

SPECIAL VETERANS ISSUE

# PACIFIC CITIZEN

The National Publication of the Japanese American Citizens League



{ IN DEPTH }

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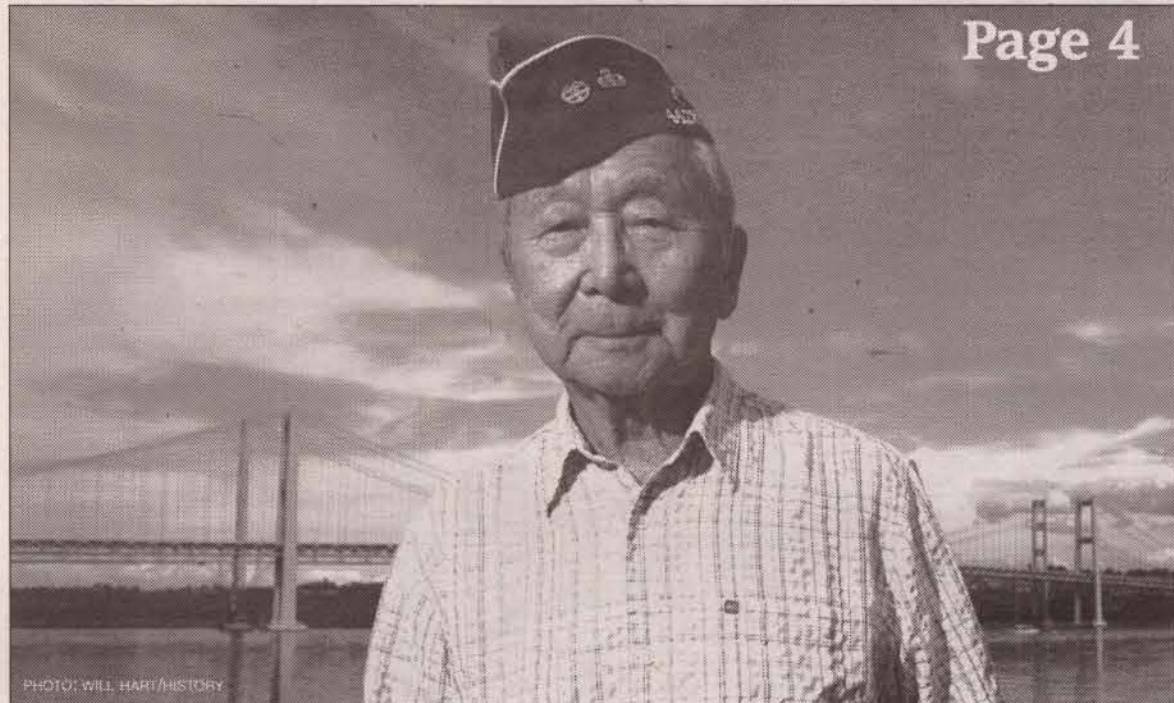


PHOTO: WILL HART/HISTORY

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## PACIFIC CITIZEN

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E-mail: [pc@pacificcitizen.org](mailto:pc@pacificcitizen.org)  
 Online: [www.pacificcitizen.org](http://www.pacificcitizen.org)  
 Tel: (800) 966-6157  
 Fax: (213) 620-1768  
 Mail: 250 E. First Street, Suite 301  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

### STAFF

Executive Editor  
 Caroline Y. Aoyagi-Stom

Assistant Editor  
 Lynda Lin

Reporter  
 Nalea J. Ko

Business Manager  
 Kristin Iwata

Circulation  
 Eva Lau-Ting

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### JACL

1765 Sutter St.  
 San Francisco, CA 94115  
 JACL President: Larry Oda  
 National Director: Floyd Mori

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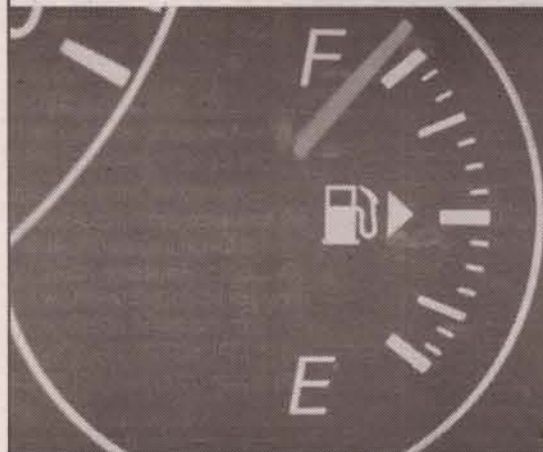
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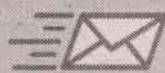
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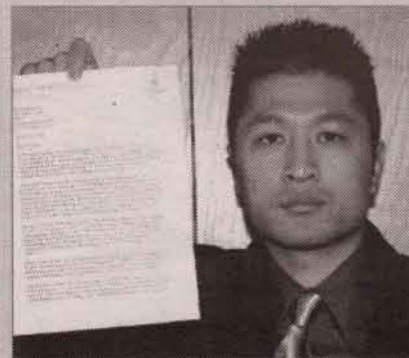
ALSO ON

## Pacificcitizen.org

Ukulele virtuoso Jake Shimabukuro talks exclusively to the P.C. about his new music foundation.



PHOTO: HISASHI UCHIDA



Former Northwestern University police officer Freddie Lee says he was fired after he complained of racial discrimination.

The day after Veterans Day is Duckworth's 'Alive Day,' the anniversary of the day she survived a helicopter crash.



## Iraq Veteran Brings Firsthand Knowledge to VA Department

**L. Tammy Duckworth hopes to expand VA programs to meet the growing needs of U.S. veterans.**

By Nalea J. Ko  
Reporter

L. Tammy Duckworth, assistant secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, has a personal understanding of United States veterans' needs. She is a decorated veteran herself having earned a Purple Heart, Air Medal and Combat Action Badge.

About five years before being confirmed as assistant secretary, her life was dramatically changed while deployed in Baghdad. Duckworth was co-piloting a Black Hawk helicopter when insurgents struck it with a rocket-propelled grenade. Before she fainted from loss of blood, Duckworth was still attempting to pilot the helicopter. She lost both her legs and damaged her arm in the accident.

"Day to day on a personal level it's tough," Duckworth said during a phone interview with the *Pacific Citizen*. "It's not easy being an amputee." She now walks with the help of two artificial legs and a cane. There are days, Duckworth said, when she does not want to get up because her body hurts. But all of the other veterans' sacrifices serve as inspiration.

"We have folks who come home from war and I owe it to them to get up," she said.

The major in the Illinois Army National Guard recovered for about 11 months at Walter Reed Army Medical Center's Fisher House, following the helicopter wreck. She left with her full medical records given to her, which were also available online. However, these records were not transferable to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, or VA. Upon accepting her new job, Duckworth said she wanted to improve the transferability of records, among other things.

When she returned to Illinois, Duckworth had to wait months to see a doctor at her local VA hospital to apply for pension benefits. She had to undergo an examination that required having to strip down and prove she was an amputee.

"It was humiliating," she said.

Duckworth's experiences gave her a unique understanding on how to serve the U.S. veterans' changing needs. Never again, Duckworth said, should another veteran have to go through what she did after leaving Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

### A Reinigorated VA's Office

Duckworth was born Thailand, but lived all over the world because of her father's position with the United Nations. She is fluent in Thai and Indonesian. As a teenager she moved to Hawaii where she graduated from McKinley High School and later the University of Hawaii. Duckworth also received her master's degree from George Washington University.

Her mother still lives in Pearl City on the island of Oahu in Hawaii. Whenever Duckworth is in the islands she heads to a popular local eatery called, "Zippy's," known for its spam, chili and saimin meals. In 2007 she returned to her alma mater to speak with students. She has continued to use her combat experience as a platform, bringing attention to veterans' issues.



"I just am really, really grateful to be working where I am with this boss," said Duckworth about VA Sec. Eric Shinseki (left) and President Barack Obama.

Duckworth went into public service after recovering from her injuries. She became an advocate for veterans' rights, testifying before Congress numerous times and calling for improved veterans health care. From 2006 to 2008 Duckworth served as the director of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. Duckworth's work in Illinois made her a leading contender for her current position.

"We're going through a transformation right now," Duckworth said of the VA officials' plans to improve veterans' programs. Now there will be more accountability and responsibility in the VA, said Duckworth.

Duckworth said the VA also needs to expand women's serv-

ices since there is a growing number of women who have served in combat.

"I'm really excited to see where we'll be in a year or two from now," Duckworth said of the changing environment at the VA.

The VA received an infusion of money, which will provide funding to expand programs. President Barack Obama proposed a \$112.8 billion VA budget, the largest increase in 30 years.

Some of the planned program expansion projects include working to end homelessness, expanding services to veterans in rural areas and tailoring care for women's specific needs.

The increased funding will enable VA officials to get resources to veterans in remote areas. Having lived in places like Hawaii, Duckworth said she understands how difficult it can be for veterans to get access to medical resources. She said some veterans in remote regions have to drive three to four hours to get to the nearest facility.

"That simply is not acceptable," she explained. Duckworth said she and others at the VA are also working to make operations transparent.

### Getting Her Wings Back

Despite her disability, Duckworth has not shirked from challenges.

Earlier this year the *Chicago Tribune* chronicled Duckworth's return to the skies in an Aug. 30 article.

"I leave my wheelchair behind up in the air," she was quoted in the article as saying as photographers snapped shots of the veteran hoisting herself into the plane. "It doesn't matter that I'm disabled. It's a joy. It's relaxation. It's also a challenge."

On Oct. 11 she completed her second Chicago Marathon, participating in the handcycling division. She said she was about 10 minutes slower this year than last.

"It was so cold," Duckworth said, adding that it was a lot of fun. Duckworth said she would have never done the marathon before she lost her legs.

To commemorate Veterans Day this year, Duckworth plans to visit her father's grave at Arlington National Cemetery. The day after Veterans Day is also Duckworth's "Alive Day," the anniversary of when her helicopter was shot down.

For now Duckworth is simply taking in the responsibilities of her new position.

"I just am really, really grateful to be working where I am with this boss," she explained. ■

# A Nisei World War II Veteran's Journey Into History



Jimmie Kanaya is one of the subjects of a new History Channel special, which will feature digitally retouched footage from the frontlines.

By Nalea J. Ko  
Reporter

Jimmie Kanaya, 89, said he dreamed of being a soldier in elementary school in the 1930s when he watched the Oregon National Guard in his hometown. They were called to active duty after a strike.

Every night he would observe the guardsmen march in an orderly formation for their retreat parade. Their discipline impressed young Kanaya.

"I was destined to be a professional soldier."

Kanaya said over the phone from his home in Washington state. "When I first joined, I would have been happy just to have a couple of stripes on my sleeve when I retired."

Kanaya retired as a colonel after 30 years and five months in the military. He served in World War II, the Korean and Vietnam Wars. The Nisei soldier amassed a lifetime of accolades for his service: a Silver Star, Legion of Merit and Purple Heart, among other awards.

At 20, Kanaya volunteered for the U.S. Army prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. In combat during WWII, he was cap-

tured by the Germans and held as a prisoner of war for six months. After the war he was sometimes reluctant to share his experiences with others.

"As a medic we didn't talk too much about the friends that were killed or who got killed," he said. "To me it just doesn't make sense because I really can't express the real feelings that came with experiencing a combat situation: the fear, the anxiety the emotions."

These were some of the experiences that Kanaya retold for the History Channel's 10-hour WWII special that will be airing Nov. 15.

His stories along with those of 11 other WWII veterans are coupled with historic combat footage in this five-day series. Kanaya's story is also partly narrated by actor James Kyson Lee. The intended effect is to make viewers feel like they are alongside decorated veterans like Kanaya on the battlefield, viewing firsthand the carnage, courage and patriotism.

## Experiencing the War in HD

He was a "loner" as a medic with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team during WWII. That was necessary to perform effectively, said Kanaya.

"I couldn't really get too close to anybody. I felt that if I did and he gets killed then I'm going to be lamenting about it, and I wouldn't be able to do my job," Kanaya explained.

More than 30,000 Japanese Americans served in WWII, which broke out in 1939. Nearly every nation joined the war that initially started as a European conflict. It was known as the deadliest war in history.

Kanaya was there. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, he was assigned to Camp Crowder in Missouri. The Nisei was part of what became known as the most highly decorated unit in American history. Kanaya recalled that his 442nd RCT was comprised of JAs from Hawaii and mainlanders, who were teased as "Katonks."

"Then I had some boys from Hawaii. They were pretty brash and forward and outspoken and they would cause problems when we were not in combat," Kanaya explained. "But in combat they were just all out, and you could depend on them to do their job."

Despite some skirmishes, the Nisei soldiers fought as cohesive unit as many of their relatives were interned behind barbed wire in the U.S. Kanaya's parents, brother and sister were interned in a "friendly country" while he was a POW.

Kanaya's training prepared him for what was to come when he went overseas in 1944 with about 3,000 others, he said. A month later his battalion landed in Naples and headed north.

"So when I went overseas I had everything under control," Kanaya recalled. "It was something that kind of surprised me, too because I had never seen any deceased bodies in my life — never saw a dead body. Except I went to a funeral once and saw one of my cousins, but no real gory scenes."

Kanaya and his battalion were reassigned to the Vosges Mountains where the 100th Battalion was cut off, located on the other side of the mountain. Then the order came for the Kanaya's battalion to help evacuate the wounded from the 100th Battalion.

"So, I said, 'OK I'll help them,'" Kanaya explained. "We followed this patrol and they were dodging German patrols in the mountains." They eventually made it to the other battalion in Biffontaine, but they could not carry the wounded over the jagged mountains alone, so German prisoners were used.

"Wooo," Kanaya said. "I couldn't do anything with it. They already made up their minds to the way it was going to go." He told the other three medics to hang back.

"If we ever get stopped there's going to be a fire fight," He told them. "I said 'Boy, something is going to happen here.'" Halfway back over the mountains they were stopped by German soldiers.

Kanaya and others were taken back to Poland and held prisoner. He considered escaping at first, but decided against it.

"I looked down into this wood cellar in the first house we came to. There were steps going down to it. I looked down there and I could've went down there and hid out," He explained. "I didn't know what would happen to them if I abandoned them. So, I decided to stay with them."

When the Germans relocated to Hammelburg, Germany because of pressure from the Russian Army, Kanaya marched 380 miles in the winter to the other camp.

"Fourteen hundred of us left camp. And only 400 of us made it to the destination in Hammelburg, which was almost two months later," Kanaya explained.

Kanaya barely ate enough to survive while held prisoner. One day towards the end of April his frustration mounted. The weather was warming up and Kanaya took off his clothes to find lice crawling all over his body.

"They were full of blood," he explained. "I just kind of shivered and thought, 'How can these lice be taking this blood from me when I need it.' I just kind of stomped on them and killed them."

## A Soldier's Return

Kanaya was liberated and returned to Chicago, Ill. where his parents had purchased a modest hotel in a "rundown" part of Clark Street. His recovery from combat was peaceful, he said. Although it took time to shake some memories of the war.

Kanaya went on to receive a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Nebraska and a master's degree in education from the University of Alaska.

These days Kanaya said he enjoys spending time on his computer, among other leisure activities. The self-proclaimed loner now enjoys playing solitaire on his computer. He lives with his wife, Lynn. Kanaya inherited a daughter and three grandchildren. Far from the battlegrounds of WWII, he now looks forward to the simple things in life. On Oct. 3 he celebrated his 89th birthday.

"I just look forward to the next day. I look forward to the mail every day for example. I get a lot of junk mail," he said. "I'm kind of taking it easy. Not too much activity. Trying to stay healthy, that's the main thing. Trying to get my creaky bones unhinged and back in shape." ■

On the Web  
[www.history.com](http://www.history.com)



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Robert Nakamoto, President  
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# Meet the Crusaders

A group of Nisei women, including civil rights activist Yuri Kochiyama, led a little known war effort from behind barbed wire.

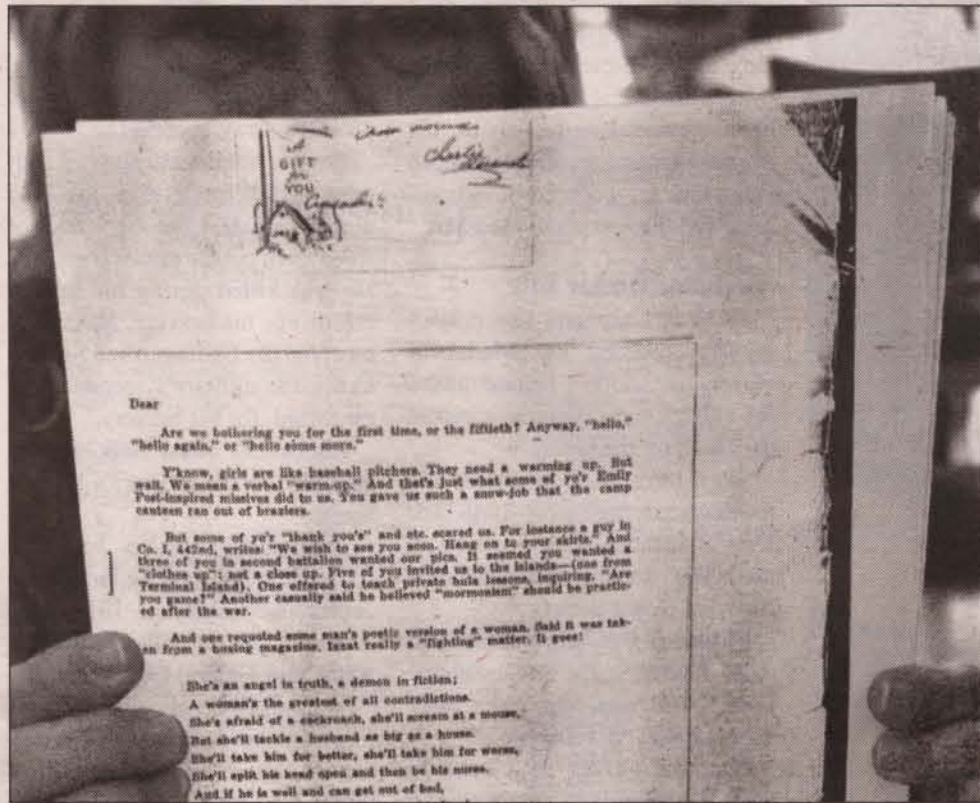


PHOTO: NALEA J. KO

'I think they can stand to be in the foreground a little bit more,' said Marlan Warren (above) holding a photocopy of a letter written by a Crusader.

By Nalea J. Ko  
Reporter

A coalition of Japanese American girls and young women found a way to boost the morale of Nisei soldiers from behind the barbed wire fences of internment camps during World War II. It began as a letter writing campaign at the beginning of the war and by the war's end it mobilized the JA community.

These young girls were aptly called the Crusaders.

Mary Nakahara, later known as Yuri Kochiyama, is credited with forming the Crusaders while incarcerated at the Santa Anita Assembly Center in California. Later, she said, interest in the Crusaders increased with more people wanting to join in the efforts of writing to soldiers overseas. To accommodate the growing members, they created three different Crusader groups for students in high school, junior high and elementary school.

Although most called her the "brainchild" of the Crusaders, Kochiyama gives all the credit to her Sunday school students.

"They're the ones who thought, 'Why don't we write to our Nisei soldiers,'" Kochiyama said during a phone interview with the *Pacific Citizen*. "For Japanese Americans it was a very devastating experience, you know, being sent to camp and all that." The formation of the Crusaders was an opportunity to mobilize internees. Plus it brought a little excitement to the sometimes-humdrum camp life, said Kochiyama.

The Crusaders' work over 60 years ago recently inspired a California playwright to bring their story to life. Marlan Warren was

doing research for a novel when she came across a Crusader's scrapbook at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

Warren wrote the play, "Bits of Paradise," which premiered in 2008 at San Francisco's playhouse "The Marsh." Crusaders, including Kochiyama, were in the audience as the cast of seven read from the Crusaders' letters.

Now Warren is hoping to create a documentary about the Crusaders. She has completed about 50 hours of production time. But filming has been halted until Warren can secure more funding. About \$60,000 is needed to complete the film.

"I just love these," Warren said Oct. 29 while sifting through copies of letters sent by the Crusaders. "This war effort has not been visibly recognized in any way. There are no exhibits at either of the museums right now that speak of this war effort."

"I think they can stand to be in the foreground a little bit more."

After the play "Bits of Paradise," a Crusader in the audience was inspired to dust off her scrapbook full of WWII correspondences and donate it to the Japanese American Museum of San Jose. Museum curator Jimi Yamaichi said it should be on display when the museum reopens at the end of the year. The museum is being renovated.

"It's pretty much in tatters," Yamaichi explained. "The paper is very fragile. We have to really treat it tenderly." Yamaichi said he heard about the Crusaders years ago, but to read the letters now sheds light on the personal lives of these soldiers and women.



PHOTO: VICTORIA YANG

Yuri Kochiyama (right) attended a performance of Warren's play last year.

"To read some of the letters that the boys wrote and to see how they appreciated to hear from the Crusaders, I think it was a real morale booster for a lot of the young men," Yamaichi said.

During her research for the play, Warren photocopied some of the original letters. Some were Christmas and Valentine's Day cards. Others were inspiring messages to Nisei soldiers, penned by the Crusaders' founder.

"Although you may not know us girls, we want you all to know that we are wishing you the best wherever you may go," read one letter from Kochiyama with a flag hand drawn at the bottom. "You're representing those of use who still remain back here. Please show America our love. Go out and pioneer."

The Crusaders started with five young women sending penny postcards.

"In a year maybe we had 60," Kochiyama explained. "But at the end we had several hundred Crusaders." They also volunteered in the camp to do various jobs such as filling in as camp waitresses.

The word got out about the Crusaders' work after articles were featured in newspapers in camps, high schools and other areas. They thought it was fun to do things that brought everyone together, said Kochiyama. Internees began to wonder how the Crusaders could afford to send so many letters. Soon the soldiers helped to fund the campaign.

"Well, then soldiers got interested and wanted to help. They would send \$1, \$2, \$3, \$4, \$5 right from where they were fighting — from the frontlines!" This money enabled the Crusaders to buy envelopes and stamps. The correspondences continued

throughout the war.

Kochiyama was about 20 when the Crusaders formed. She went on to become a well-known civil rights activist, joining forces with historical figures like Malcolm X. In 2005, she was nominated for Nobel Peace Prize.

Warren's play highlighted Kochiyama's personal letters to her then-fiancé William Kochiyama, who served in WWII. Her twin brother, Peter, also served in the U.S. Army.

For those like Kochiyama who had loved ones fighting in WWII, the Crusaders represented more than just penny postcards and inspiring messages. Decades after she wrote her first letter, Kochiyama said she is still just as proud of the work her Crusaders did. She hopes their legacy will live on.


"I'm glad you're interested," Kochiyama said. "So many years have passed that I don't even think people remember the Crusaders."

Warren hopes to preserve the memory of the Crusaders' work in her documentary. If she secures funding for the film it could be available in 2010. But whatever happens, Warren said her life will never be the same after meeting a real life Crusader.

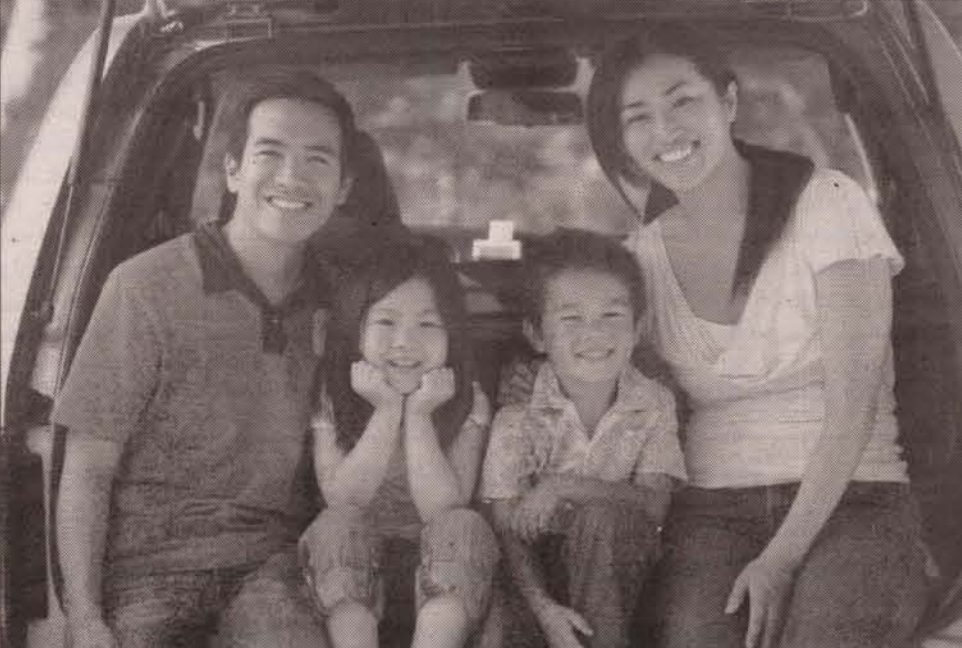
"Yuri said, 'We've learned that it's not our position that matters most, it's our disposition,'" Warren said, quoting Kochiyama's philosophy about the JA internment.

"The message that the letters conveys ... is as current today as it is any day. What it does is it takes a situation that appears to be hopeless and gives hope to it and gives faith to it." ■

For more information about Warren's film on the Crusaders: <http://sites.google.com/site/bitsofparadisethemovie>.




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# Univ. of Washington to Dedicate Memorial in Honor of its Bravest

A 442nd foot-soldier killed defending his platoon will be among the honorees.



PHOTO: MARY LEVIN

The memorial honors the university's Medal of Honor alumni, including William Kenzo Nakamura.

By P.C. Staff and Associated Press

Before William Kenzo Nakamura became a war hero, he was a university student likely studying for a medical career that was never realized because of World War II.

Because of his Japanese ancestry, Nakamura — a Seattle native — was incarcerated behind barbed wire fences after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. And because of his bravery, he fought to prove his patriotism as a member of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Nakamura was only 22 when he fell to a sniper's bullet July 4, 1944 on the outskirts of Castellina, Italy. His life cut short has since been celebrated in many ways, including a posthumous Medal of Honor and a Seattle courthouse bearing his name. Now Nakamura's alma mater is unveiling a memorial in his and seven other former students' honor.

Nakamura only attended the University of Washington (UW) for a

short time in 1941, but university officials say they still claim him as their own.

On Veterans Day, Nov. 11, the UW is dedicating its Medal of Honor Memorial.



NAKAMURA

"It's a big honor," said June Oshima, Nakamura's only surviving sister. "I never expected all this. I thought that the trip to Washington

[for the Medal of Honor ceremony] was plenty."

### A Powerful Reminder

The \$152,000 monument, which was entirely funded by private contributions, is located at the end of Memorial Way.

Hiroshi "Hershey" Miyamura, a Korean War Medal of Honor recipient, will be attending the dedication ceremony.

Mike Magrath, a UW visiting scholar in sculpture and public art, led the design team, which included Heidi Wastweet and Dodi Fredericks.

A five-point star anchors the monument. At the north point of the circle a "book stone" is featured. On the exterior, the plain serpentine stone sat for years, largely ignored, outside the UW sculpture studio. But "split open like a book and polished," Wastweet said, "the stone glows like ordinary people courageous enough to do something

extraordinary for their fellow human beings."

The book stone includes each Medal of Honor recipient's name, rank, award year and years at UW.

"The memorial will be a permanent, powerful reminder of the extraordinary things that can happen when ordinary people take action," said Mark Emmert, UW president.

### Medal of Honor Life

In 2000, Nakamura was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award for military valor. Oshima accepted the award for the family.

Since 1863, when the honor was first awarded, only about 3,448 U.S. service members have received it, according to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society.

Nakamura was born and raised in what is now Seattle's International District. He was four years older than Oshima, the youngest.

"He was always very good to me," she said by phone to the *Pacific Citizen*. "He bought me my first ice cream soda."

At the outbreak of war, the Nakamura family was first taken to the Puyallup Fairgrounds and then onto Minidoka near Hunt, Idaho. From there, Nakamura followed his older brother, George, into the Army as a volunteer.

He was a private first-class, a foot soldier in the 442nd RCT. In July 1944, the regiment was sweeping north along Italy's coastline toward Livorno. Along the way, the soldiers hit what was

known on military maps as Hill 140, where one of the war's bloodiest battles took place. As Nakamura's platoon approached the crest of the hill, a concealed nest of German machine gunners 35 yards away opened fire.

Twice, Nakamura single-handedly attacked German machine gunners so his platoon could be freed from pinned-down positions. He was killed during his second effort. For his bravery, Nakamura received the Distinguished Service Cross, the military's second-highest award, for his bravery.

Almost 50 years later, it was upgraded to the military's highest honor.

That same year, a bill was signed into law naming the Seattle courthouse located at 1010 Fifth Avenue the "William Kenzo Nakamura Federal Courthouse."

"I thought he should never be forgotten and something should be named after him," said Steve Finley, of Seattle's Nisei Veterans Committee, who helped lobby the bill through Congress. "Since the U.S. courthouse was not named after anyone I thought it would be perfect — he was denied justice and gave his life for his country."

### Memorial Dedication

Nov. 11, 10:30 a.m.  
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Info:

<http://depts.washington.edu/memorial>



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**To all Asian veterans of foreign wars:  
Our deepest gratitude and appreciation for  
sacrifices and service made for our country.**



**FROM THE SPOKANE CHAPTER JAFL**

## Following in the Footsteps of Hershey Miyamura



'I'm here because of him,' said 2nd Lt. Marisa Miyamura about her famous grandfather.

By Lynda Lin  
Assistant Editor

Marisa Miyamura, 22, always knew she had a special grandfather. In his hometown of Gallup, New Mexico a park, school and overpass have been named in his honor. And whether it's a veterans function or a Nisei Week parade in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo, her grandfather Hiroshi "Hershey" Miyamura always seems to receive royal treatment.

That's just what happens when your grandfather is Korean War hero and a Medal of Honor recipient.

"It's surreal sometimes," Marisa, a Yonsei originally from Ontario, Calif. She's always heard people talk about his heroism like a legend from days past, but the stories were all really abstract until she put on a uniform herself.

"I wanted to fly," said Marisa, a second lieutenant with the U.S. Air Force.

Her journey to the Air Force, she says, is a direct result of her grandfather.

"He's this loving man ... and I always associated the military with making him that person," said Marisa.

According to the Medal of Honor citation, Hershey, who was a corporal in the U.S. Army's Company H, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, showed "indomitable heroism and consummate devotion to duty" in a April 24, 1951 battle.

That night in South Korea, Company H came under enemy attack. Hershey, a machine gun squad leader, saved his troop members through hand-to-hand combat and machine-gun fire before being severely wounded and taken prisoner. Because of his heroism, his company was able to fall back to safety.

Hershey spent over 27 months in a

Chinese prisoner of war camp near the Yalu River. When he was released, he found out that he had been awarded the Medal of Honor.

Ask Hershey, 84, about his heroics and he'll say, "I did what I was supposed to do."

In an Oct. 27, 1953 ceremony, President Dwight D. Eisenhower conferred the honor to young Hershey in uniform. In a black-and-white photo, the two war heroes smile at each other and firmly shake hands.

Receiving the medal from Eisenhower, a five-star general and famed World War II commander, was a great honor, he said.

Hershey was drafted in 1944 and assigned to the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. He was sent overseas to Naples, Italy, but after five days the war ended and Hershey returned to the U.S. with the 442nd to march in review for President Harry S. Truman.

"I got in at the tail-end of the glory," said Hershey about the 442nd. "I've been very fortunate."

These days, Hershey spends much of his time traveling to veterans' events with his wife Terry. It's the least he can do, he said.

Terry agrees. "They [the veterans] made our life better. They opened the doors."

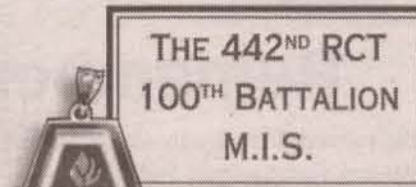
This Veterans Day, the couple are heading to the University of Washington to attend the dedication of a memorial in honor of another Nisei Medal of Honor recipient, William Kenzo Nakamura.

"It's for my fellow veterans," said Hershey.

And for Marisa, this Veterans Day will be spent working with the Air Force in Mississippi with her grandfather not far from her mind.

"I'm here because of him," she said. "I'm carrying on the legacy." ■

## A MEMORIAL TO HONOR JAPANESE AMERICAN WWII VETERANS Placer County Japanese American Citizens League



The Placer County Japanese American Citizens League has partnered with the County of Placer to remember those Americans of Japanese ancestry who served in the Second World War with a memorial at the new Justice Center. Central to the memorial will be a life-size bronze sculpture depicting a Japanese American soldier of the 100th Battalion/442nd RCT helping a wounded soldier of the "Lost Battalion" off the battlefield.

We ask for your support for this memorial project by making a tax-deductible donation to the monument fund at the Placer County JAACL. Our goal is to raise \$120,000 by June 2010, and to have the memorial completed as soon as Veterans Day, November 11, 2010.

*The 442nd RCT was the most decorated unit for its size and length of service, in the entire history of the U.S. Military.*

*This project honors our parents and friends who fought to defend our Country, were interned in relocation camps, and endured the racism of the war. Their loyalty and bravery in battle defending America, is an inspiration to the all Japanese-Americans everywhere.*



WW II Photo



Location:  
"Go For Broke" Road, Placer County Justice Center  
Sculpture designed by France Borka

*By creating this memorial we honor all those who served from Northern California in the 100th Battalion, the 442nd and the Military Intelligence Service.*

### To Participate or Donate:

*Please help us erect this memorial to the heroic Japanese Americans who sacrificed so much in World War II. Your contribution to Placer County JAACL is tax-deductible.*

Mail to: **Placer JAACL Memorial Project**  
11850 Kemper Road, Suite D  
Auburn, CA 95603

FEIN # 94-6102630

...or contact Ken Tokutomi, Placer County JAACL Fundraising Chair, at (530) 888-1303 or email to [kentokcar@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kentokcar@sbcglobal.net)

**For Information:** Visit [www.placerjaacl.org](http://www.placerjaacl.org)  
(you can sign up to receive email updates)

**Thank you for your support!**



# for the RECORD

BY JOHN TATEISHI

## Remembering the Vets

When the war ended, my family returned to West Los Angeles and moved into the West LA Methodist Church social hall, which had been converted into a hostel with partial walls built of plywood, creating numerous living quarters. If our units were small at Manzanar, these were even smaller and much more cramped. But we didn't mind because we were free and no longer prisoners in our own land.

One of my distinct memories in those months after our return was seeing, one by one, Nisei vets returning from the war. I remember the Go For Broke shoulder patches, their brown uniforms, the Ike jackets that many of them wore, the cocky slant of their hats, and the uneasiness they seemed to feel being back.

Those of us kids who didn't have older brothers who went off to war stood back when we were around any of the vets, staring at their ribbons and imagining what they had done to earn them. I remember their reluctance to talk about any of that. Some were glum, some moody. Older girls hung back but clung to them with their eyes, and I remember thinking about what great heroes these guys were.

Where I lived we had plenty of vets returning from the war because there was a large Japanese American community clustered in West LA. There was something so glorious and movie-like seeing these guys rejoining their families and hearing all the screaming, shouts, tears and laughter. I think we all shared in the happiness of those families. It was a good time.

But I also remember the families whose sons didn't return, their Issei mothers always dressed in black. Their silent tears were just as loud, and you could see the pain in their eyes even as they smiled and shared in the happiness of other families whose sons returned safely.

Growing up in the JA community, I used to hear stories about the 442nd. Many of my friends had older brothers who served, some who lost brothers in the war, and all of it touched us in some way or another. To me, these returning soldiers were all heroes. I didn't know what they did, but we kids knew they were soldiers who saw awful combat in

Europe. You could see it in their eyes.

Some 30 years later, in 1978, I remember returning to the JACL headquarters after doing a call-in talk show and running into Wally Nunotani and a few of his cronies sitting on a bench in the J-Town mall. We chatted and I said to them that before this (Redress) was over, others were going to see them for the heroes they were. And I told them about a call that had come in and that my response focused on the 442nd and their incredible achievements. I knew then that this was one of the most powerful weapons I had in facing public audiences because really, who could possibly question the loyalty and bravery of the Nisei? Their achievements spoke for themselves.

Over the years of my involvement with Redress, I often thought about the vets and their guts and strong sense of honor. "Do not bring shame on the family," each of them had heard as an admonition from their fathers as they said goodbye to their families and departed for the war. And none did, to an extraordinary degree.

Eric Saul and I used to sit around and talk about the vets and the remarkable things they did. Eric is the most informed historian of the Nisei vets. The one constant, he would point out, was their extraordinary sense of honor.

I remember sitting with Helen Kawagoe, then JACL president, on the White House lawn in June 2000 as President Bill Clinton awarded retroactive and posthumous Medals of Honor to 21 soldiers, all but one being Nisei vets. As I listened to a seemingly omniscient narrative voice read each individual citation describing the achievement of the recipient, I was absolutely amazed how these men, so small in contrast to Clinton towering over them, could do these remarkable things being described. Maybe small in stature but enormously big of heart and courage.

The vets are still very much on my mind these days, but when I think about them, it's often as I remember them when I was a kid. They were heroes to me then, and they still are. ■

*John Tateishi is the immediate past JACL national director.*

## MEMOIRS OF A NON-GEISHA How Will They Learn?

BY YUMI SAKUGAWA



Yumi (right) wonders how her 'niece' Kiyomi — with her mom Amy — will learn JA history.

### I am the unofficial aunt of a 7-month-old Japanese American girl.

Having no JA children of my own, I find myself wondering how this girl will grow up to learn everything she wants to know about her own JA heritage.

How will she learn about the legacy of the JA veterans who served the country during World War II?

I imagine that she will not learn about it directly from the classroom, as I and countless other JA youths did not. There is no time allocated in U.S. history class to learn in great length about Executive Order 9066, the collective shame that came from having to live in barracks in the middle of the desert, or how many young JA men were forced to answer loyalty questionnaires and still chose to fight in the war.

Someone will have to make the conscious effort to tell her what these JA war veterans have done for our community and for our country, many decades before she was even born.

Looking back at my college career, I realize that in terms of learning more about my JA heritage and history, I truly had the best opportunities one could possibly ask for. I did the Nikkei Community Internship (NCI) through the Little Tokyo Service Center, which meant that I had the chance to visit the Go For Broke Foundation in Torrance, Calif. with my peers and listen to war veterans tell their stories. I also had the opportunity to participate in the annual Manzanar pilgrimage with the UCLA Nikkei Student Union, where I saw with my own eyes the bleak and desolate desert landscape ordinary citizens were forced to live in.

What opportunities will exist two decades from now when my JA niece reaches college and wants to learn more about her culture as we did?

By the time my JA niece reaches her 20s, her opportunities may not be the same as mine. Her chances of speaking directly to a war veteran will have greatly diminished. As the JA population is shrinking compared to other Asian Pacific American communities, she may not have as many JA peers to connect with when she is growing up.

One cannot even imagine the radical transformations Little Tokyo will go through in the next five years, let alone the next 20. Will the NCI program still be available for future JA youth? Will the Go For Broke Foundation still be open to the public for everyone to see?

These are all the questions that ran through my head when for the first time, I discovered the extensive oral histories of the JA war veterans available online for everyone to see on the Go For Broke Foundation Web site ([www.goforbroke.org](http://www.goforbroke.org)). You can literally lose yourself for hours going through the extensive interview material of different JA veterans telling different stories relating to their wartime experience.

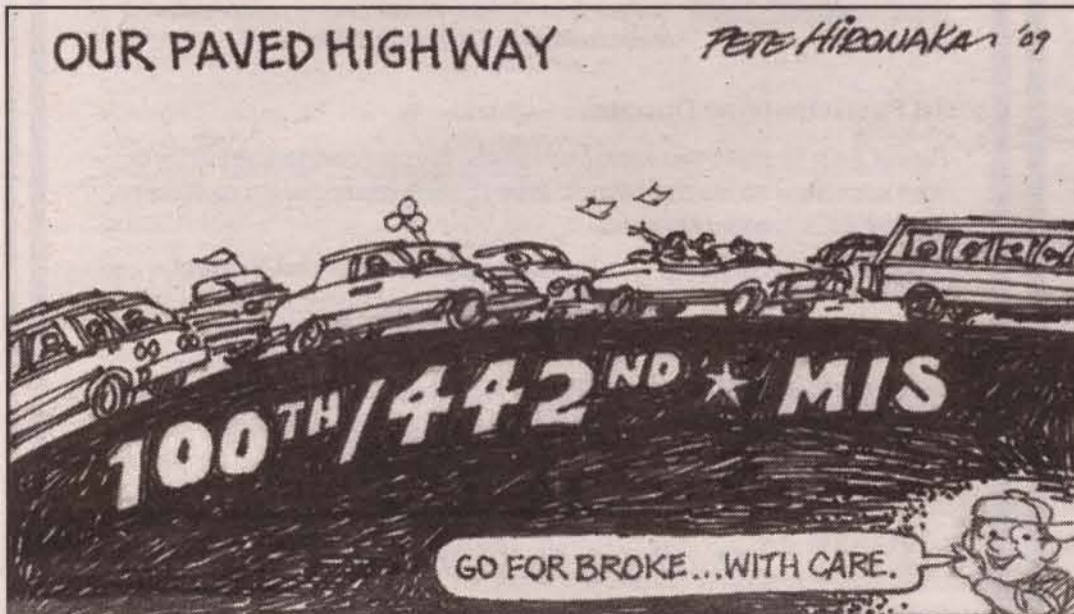
Through these videos and interview transcripts, these veterans are no longer mythological figureheads of a bygone past, but real living people who may as well be sitting in your living room telling their stories. One veteran remembered his first terrifying parachute jump. Another veteran remembered reading a letter from his mother urging him not to be a coward and to make the family proud. Another veteran mused on the strangeness of war — the absurd tragedy of human beings forced under historical circumstances to kill each other in violent ways.

One cannot listen to these stories without wanting to do something about them.

As the number of living veterans slowly dwindles from the community, I cannot help but feel a palpable sense of urgency in making sure that our generation properly embraces the responsibility of educating the incoming generation who will soon replace us as the new JA youth. As we graduate from college and start forming families of our own, these JA youth will be looking up to us to follow in our footsteps.

Will they see that we care? Will they see that we understand? Will they see that we truly want to remember? ■

*Yumi Sakugawa writes from Los Angeles.*





## A FITTING TRIBUTE



Two generations of Japanese American veterans recently visited the National Japanese American Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Min Hamada (pictured above), a World War II soldier in Company G of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and his son Lynard Hamada, who served in the Vietnam War were in Washington representing the Wasatch Front North JACL at the third annual JACL Gala.

The memorial was dedicated to JA patriotism, military

service, heroism and perseverance during WWII.

Last year, Min and Lynard visited the Go For Broke Monument in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo.

"At the monument, I saw my name engraved in the wall along with the other Japanese American soldiers who served during World War II," said Min. "To see my name engraved in the wall and to know that I did something for the next generations was very gratifying." ■

## Vice Adm. Harris Meets Seattle Nisei Veterans



During an Oct. 16 visit to Seattle's Nisei Veterans Committee (NVC), Navy Vice Adm. Harry B. Harris (pictured above, seated at right) praised the valor and loyalty of World War II Nisei soldiers for paving the way for succeeding generations of Asian Pacific Americans.

Harris, who was born in Yokosuka, Japan, said he has personally seen the progress made in diversifying the U.S. Navy, according to a release from the Japanese American Veterans Association.

Harris was recently nominated for a promotion to com-

mander, sixth fleet and also commander, striking and support forces, NATO, with headquarters in Naples, Italy.

He is currently serving as deputy chief of Naval Operations for Communication Networks in Washington, D.C.

NVC members who attended the event were: Art and Kay Abe, Sam and Matsue Watanabe, Dale and Shizue Kaku, Art Yorozu, Steve Finley, Tom Ohtani, Takashi Matsui, Teruo Yorita, Tosh Okamoto, Keith Yamaguchi, Frank Shinoda and May Sasaki. ■

## STOCKTON JACL

Supports our veterans.  
Thank you for your service and sacrifice in protecting America.

With love and admiration,

### Gary Yoneto Yonemoto

United States Army  
Fort Sam Houston  
San Antonio, Texas  
Years of service: 1939-1945

We hope our lives will be as full as yours, as we celebrate your 92nd year!

Love,  
your children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren

The Wisconsin Chapter  
Thanks our Past and Present Members  
for Their Service to Our Country

*In Memory:*

Mako Aratani ★ Julius Fujihira ★ Andy Hasegawa ★ Minoru Hirai  
Takio Kataoka ★ Jitsuo Kobayashi ★ Jim Miyazaki ★ Roy Mukai  
Shigeru Nakahira ★ Taka Naruo

*Current & Former Members:*

Otto Christianson ★ Michael Fujihira ★ Allan Hida  
Shizuko Jackson ★ Henry Kanazawa ★ Jeff Kataoka  
Charles Matsumoto ★ Yuki Minaga ★ Ronald Minami  
Dennis Musashi ★ Susumu Musashi ★ Toshio Saiki  
Shiro Shiraga ★ Tamio Suyama ★ Akira Toki ★ George Watanabe

Thank You  
to our Veterans,  
past and present

your sacrifice and  
dedication to protect our  
freedom for all generations  
is not forgotten

  
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*thanks all veterans for their patriotism*



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## TO OUR VETERANS IN ALL WARS

GOLDEN GATE VFW #9879  
EDEN TOWNSHIP JACL



PHOTO: DENSHO

Nisei soldiers throw fragmentation grenades during basic training at Camp Shelby.

# DAYS OF HEROISM

*A World War II Historical Timeline\**

Over 60 years after the end of the war, the *Pacific Citizen* takes a look back at the events that defined generations.

## 1941

### March

Arthur Komori, Richard Sakakida, and Clarence Yamagata are recruited by Corps of Intelligence to serve as U.S. Army undercover agents and spy on the Japanese community in the Philippines.

### November 1

The War Department opens a secret language school at Crissy Field at the Presidio of San Francisco, with four Nisei instructors and 60 students. This was the first class of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) Language School.

### December 7

Japan bombs the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor. FBI agents and police begin arresting Japanese American community leaders in Hawaii and the mainland.

## 1942

### January 23

JAs in the military on the mainland are segregated out of their units.

### February 19

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, setting the stage for the incarceration of more than 110,000 JAs throughout the U.S.

### March 30

A War Department order discontinues the induction of JAs in the armed services on the West Coast.

### June 12

100th Infantry Battalion (Separate) is officially activated on the Oakland docks.

### June 15

The War Department announces that it will not "accept for service with the armed forces, Japanese or persons of Japanese extraction, regardless of citizenship status or other factors."

### October 2

Elmer Davis, Office of War information director, recommends to President Roosevelt that JAs be allowed to enlist for military service.

## 1943

### January 6

The 100th Infantry Battalion leaves Camp McCoy for Camp Shelby, Miss.

### February 1

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team is activated by President Roosevelt: "Americanism is not and never was, a matter of race and ancestry."

### March 28

The Honolulu Chamber of Commerce sponsors a farewell ceremony at the Iolani Palace for 1,686 Nisei volunteers of the 442nd RCT.

### April 16

Harold Fudenna, a Nisei MIS soldier, with 138th Signal Corps, interprets an intercepted radio message that reveals the air route that Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto will take. His bomber is shot down and he perishes with it. Fudenna is awarded a Bronze Star.



YAMAMOTO



## The San Diego Chapter of the JACL Honors the Nikkei Veterans of the San Diego Japanese American Community



Toshio "Bill" Abe  
Yutaka Amano  
Roy Arakawa  
Steve Arata  
Bruce Asakawa  
Florence Asakawa  
Masato Asakawa  
Takeo Asakawa  
Tatsuo Asamen  
Toru Asaro  
Takeo Azuma  
Akira Chino  
Shoji Date  
Tsutomu Tom Date  
Minoru Fujita  
Sam Fujita  
Frank Fujikawa  
Akio Fukuda  
Ted Fukumoto  
Calvin Furukawa  
George Furuya, Jr.  
George Furuya, Sr.  
Benjamin Hanaike  
Sam Handa  
Shigeru Hara, M.D.  
George Hasegawa  
Fred Hashiguchi  
Henry Hashiguchi  
John Hashiguchi  
Leo Hashiguchi  
Tom Hashimoto  
Fred M. Hatashita  
Alan Hayashi  
Arthur Hibi

Gary Himaka  
Mich Himaka  
Osao Himaka  
Tatsuo Hirata  
Ben Honda  
Tom T. Honda  
Tom Toshio Honda  
Ben S. Horiye  
Charlie M. Horiye  
Shizuo Horiye  
John T. Hosaka  
Paul Hoshi  
Isen Iguchi  
Miyoshi Ikeda  
Yosh Imoto  
Kenzo Inada  
Dale Inahara  
Gary N. Ishida  
Mike Ishikawa  
Bob Ito  
Elwood Ito  
Martin Ito  
Richard Ito  
Robert Ito  
Ronald Ito  
Walter Ito  
Masami S. Iwataki  
George Kamiura  
Chet Kaneyuki  
Paul "Po" Kaneyuki  
Joe N. Karamoto  
Tetsuyo Kashima  
Harry Kawamoto  
Harry Kawase

Satoshi Kida  
James Kida  
Jim Kimura  
Allan Koba  
Haruki Koba  
Hideo Kobayashi  
James Kobayashi  
Oscar Kodama  
Steve Konishi  
Harry Kowase  
Hiroshi Kubota  
Alice Kurashige  
Tom Kusaka  
Dale Kusumoto  
Paul Kuyama  
George Masumoto  
Fred Masumoto  
James Matsumoto  
David Matsumoto  
Yutaka Matsuoka  
Bill Mayeda  
Richard Miyao  
Shuji Miyasaki  
Roy Morinaka  
Shigeru Moriyama  
Roy Muraoka  
Takenori Muraoka  
Allen Nakamura  
Jake Nakamura  
Hide Nakamura  
George Nakanishi  
Arthur Nakano  
Tsutomu Ben Nakata  
Fred Nakatani

Richard K. Nishiguchi  
Shunro Nomura  
Glenn Obayashi  
Hideo Ochi  
Satoshi Okamoto  
Tim Okuma  
Yusuke Omori  
Earl Osaki  
Shig Oto  
Dennis Otsuji  
Arthur Oyama  
Craig Ozaki  
Scott Ozaki  
Tom Ozaki  
Amanda Plummer  
Norman Sakaida  
Min Sakamoto  
Norman Sakamoto  
Tom Sakatani  
Taka Sawasaki  
Ben Segawa  
Fred Segawa  
Tom Segawa  
Ken Shima  
Dr. Paul Shimizu  
George Shimotori  
Harry Shinagawa  
Shizuko Shinagawa  
Toru Shiraishi  
Power Sogo  
Mike T. Sonoda  
Sueo Sonoda  
Tak Sugimoto  
Byron Sugiyama

Kathleen Sumida  
Zuzie Suwa  
Kenneth Tagami  
Howard Takahashi  
Howard Takahashi, Jr.  
Toshiyuki Takasaki  
Noboru Takashima  
Tsukasa Takehara  
Frank Takenaga  
Bert Tanaka  
Dr. Francis Tanaka  
Tyler Tanaka  
Franklin Tanaka  
Henry Tani  
Junichi Tanida  
Noboru Tanouye  
Nob Tanouye  
Masa Tominaga  
Alan Tomiyama  
Steve Tomiyama  
Noy Tomoi  
Charley Torio  
Frank Torio  
Kent Tsubakihara  
Tadaso Tsuda  
Glenn Tsuida  
Masaharu Tsuida  
Masayoshi Tsuida  
Jim Tsuji  
Shoji Tsuma  
Motoo Tsuneyoshi  
George Uda  
Tom Uda  
Tom Udo

Hiroshi Ukegawa  
Peter Y. Umekubo  
Edward Urata  
Kenneth Uyeda  
Raymond Uyeda  
Kattie Uyeji  
Saburo Uyeji  
Bill Vetter  
Yuri Frances Vetter  
Frank M. Wada  
Henry Rakashi Wada  
Frank Wada  
Arnold Watanabe  
Wade Watanabe  
Ron Yagura  
Robert Yamada  
So Yamada  
Sam Yamaguchi  
Tadaso Yamaguchi  
Gary M. Yamamoto  
John Yamano  
James Yamate  
Kiyoshi Yamate  
Jimmy Yanagihara  
Tadashi Yano  
George Yasukochi  
Toshiharu Yonekura  
Michael Yonemitsu  
Robert Yonemitsu  
Charles Yoshimura  
Joseph Yoshioka  
VFW Post 4851

On November 10, 2009 the Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego (JAHSSD) will open an exhibit titled "Japanese Americans in the Military" at the Veterans Museum & Memorial Center, 2115 Park Blvd. in Balboa Park, San Diego. It will run through May 31, 2010.

**July**  
MIS soldiers become part of Task Force to recapture Kiska Island in the Aleutians.

**September 29**  
On the first day of combat for the 100th, baseball star **Shigeo "Joe" Takata** is the first to be killed in action and the first to receive the Distinguished Service Cross.

**October**  
JA women are accepted into the Women's Army Corps. During WWII and the post-war period more than 300 Nisei women serve in the WAC.

**Late 1943**  
Fourteen Nisei are assigned to Merrill's Marauders in North Burma.

**1944**  
**January 24**  
The Battle of Cassino begins. It takes four major assaults and four months to take Cassino. The 100th fights in the first two assaults.

**March 26**  
The 100th lands at Anzio, the second front between the Gustav Line and Rome.

**June 2**  
The 100th participates in the breakout to Rome by attacking and capturing Lanuvio. The 442nd arrives at Naples harbor and on June 10 meets the 100th in Civitavecchia, northwest of Rome.

**July 7**  
The 442nd takes Hill 140 in Italy after a bitter

battle.  
**August**  
Merrill's Marauders captures Myitkyina, the vital junction for opening the Burma Road into China. **Kenny Yasui**, an MIS soldier, impersonates a Japanese colonel and captures 15 Japanese soldiers.

**August 31**  
The 442nd minus the 100th reaches the Arno River in Italy near Florence. The 100th spearheads the crossing of the Arno River and the capture of Pisa for the IVth Corps.

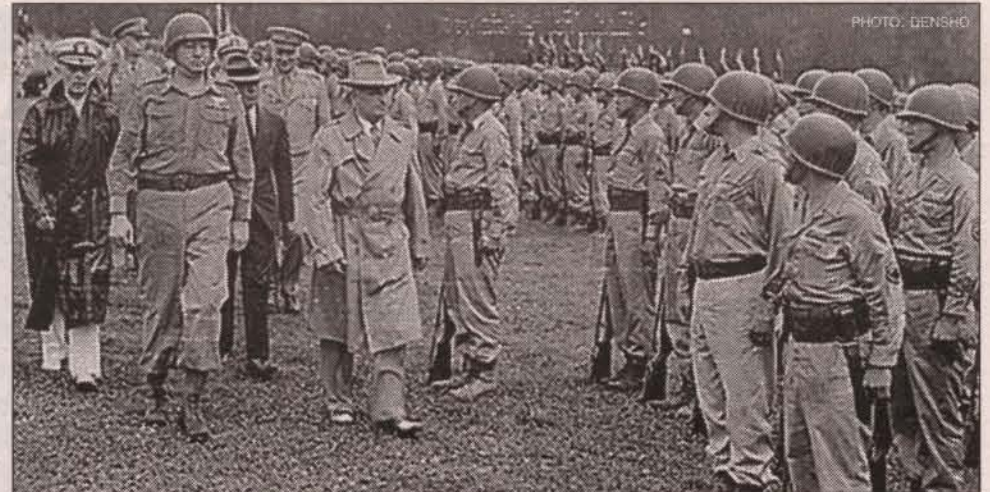
**October 15**  
The 100th/442nd enters the battle of Bruyeres in the Vosges Mountains. In the following days of fighting, the 100th takes Hill A, B and C.

**October 22**  
The 100th takes Biffontaine, suffering many casualties.

**October 26-31**  
100th/442nd rescues the "Lost Battalion."

**1945**  
**March 12**  
The 522nd Field Artillery Battalion is sent to assist the 4th Infantry Division's assault on the Siegfried Line between Eastern France and Germany.

**March 20**  
100th/442nd, minus the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion, leaves France for Italy to join the all



President Truman walks past members of the 442nd RCT on July 15, 1946 in Washington, D.C.

African American 92nd Infantry Division.

**April 5-6**  
The 442nd launches a surprise attack on Nazi mountainside positions in Italy, breaking through the Nazi Gothic Line in one day.

**April 6-30**  
The 100th/442nd drives the enemy up the Italian coast to Genoa and Turin.

**April 29**  
The 522nd help to liberate Jewish prisoners of the Landsberg-Kaufering Dachau Death March and Dachau sub-camps.

**May 2**  
The war in Europe is over.

**August-September**  
MIS soldiers participate in the surrender and occupation of Japan including: war crimes, repatriation of Japanese soldiers/civilians from overseas, civil censorship, land reform, government reorganization activities and rewriting of Japan's Constitution.

**1946**  
**July 15**  
Reception held in Washington, D.C. Under a driving summer rain, President Truman pinned the Presidential Unit Citation on the 100th/442nd colors. "You fought not only the enemy, but you fought prejudice — and you have won." ■

\* Information courtesy of the Go For Broke National Education Center. This is not a complete timeline.



# NVC JAPANESE AMERICAN MEMORIAL WALL BRICK DONATION FORM

NVC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization.

The NVC Japanese American Memorial Wall is your opportunity to honor your grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends - both living and deceased - who were interned during World War II as a result of Executive Order 9066 as well as Japanese Americans who have served America in the military.

The Memorial will be built next to the NVC Memorial Hall in Seattle. The minimum donation is \$250 per brick. Please make your tax deductible check payable to The NVC Foundation.



## INTERNEES

First & Middle Name or Initial	Nickname/Maiden Name (Optional)	Last Name	Camp or Camps
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

## WORLD WAR II VETERANS

First & Middle Name or Initial	Nickname (Optional)	Last Name	Unit (Please Check or Specify)
1.			<input type="radio"/> 442nd <input type="radio"/> MIS <input type="radio"/> Other:
2.			<input type="radio"/> 442nd <input type="radio"/> MIS <input type="radio"/> Other:

## OTHER VETERANS/ACTIVE DUTY

First & Middle Name or Initial	Last Name	Branch (Please Check)	Years Served	Wars (Optional)
1.		<input type="radio"/> Army <input type="radio"/> Navy <input type="radio"/> USAF <input type="radio"/> USMC <input type="radio"/> USCG		
2.		<input type="radio"/> Army <input type="radio"/> Navy <input type="radio"/> USAF <input type="radio"/> USMC <input type="radio"/> USCG		


I wish to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for a total of \_\_\_\_\_ bricks at \$250 each to honor my loved ones.  
I wish to donate or contribute an additional \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help fund the NVC Memorial Wall.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
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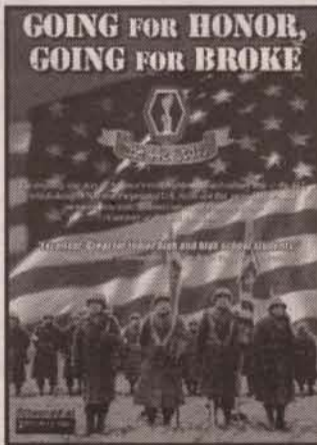
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# Nisei Rescuers Reunite with the 'Lost Battalion'



PHOTO: CHAD J. MCNEELEY/DOD

Veterans from both units gathered in Houston Nov. 1 to mark the 65th anniversary of the WWII 'Lost Battalion' rescue at a fundraising gala hosted by the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation.

## Sixty-five years after the WWII Japanese American veterans forged a daring rescue, members of both units meet again.

By P.C. Staff and Associated Press

Even though it was 65 years ago, Al Tortolano clearly recalls the one thought, the only thought, that ran through his mind as his military unit was surrounded by German soldiers during World War II.

"About the only thing you could think of was family. Will I ever see my family again?" remembered the 88-year-old Tortolano, part of what was dubbed the "Lost Battalion."

It was October 1944 and Tortolano

was part of the 1st Battalion, 141st Regiment, 36th Infantry Division — a Texas military unit that was surrounded by German soldiers in northern France's Vosges Mountains.

The prayers of Tortolano and the other members of the 1st Battalion were answered by the Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team, a unit made up almost entirely of Japanese Americans. The 442nd broke through the German ranks and was able to free the 1st Battalion.

The epic and bloody rescue, which

lasted several days, became one of the most famed battles of WWII. The 442nd suffered 814 casualties as it rescued 217 men.

"I still can't thank my fellow veterans enough for what they did," said Tortolano, who stood next to his wife Alice.

Tortolano was among 40 members from both units who gathered in Houston Nov. 1 to mark the 65th anniversary of the rescue at a fundraising gala hosted by the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation. Although the units had reunited once before, this was the largest meeting of surviving members of the two groups.

Dr. Susumu Ito called the gather-

ing "wonderful and nostalgic."

"I regret that there are now so few of our comrades remaining, but rest assured that those who have passed away will not be forgotten," said Ito, an artillery forward observer with the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion of the 442nd RCT, attached to I Company, 3rd Battalion.

At the event, the bond between members of both units was apparent as the more able-bodied veterans helped those in wheelchairs or using canes stand up on stage. During the reunion, the men hugged one another and exchanged stories of the war and of their lives since then.

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the veterans of the 442nd are "men of the noblest heart and the greatest courage."

The 442nd became the most decorated unit in U.S. military history, he said.

"Their courage, valor, dedication are values we hold dear as a country — and to do this in what clearly was one of our darkest hours," Mullen said, referencing that many of the 442nd's members had families who

were held in internment camps by the U.S. government while they served in the military.

"The soldiers who fought in the war and who were united against a common enemy weren't the only

winners 65 years ago. Many American ideals were rescued on that French battlefield," said Dr. Craig Uchida, NJAMF board chairman. "The Nisei in the U.S. Army did what many others might never have been able to do. Forced to prove their loyalty to the United States, they did first by volunteering to serve and second by giving every measure of sacrifice requested."

Tortolano, who lives in Santa Clara, Calif., said he is even more grateful for what the 442nd did considering the discrimination they faced.

"They were sent into some battles other [units] wouldn't go to," he said. "In some ways they were treated as second-class citizens. But they proved they were true Americans." ■

*'I still can't thank my fellow veterans enough for what they did.'*

— Al Tortolano, of the 1st Battalion, 141st Regiment, 36th Infantry Division

The National Japanese American Historical Society salutes JACL and the Veterans!

"The Nisei bought an awful big hunk of America with their blood."

—General Joseph (Vinegar Joe) Stilwell, Commander of the U.S. Troops in China-Burma-India Theater



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TRIBUTE

**GEORGE KATAGIRI**

September 22, 1926 - June 3, 2009



George Katagiri was born in Portland, Ore., to Chiharu and Teruye Katagiri. In 1942 he was interned at Tule Lake, CA. A year later, he relocated to Minneapolis, Minn. to finish high school. He matriculated to the University of Minnesota before entering the Army in 1945. He served in occupied Japan, returned to Minnesota and graduated from the University in 1950.

He married Helen Hayashi in 1948. She died in 1993.

After teaching in the Portland school system for nine years, in 1959 he was hired by the Oregon State Department of Education to be the first science education specialist for the state.

In 1969, he was honored as "State Employee of the Year." In his retirement, he volunteered to work to preserve the legacy of the Japanese Americans in Oregon. His efforts helped to develop the Bill of Rights Memorial in Tom McCall Riverfront Park and the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, which collects and disseminates information about Japanese Americans in Oregon.

Survivors include his sons, Douglas (Valerie), David, Steve (Claudia); sisters, Rose (Kane) Senda, Mary (Paul) Uno; four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; and his significant other, Michiko Kornhauser.

A beautiful memorial celebrating his life was held in Portland on July 18, 2009.

Col. Christopher Ray Keegan, 1915-2009

**His Greatest Honor was Serving with the 442nd**



Keegan was the World War II commander of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team 'H' Company.

By Pacific Citizen Staff

Col. Christopher Ray Keegan, the World War II commander of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team "H" Company, died Oct 11 at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He was 94.

Keegan had been suffering from congestive heart disease and dementia, according to his daughter Kathy Clare.

The Bronx, New York born retired Army colonel was the last surviving company commander of the legendary 442nd RCT, according to the U.S. Army.

His greatest honor was serving with the 442nd RCT, said Clare.

Keegan was drafted in 1941 and retired in 1970. After his retirement, he enjoyed playing golf, gardening and being involved in community affairs.

In a July 2002 letter to Davide del Giudice, an Italian author and historian, Keegan said "there was something special" about the Nisei men he led.

"They had been involved in the most trying experience of their lives — rejection, family and friends placed in relocation camps, loss of

homes, businesses, farms and personal belongings, non-recognition as American citizens — but as a group they developed and retained a special bond, like a band of brothers that eventually became a family that has remained strong for almost six decades. They became part of my family — more than friends, we are a family."

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at the Old Post Chapel at Fort Myer, Virginia Dec. 29. The burial with full military honors will follow at Arlington National Cemetery. ■

'In Memoriam' appears on a limited, space-available basis at no cost.

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