IN DEPTH

WAITING FOR A STAMP OF HONOR
The fight continues for a postage stamp in honor of Nisei war heroes. >> PAGE 3

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Mystery author Naomi Hirahara brings back sleuth Mas Arai.

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Family members are searching for Fredric H. Yamamoto.

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Far East Movement is moving on up in the music industry.
Support the Regional Connector

As a longtime visitor to Little Tokyo, I have seen how bad the traffic and parking can get in the downtown area. In fact, this traffic has become a major barrier to myself and other Japanese Americans who wish to attend events in Little Tokyo.

The Downtown Regional Connector will help alleviate this problem. All construction, whether it is construction of the Budokan of Los Angeles or the Nikkei Center or a new light rail line, will require mitigation.

My concern is that if the JA community does not show strong support for the underground option, the MTA will likely go with the at-grade option. By opposing both options, the JACL is standing in the way of solving one of Little Tokyo's biggest problems.

JAMES FUJITA via e-mail

An Open Letter to John Tateishi

In your column entitled, "About Honor," (Feb. 5-18) I find it interesting that you would spend the first six paragraphs of your column praising the Nisei vets, believing that this sets up the comparison to Ehren Watada with this group of incredible heroes. This makes as much sense as spending several pages talking about the greatness of President Abraham Lincoln, then comparing that to the courage of President Richard Nixon. This kind of logic leap is a bit too wide for many of us.

In your article, you mention that Lt. Ehren Watada was allowed to resign his commission from the U.S. Army "under other than honorable conditions." I suppose that was actually discharged from the U.S. Army in September 2009. It is interesting, however, that you did not mention that Ehren Watada was actually discharged from the U.S. Army "under other than honorable conditions." I suppose that was an inconvenient truth for you to mention.

You can continue forever to try to make Ehren Watada look honorable, and with many, you will succeed. However, for the vast majority of people who have served in America's armed forces, there will never be anything honorable about abandoning your soldiers as they prepare to deploy into combat, in violation of an oath that some of us hold very sacred.

CHIP LAROCHE
Lt. Colonel, U.S. Army Retired

Tell Us What You Think

Write to: Letters, Pacific Citizen
250 E. 1st St., Suite # 301
Los Angeles, CA 90012
or e-mail: pc@pacificcitizen.org
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Immigrant Heritage Month

March 15-22

The newly elected lawmaker keynoted Washington, D.C., on March 15 with a call for immigration reform.

CHIP LAROCHE
Lt. Colonel, U.S. Army Retired

 Venezia Class Reunion

March 19-20

The new class of Venezia event, March 19, 2010, will be held at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, 243 N. Beacon St., Los Angeles.

CHIARA MAVI
JACL President

Honorary Degrees

If your education were interrupted because of WWII, Calif. colleges may be looking for you.

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A JA family is suing the car company over another death of Noriko Uno.

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The hip-hop group is moving on up in the music world.

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Immigration Reform

To pass comprehensive reform legislation this year, all of JACL needs to get involved.

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Mark Keam

The newly elected lawmaker keynoted the Washington, D.C., installation dinner.

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Walk down memory lane with other Manzanar High School alumni at their summer reunion.

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JACL MEMBERS

Change of Address

If you've moved, please send new information to: National JACL, 1765 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115.

Allow 6 weeks for address changes.

To avoid interruptions in delivery, please notify your postmaster to include periodic cards in your change of address (USPS Form 3575)
Supporters say despite rejection they will continue to work toward honoring Japanese American World War II veterans.

By Nalea J. Ko
Reporter

Nisei veteran Jimmie Kanaya remembers how Issei parents would watch their children go off to fight in World War II from behind barbed wire fences. Many, he said, displayed a blue-star flag in their front windows, waiting in vain for their children to return. When they did not, a flag with a gold star was placed in their windows.

"There was no way to fight back at being termed a 'yellow Jap', but to enter combat and be willing to give our all for the sake of our family, reputation and our country," Kanaya explained about serving in WWII. "Some 800 young men in their prime gave their all so that those of us who survived can return to our rightful place in our society, heads held high and without shame or remorse."

Over 30,000 Japanese Americans like Kanaya served in WWII. The Japanese American WWII Veterans Commemorative Stamp Campaign has been pushing for years to honor JAs like Kanaya with a commemorate postage stamp.

It has been a long wait for Kanaya and other Nisei veterans. The latest proposal for a Nisei veterans stamp was rejected. The reason: the U.S. Postal Service's Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee's policy against honoring separate military sub-branches, units or divisions.

Instead the committee, which works on behalf of the postmaster general to evaluate stamp proposals, suggested creating a stamp honoring the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism in Washington, D.C. But some supporters of the Nisei vets stamp disagree with creating a stamp to honor the memorial.

"It's not a military memorial," said Gerald Yamada, Nisei veterans stamp project liaison for the Japanese American Veterans' Association (JAVA). "So just to take a Japanese American memorial and say, 'Let's convert this into a military memorial' I think diverts the purpose for the memorial itself and it takes away from the internees."

Although it has been years since the campaign for a Nisei veterans stamp began, supporters said they would continue to fight indefinitely to honor the JAs who served in the war.

"The grassroots campaign to honor these veterans from our community will continue for as long as it takes. We have actually been a campaign for about six years total," explained Wayne Osako, co-chair and coordinator of the campaign. "Stamp campaigns are typically a very long process. We must be prepared to just keep going until the Postal Service says 'yes.'"

Preserving a Legacy

Since the proposal for a Nisei vets stamp has been turned down, supporters are now focusing their efforts on changing the U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) informal policy against issuing stamps for individual units, branches or divisions.

The strategy is to appeal to the postmaster general, who overrules the advisory committee, to stop using this informal policy, said Yamada. He is scheduled to make a presentation to the National Military Veterans Alliance on Feb. 22, outlining the strategy and asking for its members' support.

"If the alliance agrees to it, then hopefully they'll sign on to the letter (on their letterhead) and send a letter into the postmaster general," Yamada added. The letter will be copied to the president, secretary of defense and secretary of veterans affairs.

Some said the USPS policy unfairly excludes Nisei veterans. "If Akune said, Ken Akune, 96, who served in the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) in the Pacific said he has seen stamps honoring individuals, military branches, units and divisions. He questioned why a Nisei veterans stamp could not be made. Akune said he could imagine what he would do with such a stamp.

"It would be nice to pass it out," he said. Others are also thinking about the significance of having the commemorative stamp.

"Getting a Nisei veterans stamp will mean so much to us, especially the WWII veterans, who are dying at a very fast pace," said Grant Ichikawa, an MIS veteran. "To me, every time someone pastes the stamp on an envelope, he or she would be saying 'thank you' to the Nisei WWII veterans."

Although the Nisei veterans continue to wait for a stamp, supporters from War World I were honored by the USPS. On Feb. 4 the USPS issued the 'Distinguished Sailors' stamps to commemorate the service of William S. Sims, Arleigh A. Burke, John McCloy and Doris Miller. Proponents of the Nisei vets stamp said the same should be done to honor the JAs.

"The [Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee] has in the past supported similar stamps which honor veterans groups: Hispanic Americans: A Proud Heritage (1984) and Buffalo Soldiers (1994)," Osako said, adding that the stamp committee altered its policy in 1994.

The JACL is also supporting the campaign's decision to change the USPS policy, explained JACL National President Larry Oda.

"The NVSC [Nisei Veterans Stamp Committee] argument is that the World War II Nisei soldiers served in different branches of the military, and their accomplishments are unmatched in history and are encouraging our coalition partners to support the effort," Oda explained in an e-mail to the Pacific Citizen. A resolution to consider supporting the memorial stamp was on the February agenda for the JACL National Board meeting. The agenda item was removed at the request of the resolution author, Oda said, and asked to be postponed and reconsidered at the convention.

About 50,000 stamp proposals are submitted to the stamp committee annually. Osako said he resubmitted a Nisei veterans stamp proposal Oct. 23. Supporters said they are prepared to continue the campaign indefinitely.

"I think what it may eventually, hopefully take is for the postmaster general to say, 'No we can't use this informal policy,'" Yamada continued, "Even though the proposal has been turned down, there's no prohibition to resubmitting it."

Veterans like Kanaya said they would like to see a stamp created not to honor any particular units, person or event, but to honor Nisei veterans who served during a trying time in the United States. While the campaign continues, Kanaya is already planning on what he would do with his stamps.

"I would purchase it and cherish it as a memento of a very trying period in my lifetime," he said.

George Fujimori (above) served in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II and now volunteers at the Go For Broke Monument.
Bringing Back
Mas Arai

The reluctant sleuth in Naomi Hirahara’s mystery series is back in ‘Blood Hina.’

By Naleu J. Ko
Reporter

PASADENA, Calif.—Author Naomi Hirahara said her father’s history was her inspiration for the popular Mas Arai mystery series, but the rest of the protagonist’s characteristics were fictionalized.

Born in California, her father Isamu (or Sam) moved to Hiroshima as a baby. There he survived the atomic bomb, being only miles from where it dropped. He returned to California after World War II and worked in gardening.

Parts of his life mirror the background of the fictional character Mas. And when her father read about the mystery series’ leading character the similarities did not go unnoticed.

“And I gave one to my dad and my dad read it and he goes, ‘Oh my god! Korai! Hey, this is me!’ I go, ‘Dad you took me to track — you knew I was writing about a character like you,’” explained Hirahara, breaking into a smile.

Also a Japanese American gardener, Mas is more introverted than her father, Hirahara explained. When Mas is not trimming lawns in Los Angeles, he is involved in sometimes bloody and dangerous mysteries.


It is the fourth book in what is likely to be a seven-series set, said Hirahara. In the story, Mas is on the case again after his best friend’s soon-to-be wife reports that her Japanese dolls are missing from her home. The elderly gardener sets out to help his friend, but gets mired in a case involving all the elements of a mystery book: drugs, murder and deception.

Years after the first mystery book was penned, Hirahara said she has fallen in love with the characters of the book. Fans and book reviewers also have an affinity for the characters. But they have different ways of showing their attachment to the books.

“I think he [my father] is puzzled and doesn’t quite know what to make of it,” Hirahara explained about her father’s reaction to the series. “I know when I was leaving one time...he stood on the porch and he goes, ‘Hey, my friends are wondering when the next one is coming out.’”

Meet Mas Arai

The process of researching, writing and publishing her first mystery book in the series took about 15 years. When Hirahara sought feedback about her first book “Summer of the Big Bachi,” people advised her not to write about the JA experience.

“Even some other people mentioned well you should write about, you know, the dominant culture — the white culture — because that’s the only way you could get a best selling book,” Hirahara added. “But I think I wanted to write something that I would like to read, something that wasn’t readily available.”

Not heeding their advice, Hirahara published her first book in 2004. It was nominated for the Macavity Award and took the Chicago Tribune’s 10 best mysteries and thrillers award. Her second book, “Gasa-Gasa Girl,” was also on the Southern California Booksellers Association’s bestsellers list. Hirahara explained that when she began writing “Summer of the Big Bachi” she did not expect it to become serialized. But fans wanted Mas.

Carnations, gladiolas and bird of paradise flowers are the backdrop for the latest novel, which is partially set in Los Angeles’ flower market. Each book starts with a clue. This book’s clue: a Hina Matsuri doll, or Girls’ Day doll. Hirahara explained that she wanted to incorporate the Japanese dolls into the stories.

“So, this is the Girls’ Day doll that my relatives sent to my mother when I was four,” said Hirahara, pulling out a tattered case containing two intricate, slightly worn Hina dolls wrapped in plastic. “I don’t know I was just looking at the dolls and I was thinking it would be fun if I did something with them.”

Hirahara added about the dolls, which were sent to her as a child from relatives in Japan.

“I think because I lived in that kind of [bilingual] household I wanted to reflect that,” she explained. “That’s probably the most controversial aspect of my books...I mean some people have said, ‘Well isn’t it kind of disrespectful for like my character to speak in dialect?’”

“...You have to kind of make decisions that are right for your characters in the story and just work from there.”

Born in Southern California, Hirahara worked as a reporter and editor for the Rafu Shimpo newspaper. There she worked in the heart of downtown Los Angeles next to areas like Skid Row and the flower market, which would serve as the setting to her mystery books years later.

Hirahara said there is something more magical about creating nonfiction compared to working in journalism.

“It just so happened, I think my alter ego is like this crotchety old man [laughs],” Hirahara said about writing from the male perspective of Mas. “But I’m kind of glad to write it from a male perspective because I think for so long when you looked at a woman writing Asian American literature it’s more like Amy Tan and you usually wrote from a female point of view.”

Hirahara is doing research for her next mystery book, which is likely to involve baseball and “more contemporary issues.” Not ready to part with Mas, she hopes to publish more mystery books in the future.

“You know I know they’re elderly and realistically probably some of them should be passing away,” Hirahara explained. “But there’s no way I would do that. I mean I shouldn’t say that because who knows what happens in the future. I think in that way—that’s what’s wonderful about fiction and writing a mystery series character. Some of it can be like a fantasy in some ways.”

On the Web
www.naomihirahara.com

Incorporating JA culture into her books was important for Hirahara. Her characters reflect the JA California experience. Some of the dialogue portrays characters speaking in broken English and Japanese, which Hirahara said has been controversial.

Introducing a Japanese American gardener to become serialized, but fans wanted Mas.
Family Members Search For Answers in Mysterious Disappearance

Fredric H. Yamamoto was last seen Sept. 29 in his hometown of Bothell, Wash. The 56-year-old is believed to have taken an inflatable kayak out on Lake Washington.

By Nalea J. Ko, Reporter

Missing-person fliers with Fredric H. Yamamoto’s smiling photo are no longer hanging at the local Safeway store his neighbors said he frequented. It was one of the only places he had gone to when he left his renter Bothell, Wash., townhouse. He disappeared, they said, as if he had gone to the market and never returned.

In October Yamamoto’s abandoned car was located by a security guard at Denny Park and eventually impounded on Oct. 14.

Snohomish County Sheriff Department officials searched the vehicle Nov. 20, finding no signs of foul play. One thing recovered of interest was an empty, inflatable kayak bag. The discovery suggested to his family that Yamamoto, 56, had paddled off in a kayak on Lake Washington. A kayak or paddle has not been found.

A private investigator hired by the family continues to canvas the area with fliers, but Yamamoto’s acquaintances and family said there are many unanswered questions in his disappearance nearly three months later.

“I wish I knew. It would sure answer some questions,” said Sharon Martin, a residential property manager, when asked about Yamamoto’s whereabouts. “I hope he didn’t decide to end his life. I really hope that he went off with somebody. Maybe he met somebody at that park and they took off and went somewhere.”

Martin manages the 81-unit Park Lane Townhouses where Yamamoto resided for about four years, she said. She had no reason to be concerned about Yamamoto’s well-being until the month of October.

“There was never any thought about him in October when he wasn’t around. It just didn’t occur to me to be concerned,” Martin explained. “My daughter lives in the same building as him and she came over maybe the middle of October and she said, ‘Mom there’s something wrong.’”

Yamamoto’s Disappearance

By all accounts, Yamamoto’s daily life is as big of a mystery as his disappearance. Yamamoto was raised in Tokyo, Japan with his sister Ellen. They were “American military dependents,” she said. Yamamoto later graduated from the Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, Calif, where his parents eventually retired. Yamamoto then went to Washington State. His sister, who lives in California, described him as a “skilled photographer” and “accomplished classic rock guitar player.”

“Fred did not leave a letter or any messages, so I can’t say it’s a suicide or accident,” Ellen Yamamoto said in an e-mail to the Pacific Citizen. “The last time we spoke he was upbeat and there was no indication anything was wrong.”

Yamamoto’s sister hired a private investigator on Nov. 16 after traveling to Washington State when word of his disappearance surfaced. His family was notified when Yamamoto did not pay his November rent.

Martin also called the Snohomish County Sheriff Department to open a missing person’s case.

“Let me tell you about Fred,” Martin said. “He was a total loner. Very much a stay-at-home and not-bother-anybody type of guy. Absolutely one of the nicest people you’d ever want to meet.”

Yamamoto always paid his rent three months in advance, giving Martin a check a few weeks before the day it was due, she said.

“(On) Sept. 28 he came in and he sat down to write out his rent check and he handed it to me and it was for one month. And he said, ‘This is all I can do.’ And I said, ‘Well, that’s fine,’ ” said Martin over the phone. “The change in Yamamoto’s pattern of payment ‘shocked’ Martin.”

Other than that Martin did not notice anything out of the ordinary until her daughter, who had last seen Yamamoto in September coming back from the grocery store, said something was awry.

“’You know because he was so quiet and kept to himself, the majority of the people around him didn’t even notice he was gone,” Martin said.

Yamamoto’s family was scheduled to return to his townhouse to clear out his belongings, Martin said, at the end of December.

Most who knew Yamamoto want more attention paid to a man who often went unnoticed in his life.

“It’s very hard to stop looking when there’s so many unanswered questions and you don’t feel like the police are doing much and they feel like it’s a closed case and that he just drowned,” Kearns said.

“It’s such a tragedy for the family. The not knowing.”

Anyone with information about the case is asked to call the Snohomish County Sheriff Department’s tip line at 425/388-3945.
The pilot program will help Asian Pacific American students learn about their ethnic history.

Educators Want Ethnic Studies in High Schools

The pilot program will help minority students better understand their roots, supporters say.

By Nalea J. Ko
Reporter

San Francisco educators and students are pushing for the creation of ethnic studies courses in high schools, despite the school district's budget constraints. Organizers with the Campaign for Ethnic Studies hope the San Francisco Board of Education implements the proposed ethnic studies pilot program for ninth graders. If approved, the pilot program would be established in five high schools—which have not been identified—during the 2010-11 school year.

The estimated price tag is $300,000. But students, educators and city officials say the cost is an investment in San Francisco's future. "I think this is really important for the students, but also for the school culture in general," explained Allyson Tintiang-co-Cubales, associate professor of Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University, or SFSU. "I mean ethnic studies really fosters hope and I think that's something that has been missing for a long time."

At a Jan. 12 board meeting supporters of the ethnic studies pilot program wore red to show their solidarity. They urged the Board of Education to consider creating a culturally sensitive curriculum in high schools.

A resolution will be introduced Jan. 26 in support of ethnic studies being included in the core curriculum, explained board commissioner Sandra Lee Fewer.

The details concerning the ethnic studies courses will be ironed out most likely in the committee meetings, she said. "It will probably go through two committees, especially in the budget committee is where the deep discussion will take place," Fewer said.

"In San Francisco we have to cut like $100 million in the next two years, so that means it's about 20 percent of our overall budget. What the superintendent is doing now is looking at the classes that ninth graders take currently and how are we funding those classes."

High school students said they want to see ethnic studies courses—like those offered at SFSU—implemented in public high schools.

"While studying U.S. history in the eleventh grade, I didn't see myself reflected in the curriculum," explained 17-year-old Harriet Hu, who is a senior at George Washington High School. "Ethnic studies will stray away from the Eurocentric curriculum, and truly engage students so they can start learning about their own history."

The aim of the proposed ethnic studies courses is to "develop students' self-respect, their respect for their families and communities. The curriculum will touch on topics like the Japanese American internment, the Black Panther Party, imperialism, and other topics. It is an opportunity to help students identify with their ethnic heritage and encouraged them to pursue higher education, said educators.

A lot of the students have told me over the years—and I've been working with the school district for almost two decades—and students say, 'Oh they don't care about us.' When Tintiang-co-Cubales explained, "They'll often say things, referring that schools don't always reflect who they are. And ethnic studies is about that. It's really about trying to create a relevant education."

Diverse Curriculum

Tintiang-co-Cubales, who is also the director of the Pin o 'Education Partnership in the district, has been a part of other ethnic studies pilot programs in the district. Some high schools in the district, such as George Washington High School, have current ethnic studies classes.

The proposed lesson plan for the ethnic studies pilot courses, which were presented at the Jan. 26 Board of Education meeting, would reflect the diverse ethnic make up in the school district. About 10 percent of students are white and the rest are students of color, Fewer said.

"The San Francisco Bay Area is a hugely diverse region, which is reflected in many of the public schools," explained Mitz Valdez. "Unfortunately, this diversity is not exactly reflected in the curriculum offered in the schools."

Three hundred and eight signatures have been collected for a petition in support of creating an ethnic studies pilot program in the school district. Supporters said expanding ethnic studies to five more high schools is necessary to engage students in their education and their future.

"I just think even for those of us who are of color that are born and raised in San Francisco sometimes we aren't learning this through our families or even through oral history," Fewer said. "I think if we're going to send children, students out into the world and the larger community that this is a really important foundation for them to have."

The Birth of Ethnic Studies

The push to create ethnic studies programs at a college level began across the country in the 1960s. But the longest campus strike took place in 1968 at SFSU, according to its Web site. Students with the Third World Liberation Front led the protest carrying signs that read, "Power to the People."

Protests continued on campus for months. Their efforts would not be in vain. The following year the College of Ethnic Studies was created.
APAs in the News

By Pacific Citizen Staff

JAVA Honors Shiniseki
Sec. of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shiniseki has received the Courage, Honor and Patriotism Award from the Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) in recognition of his 44 years of leadership in the U.S. Army and in the Department of Veterans Affairs.
JAVA President Robert Nakamoto said Shiniseki is “our ultimate role model.”

Tennis Aces at Longwood Cricket Club
Dr. Yutaka Kobayashi of Wellesley, Mass. and his partner, Larry McDonnell of Potomac, Md., won the bronze ball (third place) in doubles at the U.S. Tennis Association’s (USTA) Men’s 85 National Grass Court Championship held at the Longwood Cricket Club. At the USTA Men’s National Clay Court Championships, they repeated their third place win in doubles.
Kobayashi, a former Topuz internee and retired biochemist, won the bronze ball in singles.

Hawaii JACL Honored With Civil Rights Award
The Hawaii Friends of Civil Rights awarded its annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Friends Award to the Hawaii JACL for its mission to protect the civil rights of Asians and all victims of injustice and discrimination. The award celebrates King’s life and vision.

Eagle Scouts’ Honor
Troop 611 from the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin in San Jose, Calif. awarded five of their own the highest rank in scouting, the Eagle Scout Award. Jeffrey Doi, Kenneth Matsumoto, Robert Sugano, Kyle Tan and Garrick Hirasawa joined the more than one hundred Troop 611 Boy Scouts who recently became Eagle Scouts.

Knicks Honors Misaka
Former New York Knicks player Wat Misaka was recently honored by the basketball franchise at a game in Madison Square Garden. Misaka was the first non-white person to play in the National Basketball Association. Misaka was drafted in 1947.

Lewis Suzuki Day
Mayor Tom Bates of Berkeley, Calif. has issued a proclamation declaring Jan. 19 “Lewis Suzuki Day.” The proclamation was made at the Jan. 19 city council meeting. Suzuki is an 89-year-old JA watercolor artist who has lived in Berkeley since 1962.

APAs Take the Bench
The Senate has confirmed Judge Jacqueline Nguyen and Los Angeles attorney Dolly Gee to federal district judgeships in the Central District of California.
Judges Edward M. Chen and Lucy H. Koh were also nominated by President Barack Obama to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Lawsuit Seeks Acceleration Fix For More Toyotas
Noriko Uno’s 2006 Camry suddenly accelerated despite her attempts to stop, according to the suit.

By Greg Risling
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — A lawsuit filed Feb. 4 against Toyota Motor Corp. seeks to expand the automaker’s recall of millions of vehicles to fix sticking accelerators, saying the death of a Southern California Japanese American woman could have been prevented if her car had a brake override system.

The lawsuit was filed in Los Angeles Superior Court on behalf of the family of Noriko Uno, who was killed in August in San Bernardino County when her 2006 Camry suddenly accelerated on a residential street despite her attempts to stop.

The suit cites dozens of complaints of unexpected acceleration made to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Uno’s death could have been prevented had Toyota not blamed the accidents on driver error, said Garo Mardirossian, the family’s attorney.

“Now we are finding it’s not human error. It’s the vehicle,” he said.

Uno, 66, who ran a family restaurant, died after her car went onto a center median, struck a telephone pole and then hit a large tree. She was traveling at up to 100 miles per hour, Mardirossian said. She was wearing her seat belt and even pulled her parking brake in an attempt to slow down or stop.

“There is no way my mom would be going 90 to 100 mph, no reason,” said Jeffery Uno, 34, who said his mother didn’t like to drive on the freeway. “It makes no sense for her to willingly go that fast.”

Uno’s accident occurred the same day when a fiery crash of a 2009 Lexus ES 350 killed California Highway Patrol Officer Mark Saylor, 45, and three members of his family in Santee. An inquiry into the crash led to the recall.

Bone Marrow Donor Needed For Natalie Nakatani
By Pacific Citizen Staff

Community leaders are taking to the streets and the world wide web to help find a bone marrow match for an 8-year-old Asian Pacific American girl stricken with leukemia.

Natalie Nakatani, 8, of San Francisco, Calif., has just a few weeks to find a suitable donor to save her life, according to supporters. Nakatani, who family members describe as “joyful” and “artistic,” suffered a relapse recently.

Her greatest chance for a bone marrow match is from those of Asian descent.
Nakatani’s supporters range from friends and neighbors to celebrities like actress Alyssa Milano and director Kevin Smith — who both called on Twitter followers to help save Nakatani.

JACL and the Diablo Valley chapter sent out an e-mail blast encouraging JACL members to get tested.
Bone marrow drives have been scheduled across the U.S. But for those who cannot attend, easy to use at home kits can be requested from DKMS, the world’s largest marrow donor center.

Order an at home kit: https://www.dkmsamericas.org

HELP NATALIE
Natalie’s Hometown Drive
Feb. 20, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Gregory Gardens Elementary School
1 Contilone Ct
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

Natalie’s UC Berkeley Drive
Feb. 22
12 noon-6 p.m.
Pauley East, MLK Student Union
For a complete schedule: www.hopefornatalie.com
Being Japanese American in 2050

OVER THE HOLIDAYS, it was surprising to find emanating from Illinois an online petition on petitiononline.com to preserve Little Tokyo addressed to Los Angeles City Councilwoman Jan Perry. It had garnered over 6,500 signatures. Hats off to California’s statewide undertaking of preserving the three Japantowns in Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Jose widened its horizon? And why not?

Looking through a 1993 bound volume of the Pacific Citizen, one headline caught my eye, “Is the JA community disappearing? Or is the choice up to us?” by Dr. Lane Hirabayashi for the Holiday Issue. He was then coordinator of Asian American Studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Now, he’s at the UCLA Asian American Studies department as the George and Sakaye Aratani professor of Japanese American interment, Redress and community.

You may agree with Lane on that issue. He wrote: “While I always appreciate data on the current rates of Asian American intermarriage, as a person of Japanese and Norwegian ancestry, I had a serious objection to UCLA Prof. Harry Kitano’s assertion that ‘the Japanese American community… thriving today will be no more in 2050 in the face of the rising rate of intermarriage’ (as I reported in the 1993 article, ‘Diffusion of JA Community Seen by 2050.’)

“Simply put, Dr. Kitano seems to assume that the survival of Japanese American culture and community revolves around the purity of Japanese ‘blood’ down through the generation….”

“Now, contrary to this view, most contemporary social scientists agree that culture is learned. Learning has to do with exposure within the family and beyond” (emphasis added). “The most obvious one deals with being healthy. Yes, it can be said that if need be, that the dignity of mankind may be conserved for all eternity…”

“The Japanese and Norwegian ancestry, I had a serious objection to UCLA Prof. Harry Kitano’s assertion that ‘the Japanese American community… thriving today will be no more in 2050 in the face of the rising rate of intermarriage’ (as I reported in the 1993 article, ‘Diffusion of JA Community Seen by 2050.’)”

“The Japanese American community… thriving today will be no more in 2050 in the face of the rising rate of intermarriage” (as I reported in the 1993 article, ‘Diffusion of JA Community Seen by 2050.’)”

Five years ago this summer, I packed my bags and moved to the fabled city of New York to prove to myself that if “I can make it there, I can make it anywhere.”

To this day, one of my absolute favorite things about life in The City is the seemingly endless variety of dining possibilities. I cannot even come close to naming my top 10 favorite restaurants in New York — let alone fabricate a list of must-try-restaurants — there are simply too many to consider.

Yet, despite the variety of great dining establishments, one thing is standard among them all: you will pay for your drink refills. Pretty much anywhere else in the country, you can count on free refills with your meal when you order a soda. Not so, in the City That Never Sleeps.

When I was in college, my friends and I would joke that our server’s tip would be based on the urgency in which our glasses were refilled. If we had to ask for a refill, forget about it, that tip (in theory) would take a nosedive.

If I moved to New York, I had to regulate my fluid intake to one glass of soda per meal or get stuck paying $2 again and again for my Coca-Cola Classic. Plus who needs the additional calories? It was an unwelcome change at first, but a change I would become accustomed to, and even enjoy.

Flash forward to 2010 in a new city, and ironically, I miss the stingy approach to soda refills. When my wife and I go out for dinner, servers would often without asking bring me a new drink and take away my empty glass. It’s the curse of the free refill.

There are several points that can be emphasized from this simple illustration. The most obvious one deals with being healthy. Yes, it can be said that New York City leads the nation in healthy initiatives like: early smoking ban, trans-fat ban, and posting calorie content on menus so consumers can make informed (albeit sometimes guilt-ridden) decisions.

Another point is that we should make it easy as possible to keep ourselves healthy. I’m not suggesting the practice of charging for refills is altruistic health drive. Rather, I’m saying we should take advantage of these types of scenarios to make it easier on ourselves to make and meet our fitness goals.

Let’s be honest, how many of us set New Year’s resolutions to become more fit? So, let’s do something to make it easier: just say no to that free refill.

We need to reset the default.

Peter Shigeki Frandsen is living in Biloxi, Miss. He is a Mount Olympus JACL member.
Far East Movement is Moving On Up

Radio hits like ‘Girls on the Dance Floor,’ have propelled the rap group into the spotlight.

By Nalea J. Ko
Reporter

It is hard to forget the astronaut helmets and monkey suit that are part of the Far East Movement’s stage act. To make sure that people remember the music, the four Asian Pacific American musicians said they network with fans directly online, sometimes feverously typing backstage before a performance.

Networking with their community of fans was critical to the performers success early on, when they occasionally performed to thousands. Audiences where audience members would throw fruit at the stage.

Performers success early on, when they occasionally performed to thousands. Audiences where audience members would throw fruit at the stage. "You know what was actually cool about that was the fact that there are other perks to having the radio hit “Girls on the Dance Floor” and a growing fan base. But sometimes the plus...“ said Prohgress, who is Korean American. “Maybe next time when they see some Asian faces they’ll start playing some music or something.”

As their fame grows, keeping up with fans is difficult. The key, they said, is to stay humble. But the FM members said that they have not reached the level of success they expected or the second you feel like you’ve made it, you really limit yourself,” Kev Nish said. “[There] never is reason, there’s barely rhyme. You do it purely out of love and like J said passion.”

And after years of working to make it in the music industry, they say there is no time for girlfriends or distractions.

“It mean don’t get us wrong,” said Kev Nish or Kevin Nishimura, who is of Chinese and Japanese descent. “Shout out to all the beautiful ladies out there. We’ve got to stay focused right now.”

Although their work schedules are hectic, touring around the world has opened their eyes to new musical influences, said Kev Nish. Seeing an APA hip-hop group perform in other countries sometimes prompts an unanticipated response. "For awhile there just weren’t a lot of Asian American musicians,” J-Spliff explained, a Korean American born as Jae Choung. “I think the cool thing about the generation right now is that they really aren’t seeing race as much anymore.”

L.A. Grown Musicians

The FM members are high school friends. Prohgress went to Palisades Charter High School where J-Spliff also attended. Kev Nish attended Palos Verdes Peninsula High School. Their love of music would lead them to form the group “Emcee’s Anonymous.”

A song titled “Far East Movement” would entice the group to adopt the new name. Longtime friends, the musicians said they avoid arguments by focusing on their music.

“We do get perks by people thinking we are the Jabbawockeez. Where ever we go people are always like, ‘Hey, you guys better bring it! Can you guys play basketball as well as you can dance?’ And we’re like, ‘What are you talking about?’” said Prohgress about being misidentified as the first season winners of MTV’s “America’s Best Dance Crew.”

Making party music is their forte, so they will leave the dancing to the Jabbawockeez.

“We have no rhythm,” Kev Nish said over the phone. “We make dance music strictly because we can’t dance. So, we’d rather stay behind the DJ booth and watch the people dance.”

Fresh off the Party Rock Tour with LMFAO, FM is back in Los Angeles to fine-tune their next album. They are working with the Stereotypes’ producers for their third album, which showcases their “new sound.”

“Girls on the Dance Floor” and a growing fan base. But sometimes the plus...“ said Prohgress, who is Korean American. “Maybe next time when they see some Asian faces they’ll start playing some music or something.”

In the United States fans occasionally react with surprise when they see the faces behind the radio hit. On YouTube, viewers comment that they did not realize the group’s members are APA, which does not surprise the FM musicians.

“Ever since Virman joined the group when ever we go touring or traveling or anything there’s never a dull moment. We’re always cracking jokes or throwing snowballs with rocks in them,” J-Spliff said shortly before their Colorado performance at the X Games.

Their shared vision also keeps them focused.

“This is a life-long journey,” Prohgress said, adding that he would be dead if he did not pursue music. “[There’s] no plan B, no plan C, no plan D. Nothing but the music and staying focused with it.”

As their fame grows, keeping up with fans is difficult. The key, they said, is to stay humble. But the FM members said that they have not reached the level of success they would like. Until then, their love of music fuels them.

“We always hear from more established people in the industry and they always say the second you get comfortable or the second you feel like you’ve made it, you haven’t and you really limit yourself,” Kev Nish said. “[There] never is reason, there’s barely rhyme. You do it purely out of love and like J said passion.”

On the Web:

www.far eastmovement.com
Calif. Colleges Seeking Nisei Students

By Pacific Citizen Staff

California universities and community colleges are continuing efforts to grant honorary degrees to their former Nisei students who were forced to discontinue their education because of World War II.

Many are still searching for potential honorees.

Pasadena City College (PCC) in Pasadena, Calif, is seeking honorees as part of the California Nisei College Diploma Project.

Dorothy Fukutoki Potter, a PCC librarian and alumni, found her father’s name on the college’s 1942 roster. Edgar Fukutoki was just weeks away from graduating from PCC (then known as Pasadena Junior College) before his education was interrupted by Executive Order 9066, the president’s order to incarcerated over 100,000 Japanese Americans in internment camps.

“Dad did get his [Pasadena Junior College] diploma while in camp,” said Fukutoki Potter in a statement. “But he and other Nisei students did not have the opportunity to march in the graduation ceremony. They never got to experience this rite of passage.”

This June, PCC officials are hoping to make up for a six-decade-long missed opportunity by honoring Edgar Fukutoki with his honorary degree.

Over 100 Nisei PCC students were affected by Executive Order 9066, according to the college.

California State University, Fresno has gathered a preliminary list of 77 names of former students who may be eligible for honorary degrees. CSU Fresno officials are searching for Nisei students who were enrolled the fall of 1941 to the fall of 1942. Local JACL chapters and districts have been helping in the search effort.

Sacramento City College (SCC) is also searching for its former Nisei students as a part of its diploma project.

The California Nisei College Diploma Project is the result of Assembly Bill 37, a bill introduced by Calif. Assemblyman Warren Furutani and signed into law by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The California Community College, California State University and University of California systems are all involved.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CSU Fresno Student Affairs: 559/278.2541; PCC 626/885-7315 or www.pasadena.edu/pccnisei; SCC: www.scc.lorinos.edu/scc_nisei_diploma_project.xml

Chris and Cathy Reed had little chance of competing for the U.S., so they turned to different nations.

By Rachel Cohen
AP Sports Writer

WARREN, New Jersey—If the ice dancing teams from Japan and Georgia share the rink during Olympic warmups, watch out. Some fierce trash-talking is bound to break out.

The three Reed siblings burst into laughter at that image. Joking aside, they’ll feel only pride when they finally appear on their sport’s biggest stage.

Cathy, 22, and Chris, 20, will represent Japan in Vancouver; their mother is Japanese, and they have dual citizenship. Allison, 15, will skate for the former Soviet republic of Georgia, the home country of partner Otar Japaridze.

In all their years of ice dancing, the New Jersey natives have never before competed against each other.

“It’s amazing how it all worked out,” Cathy said. When she was 13 and Chris was 11, they didn’t seem destined for the Olympics. Both competed in singles figure skating and enjoyed the sport, but the Reeds were hardly prodigies — they never advanced beyond local events.

“My jumps, my spins were just not working,” she said. It might have ended there, except a coach suggested ice dancing. Cathy had done ballet growing up, but Chris had no background in dance; football and karate were his sports of choice. At first, he just thought ice dancing was skating.

“What is this?” he thought. “This is so easy.”

Not really. Chris was much shorter than his older sister at the time, so their lifts were more like him briefly throwing her in the air.

But the sport certainly proved more natural to the Reeds and before they knew it they were finishing 10th at junior nationals.

In 2004, the pair just missed qualifying for nationals, and their family had a decision to make. Should they give up, or try ice skating? As a sport where the partners must look right togeth­er, Chris was just too short at 4 foot 10 inches. She tried about eight potential partners and none panned out.

Then she found out Japaridze, who was home in New Jersey, was seeking a new partner.

Within days of the tryout, she was back to home­schooling. In September, the new pair went to an Olympic qualifying event in Germany that would determine the final five teams in Vancouver. They won the fifth and final spot.

In less than a year, Allison went from not having a partner to going to the Olympics. The ice dancing competition is scheduled to begin Feb. 19.

Like any fan of the Olympics, their mother, Noriko, has seen the symbol of the five rings countless times. The reality that her children were heading to Vancouver hit home when she returned from the European championships with Allison, and Cathy and Chris had received their official Japan Olympic gear.

“It just came out perfect,” Noriko Reed said. “It’s amazing how things can change in your life.”

On the Web

http://www.ice-dance.com/reeds/

www.vancouver2010.com
Will Autra (center) won the 2008 Min Yasui Oratorical Competition.

Who Will Be the Next Min Yasui?

Guidelines and procedures for the 2010 JACL Minoru Yasui Oratorical Competition are being distributed to help JACL district governors and chapter presidents to identify participants for the speech competition that culminates at the upcoming Chicago national convention. JACL chapters are being asked to identify high school students, age 16 or older, or full-time undergraduate college students to compete at JACL district council competitions. The winners will advance to the finals at the July 2 national convention, where they will present their three to five minute presentation in front of an audience of convention delegates and attendees.

The topic of this year’s competition is: Our 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama inspired and motivated a nation with a simple word, ‘change.’ As our nation still faces economic turmoil, wars abroad, as well as damaged health care and immigration systems, ‘change’ has never been more welcome. What can the Asian Pacific American community and the JACL do to inspire and create change to meet the needs of America’s current socio-political landscape?’

The deadline for JACL district councils to submit the names of their finalists to national JACL is May 15. The oratorical competition is named in memory of Yasui, an attorney and civil rights activist who testified before the Supreme Court about the unconstitutionality of the curfew orders imposed against Japanese Americans after the Pearl Harbor attack. During the 1980s, Yasui served as an articulate voice for the JACL’s successful campaign for Redress.

The competition was established to encourage and reinforce communication skills among young JACL members. Finalists will be given roundtrip airfare to Chicago, two nights lodging and attendance at the youth luncheon where the winner will be announced.

For more information or to download forms: www.jacl.org

COMMENTARY
Are the Benefits of Chapter Scholarship Programs Worth It?

By Brandon Mita

The most common complaint I’ve heard from chapter and chapter presidents is that they have this scholarship program, which gives out considerable sums of money to academically gifted high school, undergraduate, and graduate students each year.

As a chapter board member you’ve diligently organized your scholarship committee to recruit donors and advertise to potential applicants. You’ve put in countless hours working with your board’s legal counsel to ensure that your accounting is in order.

On top of that, your chapter has paid a pretty penny to host a modest but generous luncheon. And because fundraising is an implicit function of your role as a board member, you have the burden of personally financing a table at the luncheon.

So what’s the complaint? The biggest concern is that chapters expend all of this time, effort and money with little turnaround from its scholarship recipients. In other words, students graciously receive their awards, take a couple of photos with the amazing donors, eat the free food at the scholarship luncheon, and then conveniently, are never heard from again.

I’ve heard the argument that JACL should reward these young, talented individuals and expect nothing in return. I can accept this argument based on the fact that the JACL is a charitable organization. Charity means giving to those in need. Students are needy. As a student myself about to finish law school, I’m starting at $150,000 of debt and a terrible job market.

On the other hand as a JACL national board member, I see that membership numbers continue to decline. As a membership-based non-profit, without members we don’t have money. Without money, we can’t run programs. Logically, it behooves us to go out and get more members.

In my role as national youth representative, I see the organization doing a couple of things in order to solve this dilemma: 1. Have an effective strategy towards tapping into the existing Japanese American youth/student population; or 2. expand the JACL membership base by reaching out to other Asian Pacific American communities.

Now, you’re probably asking, “Okay, how can we do that? What do scholarship awards have to do with your argument?” In reality, all of the things I have discussed here are interconnected.

Here’s a novel idea, if your chapter’s scholarship committee is flexible and the donors’ intent allows for it, convert one or two of your existing scholarships into awards. These awards would be given to student/youth organizations that have contributed significantly to their on-campus and local communities. Moreover, these awards should not be limited to JA student organizations.

Not only do student organizations benefit in receiving funds to continue their programming initiatives, but chapters can also attain exposure to a broader APA community, and thereby, build stronger coalition ties.

We learn about their issues as student organizations. They learn about ours.

Moreover, this is the perfect recruitment strategy to inject a greater youth presence into the JACL. All too often, I hear that chapter members don’t know what kind of programming to offer younger folks. Well, that problem can be resolved here by recruiting these young, talented individuals who are already engaged in some great activism.

As a personal anecdote, I am one of the founders of Howard University’s Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, which was formed last year as the university’s first APA organization. Funding for student organizations at Howard is based on an organization’s number of members. I’m sure you can guess that there are not too many APA students walking around at Howard. We receive a little over a $100 in funding for the entire year.

Talk to some of the students at Howard and you’ll hear about some of the great events we put on each semester that incorporate APA identity, Black/Asian conflict, undocumented immigration, hate crimes, etc. We have the ideas, the passion, we just need contacts to put on these events, but not the money.

I’m sure I speak for most student leaders when I say that student organizations would greatly appreciate more funding to put on bigger and better programs. Moreover, it would be nice to be recognized by community organizations like the JACL. Most importantly, if a community group were to give my student organization a monetary award, I would be inclined to participate and be more proactive in that community organization’s programming and issue initiatives.

My last and final argument is a quick and dirty analogy relating to the stock market. A common technique in risk management is to diversify your portfolio. Relating that back to JACL, we’ve been opening ourselves up to tremendous risk by investing solely in scholarship recipients and hoping that they come around and join JACL. So, why not diversify?

I know you may have more concerns, and I want to address them all. I’m willing to work with any chapter that is amenable to this idea and willing to implement it. Please feel free to contact me at youthrep@jacl.org with any of your questions.

Brandon Mita is the JACL national youth representative.
Power of Words, Part Two

The purpose of the JACL proposal, which seeks to replace euphemisms used to describe the World War II JA experience, is education.

By Mako Nakagawa

Part one of the "Power of Words" dealt with the need to take a hard look at the terminology used to describe the incarceration of Nikkei during World War II. I focused on two specific terms — "evacuation" and "relocation."

Now I wish to focus on two more terms "concentration camp" and "internment camp."

Concentration Camps

Some people have said using the term "concentration camp" to describe where Nikkei were incarcerated during WWII is harsh. I totally agree. But the Nikkei experience within the camps can be accurately described as harsh.

I also agree that the Nikkei WWII experience cannot be compared to the Nazi camps in Europe. The brutality in the Nazi camps deserves the distinction of being designated as "slave labor camps", "death camps" and "killing centers."

The term "concentration camp" was used as a euphemism to mask the horrifying reality of the Nazi-run death camps. I propose we not shy away from the term "American concentration camps, or the terms "Nazi death camps" and "killing centers."

Quite simply, that is what they were.

Internment Camps

The Geneva Conventions legitimate the "internment" of citizens of a country who are present in another country in a time of war between those countries.

My father was an Issei, a citizen of Japan, and thus ineligible to become an American citizen. He was initially interned at the Missoula, Montana Department of Justice (DOJ) camp. The term internment is properly used in his case — and for more than 17,000 other people of Japanese ancestry — were interned at DOJ camps like the one in Missoula.

But for the many other Japanese Americans incarcerated in camps run by the Army and the War Relocation Authority, the term "internment" is a misnomer.

Civil rights activist Edison Uno had championed the term "American concentration camp" as early as April 1974.

I strongly urged JACL to take the action in ensuing euphemisms and replacing them with honest and accurate terms. PWNA prepared a resolution for the Oct. 30-31 national board meeting, but the outcome did not meet our hopes and expectations. It was announced that an old resolution regarding euphemisms already exists. Resolutions considered duplicates in subject matter are generally rejected by policy practice. Of course, we are anxious to secure a copy of the old resolution.

Perhaps we can add strategies to expedite the educational aspects of the resolution and seek the approval of the national council at the JACL national convention.

With two districts already officially supporting our "Power of Words" resolution, and interest from a number of other districts, we are very hopeful that a clear, strong and effective measure can be launched in Chicago.

The focus of the "Power of Words" proposal is education. Some may want to learn why terms are considered euphemisms and may decide to begin using different words. Then again, they may not — it's their choice.

If your chapter or district wants to support the "Power of Words" proposal, please bring it up at your meetings. E-mail me at mako@clearwire.net. I will send you a copy of the proposal and related material.

Mako Nakagawa is a retired educator with the Seattle Public Schools. She is also a Seattle JACL member.

Key speakers included former Sen. Alan Simpson and former Sec. of Transportation Norman Mineta. Simpson first met Mineta at a Boy Scouts meeting at Heart Mountain.


First JA D.C. Summit Focused on Camp Preservation

The JACL worked with other national historic preservation organizations to preserve World War II confinement sites at the first Japanese American Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C.

The Feb. 3-4 summit was themed, "Preservation, Interpretation, Education."

Three million dollars has been set aside for the summit. The JACL worked with other national organizations to secure this funding by meeting with Sec. Ken Salazar in the federal budget for grants to assist in the preservation and restoration of national JA confinement sites.

The JACL has been advocating for more money by meeting with Sec. Ken Salazar from the Department of Interior, and Jon Jarvis, director of the National Park Service.

Kearn (center) with Phillip Ozaki, JACL Mineta fellow (left) and Jean Shiraki, JACL Inouye fellow.

Kearn Keynotes Washington, D.C. JACL Installation

Mark Kearn, the newly-elected delegate for the 35th District in Virginia's House of Delegates, was the keynote speaker at the Washington, D.C. JACL chapter installation.

Kearn, who attended the event with his wife Alex and children Brenna and Tyler, edged out John Hyland to become the first Korean American in the legislature.

He previously worked for the Federal Communications Commission, the Small Business Administration, and Verizon Communications.

In 1988, while attending the University of California, Irvine Kearn was chosen by John Tobe, a Washington, D.C. JACL to be a D.C. intern.

"He is an outstanding young Asian American leader, and we expect even bigger things from him in the future," said Floyd Mori, JACL national director.

Mori installed the Washington, D.C. JACL board officers, with Michelle Amano continuing to serve as chapter president.

A past president's pin was awarded to Emily Ihara, who served with Amano as co-president during the past term of office.
Working For Immigration Reform

By Kristin Fukushima

The immigration system is broken. It is so broken, in fact, that the only way to move forward in fixing the system is by creating an entirely new system — comprehensive immigration reform.

In the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community, 63 percent of AAPIs are foreign-born. And we suffer the longest backlogs.

The JACL, recognizing the need for reform in the APA community has made immigration reform a top policy issue. In fact, JACL is working on this issue on both coasts, and on every level (local, regional, national), with the aim of passing comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) in 2010.

Nationally, JACL is part of a nationwide campaign known as the Reform Immigration For America (RIFA). Here on the West Coast, that means participating in a subgroup of RHA known as the California Table. The CA-Table, a multiracial coalition of 50-plus organizations, is a statewide mobilization of immigrant advocates. So far, JACL has participated in press-conferences, marches, rallies, legislative visits, town hall meetings, community forums, and much more. There is always an event to attend, so anyone interested should definitely contact me.

In addition to work with RHA, we have also recently formed a Los Angeles AAPI Immigration Task Force on the West Coast, which JACL co-chairs.

On the East Coast, Phillip Ozaki, JACL’s Norman Mineta Fellow, is also working on the RHA campaign and collaborating with other APA organizations on immigration issues. Most recently, this has meant participating in a blogging campaign for the National APA Week of Action, which JACL was involved in on both coasts.

For the campaign, Phillip coordinated blogs from various JACL staff and board members, which you can check out at: www.apaforgprogress.org/blogs/jaclp4progress.

Phillip also coordinated a national text messaging campaign, utilizing the JACL National Youth Student Council’s Facebook group. About 100 JACLCers texted “AAPI” to the number “69866” to join a mobile network supporting AAPI’s stake in immigration reform.

“Our generation is wired on text messaging,” said Phillip. “Texting is the fastest way to reach someone, and a great tool to spark interests and get younger community members involved.”

New technology and the internet have changed community organizing, and make it easier for us to reach out to the youth in our community.

An issue JACL faces in our work on CIR is the continuous framing of immigration as a “Latino issue.” There is an ongoing lack of AAPI voices, faces, and perspectives in the debate, so our issues are often overlooked. It is critical that we ensure our community and its issues are inserted into the discussion, and that our concerns are addressed in legislation.

That is why JACL is involved with AAPI-focused immigration coalitions in addition to our work with RHA. These AAPI coalitions provide a space for the AAPI community to discuss and address specific immigration issues unique to their ethnic community as well as the wider AAPI community.

With JACL working on immigration from both coasts, we are that much more effective. However, to get CIR passed in 2010, we need support from every part of JACL. Phillip and I encourage chapter leaders to engage members in the discussion. It’s easy to get involved — you can blog, write an op-ed, put something in your chapter newsletter, or sign up to receive updates by texting “AAPI” to “69866.” JACL staff members are ready and willing to help out in any way, by providing materials, workshops, or any other kind of support.

There is a National Mobilization Day march in Washington, D.C. on March 21, with similar events across the country. We need to make sure the AAPI and Japanese American voices are heard in the debate. This is our issue too.

Kristin Fukushima is the public policy coordinator in the Pacific Southwest District Office. Phillip Ozaki is the current Norman Mineta Fellow in the Washington, D.C. office. Want to get involved? Contact Kristin at kfukushima@jacpsov.org or Phillip at jacl.minetafellow@gmail.com.

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*Opting into the paperless P.C. program means you will no longer receive the print edition. You can download the PDF of the entire issue at www.pacificcitizen.org.
Art of Gaman
WASHINGTON, D.C.
March 5-Jan. 30, 2011

For the second time, the Smithsonian Institution is mounting an internment camp exhibit. ‘The Art of Gaman’ exhibition will be held at the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery. It is based on a book by Delphine Hirasuna.

For information
www.americanart.si.edu or
GallerV.

Northern Calif.
Festival of Children’s Stories
SAN FRANCISCO
Feb. 28, 1:30 p.m.

For information
www.americanart.si.edu or 202/633-7970

Central Calif.
DOR Dinner & Groundbreaking
FRESNO
Feb. 21, 4:30 p.m.; dinner 5 p.m.

For information
www.americanart.si.edu or 202/633-7970

Art of Gaman

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For information
www.americanart.si.edu or 202/633-7970

Korematu v. United States

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www.americanart.si.edu or
GallerV.

Historical Landmark Unveiling
MARYSVILLE
Feb. 27, 11 a.m.

Marysville Buddhist Church
125 B Street
The Marysville JACL and the Arboga Assembly Center Committee will dedicate the Arboga No. 934 plaque. John Tateishi, immediate former JACL national director, will keynote.

Info: arboagassemblycenterproject@yahoo.com

Merridion vs Freedom

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For the second time, the Smithsonian Institution is mounting an internment camp exhibit. ‘The Art of Gaman’ exhibition will be held at the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery. It is based on a book by Delphine Hirasuna,

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TRIBUTE

Amy Hashiguchi-Kawaoka
August 21, 1927—December 20, 2009

Amy Hashiguchi-Kawaoka, a resident of Gardena, Calif., left this earth to enter Heaven to be with Christ on Sunday, Dec. 20, 2009 at the Torrance Memorial Medical Center after her courageous battle with an ongoing illness. She was born on Aug. 21, 1927 in Sunnyside, Calif., in the county of San Diego. She is survived by her son, Alan Kawaoka; daughter, Beth Edwards; brothers Henry, James, John and Bill Hashiguchi; and sister Betty Inahara. She was preceded in death by brothers Leo, Roy, Fred Hashiguchi and her son Christopher Kawaoka. Services were held Jan. 10 at Rice Mortuary in Torrance, Calif. She will be missed by all the lives she touched.

Attend the Manzanar School Reunion

The Manzanar school reunion will be held Aug. 9-11 at California Hotel in Las Vegas, said Hank Nakano, reunion committee chair. Buses will be available from Los Angeles, Gardena, Venice and the San Fernando Valley. Reunion events will include a slot tournament at the Main Street Station Casino and a banquet. Rangers from the Manzanar National Historic Site will also provide the latest information on park activities.

Veterans’ Group Calling For Scholarships Applicants

The Japanese American Veterans Association has increased the dollar amount and number of scholarships it will be awarding this year, according to Calvin Ninomiya, JAVA scholarship chair. The awards will be $500 each, said Ninomiya. The deadline is April 21.

To be eligible, applicants must have graduated from high school students related lineally to a veteran of the 100th Infantry Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team or the Military Intelligence Service.

Japanese Americans who have or are serving in the U.S. armed forces are also eligible. And relatives of JAVA members can also apply. Each applicant must submit an essay on the topic, “What winning a JAVA scholarship award will mean to me.” Applicants must also provide documentation that they have been accepted to an accredited college or university.

JAVA’s 2010 scholarship program has been augmented by three new scholarships from the estate of Kiyoko Tsuboi or the Military Intelligence Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat serving in the U.S. armed services are chair.

According to Ninomiya, JAVA’s offices will be awarding this year, according to Ninomiya, JAVA will be awarding this year, according to Ninomiya, JAVA.

California Hotel, Las Vegas
For reservation: Sam Ono, 310/327-5568 or samono@earthlink.net
For info: Lillian Kawasaki, 562/754-8850 or lillary@iowl.com;
Cherry Uyeda, 818/961-2629; Henry Nakano, 714/871-8178; Kanji Sahara, 310/539-3733; k.sahara@worldnet.att.net

For more information or to download forms: www.javadc.org

Professor Helped Established Asian American Studies

Under her leadership, the Asian American Studies Center developed its Master’s Degree program. Cheng served as the first permanent director of the center from 1972-1987 succeeding the interim director Harry Kitano.

Cheng also helped establish the university’s first endowed chair in Asian American Studies.

After she retired from teaching, Cheng worked as a publisher and journalist for two newspapers in Taiwan, including the Lepao Newspaper founded by her father, Cheng She-Wo. In 2006, Cheng established the Cheng She-Wo Institute for Chinese Journalism at Shih Hsin University.

IN MEMORIAM

For information about a specific obituary, please visit the Asian American Studies Center's website or the University of California, Los Angeles' website. The obituaries listed are from various newspapers in the Los Angeles area and are provided as a public service.

Obituaries appear in a limited, space-available basis at no cost.

Lucie Cheng, the former University of California, Los Angeles' director of the Asian American Studies Center and a pioneering social scientist, passed away Jan. 27 in Taipei, Taiwan from cancer.

FOR CHINESE JOURNALISM AT SHIH HISN UNIVERSITY.

Obituaries appear in the Asian American Studies Center's newsletter and are also available on the university's website.
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Union Bank is a proud supporter of the California Nisei College Diploma Project. We are honored to be involved with an initiative that recognizes the important history of our Nikkei community. For more information or to obtain an application, stop by one of our select local branches or visit unionbank.com/niseicollege.

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