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### Finding Roots



JAs face barriers but also find hope in search of their family genealogies.

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### Walking For Vets



Sinh Tho Nguyen is walking across America for a cause.

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### Miné's Collection



Miné Okubo left many personal items that could become an exhibit.

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### JACL Bi-District



PNW/IDC JACLers enjoy final bi-district in Ontario.

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# PACIFIC CITIZEN

The National Publication of the Japanese American Citizens League

**80**  
YEARS



{ IN DEPTH }

## 30 Years of Smooth Jazz

Since debuting their self-titled album in 1979, Hiroshima is still going strong with its jazz-fusion sound.

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PHOTO: JAMIE ITAKARI





## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



### Confidence in Sotomayor

I just finished reading the article, which I found very interesting, regarding Sonia Sotomayor in the Aug. 7-20 issue. Sotomayor said: "It is inconceivable today that a decision permitting the detention and arrest of an individual based solely on the basis of their race would be considered appropriate by our government."

The key word in her statement is "today." Sure, it's inconceivable today but was not even considered in 1942. Then, it was considered a national emergency and the "Bill of Rights" written specifically just for these types of occasions, was set aside.

Under the guise of "National Emergency," the United States did everything to detain and arrest an individual solely on the basis of race without regard to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, which as we all know, was added specifically to protect the individual from big government.

My opinion of Sotomayor has become more positive since reading your article and realizing that she may truly be a Constitutional Law Supreme Court Justice.

JON I. TAKATA  
Thornton, CO

### Nisei Vets Fought to Prove Our Loyalty

I had the opportunity to read the interesting commentary, "Remembering the Legacy of the 'No-Nos'" by Barbara Takei. In the article the writer acknowledges that it was the Nisei who answered "Yes-Yes," who did not protest and shed blood to prove their loyalty and reverse the anti-Japanese propaganda that led to the WWII internment.

It was these Nisei who formed the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service. Many were wounded or killed in action to fight for their country, the United States of America. These Nisei soldiers fought to prove our loyalty, not the No-No boys.

In 2000, the JACL held its national convention in Monterey and our VFW Sierra Nisei Post 8499, who are composed of the Nisei veterans of WWII, attended. When the JACL placed before its delegates a resolution to "apologize to the Resisters" I had the opportunity to speak against it.

My final words were: "If the JACL does approve this resolution ... an amendment should be placed within this resolution. The JACL must also apologize to every Nisei family whose sons were Killed in Action, for, it was these Nisei soldiers who fought for our country,

for the Japanese people, and the JACL."

After the final vote was passed by the JACL delegates to approve the resolution, in protest all the Nisei JACL veterans walked out of the room.

DONALD WAKIDA  
CWO — 3, U.S. Navy,  
Retired Vietnam veteran

\*\*\*

### NAACP, Urban League at EDC/MDC Bi-District

Just a few words regarding the *Pacific Citizen*. I enjoy reading it very much. Sometimes I do get a little uptight after reading an article. Today, in the Aug. 7-20 edition I had such a feeling.

In the article regarding the EDC/MDC Bi-district meeting I would have hoped that there was an inclusion of the NAACP and the Urban League as coalition organizations at the meeting.

I am a lifetime member of both organizations as well as other civil and human rights groups. I look forward to seeing an emphasis on such coalitions in the very near future.

ALLEN CURTIS JOHNSON  
Charlotte, TN

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PHOTO: DENSHO

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During WWII, the 442nd rescued the 'Lost Battalion' in France. Over 60 years later, they will meet again.

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PNW & IDC JACLers gathered in Ontario, Oregon for the event.

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### Building a Topaz Museum

Backers have laid plans for a 27,000-square-foot historical complex in Delta, Utah that would tell the Topaz story.

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### How Do I Look?

Jeannie Mai (right), the new host of Style Network's fashion makeover show, has some tips for you.



## PACIFIC CITIZEN

### HOW TO REACH US

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# JAs Encounter Both Barriers, Hope in Family Genealogy Search

One woman finds 'long lost' relatives in Hiroshima.

By NALEA J. KO  
Reporter

Brenda Nakamoto, 50, always thought her relatives in Hiroshima died after the 1945 atomic bomb. But in the back of her mind there was a possibility her family was alive in Japan. About ten years ago her mother-in-law, Virginia Smallwood, made a concerted effort to track down Nakamoto's Japanese roots.

That research would eventually lead to an emotional family reunion on Japanese soil.

"It was a narrow, windy road to their neighborhood, but one of the most exciting moments was seeing a petite woman with short, curly hair standing in the carport waiting for us," wrote Nakamoto in an e-mail to the *Pacific Citizen*.

The woman standing in the driveway was Nakamoto's second cousin. Nakamoto made the journey to Japan in 2008 with her husband, two children and her husband's colleague. Although the 50-year-old's search for her roots ended joyfully, many do not have as much success.

To help the other JAs reunite with their ancestors, the Japanese Consulate of Boston, Mass. started offering a free program about a year ago to residents in their district. The area served by the Consulate of Boston includes Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

"It started from this area because the first person that asked for help was from New England," said Vice Consul Mika Iga, with the Consulate General of Japan in Boston.

That "first person" is the only one who has inquired about the program to date. It is not clear if the other 15 Japanese consulates in the U.S. will offer similar programs, although an official with the consulate in Hawaii said they assist people on a case-by-case basis.

Some JAs said searching for their ancestral heritage without the consulate's assistance could be as rewarding as it is frustrating. People like Nakamoto, who do not speak or read Japanese, said they face further obstacles digging up their roots and *koseki*, or Japanese family registry.

For Smallwood, finding her daughter-in-law's "long lost" relatives was cumbersome, but ultimately gratifying.

"To our utter amazement, this friend [a business colleague of Smallwood's son] found actual relatives of my daughter-in-law still living in Hiroshima in the house where they had lived during the war!" said Smallwood, who is a genealogist.

"It so happened that the house was situated behind a hill, and it was that hill that had protected the house and its occupants from the blast. The two families met. The visit was short, but emotionally powerful."

## Digging Up Familial Roots

Other JAs like Washington state-resident Aiko Lawson continue to search for their genealogy. Lawson recovered a ship manifest online, documenting her mother's journey from Japan to Ohio in 1952.

Her mother Katsue "Kathy" Lawson died in May of this year, seven years after her husband. Lawson said she laments not asking about her ancestry when her greatest genealogical resources were still alive.

"When I was young I was too interested in distancing myself from the East side and being as Westernized as possible," said Lawson. "As I got older, my culture became more important, but family and life always seemed to get in the way."

Lawson is not alone. Many others who are searching for their extended family, or traces of their ancestors' lives, find the task daunting.

"I first became interested around high school age, listening to my grandmother's stories about my great grandfather, Takezo," said 52-year-old Sharon Gayle Wermuth. "I started going to the main branch of the city library in Dallas [Texas] and searching primarily through census records to start. But the information in



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRENDA NAKAMOTO

*'Shunjiro Sakaoka, my grandfather, my ojisan, I never knew you.'*

— Brenda Nakamoto (right) in her 2008 award-winning essay about searching for her grandfather (top, far right). The quest took her to Hiroshima in 2008, where she found her roots.



the library was sparse."

Knowing where to begin genealogy research is the first barrier. Nakamoto's mother died about 17 years ago. Her father, 91, is alive but lost his sight from glaucoma and can be "touchy" when asked about the family history, she said.

"My dad said that his parents were too busy working, trying to get food on the table to have time to talk about things like that," Nakamoto said. So, she relied on the researching skills of her mother-in-law to learn more about her ancestors.

Marriage licenses, birth and death certificates, photographs, military records, diaries and other historical documents are essential for genealogical research, explained Smallwood.

"Sometimes it helps to make a timeline for an individual, or to study the entire family as they had families of their own," Smallwood said. "Who lived near whom? What did each do for a living? Did they work at the same place? Did someone marry the boss' daughter? Or did they attend the same place of worship and meet there? I follow the clues where they lead me."

Most of the consulates the *P.C.* spoke with said it is difficult to offer a genealogy program because the process is often tedious and costly. Smallwood's research began because she wanted to create a solid family tree for her grandchildren.

The genealogist soon discovered bits and pieces about Nakamoto's extended relatives. A ship passenger records showed Nakamoto's grandfather, Shunjiro Sakaoka, who traveled to the U.S. in 1909 with \$50 in his pocket and his mother's blessing. At 17 Sakaoka departed Japan headed toward Seattle, Washington. In 2008 Nakamoto won the Southern California Genealogical Society's writing contest for her essay, "Searching for Grandfather."

"Shunjiro Sakaoka, my grandfather, my ojisan, I never knew you. How a self-inflicted bullet to the head separated you from me before I was even conceived, before mommy and daddy were even married," Nakamoto wrote in her award-winning story. "And I would never be able to rock in your arms or drool on your shirt or make gurgly sounds in your ears or see your lips crease into a smile or hear your hearty laugh." Sakaoka committed suicide in 1949, a few years after being interned.

## Traveling to Hiroshima

After gathering numerous historical documents about Nakamoto's family, Smallwood enlisted all of her resources, having her son reach out to his colleagues living in Japan.

"It is hard to explain," Smallwood said. "One of the big things in genealogy is that people help each other. ... I find immense satisfaction in helping others find their families in their records. To have helped Brenda to find living relatives — and in a place like Hiroshima — is just wonderful for me."

In the fall of 2008, Nakamoto and her family packed up for a

business trip to Japan. A day before leaving overseas, a business associate said he found Nakamoto's relatives in Hiroshima.

"The actual meeting in Hiroshima was when the reality sunk in," Nakamoto said.

Soon Nakamoto and her family were navigating through Hiroshima in a taxi, headed toward her family's house in Okada. Nakamoto was asked to pray at the *obutsudan*, the Japanese home altar, and family shrine at the neighborhood cemetery.

Before the family left Hiroshima in 2008, Nakamoto's relatives said she resembled her grandfather — the inspiration for her award-winning essay.

"This brought out a chuckle and I felt a bit teary eyed because since I was born after my grandfather Sakaoka had died, I had never seen him nor known what a Sakaoka would look like," Nakamoto said.

Since she has returned to her home in Northern California, Nakamoto sent and received letters from her family in Hiroshima, which her Japanese instructor translated. Despite the language barrier, Nakamoto hopes to continue communicating with them. ■

## Research Your Family Roots

### National Archives

[www.archives.gov/genealogy](http://www.archives.gov/genealogy)

This Web site allows users to search national archival databases by subject at no cost. There are also links to genealogy workshops nationwide.

### Roots Web

[www.rootsweb.ancestry.com](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com)

A free genealogy search engine with more than 575 million names on file.

### Interment.net

[www.interment.net](http://www.interment.net)

Allows users to search cemetery records worldwide, but records in Japan are limited to the International Cemetery.

### Footnote.com

[www.footnote.com](http://www.footnote.com)

Allows users to search Social Security Death Index, Census information, among other databases.

### Ancestry.com

[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

A free 14-day membership is available. A credit card is required to register for the trial membership. The Web site has more than 4 billion historical records on file.



# Vietnamese American Treks Across America in Crocs



PHOTO: BRAD CRITTENDEN

When Nguyen is on the road, his travel provisions are simple: an American flag on his shoulders and an ever-present smile. Along his journey, he relies on the kindness of strangers for meals and drinks.

## Sinh Tho Nguyen's 2,600 mile journey is in honor of America and her troops.

By NALEA J. KO  
Reporter

Sinh Tho Nguyen's feet were bloody and infected from trudging across the United States in Crocs sandals, but patriotism fueled his journey.

Walking about 23 miles a day, the pain in Nguyen's feet started to mount. The 40-year-old soon learned that Crocs were not the ideal walking shoes, especially for someone who plans to travel about 2,600 miles before the year's end.

The Vietnamese American has made a commitment to walk across the U.S. and nothing, he said, will impede his journey.

"I have no regrets but pride to carry the American flag and walk across America to give her thanks," wrote Nguyen in an e-mail to the *Pacific Citizen*.

The blisters, blood, calluses and sweat are all to show appreciation to the U.S. and soldiers in the military. Nguyen's unpaid expedition called "Shore-to-Shore" started June 10 in Atlantic Beach, Fla. San Diego, Calif. marks the finish line for Nguyen's patriotic walkathon. For now, he's resting at home in Texas, under doctor's orders to stay off his feet for at least two weeks.

"I saw pictures and it's very graphic. The blood is just pouring out," said Jackie Nguyen, who is a friend and volunteer spokeswoman for the Shore-to-Shore project. "He took pictures of the blood coming up. He doesn't feel any pain at all, I think his heart is so big."

In 1992, Sinh Tho Nguyen moved to the U.S. and later joined the Army. Born in Vietnam, Nguyen never met his father who was an American soldier in the Vietnam War. Chances are his father died in Vietnam, he said. If he could meet his dad along his journey Nguyen would say, "Dad, this walk is to honor you and all your fellow soldiers who served in Vietnam."

When Nguyen is on the road, his travel provisions are simple. The type of American flag and pole that usually adorns a home rests on his shoulder. Photographs of his journey show Nguyen wearing a smile just as large as the sign on his back that reads, "Shore to Shore: A Walk Across America to Honor Those Who Serve."

People familiar with Nguyen's journey from local news coverage have tracked him down as he passes through their cities and towns. They come bearing gifts from their kitchens and gardens.

"I received unfinished meals from people who see how exhausted I am, half of a Snickers bar, fresh homemade lemonade," Nguyen added, "People also insist on us to stay at their homes for hot meals and warm showers. Some insist on us to stay in hotels at their cost."

Folks in Louisiana are still talking about Nguyen and his amazing trek and unwavering patriotism.

"He was walking down the street and I saw the American flag. It was really, really hot outside," said David Mayfield over the phone from Louisiana. "We saw him walking down the road and I knew he was probably going to be hot. I thought I'd get this guy something to drink." Mayfield gave Nguyen \$20, a cool drink, supper and paid for a motel room. Others offer anything they can to show their appreciation.

"It was hot. He was as happy as can be, like he just started," said Finley Perkins of Louisiana. "I rode up there and talked to him and looked at his feet. I let him soak his feet. He was in Crocs. I said, 'I ain't got no money, but I can help in other ways.'"

Perkins let Nguyen stay in his home, take a shower and rest his swollen feet. The Louisiana resident took a scalpel to Nguyen's feet, cutting off the layers of dead skin. The next morning Nguyen was back on the hot highway again, in what Louisiana residents said was 90- to 100-degree weather.

With no sponsors, Nguyen is using the money he saved as a water meter reader to fund his travels. Preparations for the Shore-to-Shore project began a year ago. Nguyen resigned his job and recruited a driver —

David Dominguez — to tail him across the continental U.S. First aid supplies, food, water and sleeping gear equipment are stored in the car driven by Dominguez.

The small budget allows for a hotel stay once a week. On other nights Nguyen sleeps in Dominguez's vehicle, in cemeteries, a tent or a friendly American's home.

Curious onlookers and TV reporters stop to talk with Nguyen, forcing him to alter his travel itinerary to factor in the delays. But Nguyen always greets well-wishers with a wide smile, handing out his business cards.

The 40-year-old is not the first person to attempt a walk

across America. In 2007 Matt Gregory completed his walk across America, raising money for cancer research. Steve Vaught garnered worldwide media coverage in 2006 for setting out across America to lose weight and regain his life.

Nguyen's supporters said his journey differs from others because the Vietnamese American is not asking for any monetary donations — he simply wants to give back to the country that welcomed him.

"It is so emotional," Jackie Nguyen added, "I mean initially he did it as a personal project, but a week into the project people stopped and encouraged him. He became very emotional and now he thinks it's more of a community project."

Bloggers have compared Nguyen to Forrest Gump. Those that have personally met Nguyen said the comparisons to the fictional movie character played by Tom Hanks are understandable, but limiting.

"Well, Forrest Gump wasn't walking for a cause," Perkins added, "Our soldiers are dying every day. When he [Nguyen] hit Calhoun, Louisiana he had so many supporters. He really believes in America."

The pain in Nguyen's feet are just one of the speed bumps he has incurred along the voyage. The summer heat has also made it difficult to keep on schedule.

"The heat during summer is unavoidable, so our strategy is to avoid walking in the prime heat of the day," Nguyen explained.

Nguyen credits good Samaritans for giving him motivation. But equal recognition is also due to Nguyen's compadre — Dominguez — along the journey, said Nguyen's supporters.

"They are both good guys," Mayfield said adding that he is worried about them as they near the Arizona desert. "He's got my number."

Mayfield has volunteered to scrapbook Nguyen's press coverage as he walks from shore to shore.

By Thanksgiving Nguyen hopes to set foot in his final destination: San Diego, Calif. Despite the hurdles he has already faced along his journey, Nguyen said he never loses sight of his goal.

"This walk is to give thanks to America — a nation that all Vietnamese Americans and I are deeply thankful to call our second home," Nguyen said. "This walk is also to honor those who bravely serve America, to keep her safe, and to fight for her freedom spirit." ■

For more information about the Shore-to-Shore project, visit <http://www.bacaytruc.com>. Or to contact Nguyen directly, e-mail him at [fromshoretoshore@yahoo.com](mailto:fromshoretoshore@yahoo.com).

*'This walk is also  
to honor those  
who bravely  
serve America,  
to keep her  
safe, and to  
fight for her  
freedom spirit.'*



# College Works to Preserve Miné Okubo's Personal Material, Artwork

The late artist donated boxes of never before seen material to Riverside Community College. Among the items are letters to the *Pacific Citizen* and the JACL.

By LYNDALIN  
Assistant Editor

Much of Miné Okubo's last worldly possessions are packed in boxes at the same Riverside Community College campus she once attended. The contents — which include personal writings, sketches and paintings — are more than an accumulation of the artist's life, but a rare glimpse into Japanese American history.

Scholars say the collection may be the largest and most complete body of materials on the JA experience during the mid-20th century, a turbulent time period marked by war and forced relocation.

Now officials at Okubo's former college are working to catalog, archive and curate the collection. It's not a small project — about 27 document boxes, 1 photography box, 9 flat storage boxes, and 47 banker boxes filled with Okubo's personal items were donated to Riverside Community College (RCC) after her passing in 2001 at the age of 88.

"We believe the scope of the collection, the fact that it contains both works of art that span the artist's career, as well as personal writings, documents and other belongings, make this one of the most unique collections yet discovered that covers the Japanese American World War II and post-World War II experience," said Jim Parsons, an RCC spokesperson.

It's the largest repository of Okubo's papers and artwork in a single location, RCC officials say.

The collection includes photographs, paintings and sketches that have never been exhibited and correspondences dating back to the 1930s.

The Nisei artist and community activist is perhaps best known for writing and illustrating the groundbreaking 1946 book, "Citizen 13660," the first account of the WWII internment told from the perspective of a former internee. It is still being used in many college curricula today.

Okubo was a "fiercely independent" native of Riverside, Calif., who never forgot her roots, said Seiko Buckingham, her niece.

Almost a decade after her death, RCC officials hope preserving and showcasing Okubo's collection at future events — including a 2012 celebration of what would have been her 100th birthday — will shed light on this little known part of Okubo's legacy.

"She had one purpose in life and that was art," said Buckingham.

## Creating the Okubo Collection

"Miné Okubo is a great artist, one of the Japanese American community's finest," said Mark Takano, a member of the RCC board of trustees and Okubo's family friend.

The longtime New York resident, said Takano, often spoke nostalgically of Riverside's orange groves.

Okubo attended Riverside Junior College from 1930-33. She went on to the University of California, Berkeley to earn her bachelor's and master's degree in fine arts in 1935 and 1936, respectively.

"She had an affinity for RCC," said Buckingham. "The educators there gave this shy child the encouragement to fulfill her dreams and she never forgot where she came from."

The affinity seems to be mutual. In 2005, RCC named a street after Okubo.

RCC officially took possession of Okubo's collection in February. Her life's work on the internment camps, women's rights and modernism are "a commentary on the American experience in the post-war decades," said Parsons.

Two grants from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program (CCLPEP) have been awarded to help library archivists with the inventorying and cataloging of the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

*'She had one purpose in life and that was art.'*

— Seiko Buckingham, about her late aunt Miné Okubo (top), whose donated items include photos (left) and never seen before artwork.



collection.

RCC also has applied for a \$6,000 "seed grant" from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to begin assessment of the Okubo collection.

If the grant request is successful, RCC officials plan to apply for a larger NEH grant to more fully catalog, archive and curate the collection, according to Richard Keeler, RCC director of grants.

It's just the start, said Dr. Bernard Fradkin, RCC dean of technology and learning resources.

"There is an extensive artwork collection that will take a year of planning and preparation before it is ready for exhibit," he said.

This Okubo collection includes copies of outgoing mail and responses, over 1,800 small sketches, said Joyce Davis, an adjunct librarian and part-time archivist. Among the correspondences are letters to the *Pacific Citizen* and the JACL.

RCC hopes to raise enough funds to showcase the collection nationally and internationally.

"We are seeking private funding support to endow the collection for continued research and development that will allow these materials to be valued by the community and others interested in the internment period and the resulting contributions of this artist," said Fradkin. "This collection is unique in that it portrays the artist's life shaped by her early experiences in a very important period of American history."

## No Other Like Miné

"She was so wildly different from anyone I had ever met ... she was just amazing," said Julie Azuma, about Okubo, whom she met at an art show in the mid 1980s.

They chatted briefly after the show at a bus stop where Okubo gave "her philosophy on art and on relationships in

about 15 minutes."

From then on, Okubo would visit Azuma for *Oshogatsu* — their Japanese New Year celebration — and small community parties. The renowned artist always brought a gift along with a drawing.

"Miné was gifted in so many ways," said Azuma.

Many call her a trailblazer.

Okubo was born June 27, 1912, in Riverside, Calif. to immigrant parents. After graduating from UC Berkeley, she was awarded a fellowship to study art in Europe for 18 months.

"She did an extraordinary thing by obtaining her college education as a Japanese American woman in the 1930s," said Takano, a Riverside JACL member.

Okubo returned to the U.S. as World War II broke out. Like many other JAs during this time, she was incarcerated at Topaz and assigned the number 13660. Her experiences poured into her artwork. The black and white drawings in "Citizen 13660" showed a wide range of emotions including the profound sadness of a JA family surrounded by suitcases.

Okubo went on to illustrate for *Fortune*, *Time*, the *New York Times* and other major publications.

In 1981, she testified about her wartime experiences before the Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation.

Okubo lived in New York for over 50 years in the same Greenwich Village apartment where she hosted many admiring scholars, writers and artists. Nearly a decade after her death, interest in her work continues to grow.

"She had a ton of work and it's important to save everything — early work and late work," said Azuma. "She had an exceptional history from her early days on and she made a huge impact in every component of the community. I can't think of anyone who had her spirit and resolve to continue her artistry."

## SUPPORT

Donations to the cataloging and future curation of the Miné Okubo archives can be sent to:

RCCD Foundation  
at 4800 Magnolia Ave.,  
Riverside, CA 92506.

Checks should be made out to the foundation, with a reference to the Okubo Archives on the memo line. Donations are tax deductible.



## Plans to Preserve Wakamatsu Colony Gain Momentum

JACL and other community groups have been longtime advocates of saving the site where JA history began.

By Pacific Citizen Staff

A California lawmaker has introduced legislation authorizing the Bureau of Land Management to acquire and manage the site of the former Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony, the first Japanese settlement in the United States.

Calling the Wakamatsu Colony site near Coloma, Calif. as significant as Plymouth Rock, Sen. Barbara Boxer introduced the "Gold Hill-Wakamatsu Act" on Aug. 6 to "preserve the story of the Wakamatsu colonists for future generations."

In a statement, the Democrat called the site a "testament to Japanese history, California's agricultural economy and the American tradition of bringing together people of diverse cultures in the common pursuit of freedom and prosperity."

Preservationists and community groups say it's a major victory in their efforts to save this little known part of American history.

"This legislation is important to America because it serves to memorialize the beginning of the Japanese American experience and, by extension, the experience of all the immigrants who sought a better life in the land of opportunity," said Larry Oda, JACL national president.

Several JACL chapters — including Sacramento, Placer and Florin — have been working with preservation groups like the American River Conservancy (ARC) to protect and restore the site.

The Wakamatsu Colony project also recently received a \$488,000

*'It's an underappreciated story.'*

Phil Veerkamp, about the Wakamatsu colony



The Wakamatsu house with the 140 year old Keaki tree still stands today.

Farm and Ranchland Protection Program grant. These grant funds will be matched by approximately \$500,000 in private donations that have previously been received by the ARC.

Last year at the JACL national convention in Salt Lake City, the national council passed a Florin chapter-sponsored resolution to have the history of the Wakamatsu colonists incorporated into JACL events.

This site, which was the location of the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony from 1869 to 1871, is recognized by the state of California and the JACL as the first Japanese settlement in the United States.

In 1869, seven Japanese citizens and a European expatriate fled turmoil in Japan and sailed across the Pacific to San Francisco to purchase land in Gold Hill. Within two years, the colony grew to 22 Japanese settlers and began producing traditional Japanese crops such as tea, silk, rice, and bamboo.

Eventually, drought and financial

problems forced the group to disperse and settle throughout California. The property was purchased by the Veerkamp family in 1875.

Many of the original structures on the site remain intact. The 272-acre ranch encompassing the original colony site has been passed down for generations through the Veerkamp family.

The Gold Hill Ranch is also the gravesite of Okei Ito or Okei-san, a 19-year-old girl believed to be the first Japanese to be buried on American soil in 1871.

In 1969, on the centennial of the arrival of the first Japanese colonists in the U.S., a commemorative marker was dedicated at the site.

"We were aware of the historical context of the land," Phil Veerkamp told the *Pacific Citizen* in 2007. Veerkamp is a descendent of Francis and Louisa Veerkamp, friends of the original Japanese colonists.

"It's an underappreciated story," said Veerkamp. ■

## National Newsbytes

By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

### APA Groups Want Apology For Racial Slur in 'The Goods'

CHICAGO—APA groups are criticizing a new Hollywood film about an over-the-top car salesman for its use of a racial slur and its "shocking lack of judgment."

Both the JACL and the Media Action Network for Asian Americans (MANAA) have issued

statements demanding an apology from Paramount Vantage for the film, "The Good: Live Hard, Sell Hard."

In the film, star Jeremy Piven reportedly says, "Don't get me started on Pearl Harbor — the Japs flying in low and fast. We are Americans and they are the enemy! Never again!"

Critics say the scene is a "sad reminder of a time during the 1980s and 1990s when 'Japan-bashing' based on perceived economic threats reached a dangerous level."

### Hawaii Plans Quiet, Sobering 50th Anniversary

HONOLULU—Hawaii turns 50 years old as the 50th state on Aug. 21, but there will be no grand parades, no dazzling fireworks, no lavish displays of native culture.

Organizers of the observation are not even willing to call it a party. It is simply a "commemoration," one that is sensitive to a painful history of the Hawaiian monarchy's overthrow and unresolved claims of Native Hawaiians.

When statehood came calling in 1959, it ushered in an era of economic prosperity through tourism and the side effects that came with it: resort high rises, more than 500,000 monthly tourists and an emphasis on hokey luaus rather than the authentic host culture.

Sovereignty groups advocating independence from the U.S. make up a minority, but many residents recognize the long-standing issues associated with the 1893 overthrow of the monarchy, the islands' annexation and past harms to the Native Hawaiian people.

### New Mural Honors WWII JA Internees

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. —A mural of two men working has been painted into a neighborhood brick retaining wall to depict the World War II internment of Japanese Americans.

Homeowner Carrie Lange commissioned the mural in memory of the over 120,000 JAs sent to internment camps during the war, according to the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin*.

She told the newspaper that former internees assembled the rock walls that hold the hillside together.

### For Sale: Historic Japantown Building

SAN JOSE, Calif. —The Ken Ying Low building near the corner of 6th and Jackson in Japantown is up for sale.

The building is now on the market after its tenant — the owner of the building's Cuban International Restaurant — died last year.

Built in 1887, the two-story wooden building is the last remnant of the Chinatown known as Heinlenville, which existed adjacent to Japantown from 1887 until the 1930s, according to the *San Jose Mercury News*.

It's been home to restaurants since 1915 and in turbulent times, it was a haven for all of the area's APA residents.

### Prime Minister Voices Deep Regret over WWII Suffering

TOKYO—Japan's prime minister expressed deep regret over the suffering his country inflicted on Asian countries during World War II in a solemn ceremony Aug. 15 that marked the 64th anniversary of Tokyo's surrender.

Prime Minister Taro Aso joined some 4,800 families to pay respect to millions of Japan's war dead at the Nihon Budokan hall in Tokyo. Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko also attended the ceremony, leading a one-minute silence at noon.

The prime minister vowed that Japan would never repeat the tragedy.

Emperor Akihito — whose father Hirohito issued the surrender on Aug. 15, 1945 — said he hoped Japan would never again wage a war. ■

## Filipino Vets Still Waiting for Promised Payments

By Pacific Citizen Staff

It's been six months now since President Barack Obama signed a bill to provide a one-time, lump-sum payment to Filipino veterans who served alongside American troops during World War II. But so far many of these vets are still waiting for their long-sought payments.

Hundreds of Filipino veterans in Hawaii have yet to receive their checks and have been told that a staff shortage is the cause for delay. Now many of these vets are urging the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to help speed up the process.

"We are losing hope," said Art Caleda, WWII Filipino-American Veterans-Hawaii Chapter president

in an interview with the *Star Bulletin*.

As of June approximately 550 Filipino veterans in Hawaii have filed claims. Of those filings, only 15 veterans who suffered battle injuries have received their payments. The others are still waiting.

Caleda says he was told that the payments could still take another seven months.

The reason for the delay in payments seems to be a staff shortage at the National Personnel Records Center in Missouri where staff verify whether a U.S. citizen filing a claim is a veteran. Officials are working to increase personnel.

Earlier this year President Obama signed the American Recovery and

Reinvestment Act which authorized a one-time payment to Filipino veterans who fought alongside American troops during WWII. Of these veterans, those who are U.S. citizens will receive \$15,000 while non-citizens will receive \$9,000. Today, about 6,000 of these Filipino vets live in the U.S. while another 12,000 live in the Philippines.

"The long process is ridiculous," said Caleda in the *Star Bulletin* article. "The veterans cannot wait."

Since February about 30 veterans in Hawaii have passed away.

Currently all claims for Filipino veterans, U.S. citizens and non-citizens, are being processed at the Veteran Affairs' Manila regional office. ■



## APAs in the News

By Pacific Citizen Staff

### Two APAs are Nominated to Federal Judiciary



GEE



CHEN

Dolly M. Gee and Edward M. Chen have been nominated for judgeships in the Central California district and the Northern California district, respectively.

If confirmed, Gee will become the first Chinese American female district court judge in the United States.

Chen is a Northern California district federal magistrate judge. He was also part of the legal team that overturned the conviction of **Fred Korematsu** in a *coram nobis* case.

### Minami Takes Helm of JA Republican Group

Roger Minami has been installed as acting president of the Japanese American Republicans (JARS).

Minami served as a political appointee in Washington, D.C. under President George W. Bush at the Department of Agriculture and Transportation. He is currently finishing a master's degree in public administration at the University of Oklahoma.

Established in 1967, JARS strives to advance the JA community through its support of various political figures and organizations.

### Community Sports Leaders to Receive Awards

Four community sports leaders will receive this year's **Aki Komai Memorial Awards** during a Sept. 20 event at the Japanese American National Museum.

The awards, which are named after the Nisei Athletic Union founder and post-war publisher of the *Rafu Shimpo*, recognizes individuals who are devoted to JA community sports.

The 2009 recipients are: **Jesse James, Al Morita, Chester Tadakawa** and **Dave Yanai**.

**Tets Tanimoto** will also be presented with the Founder's Award.

### Graves Receives Harvard Fellowship

**Donna Graves**, the current director of "Preserving California's Japantowns," has been named a Loeb Fellow at Harvard University's Design School. She will be in residence at Harvard for the 2009-10 academic year.

Graves will study urban design, public art and historic preservation strategies. Founded in 1971, the Loeb Fellowship provides a year of independent study to outstanding mid-career professionals in fields related to the built and natural environment.

### Bharara Gets Confirmed as U.S. Attorney

**Preet Bharara** has been confirmed as U.S. attorney for the southern district of New York.

Bharara, 40, is the nation's third Indian American U.S. attorney. He is also the first APA to be appointed as U.S. attorney on the East Coast, according to the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association.

Prior to his confirmation, Bharara was the chief counsel to Sen. Charles Schumer and served as the staff director of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts.

### UCLA Professor is Named First Endowed Chair in U.S.-China Relations

**Min Zhou**, a sociology professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, has been named the inaugural appointee of the **Walter and Shirley Wang Endowed Chair** in U.S.-China Relations and Communications at UCLA.

This is the first endowed chair in American higher education that focuses on U.S.-China relations and Chinese American Studies.

Zhou has been a faculty member in the departments of Sociology and Asian American Studies at UCLA since 1994. ■

## APAs Support Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Asian Pacific Americans, including JACL, organize first-ever collective National Week of Action

WASHINGTON—Asian Pacific Americans across the country are flexing their political muscle in a first-ever National Week of Action in support of comprehensive immigration reform.

The various APA organizations, including JACL, are holding town hall meetings with members of Congress, hosting press conferences and petitioning lawmakers in support of comprehensive immigration reform. Attendees are sharing their personal stories about how outdated immigration policies are breaking up families, hurting the economy and devastating local communities.

"Immigration reform is a defining issue for the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities," said Karen K. Narasaki, president and executive director of the Asian American Justice Center. "The right legislation legalizes millions in our communities, reunites thousands of families, and signals that the U.S. welcomes Asian and other immigrants."

"For this national week of action we tell our stories as immigrants, and as descendants of immigrants," said Titi Liu, executive director of the Asian Law Caucus. "We are workers, neighbors, and small-business owners who revitalize commu-



nities and contribute to the economy."

Events are being held during the week of Aug. 17 to 24 but the groups plan to continue pressing the issue into the fall. AAPIs are being urged to submit letters to the editor and write or visit their members of Congress.

The national effort also includes a "text-in" day and a postcard campaign. Organizers are aiming to collect 5,000 postcards that focus on the need to fix the family immigration system as part of comprehensive reform.

"Asian Americans have an opportunity now to influence the critical conversation around immigration policy," said Deepa Iyer, executive director of South Asian Americans Leading Together.

"We must play a role through grassroots organizing and advoca-

cy to let lawmakers know that the immigration system must be reformed now before it is too late."

Multilingual literature — in Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Vietnamese and English — are aimed at helping community members explain the need for immigration reform and are now available. The information can be used to craft letters to the editor, and blog posts.

In addition to the JACL, some of the other national APA groups include: Asian American Institute, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, OCA, South Asian Americans Leading Together, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, Hmong National Development, Kaya, and the National Federation of Filipino American Associations. ■

## Census Aims to Better Count Native Hawaiians

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

WAIANAE, Hawaii—The Census Bureau is opening an office in Waianae in an effort to better count the state's Native Hawaiian population in 2010.

Officials say Native Hawaiians are among the most underreported ethnic groups in the nation. Many residents fail to return the government questionnaires, and others get absorbed into broader categories of "Asian" or "other Pacific Islanders." The 2000 Census counted 240,000 Native Hawaiians in Hawaii, but officials believe the actual number could be far greater.

"That's because there are plenty of uninformed people that participated in the census survey in 2000 that missed their opportunity to mark off Native Hawaiian," said Momi Fernandez, director of the Hawaii Census Information Center. "Others, within the last 10 years, have found out that they have Native Hawaiian blood."

Fernandez said the census survey counts as Native Hawaiian every

person who considers herself or himself to be of that ethnic heritage, regardless of their percentage of Hawaiian blood.

"That's any drop of Native Hawaiian blood," she said. "There's no application for quantum whatsoever. It's purely self-identification. And it doesn't matter how much."

Wanda Liloa Hanson, a regional technician for the Census Bureau said an accurate count helps assure that Hawaii gets its fair share of federal money, dictates government representation and more.

Hanson, who is Hawaiian, understands why some residents on the Waianae Coast might be reluctant to answer a government survey.

"Hawaiians have a bitter taste in their mouth," she said. "They have an aversion to government because of the overthrow of the monarchy. And that wound has not healed for many people. It's a deep hurt."

She added, "Once we accepted statehood we accepted to be governed by the United States. Our Hawaiians need to stand up and be recognized. They need to be

counted."

And if Hawaiians continue to be undercounted, it could result in the loss of disaster service or health care funds for their communities. Over time, Native Hawaiians could also lose more of their ethnic rights as an indigenous group, Hanson said.

"The outcome of Census 2010 will impact 10 more years of our lifetime," she said. "This is money that is due us just for living and residing in the state of Hawaii. We need to do this to get our fair share."

Census officials say they chose the Waianae location for an office because western Oahu has one of the largest populations of people with more than 50 percent Hawaiian blood. Kapolei was also considered for the office.

"But being visible in Waianae, we hope, will create an awareness," she said. "And, we also wanted to give people there, in this declining economy, an opportunity to come and work for the government."

The office is scheduled to open by early October and will be staffed with 150 Census workers. ■





# VERY

## truly yours

BY HARRY K. HONDA

### Pre-Modern Japan

A BUDDY OF MINE, Ed Moreno, and I have been pursuing Pre-Modern Japan Studies (PMJS) and Pre-Siberian Human Migrations to the Americas (PSHMA), obviously an academic quest into the movement of Asians following animals for food crossing the Bering Sea eons ago when it was a frozen mass to the continent now known as the Americas — a cool subject for midsummer August!

Ed “at last” found interest among scholars in Japan. Michael Hoffman in *The Japan Times*, July 12, traces some risings and settings among commentators of pre-historic and early history of Japan. Then he highlights Japan’s recorded history through St. Francis Xavier, Tokugawa, Commodore Perry and how the Hinomaru arose as a national flag, replacing the separate banners of the Shogun and *daimyo*.

Historian Grant Goodman in “Japan: the Dutch Experience” (1986) notes, “When the sun rises and sets in Japan ... pointed to the remarkable coincidence of the Copernican system of the sun and the central role of Amaterasu Omikami in the Shinto tradition.”

Among the pathways by which people made their way to Japan, wanderers from northern Asia came through Kamchatka peninsula and Sakhalin; and the south from tropical Indies, Southeast Asia or along the China coast, the Philippines, Formosa and the Ryukyus. The Black Current (Kuro-shio) from the south also moved past the Philippines, the Ryukyus and Japan.

Migrations from the north would appear to be voluntary for a warmer climate. They would be the Caucasoid Ainu.

Ethnic studies scholars have determined the Japanese are Mongoloid, mainly people from Mongolia (central Asia) and China, who came through Korea and gradually spread throughout the islands and were seafarers who worshipped the Sun Goddess, according to Takeshi Matsumae in “The Cambridge History of Japan” (1988).

Legends exist that the Lost Tribe of Israel migrated to Japan and is a possible source of Japan’s Imperial Family, as mentioned in James Oda’s “The Jewish and Alien Heritage of Ancient Japan” (1997).

The eighth century “Kojiki” (“Record of Ancient Matters”) relates the mythical spirits Izanagi and Izanami, who created the islands of Japan, birth of the sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami, and down to a human descendant, the first emperor Jimmu Tenno.

What is now Shinto (The Way of the Gods) rests heavily on the “Kojiki” (712 A.D.) and “Nihon-ki” (720 A.D.), the collection of ancient chronicles. Ancient traditions and nature worship eventually merged with Buddhism and Confucianism, and since 1868 a religion of the state with several branches.

But historian W.G. Beasley (“The Japanese Experience,” 1999) notes the earliest evidence of human settlement in Japan dates from 30,000 years ago or more when there was a land bridge between Japan and the Asian continent.

Starting about 10,000 B.C., one group came and produced a rope-pattern pottery, or Jomon. They used tools, made weapons of stone, and lived by hunting, fishing and gathering shellfish. Millennia later, they added plants and rice to their diet.

Of the pre-Siberian migrations to the Americas, we limit focus on the northerners around the North Pole. The polar people, the Inuits, Komi, Sami and Yakuts are relatively numerous today (87,000). The Inuits of Canada have won some powers of home rule in the Arctic territory of Nunavut. Autonomous since 1993, Greenland has just elected a new prime minister, promising to act as “equal partners” with Denmark.

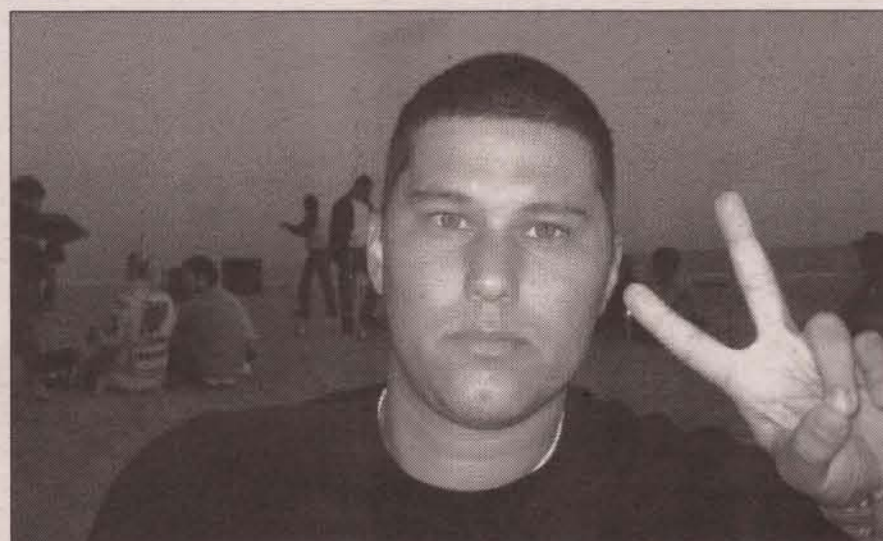
A greater story is bound to unfold with climate change and the exploitation of natural resources on the agenda. ■

Harry K. Honda is the Pacific Citizen editor emeritus.

### THE SHIGEKI SHAKE DOWN

## Choosing All of the Above

BY PETER SHIGEKI FRANDSEN



I recently completed a rigorously intense five-week training program.

Three hundred and thirty strangers in this training program were divided into 21 smaller 16-member groups that were required to spend all waking hours of the day from 4:30 a.m. until 11 p.m. together developing team building and leadership skills.

It was a unique environment. While the hours were long, the activities grueling, the opportunities for introspection were immense. In an environment like this with total strangers, each individual has the luxury to be, to behave, or to define oneself in any manner he or she chooses at that particular moment.

Naturally, similars attract.

So I found myself in a quandary. How do I define myself? Do I go with ethnicity, undergraduate major, graduate program, religious affiliation or life experience? There are so many variables to align, prioritize and incorporate. I guess, as I become a full-fledged adult, I will have a lot in common with many types of people that will allow me to form bonds with a people from diverse backgrounds. But I’m not there yet.

In my quest to make new friends and to facilitate quicker team building, I found myself putting on different hats: a Mormon, a dentist, an Asian American. I must admit, it helped. But, it also felt like these labels were simplistic and artificial. For the most part, it was because I was all of the above, all the time. However, it did make me think of what it might look like to live in a truly post-racial world.

There has been a lot of talk since the rise of Obama about how America is entering into this “post-racial” era. Sometimes it feels good to believe the hype. Sometimes, that’s all it is: hype. Case-in-point: the run up to the confirmation of Sonia Sotomayor. What are the first things the general public thinks of when they hear her name? Hispanic. Woman. Or in other not-as-kind words: Wise Latina. Hardly anyone speaks about her credentials. People will boil her entire career down to two simple categories into which she neatly fits. Will

she be the intellectual powerhouse driving the liberal judicial philosophy for the next 40 years?

Probably not. Yet, look at the actual intellectual conservative force on the other side of the Supreme Court: Antonin Scalia. He was confirmed by a vote of 98-0 in 1986. Is Scalia that much more qualified than Sotomayor? Surely, that cannot be the case. Could it be that we have not passed the post of racial politics? Twenty-plus years later begs the question: is the United States moving in the right direction in terms of race relations?

I believe we are. As a 20-something millennial who came of age in the 1990s and “The Naughts,” I am untethered in my abilities to claim whichever label I desire. I am not confined to excel in particular courses because I look or act a certain way. I can love Thai food and Russian literature.

To quote one of my favorite musicians, Common:

*I [can] be as free as the spirits of those who left*

*I’m talking Malcom, Coltrane, my man Yusef*

*Through death, through conception  
For moms, new steps in her direction...  
Never looking back or too far in front of me*

*The present is a gift  
And I just wanna be*

To my peers, oftentimes the labels we wear adhere to ourselves. We as a society can be limited by the artificial labels, like woman or Latina. It is not as simple as blaming the politicians for being petty and partisan, because it is we the people that continue to elect petty partisans.

So, will we reach a golden era that is truly post-racial? It depends on the labels we in society decide to arbitrarily assign. Hopefully, we will choose not to be selected groups, but instead choose to be “all of the above.” ■

Peter Shigeki Frandsen is currently living in Biloxi, Mississippi. He is a member of the Mount Olympus JACL.







THE BAND: (l-r) Dan Kuramoto, Dean Cortez, Kimo Cornwell, Danny Yamamoto, June Kuramoto and Shoji Kameda.

## Hiroshima: Looking Back on 30 Years of Smooth Jazz

Three decades after their debut, this jazz-fusion band is still going strong.

By NALEA J. KO  
Reporter

There are a lot of milestones celebrated in the confines of a tour bus when a band has been together for 30 years like the jazz-fusion ensemble Hiroshima.

"Our daughter literally learned how to walk and take her first steps on a tour bus going from New York City to Buffalo," said Dan Kuramoto, one of the founding members of the jazz band Hiroshima. "I missed it, I was in the back lounge and they started yelling 'come on you got to see this!'"

Just like the band itself, the Kuramotos' daughter, Lani, is now 30. More than just 80s hairstyles and clothing have changed since the band released its debut album "Hiroshima" in 1979. Social networking sites like MySpace and YouTube have transformed how Hiroshima's music is disseminated, which has its pluses and minuses.

"There's a lot of things of ours on YouTube. Some really amazing — I don't know where they get this stuff," said Dan Kuramoto while sipping bottled water at the Senka Café in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo.

"Only trouble is, it could have been a bad night and then you have to live with it," added June Kuramoto with a laugh during a recent interview with the duo. "So, there's a lot of pressure now because anyone can do it and put it on [YouTube]. You have to live with it."

Thirty years have past since the ensemble debuted, but the heart of Hiroshima has remained consistent over the 30-year span. Hiroshima's first decade of work is recaptured on its new album, "Legacy," which was recently released Aug. 18.

To commemorate their anniversary, the band — including *koto* player June Kuramoto, saxophone player Dan Kuramoto, keyboard player Kimo Cornwell, drummer Danny Yamamoto, bassist Dean Cortez and taiko drummer Shoji Kameda — re-recorded songs like "Turning Point" and the Grammy nominated "Winds of Change."

"Over the years we've seen the best and worst of each other and we still want to be together," Yamamoto wrote in an e-mail. "I think that's a real definition of family."

Yamamoto said the band's "burning desire" to be unique and try new things has allowed them to remain viable in a changing music industry.

### Hiroshima's Legacy

Sitting down with the two founding members of Hiroshima,

it is clear that much has changed since the band's inception. The Kuramotos are now divorced, which was "awkward at first."

"Well, we see each other everyday. And she's my best friend — she puts up with me," Dan Kuramoto said. "We get along, I think, pretty well."

Dan Kuramoto said his ex-wife June Kuramoto was mostly responsible for forming the band.

Born in Japan, June Kuramoto was raised in the Crenshaw District of Los Angeles, Calif. Her childhood home was a makeshift studio for Japan's *koto* Sensei Kazue Kudo. Taught to play the 13-string instrument in the traditional Japanese way, June Kuramoto was soon playing the Temptations on the *koto*. It was a constant internal struggle, she said, to stray from the time-honored Japanese style of playing the *koto*.

*'Everyone said Asians don't listen to music. Everyone was against us. And it hasn't changed that much. We've been blessed because 30 years later we still have a record deal.'*

— Dan Kuramoto, one of the founding members of Hiroshima

"I had the concept of wanting to integrate *koto* with Western instrumentation in a more hipper sense because my friends used to make fun of me for playing in an old traditional way," she explained.

Dan Kuramoto was born and raised in East Los Angeles. He was influenced, among other things, by Latin music. Together, their musical backgrounds shaped Hiroshima, said the duo.

In the United States, Hiroshima's fusion of American jazz and Japanese instruments gave them a broader audience, said the two founding members. But in Japan, June Kuramoto was hard-pressed to find fans because the *koto* is a revered instrument, once played mostly in the royal court.

"The whole point is we were a JA band that wanted to reflect the Asian Pacific mentality that, at the time, did not exist at all," Dan Kuramoto said. "So there was so much overt racism and a lot of it was done by omission."

The initial resistance to Hiroshima came directly from its own record label. Everyone, it seemed, was expecting the band

to fail.

"There were bets in the record company itself — like Clive Davis' company Arista Records — there were bets that we would sell a certain amount of records and then we would be an embarrassment and then be gone," Dan Kuramoto said.

Music executive Larkin Arnold, who wanted to promote diversity in music, first signed Hiroshima. He is also credited with discovering and signing talents such as Natalie Cole and Luther Vandross, among others.

People criticized the band for choosing to fuse two distinctly different genres. And after 30 years, the band is still lambasted for blending music from the East and West.

"Everyone said Asians don't listen to music. Everyone was against us. And it hasn't changed that much," Dan Kuramoto said. "We've been blessed because 30 years later we still have a record deal."

"I'd just like to add, in a world where being sort of generic and in sync with everyone else is like the norm," wrote Kimo Cornwell in an e-mail to the *Pacific Citizen*. "It's great to be a part of a band that isn't afraid to be unique and can create a music that is fun a lot of the time, but also socially conscious at other times."

### Hiroshima: Looking Forward

In retrospect of the last three decades, there are a few things they would have done differently, said the Kuramotos.

"I think there were a lot of things we would have done differently had we known," Dan Kuramoto explained with a laugh. "We had to learn by mistake and we made many of them." Mistakes such as investing a "small fortune" in stage equipment that would not fit in the venue, he said.

"We didn't learn to trust our own instincts probably for the first 20 years," Dan Kuramoto explained.

After 30 years, the band has learned to trust their intuition. One thing they have never regretted: combining distinct music genres.

"No," June Kuramoto said. "That's not one of the regrets."

With over a dozen albums under their belts, the band hopes to partner with colleges across the country in the future to hold educational workshops. As for the next 30 years, do not expect these musicians to put down their instruments any time soon.

"Whew," June Kuramoto said laughing. "I don't think we can ever stop doing music. I don't think I could ever stop writing and even performing." ■

The band will perform Sept. 11 at Yoshi's Jazz Club and Restaurant in Oakland, Calif. For more information about Hiroshima's tour dates, visit [www.hiroshimamusic.com](http://www.hiroshimamusic.com).





PHOTO: TAMI TANAKA

National board members (l-r) David Kawamoto, vice president of planning and development, Sheldon Arakaki, v.p. of general operations, and National President Larry Oda answer questions at the PNW/IDC Bi-District meeting.

## PNW and IDC Members Enjoy Final Bi-District

By **JEFF ITAMI**  
Special to the *Pacific Citizen*

By plane or by car, members of the JACL Pacific Northwest and Intermountain Districts came to Ontario, Oregon July 30 to Aug. 2 to attend what was hailed as the "Last Bi-district Conference" for the two districts.

A big attraction for many of the attendees was the dialogue with national JACL officers including National President Larry Oda, Vice-President of Operations Sheldon Arakaki and Vice President of Planning and Development David Kawamoto. The national officers provided an update on the national organization and the duties of their respective positions.

### Finances

Oda provided an update on the finances of the national JACL noting that the finance committee met recently to adjust the budget due to market fluctuations. He noted that the national board met in June to balance the 2009 budget by adding more fundraisers and reducing items such as travel. Thus, the current two million dollar budget faces a deficit of \$48,000.

Oda believes that a one-percent deficit is acceptable at that level. He noted that originally they faced a \$150,000 deficit, which was discussed with the national director since there was only \$120,000 in the Reserve Fund. The current 2009 budget has aggressive membership goals. The national officers noted that if we don't meet these goals, the national organization will be in trouble.

### Conventions

Arakaki presented a PowerPoint on the upcoming national conventions. The 2010 convention will be held in Chicago June 30 to July 4 at the Swiss Hotel. Discussions regarding the 2011 convention are currently taking place between National Director Floyd Mori and OCA. A possible joint convention between the two non-profits may take place in Los Angeles. The 2012 national JACL convention will take place at the Bellevue Hyatt Regency, downtown Seattle July 4 to 7.

### Planning & Development

Kawamoto noted that districts are currently discussing sponsorship of tables at the upcoming JACL Gala Dinner in Washington, D.C.

Sept. 17. He also noted that the National Scholarship Endowment was down \$10,000 from the \$59,000 normally available. The PNW district had seven recipients this year with the Portland chapter getting five of them. The IDC had zero recipients this year.

### Q&A with the National Board

District members of the PNW and IDC had a number of questions for the national board. Salt Lake JACL member Paul Fisk asked for an update on the monies earned by the local chapters that hosted the 2008 national convention in Salt Lake City. Oda noted that those funds should be available soon. Oda explained that part of the difficulty was not having a single point of contact with the local convention committee. That issue is now being resolved for future annual conventions.

Members also wanted to know what national JACL was doing in regards to membership. Oda explained that the Nisei, the largest portion of the JACL membership, is getting older and passing on while the Sansei generation is not joining at the same rate. The concern was prevalent at all of the bi- and tri-districts this year.

Arakaki also noted that more information needs to be known about what chapters are doing at the local level. Not enough information is being disseminated such as the names of the local chapter membership chairs. This even though national JACL has repeatedly asked for the information. So far Chicago and the CCDC have had the largest increases in membership.

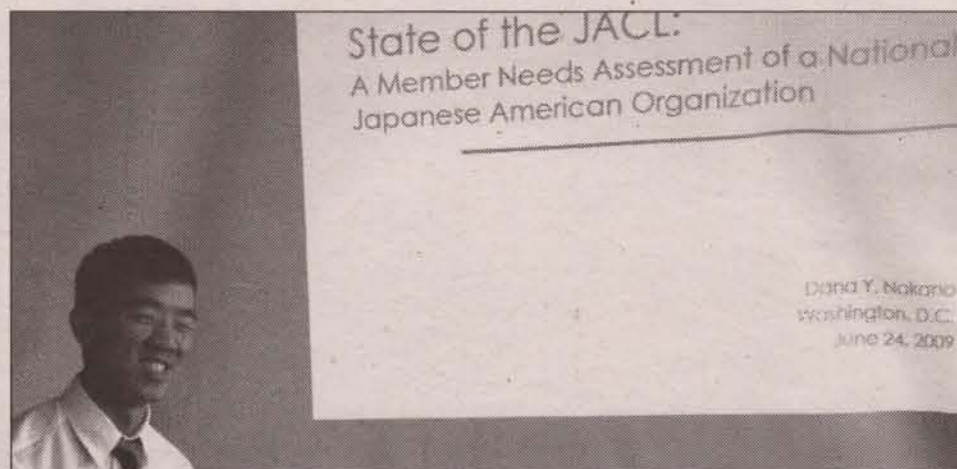
### Workshops and Activities

The plenary session on Saturday was led by Karl Endo of the Pocatello-Blackfoot chapter and was entitled "How to Increase Membership." Some of the workshops included: Be Counted: Importance of 2010 Census; Asian Kite Making; Recording Family Histories; Learn to Play Hana; and Introduction to Tai Chi.

Participants also got a tour of the Four Rivers Cultural Center followed by a banquet dinner with speaker Idaho State Rep. Pat Takasugi. ■

*Jeff Itami is the Intermountain District Representative on the Pacific Citizen editorial board.*

## JACL Unveils Survey on State of the Organization



Dana Nakano, former JACL Masaoka Fellow, worked on the survey with JACL staff members.

JACL has completed a survey titled: "State of the Japanese American Citizens League: A Member Needs Assessment of a National Organization."

The survey — funded by a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation — looked at the current state of JACL and will be used in future planning of the organization.

"The pace of change in the world is accelerating, and this is an important tool for helping the organization to appreciate and oblige the evolution," said National President Larry Oda. "This study will assist us to adapt to the changes we experience, and to determine where we are now as we establish what we must be in the future."

Insight into the JA experience may be gleaned from the survey results. The informa-

tion will also be used for collaborative work in policy and community preservation.

The survey was undertaken by the JACL staff and Dana Nakano, a PhD candidate at the University of California, Irvine and a former JACL Mike M. Masaoka Fellow.

"The JACL is grateful to the Annie E. Casey Foundation for making this project possible and to Dana Nakano, who was the lead researcher for the study," said National Director Floyd Mori. "We also thank everyone involved, especially those who took the time to respond to the survey which provided valuable information for our community."

Copies of the survey booklet are available at JACL headquarters and regional offices. ■

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



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# Plans Being Made for Topaz Museum in Delta



By ASSOCIATED PRESS

DELTA, Utah—A broken teacup handle. A splintered garden box. A cracked concrete slab that, long ago, served as a mess hall for an imprisoned community so large that it would have ranked as Utah's fifth most-populous city.

These are among the scattered memories that awaited Camellia Davis on a sun-scorched greasewood flat — about 15 miles outside Delta — where her father spent three years of his childhood behind barbed wire in the Topaz internment camp.

It was a pilgrimage, of sorts, for this Illinois mother of four, who desperately wanted to understand her father's bitterness more than 60 years after the United States, following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, ordered the imprisonment of 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry.

"I was just driven," she says. "I had to see it."

But the tale of Topaz is easily overlooked in

this west desert town — a reality that historians hope to remedy soon. Momentum is building for a stand-alone museum in downtown Delta to chronicle the Topaz confinement.

Until then, the story of this sprawling prison camp, which once housed up to 11,000 people and raised constitutional questions about the wartime rights of U.S. citizens, will be retold in a single cramped corner of Delta's Great Basin Museum.

While potbellied stoves, military-style metal bunks and even a crib carved with the identification number 11880 are displayed in a Topaz-era recreation hall behind the museum, historians have no place for dozens of other artifacts, ranging from Japanese ink wells to watercolor paintings to brooches decorated with shells from the desert floor.

Jane Beckwith, president of the Topaz Museum Board, retrieves several boxes of flower-petal pins and bird carvings from the bedside of her Delta home — ornate reminders of the history she has pushed for more than two

decades to preserve. Those trinkets, she says, should have a permanent home.

And soon, they might.

Museum backers have laid plans — and even purchased property — for a 27,000-square-foot historical complex in Delta that would offer expansive exhibit space not only for the Topaz story, but also for the Great Basin Museum and Daughters of Utah Pioneers. Designs for the nearly \$5 million building also call for a community meeting hall and office space for the Delta Chamber of Commerce.

It's a high-dollar endeavor that Delta Mayor Gayle Bunker says is in "a very good position" to succeed.

Not only has the federal government recognized the Topaz internment camp as a National Historic Landmark, but the Utah Legislature also passed a resolution this year supporting a museum that would preserve that heritage. The National Park Service extended another helping hand in late July with a \$48,000 Japanese American Confinement Site Grant to hire an exhibit designer.

Years from now, Beckwith hopes the museum will remind visitors about a tragic chapter in U.S. history that, hopefully, the nation never will repeat.

"I want people to see that through inaction, through fear and through prejudice, horrific things can happen if no one does anything to say no," Beckwith says. "I want people to know that, in a democracy, we have the

responsibility to protect those who are not quite as strong as the majority."

As for a build date? Beckwith chuckles. "We wanted it done 20 years ago."

But for now, there are only a tiny museum and a cracked desert floor to revive those memories for people such as Davis, who stood with her husband and four children among the weathered remains of her father's unwanted home: Block 6.

"Could you live here for 3 1/2 years?" she asks her children, who shake their heads.

She hopes her children won't forget that story of her father — the heart-rending tale of a boy whose friends turned against him and whose country forced his family from their homes during World War II.

She hopes the world won't forget what it did to people like her grandparents who had to forsake their family dry-cleaning business, abandon a cat at the garbage with only a can of sardines and, ultimately, suffer the loss of all of their belongings in a mysterious barn fire during their imprisonment.

"We can all heal and move forward," she says. "But we need to be educated, all of us, to avoid having this mistake happen again. It would be an even greater tragedy if we learned nothing from this — that sometime in the next century we did it again because we were afraid." ■

*'I want people to see that through inaction, through fear and through prejudice, horrific things can happen if no one does anything to say no.'*



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| November 9-13  | <b>New Orleans Getaway with Collette Vacations</b> — 5 days/4 nights New Orleans includes sightseeing and a scenic river cruise, plus a Collette Foundation feature where you spend the morning giving back to the children of New Orleans in a special service project. Space is limited.<br>Sharon Seto |
| November 9-17  | <b>Costa Rica — Nature's Museum, A Smithsonian Journeys Tour</b> With Collette Vacations — 9 days/8 nights visiting San Jose, Poas Volcano, Braulio, Carrillo and Tortuguero Nat'l Parks, Sarapiquí, San Carlos, Arenal Volcano, Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge. Includes stay at a rain forest resort.       |
| Nov. 30-Dec. 9 | <b>Yamato European Christmas Markets of Europe Tour</b> — 10 days/8 nights visiting Prague, Rothenburg, Romantic Road from Dinkelsbuehl to Ulm, Neuschwanstein, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Salzburg, Vienna.<br>Philippe Theriault   |

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## Anaheim JA Family Brings History to Life

Los Angeles' Little Tokyo has always been considered the Japanese American center of Southern California, but the City of Anaheim also has a rich history of the contributions of many Japanese and JA families who called Anaheim their home.

In the early days, these Japanese families worked on their farms, established businesses, worked in professional careers and sent their children to Anaheim schools. One family is now celebrating their Centennial year of emigration to the United States from Wakayama Prefecture in Japan to Washington State in 1909.

The Hirahara Family, who arrived in Anaheim in 1955, is being honored in the City of Anaheim's "100 Years and Four Generations — Bridging the Past and Present" exhibit in its first "Museum without Walls" gallery display. The exhibit is being shown in memory of Frank Hirahara who passed away in 2006.

The Hirahara family is a Southern California success story and offers a diverse introduction into the aerospace industry, broadcasting, local festivals, and involvement in the JA community as well as being a bridge maker between the U.S. and Japan.

In local Anaheim community activities, the Hiraharas are charter members of the Anaheim YMCA's Heritage Club. Frank was also a past member of the board of directors of the Anaheim Memorial Medical



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CITY OF ANAHEIM

The collection is on exhibit at the Anaheim History Room's 'Museum Without Walls' gallery.

Center Foundation. He was also a past lieutenant governor of Optimist International that covered the Orange County region as well as being president of the Suburban Optimist Club.

### Hirahara Collection

Anaheim History Room  
Open Mon. to Fri. until Oct. 15  
12 noon to 5 p.m.  
Admission is free  
For more information:  
Anaheim's Heritage Services at  
714/765-6453

The Hirahara family will also be featured in the "Japanese Pioneers of the Yakima Valley" exhibit at the Yakima Valley Museum in Yakima, Washington in 2010 and will be part of a standing exhibit at the Heart Mountain Interpretive Learning Center, which is being built on the original site of the WWII JA internment camp at Heart Mountain in Powell, Wyo.

The Hirahara Family Collection represents the only four generational family the Anaheim History Room has in its collected works. ■



## WWII 442nd Veterans Mark 65th Anniversary of Liberation of Vosges Region in France



**RUE DE 442:** WWII Nisei veterans visit the street named in their honor. Pictured (l-r) are: Art Iwasaki, George Kanatani, Sam Sakamoto, Nelson Akagi, Fumio 'Steve' Shimizu and Lawson Sakai.

PHOTO: ELLEN SAWAMURA, PHD

Lawson Sakai went to France to retrace his own footsteps. During World War II, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team warrior fought in the densely wooded Vosges Mountains to rescue the soldiers from the Texas 36th Division, the "Lost Battalion."

For his service and valor, he received a Bronze Star and four Purple Hearts.

In July, Sakai, 85, and a handful of other 100th/442nd veterans arrived in France to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Bruyeres, Biffontaine and the rescue of the "Lost Battalion."

He's been back many times since the end of WWII. In fact, Sakai has traveled to the Vosges about nine other times for previous anniversaries. But this trip back may be the last.

It was "the time to say our final farewell" to those who did not return home.

On the trip, the veterans swapped

war stories with each other and family members — often for the first time.

Art Iwasaki, 89, of Portland, Oregon, was wounded in the arm and shoulder on Oct. 27, 1944, during the rescue of the "Lost Battalion." The I Company veteran was being transported in a jeep with two other wounded soldiers when the vehicle hit a road mine. Although seriously injured himself, Iwasaki dragged another soldier to safety and received a Bronze Star.

He never previously shared these stories with his family.

The delegation of Nisei veterans and their family members visited several significant sites that brought back memories, including an emotional visit to the Epinal American Cemetery.

There, 84-year-old Sam Sakamoto, a veteran of I Company, placed an American flag on a gravesite along with origami paper

cranes and saluted.

The six veterans and their families also visited significant battlefields where the 100th/442nd valiantly fought and suffered tremendous losses. Other veterans who attended included: Nelson Akagi, a 522nd Field Artillery veteran; George Kanatani, an E Company veteran; and Fumio "Steve" Shimizu, an F Company veteran.

The delegation also included family members of the "Lost Battalion," including Janet and Susan Hardwick, who in 2007, left a thank you note to the Nisei soldiers at the National Japanese American Memorial in Washington, D.C. on behalf of their father, Sgt. Bill Hardwick.

For these Nisei veterans, the lessons of honor and pride are deeply ingrained.

Kanatani, 91, said his Issei parents taught him that service to your country is a duty. ■

## Pack, Troop and Post 58 Celebrating 70th Anniversary

The Boy Scouts of Pack, Troop and Post 58 of San Francisco, both past and present, plan to celebrate their 70 anniversary with a reunion luncheon Nov. 7 at the Hotel Kabuki in San Francisco.

Pack and Troop 58, sponsored by the Konko Church of San Francisco, was founded in 1939 to help assimilate Japanese Americans into mainstream society. The scouting program was interrupted in 1942 by the internment of JAs during WWII but was reinstated in 1948 following the community's return to San Francisco.

Currently, the Troop and Pack meet regularly on Friday evenings during the school year at the Konko Church of San Francisco, and participate in camping, outdoor activities and community service in and around San Francisco's Japantown.

The Troop was recently honored with the Kimochi Spirit Award for its longtime service during the holiday

season to Kimochi Home. The Pack annually carols at Kokoro, and participates in the spring cleanup of the Japanese Cemetery in Colma and the Memorial Day planting of flags in the S.F. Presidio.

The Pack and Troop 58 reunion committee, co-chaired by Kathy Inouye-Chu and Yee Tom, is networking with former scouts, parents and leaders in an effort to get the word out about the celebration.

The Troop is also compiling photographs and is updating its alumni roster. Anyone with information should visit [www.pack-troop58.org](http://www.pack-troop58.org)



or contact Nob Fukuda at 415/221-8295; nobfumifukuda@yahoo.com; Kathy Chu at dragonox85@aol.com; or Nestor Tom at nestor-tom@gmail.com. ■

**What:** Pack, Troop and Post 58 70th Reunion

**When:** Nov. 7, 11a.m. - 3 p.m.

**Where:** S.F. Hotel Kabuki

**Information:** [www.pack-troop58.org](http://www.pack-troop58.org)

## JACL Announces Nat'l Gala Honorees

The JACL has announced the slate of honorees for its third annual National JACL Gala Awards Dinner.

This year, the civil rights organization will honor Japanese American veterans collectively at the Sept. 17 event. Among the honorees will be Sen. Daniel K. Akaka, D-Hawaii, a World War II veteran.

On Dec. 7, 1941, Akaka, 17, witnessed the bombing of Pearl Harbor from the roof of his high school dormitory. After graduating high school, he served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, first as a civilian, then as an enlisted soldier.

Since he was first elected to the Senate in 1990, Akaka has served as chair of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs to ensure that veterans receive the care and benefits they have earned through their service.

At the event, the JACL will also present awards to JA veterans groups that have been committed to keeping the veterans' story alive for future generations. The honorees are: Japanese American Veterans Association, The Japanese American Korean War Veterans, Go For Broke National Education Center and The National Japanese American Historical Society.

The JA veterans' bravery and commitment helped to build the civil rights movement, said the JACL in a statement. The gala will be an opportunity to thank the veterans for their service and sacrifice. ■

### National JACL Gala Awards Dinner

Thurs., Sept. 17

J. W. Marriott Hotel in Washington, D.C.

Info: [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org)



## KOKUSAI-PACIFICA 2009-2010 TOURS

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### Nov 3 SPECIAL - Fall Japan - 10 Days - \$2995

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# New Gov't for Native Hawaiians Gains Support

By KEVIN FREKING  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON—A new administration has brought a change of view about the legality of Native Hawaiians establishing their own government.

During the past decade, members of Hawaii's congressional delegation have worked to pass legislation allowing for the reorganizing of a Native Hawaiian government that was overthrown in 1893. Their legislation sets up a process for that reorganization and would allow Native Hawaiians to be treated on par with more than 560 American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives.

Sam Hirsch, deputy associate attorney general for the Justice Department, told the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Aug. 6 that the department "strongly supports the core policy goals" of a bill allowing for self-governance by Native Hawaiians.

Once established, the new government would negotiate with the state and the federal government over which assets the new government would own. Currently, the state administers 1.2 million acres of former monarchy land, and some of that land could revert to the new Native Hawaiian government.

Prospects for the legislation seem better than ever now that Democratic lawmakers have strengthened their majority in Congress and President Barack Obama has voiced his support.

*"The United States has not always acted honorably in its treatment of our nation's first people."*

Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii



That's a marked shift from the Bush administration's viewpoint. Two years ago, the White House threatened to veto a comparable bill, saying it would "formally divide sovereign United States power along suspect lines of race and ethnicity."

Hirsch took issue with some of the key issues raised by the Bush administration, which cited court rulings stating the "history of indigenous Hawaiians .... is fundamentally different from that of indigenous groups and fed-

erally recognized Indian Tribes in the continental United States."

Hirsch said Native Hawaiians have much in common with Indian tribes. Congress recognized that similarity when it set aside lands expressly for their benefit. He noted that Native Hawaiians exercised self-rule prior to the arrival of Western explorers, and have collectively worked to preserve traditional culture just as Indian tribes have.

Hirsch also said no court has squarely

answered the question of whether Congress has the authority to treat Native Hawaiians in the same manner as members of an Indian tribe.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs held that chamber's first hearing of the year on legislation establishing a Native Hawaiian government, though Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii, noted that it's the 10th time the committee has met to consider the issue.

The hearing was for informational purposes only and no vote occurred.

The legislation is commonly referred to as the Akaka Bill because of his sponsorship.

"The United States has not always acted honorably in its treatment of our nation's first people," Akaka said. "However, I am proud that as a country we have pursued actions acknowledging past wrongs and building a mutual path forward."

Stuart Benjamin, a professor at Duke Law School, told the committee that the bill would test the minimum requirements for what constitutes an Indian tribe. "No tribe has ever had the paucity of connections that exist among Native Hawaiians," he said in his written testimony.

Benjamin said that limiting the organizers of the new government to Native Hawaiians who are state residents would prevent people connected to Hawaii only through an ancestor from participating in the reorganization effort. ■

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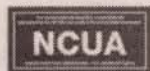
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## Victim's Family, APA Leaders Reflect on 10th Anniversary of a Hate Crime

By Pacific Citizen Staff

"He was killed because of his skin color," said Ismael Ito about his brother Joseph Ito, a Filipino American postal worker who was fatally shot by a self-proclaimed white supremacist 10 years ago in a hate crime that shocked the nation.

Joseph, 39, was shot nine times as he was delivering mail in Chatsworth, Calif., less than an hour after the gunman opened fire at the North Valley Jewish Community Center.

On Aug. 10, his family members and Asian Pacific American leaders gathered in Los Angeles to mark the anniversary of the murder.

At the time of the shooting, the audience paused for a moment of silence.

Since Joseph's murder, the Ito family has stepped up their advocacy work by creating the Joseph Ito Hate Crimes Prevention Fellowship and lobbying for hate crime legislation.

"We know that your loss will never be forgotten, but your contribution to harmony and peace will always be remembered," Stewart Kwoh, executive director of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) said to members of the Ito family.

APALC sponsored the event with PSW JACL as a co-sponsor. The commemoration also offered an opportunity for APA leaders to reflect on how far the community has come in the last decade when it comes to hate crimes.



PHOTO COURTESY OF APALC AND VANESSA LAP

Ten years after her son Joseph Ito was gunned down by a white supremacist, Lilian Ito (left) said she still misses him.

According to recent data we've come a long way, said Craig Ishii, PSW JACL regional director. Police reports indicate that hate crimes in the APA community are down.

"Numbers are deceiving," said Ishii, citing issues of underreporting and cultural roadblocks to reporting hate crimes, including language issues.

APA leaders say these factors don't reflect reality completely and more work needs to be done.

Other speakers at the event included Congresswoman Judy Chu and Assemblymember Warren Furutani. ■



# GO SEE DO

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS\*



## 12th Annual Aki Matsuri

BELLEVUE, WA

Sept. 12-13

Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Bellevue College (BC), Main Campus

3000 Landerholm Circle SE, Bellevue, WA 98007

The matsuri includes two full days of on-stage Japanese performing arts, martial art demos by local dojo members, puppet shows based on Japanese folk tales, tea ceremony demonstrations in the Teahouse, 65+ exhibit booths, and Japanese food booths. Browse through Nomi-no-ichi, a Japanese style flea market to make a lucky find!

### Info and registration:

Admission and parking are FREE. Fees apply to some workshops. Contact: 425/861-7865 or [info@enma.org](mailto:info@enma.org)  
[www.enma.org](http://www.enma.org)

## National

JACL Gala Dinner  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Thu., Sept. 17

"A Salute to Japanese American Veterans"; J.W. Marriott Hotel.

Info: [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org) or 202/223-1240.

**GO!**

## East

2009 APAICS Golf Classic  
Maryland

Mon., Oct. 19

The Courses at Andrews Air Force Base

The Asian Pacific American Institute For Congressional Studies (APAICS) invites you to join them for a day of golf, breakfast and awards luncheon/reception.

For info and sponsor packages: Helen.Ruggiero, [Golf@apaics.org](mailto:Golf@apaics.org)  
[www.apaics.org](http://www.apaics.org)

## Midwest

NMJACL Annual Aki Matsuri  
ALBUQUERQUE

Sun., SEPT. 27

10 a.m.-6 p.m.

National Hispanic Cultural Center  
1701 4th St. SW

Matsuri theme: Kado: The way of the flower ikebana: Japanese Flower

arranging. Free parking, free entertainment, raffle prizes. Fun for the WHOLE family. All proceeds go toward the proposed Japanese Cultural Center.  
For info: Leo Gomez at: 505/291-1062, [hanayagi@spinn.net](mailto:hanayagi@spinn.net) or [www.nmjacl.org](http://www.nmjacl.org)

1st Annual Asian Health Care Leaders Conference  
CHICAGO

Nov. 16-17

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For info: visit [www.asianhealthcare-leaders.org](http://www.asianhealthcare-leaders.org)

## Pacific Northwest

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Free admission, activities for all ages and community tables with food a drink from local restaurants.

Featuring Minidoka Swing Band (Noon-2:30 p.m.), Girl Genius (Radio Play at 3:00 p.m.), A-Key-kyo (4-5 p.m.), Swing Dance Contest.

For info: Mari Watanabe 503/224-1458, [Mari@oregonnikkei.org](mailto:Mari@oregonnikkei.org), [www.oregonnikkei.org](http://www.oregonnikkei.org)

Portland Taiko Season Finale  
PORTLAND

Oregon Lost & Found, Sept. 19, 8 p.m.

Taiko Show & Tell, Sept. 20, 2 p.m.

Children's Matinee, Sept. 19, 1 p.m.

Newmark Theatre, Portland Center for the Performing Arts  
1111 SW Broadway, Portland

Join Portland Taiko for their 15th anniversary season finale concerts.

For ticket info: [www.portlandtaiko.org](http://www.portlandtaiko.org), PCPA box office, 800/982-2787  
For group tickets: 503/288-2456

## Northern Calif.

Showing: "Hidden Internment: The Art Shibayama Story"

SAN JOSE

Sun., Sept. 13

2 p.m.-4 p.m.

Yu-Ai Kai Building

588 North 4th St.

San Jose, CA 95112

Nihonmachi Outreach Committee presents a free screening of "Hidden Internment," a film about the experience of Japanese Latin Americans during WWII. Mr. Art Shibayama will be the guest speaker and will hold a Q&A session following the video.  
For info: 408/374-2722, [info@sjnoc.org](mailto:info@sjnoc.org), [www.sjnoc.org](http://www.sjnoc.org)

Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL  
75th Anniversary

APTOS

Sun., Oct. 4

11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Seascope Golf Club Banquet Room  
610 Clubhouse Dr  
Aptos, CA 95003

Join the Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL as they celebrate their 75th anniversary. Guest speakers: Sandy Lydon, historian emeritus of Cabrillo College, Tom Ikeda, founder of Densho, Megumi Kaminaga, JACL youth leader & founder of Nakayoshi. Buffet lunch is \$35 per person.  
For info: Bobbi Jo Palmer, 831/840-5436 or Marcia Hashimoto, 831/722-6859, [hashi79@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hashi79@sbcglobal.net)

Performance: "When Dreams Are Interpreted ..."

BERKELEY

Oct., 9-11

2 p.m.

1623 Stuart St.

Berkeley, CA 94703

Jill Togawa and Purple

Moon Dance Project

present the world premiere of "When Dreams Are Interpreted..." an interdisciplinary work inspired by memories, stories and "interpreted dreams" of the WWII internment experience of the Japanese American community in south Berkeley. Free & open to the public; limited seating, reservations required.

For info and reservations: 415/552-1105, [project@purplemoondance.org](mailto:project@purplemoondance.org), [www.purplemoondance.org](http://www.purplemoondance.org)

## Southern Calif.

Project: Community! Culmination

LOS ANGELES

Aug., 25th

6 p.m.-9 p.m.

JACCC Garden Room

244 S. San Pedro St.

Los Angeles, CA 90012

The JACL PSW invites you to celebrate the work of 13 high school participants of Project: Community!, an eight-week program that develops and empowers the youth's voice in Little Tokyo.

For info and to RSVP: Tracy Kanamori: 562/716-9432, JACL PSW office: 213/626-4471, [ProjectCommunityRSVP@gmail.com](mailto:ProjectCommunityRSVP@gmail.com)

Pre-War Talk Story, Part 2

VENICE

Sat., Sept. 19

11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Venice Japanese Community Center  
12448 Braddock Dr.

Los Angeles, CA 90066

The Venice JCC's History Project will be holding the 2nd "Talk Story." All former residents of the Venice area are invited to bring their memories, photos and stories of growing up in the Venice area.

For info: Sharon Kumagai 310/822-8885, [vcjacl@gmail.com](mailto:vcjacl@gmail.com)

Screening: "Citizen Tanouye"

SAN DIEGO

Sat., Oct. 24

12:30 p.m.

Serra Mesa-Kearny Mesa Public Library Community Room

9005 Aero Drive, San Diego

The San Diego JACL invites you to their free showing of the award-winning documentary, in which Torrance, CA high school students discover why an alumni receives a posthumous Medal of Honor from President Clinton. Space is limited.

For info and reservations: SD JACL

## Nevada

619/230-0314

National Singles Convention

LAS VEGAS

Sept. 18-20

Sam's Town Hotel and Gambling Hall

The 12th annual singles convention will include "Big Bash" dinner dance on Sat. evening. Entertainment, dinner and a dance for an extra \$75. \$185/full registration; hotel \$89.99/night, single or double occupancy.

Info: [www.jaclsc.com](http://www.jaclsc.com) or

Yas Tokita, 702/897-8975. ■

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# IN MEMORIAM

All locations are in California except as noted.

## Hangai, Noboru, 78

June 19, Monterey Park, CA. Army Air Force veteran. Survived by wife, Barbara, son, Dana, sister Mineko Kimura, and numerous nieces and nephews.

## Hyun, Carolynn, 44



July 5, Chicago, Ill. the former deputy chief of staff to U.S. Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater from 1998-1999. Born in San Francisco on July 29, 1964. Battled cancer and is survived by her brother Arthur, his wife Lisa Greenstein and their son Max.

## Maruyama, Midori Takahashi, 85

June 1, Richmond, CA. born in Mt. Eden. Survived by her husband Masami. Memorial service was held at Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland.

## Maykin, Michelle, 27

July 25, Diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia in 2007. Created "Project Michelle," to recruit people to register as bone marrow donors. She is survived by her parents,

boyfriend Van and sisters Maybel and Melanie.

## Saruwatari, Beverly Jeane, 61

June 27, Spokane, WA. Elementary school teacher until her death. She is survived by sons Jerud and Travis Melcher, sister Diane Tokugawa, brothers Steven and Mike Saruwatari, and nieces and grand-nephews.

## Suyama, Dr. Eji, 89

June 8, Sebastopol, CA. Served in 442nd RCT and was awarded the Silver Star. Helped rescue the "Lost Battalion." Became the chief of surgery at the Maine Coast Memorial Hospital in Ellsworth, ME. He is survived by wife Virginia and six children.

## Watanabe, Hideo, 88

Feb. 15, Spokane, WA. Interned at Manzanar. Enlisted and served with MIS during WWII. Had a long career as a research chemist and held 16 patents. Survived by wife of 63 years, Ikuko Dorothy Amatatsu, sister Fujiye, sons Nathan and Gordon.

## Yada, Joe Josaku, 84

May 25; Interned at Tule Lake and later at Minidoka, Idaho. Served with the MIS division in Minn. and Japan. Worked various jobs including US Postal Service, Connor Sales, Singer Sewing Company, Seasia and Uwajimaya. Survived by daughter, Gail; son, Jeffrey (Chris); 4 gc.; 1 ggc.; and sisters Emi Somekawa-Beckwith and Kimi Yada. ■

# 442nd Veterans to Reunite With the 'Lost Battalion'

Veterans from the Texas 141st Infantry Regiment and the Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team will be reunited after more than 65 years at a Nov. 1 Houston gala hosted by the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF).

The event, to be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, will recall the rescue of the "Lost Battalion" on a French battlefield by the Nisei 442nd — a rescue that brought together two uniquely American communities, one of which fought in the U.S. Armed Forces even as tens of thousands of its civilians were held forcibly in U.S. government internment camps.

"The Houston gala will recognize the heroism of both the 442nd and the 141st. These veterans helped the U.S. to win that war, but they also built a foundation of understanding that decades later led to redress for the injustices of the internment. In that sense, they helped win two wars," said Craig Uchida, NJAMF chairman of the board.

NJAMF, a non-profit organization, previously raised the private funds to build the Washington, D.C.-based Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II.

Proceeds from the event will be used to develop curriculum on the history of the 442nd and the "Lost Battalion" as well as launch a



PHOTO: DENSHO

**442ND IN BRUYERES:** Nisei infantrymen move into action in a hilly sector of France on Oct. 24, 1944.

fundraising campaign to replicate a part of the national JA memorial — the crane entangled in barbed wire — in select cities and at former internment campsites.

The first replica will be placed in Texas to honor the 141st and 442nd.

On Oct. 24, 1944, Nazi forces in the Vosges Mountains of Northern France surrounded the 1st Battalion of the 141st Regiment of the 36th Infantry Division. In a five-day battle, the 442nd fought enemy infantry, artillery and tanks through forests and mountain ridges until it reached the "Lost Battalion," breaking through Nazi defenses to rescue about 230 men. The 442nd then

pushed on for 10 more days to complete the "Lost Battalion's" original objective: take the ridge.

The 442nd, the most decorated unit in U.S. military history for its size and length of service, suffered tremendous injuries and casualties.

"The brave men of the 'Lost Battalion' owe their lives to the courageous men of the 442nd," said Patricia Barry Rumble, the daughter of Pat CR Barry, who served in the 36th from 1939 to war's end. "We must honor their names in history. These men were true heroes." ■

**For more information:**  
www.njamf.com

## Robert M. Takasugi 1930-2009 First Japanese American Federal Judge Dies

By P.C. Staff and Associated Press

U.S. District Judge Robert M. Takasugi, who was sent to an internment camp with his family during World War II and overcame discrimination to become the first Japanese American appointed to the federal bench, died Aug. 4 at the age of 78.

Takasugi, a much-honored jurist who presided over the high-profile trial of automaker John Z. DeLorean in 1984 and authored groundbreaking opinions on constitutional issues during his 33 years on the bench, died at a Los Angeles nursing home after a number of illnesses, according to his son, Superior Court Judge Jon Takasugi.

Takasugi's life was all about overcoming adversity.

Born in Tacoma, Wash., on Sept. 12, 1930, he was the son of impoverished Japanese immigrants. In 1942, 12-year-old Takasugi and his family were taken to the Tule Lake internment camp where his father died from lack of medical care.

He rarely talked about the experience, except to call it "an education



*'For many in the Asian American and legal communities, Judge Takasugi was an inspiration and a hero.'*

— Stewart Kwoh, APALC

to be fair."

But in later life, when Takasugi took up art, he often drew pictures of barbed-wire fences, guard towers and tarpaper barracks, his son said.

After the war, Takasugi attended the University of California, Los Angeles. He was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War and upon discharge, he attended the University of Southern California

Law Center with the aid of the GI Bill.

"The experience of being a victim of the term 'military necessity,' and 'national security' gave him a view of fairness and judicial restraint that earned him the respect of lawyers on both sides of the courtroom," said Larry Oda, JACL national president.

In 1973, Gov. Ronald Reagan appointed Takasugi to the East Los Angeles Municipal Court bench. He moved up to Superior Court and was named the first JA to the federal bench by President Gerald Ford in 1976.

"For many in the Asian American and legal communities, Judge Takasugi was an inspiration and a hero. His death is a great loss to our community," said Stewart Kwoh, APALC president and executive director.

U.S. District Judge Consuelo Marshall said Takasugi had been expected to recover and return to the bench.

"He could have left the court years earlier," she said. "But he was really dedicated." ■

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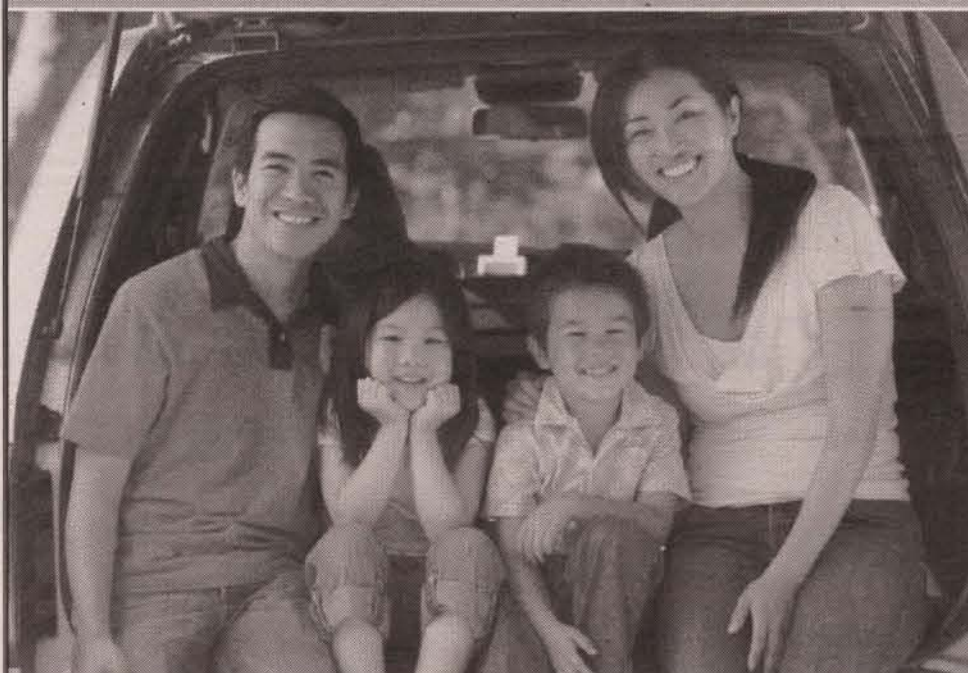
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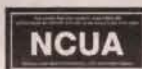
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