japanese Americans once worked, lived, and farmed. First person narratives," said Graves.

And for these Nisei, they know that often their stories are all that's left of an important part of JA history. "I think it's important we preserve our history for our own future generations because I don't think anyone else will," said Himaka. "I only hope we can get our Yonsei and Gosei more involved ... to keep it going."

For information or to participate in the "Preserving California's Japantowns" project, contact Jill Shiraki at 510-277-2154 or email: pjcalifornia@japantowns.org.

The JACL Hall (pictured above) in Monterey, Calif. is still a large part of the JACL Monterey chapter's activities.

For many of these California Japantowns, the onset of WWII and the years of internment would ultimately cause their demise.
GOLF

A Year Older, A Year Later, Wie Still a Work in Progress

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

PALM DESERT, California—
Michelle Wie celebrated her 17th birthday Oct. 11. Next up is an anniversary.

One year ago at the Samsung World Championship, the teenager from Hawaii steadied her nerves and ripped a 3-wood down the middle of the fairway to embark on a professional career that was loaded with expectations and perhaps more hype than any player in U.S. LPGA Tour history.

Expectations remain high. The scrutiny is still severe.

And one year later, the trophy case remains bare.

"Every week I go into, I want to win," Wie said at Bighorn Golf Club, where her family has bought a second home. "I’m not going to force it to happen, because it will happen.

But with each tournament — 14 as a pro, plus a U.S. Open qualifier — the question of "when" slows down to "if.""

Strange enough, the Samsung World Championship with its 20-player field and no cut is the only U.S. LPGA Tour event where Wie has failed to earn a paycheck. She finished in fourth place, 10 shots behind Annika Sorenstam, but an improper drop in the third round that was pointed out a day later led to Wie being disqualified.

Wie has played only seven U.S. LPGA Tour events this year, because she is not a tour member, yet she has earned $718,343 which would put her at No. 14 on the order of merit. Karrie Webb, Sorenstam and Wie are the only players to average more than $100,000 per start this year.

Despite not winning, Wie came within a whisker of capturing the U.S. Women’s Open — her only finish in the second round with heat exhaustion and was shown being loaded into an ambulance on a stretcher.

She tied for 229th at the Women’s British Open — her only finish outside the top five on the LPGA Tour — and fired her caddie without anyone from the Wie family breaking the news. And after starting her senior year at Punahou School in Honolulu, Wie took a two-week break to take on the end and finished both times, in the European Masters and the R&A Lumber Classic.

"I have to learn how to schedule better, how much better my body can take and when I should play," Wie said. "My first year, I haven’t got it down yet. Obviously, I learn from my mistakes."

TOUGH YEAR: A year ago, no one showed more promise than Michelle Wie. But as a pro, she has played more like an amateur.

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ELECTION METHODS HAVE been in the news with general elections the next month. The state of Arizona, while we were in convention last June, was pondering an initiative promoting voter registration. The caret: a million dollar prize to a lucky voter. The prize was to come from untouched Arizona lottery winnings. Critics argued it was like “buying votes” by offering a prize. Proponents sought a greater number of voters.

In an aside, the primaries last spring in the state of Washington were tight and confusing. The winner for the state governor was declared after two months, despite dead people having voted and more ballots being returned than the number registered in some parts of the state. And King County officials said it would be cheaper in the long run by doing away with polling stations.

Oregon is a pioneer, having used polling stations in 2000. Among the reasons were the long lines at the polling place, some in line for an hour or two, trying to work through 26 initiatives one year. For the 2004 election, Oregon had the highest voter turnout by mail at 97 percent of registered voters.

California allows permanent absentee voters. The envelope used to return ballots are different sizes and color for postal clerks to spot and deliver. Statewide over one-third of the votes cast in 2004 were absentee, 18 percent permanent. In Colorado, the voters will decide next month whether to switch to mail-only on a county-option wide basis. One twist here is that in the even-year partisan elections, the mail-only will not be allowed.

Because of federal and state voting rules, such as printing ballots in multiple languages, county finances have been hard hit. One election official says going mail-only would be a savings, not having to rent a polling place or employ temporary staff.

Voter registration was a major JACL chapter effort in the 1930s. Chapter had a list of eligible Nisei voters. Nisei were told to also fight racial discrimination at the polls. It is recorded that the Bransley chapter “fined” those members who did not vote. One needed to check the next day with the polling place of those who did vote.

In Illinois, some at Arizona. In California, at one time, didn’t register as jurors were selected. If a driver’s license, they can be summoned.

These lessons have driven me to give everything I do 110 percent, grateful for everything I have, never taking anything for granted, and try to love and appreciate my family, friends and community. Their stories have fueled my passion for social justice and dream for the future.

Tim’s last words “Encourage them to keep telling their stories. We’re listening.”
To find out what kind of hypnotizing power white men have over Asian Pacific American women, one intrepid APA student (Phillip Wang) sought the counsel of a blue-eyed guru who could seduce with a beckon and a softly uttered, “Dude.”

The scene from the aptly titled January 2006 short film “Yellow Fever” generated a lot of buzz and spread through the internet quicker than you could say: Who the heck is Wong Fu?

The men behind the film—Wang, Wesley Chan and Ted Fu—all recent graduates from UC San Diego, seemed to have cornered the internet movie world with their irreverent humor and lip-syncing music videos. Now they’ve ventured into a new arena: a feature length romantic comedy. WAS: It happened so gradually. Slowly we were getting more and more feedback. It was never like we made something that was ‘Oh, man, this is amazing.’

WANG: “Yellow Fever” was one thing...

CHAN: Tell her about the bill.

WANG: Oh yeah. Our Web site at the time had a cap on how many people could download and for every gigabyte that you go over it was like $1. So many people started downloading that we ended up with a bill of $1,000 a month.

FU: That’s why we have donations.

PC:“Yellow Fever” put you on the map for Internet movies, but there was also a backlash. What were the critics saying?

WANG: The critics tended to take things way too seriously. They analyzed it and said that we were trying to break these social barriers, but we were just trying to talk about things that groups talk about. Some people were saying that we were being really racist. It’s funny because we would get this one e-mail saying, ‘Wow, you guys just reinforced every stereotype.’

FU: Yellow Fever definitely was one of those movies that are showing Asian Americans just as people not as kung fu fighters. We’re just regular college kids too trying to do some fun stuff. It’s been good to hear younger Asian American kids say those things.

PC:What’s next for Wong Fu?

WANG: We’re also trying to start our new company called Sketchbook Media. That’s some-thing we’re going to launch within a month.

FU: When people think of Wong Fu now, they think of entertainment. When people think Sketchbook, they’ll think production company. We’re just branching out.

WANG: That’s how Wong Fu is growing up, I guess you can say.

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SECRET ASIAN MAN By Tak

ASIAN HAIR IS SO FABULOUS!
IT DOES EVERYTHING I WANT IT TO DO. IT BEHAVES SO WELL!

1. Mimi Chao shares a moment with Casey Hoffman. 2. Wong Fu’s Wesley Chan (far left) and Ted Fu (right) during a shoot. 3. (fr-om left) Chao, Austen Chong and Hoffman share their burden. 4. Chao and Chong fail in love in ‘A Moment with You.’
In Memoriam - 2006

The following obituaries were published in the Los Angeles Times.

**Morishita, son, Dean (Melanie); L--A-U-t-h-e-t-o-n-s-a-r-e-i-n-C-a-I-i-o-n-a-e-x-c-e-p-t-a-s-n-o-t-e-d-.**

Henry band, Tom; sons, Steve (Elena) and gc; brothers, Kaz (Fusae) and Tak Kenny (Laura); daughters, Julie by husband, Tokuji; daughters, San Francisco, Aug. 14; survived sister, Yasuko Yagami; and brothers, (Randy) Kameshige; (Nolan) Matsumoto and Jayne gc. (Joanne) and Steven (Shirl); Angeles, Sept. 7; married, Kay Kazumi, 79, Los Shinobu (Sadao) Ida. **Hirumori, Kay Kazumi, 79, Hagi-mori, Kikue **

Morishita, son, Dean (Melanie); L--A-U-t-h-e-t-o-n-s-a-r-e-i-n-C-a-I-i-o-n-a-e-x-c-e-p-t-a-s-n-o-t-e-d-. Henry band, Tom; sons, Steve (Elena) and gc; brothers, Kaz (Fusae) and Tak Kenny (Laura); daughters, Julie by husband, Tokuji; daughters, San Francisco, Aug. 14; survived sister, Yasuko Yagami; and brothers, (Randy) Kameshige; (Nolan) Matsumoto and Jayne gc. (Joanne) and Steven (Shirl); Angeles, Sept. 7; married, Kay Kazumi, 79, Hagi-mori, Kikue **

- **Hirumori, Kay Kazumi, 79, Hagi-mori, Kikue**
- **Hirumori, Kay Kazumi, 79, Hagi-mori, Kikue**
world had come off his shoulders,” said Bob. “He felt good about his decision, even today. Even ten years from now he knows he did the right thing, even if he has to be punished.”

That punishment will be determined in a possible court martial with Ehren facing up to eight years in prison for several charges including: missing troop movement, conduct unbecoming an officer, and contempt towards officials. 

Ehren’s uncle has been reassigned to an administrative position at Fort Lewis, Washington and is living off base. He is currently waiting to hear a final decision on his possible court martial.

“Mentally, emotionally he’s doing pretty good,” said Bob.

It has helped that many of his fellow soldiers have been supportive of his actions and sympathetic of his current plight, especially in light of the military charges he now faces.

“The soldiers support him and many soldiers are thanking him,” Bob continued, noting that he too has received a lot of positive e-mails.

As the JA community continues to debate Ehren’s decision, Bob and Rosa are making themselves available to answer questions regarding their son’s actions in the current war.

“He’s taking the most difficult road of his life,” said Rosa. “But hopefully his sacrifice will not be in vain.”

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