Seeing Japanese American History Through Toyo’s Lens

A new documentary about photographer Toyo Miyatake bridges communities.

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Letters to the Editor

Guantanamo

An almost unnoticed article appeared in a recent edition of Newsweek addressing the issue of where to put the Guantanamo detainees once the detention center is closed. It has been suggested that these Gitmo prisoners be placed in existing federal facilities such as Fort Leavenworth. Howling protests arose from not only the governor of Kansas but from other governors fearful of having their states involved in the move.

The major argument? It would pose a danger to their community. This argument sounds similar to those arguments presented during the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII. In early 1942, the governors and attorney generals of several western states vehemently protested and opposed the use of their states to hold and detain the dislocated JAs. Their reasoning was the same: danger to their nearby communities.

The U.S. government saw no danger as perceived by the states and had not intended to surround the relocation camps with barbed wire fences and watchtowers. The War Relocation Authority eventually relented on the governors' demands for maximum security. Today, the Gitmo detainees may pose a national security problem, however the JAs from the beginning were not security risks. It was only perceived in the eyes of West Coast racist elements and General DeWitt who felt that all JAs were "disloyal" until proven otherwise. We too were the unwanted, moved about to undesirable places and confined behind barbed wire fences.

ROY U. EBIHARA
Topaz detainee Oberlin, Ohio

Re: Oshogatsu

I enjoyed the column by Margie Yamamoto in the special New Year's issue so much I wanted to share my experience with Japanese New Year with you.

I am the Italian American spouse of a Japanese gentleman who came to the States in 1969 to attend university and has been here ever since. We were married in 1976 and, with the exception of New Year's 1977 which we spent with his parents in Japan, my husband has prepared osechi every year since then.

Moving to Ohio in 1978 made the annual preparation of osechi challenging to say the least, but we always managed to have the basics and our jubako has the requisite assortment of delicacies. Years ago he made enough food to last for three days but now we are happy to finish off all the food by the second day.

Keeping this tradition has been a joy for all of us. My only son, who has lived in three East Coast states since leaving home, comes home for both Christmas and the New Year's holiday no matter what other options he has.

I believe the children of bicultural families benefit greatly from these kind of traditions and that is why I am a member of the Cincinnati JACL which has brought us many good friends and cultural opportunities over the years. I enjoy Pacific Citizen very much, especially reading about people's life experiences.

BARBARA NODA
Via e-mail

COMMENTARY

Masaoka Fellow Realizes the Power of Politics

With Hill experience, I can claim active membership to a community of Americans devoted to effecting change.

By LESLIE K. TAMURA

In one of the many local watering holes that surround Capitol Hill, young professionals stood shoulder-to-shoulder in their business suits, watching an Illinois senator and his colleague from Arizona go at it. Ties had been loosened. Black, navy and gray jackets draped chairs and barstools. Plastic identification cards, the distinctive trademark of a government staffer, swung from belt buckles.

Some women in their stiletto heels, looked over the heads in the crowd, while others—exhausted by 12-plus hours of clicking and clacking along the marble halls to committee meetings, briefings and coffee breaks—stood comfortably in their flats, watching the third and final presidential debate.

Although Democrats and Republicans bumbled in their respective groups, all clutched bingo playing cards, listening for buzzwords like "change," "hope" and "country." "Bingobama," a voice shouted as Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said the winning phrase, "my friends." A staffer next to me pointed to his playing card and said, "Joe the Plumber should've been on here."

We shared a smile before turning our attention back to the television as McCain and then Sen. Barack Obama, D-III., diverged into a discussion about the state of American health care — my legislative baby during four remarkable months on Capitol Hill.

It was September when I came to Washington, D.C. to work in the office of Rep. Doris Matsui, D-Calif., as the JACL's Mike Masaoka Fellow. I didn't know much about politics or policy, but I was eager to learn how I could be a more involved citizen and a more informed Asian Pacific American.

Although my time on the Hill was not long enough, I discovered an incredible amount about health care, government and the meaning of public service.

A Government Education on Health Care and Policy

Every day I attended briefings, or lectures, about the U.S. health care system. I'd check my e-mail in the office before heading off to a briefing about tax policy and health care. These briefings were meant to educate staffers about relevant legislation, debates and research.

I met with government affairs representatives who made me more aware of the health

in the mail today. Thank you very much. I enjoyed reading all the articles. I am a senior citizen and I worked in Japantown before World War II.

YUKI KUMAKI
South Holland, Ill.

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Local JAs and a politician are raising funds for a monument to be built at the former assembly center.

By CAROLINE Aoyagi-Stom
Executive Editor

Walking by the colorful stands of fruits and vegetables, the hanging pinatas and the one of a kind antiques, it’s hard to believe this bustling flea market at the Merced County Fairgrounds was once a place of injustice for thousands of Japanese Americans.

A bronze plaque at the fairgrounds entrance is the only reminder that the Merced Assembly Center once existed here, a forlorn place where 4,699 JAs were rounded up during World War II before heading to more permanent digs at an internment camp.

Sherman Kishi, 83, still remembers his first day there.

"I was interned on May 13, 1942. It was my 17th birthday."

Seven Kishi family members — five kids and Sherman’s parents — headed to the Merced Assembly Center during World War II, leaving their grape farm in Livingston, Calif. behind. They would join other JA families from areas like Merced, Sacramento, Yolo and Mariposa.

"I still remember it vividly. All barbwire fences and the buildings we were allowed to go to with their watchtowers and soldiers," said the longtime JACL Livingston-Merced chapter member.

He also remembers the black tarred barracks that were still unfinished by the time they had arrived. The 20-feet-high barracks had walls that only went up eight feet. "The rest of the walls were open so we could hear our neighbors."

After four months in confinement, the Kishi family was sent to the Amache, Colorado internment camp to spend the remainder of the war. Sherman volunteered to serve in the Military Intelligence Service.

Now some 67 years after the creation of the Merced Assembly Center a group of local JAs and a determined politician are working to raise funds to build a permanent reminder of this part of Merced history, a story that few locals are aware of today.

"We need to educate our community of the fact that this happened ... it was one of the grossest violations of the Constitution," said Bob Taniguchi, co-chair of the Merced Assembly Center Commemorative Committee (MACCC) and a former JACL CCDC governor.

"We want to honor the spirit of these people who came back and kept on chugging. Most of us have succeeded because of the hardworking Issei and Nisei. We pay honor and tribute to them."

HR 129

Taniguchi first learned about the history of the Merced Assembly Center after taking a call from Rep. Dennis Cardoza’s office. The congressman had an idea to build a permanent monument at the former site and wanted to get the local JA community involved.

So far MACCC, a coalition of the Livingston-Merced and Cortez JACL chapters, has managed to raise close to $100,000 from various donors including the Merced Museum, the Merced County Board of Supervisors and several local businesses. Their goal is to raise $150,000 for the permanent bronze structure along with benches, trees and storyboards. There will also be an educational component to the project.

On Feb. 10, HR 129 — a bill introduced by Cardoza, D-Calif., recognizing the memorial site at the Merced County Fairgrounds — passed.

"This designation is long overdue," said Cardoza in a statement. "We can never forget that this unconscionable act happened in our community. We have an absolute responsibility to remember this event and to educate future generations."

The bronze monument will depict a stack of suitcases with the former internees’ identification tags and a small girl sitting on top. The memorial will be located in one of the busiest sections of the fairgrounds in a 600 square foot area. The group hopes to unveil the site on Feb. 20, 2010.

"It will be a real good visual reminder for the community, many of whom have no idea of what occurred," said MACCC co-chair Patti Kishi, 57, whose father Fred and uncle Sherman were both interned at the Merced Assembly Center. "It’s a permanent installation of a story that needs to be remembered so not to do a similar kind of injustice."

As a Sansei, Kishi believes the memorial will be an important story for her generation.

"It’s our history and it has to do a lot with our families and how we developed and why we are the way we are," she said. "It’s really important to share that history with the community so that the path is not followed again."

JA Farms

Local native Grace Kimoto, 80, grew up on one of the many JA farms in the Livingston-Merced area. She and her eight siblings would be housed with other JA families.

"I was very scared," she recalled. "We had to get rid of all the Japanese things, pack what we could."

The family emptied their refrigerator and brought their furniture to the local church to be stored. They also had to get rid of their trucks and farm equipment.

"Camp was very strange," she said. For the first time she would be surrounded by unfamiliar Japanese faces and forced to eat unusual foods. "The toilets were horrible. The water would go ‘gachung’ when we weren’t ready."

This was their home for three months and like many of the JA families they were transported by train to the Amache internment camp for the duration of the war.

Unlike many JAs, Kimoto’s family was able to return to their Cortez farm after their confinement. The land had been leased during their absence but was returned to them after the war.

"My family was very lucky."

For 34 years Kimoto taught grade 5 in the local Winton School District and she would often tell her internment story to her students. She’s ecstatic that a permanent memorial is planned at the former Merced Assembly Center.

"It really is educational. We want people in the area to really know what had happened in their history," she said. "It wasn’t just Merced people, it was people from all over."

Coming Full Circle

During the 1970s when some local JAs proposed an idea for a bronze plaque at the former Merced Assembly Center site, many locals protested. The plaque was eventually placed in a far off, obscure location. Several years later the plaque was placed at the Merced Fairgrounds entrance.

This time around the response to a proposal for a permanent monument at the former site has been diametrically different.

"We’ve had nothing but support," said Taniguchi, who noted that the fairgrounds board gave the idea their unanimous approval.

"People have been so enthusiastic about it. There’s been an incredible change of attitude," said Sherman.

MACCC plans to hold a Day of Remembrance event on Feb. 21 to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066.

Many of the former Merced Assembly Center internees plan to attend. It will be another opportunity to tell their stories, stories many locals will be hearing for the first time.

"It’s so sad they don’t know," said Kimoto, who often gets looks of disbelief when she tells her stories to local students. "They don’t believe it. I have a hard time believing it, that our government did this to their own people."

For more information: www.mercedassemblycenter.org

Day of Remembrance:
Feb. 21, Merced County Fairgrounds, Junior Building; For information: Steve Teranishi at 299/383-6577, Ext. 13 or Bob Taniguchi at 209/384-6357, taniguchi.r@mccd.edu.
Seeing JA History Through Toyo’s Lens

‘Toyo’s Camera,’ a new documentary about the famed Issei photographer, creates a connection between two cultures.

By LYNDA LIN
Assistant Editor

Junichi Suzuki can look at Japanese American history with fresh eyes. When he first arrived in Los Angeles from Japan in 2001, he had 20 years of filmmaking experience on subjects inspired by true events — including a sweeping story about a dog that swims for miles to reunite with its true love.

“All filmmakers are influenced by real life,” said Suzuki, 56.

He came to the U.S. with an artist visa to find a different source of inspiration. At the time, he admits he didn’t know much about JA history. Because frankly, “Japanese people don’t care about foreign matters.”

But in his day-to-day interactions with Japanese Americans, he heard the same word pop up in different conversations: internment.

In his mind, this historical event could help bridge the gap between two cultures by providing a fresh perspective on the past.

“Toyo’s Camera” is a sweeping documentary that examines the connection between Toyo Miyatake, a Japanese American photographer, and the Issei generation who lived through the internment camps during World War II.

The new point of view on a historical event could help break down stereotypes and build bridges, said Craig Ishii, JACL PSW regional director, who also appears in the film.

“Without a doubt, I think it’s understandable and more importantly, significant that the filmmakers are Japanese and not JA because it provides a fresh new perspective on the events that took place during WWII,” said Ishii.

The Man in the Beret

Behind the film’s broad examination of WWII internment history is the story of an Issei man who captured life in photographs.

Toyo was a man driven by his art, said his son Archie. One winter, they took pictures in Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo before his passing in 1979, took his family to the mountains to play in the snow. Once there, he disappeared. In the evening, Archie saw his father making his way back with a camera slung over his shoulders.

“They were some of the most beautiful pictures,” said Archie.

Raising the Bar to New Heights

Holly Fujie is the first Japanese American woman to be elected president of the State Bar of California.

By JOHN SAITO, JR.
Special to the Pacific Citizen

Growing up, Holly Fujie thought about what she wanted to do professionally with her life and narrowed it down to doctor, professor or lawyer.

Whether she was smart enough to pursue any of them was never an issue. In fact, it was more like she was school sharp enough for her, because it was so seamless it almost made her head spin. She had skipped two grades by the time she was nine, graduated from high school at age 16 and finished college in three years.

And last July, Fujie had decided to pursue law. She graduated from UC Berkeley School of Law (Boalt Hall), and the Oakland native moved to Los Angeles to begin what has become a groundbreaking career. In 1978, she joined a firm of 70 lawyers as a litigator, became a partner in two subsequent firms and is now a shareholder at Buchalter Nemer, a business law firm in Los Angeles.

By then, Fujie had decided to pursue law. She graduated from UC Berkeley School of Law (Boalt Hall), and the Oakland native moved to Los Angeles to begin what has become a groundbreaking career. In 1978, she joined a firm of 70 lawyers as a litigator, became a partner in two subsequent firms and is now a shareholder at Buchalter Nemer, a business law firm in Los Angeles. On 20 May, she was elected as the first woman and the first Asian American woman to serve as president of the State Bar of California.

Fujie’s election marks a significant milestone for the legal profession, as women and minorities have been underrepresented in the field. As the first woman and Asian American to hold this position, Fujie hopes to inspire and mentor others to break down barriers and achieve their career goals.

“While I was running, I had a conversation with a colleague who said, ‘You’re a new president, and there’s a lot of new faces,’ ” Fujie said. “And I thought, ‘Well, that’s exactly what I want to happen.”

Fujie’s leadership and advocacy have positioned her as a role model for diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. As president of the State Bar of California, she is committed to promoting equality and justice for all individuals, regardless of their background or identity.

“Being elected to the presidency is a very humbling experience,” Fujie said. “But it’s also an opportunity to lead and inspire change. I hope that through my leadership, we can make the legal profession more welcoming and accessible to everyone.”

As Fujie looks towards the future, she is focused on ensuring that the State Bar of California remains a vibrant and dynamic organization that is reflective of the communities it serves. She is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion, and working with all members of the legal community to create a more equitable and just legal system for all.

“Being the first woman and the first Asian American to serve as president of the State Bar of California is an honor, but it’s also a responsibility,” Fujie said. “I want to use this opportunity to make a difference and to leave a lasting impact.”

Fujie’s leadership exemplifies the value of diversity and inclusion in leadership positions, and she is an inspiration to all who seek to make a positive impact in their communities.

As she continues to serve as president of the State Bar of California, Fujie looks forward to the opportunities that lie ahead, and is committed to leading the organization towards greater equity and justice for all.

See TOYO’S CAMERA/Page 13

See HOLLY FUJIE/Page 12
The fourth quarter closes with a six-figure deficit. Ryan Chin, the national president's appointee for vice president of membership, steps down.

By LYNDA LIN
Assistant Editor

SAN FRANCISCO—The JACL national board has passed a revised 2009 budget with reductions in revenue and spending. The revisions were necessary, according to board members, because of the effects of the economic crisis on the organization's investment funds.

JACL's investments are down about 22 percent compared to last year — below the threshold for withdrawal. So in December, the Finance Committee and national staff members adjusted the 2009 budget to take out $262,949 of budgeted earnings from the Legacy, National and Life Trust Endowments.

Changes in the 2009 budget include:
- The cancellation of Legacy Grant programs and chapter legacy rebates because the Legacy Fund is under performing.
- The cancellation of chapter and district rebates/refunds from the Life Trust Endowment.
- An 8 percent cut in the Pacific Citizen's program budget.
- Keeping the director of public policy position in Washington, D.C. vacant.
- A 10 percent cut in travel across the board.

Even with these adjustments, in 2009 the JACL is looking at a projected deficit of $28,731, which will be drawn from the JACL Reserve Fund. To his left are Larry Oda, JACL national president, Michelle Yoshida, legal counsel, and Sheldon Arakaki, national vice president of general operations.

Over 1 percent of the total budget, an understandable amount considering the difficult economic times. Going forward, the budget needs to be monitored carefully.

But other board members say more thorough and immediate measures needed to be taken in order to stop the financial bleeding.

About $150,000 has already been withdrawn from the Reserve Fund to cover cash needs in 2008.

"I fear that the longer we put off taking immediate corrective action our budget woes will snowball into a much larger one which would limit our options to stabilize our finances," said NCWNP District Gov. Alan Nishi.

Ryan Chin, the national president's appointee for vice president of membership, called the revised budget "unrealistic." At the meeting, he announced that he was stepping down from his post citing personal reasons.

"It did not reduce membership or grant/fundraising money — this despite the fact that I clearly pointed out that since October, these numbers swung dramatically from being more than budgeted to less than budgeted," said Chin about the revised budget.

"This is significant because the stock market meltdown began in October and these numbers demonstrate that JACL isn't immune to the current recession."

The 2009-10 budget adopted by the national council laid the foundations for aggressive membership goals to fund JACL programs. Those goals have not been adjusted in the revised budget.

"In these troubled economic times factored in with an average annual membership attrition rate of approximately 4 percent, our projected membership revenue for the current fiscal year appears to be significantly overstated," said IDC District Gov. Brian Morishita, who voted against the revised budget.

Chin, Nishi and PWN District Gov. Elaine Akagi also voted "no."

But other board members say now is not the time to over adjust the budget.

"We are only into the beginning of the year, and it is not necessary to sound the alarms when we have 10 months to adjust our spending to match the actual membership revenues," said JACL National President Larry Oda.

In tough economic times, membership revenue has more certainty than grants or investment income, said Spry. More data is needed from the first quarter of the 2009 fiscal year, he added.

"This is the time to broaden our membership base because people are in need and we have the capacity to help," said Mori. "When the going gets tough, the strength of our organization comes to the surface. So we have to dig deeper and work harder and smarter."

Tough Decisions Ahead

The numbers, so far, are bleak.

As of Dec. 31, the Legacy Fund is at $5.2 million, the Life Trust Endowment is at $416,754, and the National Endowment sits at $356,642. The Masaoka Endowment Fund is at $341,758 and the JACL Reserve Fund sits at $270,269.

For Oda, the real crisis is the potential of using up the JACL's Reserve Fund.

"We wasted a lot of time at the board meeting trying to erase [the 2009] deficit, when the board should have been focusing on the $285,100 loss that we experienced in 2008," he said.

With the revised budget in place, the plan is to move forward, continue examining the data, and revisit the budget in the spring with more concrete numbers.

But the potential for additional cuts is very real.

"Basing revenue on membership dollars, grants and the kindness of members' donations is so silly, it's frightening," said Akagi.

"Remembering past years, we didn't realize our goals, and I fear this year will be the same."

No one wants to see a loss of staff, she added. "That is the hard decision we might have to face this year, and it won't be pleasant."

Chin says more transparency and accountability is needed from the national board.

"The membership must follow the board's decisions closely and inquire often — demand answers," he said. "The membership must hold the board's feet to the fire on reckless financial decisions."

Now, the consensus is: JACL needs its members.

"We are at a crossroads, said ada. "... We need their help to build our membership and maintain our programs and people."

Get New Members Now!

Download JACL membership development tools, brochures and other documents at: www.jaclmembership.org. Get the login information by contacting your chapter president.
Stimulus Bill Includes Benefits for Filipino Veterans

By Associated Press and P.C. Staff

With a stroke of his pen President Barack Obama on Feb. 17 signed into law a $787 billion stimulus package that includes $198 million in payments to Filipinos who fought for the U.S. during World War II.

U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Inouye had fought to include the veterans’ long-awaited compensation in the Senate version of the stimulus bill.

"While I believe that this action should have happened long ago, I hope that these veterans will now know that the people of the United States truly appreciate the great sacrifices that they and their fallen comrades made for our country," said Inouye in a statement.

The stimulus bill would award a one-time payment of $15,000 to Filipino veterans who are now American citizens and $9,000 to non-citizens.

About 200,000 Filipinos served alongside U.S. soldiers to defend the Philippines from the 1941 Japanese invasion and resist subsequent Japanese occupation.

The Filipinos were a U.S. colony at the time, and the U.S. military assured Filipinos they could apply for U.S. citizenship and qualify for full U.S. veterans’ benefits if they served.

After the war, however, Congress passed the Rescission Act of 1946, stripping Filipino veterans of their status as U.S. veterans. This denied Filipinos the benefits they were promised.

The veterans have campaigned for decades to win these benefits back. They’ve had some victories, including when Congress passed a bill allowing thousands to immigrate and become U.S. citizens. Burial rights in national cemeteries came a decade later.

Inouye said about 18,000 veterans are still alive in the Philippines and the U.S. Many live in Hawaii and California.

Inouye, who fought with the U.S. Army in Italy during World War II, said the measure would "close a dark chapter in this history of this country.

"Through this funding, our government gives some recognition and thanks to the Filipino soldiers who fought under the Stars and Stripes and helped rid the world of tyranny and fascism," said Rep. Mike Honda, chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

The token of gratitude for their service is long overdue.

This “marks for many the end of a long struggle for equality and recognition for those Filipino veterans who served side by side with American soldiers,” said the group KAYA: Filipinos Americans for Progress in a statement. “For some, it is compromise over full equity, but nonetheless an act on a promise long overdue.

Although the stimulus package garnered Democratic support, most Republicans in both the House and Senate voted against the federal bill.

Some Republicans also voiced their opposition to the Filipino veterans’ benefits.

"I hope Americans will stop to ponder the distorted values of those who crafted this bill," said Representative Representative Steve Buyer of Indiana in an interview with The New York Times.

Obama Lifts Restrictions on Kids’ Health Coverage

A groups, including JACL, applaud signing of SCHIP bill.

By Associated Press and P.C. Staff

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama made more children from middle-class families eligible for government health insurance Feb. 5 by lifting a directive imposed by his predecessor.

In 2007, the Bush administration said it would strictly adhere to guidelines that limited the scope of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program.

A year later, it backed off its threat to penalize states that enrolled middle-class children without first proving they had enrolled nearly all poor children first.

In a memorandum issued Feb. 5, Obama completely lifted the restrictions, which many governors and Democratic lawmakers said were nearly impossible to meet.

Obama said in a letter to the Department of Health and Human Services that “tens of thousand of children have been denied health care coverage” because of the directive.

The Asian Pacific American community includes a large percentage of legal immigrants who do not have access to health insurance.

"The JACL feels that the signing into law of the SCHIP bill is a step toward healthcare reform by providing help to millions of deserving people," said Nat’l JACL President Larry Oka. "Making healthcare coverage available to those who need it most through SCHIP is a step in the right direction.

"The SCHIP bill being signed into law will ensure adequate healthcare for some of the most vulnerable of our nation’s population," said Floyd Mori, JACL national director. "We commend all those who were instrumental in bringing about the passage of the SCHIP bill.

"The restrictions, at least 95 percent of poor children eligible for Medicaid or SCHIP had to already be in those programs before states could begin using federal funds to cover higher-income children.

Also, states covering higher-income children had to make sure individuals were without health insurance for one year before they were allowed to get government-sponsored coverage.

Obama’s memo was issued a day after he signed legislation that will enable about 7 million children to continue coverage through SCHIP and allow another 4 million to sign up.

"The way I see it, providing coverage to 11 million children through SCHIP is a down payment on my commitment to cover every single American," Obama said Feb. 4 at a White House bill-signing ceremony.

"It is the first step in a long journey toward repairing our healthcare system and providing universal coverage, care, and access to the people of our nation," U.S. Rep. Mike Honda, chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

Most lawmakers and advocacy groups in the health reform debate acknowledge that the next steps toward reform will be harder than expanding SCHIP, given the increasing federal deficit.

National Newsbytes

By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

Foreclosure Puts North Austin Chinatown Center in Peril

AUSTIN—Like many shopping centers in today’s economy, the city’s Chinatown Center has become a victim of foreclosure and will go up for auction in March.

The center, which was appraised at nearly $23 million, was one of the local APA community’s largest shopping centers.

"It is very comforting to have a space that they can somehow connect with or identify with, with the language, with the spices, with the smells," Asian American Cultural Center CEO Amy Wong Mok told News 5 Austin.

Margaret Cho Calls Miley Cyrus a Disgrace

LOS ANGELES—Comedian Margaret Cho blasted Miley Cyrus for the recent photo of the teen star posing in a racially stereotypical gesture.

On a blog post entitled “Oh Miley,” Cho calls Cyrus a “disgrace” and asks, “why isn’t racism against Asians taboo?”

The photo surfaced showing Cyrus, 16, and her friends all making a stereotypical gesture by putting their eyes into a slanted position. Cyrus denied that she meant the gesture to be racially offensive on her own blog and said that she was simply making a “goofy face.” She later issued an apology after critics said her response was simply too little too late.

Earlier this week, a Los Angeles woman filed a $4 million lawsuit against Cyrus on behalf of APAs.

Japanese Tea Garden Dispute Continues

SAN FRANCISCO—A Japantown cafe owner who promises to bring in $300,000 for improvements should operate the historic Japanese Tea Garden in Golden Gate Park instead of the current vendor who has held the contract for more than 15 years, city staffers have recommended.

The Recreation and Park Department said that an advisory panel had unanimously given highest marks to Cafe Hanu owner Carol Murata. But the current garden operators, a firm led by Fred and Vincent Lo, called the decision racially motivated. The department is slated to take up the matter Feb. 19.

The Tea Garden, near the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, features stone footpaths, bonsai trees, pagodas, koi ponds and Buddhist statues.

APAs Still Not Ready to Switch to Digital Television

NEW YORK—About 6.9 percent of APA households are still not ready for the transition to all-digital broadcasting, according to a report from the Nielsen Company.

Under government-mandated action, all television stations are required to switch to digital programming, which will leave viewers without a television signal unless they purchase digital television sets, connect to cable, satellite, and alternate delivery systems or purchase a converter box.

Although Congress voted to delay the nationwide transition to June 12, the bill allowed stations to make the switch early with the approval of the Federal Communications Commission.

Park Backers Resist Chinatown Development

RIVERSIDE, Calif.—Backers of a memorial park at the site where Riverside’s Chinese community was once concentrated say they’ll stake out the location to keep developers from breaking ground until a judge hears their request for a restraining order.

Save Our Chinatown Committee member Jean Wong says a crew with earth-moving equipment has arrived and began work on the site of a planned medical office building.

Riverside City Council has approved an excavation plan that requires an archaeological analysis on the site.

Third time’s the charm — Riverside’s Chinatown in the early 1900s— is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
APAs in the News
By Pacific Citizen Staff

Tammy Duckworth Nominated to VA Post
WASHINGTON—Tammy Duckworth, the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs director, was nominated by President Barack Obama Feb. 3 to serve as an assistant secretary at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Duckworth is a University of Hawaii-Manou and McKinley High School graduate who earned the Purple Heart for her service in Iraq. She was a helicopter pilot who lost both her legs and partial use of one arm in a rocket-propelled grenade attack in 2004. She ran for Congress in 2006, but lost.

"She is a role model for not only the Asian American community but for all of those who are faced with physical disabilities," said Floyd Mori, JACL national director.

Tia Carrere, Daniel Ho Win Hawaiian Grammy
Actress and singer Tia Carrere, along with producer and guitarist Daniel Ho, won the Hawaiian Grammy for the album "Ikena." It's the first time since the Hawaiian music Grammy was established in 2005 that a non-slack-key album has won. This is Ho's fourth Grammy. Carrere lost out last year when she was nominated for her album "Hawaiiana."

Both Carrere and Ho live in Los Angeles now but were both born and raised in the islands.

Moon Wins Democratic Nomination for Supervisor
At-large Fairfax County school board member Byong Moon has won the Democratic nomination for Braddock District supervisor.

Moon, a Korean American, is the only APA elected official in Northern Virginia, even though the APA community makes up 15.8 percent of Fairfax County's population and is the locality's largest racial minority group.

Moon will face Republican and Kings Park Civic Association president John Cook in a March 10 special election. If he wins, another special election will have to take place to replace him on the school board.

Yale Law Dean May Be Considered for State Department
Harold Koh, dean of Yale Law, is a top contender to be the principal legal counselor to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, according to the Yale Daily News. Koh, an international law expert, did not confirm or deny that he would be leaving Yale for a government post. He has testified numerous times before Congress and worked in the Department of Justice.

Yoon Launches Historic Bid to be Boston Mayor
Boston City Councilor Sun Yoon has confirmed that he plans to run for mayor. The 39-year-old Yoon, who has been a city councilor since 2005, represents a departure from traditional Boston politics.

He is the first APA to run for mayor and is not a lifelong resident of Boston. He was born in Korea, grew up in Pennsylvania and moved to the city in 2003. He has tapped a nationwide network of APA donors and has about $210,000 in his campaign account.

Yoon says his campaign will focus on the city's future.

Moriwaki Named National Parks Conservationist of the Year
The nonprofit National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) recently honored Clarence Moriwaki, chairman of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Memorial Committee, as national parks conservationist of the year with its annual Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award.

Moriwaki was singled out for his efforts to protect the former Eagledale Ferry Dock on Bainbridge Island as a satellite unit of Minidoka National Historic Site in Idaho.

In addition to acquiring financial and political support for the site, Moriwaki worked to build local support for the project by educating the public about the injustices suffered by the members of the Japanese American community on Bainbridge Island during World War II.

Pinedale Remembrance Plaza Honors the JA Story
By LESLIE K. TAMURA
Special to the Pacific Citizen

Although rain drenched the more than two hundred people who came to the Feb. 16 dedication of the Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial in Fresno, Calif., they braved the elements to honor the journey Japanese Americans have made since World War II.

"The ground is wet, our bodies may be wet, but our spirits are not dampened," said keynote speaker Norman Y. Mineta, former U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

The dedication concluded the final JACL Tri-District Conference, which will change to an annual convention format in 2011. The three-day conference, "Internment and Redress Remembered," featured panel discussions with Pinedale and Fresno Assembly Center internment committee members; the legal team that successfully petitioned the courts to overturn the wartime criminal convictions of Fred Korematsu, Gordon Hirabayashi and Minomu Yasui; as well as major players in the Redress Movement.

"This was a community event not only for JACL members," said Bobbi Hanada, former JACL Central California District Governor, "but it embraced members throughout our community."

The Pinedale Memorial, also known as Remembrance Plaza, is a California historical landmark that focuses on the story of Japanese Americans.

Ray Ethan, 74, has lived in the Fresno area all his life. He was about eight years old when the government forced 4,823 Americans of Japanese ancestry from their homes in California, Washington and Oregon, and into the Pinedale Assembly Center, before transporting them to more permanent internment camps across the country.

"The [Remembrance] Plaza is gorgeous," Eshner said of the memorial at 625 W. Allaround Ave. in northwest Fresno. "I'm familiar with the internment ... and I felt that I needed to be here."

Although the cherry trees surrounding the 7,000 square-foot plaza have yet to blossom, 12 storyboard plaques and a water fountain at its center honor a "unique American story," according to Elizabeth Laval, photographic historian of the Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial Project Committee.

Two storyboards provide background of the Sugar Pine Lumber Company, which established the Pinedale community, and Camp Pinedale, an Army Air Force base. The 10 remaining storyboards track the progress of JAs from WWII to Redress on Sept. 17, 1987.

A bronze water fountain, designed and fabricated by renowned artist Gerard Tsubakawa from Seattle, stands at the center of the plaza. Inspired by the work of his father, sculptor George Tsutakawa, the Remembrance Fountain brings together the elements of heaven, earth, man and life.

Buried beneath the fountain, "as a heartbeat of the memorial," Laval added, are artifacts from the Sugar Pine Lumber Company, Camp Pinedale, as well as photos from assembly and relocation centers.

"It's a great work of art," Mineta said. "It's a combination of the peace as well as the turmoil of the evacuation and internment."

The Pinedale Assembly Center Memorial Project Committee, a partnership between the CCDC JACL and the Central California Nikkei Foundation, organized the development of Remembrance Plaza.

The project began in 2005, when a developer sought to demolish a building that may have been used to process JAs into the Pinedale Assembly Center.

Under the leadership of Judge Dale Ikeda, the committee sought and achieved a rezoning application from the Fresno City Council in November 2006 to establish the memorial. The next year, on Feb. 19, the committee broke ground.

The committee received more than $60,000 for constructing the plaza, and the Clovis Memorial District, which provides and maintains memorials for veterans, donated $65,000 for maintenance and repairs, and will have stewardship of Remembrance Plaza in perpetuity.

"Many of you who are here today will visit this site in future years, and your children will visit this site as well, and when they do so," Mineta said, "remind them that while this memorial reflects on a time of great injustice, it's most fundamental purpose is to show how far we have come."

In the audience, as Mineta spoke, was 14-year-old Holly Kirkman of Mendocino County, Calif.

While Kirkman knew about her grandmother's internment at Tule Lake, she didn't know much about Redress.

"My teachers didn't know much either," she said, "but it's exciting to listen to people who've been there, to learn about what they were experiencing."

Mineta concluded the dedication, reminding the audience that, "you cannot appreciate where you have been if you do not understand and remember where you have been."

JACL National Director Floyd Mori added, "The enormous service and sacrifice that preceded us requires each of us to recommit ourselves to doing our part in keeping our Constitution intact and relevant."
Very Truly Yours

Our Past Year with Books

Ogawa, Dennis and John Bink. “California Hotel and Casino: Hawai’i’s Home Away from Home.” Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai’i, Honolulu, (2008), 133pp.;
• The biggest surprise (or attraction) for me this past year was Lake Washington JACLer Hugh Barlowe’s autobiographical text with “Pacific Citizen” in the title. Having lost my auction bid for the red-covered book at the National JACL Convention last year at Salt Lake City, he kindly sent me a copy.
• At JACL conventions, I knew Hugh was a retired U.S. foreign officer of 30 plus years, but learned (in his book) his father was a circuit-riding Episcopalian priest, who ranged from Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Porterville to San Diego where this JACLer spent his youth in the ’30s.
• At Cal Berkeley in ’44, Hugh bares his “uneven record” with the coeds, then drafted by the Army in March ’45, basic at Camp Hood, Texas, and shipped to the 1234 Infantry at Nagasaki in November and to Occupation duties at Yokohama, where he met his wife to be, what a fascinating life they led and Hugh wound up as the Pacific Citizen (in lower case).
• Heavy reading, it was, to learn in-depth about Saigo Takamori (1827-1877) of Satsuma who was the Last Samurai, a man behind the scenes during the civil war of Japan (1862-1868) that ended in a bloodless surrender at Edo Castle. (We’re getting ahead of the story unfolding in NHK’s Taiga drama, Taisho-ji — Princess Atsu on Saturday night on Japanese TV.)

In the summer of ’43, the government issued the loyalty questionnaire and it was seen as one of “great confusion and suspicion,” specifically No. 27 and 28. Their no-no response saw them on a long train ride to Tule Lake that summer, again to Block 34 near a sewage treatment layout. A year later, they were moved to Block 75, in a district named “Alaska” with new barracks for segregates. Kids were told to speak, read and write Japanese and learn bushido.

The controversy surrounding the passing of California’s Proposition 8 is only the latest flare-up in a long running battle between religiousists and secularists. On one side of the dispute, I had family members and friends who suffered at work and business for their support of Proposition 8. On the other hand, I had friends who took to the streets in protest after its passage. I struggled to find my voice in the matter because I could see value in tenets on both sides of the arguments.

As individual believers, it’s difficult to separate beliefs regarding church and state. That’s like trying to separate the influence of mother and your father when you are analyzing your childhood. There is too much overlap. As individual citizens, it is difficult to see your pluralistic society be determined by a monistic majority.

The reality is that we do live in a pluralistic society that put the rights of its individual members as its foundation. How we decide to exercise those rights remains the responsibility of its members.

But in times of conflict, we often need a leader who is wise enough to put things in historical and current perspective. It is my hope that a man with a mother from Kansas and a father from Kenya with a family made of Christians and Muslims and non-believers will be that leader and succeed where others have failed.

We urgently need to begin to solve the battle-scarred memories of our past, distant and near, and find a way forward to chart that ever-elastic balance between church and state.

Jefferson spoke of the “wall of separation of church and state.” Lincoln cited God more often when his popularity was low. Innumerable presidents since our founding have struggled to define this seemingly elusive relationship between our religious and civic beliefs.

Impossible as it may sound, this is one hope I hang on President Obama. And I hope I am not alone in this.

The Shigeki Shake Down

The Shigeki Shake Down

I have yet to hear any final tallies of how many Americans witnessed the swearing-in and subsequent address by our 44th president on that frigid, fateful morning in mid-January.

I know they told us that 1 to 2 million people had squirmed into the space between the Capitol and the Lincoln Monument, but I am curious to know how many people sat in their living rooms, dorm rooms, waiting rooms, auditoriums or offices watching the inaugural address on TV screens, flat screens and computer screens. What a seminal event in the living history of our country!

The Obama administration marks the ostensible beginning of a new era in the American story. Many people have hung their hopes on his acuity. It is hard to predict where we will be in four or eight years, but one thing is certain: we have many obstacles to face before we get there.

As I sat in a library auditorium packed with over a hundred other students, doctors, scientists, administrators and staff from the medical center where I go to school, Obama said:

“For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, (rumbling of hands clapping, heads nodding) and nonbelievers, (eruption of applause and cheering). We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth.”

The audience surrounding me was ecstatic for a presidential about-face on nonbelievers to be included among the other religions of our land. After the Bush years, it’s hard not to see why. To me, this illustrates one of the major obstacles that President Obama will have to face. The list of pressing issues facing this new administration has been stated ad nauseam. But for me, I hope that the Obama era will bring some type of reconciliation of the resurgent tensions between church and state.

Jon Meacham, in “American Gospel, God, the Founding Fathers, and the Making of a Nation,” lays the groundwork to explain our “civil American gospel.” He points to the speeches of Jefferson and Lincoln to present the complex ways in which many of our nation’s leaders have tried to find harmony between the tensions of church and state.

Peter Shigeki Frandsen is currently a student at Columbia University, College of Dental Medicine. He is also a Mt. Olympics JACL member.
Entering the Hallowed Halls of Oscar History

Four nominations puts filmmaker Steven Okazaki in an elite group of Asian American Hollywood heavyweights.

By LYNDA LIN
Assistant Editor

Steven Okazaki's fourth Academy Awards nomination got him thinking about his first time. When you've come so far, it's only natural to start looking back.

"They didn't even care," said the Sansei filmmaker with a chuckle about his first brush with Hollywood's premier awards show in 1985 as a nominee. He was there for "Unfinished Business."

While Okazaki is a trailblazer, he insists that the race for the Oscar doesn't get any easier with time. "Someone from a foreign country kept calling me, 'Ever seen my Emmy?'" he said. "How do you say, 'I left it at the hotel?'"

Over the years, Okazaki has had a steady working relationship with the Academy, and they have kept him in the running for the first time because he found himself blanked out and weeping.

"I felt like he was holding things back," Okazaki said of a former Khmer Rouge soldier. "I usually interview people I admire. I didn't feel any admiration [for En] and I felt like he was holding things back."

"He did nothing. He didn't offer [the victims] a hand. They were mostly of En as a young Khmer Rouge soldier."

Okazaki. "I usually interview people I admire. Even with drug addicts, there was something I admired. I didn't feel any admiration [for En] and I felt like he was holding things back."

In his last on-camera interview, En explodes under Okazaki's forceful questioning.

"I said to him the pictures have this cruel coldness about it. Maybe it reflects the photographer."

En's angry response is included in the film. He says he was simply doing his job. Not doing it might have been worse.

"The film is an examination of the effects of being silent when something horrible is happening to your fellow man," said Okazaki.

In it, En asks a question that would inspire the premise: would you die for your conscience?

Moving On

The film has drawn comparisons to Holocaust documentaries, but Okazaki thinks there are stronger parallels to the U.S. history of slavery and the WWII JA internment.

Tragedy can continue to affect people for generations. With the JA internment, there are still effects on people's self-esteem three or four generations later, said Okazaki. Surviving means you have to move on, but sometimes it's not so simple — even for the man behind the camera.

"I found making the film really traumatic, almost unbearable."

He heard horrific stories that he couldn't share. HBO called the initial cuts of the film too soft and poetic for the cruelty of the subject. Okazaki argued that he didn't want to lose the audience.

"What I was also saying was that I didn't want to go this deep."

So the filmmaker sought the help of a therapist for the first time because he found himself blanking out and weeping.

Let's get this straight: the man who made documentaries about the internment and the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings found this topic to be difficult to digest.

"In a way, making a film on the effects of the atomic bombs was easier to process," said Okazaki. "There was a president who made a decision, someone pushed a button and all these terrible things happened. It was a political decision."

The difference in this story is that there were so many individuals who made individual decisions without asking. "Is this right? What is the cost of not doing anything?"

For Okazaki, the cost is a lost soul like En. The filmmaker has no plans to develop this into a feature-length documentary, perhaps simply because he can't bear it. En hasn't seen the film yet either, he said.

"Clearly, he is a cold and empty person," said Okazaki. "That's the price he paid."

WATCH IT

The Academy Awards airs Feb. 22 on ABC. The Conscience of Nhem En’ is slated to air on HBO in June. For more information on the film: www.farfilm.com.
Ethnic Slurs Upset Virginia Tech Chief

By SUE LINDSEY

BLACKSBURG, Virginia—An internationally diverse campus is vital to Virginia Tech, the school’s president said recently in response to e-mails and blogs disparaging Asians that surfaced after a Chinese student was accused of decapitating a classmate.

The killing last month was the first since Seung-Hui Cho, a Korean American student, killed 32 people in a mass shooting in 2007 and revived memories of the tragedy.

Some of the comments from parents, alumni and members of the public questioned whether the university should allow international students to attend the school. Others supported the university’s international community.

President Charles Steger said in an open letter that the school was enriched by its diversity and that overall there were few reports of international students getting into trouble.

“Virginia Tech is an open and accepting community including many races, ethnicities, and cultures from around the world,” Steger wrote in the letter.

Steger said there was no evidence that the decapitation of Xin Yang, 22, in a campus coffee shop Jan. 21 had anything to do with her ethnicity, Steger said. Both Yang and suspect Haiyang Zhu, who is charged with first-degree murder, are from China.

The school has more than 2,100 students from 72 foreign countries among its full-time enrollment of 30,000.

University spokesman Larry Hincker said school officials have received several dozen letters as well as e-mails and calls attacking foreigners. Hincker called the comments “xenophobic barbs.”

A head of the support for a service of the school’s international community said the comments on blogs began the night of the recent slaying. They ranged from “being very negative to being very irrational,” said Kim Beisecker, director of the Cranwell International Center on campus.
JACL Announces Calif. Statewide Project: Community! Program

The JACL recently announced the launch of a California statewide Project: Community! program intended to empower the high school youth voice in the Japanese American community. The program also seeks to give participants a sense of identity and understanding of their place in the community.

The program was started in 2008 by the JACL Pacific Southwest District in Southern California and has now spread to Northern California with both programs set to run through the summer.

Project: Community! will focus on the Japantowns in each area: San Francisco Japantown in Northern California and Little Tokyo in Southern California. JACL recognizes the importance of preserving physical places important to the JA community such as Japantown. Each session of the program will help participants better understand important community issues such as: the power of physical space, community organizations and grassroots organizing.

The program will begin on June 23 and run until Aug. 18 meeting on Tuesdays starting at 6 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. for Northern California and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for Northern California. The programs will gather 15 to 20 high school age participants who are enthusiastic about learning about their community.

Applications for each of the programs are available upon request. For more information on the Southern California program, contact Kene Kubo at programs@jacpsw.org or 213/626-4471. For the Northern California program, contact Tim Keida at mb@jacl.org or 415/921-5225.

DENSHO ANNOUNCES NEW NATIONAL INTERVIEW INITIATIVE

The nonprofit hopes to collect oral histories from former internees in all WWII camps.

Seattle-based Densho, a nonprofit organization dedicated to documenting the oral histories of World War II Japanese American internees, is expanding its collection of video interviews to include national and diverse perspectives.

Working with local community partners and the Manzanar National Historic Site, Densho (meaning “to leave a legacy”) is extending its visual history interview program beyond the Pacific Northwest to capture the life stories of JAs unjustly detained during WWII in all 10 incarceration camps run by the federal War Relocation Authority.

“We’re proud of what we’ve accomplished in the Pacific Northwest, and we will continue our commitment to documenting our home region’s Japanese American stories,” said Tom Ikeda, Densho executive director.

The National Densho collection of visual histories will preserve diverse and relatively undocumented perspectives of the JA experience, including early immigration, prewar communities, the WWII internment of immigrants and incarceration of U.S. citizens. It will also document the opposition and resistance to the wartime measures, renunciation of citizenship, postwar resettlement and the campaign for Redress.

Densho will also interview JAs who were not in a detention facility and non-JAs who played roles in the incarceration process, such as guards, teachers and administrators in camps.

In order to identify notable interviewees with exceptional life stories, Densho is collaborating with local organizations in key cities around the country.

As part of the Densho Digital Archive, all the interviews will be publicly accessible, free of charge, online at www.densho.org.

“Densho will also be producing 80 video interviews from eight to 10 communities around the country. Each interview will be fully transcribed, catalogued, indexed and digitally preserved.

At the same time, Densho will be adding thousands of historical photos to its digital archive. The archive currently holds over 300 transcribed and indexed visual histories and nearly 10,000 photos and documents about the JA experience before, during, and after the WWII mass incarceration.

This year, Densho will visit non-West Coast areas such as Chicago; Phoenix and Minneapolis/St. Paul to record memories of what are called the resettlement years, after JAs left the camps.

“The Twin Cities JACL is grateful to have this opportunity to work with Densho to add our community’s perspectives to the Densho online oral history collection,” said Steve Ozone.

For more information, contact Tom Ikeda at 206/320-0095 or tom.ikeda@densho.org.

JACL'S GALA DINNER WILL TAKE PLACE SEPT. 17

This year’s Salute to Champions dinner will honor the JA veterans.

The JACL recently announced that the National JACL Gala Dinner in Washington, D.C. will take place on Sept. 17. Each year this event is held as a Salute to Champions, honoring those who have contributed to the Japanese American community and the JACL.

This year’s annual gala dinner will honor the Japanese American veterans who served valiantly during World War II and in later wars.

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team/100th Battalion, which was made up of Japanese Americans from the U.S. mainland and Hawaii, are the most decorated unit for its size in U.S. military history. Many of these veterans volunteered for service even as their family members were being detained behind barbed wire fences. Their service during WWII played a vital role in the welfare of the JA community after the war and the success of the 1988 Civil Liberties Act which offered an apology and redress for former internees.

In 2008 the JACL celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act. The honorees included former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta; former JACL Redress Chair John Tateishi; and Grayce Uyehara, who led JACL’s grassroots efforts. An award was also presented to the American Jewish Committee, who was the first national organization to support JACL’s redress efforts.

This year’s gala dinner will honor the Japanese American veterans who served valiantly during World War II and in later wars.

The event will also interview JAs and in later wars.

For more information, contact Tom Ikeda at 206/320-0095 or tom.ikeda@densho.org.

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Historical Society Calls for JA Family Stories

The Japanese American Historical Society of Southern California is seeking personal stories about Japanese American families for its fourth volume of “Nanka Nikkei Voices.”

The JAHSSC is calling for submissions from contributors who currently live or once lived in Southern California. The stories should be regional and focused on JA families. Family histories, autobiographies and biographies will not be accepted.

The stories should illustrate personal family experiences with Issei values and practices, such as gaman, shakata ga nai and enryo. Also sought are stories of how Nisei and Sansei parents have continued these values and practices.

Are there geographic differences that influence JA family traditions? Former Hawaii residents now living in Southern California could share their observations and experiences. Were you a lone JA or one of a few growing up in another predominant racial community? How did that affect your JA-ness and family interactions?

The publication will be released in 2010. Naomi Hirahara, mystery writer, is guest editor for “Nanka.” Also on the committee are Jenni Kuida and Kimiko Ige.

Writing Guidelines

“Nanka Nikkei Voices”
Deadline: July 1, 2009
Stories are limited to 4 pages, typed (single-spaced), minimum 11-point size font. Stories will not be returned, so don’t send the only existing copy. E-mailed stories are preferred, but send hard copies to: PO. Box 3164, Torrance, CA. 90510-3164.
For more information, call chairperson and editor Iku Kiriyama at 310/326-0608 or goiku@sbcglobal.net.

HOLLY FUJIE

(Continued from page 4)

sent to an internment camp in Topaz, Utah during World War II. Before the war, her father, Asa, was a student at UC Berkeley. Due to relocation, he would earn his degree at Brigham Young University and become an insurance agent. Her mother, Sonoko, was a secretary who would later start a thriving business as a tax accountant.

The internment was the subject of Fujie’s monthly column in December for the California Bar Journal, in which she detailed the saga of her maternal grandfather who was detained by FBI agents on Dec. 7, 1941, for being the principal of a Japanese language school in San Francisco. Koichi Suzuki was never charged with any crime, and in the ultimate twist, he was asked to teach Japanese to U.S. naval officers in Boulder, Colo. He took the job.

She credited her mother for becoming a self-made career woman who deftly balanced work, family and community affairs. That model continues to serve Fujie well, now more than ever with her duties as state bar president.

Fujie is married to Lee Cotugno, a Beverly Hills attorney who practices employment law. He was her most court advisor at Boalt Hall, and the couple married the day after she finished law school. They have a daughter, Sabrina, who is a freshman at the California Institute of the Arts, and a son, Thomas, 12.

With their blessing and a flexible work schedule, Fujie — who is a member of the West L.A. JACL and once earned a $100 scholarship from a Bay Area JACL chapter as a high school senior — will continue to delve headfirst in her obligations. Meetings and speaking engagements across the state and to all parts of the country will keep her busy each week through the rest of the term.

And she was recently named chair of Sen. Dianne Feinstein’s judicial advisory committee to President Barack Obama to screen nominees for the position of U.S. central district court judge in California.

In closing her inaugural address, Fujie made a simple, yet succinct appeal to those who could help bring more diversity to the ranks.

“What can you, individually, do that will—make the profession more diverse? One word — mentoring. By mentoring an individual woman or minority attorney, you can influence that one attorney to stay and succeed in the profession, which usually prevents anyone else from returning to work as scheduled. A comedy about a usually polite Asian coping major favor while he ramps his next life in the face of . . . life.
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TAMURA (Continued from page 2)

Mike Masaoka, while he remains a controversial figure in Japanese American history, was an active and engaged participant in public policy. After World War II, he dedicated himself to the civil rights movement, lobbying against racial discrimination. Until his death in 1991, Masaoka continued to fight for what he thought was best for the JA community.

The main purpose of the Mike M. Masaoka JACL fellowship, I believe, is to empower a new generation of APAs dedicated to public service.

Before joining Team Matsui, I had no idea what public service was about. Now, after an incredible learning experience on and off the Hill, I can claim active membership to a community of Americans devoted to effecting change, improving government and promoting public participation.

After completing her service as the JACL Masaoka Fellow, Leslie Tamura — a member of the Fresno JACL — is planning to attend graduate school.

‘TOYO’S CAMERA’
(Continued from page 4)

At Manzanar where cameras were considered contraband, Toyo secretly brought in all the necessary equipment to have a camera made from wood scraps. Nightfall was his cloak of secrecy. When other internees fell asleep in their cots, Toyo used the barrack or latrine as his darkroom.

“He said as a photographer, I have a responsibility to record camp life, so this kind of thing wouldn’t happen again,” said Archie. The wooden camera still works, he added.

Toyo’s passion for art created three generations of Miyatake photographers. Archie is retired from the business, but his sons Alan and Gary Miyatake carry on the legacy. Gary operates his own studio while Alan runs the San Gabriel-based family business Toyo Miyatake Studio.

Alan, 55, is proud of his family legacy.

“I started realizing that as my father gets older and I see his memory start dwindling, who’s going to tell this story?”

In March, United Television Broadcasting Systems will release “Toyo’s Camera” theatrical at Santa Monica’s Laemmle Theater and Little Tokyo’s Aratani Theatre. In conjunction with the Little Tokyo screening, Toyo’s photographs will be displayed in an exhibit at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center.

Toyo “is so important as a documenter of Japanese American community and cultural life,” said Chris Aihara, JACCC executive director.

The largest collection of Toyo’s work in Japan is located at the Kawasaki City Museum. In the U.S., the collection is mostly located in Archie’s home. There have been smaller exhibits of his father’s in the past, but this one will be special, if only for its location.

“It’s just like going home for my father,” said Archie about Little Tokyo. “That’s where my father liked to be the most.”

‘Toyo’s Camera’
The film is playing at the Laemmle Monica 4-Plex in Santa Monica, Calif. March 6-12, and at the Little Tokyo’s Aratani Theatre on March 15. Toyo Miyatake’s photo exhibit runs at the JACCC until March 15.

2009 Day of Remembrance Events

DENVER
Sun., Feb. 22—Amache Archeology 2009 Day of Remembrance Program; 2 p.m.; Sturm Hall, Room 281, Denver University; tenta­tively, Professor Bonnie Clark and her graduate students plan to present their research finding at Amache Camp. Info: Mark Shimoda, 303/933-4095.

LOS ANGELES
Sat., Feb. 21—“Forging Alliances: Connecting Nikkei to Current Immigration”; 2 p.m.; Japanese American National Museum, 269 E. First St.; Roger Daniels will be the keynote speaker; he was a consultant to the Presidential Commission on the War Relocation and Internment of Civilians; no fee to apply. Info: Nao Vang, 415/346-2051, ext. 102 or programs@jaaj.org.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.
Sat., Feb. 28—Forum, “So...What Are You Anyway?” Multiculturalism in the 21st Century”, 10-6 p.m.; Boylston Hall, Harvard University; 1310 Massachusetts Ave.; free but registration required. Register at hapa.eventbrite.com.

TOWSON, Mass.
Through Mar. 14—Exhibition, “Ostriches and Silent Flowers: Paintings by Kotaro Fukui”; gallery hours Mon.-Fri. 11-4 p.m., Sat.-1 p.m.; Asian Arts Gallery, Center for the Arts, Towson University; free. Info: 410/704-2807 or www.towson.edu/asiansarts.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
Mar. 6-10—2009 JACL-OCA D.C. Leadership Conference; Doubletree Hotel, 1515 Rhode Island Ave. NW.
Thu., Sept. 17—JACL Gala Dinner; focus will be on the JA veterans from World War II and beyond. Info: www.jaclo.org or 202/223-1240.

Midwest
CINCINNATI
Sun., Mar. 8—Cincinnati/Dayton JACL Installation Dinner; 5 p.m.; dinner, 6 p.m. installation of officers; Kyoin Japanese Buffet, 12140 Royal Point Dr.; MDC Regional Director Bill Yoshino is the speaker; $30.

INTERMOUNTAIN
DENVER

San Francisco

ONTARIO, Ore.
Fri., Feb. 27—Snake River Valley JACL Crab Feed and Auction; 6-7:30 p.m., auction begins at 7:30 p.m.; $30/adults, $25/seniors (70+), $15/youth (13-18), $10/youth (6-12). Info: Mike or Mary Ann, 541/889-8691.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST
PORTLAND

Feb. 26, 28—Screening, “Zen”; Feb. 26, 6-9 p.m., HUB Auditorium, Univ. of Washington, Feb. 28, 2-6:30 p.m., Pigott Auditorium, Seattle University; film is the true story of Zen Master Dogen; free, but seating limited to 470 for both screenings. Info: www.seattle.emb-japan.go.jp.

Sun., Mar. 1—Hinamatsuri (Girl’s Day) Reception and Tea; 1:30-3 p.m.; Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, 121 NW 2nd Ave.; featured: Professor Bonnie Clark and her graduate students plan to present their research finding at Amache Camp. Info: www.oregonnikkei.org or 503/224-1458.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
ALISO VIEJO
Through Mar. 15—Exhibit, “Manzanar Pilgrimage Photographs”; Founders Hall Art Gallery, 1 University Dr.; photographs were taken by Mark Kirchner from 1983-2008. Info: www.soka.edu, info@soka.edu or 949/484-4000.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST
PORTLAND

Sun., Mar. 1—Hinamatsuri (Girl’s Day) Reception and Tea; 1:30-3 p.m.; Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, 121 NW 2nd Ave.; featured: Professor Bonnie Clark and her graduate students plan to present their research finding at Amache Camp. Info: www.oregonnikkei.org or 503/224-1458.
DEATH NOTICE

JACK HIDEYA KAKUCHI

Funeral services for the late Jack Hideya Kakuchi, San Francisco, Calif.-born Nisei resident of Los Angeles. Beloved husband of Charlotte (Clem) Oyama of Tucson, Arizona, and American kindness. Jack was born Feb. 15, 1910, in Stockton, Calif., and subsequently lived in South Pasadena. He was the second of five children; his parents immigrated from Japan in the early 1900s. A Registered Pediatric Nurse, she had been a valued member of the Japanese American community in South Pasadena, delivering babies and serving in community leadership roles. In later years Shizu's volunteer work teaching knitting and other activities for their community activities, including one in 1987 for philanthropy. They also enthusiastically supported the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

The couple moved to San Francisco in late 1999. Shizu lost her husband in 2003; she is survived by her brother Lawrence Fujii; her children, Pat, Susan, and George; numerous grandchildren and one great-grandchild. At Shizu's request there will be no service. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Kimo Home or Kimo Inc. at 1715 Buchanan St., San Francisco, CA 94115, or to Hospice by the Bay, 1902 Van Ness, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109.

In Memory - 2009

Fujii, Mary Matsutko, 85, Stockton, Feb. 5; Stockton JACL; sister of Sami (Jerry) Ueda and Emi Fujii; 2 gc.; and brother, Mitsuo Sakai.

Fukuchi, Shizue, 45, Downey, Jan. 30; survived by husband, Ken; brother, Iwao Nakawatase; and sister-in-law, June Dorcy.

The compilation appears on a space-available basis at no cost. Printed obituaries from your newspaper are well-recognized. Death notices, which appear in a timely manner at request of the family or funeral director, are published at the rate of 929 per column inch. It is advised to wait at least 7 days for notices.

Funke, Jack Yoshikazu, 81, Monterey Park, Feb. 7; survived by wife, Sumiko; daughter, Leslie; brother, Masuo (Fumie); and sister-in-law, Tomiko Domoto, Chikaye Hashimoto and Masami Azeka.

Habu, Grace (Albert) Taguchi; mother-in-law, Setsuko Maki; and sisters-in-law, Hilda Terada and Yama Nakao.

Matsumura, Fred Mitsuharu, 85, Gardena, Jan. 31; WWII veteran; 442nd; survived by wife, Beatrice; son, Dan (Della); daughter-in-law, Diana Matsumura; 2 gc.; daughters, Margaret (Jim) Leonard and Mary Kogo; brother, Chuck (Merrilyn); brother-in-law, Walter (Jean) Ogata; and sister-in-law, Elsie (Robert) Sakai.

Matsuo, Chiyu, 90, Los Angeles, Jan. 28; survived by daughters, Donna (Pete) Dote and Elizabeth Yoshizuma; sons, Michael (Dora) and Ernie (Pat); 9 gc.; brother, Yoichi (Yuki) Hara; and sister, Yuki (Tak) Hyama.

Minamide, Takako, 83, Los Angeles, Jan. 29; survived by daughters, Christine (Alan) Shimizu and Sherry (Mark) Young; son, Joel (Jean); 8 gc.; and sisters, Kimiko Tazo and Cassie (Bob) Endo.

Morozumi, John, M.D., 84, Stockton, Jan. 25; WWII veteran; MIS; survived by wife, Mary; and sisters, Charlie (John) Thompson; brother-ill-law, Walter (Jean) Ogata; and sister, Sue Tokushige.

Muraoka, Carl Hikaru, 89, Chicago, Jan. 19; survived by wife, Miyoko; son, Ronald (Charlene); daughter, Sharon; 3 gc.; and brothers, Tadashi (Gail) and Noboru (Sue), both in Chicago.

Nakawatase, Fred Hideshi, 85, Glendale, Jan. 31; survived by wife, Betty; sons, Ronald and Gerald (Rose); daughters, Vicki (Mike) Shimaji and Pam Nanson; 8 gc.; brothers, Roy (Terry) and Joe (Kaz); and sisters, Sachi Nakawatase and Ruby (Aki) Kiyohara.

Nambo, Isao Ken, 90, Oakland, Feb. 16, 1922; WWII veteran; MIS; survived by brother, Bill.

Muraoka, Carl Hikaru, 89, Chicago, Jan. 19; survived by wife, Miyoko; son, Ronald (Charlene); daughter, Sharon; 3 gc.; and brothers, Tadashi (Gail) and Noboru (Sue), both in Chicago.

Ookamoto, Kenji, 83, Tampa, Fla., Jan. 30; Korean War veteran; survived by sons, Karl Kieneberger, Eric and Kurt; daughters, Julie Spencer, Cheryl Piscott and Peggy Paddock; 4 gc.; and brother Tadashi.

Okamura, Herbert Asao, 75, Torrance, Jan. 28; survived by wife, Elizabeth; sons, Mark (Ellen) and Darin; daughter, Karin (Garrick) Sato; 2 gc.; and brothers, George and Thomas (Kazuko) Okamura.

Ozaki, Victor, 66, Milwaukie, Ore.; 2 gc.; U.S. Army veteran; survived by wife, Bernice; brother, Richard; and sister, Ruby Ishida.

Okuda, Yeniko, 88, Hawthorne, Jan. 15; survived by daughter, Pat Watanabe; son, Jerry (Jackie); and 5 gc.

Oseto, Masao, 92, Honolulu, Haw., Jan. 18; survived by wife, Denna; daughters, Elaine Ishikawa; 2 gc.; and 3 gc.

Sakasegawa, Eugene Isao, 85, Los Angeles, Feb. 5; survived by wife, Tomiko; sons, Michael (Tanny) and Patrick (Janis); and 4 gc.

Tachibana, Yoshinoshi, 87, Gardena, Feb. 12; survived by wife, Elsie; and children, Judy (Steve) Gibson and Sharon (Steve) Awakuni; son, Glenn (Gladys); and 2 gc.; and sisters, Fumi (Buddy) Kasai and Miyo (Ted) Inouye.

Takemoto, Helen Misao, 85, Gardena, Jan. 28; survived by sons, Roger, (Helen) (Alan) and Scott (Eugenia); and 4 gc.

Taniguchi, Takehiko, 95, Lakewood, Jan. 22; survived by son, Yoshishio (Megumi); daughters, Miyuki (Masakiyo) Watanabe and Shoko (Haruyasu) Yawata; 3 gc.; and 1 gc.

Tomida, Toshio "Dave," 85, Palo Alto, Jan. 21; WWII veteran; 442nd; survived by wife, Mac; sons, Ronald and Bruce; daughters, Bonnie (Tom) Savage and Connie (Pet) Deenen; 4 gc.; and sister, Sue Tokushige.

Tsujii, Isao "Sun," 82, Auburn, Wash., Jan. 19; U.S. Air Force veteran; survived by wife, Dai; son, Kenji (Fukuda); son, Ira (Lisa); 2 gc.; brother, Frank; and sister, Mary Oskyi.

Wada, Tazuko, 91, Los Angeles, Jan. 14; survived by brother, Thomas; and sisters-in-law, Ayako and Yoko, both in Hawaii.

Wong, Beatrice Michiko, 74, Monterey Park, Jan. 30; survived by husband, Theodore; daughters, Michelle (Courtney) Ukita and Suzanne (Joe) Matsuoka; son, James; 2 gc.; brother, Sakai (Kyoko) and Suzanne; and sisters, Kay Kodani, Nora Matsumoto, Betsy (Harold) Kubo, Sarah Okada, Mabel (Hideo) Watanabe, Eileen Nakamura and Lorraine (Kenji) Yogi.

Yamada, Akira Douglas, 90, Dinuba, Feb. 10; WWII veteran; Army; survived by wife, Grace; daughters, Clara Clark and Marjorie Davis; sons, Dennis and Arthur; 6 gc.; 7 gc.; brothers, Roy and Harry; and sisters, Yo Kouno and Sue Tanaka.

Yamana, Katsumi, 63, Montebello, Feb. 3; survived by wife, Tsuruye; sons, Rodney and Richard; and nieces, Cindy Yanaga; 1 gc.; mother, Toshie; sister, Kayoko (David) Endow; sisters-in-law, Yoshiko Nakuro, Marko Michiyue, Yoko Oishi and Sumiko (Akio) Kono; and brothers-in-law, Kanno (Akio) Michiyue and Tom Matsutomo. 

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