Symbol of Once-Thriving Sac’to J-Town Needs Desperate Repairs

The Nisei War Memorial Hall has seen better days. Now a committee hopes to raise the needed funds for renovations.

By CAROLINE AOYAGI-STOM
Executive Editor

Shig Shima, 82, is one of the lucky few who can still share memories of the once-thriving Japantown in Sacramento’s downtown core. As a young boy of eight, he and his dad would often drive into the area to patronage the more than 300 Japanese businesses.

“My dad used to drive me into Japantown as a child,” he said. “I would just follow my dad and do our shopping.”

A brief stop at the tofu shop or a quick snack at the manju store were often popular destinations for the father and son. Their trips to J-town were also a chance to catch up with community friends.

But today, all that remains of this historic enclave is the Nisei War Memorial Hall, a two-story building that stands just steps away from the Capitol.

Purchased in 1956 with funds raised by the community and seed money from a prominent Japanese American attorney, the building is now owned by the local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post and the Sacramento JACL chapter. Years of usage with little upkeep have created much-needed renovations. Now the two groups have formed a committee to raise the monies to help preserve the historic building.

See NISEI HALL/Page 11

The Heat is on for NBA’s 1st APA Head Coach

In April, Erik Spoelstra made history as the succes­sor to a Hall of Fame coach. It’s his love of basketball that has taken him this far.

By LYNDA LIN
Assistant Editor

Call it one of the coolest job promotions ever. For Erik Spoelstra it’s a dream come true.

After 13 seasons working with the Miami Heat, he was recently tapped to succeed Pat Riley and become the National Basketball League’s current youngest head coach. At 37, he also made history as the league’s first Asian Pacific American sideline native who has been an astronaut since 1996. The Tani family has had a long involvement with the JACL dating to the service of Tani’s father, Henry, as president of the San Francisco chapter at the outbreak of World War II.

Following Ellison Onizuka as the second JA to have ever ventured into space, Tani has taken two spaceflights during his time with NASA. He just returned from his second mission on Feb.

See SPOELSTRA/Page 10

Astronaut Dan Tani to Keynote JACL Convention

NASA astronaut Daniel M. Tani is slated to be the keynote speaker at the JACL National Convention’s Sayonara Banquet on July 19 in Salt Lake City.

A longtime JACL member, Tani is a third generation Japanese American and Chicago-area native who has been an astronaut since 1996. The Tani family has had a long involvement with the JACL dating to the service of Tani’s father, Henry, as president of the San Francisco chapter at the outbreak of World War II.

Following Ellison Onizuka as the second JA to have ever ventured into space, Tani has taken two spaceflights during his time with NASA. He just returned from his second mission on Feb.

See DAN TAN/Page 12

Bush Signs Bill Expanding Borders of Minidoka Monument

The massive public lands bill also designates Bainbridge Island’s Nidoto Nai Yoni Memorial a part of the national park system.

By Pacific Citizen Staff

With a stroke of his presidential pen, Bush signed into law a bill that expands the borders of the Minidoka Internment National Monument and designates Bainbridge Island’s Nidoto Nai Yoni memorial a part of the national park system.

The massive public lands bill, better known as the Wild Sky wilderness bill, was passed by the House on April 29 and Bush added his signature on May 8.

“This memorial proclaims that we should never again sacrifice liberty at the altar of fear,” said Rep. Jay Inslee, D-Bainbridge.

The Nidoto Nai Yoni memorial on Eagle Harbor in Washington will now become a satellite of the historic Minidoka Internment National Monument in southern Idaho. Minidoka was designated a National Monument in 2001.

The Bainbridge Island memorial marks the place where 227 Japanese American residents were taken to the Eagledale ferry dock before being sent away from the community.

See MINIDOKA/Page 12

In Immigrant Rights Movement, New Activism Meets an Old Justice

Not long ago, APAs were the target of anti-immigrant sentiment. JACL lead the fight back then. Today, some chapters are continuing the tradition.

By LYNDA LIN
Assistant Editor

When Sachiko Chermin first moved to the United States from her native Kobe, Japan she had no problems getting her visa and green card. The Shin Issei also breathed through the naturalization process to become an American citizen in 2004, so she thought it was a level playing field where everyone had the same opportunities.

Then one day, she learned a different truth.

“Japan is one of the privileged countries when it comes to immigration,” said Chermin, a Sonoma County JACL board member. In her expe-

See IMMIGRANT RIGHTS/Page 13

100th Anniversary

The Japanese Cemetery in Oxnard, Calif. marks an historic milestone.

NATIONAL PAGE 5
By FLOYD MORI

Some recent visitors to the JACL office were Shirley Higuchi and Doug Nelson, board members of the Heart Mountain, Wyoming Foundation (HMWF). They gave an update on their efforts to raise funds for an Interpretive Learning Center at Heart Mountain.

The Foundation has been in existence for 11 years and is a non-profit organization established to memorialize and educate the public about the internment of Japanese Americans at Heart Mountain near Powell, Wyoming. Their president is David R. Reetz. The foundation has set and achieved an aggressive agenda of preservation and education. They are currently seeking funds and support to build an interpretive learning center which they expect to open in 2010.

Shirley Higuchi is the assistant executive director of the Legal and Regulatory Affairs of the American Psychological Association and has served as president and board member for the District of Columbia Bar. Shirley’s parents met at Heart Mountain as children and later became reacquainted at UC Berkeley. They have supported the HMWF for many years. A self-guided walking tour at the Heart Mountain site is named for her mother, Setsuko Saito Higuchi.

Doug Nelson is president of the Annie E. Casey Foundation in Baltimore, Maryland. He is a leading advocate for children. He became interested in Heart Mountain while attending graduate school at the University of Wyoming. His social history of the World War II relocation of JAs entitled “Heart Mountain” earned a Pulitzer Prize nomination in 1976. He has taught social history at the University of Wisconsin.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a financial contributor to the educational efforts of the JACL.

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See MORI/Page 12

Letters to the Editor

Tule Lake Committee Thanks P.C. for Coverage

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HR 2506 was introduced in May 2007 by Rep. John Doolittle and co-sponsored by Rep. Doris Matsui. For the past year, the House legislation has languished, while the companion bill in the Senate, SB 1476, has sped along and is ready for passage.

In the 11 months before the P.C. began making story inquiries about the House bill, there was no activity. Within days of the story about the stalled House legislation appearing, Reps. Doolittle and Matsui acted and sent a letter requesting a Subcommittee hearing on HR 2506.

The coverage of the P.C., with its large Japanese American readership from all over the U.S., helped our grassroots community group gain the attention of members of Congress. Now that the P.C. story has focused more attention on Tule Lake, we hope that readers will take the next step and contact their local Congressional representatives and ask them to sign on as co-sponsors to HR 2506.

Thank you for your support of Tule Lake.

HIROSHI SHIMIZU
Chair, Tule Lake Pilgrimage Committee
Co-President, San Francisco JACL Chapter

Glendale Should Honor Munemori

I read with interest your article in the Pacific Citizen (P.C., April 18-May 1) about the efforts to memorialize and honor Medal of Honor recipient Sadako Munemori.

A year ago my husband and I took a tour of Italy with Tonko Doi of Waves Travel in Chicago. As a side trip from Florence she arranged for us to go to Pietra Santo where a statue to honor Sadako Munemori (left) had been erected by the grateful citizens of that community.

It was truly an emotional experience to see the life sized statue and to see on the plaque how young the young soldier was when he committed such heroism.

If the Italians can honor him, surely the citizens of Glendale can too. Please feel free to forward this to the officials of Glendale, Calif.

BETTY MORITA
Via e-mail

PACIFIC CITIZEN
250 E. First Street, Ste. 301, Los Angeles, CA, 90012
Tel: 213/620-1767, 800/986-6167
Fax: 213/620-1768
E-mail: pc@pacificcitizen.org
www.pacificcitizen.org

Executive Editor: Carolyn Y. Aoyagi-Stom
Assistant Editor: Lynda Lin
Office Manager: Brian Tambara
Circulation: Eva Lau-Ting


JACL President: Larry Oda
Natl Director: Floyd Mori
Pacific Citizen Board of Directors: Gil Asakawa, chairperson; Margerie Yamamoto, EDC; Lisa Hansason, MDC; Kathy Ishimoto, CCD; Judith Aono, NCWNPDC; Justin Kondo, PNWDC; Jeff Itami, IDC; Ted Namba, PSWDC; Naomi Oren, Youth.

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NATIONAL DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Heart Mountain Interpretive Learning Center

By FLOYD MORI

MAY 16-JUNE 5, 2008

POSTMASTER: Send address changes

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BETTY MORITA
Via e-mail
For WWII Internees, UW Degrees Come After 66-year Wait

Members of the Japanese Student Club (JSC) pose in front of the clubhouse fireplace. The JSC was a precursor of the current University of Washington Nikkei Alumni Association.

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEATTLE—The University of Washington is planning to issue honorary degrees to Japanese Americans who were students at the school, but were forced to leave campus in the months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

A ceremony to honor the former students is scheduled for May 18 at Kane Hall on the university’s Seattle campus.

In the fall of 1941, about 450 Japanese Americans signed up to study at the University of Washington.

But Pearl Harbor was attacked in December that year, and in February 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt gave the military broad powers over anyone considered a security threat.

The military banned JAs from the West Coast, forcing most of the JA UW students into out-of-state internment camps.

Many of the surviving students, most of whom are now in their late 80s, tell The Seattle Times they are excited about finally being recognized as Huskies — although others remain ambivalent, or wonder what has taken the UW so long.

Some finished their degrees after the war — at the UW or elsewhere — while others never did.

JACL Announces 2nd Annual D.C. Gala

National JACL recently announced that this year’s Gala Dinner Event will be held Sept. 25 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington, D.C.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, has agreed to serve as the honorary chairman of the gala event. Master of Ceremonies will be Congressman Mike Honda of San Jose, Calif.

The focus for this year’s Gala Dinner will be the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Several champions of the Redress Movement will be honored at the event.

Floyd Mori, national JACL director, and Larry Oda, national president, are encouraging friends and supporters to save the date of Sept. 25 and to make plans to attend this major national JACL event. Further details will be forthcoming shortly.

The national JACL held its first D.C. Gala Dinner last September. The Hon. Norman Y. Mineta, former secretary of transportation and secretary of commerce, was the honorary chair for the dinner with several members of Congress on the honorary committee.

Actor and activist George Takei served as MC and Tamaki Kawabuko, concert violinist, provided musical entertainment. The Salute to Champions event honored individuals and a corporation who have championed the causes of the JACL.

Honoraries were: Sen. Inouye, Hon. Ryozo Kato (Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the United States of America), Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, Karen Narasaki (president and executive director of the Asian American Justice Center), and State Farm Insurance, a major supporter of JACL programs, was the corporate sponsor.

GALA DINNER

Date: Sept. 25
Place: Grand Hyatt Hotel
1000 H Street NW, Washington, D.C.
Info: www.jacl.org

Al Simpson and Mineta Join Forces to Promote Heart Mountain

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

POWELL, Wyo.—Former U.S. Sen. Al Simpson and others are undertaking a nationwide campaign to raise money for a proposed state-of-the-art interpretive center at the site of the Heart Mountain Relocation Center west of Powell.

This past week they traveled to Washington, D.C., where they were joined by former Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta.

Mineta and Simpson met in 1943 as Boy Scouts at the Heart Mountain camp. The friendship forged by the two 12-year-olds 65 years ago has seen them through a life of politics, and they now serve as fundraising co-chairs for the interpretive learning center project.

The center promotion effort was to include stops in Jackson Hole and San Jose and Los Angeles in California.

Plans for the proposed $5.5 million center include an 11,000-square-foot building. The center will house a theater, two replicas of barracks that housed internees, interactive exhibits and a research facility. Designs also include a reconstructed sentry station at the camp entrance and a guard tower rebuilt in its original location.

It will provide an overview of the wartime relocation of Japanese Americans and provide visitors with personal stories of internees and local residents during World War II. Designers relied heavily on the involvement of former internees.

The fundraising campaign for the center has raised $1.2 million so far.

"We’re getting pretty close," Dave Reetz, a member of the Heart Mountain foundation board, said. "We are raising awareness of this project and for what we’re doing." The Heart Mountain camp, which is a Wyoming Heritage Site and a National Heritage Landmark, is already home to an eight-station, self-guided walking tour.

JACL Celebrates APA Heritage Month at the White House

To kick off Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, the JACL participated in a May 1 White House ceremony where President George W. Bush recognized Japanese American veterans of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team/100th Battalion and the American Heritage Month in the East Room of the White House.

"Asian American pride was felt by all during the emotional part of the program when the Japanese American veterans were extolled by President Bush for their courage, patriotism, and bravery in spite of many enduring from behind barbed wire of concentration camps into which their families were forced to live during World War II," said JACL National Director Floyd Mori.

At the event, APA leaders were also recognized including former Secretary of Transportation and Author of Public Law 102-450, Norman Y. Mineta, Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao and Congressman David Wu.

APA Heritage Month was designated by Public Law 102-450 to be held during the month of May each year to honor the achievements and contributions of APAs.

The first APA settlement dates back to 1763, when Filipinos escaped imprisonment aboard a Spanish ship and established a community near New Orleans, according to the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC).

Chinese and Japanese immigrants started communities in Hawaii and California seeking labor and agricultural opportunities.

From the beginning, APAs have experienced discrimination, said Congressman Mike Honda, who is also chair of CAPAC.

"From the legal fight against internment championed by Fred Korematsu, to the efforts in response to the 1982 murder of Vincent Chin in Detroit, to the current fight for full benefits for the thousands of Filipinos who fought for our country during World War II, the national AAPi community has stood ready to rally for justice and equality," said Honda in a statement.

In May, "we celebrate not only the individuals that have forged milestones throughout our proud history, but we also celebrate our growing community," Honda added.

"This month is a special opportunity to pay tribute to the contributions of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community and to address the challenges facing the community," said Congressman Hilda Solis in a statement.
S.F. Chapter Receives School District Commendation

The JACL San Francisco chapter was recently honored with a commendation from the San Francisco School Board highlighting the support the chapter has provided to the school district.

Over the past two decades the chapter has often partnered with the district including the introduction of a “Day of Remembrance” resolution in 1990 formally carried by then board member Leland Yee. The resolution passed by a unanimous vote.

The chapter, with the support of the S.F. Bay Area Nikkei Singles, financed the development and duplication of the first curriculum guide about the Japanese American experience that was distributed to every teacher in the district.

The chapter has also donated over $5,000 worth of books and videos related to the internment experience to the district.

The chapter has arranged special readings by Marlene Shigekawa who read “Blue Jay in the Desert” and “Welcome Home Swallows” to elementary school students as well as having Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston on panel presentations to teachers in the district.

Most recently the chapter donated 480 copies of “Journey to Gold Mountain: The Asian American Experience” curriculum and resource guide to teachers and all school libraries.

Education Committee chair for the chapter, Greg Marutani, accepted the commendation.

The chapter has recently begun a program to collect books about the JA experience that will be donated to the district’s Teacher Resource Center as well as the school libraries.

Anyone wishing to donate books from their personal collections are encouraged to contact the San Francisco chapter at P.O. Box 22425, San Francisco, CA 94122.

Mori Receives ‘Voices of Courage Award’

JACL National Director Floyd Mori was recently present­ed “The Voices of Courage Award” for speaking out against the racial profiling of Muslim and Arab Americans following the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks.

The award was presented by the Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno at a Day of Remembrance event hosted by the JACL. Mori was the JACL’s national president in 2001. The day after the terrorist attacks, Mori had the JACL speak out in support of Muslim and Arab Americans.

(L-r) Raafat L. Shahata, Kamal Abu-Shamsieh, Floyd Mori and JACL National President Larry Oda.

Fill Up On Savings!

Beginning February 1st, National JACL Credit Union is offering free gas to members who are approved for auto loans! Not only will you save big on your loan with rates as low as 4.50% APR, but we’re filling up your tank too!

Hurry! This offer is for a limited time only and may be discontinued at any time without notice.

Fill Up On Us!

Rates as low as 4.50% APR
at National JACL Credit Union

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Offer available from February 1, 2008 to March 31, 2008. Membership required. For more information visit www.jaclcu.com

National Newsbytes

University No Longer Offering Credit for Work on Student Newspaper

BOULDER, Colo.—Students working at the University of Colorado’s Campus Press will no longer receive credit for working there after publication of a satirical column saying Asians “hate us all.”

On Feb. 18, “If it’s war the Asians want... It’s war they’ll get”—an opinion piece by student editor Max Karson calling for Asians to be rounded up, “hog tied” and made to perform demeaning acts—was published in CU’s online student publication.

University officials are also examining whether the February column by Karson violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Campus Chancellor Bud Peterson says the school will continue to support student-journalists by providing workspace, a professional adviser and a “modest operating budget.”

Affirmative Action Petition Misses Deadline

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.—A group seeking to bar many state affirmative action programs has missed a May 4 deadline to submit its initiative petition.

Missouri had been one of five states California businessman Ward Connerly and his supporters had targeted for an effort to strike down affirmative action laws. The director of the Missouri effort said there were not enough signatures to qualify the proposed constitutional amendment for the ballot, and he pledged to try again in 2010.

California, Washington and Michigan have already approved ballot measures backed by Connerly. Besides Missouri, he is supporting similar efforts in Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma and Nebraska.

Burmeses Americans Try to Help, But Have Few Options

NEW YORK—In the days since Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar, thousands of Burmese immigrants around the United States are desperately scrambling to organize relief to their ravaged homeland.

The challenge of providing relief has been magnified by the sheer desperation of the situation in Myanmar and a ruling military regime that is hostile to U.S. citizens and supplies. The United Nations and other agencies have said they are trying to persuade the government to issue more visas to speed aid to sites where it is most needed.

More than 10,000 Burmese residents live in New York City. Thousands more live in nearby New Jersey and Connecticut, forming the second largest U.S. Burmese community. California has as many as 100,000 residents of Burmese descent.

House OKs Bill to Add Sexual Orientation to Hate Crimes Law

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—The Alabama House has approved a bill to add crimes against people because of their sexual orientation to the state’s hate crimes law.

The bill by Rep. Alvin Holmes, a Montgomery Democrat, generated heated criticism last year and did not get enough votes to come up for passage. The bill passed by a close 46-44 vote with no discussion. The bill now goes to the Senate.

Holmes said the state’s current hate crimes law, passed in 1994, includes crimes against people for race, color, religion and national origin, but left out sexual orientation because of a technical mistake.

Holmes said most other states have hate crime laws that include sexual orientation.

Hawaiian School to Offer Scholarships for Other Schools

HONOLULU—Kamehameha Schools has found a way to help more Native Hawaiian students than it can fit into its classes.

The school is offering scholarships for students to enroll in kindergarten at other Hawaiian private schools. The scholarships would carry through to graduation.

The richly endowed Hawaiian school system plans to start the program for the upcoming school year. Only about one in eight applicants gets into Kamehameha Schools, which was set up to help boost education for Native Hawaiians.

The school has not said how many scholarships will be issued, which private schools will be considered or how much the program is expected to cost.
APAs in the News

By Pacific Citizen Staff

First APA Woman to Run for Public Office in Utah

Jani Iwamoto is running for a Salt Lake Council seat making her the first APA woman to run for public office in the state’s history.

Iwamoto was born and raised in Salt Lake City where she graduated from the University of Utah. She went on to practice law in California. She was also a regional governor of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association.

Her dedication as vice president of the Japanese Community Preservation Committee helped prevent the expansion of the Salt Palace and Convention Center from negatively impacting the Salt Lake Japanese Church of Christ and the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple.

City Councilman Inducted into Bowling Hall of Fame

Gary Yamauchi, a councilman of Alhambra, Calif., was recently inducted into the Japanese American National Bowling Association Hall of Fame.

Yamauchi, a graduate of Gardena High School and founder of Tri-Star Vending, one of the largest independent vending service businesses in Southern California, was selected in the category of tournament performance.

In 1973, Yamauchi led his team to the Greater Los Angeles All Stars League Championship, the nation’s highest scoring traveling league, as well as leading the entire league in scoring with a 219 average.

Sacramento Valley JA Wins Metlife Award

Sam Inouye was recently honored by the MetLife Foundation for his volunteer work with the Asian Community Center of Sacramento Valley. Inouye was among the first volunteers to help launch the center’s rides transportation program in 2003 and is currently one of the 50 volunteer drivers and escorts providing over 1,000 one-way rides per month.

As part of the celebrations for older Americans month, the program, now in its sixth year, honors the exemplary contributions of older volunteers and promotes volunteering. The volunteers are all over the age of 50.

Akaka Commends two APA Officers for Making a Difference in Iraq

Two high-ranking Japanese American Air Force officers were recently praised by Sen. Daniel K. Akaka, for their contributions to their country.

“I am proud of the commitment and dedication to duty displayed by the members of the Armed Forces from Hawaii and across the nation,” said Akaka.

Col. Lisa Ann H. Onaga, has been assigned to Camp Victory in Baghdad since June 2007 as the director of collection management and dissemination for MNF-I.

During the past 32 years, Maj. Gen. David Clary has served in various staff and command positions, including 10 assignments to domestic posts, six overseas posts including South Korea, Italy, Turkey, England and Iraq.

Oxnard Japanese Cemetery Celebrates 100th Anniversary

This year marks the 100 anniversary of the historic Japanese Cemetery, the final resting place for many pioneering Japanese immigrants who first settled in Ventura County, Calif. and were excluded from the Caucasian cemeteries in the area.

The JACL Ventura chapter marked the historic anniversary with a May 10 annual cleanup of the cemetery.

According to Yoshio Fukuyama, author of "Citizens Apart: History of the Japanese in Ventura County," the cemetery dates back to the turn of the 20th century when the first group of Japanese immigrants arrived in Ventura County.

The Japanese Cemetery is located on a one-third acre plot at the intersection of Pleasant Valley and Etiwanda Roads in Oxnard. An estimated 139 graves are on this site with the last burial taking place in 1960 when several old bachelors were buried there. The property is owned by the Haunene Masonic Cemetery Association.

In 1971 the Japanese Cemetery was designated County Landmark No. 18 by Ventura County.

In 2006 the city of Oxnard implemented some major improvements to the cemetery such as a six-foot wrought iron fence around two sides of the cemetery, which protects the cemetery from vandalism.

At the height of the cemetery, a large torii-style wooden gate marked the entrance. Elaborate granite headstones with names carved in Japanese characters or in English were placed over the graves. After 1960, the Japanese Cemetery fell into disuse.

Fukuyama notes that nearly all the families who have their dead buried in the Japanese Cemetery no longer live in Oxnard. Others have moved the remains of family members to Ivy Lawn or sent them to Japan.

Over the years neglect and vandalism have destroyed many of the original headstones, and they have been replaced by obelisk-shaped wooden posts with only identifying names painted on them.

For over 40 years, the maintenance of the cemetery has been undertaken by the Ventura County JACL members and friends. Presently on an annual basis the VC JACL organizes a cemetery clean up in the first or second week in May.

PSW District Holds 3rd Annual Golf Tournament

The PSW district held its third annual golf tournament May 3 at Los Robles Golf Course in Thousand Oaks, Calif. Over 72 golfers in five divisions turned out for the event. John Saito (left) displays his putting stroke during the putting contest. San Fernando Valley JACLer Brian Moriguchi (right) stares down his tee shot as it heads for the fairway.

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JACL Announces Slate of National Board Nominees

Submitted by the JACL Nominations Committee

Nomination forms for national JACL officers have been received. The following are excerpts from the nominees' biographical information and statements regarding leadership and the role of the national board that were included in the nomination forms. Although the regular filing period has passed, potential candidates can still submit late applications at the convention as a "candidate from the floor."

CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT

Larry Oda

JACL Background/Community Service/Personal Background: Larry Oda has 40 years of membership, chapter and district board responsibilities, and most recently national board leadership positions. He has been a chapter president, and has served as a national convention chair as well as chair for many of NCWNP District fundraising events. He was vice president of general operations in 2004 prior to assuming the presidency in 2006 to the present. Oda has also led his chapter in supporting various community events. Some examples include the listing of the Monterey JACL Hall as a Monterey Historic Landmark and the chapter being named the Philanthropic Organization of the Year for participation in acquiring a Chiri Obata mural at California State University at Monterey Bay in 2003. Oda’s community service includes volunteering at the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am Golf Tournament and at the Big Sur Marathon. Professional memberships include the American Civil Liberties Union, Society of Automotive Engineers, American Public Works Association, and Epsilon Pi Tau Honorary Fraternity in Industrial Arts.

Oda is currently the fleet, facilities, parking, and administrative manager for maintenance services for the city of Salinas, Calif. He earned a BA and MA from California State University, Fresno and served in the U.S. Naval Reserve. He is a Vietnam war veteran. He has also been active in the Monterey Peninsula Buddhist Temple holding several leadership positions. He is married to Anne Oda.

Definition of leadership and the role of the national board: I define leadership as the quality that one possesses that encourages or influences others to accomplish a task or objective. The role of the national board is that of governance, to set policy, manage the business and affairs of the organization and implement the directives of the national council. In a leadership sense, the national board directs the organization, interpreting the decisions of the national council in such a way that the chapters and members internalize the objectives and desire to accomplish them. Our members have the right to be guided by those they respect and who have a clear sense of direction or strong vision of the future.

Qualifications: Internal structure of JACL: My experience and ongoing training as a municipal division manager has given me a different perception of organizational structure than my experience as a business owner or employee. The diverse view helps me understand the dynamics of organizations in general, and JACL in particular.

Personal Policies: Municipal management-level employees are the administrators of personnel policy and are provided with ongoing training on every aspect of personnel administration. This ongoing training has given me a wealth of knowledge as well as reference material at my disposal beyond what I personally possess.

Implementing Program for Action: The Program for Action is the blueprint for the organization. As adopted by the national council it is the directive for the board to accomplish. It is the responsibility as president to insure that the programs and activities recommended by the Program for Action are given the highest priority. The leadership involved in implementing the Program for Action would be to interpret and provide a clear vision of the need, set goals to accomplish, and empower the board and staff with the tools and methods they will need to fulfill these goals. In terms of the responsibilities of the president, the leadership I would provide would be to effectively guide the board to comply with the additional governance requirements of the Nonprofit Integrity Act.

CANDIDATE FOR V.P. GENERAL OPERATIONS

Sheldon Arakaki

JACL Background/Community Service/Personal Background: Sheldon Arakaki is running for the position of vice president for general operations and is currently holding this position. Arakaki has held leadership positions in JACL locally, at the district level and nationally. He is the current Lake Washington JACL chapter president, serves on the PNW District Strategic Planning Committee and has been the PNW District Pacific Citizen representative in addition to a number of other positions and committees.

Arakaki has also served as the Washington University in St. Louis Seattle Club chair, is involved with the International Community Leadership Scholarship program and is a member of the Organization of Chinese Americans. Born in Seattle and raised in Honolulu, Arakaki now calls Bellevue, Washington home and will celebrate 14 years at his current position as an e-commerce coordinator for Univar USA.

In his candidate application, Arakaki states: "Leadership is taking action and risks. Leadership is dealing with the hand given ... and creating something positive from it."

Definition of leadership and the role of the national board: Leadership is taking action and risks. Leadership is a willingness to question the effectiveness and relevancy of the status quo. Leadership is dealing with the hand given whether good, bad or ugly, and creating something positive from it.

The role of the national board is to implement the will of the national council as expressed through the budget and resolutions passed, and using the Program for Action as a guideline. The national board must, however, also keep the big picture in mind when making decisions, educating the membership about the issues and defining the "what" and not getting too caught up in the "how."

Qualifications: As the current vice president of general operations, I have nearly two years of national board participation and governance reality which has altered my perception of how things get done.

My company’s acquisition of a large rival last spring followed by the summer private equity buyout has stress tested my abilities to manage the complexities of people and processes while trying to stay on time and budget during the integration process.

I believe these experiences combined with and tempered by my past non-profit experience elsewhere (we are still all just volunteers) provides the background and inspiration needed to do this job for the next two years.

Implementing Program for Action: The membership must own the Program for Action with actionable items for them to achieve at the chapter and district level. I envision taking the Program for Action process to the next level and address how it is created, implemented, supported and reported on. This continues the incremental evolution of the Program for Action and its value to the organization.

The process starts with an earlier appointment of a chair and definition of committee member skills. One key milestone could have the committee use the bi-~/bi-annual convention meetings to review the accomplishments of the current state of the Program for Action and to begin the discussion on the next Program for Action.

CANDIDATE FOR V.P. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

David Kawamoto

JACL Background/Community Service/Personal Background: David Kawamoto has served as president of the San Diego chapter, Pacific Southwest district council governor and was elected to two terms as the vice president of general operations. He currently chairs the National JACL Scholarship Committee.

In 2002, Kawamoto was elected to the founding board of the San Diego Alliance for Asian Pacific Islander Americans. The "Alliance" was created to increase communication, collaboration and celebration of the cultural heritage and diversity of the Asian Pacific Islander communities in San Diego.

In 2000, he was appointed the Western Region vice president of the Federal Probation and Pretrial Officers Association and was reelected in 2002 for a three-year term. This association serves as a union for the federal government employees.

Kawamoto has also served on the board of Kiku Gardens, a senior housing facility for the Nikkei community in San Diego. He is also on the board of governors for the 1004422MIS World War II Memorial Foundation, a group organized to recognize the accomplishments of Japanese American military personnel from WWII.

Kawamoto has a BA in Public Administration from San Diego State University. He also possesses a Juris Doctorate. He has worked for the past 22 years for the U.S. District Court, Pretrial Services Agency, where he retired in February 2008.

Kawamoto has been married to the former Carol Iguchi for almost 32 years and has two sons, Kevin (29) and Keith (27).

Definition of leadership and the role of the national board: Fiduciary responsibility is the primary responsibility of each member of any board. This is very true with the JACL. It is vital to our organization that the elected officers be familiar with all of the organization’s programs. Decisions affecting the programs are made at each meeting and the leadership of JACL must be able to make learned decisions on these matters.

The governance of JACL also includes the management of a million dollar budget. With decreasing membership and inconsistent investment income, the national board must be prudent in all its fiscal decisions. It is very easy to fund new programs when the income is available, but it may not be in the best interest of the JACL to utilize funds which may be needed for operations in the coming years. We need to have a long-term vision for the organization when allocating funds.

Qualifications: I feel I have the education and experience to effectively serve on the national board. My legal education has served me well during my service on various non-profit boards. With the JACL, the personnel and budget issues often require the opinion of our legal counsel and during my past service on the JACL national board, I’ve been able to assist with these issues.

Also, having served JACL at the chapter, district and national levels gives me a better perspective on how all these levels of our organization need to be considered in all decisions by the national board. I also have prior experience working on several of the national JACL programs, including service as the chair of the Personnel Committee and chair of the Scholarship Program.

Implementing Program for Action: In our Program for Action and biennial resolutions, the JACL is always setting
goals. However, we need to be more concrete in our goals. In most bienniums, there are resolutions which receive little (or no) attention. If elected, I will put into action the resolutions which fall under my supervision, and will provide updates on all of my programs at national board meetings. I did this when I previously served on the national board and will continue this practice.

CANDIDATE FOR V.P. MEMBERSHIP

VACANT

CANDIDATE FOR SECRETARY/TREASURER

VACANT

CANDIDATE FOR NAT'L YOUTH/STUDENT REP.

Brandon Robert Mita

JACL Background/Community Service/Personal Background: Brandon Mita has served as the JACL national convention internship manager, youth committee and communication chair, editor of the Chicago JACLer newsletter, public policy and hate crimes fellow and youth chair for the Eastern district council. In these various positions Mita has been involved in bringing leadership, awareness, strategic action planning and education in the areas of racial hate crimes, civil liberties and Asian American politics.

His other affiliations include the American Bar Association, Law Student Division; UIC Asian American Alumni; Korean American Coalition; and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Mita is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Chicago earning a BA in political science. While at the University of Illinois, he was a former chairman and Webmaster for the LEADERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP:

For these two areas, I see them inherently tied together. It is my hope to have the majority of chapters in every district to have at least ONE board member between the ages of 18-22 as its youth chair. By 2009, I hope to develop a handbook on how JACL chapter youth chairs can build a strong youth group and thereby attract new blood into the organization.

QUALIFICATIONS: Currently, I am the Eastern District Council’s youth chair. In my capacity as youth chair, I strategize with fellow JACL National Youth/Student Council (NYSC) members in addressing critical issues pertaining to youth and civil rights, such as the Jena Six Case. Moreover, I sit on several committees with the NYSC such as the Youth Director Committee and the External Issues Committee. I am also on several Convention Committees, including the Constitution and By-Laws Committee and the Program for Action Committee.

IMPLEMENTING PROGRAM FOR ACTION: ADVOCACY: I hope to expand this area beyond the scope listed in the Program for Action by not only focusing on the protection of rights and on issues pertaining to persons in the United States, but by also incorporating the protection of human rights for all persons affected by tyranny and oppression.

TOLERANCE AND DIVERSITY: As far as expanding the Anti-Hate Network, I would utilize the resources of the District Youth Representatives and young Asian American leaders in student organizations to establish a large and expansive network of JACL Anti-Hate University Liaisons.

My goal is to have one liaison per major university by the time I leave office.

LEADERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP: For these two areas, I see them inherently tied together. It is my hope to have the majority of chapters in every district to have at least ONE board member between the ages of 18-22 as its youth chair. By 2009, I hope to develop a handbook on how JACL chapter youth chairs can build a strong youth group and thereby attract new blood into the organization.

Registration Fees

CONVENTION PACKAGE REGISTRATION (includes individual events listed below)

- Regular Package

  - Youth Package $150
  - Student Package $175

- Youth Package (for Youth/Students who are 20 years of age or younger or currently enrolled in a college, trade school or university. Youth package includes all of the events in the Flag package.)

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS (all included in package registration)

- Welcome Mixer $50
- Workshops ($1) $25
- Awards Luncheon $50
- Sayonara Banquet $100
- Youth Luncheon $50

- For a listing of all workshops, go to www.utjACL.org.

GENERAL EVENTS (not included in package registration)

- Golf Tournament $85
- Nihonmachi Show $25
- Youth 18 and under $10
- Youth Club Wing Ding $25
- 1900 Club + Nihonmachi $40
- JACL Credit Union Luncheon $20
- Youth 5 - 18 years $10
- Non-members $25

- Convention Package Individual Events Special Events

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The National Council will elect its officers at the JACL National Convention, July 16-20 in Salt Lake City. See registration form on the left.

The early bird registration deadline is June 30. Registration is $225 before then and $250 after June 30. The hotel early bird rate of $119 a night plus tax is June 24. Please call 801/531-0600 to make your hotel reservations.

Kimberly M. Shintaku

JACL Background/Community Service/Personal Background: Kimberly Shintaku is an incumbent candidate running for the office of national youth chair for a second term. Previously, she was the Pacific Southwest district youth representative. In addition, she is an active member of the Fresno JAYS, in which she formerly held positions of secretary and president.

Shintaku has been involved with numerous organizations over the past few years. She has volunteered at various fundraising and family events at the San Diego Buddhist Temple. She assisted at J-CAP, which is an annual high school competition to encourage knowledge growth of Japanese culture and language.

As a student at the University of California, San Diego, Shintaku was active in the Nikkei Student Union (NSU) and the Intercollegiate Nikkei Council (INC), an umbrella organization for all of the Japanese and JA interest organizations at Southern California colleges. As a staff member of the NSU, she held the positions of cultural chairperson and social external officer on the executive board, where she helped organize such events as the Annual Pilgrimage to Manzanar, 2005 Day of Remembrance, and INC Nikkei Youth Conference.

Shintaku is a recent graduate of the University of California, San Diego, receiving a BA in Pure Mathematics. She currently works at the university in the Environment, Health and Safety Department for the Research Safety Division. She ensures that the university research is in compliance with all safety codes, and serves as a liaison between the Research Safety Division and the researchers in the laboratories and medical facilities.

Definition of leadership and the role of the national board: Leadership is not only taking an active role in a group or organization, it is going the extra step to make things happen. It is not taking on the entire burden by oneself, it’s having the ability to delegate and distribute the workload to others. Another key quality of effective leadership is having a mutual respect to and from others, without which an organization would not be able to function.

QUALIFICATIONS: In my past biennium as national youth chair, I feel that the opportunities for JACL have grown, and my leadership skills have grown right along side them. By sitting on the national board as a youth voice, I realized the importance that we, the young people in JACL, speak up and we can truly make a difference. Also, chairing the National Youth/Student Council has been an opportunity for me to grow as a leader. I have gained skills in facilitating, leading, and organizing. I feel it is important for youth to become active in the issues, and just in the past year, the youth council has brought various issues such as Jena Six and Asian Americans in the media to the attention of national JACL.

IMPLEMENTING PROGRAM FOR ACTION: I feel my role would be focused on the youth in the JACL Program for Action. I plan on working with the youth council in outreaching to all communities of youth for new membership and get the ones that are already members more involved. I would like to see the communication between the generations be utilized. In order to work on retention of our existing youth members, I would like to work with the chapter and district boards to provide opportunities for youth to get involved both with participation and leadership. Overall, I feel there are three keys in which I would be focused on to help JACL youth grow which are outreach, retention, and programming.

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THE SHIGEKI SHAKE DOWN

Oba-mania!

Oba-ma-ja! Oba-mania! Barack ‘n Roll! You name it, the tacky cliché name mangle, is out there. Honestly, what is it about this political B’ Rock Star that entices so many people, young and old alike to join the ranks? Maybe it is his inspiring oratory, his charming, disarming tenor, his fan club or his audacity to hope? Time and time again I face the query: why am I, like so many others, so magnetically drawn to Obama like the gravity that encompasses Oba-Mama Earth.

Despite living in Manhattan for the last three years, the cradle of progressive liberalism, I still check the square indicating GOP when I step into the ballot box. Of course, I know that encroaches blaspheme in many JACL circles, but let me qualify that claim by stating for the record, that I am not “one of those” Republicans.

Like many children, I was raised as a political half-breed. Staunch Republicans on one side of the family and equally decided Democrats on the other side. I do not present my political pedigree to defend or denounce either party; rather I want to highlight the irony that while I feel more encompasses Oba-Mama Earth.

In the end, I found the most comfortable position was to claim both, wholeheartedly embracing sanctimonious hypocrisy. Rather, I simply assert our past and present advantages or we can recognize the goods with the bads of our co-existing halfies. While America is one giant inter-racial, inter-cultural, inter-everything package.

Back to America. I do not exclude other nations/cultures claim to the same, but I believe the ability to simultaneously embrace seemingly irreconcilable idealopinions is very American. This ability runs throughout our country’s history, even before we were a nation. Take the Declaration of Independence’s proclamation that all men are created equal, penned by a slave owner; or the U.S. government’s selection of the brave soldiers of the 42nd out of interment camps.

We have a history rife with co-existing realities. Now, I do not for an instant promote embracing sanctimonious hypocrisy. Rather, I simply assert that we Americans have a unique ability to embrace supposedly contrasting or even conflicting ideas simultaneously without selling out to either side.

To Barack. Yes, Barack Obama is mixed A man with a black father and white mother, a certifiable halfie. Welcome to the club. But is halfie club membership enough to warrant my vote for president? Probably not. He can, however, claim or deny either or both races, as he deems necessary. Yet, Barack wholeheartedly embraces both with all the inherent tugs and shoves each brings with the not-so-tidy baggage.

So, is this why I stump for Barack Obama? Possibly. There are too many factors concerning presidential qualifications to squeeze and simplify a decision down to one characteristic. The point is: we as Americans are all halfies. While America is one giant inter-racial, inter-cultural, inter-everything marriage, we are its progeny. We are all half-breeds. We can either continue to claim only the half of our country that momentarily plays to our advantage or we can recognize the goods with the bads of our co-existing realities as we avow our citizenship as American halfies.

We have both the ability and the need to embrace our past and present with all that it entails or we will never powerfully assert ourselves into the future, our future.

Peter Shigeki Frandsen's 'Shigeki Shake Down' column debuts in this issue of the PC. He is currently a student at Columbia University, College of Dental Medicine and is also a Mt. Olympus JACL member.
Joan Chen is feeling a little stressed lately. Coming from her adopted home city of San Francisco, Calif., the screen legend is almost breathless. Don’t worry, it’s the good kind of pressure that comes with juggling an exciting new slate of films and the demands of family life.

She promised them they could go shopping, said Chen about her husband Peter Hsi, nine-year-old Angela and Audrey. In a week, the actress who gained international fame in 1987 as an opium-addicted empress in “The Last Emperor,” will be flying away to the French Riviera for the Cannes Film Festival. Her new film, “24 City,” is in competition for the coveted Palme d’Or award.

Somewhere in the background, the tinkling of a department store piano brings her back to the present.

“I drift wherever. I never had a plan,” said Chen, 47, about her career. “I knew right away that I wanted to play the part,” she said about Rose, the sensual single mother who relies on prostitution to train her to speak with what they thought was a real Chinese accent.

There was a time when she didn’t think much of calling herself “Oriental,” until someone told her it was a denigrating term. And when people tell her she speaks English well, she actually takes it as a compliment.

“Being a mother myself, I’m sure she loved her children more than I did,” she said. “But I’m much luckier.”

A Gray Area

Chen became a U.S. citizen in 1988 when she discovered that her identity did not magically change once she took the oath. The feeling of being American didn’t automatically rush over her after waving the small American flag she was given — it was a lot more complicated. She didn’t feel Chinese American, but she wasn’t just Chinese anymore.

She first read the script, which is based on Australian filmmaker Tony Ayre’s real life, in 2003. “I knew right away that I wanted to play the part,” she said. “This is the type of mother we seldom see onscreen,” she said. Rose inhabits this complicated gray area we’re not used to seeing. In Hollywood, moms are either June Cleavers or Joan Crawfords in “Mommy Dearest.” Rose is some place in the middle. She is complex and flawed.

“It’s Tony’s portrait of a woman he is trying to understand.”

Like in real life, Rose uproots herself and her family and plods down in 1960s Australia. It’s the classic immigrant story, said Chen.

“That part of Rose’s life parallels with mine,” she said. “But I’m much luckier.”

“[Harold and Kumar] movie is great! I haven’t seen the new one yet, but the first one — I love it.”

To prepare for the role, Chen simply looked at her own life through a microscope. When her temper flared up at her children, she thought about Rose. When she was trying to make amends with her children, she thought about Rose. This is the type of mother we seldom see onscreen,” she said. Rose inhabited this complicated gray area we’re not used to seeing. In Hollywood, moms are either June Cleavers or Joan Crawfords in “Mommy Dearest.” Rose is some place in the middle. She is complex and flawed.

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**SPOELSTRA**

(Continued from page 1)

phone and left a mundane message for Monica Spoelstra Metz, his older sister. "Just wanted to say hi, but call me back. Monica grew suspicious when her mom Lisa kept asking if she talked to Erik lately. Oh, you really should talk to him, Lisa insisted.

When the siblings finally connected that evening, Monica found out she was talking to the new head coach of the Miami Heat.

"We were so very excited," she said from her hometown of Portland, Oregon. But she can't really say that she was surprised.

**Humble Beginnings**

Erik's work ethic is now almost legendary — long hours, no sleep and barely any time off. The story about his rise to the top of the NBA reads like the plotline of a quintessential American dream. A starry-eyed kid from Portland gets an entry-level job with the Heat splicing videos and picking up lunches for the staff. His boss Pat Riley didn't even know his name for a few years.

It's Erik's great love of basketball that drives him, said Monica.

A few weeks into his new job, Erik is already ushering in an air of newness. In a sport dominated by a usual slate of grizzled, cliquish sideline bosses, Erik chats with fans online and prefers e-mail over the more archaic form of communication — you know, the telephone. For the most part, he said life has not changed much, expect for a few minor points.

"Well, now I'm in a position to make final decisions. I used to be in a position to just suggest," said Erik in an e-mail to the Pacific Citizen. "I guess I also get recognized on the street a little more than I used to."

**Destined for Success**

"When I was a kid, all I wanted to do was play basketball, so I played every opportunity I could. I dreamed of being Isaiah Thomas and Magic Johnson," said Monica.

Growing up, basketball wasn't his only love. "He had a lot of "Star War" figures," said Monica with a laugh. But those quickly fell out of mind, when he dribbled his first basketball. Then Erik became a fixture in the family driveway teaching himself to handle the ball and dribble between his legs. His dad Jon Spoelstra, a former NBA executive with the Portland Trailblazers, made three-point hash marks for young Erik. And through rain or cold, Monica would look out the window and see him shooting basketballs in his wool cap.

Jon met his future wife Lisa when he was traveling in the Philippines during a year off of college. They were introduced by mutual friends and kept in touch for two years through letters. Then he proposed and brought her to America where they eventually settled in Portland.

"I grew up looking different than most kids at school, so that's probably the most obvious way I experienced my Asian roots. People were always wondering what I was," he said. "I would say the Asian influences were in food and cuisine and commitment to family and extended family. My mom cooks a lot of fish and rice, and my uncle makes awesome lumpia."

Erik grew up around the game.

"I have must attended almost every Portland Trailblazer home game when I was a kid. That really stoked my passion for the game."

After graduating from Jesuit High School in 1988, Erik went on to the University of Portland where he was the Pilots' starting point guard for three years and was named the West Coast Conference Freshman of the Year in 1989.

When Larry Steele, a former Portland Trail Blazers guard and college coach, first met Erik he saw a personable gentleman and a fierce competitor on the court. He watched Erik grow up and come into his own as a leader.

"He was dedicated to doing things correctly," said Steele. "He spent many, many hours honing his basketball skills. He was destined to become successful."

After college, Erik spent two seasons as a player and coach for a German professional basketball team before taking a low level job with the Miami Heat as their video coordinator.

"At the Miami Heat, I've worn many hats. In fact, many of the jobs I've had to do wouldn't lead to a head coaching position," he said. "But I stayed in the moment as much as possible, and did that particular job at the time to the best of my ability. Because of that, my opportunities just arose naturally."

Other job titles came along: assistant coach/advance scout and assistant coach/director of scouting. And success poured in. In 2006, the Heat won their first ever NBA championship against the Dallas Mavericks. But two years later, the team ended their season with a league-worst record of 15-67.

Then his longtime mentor said he was "definitely sure" he didn't want to coach anymore. And then Riley said Erik's name in the April 28 press conference.

"We're hiring Erik Spoelstra today to get a result," he said at the press conference. "When you take a look at the game today, it's a game about men like Erik who are very, very talented, have an incredible work ethic, are loyal, trustworthy and deserve an opportunity."

Just like that, the kid who no one knew was thrust into the spotlight.

**A New Future**

"It was just the right opportunity for this organization," said Erik about his new job. "I fully realize how difficult it is to get a head coaching job in this league. There are so many successful and talented coaches out there. But each team and situation is different. Pat Riley felt that continuity was going to be very important with this change."

Riley remains the Heat's president, something Erik is glad to still have.

"We've had a great working relationship for 13 years. It looks forward to continuing to work together for the common goal of trying to bring another championship to the city of Miami. And what better resource could I have as a young coach to go to when I need advice? I'm sure I'll be in his office a lot asking his advice on various things."

Even with the demands and pressure of the new job, Erik is determined to not let his new job title change his life too much. His tight-knit family tries to go on vacations together once or twice a year. On these trips, while everyone sleeps in, Erik often wakes up at the crack of dawn and goes on eight-mile runs, said Monica.

But for now, Erik and his coaching staff are focusing on the May 20 NBA draft lottery and the June 26 draft itself to help rebuild his team.

"I will be involved in the decision-making process of the draft. Right now, we are all (personnel staff and coaching staff) working film and analyzing statistical data on possible prospects. This draft is an exciting possibility for our franchise," said Erik.

"We are very encouraged about our current situation. We acknowledge our season last year and how we got to where we are now, but we use that as motivation in moving forward. We like our young core of athletic, exciting players returning under contract."

"I think it's important that I stay true to myself. I can't try to be Pat Riley or anyone else. Communication is something I'll work very hard at with my players."

"But, ultimately, my relationships and connection with the players probably won't be any better or worse, it will just be different," he said. "I want to be like a elder brother to them, because that's how I was raised with my older siblings. I was raised by my mom Lisa keeping me to the path."

"I think it's important that I stay true to myself. I can't try to be Pat Riley or anyone else. Communication is something I'll work very hard at with my players."

"But, ultimately, my relationships and connection with the players probably won't be any better or worse, it will just be different," he said.

Erik Spoelstra (right) learned from the best — Pat Riley, who remains the Heat's president.

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From Third Street to the West to Fifth Street to the East, bordered by M Street to the north down to O Street, Sacramento's Japantown was once a bustling area of this Capitol City.

Komatsubara's great-grandparents and grandparents owned the Kobayashi Fish Market in Sacramento's historic J-town, a once popular destination for the community. But like many of the JA families who owned businesses here, the bombing of Pearl Harbor and Executive Order 9066 forced Komatsubara's family into internment camps for the duration of the War.

"We were one of the first families to return to the area after the War," said Komatsubara.

With the renovations we hope it draws people back to using the building, more community groups and members will rent out the hall space, making it once again a thriving community center. "With the renovations we hope it draws people back to using the building for events," said Suzanne Sasaki, 28, a member of the Nisei Hall board and Sacramento JACL.

"There have been offers to buy the building but we have an attachment to it. It's part of our community, of who we are. "We want to take pride in ownership of it and make sure it stays here."

Nihonmachi

They wanted.

"The Japanese Americans tried to fight it but they got nowhere," said Prof. Wayne Maeda, an ethnic studies professor and author of "Changing Dreams and Treasured Memories: A Story of Japanese Americans in the Sacramento Region."

But in a twist of irony, the JA community was able to raise the funds to build the Nisei War Memorial Hall. In 1956, the Flower Garden restaurant at 1515 Fourth Street was purchased for $27,000 from an African American family.

"The building was on the edge of what was once Japantown," said Maeda. "Symbolically it is the last connection to what was once Japantown."

"The Nisei Hall is really moving...This was a place where the Nikkei rallied and tried to fight city hall," said Donna Graves, project director of the Preserving California Japantown project. "To have a structure to recall the history of the community that was completely replaced is so poignant and important.

A Moving Symbol

The Nisei War Memorial Hall may be difficult to find for those unfamiliar with the area. Large towering office buildings and massive condominiums surround the modest two-story concrete structure.

Just steps from the Nisei Hall, a Japanese American Civil Liberties Memorial Monument tells the story of the JA community before, during, and after WWII. Dedicated in 2003, the monument and the Nisei Hall are both visible reminders of what was once a bustling Japantown.

"It really speaks to this idea of the underdog trying to hold onto its space. The building speaks on its own for the heritage it's holding onto," said Graves.

The Nisei Hall also stands as a living memorial to the heroic JA veterans who fought for a country that was imprisoning their own families.

"That is the importance of the Nisei Hall," said Okimoto, "keeping alive the legacy of the Japanese American veterans."

The Nisei Hall board is getting ready for its first fundraising event this June 7. A showing of "Only the Brave" — a moving film about the heroic 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team — will be sponsored by the local Mikuni Restaurant with all proceeds going to the Nisei Hall renovations.

Community members hope a large turnout will go far in helping to raise the needed $250,000 to get the renovation project started.

"This is so important to the veterans. Their eyes light up when we talk about the fundraiser, they are so proud of the Hall," said Komatsubara. "That made it worth it for me."

To order tickets for the "Only the Brave" showing at the Crest Theatre June 7, www.thecrest.com or 916-44 CREST.
MINIDOKA (Continued from page 1)
to internment camps in rural Idaho and California's Mojave Desert during World War II.

Almost two thirds of the JAs were American citizens.

In 1917, the Minidoka Internment Camp, the second largest in the United States, was established. It was opened in 1942 and held Japanese Americans who had been forcibly removed from their homes in the West Coast states. The camp was operated by the War Relocation Authority (WRA) and enforced a policy of relocation and incarceration. The camp was located near the town of Rupert, Idaho, and covered 1,000 acres.

The camp was named after the Minidoka National Monument, a site that commemorates the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. The monument was established in 1989 by the National Park Service and preserves the history of the internment camps.

YAMAMOTO (Continued from page 2)

Many of them have to travel long distances to attend our events.

Maybe it’s because there are so few of us, but we New England JAs are fiercely proud of our heritage and take that extra effort to celebrate it and pass this pride on to our children. The one thing that continues to connect us to other JAs here and throughout the U.S. is the Pacific Citizen. To me, it’s one of the most important benefits of my JACL membership. The recent addition of the P.C. Web site (www.pacificcitizen.org) has been a boon to us given the time it takes for the P.C. to reach our mailboxes.

We are presently in the midst of P.C.’s Spring Campaign. Our newspaper needs the funds to hire an online reporter to enhance and continue its Web service. I hope you’ll join me in supporting the Pacific Citizen with a donation in any amount.

I’m sure many of you make it a habit to annually thank your service providers — the mailman, the man who mows your lawn or clears the snow, your hairdresser, etc. — with a gift or a check. Think of your P.C. as a service provided year-round, without interruption.

And don’t forget this added benefit of your contribution to the P.C.: you’ll be helping your friends and relatives on the “other” coast to keep informed and be a part of the larger JA community. Our thanks in advance.

Margie Yamamoto currently serves as the Eastern district representative on the P.C. editorial board.

DAN TANI (Continued from page 1)

20.

"We are delighted that Dan Tani will join us at this year’s convention," said JACL National Director Floyd Mori. "Dan’s accomplishments and character are inspiring and we look forward to acquainting him with our members, especially our youth."

Tani will keynote the Sayonara Banquet on the last night of the JACL National Convention, using his experience as a JA and an astronaut to explore this year’s theme, "Legacy of Leadership." He has received much recognition including the NASA Spaceflight Medal in 2001 and was honored as the "Japanese American of the Biennium for Science and Technology" at the 2002 JACL National Convention in Las Vegas.

MORI (Continued from page 2)

Salt Lake City, was also interned at Heart Mountain and helps with fundraising. Jeanette Misaka, also an active member of the Salt Lake JACL chapter and a former internee at Heart Mountain, works on the project as well.

Through the efforts of the JACL and with the help of former U.S. Congressman Bill Thomas, R-Calif., Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, Gerald Yamada, and others, Public Law 109-441: Preservation of Japanese American Confinement Sites, was passed by the Congress and signed by President Bush. Congress has not yet appropriated funding for this program, but it is anticipated that matching funds will be available for the camp preservations. The National Park Service has held hearings on the matter. The HMWF has raised over $1 million and hopes to raise $2 million to receive matching funds from the Appropriations. The project is anticipated to cost $6.2 million.

Different groups are helping with preservation projects of the various camps. At this time of the 70th Anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, it is a good time for all of us to consider supporting these worthy causes. Thanks to everyone who is working on these camp projects.

Anyone wishing to donate to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation may visit: www.heartmountain.us or call 307/734-2889.

MAY 16-JUNE 5, 2008

PACIFIC CITIZEN

GOING FOR HONOR, GOING FOR BROKE: THE 442 STORY

The short-form educational documentary by George Toshiho Johnston (Rafu Shimpo columnist and former Pacific Citizen editor)

Winner: Selected Work Award, 2007 Tokyo Video Festival Screeng at 2006 VC Filmfest

Those who have seen Going for Honor, Going for Broke say:

"Excellent. Great for junior high and high school students." "The DVD is as great as the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Infantry Regiment." Bonus Material: This DVD contains a version of the "Echoes of Silence" database compiled by the Americans of Japanese Ancestry WWII Memorial Alliance. Running time: 16 mins.

For more information: www.jacl.org, www.mnwts.com/jacl

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MEMORIAL DAY SPECIAL

PC 5/16/08

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IMMIGRANT RIGHTS
(Continued from page 1)
rence, she was welcomed — not subjected to immigration raids and racial profiling.
So Chermin, 54, and a handful of other Sonoma County JACLers decided to take a stand for human rights in a May 1 immigrant rights rally and march through downtown Santa Rosa, Calif.
They wore signs that read: “No Raids. No Profiling. Human Rights.”
She marched alone one day.
They held a large sign with their name and the JACL logo.
During the event, many people asked about the JACL and Chermin explained that the organization has been fighting this type of discrimination since 1929.
“JACL’s history begins with immigration problems,” said Floyd Mori, JACL national director. From the beginning, the organization has fought for equal rights for Asian Pacific Americans who faced immigration barriers from property rights to marriage laws. Today, some JACL chapters continue the tradition by pushing for immigrant rights at the grassroots level with rallies and educational forums.
In this new millennium, it’s a kind type of activism to fight an old injustice.
Familiar Struggles
“I think it’s a human rights issue,” said Lina Hoshino about the immigration debate. In the last three years Hoshino, a Sonoma County chapter member, has been a constant at May Day events. She marched alone one year and another year with a group of JACLers. This year, they marched together for the first time behind a JACL banner.
Sonoma County, Calif. is rooted in immigrant history. Before World War II, hundreds of acres of farmland were tended by immigrant workers with last names like Sugiyama and Hamamoto.
“A lot of the farm workers have gone through similar experiences,” said Gary Sugiyama, a Sonohji Santa Rosa-based graphic designer whose family once owned a small farm in Sonoma County. They grew prunes and strawberries before being evacuated to the Amache internment camp. Today, Sonoma’s pastoral landscape is famous for bearing the fruits that make the full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon. The identities of the immigrant workers have changed, but their struggles have stayed the same.
“Who picks the grapes?” Hoshino, 40, “They are part of our community. Their children are the ones who go to school with your children... and these people are living in fear because of the government’s draconian laws.”
Lately Hoshino, who is second generation American, has been hearing a lot of news stories coming from the Bay Area about racial profiling and raids targeting the Latino community.
Once upon a time, Japanese Americans were treated in a similar way, she said. They were driven out of their home country because of economic hardship and treated like enemies of American workers.
Because of this shared history Hoshino says, “We should be speaking up as a community.”
Rooted in JACL History
“Today’s anti-immigration movement mirrors much of the same baseless economic rhetoric and race-based issues faced by the Issei and Nisei,” said Mori.
In the 1950s, JACL actively took on discriminatory laws that banned Japanese immigrants from purchasing land and prevented the Issei from becoming naturalized U.S. citizens. At the head of the battle was Mike Masaoka, then national legislative director of the JACL Anti-Discrimination Committee.
“For four eventful decades the Alien Land Act originally passed in 1913 by the legislature and again in 1920 as an initiative measure, has been the backbone of discriminatory activity against the Japanese in California and against the citizens children,” wrote former Pacific Citizen editor Larry Tajiri in his April 19, 1952, “Nisei USA” column.
Each issue of the JACL’s newspaper provided crucial information about the organization’s push to pass the Walter-McCarran Bill of 1952, which gave about 80,000 Issei residents an equal chance at citizenship.
But when President Harry S. Truman vetoed the bill during the JACL’s 12th biennial national convention in San Francisco, the national council was called into special session to send hundreds of telegrams to lawmakers. The JACL’s action helped lead to an historic presidential veto override. To celebrate the victory, delegates and boosters met Masaoka at the airport on June 28 with banners and signs reading, “Well Done, Mike!”
Today, immigration should still be a JACL and APA issue, said Mori, who pointed out that about 15 percent of the undocumented immigrants are from Asia and are relatives of APA citizens.
“We can see so soon that we were just a few decades ago seen as part of the ‘yellow peril’? he asked.
“The spirit of wanting to better one’s personal well-being that exists in the immigrant community is the fuel that keeps the wheels of progress going in America. It is for both social and economic justice that the fair treatment of immigrants should be important to the entire APA community.”
Solidarity in Diversity
In the modern day movement for immigrant rights, diversity is key.
“We want to build solidarity across all communities,” said David Cardenas, outreach coordinator for Sonoma County’s Graton Day Labor Center.
On a national level, pro-immigration reform groups like the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC) are shifting their focus during this presidential election year to magnify APA voices in the immigration debate.
Immigration reform has switched from action to behind the scenes negotiation. Fewer bills are being introduced, said Eun Sook Lee, NAKASEC executive director.
“There are only two months left before Congress goes into recess,” she said. But there is still time for lawmakers to try to push through smaller bills with fixes or bills that could cause more damage to immigrant rights.
At the grassroots level the San Jose chapter, last April, mobilized in support of immigration reform at a rally in Mi Pueblo Plaza.
But even within the community, dissenting voices continue to sound out saying it is not an APA issue, said Chermin. Hoshino attributes the divide to a lack of information.
Somewhere, the media has made the equation that immigration is just a Latino struggle.
“It’s become a wedge issue,” she said.
Even though most members are united under the JACL’s general mission, there are diverse beliefs and opinions.
“We’re dealing with a wide spectrum of people from different generations,” said Sugiyama, a Sonoma County chapter board member. “The key is finding common ground.”
Chermin thinks people who are against immigrant rights don’t know the whole truth.
“There is a certain group of people that is not treated in a humane way. We use these immigrants. They are taken advantage by people and businesses, but when it comes to their rights they’re ignored.”
-Sachiko Chermin

IMMIGRATION FORUM
The free event sponsored by the Sonoma County JACL will feature a panel of speakers from the local APA community and representatives from immigration and law enforcement services.
May 18, 2-4 p.m. Enmanji Memorial Hall 1200 Graverstein Hwy, Sebastopol, Calif.
Information: sonomacojACL@yahoo.com or 415/613-9348

NATIONAL
MAY 16-JUNE 5, 2008
13

Online Reporter
The Pacific Citizen newspaper, a national publication of the JACL, is currently seeking a part-time online reporter for its office in downtown Los Angeles.
The focus of this position is writing news stories and features for the PC Web site. Other duties include general editing and production duties, rewriting, research, and taking photos. Assignments may include some evenings and weekends.
A minimum of two years of experience is required and individuals with knowledge in Mac, Quark X-Press and Dreamweaver are preferred. Knowledge of and experience with the Japanese American and Asian American communities is also preferred.
Applicants must have their own vehicle.
Please send a cover letter, resume and a writing sample to Caroline Aoyagi-Storm, Executive Editor, 250 E. First Street, Suite 301, Los Angeles, CA 90012 or email: editor@pacificcitizen.org.
Calendar

National SALT LAKE CITY
July 16-20—2008 JACL National Convention; Salt Lake City Marriott Downtown, 75 South West Temple; $225/regular, $150/youth; early bird registration through June 30; events include, welcome mixer, youth luncheon, awards luncheon, say-onara banquet, workshop, optional tours and a golf tournament; hotel rate $119/night plus tax (reserve by June 24); Info: www.utjc.org or www.jacl.org.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
Thurs., Sept. 25—National JACL Gala Dinner, “Celebrating Champions of Redress”; 6 p.m. reception, 7 p.m. dinner; Grand Hyatt Hotel, 1000 H St. NW. AMERICAN PUBLIC TELEVISION
May—Citizen Tanouye will be broadcast by American Public Television. Contact your local public station for broadcast date and time. Citizen Tanouye is the story of Ted Citizen Tanouye, Medal of Honor recipient, who interned at Tule Lake and other camps.

East NEW YORK
Through June 28—Minidoka on My Mind, paintings by Roger Shirnomura; Tues.-Sat. 10:30-5 p.m. W. 27th St., Suite 308; featuring recent works by Roger Shirnomura. Info: www.minidokajac.org. Contact: 212/268-4952

Midwest AURORA, Colo.

DENVER
May 26—Community Memorial Day Service; 11 a.m.; Falmount Cemetery, Nisei War Memorial, 430 S. Quebec St.; 12:45 p.m. potluck lunch at Tamai Towers Penthouse. Info: Brian Matsumoto, 303/916-9998 or matsi2200@ yahoo.com.


Intermountain SALT LAKE CITY
Sat., May 31—Mt. Olympus and Salt Lake chapter JACL Scholarship Dinner; 5 p.m.; Pagoda Restaurant. Info: Lynne Aoyama, 801/466-1758.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST PORTLAND
Through Aug. 31—Exhibit, “Go For Broke: Photographs by Motoya Nakamura” Tues.-Sat. 11-3 p.m., Sun. noon-3 p.m.; Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, 121 NW Second Ave.; exhibit features portraits of JA veterans from the 442nd RCT. Info: www.oregonnikkei.org.

Southern California LONG BEACH
Sat., Sept. 13—PSW District Awards Dinner; “PSW Heroes from Redress: 20 Years of a Living Legacy”; The Grand; Long Beach Event Center; $100/person, $1,000/table of 10; scholarship and advertising available. Info: psw@jaccl.org.

Northern California SACRAMENTO
Sun., June 1—Sacramento JACL Community Picnic; William Land Park; games and a raffle drawing. Info: Sacramento JACL office, 916/447-0231.

TULE LAKE
July 3-6—2008 Tule Lake Pilgrimage; four-day program includes bus tour of former campsite, cultural performances in Klamath Falls, Ore., speeches from survivors of Tule Lake, discussion groups and a memorial service; $395/person, $325/seniors and students; free for former Tule Lake internees who are 80 or older and children under 6 (registration includes bus transportation, housing, and all meals and activities; buses will depart from San Francisco, Berkeley, San Jose, Sacramento, Seattle, Portland and Eugene on July 3 and return July 6. Info and to download registration forms, www.tulelake.org.

WATSONVILLE Sat., June 26—Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL Community Picnic; 11-3:30 p.m.; Aptos Village Park, 100 Aptos Creek Rd.; food, races, games, raffle prizes and entertainment by Watsonville Taiko; $7/teens and children 6-12, under 6 are free.

SD Menu

Join us for an unforgettable experience...
Whose America? Who’s American?
Diversity, Civil Liberties, and Social Justice
July 3-6, 2008 Denver, Colorado

This National Conference is presented by the National Museum to examine the Japanese American experience within the historical and contemporary issues surrounding democracy and social justice.
Visit jannm.org/projects/ec/conference for more information or call Nancy Araki at 213.830.5649

Major support for this project has been generously provided in part by Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Aratani Foundation, and Dr. Paul I. & Hisako Terasaki.

Additional support has also been provided by American Airlines, The Hent and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation, Munai & Sumi Hiratsuka, and Knoop Foundation.

Images credits: From the Japanese American National Museum permanent collections, bottom left courtesy of The Asahi Shimbun

Conference Highlights
Keynote Speakers
• U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye
• George Takei
• Dale Minami
• John Tateishi
• Aiko Herzog-Yoshinaga
• Adam Schragler, Reporter 1News and author of The Principled Politician: The Ralph Nader Story

Trip to Amache Camp Site
Rockies Baseball Game & Fireworks—July 4th
Youth Expo
Community Marketplace
Mini Media Festival

HURRY! FINAL PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS JUNE 5
CONFERENCE HURRY! FINAL PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS JUNE 5
Paul T. Ohtaki

PAUL T. OHTAKI

Paul T. Ohtaki, 83, businessman and journalist, passed away on April 27. He grew up near Seattle on Bainbridge Island, Wash., and at age 17 was relocated along with his family and other Japanese-Americans to the Manzanar internment camp in central California during World War II.

The local newspaper publisher, Walt Woodward, asked him to write a weekly column about the daily lives of Bainbridge Island Japanese Americans in the camp. In his editorials in the Bainbridge Review, Woodward argued for the civil rights of these Japanese Americans, reinforced by the non-threatening, routine dispatches written by Ohtaki.

Woodward wrote to Ohtaki, “You’ll be welcomed back by the vast majority of us, but those who don’t or won’t understand … may actually try to stir up trouble. But they’ll have a hell of a hard time of it, if, in the meantime you’ve been creating the impression every week and every year that the Japanese are down there for just a short while.”

As the Bainbridge Review noted in a 2004 article, this relationship between Woodward and Ohtaki became “a friendship that made island history.”

Paul Jay Fukushima

Paul Jay Fukushima, 12749 Norwalk Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650 Everything Asian

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June 6
JACCC
244 S. Pedernales St.

GARDENA
June 14
“R-main to TEAM
Ken Nakazawa Center
1670 W. 162nd St.

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MAY 16-JUNE 5, 2008

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2:00 PM and 5:30 PM
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Contact Robert Shintaku at 559-449-0273
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1212 S. King Street, SEATTLE
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or call Dale Watanabe at 206-953-2233

SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 2008
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1013 K Street, SACRAMENTO
$10 General Admission
Free for WWII and Korean Conflict veterans
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“Finally, a movie about the 100th/442nd RCT that reveals both the historical and the emotional aspects of war.”
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— Asian Sun News

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