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Since 1929

# PACIFIC CITIZEN

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## Toyota + NASCAR = Rise in Anti-Japanese Sentiment

**With Toyota's entry into the all-American sport of NASCAR, anti-Japanese sentiment reminiscent of the early 80s increases amongst fans and some owners.**

By CAROLINE AOYAGI-STOM  
Executive Editor

In the ever-evolving world of American sports, foreign athletes have often been welcomed with open arms not only by fans but owners who watch their bottom lines. Japanese baseball players like Ichiro Suzuki and Hideki Matsui are treated like Major League Baseball rock stars and Yao Ming of the Houston

Rockets has single handedly helped the National Basketball Association leap into the lucrative Chinese market.

But when Toyota became the first Japanese car company to debut at NASCAR's Nextel Cup Series' Daytona 500 recently — the most lucrative series in stock car racing — the reception they received from many fans was not only frigid, it came with a good portion of anti-Japanese sentiment.

"Just think about how our troops will be demoralized if something Japanese makes a good showing. It would be like finding 'Honda' in huge neon lights on the Washington monument or finding sushi on the menu at Denny's," Capt. Fogg of



Toyota's debut at NASCAR's Nextel Cup Series' Daytona 500 recently launched a flurry of anti-Toyota sentiment on Web sites and blogs. There was also a lot of anti-Japanese sentiment.

Florida writes on his "Human Voices" blog.

References to Pearl Harbor intermingled with "Jap" are scattered throughout several anti-Toyota blogs and Web sites: "First Pearl Harbor and now this ... Toyota is single handedly making Asians look bad"; "I mean first, Pearl Harbor, then baseball, and now this! ... they don't belong in NASCAR"; "I ain't gonna sit back and see them Japs taking this place over, they bombed us let's bomb them."

With statements like these, many Asian Americans feel like it's the early 1980s all over again. In 1982 Vincent Chin became a victim of

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*'This is definitely outside of my own world'*  
— Apolo Anton Ohno about 'Dancing with the Stars'



## From Blades to the Ballroom

**Can Apolo Anton Ohno dance as well as he can skate?**

By LYNDALIN  
Assistant Editor

We're used to seeing Apolo Anton Ohno move across the ice like the speed of light, but the Olympic gold medalist is hoping to translate his fluid movements onto the dance floor of a hit television show.

The 24-year-old Olympian is a contestant in the upcoming season of ABC's "Dancing With the Stars," making him the youngest competitor in a diverse cast made up of a former

boy band member, a former beauty queen and a basketball legend.

"This is definitely outside of my own world," said Apolo in a phone interview with the *Pacific Citizen* while en route to practice and shoot promos with partner Julianne Hough ("an amazing dancer!").

"I've competed in front of an audience before, but this will be in front of 30 million people!" he said

See OHNO/Page 6

## The Home that Garlic Built

**Gilroy's historic Japanese style home built by a family of leaders and heroes went up in flames, but the legacy lives on.**

By LYNDALIN  
Assistant Editor

Kiyoshi "Jimmy" Hirasaki built a dream house in the middle of a garlic field in Gilroy, Calif. that would come to symbolize the family's longstanding civic legacy. For over 66 years, the wooden walls of the one-story Japanese style house told stories of war and bravery, but the last chapter may have been written Feb. 11 when flames swallowed it up.

The Gilroy Fire Department responded to a neighbor's call at 1:20 a.m. and fought the blaze at the historic house on Pacheco Pass Highway until dawn. The house is



The community regarded the house as an architectural jewel. For the Hirasaki/Sakai family, it was home.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JANET ITO

located about a mile south of Highway 152 in a remote area with a mile-long dirt road as its only access route. Its residents Lawson and Mineko Sakai, Kiyoshi's son-in-law and daughter, escaped safely.

"Our family feels very lucky there weren't any physical injuries," said Joanne Sakai about her parents, who are currently in seclusion. "It was declared a total loss."

The cause of the fire is undetermined due to the severity of damage

in the fire, said Clay Bentson, division chief of the Gilroy Fire Department. Possible causes include faulty wiring or a wood burning stove, which was lit that night, he said to the *Pacific Citizen*.

"It's a real shame and a big loss," said Connie Rogers, president of the Gilroy Historical Society. "Jimmy was a real community leader."

Jimmy, who came to Gilroy in

See GARLIC KING/Page 6

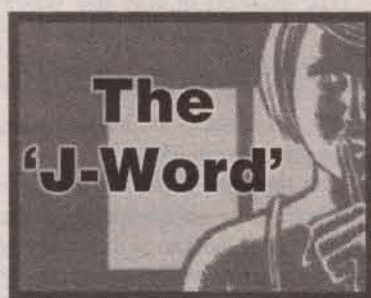
## N-Word vs. J-Word

**There's a national movement to abolish the use of the N-Word. Can a similar effort be launched for racist terms directed at the Asian American community?**

By CAROLINE AOYAGI-STOM  
Executive Editor

When Seinfeld alum Michael Richards let loose an angry, N-word filled tirade late last year at a local Los Angeles comedy club the reaction was immediate: national media outlets ran wall to wall footage of interviews with African American leaders and politicians demanding an apology; Grainy footage of Richards' racist outburst ran regularly on local news stations with the full diatribe available on YouTube.com for all to see.

Partly in response to the Richards' incident there is now a national "Abolish the N-Word" grassroots movement to get rid of the N-word. A Web site has been launched ([www.abolishthenword.com](http://www.abolishthenword.com)) and several city councils, including New York City, Paterson, and the Westchester County Legislature, have heeded the message and passed supporting resolutions.

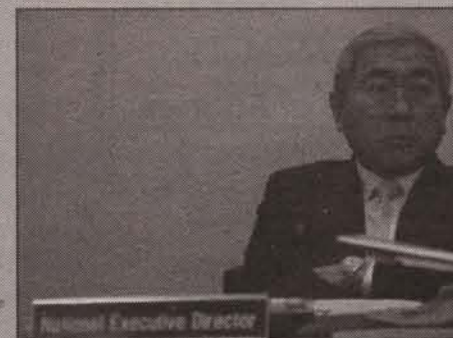


See N-WORD VS. J-WORD/Page 4

## Floyd Mori Takes Helm as New JACL Nat'l Director

**The former Calif. state assemblyman outlines his vision for the future and calls for a change.**

By LYNDALIN  
Assistant Editor



The JACL has a new leader. Floyd Mori, who has been acting as the interim national director since John Tateishi stepped down in June and subsequently fell ill last November, has accepted the position permanently.

The JACL personnel committee recommended Mori for the job at

the Feb. 9-10 national board meeting and the national board passed a motion to extend the offer to the past JACL national president.

**Experience and Leadership**

It takes a current president to recognize the talent and leader-

See MORI/Page 2





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• FLOYD MORI •

## WASHINGTON WINDOW

### Developing Corporate Partnerships



While we have often referred to the need for the JACL to develop funding sources beyond the traditional membership revenue, it is important to understand that in developing partnerships with corporations we recognize their efforts to better the communities in which we live.

It is important for JACL to partner with corporations who possess a social consciousness and who address social issues in the community in which they derive their profits. While the profit motive is the fuel that drives our market economy, issues of social and economic justice are also important corporate values to seek.

As the JACL works to develop corporate partnerships, it is impor-

tant to understand that a partnership is not all one sided. We continually seek corporate partners who express a philosophy and present programs that can be beneficial to the community.

May I cite a few examples of where our partners are developing programs and products that are beneficial to our community:

AT&T recently announced a comprehensive Web site of parental controls designed to educate and empower parents. Their AT&T Smart Limits Web site provides information for parental control features for wireless, wireline, high speed Internet access, and video into one online portal. Their site is located at [www.att.com/smartlimits](http://www.att.com/smartlimits).

Another recent innovation by AT&T is called the Unity Plan,

which brings in a new service that integrates wireline and wireless into one simple pricing and billing structure. This provides new choices for JACLers in telecommunications and new ways to save money.

One of our other corporate partners, State Farm Insurance, is working with the JACL/OCA Leadership Conference to provide a program that can be used by chapters to promote child and teen auto safety. This not only becomes a direct benefit to JACL members but provides a program that will train our chapters to organize events in cooperation with local corporate partners.

As we move towards funding outside of membership, this kind of activity will help to build the ability of local chapters to work with the national JACL in developing good corporate partnerships. It will also bring us into the modern era of coping with current issues that affect our organizational and personal well-being.

Health is something we often take for granted, but we are finding that there are many health disparity issues facing the Asian American

population. Pfizer is working with us to develop a health education program that will help us understand the disparities AAs face and the remedies for which we must advocate in order that our community maintain good healthy lives and promote better health policies in government.

Understanding the entire health care segment of our society is important in allowing our community access to primary health care, drug abuse programs, programs for the aged, disease and illness prevention, insurance, and health care professions.

As we look to the future of the JACL, it is important for us to continue nurturing corporate partnerships that will help us with our bottom line funding. The measure of success will be in our increased ability to provide new educational and advocacy tools to further our work.

There are many needs that continue to go unmet in the AA community. Our goal will be to close that gap by developing corporate partners who understand the meaning of social and economic justice. ■

## MORI

(Continued from page 1)

ship skills in a past one.

"Floyd Mori's familiarity with Japanese American and Asian American communities, his understanding of JACL's history, commitment to civil rights, and previous leadership roles provide him with the background needed by JACL as our chief executive officer and spokesperson for this organization and the Asian American community at large during this critical transition in our history," said JACL National President Larry Oda.

With the JACL, Mori has served as national president (2000-04), vice president of general operations (1998-2000) and vice president of public affairs (1990-92). He has also been running the JACL Washington, D.C. office as the director of public policy since August 2005. During his time in D.C., Mori has worked to raise awareness on health care issues. He was also integral in the passage of HR 1492, the Camp Preservation Bill, which was recently signed into law.

Mori has also served in the

California State Assembly from 1975-1980 and as councilman and mayor of Pleasanton, Calif. In the California Legislature, he authored one of the first spousal rape laws in the nation and legislation that mirrored Title IX federal regulations in the state college system.

At the local level, Mori has dedicated over 20 years as the Mt. Olympus chapter president and board member. Mori also chaired the 1994 JACL national convention in Salt Lake City.

Despite his experience, Mori expressed humility about the honor of running the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization.

"There is that feeling of inadequacy and wondering if I am up to the task," said Mori to the *Pacific Citizen*. "But I am very excited because there is so much opportunity for taking JACL to a higher level of creating a better America in terms of social and economic justice."

"I have enjoyed my past involvement and intend to have a lot of fun at the helm of the organization."

### Outlining the Future

Mori already has aspirations for

the JACL. This biennium, his goals are:

- To update JACL's technology to meet current needs in membership, fundraising, and communication.
- To increase JACL's corporate partnerships for new programs.
- To adopt programs to empower more young adults to engage in public service careers.

"While civil rights will be at the core of our mission, we need chapter building, leadership developing, and member engaging programs to broaden our base of membership and influence," said Mori, who emphasized the need to update technology especially for membership services.

This biennium, Mori will also work to fill empty staff positions and "unleash the grassroots capability of our chapters in dealing with issues of national interest," he said.

"Floyd is the best choice because of his experience as an elected public official with a long history in JACL. He had worked closely with John during the past year preparing for convention and has developed a relationship with our funders," said Oda.

### Leading the JACL of

## Tomorrow

It's not just about the short term; Mori is looking far into the future of the organization and calling for change.

"While maintaining our traditional mission, we need to implement measures that go beyond our traditional tactics. We have changed as a society, we have evolved as a community, and our community needs have changed. We cannot serve this new era of Asian Americans with an organizational structure that only looks to the past. We must live in the present," he said.

"My concerns are being able to finance change and having the organizational will to move from the past into the present," he said, adding, "As we have a democratic organizational structure, will we be statesman enough to allow an exploration of the new frontiers of progress. Traditional values are good, but old time methods may not be the best for today. We need to seek out the best of the new and have the courage to discard the barriers of the past." ■

For more information:  
[www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org)

## Letters to the Editor

### A Courageous Act

A man is morally responsible for his actions. It took great courage for 1st Lt. Ehren Watada to stand his ground and do what he thought was right. A lesser man might have taken the easy route, acquiesced, and done what he had been told to do, and to the peril of his conscience.

When confronted with a decision with equally distasteful outcomes, a man must act accordingly to his conscience even if it means he must suffer the consequence, in this case the possibility of a re-trial of general court-martial. This was exactly the position adopted by the Allies during the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal.

In my opinion it was the most courageous act of the many that Ehren Watada performed. He is a person of great loyalty, both to his ideals and to the people close to him.

Consider the way Watada confronted the immoral Iraq war. This will and determination, this conviction that he was right, was displayed both in thought and in action. Once

he decided to do something, he did it. But there can be little doubt that his ironclad faith in his own judgment was central to this power of determination in action.

The question of why this power was so strong in him must to a degree, remain from his upbringing. One can speak of his parents, especially his father, as having been strong and determined.

The time has come for his great example to be an inspiration to the young in America and hopefully more and more will be written about his life, and his contribution to society.

The struggle Lt. Watada went through was immense, as have been the struggles the Nikkei have gone through. But with faith like his, with vision and inspiration, the future can be one of blessing and redemption.

Takasumi Kojima  
Berkeley, CA

### If They Grew Bananas ...

We owe the 100th/442nd a great deal of gratitude for what they did so long ago but that was a just war, if a war can be justified.

Without taking anything from the World War II veterans, we should support 1st Lt. Ehren Watada. This is a war fought solely to protect the commercial interests of Big Oil by an arrogant administration that thinks it can do whatever it pleases. If they grew bananas there, our government could care less about them.

Tosh Konya  
Sgt USMCR (retired)  
Troy, OH

### 11-Year-Old Insulted by AsianWeek Column

I just read Kenneth Eng's article titled "Why I Hate Blacks." I am 11 years old and half-Japanese American and half-African American, and I am insulted by the comments he made. What he says is

not true. It made me mad because he tried to make me and other African Americans feel worthless. I am proud of whom I am and no one can change that.

Kara Glapion  
via e-mail

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\* Except for the National Director's Report, news and the views expressed by columnists do not necessarily reflect JACL policy. The columns are the personal opinion of the writers.

\* "Voices" reflect the active, public discussion within JACL of a wide range of ideas and issues, though they may not reflect the viewpoint of the editorial board of the *Pacific Citizen*.

\* "Short expressions" on public issues, usually one or two paragraphs, should include signature, address and daytime phone number. Because of space limitations, letters are subject to abridgement. Although we are unable to print all the letters we receive, we appreciate the interest and views of those who take the time to send us their comments.



# AA Leaders Criticize AsianWeek for 'Why I Hate Blacks' Column

Asian American leaders joined together to criticize *AsianWeek* for printing Kenneth Eng's column "Why I Hate Blacks" in its Feb. 23rd edition. The leaders condemned the piece as irresponsible journalism, blatantly racist, replete with stereotypes, and deeply hurtful to African Americans.

They called on *AsianWeek* to take immediate action and issue an unequivocal apology, terminate their relationship with Kenneth Eng, print an editorial refuting the column, review their editorial policy and process, and hold those responsible accountable.

An online petition has also been launched and is available at: <http://www.capaweb.org/awpetition>

"Race-based hate is something that is unacceptable in any form, but it is particularly disturbing when one of our respected Asian American newspapers allows itself to be the source of such bigotry," said JACL National Director Floyd Mori. "*AsianWeek* needs to apolo-

gize for this blatant error in editorial policy. We join other Asian American organizations in condemning this column."

"Eng's article is unacceptable and offensive not only to African Americans, but to all Americans," said Karen K. Narasaki, president and executive director of the Asian American Justice Center. "*AsianWeek* has a responsibility to its readers and to the community to take immediate and appropriate action to repair the serious damage it has caused by publishing this piece."

Part of Eng's controversial column reads:

"Here is a list of reasons why we should discriminate against blacks, starting from the most obvious down to the least obvious:

"• Blacks hate us. Every Asian who has ever come across them knows that they take almost every opportunity to hurl racist remarks at us.

## The Voice of Asian America AsianWeek

Based in San Francisco, *AsianWeek* touts itself as 'The Voice of Asian America' but some AA leaders have issue with the weekly's recent 'Why I Hate Blacks' column by Kenneth Eng.

"In my experience, I would say about 90 percent of blacks I have met, regardless of age or environment, poke fun at the very sight of an Asian. Furthermore, their activity in the media proves their hatred: Rush Hour, Exit Wounds, Hot 97, etc.

"• Contrary to media depictions, I would argue that blacks are weak-willed. They are the only race that has been enslaved for 300 years. It's unbelievable that it took them that long to fight back.

"On the other hand, we slaughtered the Russians in the Japanese-

Russo War."

The column goes on at length to explain why Eng has an issue with the African American community.

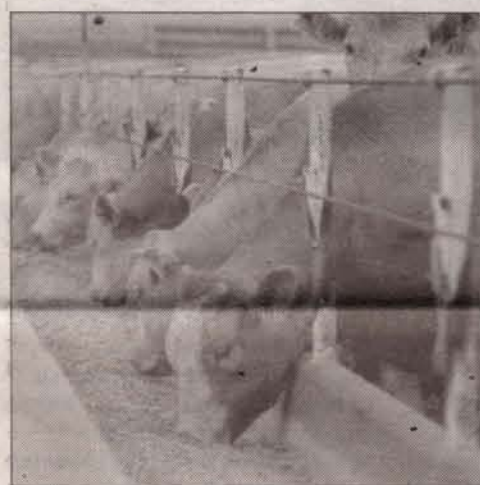
In response to the controversy *AsianWeek* issued a statement of apology: "*AsianWeek* sincerely regrets any offense caused by the one opinion piece which reflected that author's personal views. We apologize for any harm or hurt this has caused the African American community. *AsianWeek* has great respect for all that the African American community has done for Asian Pacific Americans."

*AsianWeek* has since taken down Eng's controversial column from its Web site.

"It is despicable that Kenneth Eng encourages Asian Americans to join him in his bigotry, and it is an invitation that we reject. For someone who touts his academic smarts and honors classes, he is woefully ignorant. *AsianWeek* gave ink to Eng's racist rant and should know better," said Patty Wada, JACL NCWNP Regional Director.

"We as Japanese Americans owe African Americans a major debt of gratitude for blazing the civil rights trails, providing vital support, and making it possible to even raise the issue of redress," said Andy Noguchi, NCWNP JACL District Civil Rights co-chair. "We need to strongly condemn today's bigots just as we wish our fellow Americans would have condemned the past bigots sending our Issei and Nisei generation off to the internment camps." ■

## Idaho State Senate Approves Bill to Expand Testimony Over Controversial Proposed Feedlot Near Minidoka



A proposed feedlot about 1 1/2 miles from the Minidoka Internment National Monument has many groups, including the JACL and ACLU, upset.

Current county policy prevents persons outside a 1-mile area of the feedlot from testifying.

By Associated Press and P.C. Staff

BOISE, Idaho—The state Senate overwhelmingly approved a bill Feb. 21 that expands the restrictions on people allowed to testify on proposed feedlot operations near the Minidoka Internment National Monument, calling it a matter of defending democracy.

Lawmakers voted 30-4 to allow testimony on feedlot proposals from any "affected person" who has an interest in property that could be adversely affected by the operations.

Right now, state law only requires that those who live within one mile of a proposed feedlot site are allowed to testify, although counties can expand the area if they choose.

The measure stems from a proposed 18,555-animal feedlot in Jerome County that would sit about 1 1/2 miles away from the Minidoka Internment National Monument. Opponents of the lot say the counties have repeatedly refused requests to allow testimony from people outside the one-mile limit.

Hearings on confined animal feeding operations — or CAFOs — are the only land-use hearings in Idaho that have a limit on who can testify, said Sen. Clint Stennett, D-Ketchum, who is sponsoring the measure.

"This is an artificial and arbitrary exemption," Stennett said. If his bill becomes law, he said, "we would treat CAFOs exactly as we treat any other land use decision, and that's

how it should be.

"This doesn't go as far as I'd like, but it's a step in the right direction," Stennett said. Stennett backed a similar bill in 2005 that would have opened up testimony on feedlots from any member of the public, but it died in a tied vote on the Senate floor.

Other lawmakers agreed, saying they were concerned that testimony was limited to those who had property interests in the area, but said they'd vote for the bill nonetheless.

Sen. Shirley McKague, R-Meridian, was one of the lawmakers who voted against the bill, saying she thought it was an issue for the counties to handle themselves. McKague was joined in voting against the bill by Sen. Steven Bair, R-Blackfoot, Sen. Monty Pearce, R-New Plymouth, and Sen. Jeff Siddoway, R-Terretton.

The bill must now head to the House for a vote.

In addition to the Jerome County residents, the ACLU, JACL and the National Park Service, which operates the monument, have objected to not being allowed to testify at the public hearing on the application.

Designated as a national monument in 2001, the Minidoka site was originally a 33,000-acre prison compound operated by the War Relocation Authority at the Jerome County farming community of Hunt. It operated from 1942 through 1945 and held as many as 9,397 U.S. citizen of Japanese descent. ■

## Army Refiles Charges Against Watada, Officer Who Refused Iraq Duty

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEATTLE—The Army has refiled charges against a Fort Lewis-based lieutenant who refused to serve in Iraq, pursuing the case about three weeks after the lieutenant's first court-martial was declared a mistrial.

First Lt. Ehren Watada, 28, who refused to deploy with his unit last June because he believes the war is illegal, faces the same allegations he initially faced — missing movement and conduct unbecoming an officer — and could be sentenced to a dishonorable discharge and six years in prison if convicted. The Army has not set a date for a second court-martial.

"We're back to square one," said Fort Lewis spokeswoman Leslie Kaye.

Watada's first trial began early last month but ended abruptly when the judge, Lt. Col. John Head, said he did not believe the soldier fully understood a pretrial agreement he signed admitting elements of the charges. As part of

that agreement, the Army had dropped two of the charges against him, lowering his potential sentence to four years.

Watada's attorney, Eric Seitz of Honolulu, blasted the military's



decision to refile charges and said he would seek to have them dismissed as a violation of the Constitution's protection against double jeopardy. Seitz said the judge in the first court-martial had no grounds for declaring a mistrial.

"When it's not going well for you, you can't just call a mistrial and start over again," Seitz said. "No matter

how much lip service they give to wanting to protect my client's rights, that just doesn't exist in the military courts."

"In the Army's view, double jeopardy was not attached in this case because the first trial had not reached a position of finality," Fort Lewis spokesman Joseph Pick said. "The government has the legal authority to bring the case anew."

Watada faces one charge of missing movement, and another of conduct unbecoming. The latter charge accuses him in four instances of making public statements criticizing the war or President Bush.

Watada freely admitted missing the deployment and making the statements in the pretrial agreement. Just before the mistrial was declared, he had planned to take the witness stand to argue that his motives were to avoid committing war crimes by participating in an illegal war. ■

## Nat'l AA Organizations Concerned With Omission of Hate Crimes Charge in Cha Vang Murder

By Pacific Citizen Staff

The Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), Hmong National Development, Inc. (HND) and the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC) are disappointed that law enforcement authorities did not charge James Nichols with a hate crime for the murder of Cha Vang in his preliminary hearing in Marinette County Feb. 15.

Nichols has already been charged with first-degree intentional homicide, being a felon in possession of a firearm and concealing a corpse. He will be formally arraigned March 19.

"Hate crimes hurt not only their immediate victims, but serve to isolate entire communities as well," said Vincent A. Eng, deputy director of AAJC. "If this murder was in fact hate-motivated, law enforcement

officials should do everything in their power to prosecute it accordingly to send a strong message that violence steeped in ethnic and racial bias will not be tolerated in our communities."

An autopsy revealed that Vang, who was murdered while hunting in Peshtigo, Wisconsin in January, had been shot once and stabbed six times in the neck, severing his jugular vein. According to the criminal complaint, a wooden stick was found protruding from his mouth, and his body was found hidden beneath a log and small debris of leaves and sticks. Nichols was arrested for the murder.

Because of the viciousness of the murder and inflammatory statements about the Hmong made by Nichols to the police, many in the community have raised concerns that Vang's murder may have been

hate-motivated.

The killing of Vang, a Green Bay resident and father of five, drew outrage from AA communities across the country and follows on the heels of continued racial tensions between Hmong Americans and the greater Wisconsin and Minnesota communities.

In 2004 another Hmong hunter Chai Soua Vang was sentenced to life in prison for the slayings of six white men in Rice Lake, Wis. Chai Vang insisted the white hunters had shouted racial slurs before the shootings.

Doua Thor, the executive director of SEARAC, noted that even if Nichols is not charged with a hate crime under Wisconsin laws local authorities "need to work with the community to address racial tensions existing in the state and prevent future incidents." ■



# National Newsbytes

By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

## Digital Archive Highlights Matsui's Redress Efforts



SACRAMENTO—California State University, Sacramento unveiled a new digital archive chronicling the late Congressman Robert T. Matsui's leadership efforts in winning redress.

The archive contains digital reproductions of historical photos, videos, newspaper articles, speeches and congressional documents gathered from the Library of Congress and other sources.

Browse: [www.csus.edu/matsui](http://www.csus.edu/matsui)

## Students Claim Law Professor's Comments on Hmong were Racist

MADISON, Wisconsin—A law professor is getting criticized for comments made during a lecture that students say were offensive, including "Hmong men have no talent other than to kill."

Professor Leonard Kaplan also allegedly told his class that many Hmong become criminals and gang members and purchase their wives. Kaplan, a University of Wisconsin law school faculty member since 1974, has called the Feb. 15 remarks a misunderstanding and met privately with offended students to apologize.

## Pearl Harbor Memorial Center to be Renovated in Hawaii



HONOLULU—A \$52-million project is planned to renovate and rebuild the USS Arizona Memorial Visitor Center, which commemorates the 1941 Japanese attack on Hawaii's Pearl Harbor that thrust the U.S. into World War II.

The current center is on unstable ground and slowly sinking below the ocean water in the harbor. The Park Service plans to raise the money through private donations and hopes to reopen the center by Dec. 7, 2009, the 68th anniversary of the attack. ■

## APAs in the News

By Pacific Citizen Staff

## Matsuoka is Appointed to State's Asian American Commission

Tina Matsuoka of Somerville is one of the new commissioners of Massachusetts' Asian American Commission, a permanent body dedicated to political advocacy on behalf of Asian Americans throughout the state.

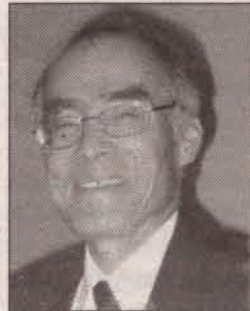
The commission was created by legislation in 2006 and charged with representing the state's fastest-growing minority group.

## JAVA Installs New Slate of Officers

The Japanese American Veterans Association elected by acclamation the 2007-09 slate of officers at its annual general meeting. The new officers are: President **Robert Nakamoto**; Vice President **Cal Shintani**; Secretary **Kim Luoma**; and Treasurer **Earl Takeguchi**.

Nakamoto announced his appointments as: Executive Director **Terry Shima**; Deputy Executive Director **Lt. Col Michael Yaguchi**; and Ret. General Counsel **Gerald Yamada**.

## Nakamura Appointed to Calif. Forestry and Fire Protection Board



**Gary Nakamura** of Redding, Calif. has been appointed to the state's Forestry and Fire protection board. He has served as a forestry specialist with the Center for Forestry at the University of California, Berkeley since 1985. From 1980-85 Nakamura, 56, was the supervisor of research and development for the California Region of Champion International Corp., where he conducted applied forest research.

This position requires Senate confirmation and a compensation of \$100 a day.

## Salinas Valley JACL Chapter Honors Students, Educator

The Salinas Valley JACL recently honored six graduating high school seniors with scholarship awards. The students are **Amy Yonemitsu**, **Evan Koike**, **Ashley McCormick**, **Cory Miyamoto**, **Michael Uchikado** and **Nicolas Fusco**.

The chapter also awarded **Jennifer Day** with a first place award of \$300 for her essay titled "How Can We Preserve the Individual Cultural Identity of Americans and Still Have a Unified Nation." ■

## N-WORD VS. J-WORD

(Continued from page 1)

But when it comes to racist terms, it seems that a different standard is being applied to the Asian American community. When derogatory words and phrases like "Jap," "Chink," or "ching-chong" are used freely — even by celebrities — it seems the mainstream does not consider these terms as racist or demeaning as the N-word.

So is it about time for the AA community to run a similar campaign, an "Abolish the J-word" grassroots movement? Many think it's a good idea, in concept, but whether it would work is highly sketchy.

"The reason there's such a debate over the N-word is because it has, to some degree, been reclaimed by black people. The N-word doesn't exist solely as a racial slur — it is used in many different contexts, with many different meanings," said Carmen Van Kerckhove, president of New Demographic, an anti-racism training company. "That same ambiguity doesn't exist with anti-Asian slurs like 'Jap,' 'Chink' and 'Gook.' As far as I know, there aren't many Asian Americans who have reclaimed these words to use as terms of endearment amongst themselves."

"As far as banning Asian slurs in conversation, I wouldn't be for it ... Besides, how do you educate people about racism if you can't mention some of the racist terms that've been used against minorities?" said Guy Aoki, founder of MANAA (Media Action Network for Asian Americans).

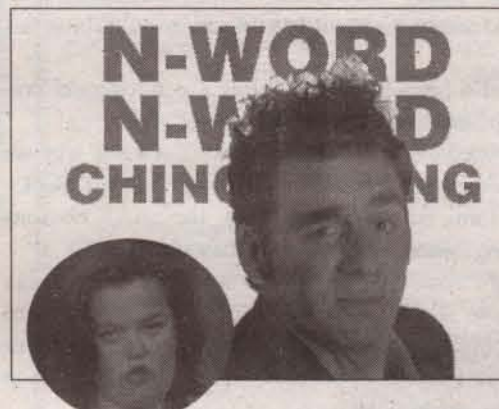
"But in entertainment, it's even more important that when Asian slurs are used, it's clear that they're hurtful. My pet peeve is that whenever someone calls someone a 'Chinaman' on television or in movies, there's no retort or come back from someone saying it's a racist term," he said.

Although the Richards' incident is the most recent example of the mainstream media's disdain for anyone non-black using the N-word, a blind eye is often turned when it comes to celebrities and comedians who use derogatory terms directed at the AA community.

Just a few weeks after the Richards' outburst, "The View" host Rosie O'Donnell made her now infamous "ching-chong" commentary. Although the incident got a lot of play in the AA community, the mainstream all but ignored the story and

O'Donnell herself refused to apologize at first, commenting on her blog that AAs needed to get a sense of humor. A few days later she gave a joke-filled apology about her use of a Chinese "accent."

In recent weeks a band named "The Ching Chong Song" was banned from appearing at Bryn Mawr College after local AA student groups protested. The band has since changed its name to "Church of Lurch." And we can always rely on comedian Sarah Silverman and her stock "Chink" joke. The joke raised some eyebrows a few years back but she continues to use it in her act today.



The list of examples is endless.

"Let's face it: White people are afraid of angry black people. They know they'll riot or launch angry protests if they're not happy about something," said Aoki. "Blacks also fought in the civil rights movement and stood up to be counted. We all know of the ugly legacy of slavery which lasted for centuries, so there's more sensitivity about how blacks will respond. Asians are just these funny-looking foreign people who lay low, do well in school, and don't get along socially with anyone."

"It has a lot to do with the way history is taught in our schools. We're all familiar (at least in broad terms) with the history of slavery and the struggle for civil rights. But few of us learn about the long history of anti-Asian discrimination in this country," said Van Kerckhove. "As a result, words like 'Chink' and 'Jap' and 'ching-chong' aren't recognized as having the same kind of historical context of oppression as words like 'N-word.'"

Kovan Flowers and his wife Jill founded the Abolish the N-word Web site last April and the campaign has gained more momentum since the Richards' tirade. The couple started the Web site in response to the

increasing use of the term by young African Americans, especially today's hip-hop artists.

"You still have to keep in mind that this word was used as a hateful word. (To use it) is a blatant disrespect to our ancestors," said Kovan in an interview with the *Herald News*.

But not all African Americans think the "Abolish the N-word" campaign is a good idea.

"Morally and logically I have always been opposed to the use of the N-word for all of the obvious reasons. A negative thing is a negative thing, you cannot change it only cancel it out," said Michael King who runs the African and Asian American Unity Web site (AAUnity.com). "So yes, in that respect I am all for the effort to abolish the use of the word. But, in terms of constitutional rights this campaign is treading the line of trampling freedom of speech."

Sandra Tanamachi knows first-hand the difficulties involved in a national campaign to rid a community of its racist terms. She spent 12 years fighting to rid "Jap Roads" and "Jap Lanes" in several Texas Counties.

She's more hopeful when it comes to a campaign to abolish the J-word.

"With the help of our national JACL and of our chapters across the United States, in addition to our Japanese American veterans' associations, and Japan-America Societies across our country, we may be able to be successful," she said. "I have found that there is strength in networking."

King believes more education is needed before racist words aimed at the AA community will start to disappear.

"We spend more time teaching our children how to make money without even considering teaching them how to be decent human beings. It is no wonder how such demeaning terminology such as J-words and N-words can so easily fall off the lips of people," he said.

"Ultimately, I think it is a matter of how we go about re-educating people regarding this word and how we go about phasing it out. Laws do not change the heart and it is the heart that truly changes the world." ■

For information  
[www.abolishthenword.com](http://www.abolishthenword.com)



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# Organizers Break Ground for Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial

By Associated Press and P.C. Staff

PINEDALE, Calif.—Organizers broke ground on a site for a memorial to more than 4,800 Japanese American internees held in Fresno County during World War II.

Residents of California, Oregon and Washington were taken to Pinedale, just north of Fresno, in 1942 after President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an order to relocate 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry to internment camps after Japanese forces bombed Pearl Harbor.

Families were put on trains and taken to the interim camp for a couple of months before being transferred to camps in other states.

"What I remember most is that the

concentration camp destroyed our family," James Hirabayashi, 80, of Mill Valley said Feb. 19 at the groundbreaking of Remembrance Plaza.

Armed soldiers guarded the wooden barracks, which were surrounded by barbed wire, said Hirabayashi, whose family was uprooted from Tacoma, Wash.

Two assembly centers were in Fresno, the Fresno Assembly Center and Pinedale Assembly Center. The Fresno Assembly Center, which was at the Fresno Fairgrounds, housed JAs from the area in and around Fresno County and a monument was dedicated at the site in 1994.

Pinedale Assembly Center remained in obscurity because the 4,823 internees were from out of the area, in Amador and Sacramento Counties and from Oregon and Washington. After the temporary incarceration in Pinedale, they were sent to permanent camps such as Tule Lake Internment Camp in Northern California and Poston Internment Camp in Arizona.

About 18 months ago, the Fresno JA community learned that a developer had applied for a demolition permit for an old



**BREAKING GROUND**—(from left): Jim Namba, Sid Arase, Lily Suda, Jack Hata, Rev. Shibata, James Hirabayashi, Sam Hirabayashi and Ted Kobata all took part in the ceremonial groundbreaking.

building in Pinedale where the Pinedale Assembly Center was located in WWII. Soon the JACL Fresno chapter and the Central California Nikkei Foundation formed the Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial Project Committee to help preserve the site.

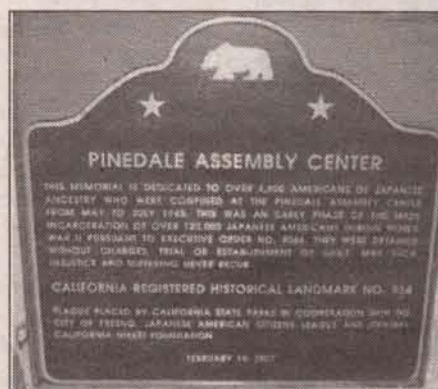
Last Nov. 28 the City Council approved designation of Remembrance Plaza to the Local Register of Historic Resources and

approved the rezoning application, including the site plan for the Pinedale Remembrance Plaza.

"By preserving the Pinedale story, we hope to teach a lesson in history. The Constitution alone does not guarantee perfection in protecting the rights of our people," said Judge Dale Ikeda, who helped lead the preservation efforts. "It takes people to ensure 'justice for all.' Therefore, it is the duty and obligation of each

generation to strive 'to form a more perfect Union' for ourselves and for the sake of our children."

The \$150,000 memorial is scheduled to be completed within two years. It will include a water fountain and a storyboard telling the story of the Pinedale Assembly Center, information about the internment, and the people who lived there including those who served this country in the military during the war. ■



## For Sixth Year, Idaho Gov. Signs DOR Proclamation



New Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter stands with former internees and war veterans as he proclaims Feb. 19, 2007, a Day of Remembrance. This is the sixth year in a row that Idaho has commemorated DOR.

By ASSOCIATED PRESS and P.C. Staff

BOISE, Idaho—For the sixth year, an Idaho governor declared a "Day of Remembrance" to honor nearly 10,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans held behind barbed wire at the Minidoka internment camp in southern Idaho during World War II.

Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter signed a proclamation Feb. 19, flanked by more than forty former internment camp prisoners and their families.

"It's hard to imagine the grip of wartime fear that led to people being sent to the camps," said Micki Kawakami, whose mother and father were held at another internment camp in California.

Late last year, President Bush signed a \$38 million grant program to help the National Park Service restore and pay for research at 10 camps, including the Minidoka Internment National Monument near Jerome in southern Idaho. The camps will be preserved as

reminders of how the United States turned on some of its citizens in a time of fear.

Otter, a former businessman at the J.R. Simplot Co. agriculture business, remembered during the ceremony working with farmers of Japanese descent who sometimes mentioned their time in Minidoka. They never complained, Otter said, but he was always struck that they were released without financial assistance when the camp was dismantled in 1945.

All they got was their freedom, Otter said.

"That was the extent of the help they received," he said. "They never lost their pride, they never lost their integrity and they never lost their spirit. Half a generation, they owned their own farms. That's a hell of a story."

At its peak in 1943, the Minidoka camp became one of the largest cities in Idaho, housing 9,397 people, primarily from Seattle and Portland, Ore. It closed Oct. 28, 1945. The 73-acre park was created in early 2001 by President Clinton, and will soon include "wayside" markers helping tell the camp's story. ■

## GLAS Chapter Installs New Leaders



Chapter officers and board members of the Greater L.A. Singles JACL were installed recently at the Toyota USA Automotive Museum by Pacific Southwest District Gov. Alayne Yonemoto.

Picture above (l-r): Yonemoto, GLAS President Janet Okubo, Vice President-Legislation Miyako Kadogawa, Treasurer Joyce Okazaki, Vice President-Programs/Membership Louise Sakamoto, Sally Akazawa, Ayako Okada, Remy Michelle Nakao and Paul Bannai. ■

## Sue Embrey to be Honored at Manzanar

"One Life... a Legacy for All," is the theme for the 38th annual Manzanar Pilgrimage, sponsored by the Manzanar Committee, which will be held April 28 at the Manzanar National Historic Site.

This year's event will honor the dedication, fighting spirit and the legacy left by Sue Kunitomi Embrey, who passed away in May, 2006.

Embrey, who was interned at Manzanar during World War II, was the former chair of the Manzanar Committee and was a founder of the Manzanar Pilgrimage. She was also the driving force behind the movement to create the Manzanar National Historic Site.

"Sue was very angry [about being interned]," said Rose Ochi, a former chair of the Manzanar National Historic Site Advisory Commission in a recent interview with the Ball State University Electronic Field Trips program.



"But she took the anger and it fueled a lifetime dedicated to make certain that this story, this very tragic episode in this country's history, be memorialized in order to ensure that it would never happen to any group again."

"She used her anger to be a springboard for action," added Ochi. "And it fueled her to be a champion for change."

In addition to the afternoon program, the popular Manzanar After Dark program is scheduled for that evening.

Buses to the Pilgrimage will be available, one leaving from Little Tokyo and another, sponsored by the Gardena Valley YWCA. For reservations and information from Los Angeles, contact Tak Yamamoto at 818/894-7723 and from the Gardena/Torrance area call 310/327-5356.

Further details about the Pilgrimage will be announced at a later date.

For more information, please contact the Manzanar Committee at 310/532-7562 or 310/908-7508 or send e-mail to manzcomm@yahoo.com. ■

## JACS Announces Funding Opportunities for 2007

The Japanese American Community Services of Southern California, Inc. (JACS) announces that applications for the 2007 annual grants funding cycle are available on their Web site.

JACS has been quietly providing seed money to a broad range of community and social service groups serving the Nikkei and Asian Pacific Islander communities for 45 years.

"This has changed in the past five years. We have really formalized our grants programs and sharpened our focus areas. In 2006, JACS provided funding to seven different organizations. We hope to continue this trend in 2007," said Dean Matsubayashi, president.

"We are interested in supporting projects and organizations who are doing good work in the Asian Pacific Islander community. Last year, we supported Visual Communications' Save Our Stories project to preserve 200 videotapes from Little Tokyo's Redevelopment era. We also provid-

ed funding to the Southeast Asian Community Alliance's Youth Leadership Project to provide multi-ethnic organizing in the Cambodian, Lao, Chinese, Thai and Vietnamese community," said Jenni Kuida, second vice president of JACS.

The origins of JACS can be traced back to Shonien, a Los Angeles-based children's home and day nursery for Japanese immigrants in the early 1900s. After World War II and the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans, the Shonien redirected its focus to provide family and community social services. The Shonien home was sold and proceeds placed in a trust fund in 1961, and the Shonien became the Japanese American Community Services of Southern California, Inc.

The application deadline is March 31. Awards will be announced June 1. Applications can be obtained from the Web site at <http://www.jacs-fund.org>. ■



# Ohno Moves From the Ice Rink to the Dance Floor

(Continued from page 1)

laughing about the new experience. "I'm going to have fun. I'm going to make the most of it."

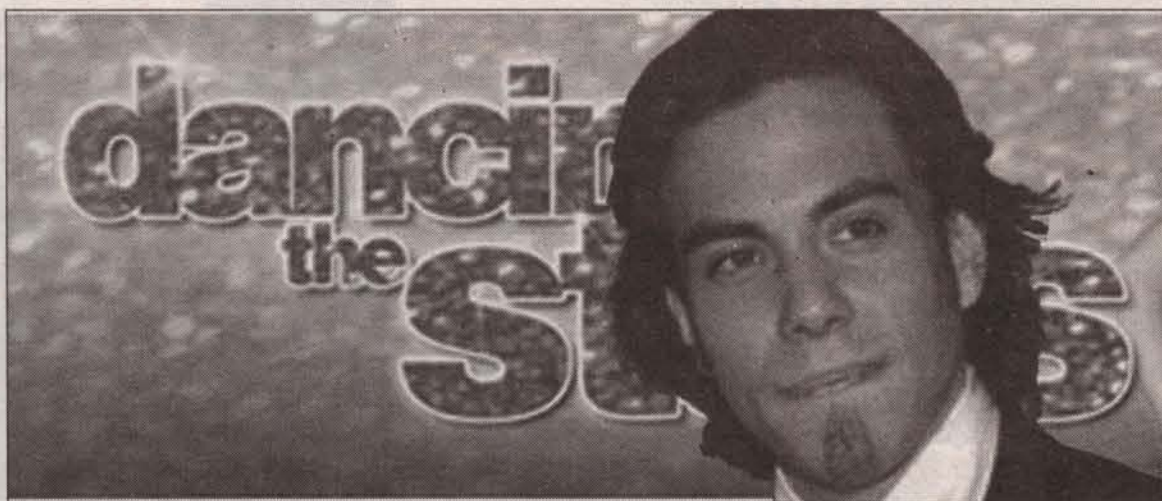
The show, which will premiere its fourth season March 19, pairs a cast of stars with professional dancers in a competition where judges critique the performances and viewers call in votes for their favorite pair.

Don't worry, Apolo has some rhythm and moves. He has experience dancing and a lot of discipline, but a little free styling in a nightclub is different from ballroom dancing, he said.

"There are so many rules! You have to keep your back stiff ... in speed skating I'm used to having my back nicely rounded!"

Since the cast was recently announced, they've already had a few dance sessions and Apolo, who doesn't have any formal dance experience, is learning the basics before he has to leave for training in another competition — his signature sport of short-track speed skating.

He is after all a two-time Olympian and the winner of two



*'There are so many rules! You have to keep your back stiff ... in speed skating I'm used to having my back nicely rounded!'*



Championships in Milan, Italy March 9-11.

"To go to nationals and defend my crown is amazing," he said. "Being 24 and having gone to two Olympics to reap the successes and awards ... I've completed all the goals I've set for myself. It's the duty of it now — to compete for the love of it."

Although he's proud of all his Olympic medals, his most recent gold medal win in Torino in the 500 was a personal victory.

"Everything was perfect, the positioning, overcoming injury ..." said Apolo, who cites "consistency" as his biggest achievement.

Is another Olympics in his future? Yes, he will be at the 2010

Vancouver Winter Games, but he's still debating the role he's going to play.

"I'm leaning towards competing again," said Apolo, who is moving from Colorado Springs to Salt Lake City to train. He's also looking for sponsors who can make his competitive dream come true.

In Apolo's world, the pressure to excel is always intense.

"I think whenever I compete, I'm expected to win. It's a sport that comes down to one-thousandth of a second or a photo finish ... but that's the beauty of sport — performing under pressure."

Fortunately, he's used to pressure. Apolo started speed skating at 14.

Before that, he dabbled in all kinds of sports like swimming until speed skating changed his life.

The world will have to wait to see if dancing will be his next sport of choice. Apolo and his father Yuki Ohno, a hairstylist, are already discussing a different look for the usually coiffed athlete.

"I will have my father there and some friends and family. I'll have a support system there," he said about his upcoming time on "Dancing with the Stars."

His name is so synonymous with excellence that it's easy to forget he's another Asian Pacific American community member. Outside of the arena, he has a passion for commercial real estate and fast cars.

"I'm a regular 24 year old. I love having fun."

But in the speed skating arena, he's considered a veteran.

When he decides to hang up his skates, he's interested in broadcasting because he's comfortable on camera and in the spotlight. He's also expressed interest in conquering Hollywood.

"It's a very interesting world," said Apolo about his future.

But it's one step at a time. Right now, he's learning to swivel to salsa music and urging people to vote for his smooth moves. ■

The fourth season of 'Dancing with the Stars' starts March 19, 8 p.m. EST.

For more information:  
www.apoloantonohno.com;  
http://abc.go.com/primetime/dancing/

## GARLIC KING

(Continued from page 1)

1916, became the original "Garlic King" as the first to commercially farm the crop in the city now known as "The Garlic Capitol of the World." His success afforded him the opportunity to build a traditional Japanese home from original parts of an art exhibit in 1941. The home is registered as a historic site in Santa Clara County, but for longtime residents and community members it's the family legacy that made the place invaluable.

"It's like time travel seeing something this unusual in the garlic field," said Naomi Hirahara, a mystery novelist who co-wrote a 2003 memoir with Manabi Hirasaki, Jimmy's son.

## Building a Home Among the Garlic Fields

The Hirasaki's ranch style home needed a touch of old world. Jimmy dreamt of building a traditional Japanese style house like the ones that dotted the memories of his childhood growing up in Kumamoto-ken.

He wanted a garden more than anything, said Manabi, who became a successful strawberry farmer.

The opportunity came at the end of the popular Golden Gate International Exposition in 1941, when Jimmy purchased the Japanese Pavilion, an opulent exhibit built for display by Shinzaburo and Gentaro Nishiura with its own pagoda and *kozashiki*, a traditional Japanese sitting room.

Jimmy reportedly paid \$23,000 for the piece, hired seven carpenters and the Nishiura brothers to reassemble and expand it into a five-room house next to their existing home. It took about 10 months of construction to complete. Manabi had just graduated from high school and left Gilroy to attend the University of California, Davis. When he returned home for the first time for Thanksgiving, it was a different house, he said.

"He was only 41, young and

ambitious," said Manabi. "Not many people would tackle a project like that."

After its completion, the Japanese style house became a landmark to the local community and a proud display of the entrepreneur's heritage.

## The Peonies Kept Growing

Like other parts of the U.S., effects of the Pearl Harbor bombing rippled through rural Gilroy like a cold snap and Jimmy, a highly regarded community leader, was ensnared in the fervor. He was arrested in 1942 by the Federal Bureau of Investigations and sent to an alien detention center in Bismarck, North Dakota before being released and reunited with the rest of his family in Grand Junction, Colorado.

Manabi volunteered for the military and joined the 522nd C Battery while Lawson joined the famed 442nd RCT.

With the Hirasaki family gone, the house was a silent sentinel during the years of injustice. When the family returned, the colorful peonies that had thrived in the garden before the war were still blooming despite the neglect. Mineko would later tell Rogers that the blossoms were symbols of renewed hope and the loyalty of friends and neighbors who watched over the house and property.

Through the years, Jimmy's reputation as a community leader solidified the home as an architectural jewel. His son-in-law carried on the legacy.

The Sakais moved into the house in the 1960s and Joanne has fond childhood memories of growing up in the historic house and poking out the rice paper in the doors, she said with a laugh.

"The house may have had a role in the local community, but its significance was not well known outside the community until Lawson's exploits as a veteran of the 442nd and his personal life became more well known," said Larry Oda, JACL national president.

At press time, renovation efforts have not been announced. ■



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## GOLF

## Miyazato Mania Returns for a Second Year

KAPOLEI, Hawaii—Ai Miyazato is everywhere in Japan: on billboards at the airport, magazine covers, TV commercials and daily sports pages. But Miyazato isn't satisfied with just being a superstar in Japan — she wants to be a winner in the United States.

In the first two U.S. LPGA Tour events of the year, the smallish shot-maker commanded the largest galleries and media attention. There were more than 50 Japanese reporters and photographers in Ai's Army following her every move in the Fields Open, which ended Feb. 24 with Miyazato closing with a 66 to tie for third.

"I get so much exposure in the Japanese media that (American) people see me not for my golf but as this person who is famous in Japan," she said. "But if I win here and move up, I think they'll respect my golf. I'd like people to start to see my game."

The 21-year-old Miyazato is entering her second season on the American women's golf tour after a winless rookie season. She had seven top-10 finishes last year, including a third-place tie in the LPGA Championship.



Playing in each tournament last year was a really good experience," said Miyazato, who lives part-time near Los Angeles. "It was my dream to improve my game and then come play in the United States. I had some tough times last year but it was really fun."

Many challenges confronted Miyazato.

"First, English. Next, the level of play is much higher than Japan. Everyone here is very competitive, so to win, you need a lot of concentration," she said.

She's still working on her English, which has improved greatly with the help of manager Takumi Zaoya, but it isn't as smooth as her effortless swing.

Her goals this year are simple: to win soon and finish in the top-10 on the money list. She finished 22nd last year with \$532,053 in 21 events.

It's not as though Miyazato hasn't experienced winning. It seems she adds to her trophy collection almost every time she returns to Japan, winning twice last year, giving her 13 victories in three years.

So why not stay in Japan and keep winning?

"I want to be more strong like Tiger Woods," she said. "There's a lot more I can learn in Japan, but it's been my dream to win over here, and I want to fulfill my dream." ■

## BASEBALL

## Dice-K Sharp in First Batting Practice

FORT MYERS, Florida—Photographers jammed the left-field line from home plate to third base. Daisuke Matsuzaka threw the first pitch of his first batting practice. Then he threw 43 more — fastballs, curves, sliders and changeups.

When the Japanese star was done, Red Sox pitching coach John Farrell gave him a positive review.

"He's as advertised," Farrell said. "He really is."

Matsuzaka threw batting practice for the first time with Boston on Feb. 24 and was very sharp. Josh Beckett and Curt Schilling took the mound before him but they might as well have been anonymous rookies. Everyone was waiting for the Matsuzaka show.

Manager Terry Francona has seen as much scrutiny of a batting practice session, if not more, when he managed a star from another sport at Birmingham in the Chicago White Sox system in 1994.

"Remember, I had Michael Jordan," Francona said, "and this guy can't dunk."

That's of no concern to the Red Sox, who love Matsuzaka's ability to throw six different pitches effectively with great control and movement.

The four minor leaguers who stepped in against him attested to that even though Matsuzaka or catcher Jason Varitek told them what pitch was coming.

"The guy's got good stuff. It's not a myth. It's not a tall tale," said Bobby Scales, who was the first bat-

ter to hit against him and let the first pitch — a bit high — go by.

"The changeup was really good. It seems like it never gets to you and it just kind of floats."

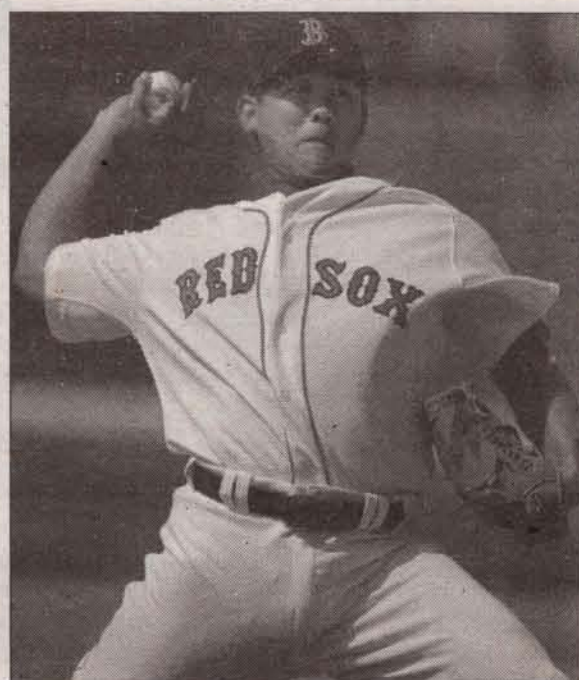
"It was impressive," said Kevin Cash, next into the batter's box. "All his breaking balls he throws for strikes and very sharp."

Matsuzaka already had thrown three bullpen sessions, firing 103 pitches to Varitek in the last one, an amazing number early in spring training.

On Feb. 24, he took the next step to what the Red Sox hope will be greatness for a 26-year-old right-hander, who was acquired from the Seibu Lions and signed a six-year contract.

"Generally, it is easier for me to pitch against a batter," Matsuzaka said. "As I threw more pitches I felt that my arms were moving smoother so you saw what I was feeling."

Matsuzaka threw his first 20



(AP PHOTO/STEVEN SENNE)

Boston Red Sox pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka delivers a pitch during batting practice at the team's minor league training complex, in Fort Myers, Fla.

pitches from the stretch position and the next 20 from a full windup. He followed that with one pitchout to each side of the plate and then one pitch to the outside of both sides with Varitek in a crouch. His fastball sped up as the session progressed. Of his 44 pitches, 20 were breaking balls.

Matsuzaka is scheduled to make his first exhibition game appearance March 2 against Boston College. He's expected to throw 35 pitches or two innings, whichever comes first.

■

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- Nov. 7 Okinawa/Kyushu/Shikoku - \$3995 - 3 Days Okinawa, Kyushu - Kuratsu - Nagasaki - Kumamoto - Beppu, Shikoku - Ashizuri - Kochi - Takamatsu - Osaka.

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## BASKETBALL

## Spawned by Yao Ming, China's Next Basketball Generation is Taking Next Step

BEIJING—To understand China's basketball ambitions, look no further than the four Chinese characters that adorn 16 glass backboards in a sprawling sports complex near Tiananmen Square.

"Basketball's new generation surpassing the old," they read.

In the shadow of those boards, 18-year-old Li Boyang is the next generation — the one Yao Ming spawned. He speaks English, lugs a scuffed orange basketball and happily hands over about \$2 to play an hour of half-court at the Dongdan Sports Center.

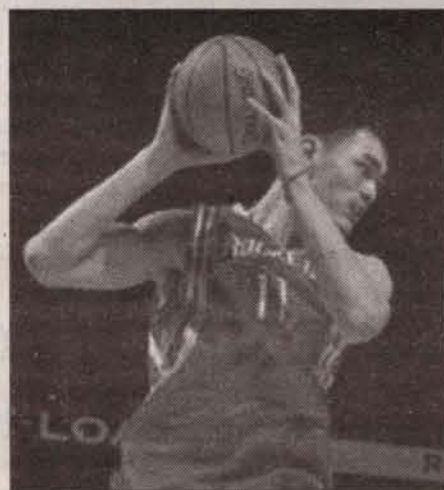
"When Yao Ming made the NBA, it started to get us interested in basketball," said Li. "For many of us, it was Yao."

American missionaries brought basketball to China in the 1890s, but the Houston Rockets' 7-foot-6 center has converted the game into street cool.

Called "lanqiu" (pronounced lahn-chew) in Chinese, basketball in China represents America's most successful sporting export. The NFL has lost money trying to transplant its game abroad — mostly in Europe as NFL Europa. And Major League Baseball has dented few nontraditional markets looking for new revenue.

Both are trying to crack China. The NFL will play the exhibition China Bowl in Beijing in August — the New England Patriots vs. Seattle Seahawks — and MLB eventually may stage a regular-season game in a stadium being built for the 2008 Olympics.

But the NBA already has a 50-member staff — its largest abroad



— and a game with deep roots.

The NBA generates about 10 percent of its \$3 billion revenue outside the United States, and China is the biggest overseas contributor.

The NBA boasts 20,000 stores in China that carry its merchandise. China's biggest broadcaster, state-run CCTV, airs four NBA games weekly, and 50 other stations across the country telecast games.

The NBA has landed local sponsors, including Lenovo, the Chinese computer maker that bought IBM's personal computer division, and Chinese sporting goods company Li-Ning, founded by an earlier sports hero, Olympic and world champion gymnast Li Ning. Inner Mongolia dairy Mengniu came aboard last month.

The NBA's numbers have risen steadily since 2001, despite games being aired in the morning. The NBA claims 347 million TV viewers in China this season.

The ratings could get another spike from China's latest star, 2.13-meter (7-foot) forward Yi Jianlian,

who's expected to go in the first round of this year's NBA draft. He'll be the fourth Chinese to make the NBA, following Wang Zhizhi, Mengke Bateer and Yao.

And there'll be more from a country where 300 million — the entire population of the United States — play the game.

Yi, who plays for the Guangdong Tigers in the Chinese Basketball Association, is quick and athletic with a deadly perimeter shot.

Many compare the 19-year-old — some dispute his age — to David Robinson or Pau Gasol.

"He's no Yao Ming, but everything about him is first-round material," Xia said.

Despite Yao's success, he's the only Chinese in the NBA among about 90 non-American players.

"It's very competitive, that's why," Ueberroth said.

Once a marginal league run under communist central planning, the CBA has improved with more foreign coaches and players. American Bruce O'Neil, who runs the United States Basketball Academy in Oregon has helped the revamp.

"China is where Europe was 20-30 years ago, but it's only going to take China 10 years to catch up," O'Neil said. "After the 2008 Olympics you are going to see a lot of players going to the NBA." ■

Stories by Associated Press and P.C. Staff



• CHERYL WATAMURA MARTINEZ •

## A BROAD VIEW

## A Taste of Germany



As a Japanese American, I really suffered from food withdrawal when I first arrived in Germany 20 years ago. Where was my Kikkoman soy sauce, my Nishiki rice, my *furikake*? No *mochi* for New Year's, no *daikon* to spice things up?

Well, I'm happy to say, things have changed in the last two decades, and these days it is possible to find the basics. Provided you live in a big city, know where to look, are prepared to pay a premium price, and can read non-translated Japanese labels. Anyway, there is an upside to the situation. I finally had to learn to cook, in order to re-create something close to those tastes of home.

There are several food-related customs though, that are pretty different to what we're used to at home. If you're planning a trip to Germany, be warned: Table manners and eating habits are sometimes impossible to decipher. Please read this before going out and embarrassing yourself. Take it from me; I had to learn the hard way.

1) When eating, keep both hands clearly visible on the table at all times. I don't know what Germans think you're doing with them under the table, but apparently it's something bad.

2) Bread here is un-squishable (as in Wonder Bread) and therefore not suited for peanut butter sandwiches. Good peanut butter is hard to find anyway. Give it up.

3) Germans believe that reheating cooked mushrooms and then eating them will kill you. Never serve them to a guest unless you don't want them to come back.

4) French fries are eaten with mayonnaise. You can eat them with ketchup, but are then immediately identified as a foreigner.

5) Coca Cola cures a stomachache. In other countries, it gives you one.

6) Bread with cold cuts and cheese are considered a great dinner and are not only served by extremely poor people.

7) Most women under 35 only eat salads when in the company of other people.

8) Large quantities of beer is said to clean out the system.

9) Eggs should not be kept refrigerated because moisture makes them

go bad.

10) Hard liquor is good for stomachaches.

11) Jell-O is called Wackel (shaking) pudding and is eaten plain and only in the secrecy of your own home.

12) Eating in a smoky restaurant with extremely slow and boorish service is considered relaxing. Dinners of 5 or 6 hours are not uncommon. Take a cushion along.

13) Sauerkraut is not as popular as we are led to believe in the U.S.A.

14) Do not ask for substitutions on the menu. It is legal for the cook to throw you out.

15) The pet food section of supermarkets is always larger and better stocked than the baby food section.

16) MacDonald's is considered unhealthy and fattening. Oily frankfurters and deep-fried shaved potatoes are not.

17) Pigs are served in a huge variety of ways:

a. Pig fat: used to spread on bread

b. Jellied pig: called Sülze

c. Huge pig hocks: looks unappetizing but are a specialty

d. Smoked pig: does not have to be cooked

e. Pig feet: also jellied and usually bought in a jar

f. Ground pig

g. Etc.

18) Wine is good for the heart — and also for stomachaches.

19) Smoking while others are eating is not bad manners but complaining about it is.

20) Dogs are allowed in restaurants because they get very lonely dining alone. ■

*If you've experienced any strange habits or customs while visiting Germany, please let me know about them! Just send an e-mail to Cheryl@texter-koeln.de.*

• YUMI SAKUGAWA •

## MEMOIRS OF A NON-GEISHA

## A Blank Canvas



This weekend, I really should have been working on my studio art assignments. Or at the very least sleeping in my own bed. Instead, I was spending two nights in a row in a cramped digital media lab doing a last-minute editing marathon of a four-minute movie that I plan on showing at the next show production of my campus Asian American theater group.

I believe this is the first time that I ever wore the same clothes and the same contact lenses for three days straight. It was not a pretty sight. Have I ever done the same thing for an art class? Never.

Because while this just might be college senioritis talking, I am currently not feeling the whole art thing. I am not feeling the whole sitting around in a studio space and going into extensive conversations about lines and shapes thing.

I miss my sophomore and junior year when I could afford to take Japanese language classes or interesting Asian American Studies classes on contemporary literature or different ethnic communities. As much as I hate to admit it, taking only art classes for an entire quarter makes me rather unhappy.

And as my graduation date begins rearing its ugly head in the not-so-distant future, I realize that the fine art world does not particularly light my mental fire. I can manage to get excited about waking up at eight in the morning on my Christmas vacation to work on writing a one-act scene for my theater group.

I can suck it up and spend entire weekends with the Nikkei Student Union painting elaborate backdrops for our annual Cultural Night, even if four to six hours worth of work is

only going to be on stage for 10 minutes and get promptly trashed that very night.

I get psyched about meeting new people in conferences for college students like myself, whether they be for Japanese Americans or Taiwanese Americans who wanted our group to present a workshop on AAs and the performance arts.

Somehow, I don't get the same excitement at the idea of going to art grad school and schmoozing in the museum circuits to get gallery openings for large-scale paintings.

And so many of my classmates are realizing the same thing with their own particular majors as they get sucked more and more into their Asian ethnic orgs.

Clearly I am not the only species of this particular breed of AA college students: crazy people who choose to kill themselves over extracurricular activities and student-run ethnic organizations while conveniently ignoring the fact that they are full-time students who technically should have classes.

We are practicing dance steps for our next Filipino American cultural night in isolated parking lot spaces instead of studying for our physics

exam. We are helping organize events in Little Tokyo, fundraising money for the campus Asian Pacific Coalition and mentoring kids in Koreatown.

Meanwhile, our textbooks and course readers gather dust in the living room. Post-it note reminders to search for summer internships in biomechanical engineering magically disappear from our attention. And somehow this so-called extracurricular becomes instead, a possible career opportunity — even a life calling.

While art-making will always play a significant role in my life, I sometimes wonder if the art I'm really interested in is not so much the brushstrokes on canvas that strive for artistic immortality, but the art of building connections within a community, however tenuous and difficult.

I have been neglecting my latest painting project for my extracurricular activities. It sits in the corner of my studio space, a blank white canvas waiting to be filled in. Just like my future. ■

*Yumi Sakugawa is currently attending UCLA*

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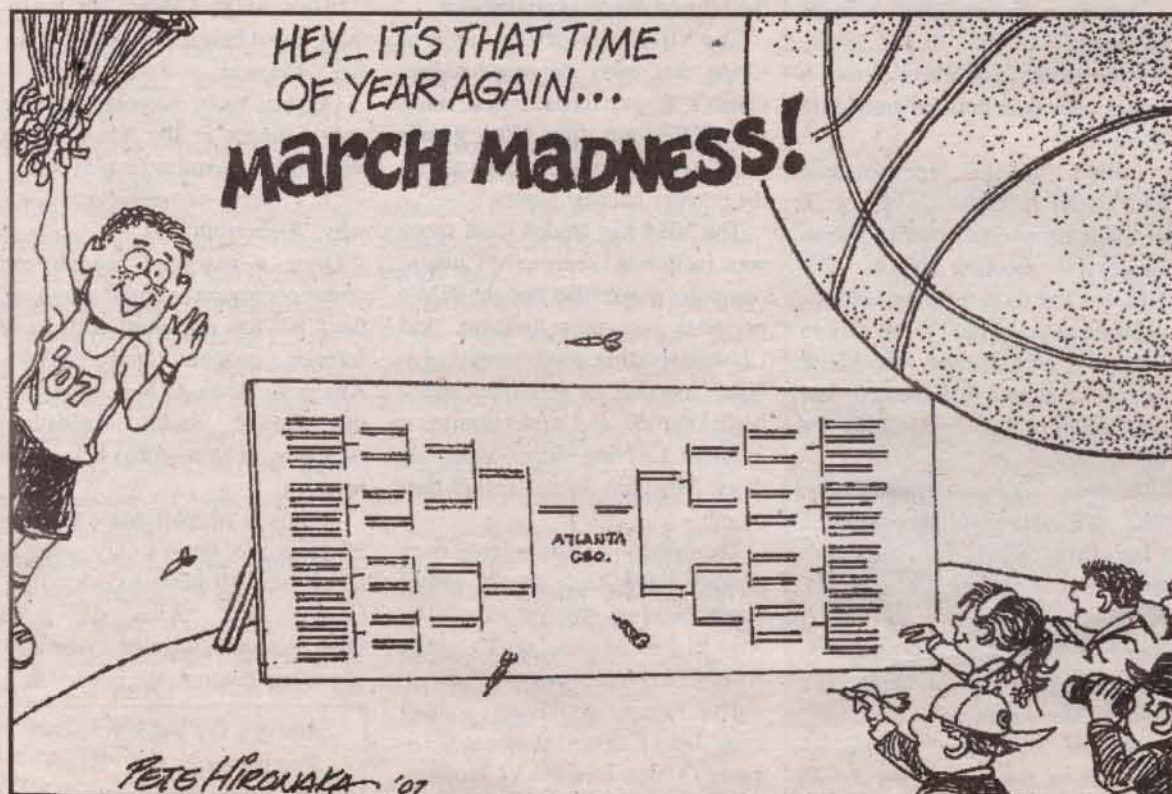
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## Fast Tracking Through Hollywood

Kelly Hu, the beauty queen turn butt-kicking babe, stretches her acting talent with two new gritty film roles and a comedy TV series.

By LYNDALIN

Kelly Hu is going nowhere.

She's stuck on the 405, Los Angeles's most clogged artery in the freeway system, on her way to meet with her acting coach with no one but the *Pacific Citizen* to keep her company. Over the phone, Hu's voice crackles with intensity as car horns bleat in the background.

That's L.A. for you — its promise of fast fame lures in countless of dreamers like the former Miss Teen USA, who moved here from Hawaii when she was 18, fresh out of high school and bursting with dreams.

"When people are young they have humungous dreams," said Hu. "I had a timeline for myself to land a TV series in five months."

Fast-forward to the present, Hu is now 39 with an extensive filmography (search "Kelly Hu" on [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)), two new movies showing at the upcoming San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival and a starring role on an ABC primetime comedy series.

Hu's career — unlike the 405 — is moving fast and there are perks that go with a skyrocketing career.

"Now I get to go to gifting suites!" she said, laughing. "It's the little things."

### She's Comes Undone

In "Shanghai Kiss," Hu is in peak femme fatale form as Micki Yang, a sophisticated lady from Shanghai who beguiles American-born Liam Liu (Ken Leung). For the first time, the Hawaii native had to play a non-Asian Pacific American character. To perfect her accent, she studied the inflection of other Asian artists like Bai Ling and Joan Chen. In the film, Hu bristles incredulously to Leung's American arrogance: "But you are Chinese!"

"Everyone can relate to at some point in their life feeling like they don't fit in," said Hu, who is of

Chinese, Hawaiian and English ancestry.

She departs from her usual glamorous image in "Undoing," a gritty neo-noir film where she plays Vera, a wilting waitress who's prone to trouble and emotional turmoil. In real life you would like Hu — a black belt in karate — to be in your corner over wispy Sung Kang, her onscreen boyfriend.

"Throw a few kicks and suddenly you're this martial arts queen!" said Hu. "I love to be known as a kick ass character. It really is who I am. I'm not just some actor pretending. I actually enjoy [martial arts]."

"I actually consider myself the laziest actor in Hollywood because I love life," she added. "There are some actors who live and breathe acting — all the more power to them — but I really enjoy life outside of acting."

### Small Screen Valedictorian, Real Life Waitress

Lately, there hasn't been much time outside of work. Besides her two new films, she will invade your living room Wednesday nights in "In Case of Emergency," a television series about a group of twenty-something former high school classmates who still don't know what to do with their lives. Hu stretches her comedic talents as Kelly Lee, a high school valedictorian-turn-masseuse who is prone to going to work in a tiny bikini.

"I've never wanted a series to [be successful] more than this, because the people I'm working with I

absolutely love," she said about the show's return Feb. 28, after unfairly being pitted against "American Idol," the current hands-down ratings winner.

With a cast of comedic veterans like Jonathan Silverman and David Arquette, Hu feels a little out of place.

"This is kind of new," she said about playing a comedic lead. "I try to do everything. I can't be that picky. I've always felt lucky. I never thought that I was better than the job. I'm just happy just to be working and to not have to wait tables on the side."

But then again there was that one time in her earlier days when she became a cocktail waitress in a trendy L.A. eatery — she only lasted a week, promptly leaving the job after she accidentally spilled a strawberry drink on a producer's white cashmere top.

"I seriously cried about that!" she said laughing.

### Hu's the Role Model?

In the APA community where mainstream media recognition is at a premium, gain a little fame and suddenly you're the spokesperson for the entire community.

It's a title Hu rebelled against for a long time partly because of her stint as Miss Teen USA when at 16, she was expected to speak intelligently about war, peace and everything in between.

"I wanted to be able to make my mistakes, say things without being judged. I say stupid things all the time!"

Now Hu is more comfortable in her role model status and uses her celebrity to support causes close to her heart like Reef Check Hawaii, an environmental organization that preserves the reef health of her native home. She also supports building schools in Botswana, and animal rights organizations because of her dog, the love of her life.

"He's a mutt like me," she said. ■

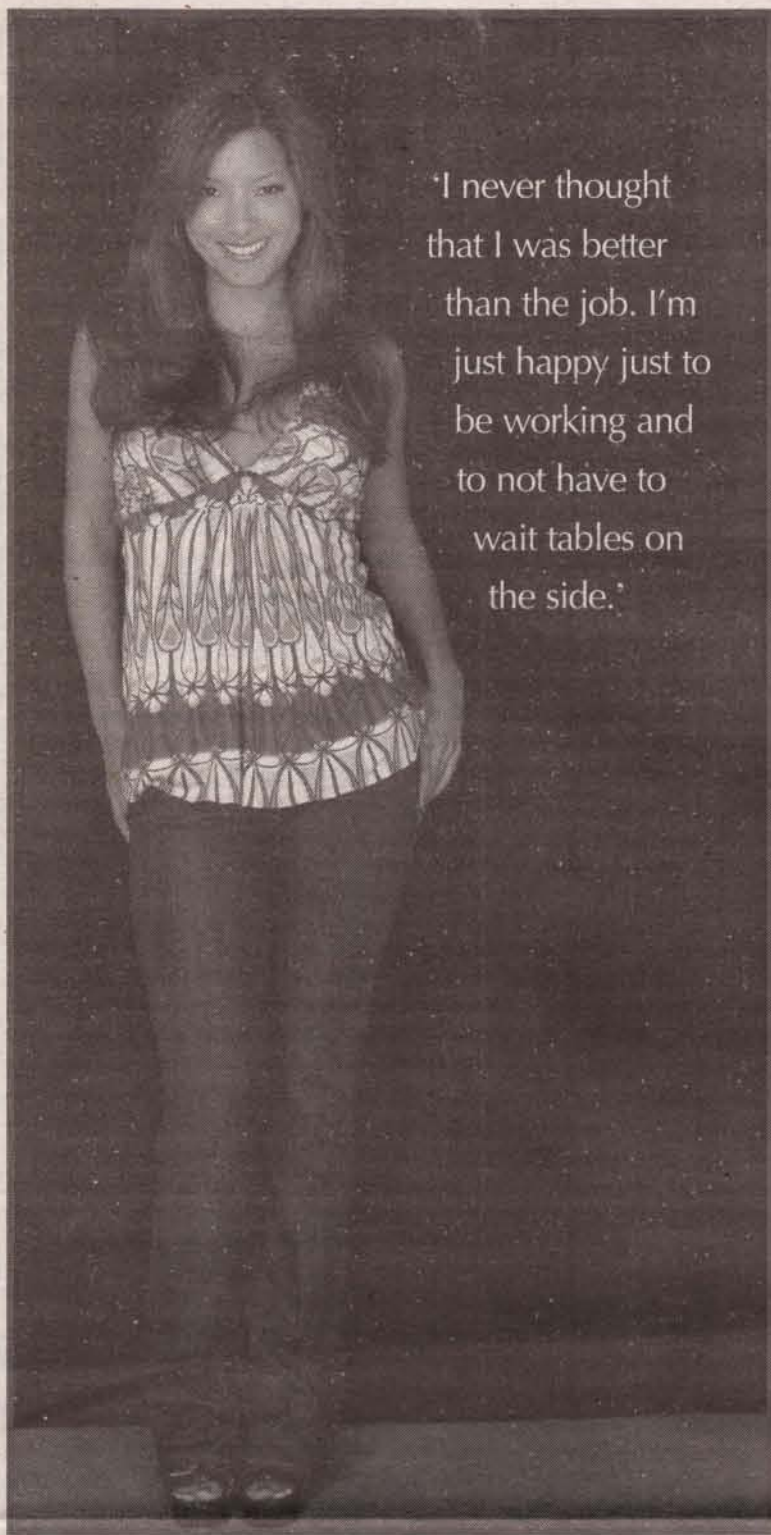


(ABC/RON TOM)

Hu plays a former valedictorian with Greg Germann (left) and Jonathan Silverman (right) in ABC's 'In Case of Emergency.'

### SECRET ASIAN MAN™ By Tak

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(ABC/BOB D'AMICO)

"I never thought that I was better than the job. I'm just happy just to be working and to not have to wait tables on the side."

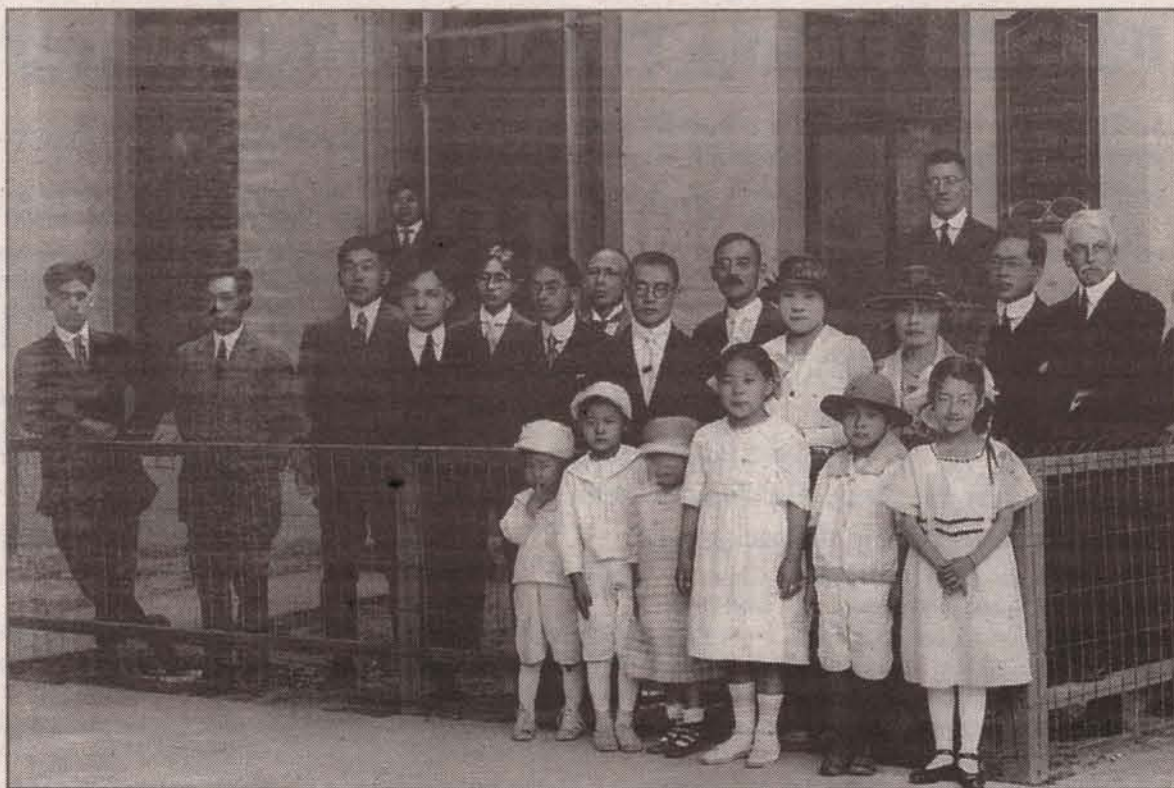
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The Parkview Presbyterian Church, founded in 1912 by the Japanese American community, will be celebrating their 95th year in the community of Sacramento. An April 1st commemoration is planned.

## Calendar

### National

#### SAN JOSE

**June 29-July 1**—JACL National Youth/Student Conference: "Cultivating Leaders by Defining Our Roots"; Santa Clara University; conference is open to high school and college students from all over the United States; housing will be in the dormitories. Info: [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org).

#### WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Wed., Sept. 12**—Gala Dinner, "A Salute to Champions Gala Dinner"; J.W. Marriott Hotel; \$200/person, \$2,000/table of 10; honorees will be given awards for their work in championing the goals and efforts of the civil rights community. Info: 202/223-1240 or [dc@jacl.org](mailto:dc@jacl.org).

### East

#### PHILADELPHIA

**Sat., Mar. 17**—60th Anniversary Graduate Recognition/Installation Luncheon; noon-3 p.m.; Maggiano's Italian Restaurant, 205 Mall Blvd., King of Prussia; guest speaker, Philip Tajitsu Nash, JD, professor of Asian American Studies, University of Maryland; \$35/members, \$40/non-members, \$20/students. Info: Scott Nakamura, 610/878-2237 or Toshie Abe, 609/683-9489.

#### WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Thurs., Mar. 8**—Lecture, Author Roland Kelts; 6:30 p.m.; Japan Information and Culture Center Auditorium, Lafayette Center III, 1155 21st St. NW; Kelts, author of "Japanamerica: How Japanese Pop Culture has Invaded the U.S. will examine the relationship between America and Japan and the influence they have on each other's pop culture; reservations are required, [jccrsvp@winter07@embjapan.org](mailto:jccrsvp@winter07@embjapan.org). Info: 202/238-6949 or [www.embjapan.org/jicc](http://www.embjapan.org/jicc).

**Mar. 31-April 15**—National Cherry Blossom Festival; 10-7 p.m. daily; Independence Ave. near 17th St. NW.

### Midwest

#### CLEVELAND

**Sat., Mar. 24**—One-Day Food and Rummage Sale; Cleveland Buddhist Temple, 1573 E. 214th St. Info: 216/692-1509.

### Northern California

#### SACRAMENTO

**Sun., April 1**—Parkview Presbyterian 95th Anniversary Celebration; 10 a.m.; Parkview Presbyterian Church, 727 T St.; Info: 916/443-4464 or [www.parkviewpc.org](http://www.parkviewpc.org).

#### SALINAS

**Sat., July 7**—Salinas Valley JACL 75th Anniversary Celebration; National Steinbeck Center. Info: Shari Higashi, 831/659-1707 or Lorrie Mikuni, 831/455-0741.

### SAN FRANCISCO

**Sat., Mar. 3**—California Civil Liberties Public Education Program informational meetings: 10:30-1:30 p.m.; San Francisco Public Library, 100 Larkin St.; meeting will help answer questions regarding the grant application or the CCLPEP program. Info: [www.library.ca.gov/cclpep](http://www.library.ca.gov/cclpep).

**Mar. 22-April 22**—Play, "After the War" by Philip Kan Gotanda; Tues.-Sat. performances at 8 p.m.; American Conservatory Theater, 415 Geary St.; "After the War" is set in San Francisco as the JAs are returning from the internment camps; tickets start at \$13.50 and are available at 415/749-2228 or [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org). Info: [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org).

**Sat., May 19**—JACL Honors John Tateishi dinner; 6-10 p.m.; South San Francisco Conference Center, 255 S. Airport Blvd.; celebrate John Tateishi's 30 years of commitment to the Asian American community and as JACL's executive director and redress director; \$75/person, \$750/table of 10; black tie optional. Info: Milo Yoshino, [miloyoshi@aol.com](mailto:miloyoshi@aol.com).

**June 2-Sept. 9**—Exhibition featuring the works of Osamu Tezuka, creator of Astro Boy; Tues.-Sun. 10-5 p.m.; Asian Art Museum, 200 Larkin St.; exhibition features more than 200 works including original drawings, covers, and poster; exhibition will be the only one in the United States; \$12/adults, \$8/seniors, \$7/youth 13-17, free for children under 12. Info: 415/581-3500 or [www.asianart.org](http://www.asianart.org).

### Central California

#### FRESNO

**Fri., Mar. 16**—Film Screening, "From Silk Cocoon"; CSU Fresno Leon Peters Education Center Auditorium; discussion with writer/director Satsuki Ina follows screening. Info: 559/434-1662.

#### HANFORD

**Through Mar. 17**—Exhibit, "The Beauty of Sharing: Twelve Collectors' Visions of Japanese Art"; 1-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.; The Ruth and Sherman Lee Institute for Japanese Art, 15770 Tenth Ave. Info: 559/582-4915 or [www.shermanleeinstitute.org](http://www.shermanleeinstitute.org).

### Southern California

#### SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

**Sun., May 20**—2nd Annual Pacific Southwest District Golf Tournament; shotgun start at noon; San Juan Hills Golf Course; \$115/player, \$400/foursome (must register together); entry fee includes range balls, cart, lunch, prizes and dinner; sponsorship opportunities are available. Info: [golf@jacpsw.org](mailto:golf@jacpsw.org) or [www.jacpsw.org](http://www.jacpsw.org).

#### TORRANCE

**Fri., Mar. 9**—Greater L.A. Singles meeting/program; 8 p.m.; Faith United Methodist Church, 2115 W. 182nd St.; Dr. Ray Imatani will present his

"Rwanda Mission" about his experiences working in Rwanda for two weeks. Info: Louise, 310/327-3169.

### VENICE

**Sun., Mar. 18**—Film screening, "Music Man of Manzanar"; 1-3 p.m.; Venice Japanese Community Center, 12448 Braddock Dr.; the story of Lou Frizzell, a teacher who taught music and drama to students at Manzanar High School; a panel discussion featuring Manzanar high alumni will share their experiences; included on the panel is former State Assemblyman George Nakano. Info: 310/719-2364.

### Arizona

#### GLENDALE

**Sun., April 1**—JACL Annual Picnic; 10-4 p.m.; Saguaro Ranch Park, 8900 N. 59th Ave.; food, games for the kids, bingo, volleyball and caricature artist Jeff West. Info: Kathy Ikeda, 480/649-1946.

### Hawaii

#### HONOLULU

**Mar. 3-June 1**—Exhibition, "Navigating Cultural Connections: Hokule'a's Voyage to Japan"; gallery hours: Tues.-Sat., 10-4 p.m.; Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i Community Gallery, First Floor; exhibition explores the historical and cultural connections between Hawai'i and Japan. Info: 808/945-7633 or [www.jcch.com](http://www.jcch.com).

### Nevada

#### LAS VEGAS

**Sept. 17-19**—Manzanar High School Reunion featuring the Clubs of Manzanar; California Hotel; anyone with photos, club rosters or emblems are asked to contact Sam Ono, 310/327-5568. Info: Sus Ioki, 310/202-9199, [sioki@comcast.net](mailto:sioki@comcast.net), Henry Nakano, 714/871-8178 or Victor Muraoka, 818/368-4113, [v.muraoka@verizon.net](mailto:v.muraoka@verizon.net).

#### RENO

**Sun., Mar. 25**—Reno JACL Teriyaki Scholarship Dinner; Washoe County Senior Center. Info: Sheldon Ihara, 747-3886.

### Brazil

#### SÃO PAULO

**July 18-21**—COPANI XIV, PANA Convention; Hotel Blue Tree Convention Ibirapuera; convention highlights include: welcome ceremony, workshops, day trip to Registro City, Japanese Festival and sayonara party. ■

### CORRECTION

On page 5 of the Feb. 16-Mar. 1, 2007, issue of the *Pacific Citizen*, the "Tri-Valley JACL" picture heading should have read "Tri-Chapter JACL Installs New Leaders."

[www.pacificcitizen.org](http://www.pacificcitizen.org)

## American Holiday Travel

### 2007 Tour Program

**SOUTH AMERICA HOLIDAY TOUR** ..... APR 25-MAY 10  
Buenos Aires, Iguassu, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo. Extension to Lima, Machu Picchu. Meet Local Nikkeis.

**JAPAN SPRING COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR** ..... MAY 19-30  
Tokyo, Lake Kawaguchi, Matsumoto, Takayama, Kanazawa, Noto Peninsula, Amanohashidate, Tottori, Matsue, Osaka.

**GRANDPARENTS/GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR** ..... JUN 24-JUL 3  
Tokyo, Hakone, Lake Hamana, Hiroshima, Kyoto.

**ALASKA HOLIDAY CRUISE** ..... JUL 28-AUG 4  
Seattle, Hubbard Glacier, Sitka, Ketchikan, Victoria, B.C. HOLLAND AMERICA - Oostendam.

**AFRICA WILDLIFE SAFARI HOLIDAY TOUR** ..... AUG 1-13  
Nairobi, Amboseli Park, Mount Kenya Park, Samburu Reserve, Lake Nakuru Park, Masai Mara Reserve. Guaranteed to see many wildlife.

**ICELAND SPECTACULAR HOLIDAY TOUR** ..... AUG 20-30  
Reykjavik, Blue Lagoon, other natural majestic sites.

**SAN FRANCISCO-NAPA VALLEY-LAKE TAHOE HOLIDAY TOUR** SEPT 19-25  
San Francisco, Napa Valley, Wine Train, Sacramento, Sierra Nevada Rail, Reno, Lake Tahoe, Dinner Cruise on Lake Tahoe.

**AUTUMN IN NEW ENGLAND HOLIDAY TOUR** ..... OCT 6-13  
Boston, Bennington, Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Factory, Lincoln, Booth Bay Harbor, Kennebunkport.

**OKINAWA-KYUSHU HOLIDAY TOUR** ..... OCT 10-23  
Naha, Beach Resort, Ibusuki, Kagoshima, Kirishima Onsen, Miyazaki, Kumamoto, Nagasaki, Fukuoka.

**SOUTH AMERICA PATAGONIA ADVENTURE TOUR** ..... NOVEMBER  
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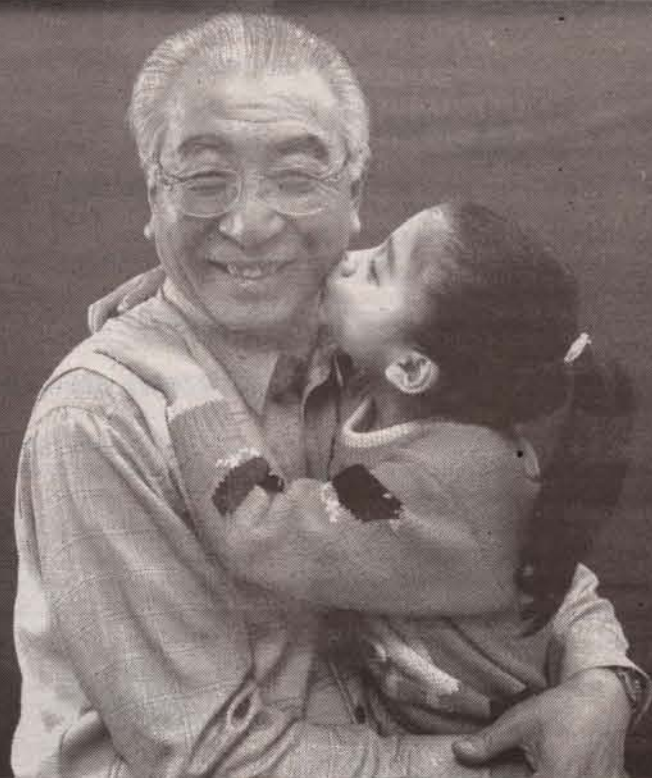
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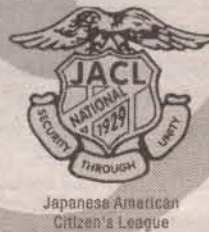
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or visit

**[www.jaclhealth.org](http://www.jaclhealth.org)**



Japanese American  
Citizen's League



In Memoriam - 2006-2007

All the towns are in California except as noted.

**Ajari, Kazue, 87,** Concord, Feb. 13; survived by sons, Allan and Bruce; sisters, Mary Masunaga, and Chizu Yoshida; brother, Kay Shiozaki; sister-in-law, Betty Nakatani; brother-in-law, Charles Ajari; 4 gc.; and 4 ggc.

*This compilation appears on a space-available basis at no cost. Printed obituaries from your newspaper are welcome. "Death Notices," which appear in a timely manner at request of the family or funeral director, are published at the rate of \$20 per column inch. Text is reworded as necessary.*

**Fujimoto, Sachiko,** Lombard, Ill., Feb. 12; survived by husband, Benjamin; daughters, Maren McCord and Rose Fujimoto; son, Martin; and 4 gc.

**Fujita, Mitsuko, 94,** Westminster, Feb. 15; survived by sons, Sam (Inah), Tadashi (Judith), Masaji (Carole) and Katsumi (Hui Lin); 6 gc.; 4 ggc.; brothers, Noboru Fujita and Saburo (Shizuko) Omae; and sister, Mitsuye Sakata.

**Goto, Masaji "Mas," 85,** Pasadena, Feb. 8; survived by sons, Kenneth and Douglas; daughter, Eleanor (Gilbert Sausedo Jr.) Goto; 2 gc.; and sister-in-law, Tamiko Goto.

**Harada, Michiko, 70,** Torrance, Jan. 31; survived by husband, Jimmy; daughters, Nancy (Ray) Toba, Amy (Paul) Mayemura and Susan Harada; 12 gc.; and 3 ggc.

**Hayashi, Mark M., 86,** Laguna Woods, Feb. 6; survived by wife, Ruby; sons, Roger (Mary) and Rex (Linda); daughter, Karen (Richard) Warner; 6 gc.; brothers, Henry (Elsie) and Tony (Lee); brother-in-law, Sam Sakai; and sisters-in-law, Shigeo Sakai and Florence Hayashi.

**Hedani, Grace Emiko, 84,** Gardena, Feb. 10; survived by sons, Bruce, Daniel and Stephen (Teri); daughter, Jean (Kenneth) Sakai; 2 gc.; sisters, Sally (Masamichi) Sueda and Nancy Tanaka; and brother, Fred (Inez) Tanaka.

**Horiba, Tak T., 82,** Whittier, Jan. 25; survived by wife, Michi; daughters, Carol and Barbara Babinski; 2 gc.; brothers, Mas (Jo) and Sabe (Sets); brother-in-law, Eichi Uyemura; and sister-in-law, Fumi (Sam) Tsuchiya.

**Iwamasa, Fumi Bette, 67,** survived by sons, Greg, Gary and Wayne (Jocelyn); 3 gc.; mother, Yoneko Kobata; and brother, Jay (Mariko) Kobata.

**Kageyama, Sei, 89,** Feb. 6; survived by wife, Chitose; daughters, Reiko (Gary) Weaver, Maurine Kageyama and Grace Sakamoto; son, Richard (Lois); 5 gc.; and sister, Fumiko Watanabe.

**Kamikubo, Gary Shigeo, 52,** Gardena, Feb. 8; survived by father, Shigeyuki; sister, Christine; brother, Bruce; and sister-in-law, Pinchieh.

**Kinoshita, Kiyoko, 94,** Harbor City; survived by daughters, Nancy Morrone, Joyce Mano, June Mano and Kimie (Gary) Nakamura; son, Shigeharu (Rose); daughter-in-law, Terumi Kinoshita; brother, Taira (Keiko) Nagao; sister, Matsuno Nagao; 15 gc.; 20 ggc.; and 6 ggcg.

**Kobata, Raymond Masao, 93,** Palmdale, Feb. 1; survived by wife, Tamaye; sons, Michael, Steve (Elizabeth) and Stacey (Jean); daughters, Doris and Susan (Nick) Seldon; 13 gc.; and 7 ggc.

**Kutsunai, Yukio, 77,** Culver City, Jan. 29; survived by wife, Kumiko; son, Roy (Maribeth); daughter, Sally (Dan) Kutsunai; 4 gc.; and sister-in-law, Yoshiye Higashi.

**Mouri, Ruth Tokeshi,** Hacienda Heights; survived by husband, George; 4 sons; 1 daughter; 14 gc.; 2 ggc.; sister, May; and brothers, Ed, Joe and Tom.

**Murakami, Kiyoko, 95,** San Jose, Dec. 7, 2006; survived by son, Bob (Sally); George (Judy) Ray (Reiko) and Denny (Carla); 13 gc.; 15 ggc.; brother, Sumio Tsuyuki; and sisters, Tamaki Kikuchi and Mariko Nakagawa.

**Murakami, Yuriko, 85,** Daly

City, Feb. 8; survived by son, Alan; daughter, Carol (Ray) Driscoll; 2 gc.; sister, Midori (Toshio) Yoshimura; and brother, Taro "Buddy" (Fumi) Kasai.

**Nagaishi, Yaeko "Mary," 88,** Feb. 7; survived by sons, Robert (Kiyoko), Norman (Karen), and Eugene (Tonya); 4 gc.; and sisters, Ann (Jim) Matsumoto and Sally (Mil) Okazaki.

**Nakano, Masako, 93,** Seattle, Wash., Jan. 25; survived by 8 gc.; and 7 ggc.

**Nishikawa, Katsumi, 80,** Feb. 10; survived by wife, Teruko; son, David; sisters, Setsuko Murata and Kumiko (Ted) Hamachi; brothers, Koji and Tommy (Marilyn).

**Oda, Mitsuko "Mitsy," 79,** Newport Coast, Jan. 31; survived by husband, Harunori; son, Kenneth (Judy); daughter, Amy (Gary) Uyemura; 3 gc.; sisters, Kazu Arisawa and Yohko (James) Arnett; and brothers, Chizu (Yoshihiko), Richard (Chiharu) and Hiroshi (Carol) Kitagawa.

**Ohara, Mitoshi Mike, 97,** Gardena, Jan. 27; survived by wife, Sachiko (Uchizono); sons, Ken (Jacqueline) and Miki (Emily) Ohara; 7 gc.; and 4 ggc.

**Ota, George Susumu, 84,** Torrance, Feb. 2; survived by wife, Masako; daughter, Kathryn (Bryan) Hori; 1 gc.; and brothers, Thomas and Ely.

**Sanematsu, Esther Yoshiko, 82,** Riverside, Feb. 4; survived by sisters, Toshiko Ito and Kazuko Inouye; and brother, Dr. Henry Sanematsu.

**Sanematsu, Dr. Henry Saburo, 80,** Newport Beach, Feb. 16; WWII veteran; survived by wife, Clara; daughter, Louise; and sisters, Toshiko Ito and Kazuko Inouye.

**Shirai, George Hiroshi, 80,** Los Angeles, Jan. 24; survived by wife, Yukiko; son, Dale; daughter, Carol (Joe) Bertoni; 4 gc.; and brother,

IN MEMORIAM  
Richard Tom, First AA to Win Olympic Medal, Passes

Richard Tom, the first Asian American to win an Olympic medal, passed away Feb. 20 at his home in Aiea, Hawaii. He was 86.

Tom won a bronze medal at the 1948 Olympic Games in London in the sport of weightlifting where he competed as a bantamweight. Harold Sakata who played "Odd Job" in the 1964 James Bond film "Goldfinger" was his teammate.

"He was a very nice person, and one of the most enthusiastic about



the sport that I knew," said Olympic champion lifter Tommy Kono, in an interview with the Honolulu Advertiser.

Tom and Kono were on the same team during the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki.

Tom was an Army veteran of World War II and retired from a government job at Schofield. Until last year Tom was still officiating at the Nuuanu YMCA weightlifting contests.

In early February Tom was inducted into the Hawai'i Sports Hall of Fame but was unable to attend because he was recovering from double bypass surgery. Kono accepted the award on his behalf.

David (Dorothy).

**Suemura, Alan Tomoki, 28,** Monterey Park, Feb. 3; survived by parents, Masaharu and Chikue; and brothers, Haruki (Leonore) and Hideki.

**Takao, Allison Yuriko, 31,** Torrance, Feb. 7; survived by parents, George and Marlene; brother, Brent (Philline); and grandmother, Mikiye Tashima.

**Tani, Tom Tamatomo, 64,** Torrance, Jan. 31; survived by wife, Etsuko; daughter, Emi; sons, Jeffrey and Jason; parents, Sumizo and Aya; brothers, Wayne (Cynthia), Eddie (Vickie), and Joey (Joann); and sister, Sugako (Chris) Kato.

**Tsuda, Tsueko, 72,** Huntington Beach, Feb. 6; survived by sons, Eugene and Albert (Lisa); 2 gc.; brothers, Hiroji, Wakinobu and Nobuteru Matsumoto; and sister, Kayoko Fujioka.

**Uragami, Mieko, 96,** Feb. 18; survived by son, Stanley (Suzanne);

daughter, Carol Tawa; 2 gc.; 4 ggc.; and sister-in-law, Frances Kino.

**Wada, Tsuyako, 101,** Chatsworth, Feb. 10; survived by daughters, Chiyoko Yoshimura, Stella Katsuki, Ruby (Hiromu) Matsuo, Barbara Hayashi, Fumi Sato and June Wada; sons, Cary, Haruo, Masaru (Pauline) and Sakaye (Kimi) Wada; daughters-in-law, Sue and Carmen; son-in-law, Minoru Takaki; sister, Teiko Yamamura; and many grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren.

DEATH NOTICE

NORENE SHIZUYE  
AKABANE-FUJINAGA

Born Dec. 11, 1920 in San Francisco and passed away Feb. 20, 2007. She is survived by son Todd Fujinaga, daughter Marsha Jung, granddaughter Misa Nakagawa, grandson Kai Nakagawa, daughter-in-law Debbie Masamori, son-in-law Sweeney Jung. A memorial service will be held at Berkeley Methodist United Church on March 3 at 11:00 am. Family requests in lieu of flowers contributions to a favorite organization or to BMU Church.

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## NASCAR

(Continued from page 1)

anti-Japanese sentiment directed at the Japanese auto industry when two laid-off autoworkers in Detroit murdered him after mistakenly identifying him as being Japanese.

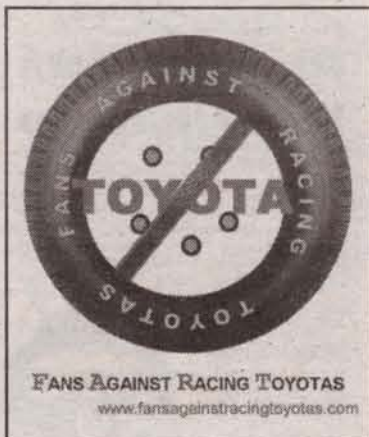
Some in the AA community see a lot of similarities between then and the current uproar over Toyota's participation in NASCAR, the most popular spectator sport with an estimated fan base of 75 million.

"I think there are many similarities — both instances involve intense economic competition between American and Japanese car companies," said C.N. Le, author of the Asian-Nation blog. "Just like they did in the early 1980s with the first wave of 'Japan-Bashing,' so too are they doing that now with the backlash against Toyota's involvement in NASCAR."

Attorney Michael Yaki, a member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, recently wrote an op-ed piece for the *New York Times* echoing similar concerns. He noted the obvious: NASCAR has many AAs fans. NASCAR also holds a number of races in California, a state which boasts the highest population of AAs.

He writes: "Nationalism, however, is the razor's edge in the American psyche, where just a push turns it into xenophobia. NASCAR, like so many professional sports before it, may soon be faced with a situation where deliberate ignorance of simmering prejudice is not an option."

Toyota now joins the "Big Three" of NASCAR: Ford, Chevrolet, and Dodge. And with Toyota closing in on General Motors as the largest car company in the United States the



Since Toyota's debut in the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series, several anti-Toyota Web sites and blogs have sprouted up including 'Fans Against Racing Toyotas.' Many NASCAR fans have issues with the Toyota drivers including David Reutimann (#00) and Michael Waltrip (#55).

comfort level for those espousing anti-Asian comments is becoming increasingly uncomfortable.

The sentiment isn't only amongst NASCAR fans either with some owners and drivers jumping onto the bandwagon of hate. Ford team owner Jack Roush has been particularly vocal saying he's preparing "for siege" and "we're going to war." In a recent Associated Press interview he said he expects "to hand Toyota their head."

Owners and some drivers believe Toyota is using its large financial resources to pump unreasonably high amounts of cash into its cars and paying exorbitant salaries to drivers so they can lure them away from other driving teams. Toyota team drivers Dale Jarrett, Michael Waltrip, and David Reutimann have been called sell outs and even been told to "leave America."

There's even a Web site dedicated to expressing some NASCAR fans hatred of Toyota: "Fans Against Racing Toyotas," or F.A.R.T. for short.

Founder Bill Bagwell, a General



Motors employee from Detroit, says one-fifth of the e-mails he receives falsely accuse him of being racist. His problem is solely with Toyota's participation in NASCAR because of what he believes are Toyota's unfair business practices.

"I'm not against the Japanese or Asian people. It's about the deep pockets of Toyota and the loyalty of people," said Bagwell who has been a NASCAR fan since the age of 16. "Toyota is coming in with unfair practices and they're using the same business model in NASCAR too."

Much of the arguments behind the anti-Toyota movement stems from the concept of foreigners being unwelcome not only in NASCAR but in America. The arguments also highlight the often-held perception that being white equals American and if you are Asian the same benefits do not apply.

Yet when Dodge recently made its way back to NASCAR after a 16 year absence, the company was welcomed with open arms even though Dodge is owned by DaimlerChrysler, a German car

company. Those in support of Toyota are also quick to point out that the cars used in NASCAR — the Ford Fusion and the Chevrolet Monte Carlo — are made in Mexico and Canada respectively. The Toyota Camry on the other hand is made right here in the United States.

"I think this whole Toyota in NASCAR episode shows just how contradictory and hypocritical some Americans can be. They still cling to these outdated ideas about who qualifies to be an American, despite documented benefits that Asian Americans like me and companies like Toyota bring to this country," said Le. "In the end, as American society continues to change and evolve, these people are destined to be left behind wondering how American society passed them by."

Still, the idea of a foreign company taking over anything considered to be "all-American" is a brick wall Toyota is going to have to face each time its cars hit the NASCAR speedways.

"In spite of all the turmoil throughout the week, we still had a good weekend at Daytona," said Lee White, senior vice president and general manager of Toyota Racing Development, USA. "I think everyone understands the mountain we have to climb and the thing that we've said is that the most important thing is for everyone to keep improving."

Luckily with some NASCAR fans, the anti-Asian sentiment hasn't turned them into Toyota or Asian haters.

"What are you afraid of ... ? Toyota's just a competitor. If you're worried about them, then make your cars better," writes "cgsk8freak" on the F.A.R.T. Web site.

"go44djttoyota" writes: "We all need to be honest ... having Toyota run in NASCAR will not make the sport any less American! GROW UP!"

As for those in the AA community who saw first hand in the 1980s what anti-Japanese sentiment can do, their hope is that a repeat isn't in the works.

Bill Yoshino, JACL Midwest director, sees some hope in the difference in attitude today, after more than 20 years.

"Some differences are that the Japanese now add much to our economy because they've established manufacturing facilities in America, and unlike the 1980s the negative sentiment isn't being whipped up in the mainstream media by public officials."

But he notes, "It's pretty clear that certain foreign owners are acceptable while others are not." ■

For information: nascar.com, Toyota.com/motorsports, fansagainstracingtoyotas.com

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