JACL, APA groups denounce racism at UC San Diego.

Is Toyota’s safety recall bringing back Japan-bashing?

A PAPERLESS P.C.?
JACL national board members, staffers are debating about a timeline for the newspaper to become all-digital. >> PAGE 3

No pain, no gain for ‘The Biggest Loser’ cousins.
Not About Honor

The article by John Takeihihi regarding Watada (“About Honor,” Feb. 5-18) is an affront to those who have honorably served in the United States military.

Watada accepted a commission in the U.S. Army and was separated from service discharged “under other than honorable conditions.” He had used a legal maneuver to get released from his commitment.

I am proud to have served in the U.S. Army as a commissioned officer [and] a disabled veteran. I do not want this individual to get any favorable recognition for his cowardly action.

Howard Okamoto
1000 Club Member and Past Philadelphia JACL president

Pass On the Stories

Thank you for the [Feb. 5-18] edition of your paper. The amount of history is phenomenal. The Alien Land Law story (“Documents Tell Government’s Side of the Alien Land Law Cases”) and the commentary from the high school student (Katie Nakano’s “Finding a Buried Past”) were excellent. In 1942, I was 10 years old when evacuated from Santa Barbara to Tulelake Assembly Center. We as a family spent a year and a half in low-level jobs in Ohio and Illinois until we were able to come back to California. Through the P.C., Trend about professional jobs and the baby boom, Nisei and Sansei were getting professional type jobs. The future looked brighter for me. Please continue the good work and pass on the stories about our ethnic community and more.

Kay Alko Willis
Santa Barbara, Calif.

A Digital Debate — Let’s Hear from the Membership

By Caroline Aoyagi-Stom
Executive Editor

In this issue you will read our feature story: “Thriving the Pacific Citizen into the Digital Age,” an in-depth look at the controversial issue of if and when this newspaper should get rid of its print edition and go all digital. Reporter Nalani J. Ko does an excellent job of investigating the issue from the board perspective.

But what has been missing so far in this contentious debate is you, the JACL membership and our non-member subscribers who read the P.C. issue after issue. We want to hear from you: do you believe it’s time to cease our print edition and go all digital?

Reporter Ko outlines the facts but there are some I would like to highlight. So far the P.C. editorial board and staff have pushed for a cautious and exploratory approach to this issue. In fact you can read the editorial board’s 2010 Media Plan on the P.C. website (www.pacificcitizen.org). The Feb. 13 national board resolution calls for a timetable for our members and subscribers. You can even download the entire site (www.pacificcitizen.org). The Feb. 13 national board resolution calls for a timetable for our members and subscribers.

So what is the rush to go all digital?

So far no revenue has been generated through the digital P.C. Students sound off about racial incidents at UCSD. (See AOYAGI-STOM)
Thrusting the *Pacific Citizen* into the Digital Age

Most JACL board members and staffers agree that the *Pacific Citizen* will eventually become an all-digital publication, but opinions vary about when the transition should occur.

By Naoko J. Ko, Reporter

JACL's board and members voiced their concerns about ostracizing readers if the *Pacific Citizen* went to a Web-only format as was proposed at the recent national board meeting.

The National Board of Directors at the Feb. 12 meeting approved a resolution, directing the P.C. editorial board — with the voice of the member audience in mind — to create a plan to transition to an all-digital newspaper.

The motion was made by National JACL Secretary-Treasurer Joshua Spry, and was seconded by PNNW District Governor Chip Larouche. It passed with district governors Sharon Ishii-Jordan (MOC) and Toshi Abe (EOC) in opposition.

The plan is slated to be presented at the April 9-11 national board meeting.

At the Feb. 12 meeting National Director Floyd Mori introduced a plan, "The Future For JACL: Budgeting," which outlined the P.C. needs to move to the Web and cease the print edition.

The plan also indicates that the print copy of the P.C. is not the preferred medium for the "targeted demographic of the JACL." According to the proposal each chapter would likely be responsible for downloading a PDF of the electronic P.C. and distributing copies of the issue to members.

It was also proposed that the P.C. office and staff relocate to San Francisco, Calif. to free additional funds.

"It needs to be understood that the P.C. now accounts for over 20 percent of the JACL's total budget and 50 percent of the revenues derived from membership," Mori explained in an e-mail to the P.C. "Critical staff positions in youth, education, and development, which are all at the heart of the JACL programs of the future, have been cut." He did not specify which positions, but said cuts were made over the past 10 years.

"Budgetary considerations," he said, are the reason the transition needs to be addressed sooner than later.

Some question the statistics outlined in Mori's plan which uses yet to be approved numbers from the 2011-2012 proposed budget. Eight other revenue sources currently contribute to the JACL budget, other than membership revenue, said Margie Yamamoto, P.C. editorial board chair. She added that the JACL's total revenue in 2009 was $2,088,621 and the P.C.'s total budget was $412,284, which amounts to 19.7 percent of the JACL's budget.

The P.C. also raises about 50 percent of its budget through fundraising, advertising and subscriptions. There are about 800 non-member subscriptions to the P.C., which brings in about $320,000 a year. If the print edition were eliminated, there is a possibility these funds would need to be replaced. The P.C. is also incorporated in the JACL's constitution and bylaws as the "official publication" of the organization. Should the print edition be eliminated, the bylaws would need to be amended.

Members and district governors, among others, are concerned about how eliminating the 81-year-old print edition will impact long-time JACL members.

Spry motioned to create a plan to move the P.C. to a Web-only format by 2014, but Mori said the budget needs to be fixed sooner.

"The demographic of the future is our younger generation to whom the printed media is a relic of the past," Mori explained.

Reading the news via the Internet is more convenient for some. "I have become comfortable with reading my news via the Internet," said Marilyn Takashashi Fordney, 72, an Oxnard, Calif. resident. "It helps retain our trees, so that we can breathe better and not use paper."

But others said the decision should be further researched before eliminating the print edition forever. It is unclear without conducting a survey how the majority of members would like to receive their news.

"I am disappointed and concerned that the JACL is seeking to completely eliminate the print edition of the Pacific Citizen in an effort to reduce costs for the organization," Ishii-Jordan said. "Given the demographics of the organization and the long-standing loyalty of a number of members, who do not own a computer and/or do not feel comfortable accessing or reading digital news, it is amazing that the JACL would consider such a move."

Jim Nagae, Portland, Ore. member said his 88-year-old mother does not have a computer and "would not read the digital version of the P.C."

"I think the P.C. provides a link for her to others of her generation as well as providing other general news involving other Asian Americans beyond her immediate neighborhood," Nagae said, mentioning that his mother was currently reading the P.C.'s story about Fred Yamamoto, a missing Japanese American from Washington State.

Tim Koide, membership coordinator, said at the national meeting that over 50 percent of the JACL members are over the age of 70. These members, said some board members, prefer the print edition.

National President T. Larry Odaka said even though the "future" think print is dead, there should be a hard copy of the P.C. as long as half of the membership were born before 1940.

The P.C. staff has conducted an informal poll over the last few months to better understand members' needs. Out of about 100 readers who returned a survey to the P.C., more than half indicated that as of March 2 that they would prefer the print edition rather than an electronic version.

Milo G. Yoshino, Diablo Valley chapter member, also administered an informal phone poll of about 12 people to see if members would prefer reading their news online.

"If my limited and informal poll is any indication of what could happen, we could lose as much as 20 percent of our membership," Yoshino said. "That would translate to a loss of 3,000 members, which in turn represents over $200,000 of lost membership revenue."

JACL has not conducted a survey of its members to determine their preference.

"Although I agree with Floyd's premise that the organization cannot afford much longer to subsidize the P.C. at the level we are currently doing, we need to investigate what the actual impact is on the members who rely on this publication," Larouche said.

Others also question how stopping the press on the print edition would actually save JACL money. The print edition — including the Holiday Issue, Veterans' and Scholarship issues — is some of the P.C.'s primary means of raising revenue.

"Unfortunately, if the print edition ceases we will no longer be able to provide our special issues either, including our popular Holiday Issue and Veterans' Day issue," said Caroline Asayan-Strom, P.C. executive editor. "It's just not feasible both from a staffing and printer's perspective."

The P.C. editorial board passed a New Media Plan Feb. 6 at their annual board meeting and it was presented to the national board Feb. 12 but the national board did not adopt the plan. There are now two media plans examining the future of the P.C.

The editorial board's plan outlined that, "newspaper online advertising only accounted for 9.7 percent of the total newspaper ad revenue in the third quarter of 2009." Yamamoto said at the national board meeting that moving the P.C. to the Web would come at a cost despite conflicting claims.

Most understand that journalism will one day move to an all-digital format, but they question the rush of moving the P.C. to the Web only format before 2014, which was initially suggested by Spry.

"Committing to a specific timeline for the transition to an all-digital P.C. at this time, when the future of newspapers is in such a volatile state, would be both dangerous and short-sighted, according to Paul Niwa, a professor of journalism at Emerson College in Boston," Yamamoto explained.

Niwa, a member of the P.C. editorial board, said there is not one example in ethnic media or mainstream media of a newspaper successfully going to an all-digital format. He added that the P.C. is an opportunity for the members to communicate with the JACL leadership, in contrast to a newsletter, which is only the membership leadership.

"Well of course this is a newspaper for members," Niwa added. "And by giving up the newspaper, we're cutting off the dialogue that members can have with their leadership. And I think that's why the leadership of JACL wants more control of this newspaper. It's more of an issue of does the leadership want this dialogue with their members?"
Students at Stanford University indulge in Asian American fare for lunch.

APAs have among the lowest statistics of obesity globally, so what’s to blame for growing waistlines?

By Christine McFadden
Special to the Pacific Citizen

Stanford University sophomore Julia Chang scans the dinging hall for food after spending her winter break at home in Taiwan. Eyeing the pizza, hamburgers, French fries, and other foods, she remembers what her grandmother used to make.

"It was so unappealing compared to what my grandma made [at home]." Chang said. "It was so hard, one to make.

In comparison to the abundance of fresh vegetables, seaweed, tofu, and lean meat she was accustomed to in Taiwan, Chang finds the discrepancy between American food — even Asian, American food — large and the transition back to consuming it a necessary, yet difficult, one to make.

Once back in America, Chang is one of many Asian Pacific Americans who find themselves eating larger portions of unhealthy food and gaining weight as a result.

"After a while, I get used to it [American food] and I start eating more, and then I have to work out in order to not get fatter," said Timtim, who is Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino.

APAs have among the lowest statistics of obesity globally, so what’s to blame for growing waistlines?

Asian Vs. American Food

According to the Office of Minority Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the portion of APAs over 18 years of age who were defined as overweight (having a Body Mass Index, or BMI, of 25 or greater) in 2007 was 29.2 percent, whereas Non-Hispanic Whites were 34.5 percent, with a ratio of 0.82 between the two.

The number of "low-income Asian and Pacific Islander children in California" who were considered overweight rose from 7 percent to 15 percent, more than doubling from 1994 to 2003, according to Modine News today.

In addition to poverty, several accounts of the discrepancies between the types and portions of traditional Asian cuisine and both American and Asian American food pointed toward possible explanations as to why this number has so drastically increased.

Chang, who lived in Taiwan for four years before moving to America, has since returned to Taiwan every summer. She notes that, in her experience, the largest differences in foods between the two countries have been the ingredients.

"The most of the food in Taiwan comes from natural whole ingredients that are purchased in open air markets," Chang recalled. "They have real chickens that are slaughtered there and the farmers bring their produce straight from the countryside, whereas in America, I feel that this [food] is a lot more processed.

In terms of AA food, she believes that the central distinction from authentic Asian food comes both how the food is made and a lack of vegetables in the ingredients.

"Recently, I noticed I’ve been gaining a little more weight because I was eating at Wilbur more," Chang said of an Asian food-themed dining hall at Stanford. "I don’t think it (Asian food at Wilbur) comes from completely natural ingredients. I’d eat a lot of rice, and then I have a lot of sugar in American food as one of the main differences between the two.

“American food in general I think has a lot more calories and is a lot more greasy — more fried stuff,”

Kao recalled. "They have it in huge portions, but with more variety. "Even though it’s little, you feel like you’re eating a lot.”

In addition, she cites that the type of "fast" food available in both countries is dissimilar.

"American and Asian American food pointed back to consuming it a necessary, yet difficult, one to make.

Within APA subgroups, the Department of Health and Human Services lists Filipinos as having the highest obesity statistics amongst Asian and Pacific Islander [Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander] adults over 18 years of age in 2007 as engaging in “Inactive Physical Activity” in comparison with 34.7 percent of Non-Hispanic Whites.

Despite the numbers, both Chang and Kao report working out more in America. Conversely to Timtim’s cultural insight on Hawaiian, they attribute the stereotypical American cultural pressure of girls staying skinny and guys bulking up as the reason why physical activity may be increasingly popular among APAs. In other examples, physical fitness can sometimes dispel the assumption that Pacific Islanders are larger due to inactivity and lifestyle.

Numerous college and NFL football teams actively recruit Pacific Islander players. Arizona University is known to traditionally recruit Samoans, among them quarterback Willie Taggart and George Malauulu. The University of Oregon consistently sports players of Polynesian descent on their roster.

In an aspect of health that can result in obesity: physical inactivity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists 38.9 percent of APA adults in 2007 as engaging in “Inactive Physical Activity” in comparison with 34.7 percent of Non-Hispanic Whites.

Regardless of genetics, being obese or overweight is a serious health risk, increasing the chance of acquiring type 2 diabetes, developing high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and the likelihood of having a stroke, and other life-threatening diseases.

Between the years of 2003-04, the National Healthcare Disparities Report recorded that APAs were 1.4 times more likely to access outpatient exercise counseling. With APAs obesity among children on the rise, it is even more important that this number increase. Physical education is one of the main emphases for Michelle Obama’s recently initiated campaign against childhood obesity.

"I eat rice because it’s good for me; I enjoy eating healthy," Kao said. "Life is harder if you’re not as healthy. That’s the way I see it.”

"I exercise because it’s good for me; I enjoy eating healthy," Kao said. "Life is harder if you’re not as healthy. That’s the way I see it.”
IN BRIEF: National Board News

Missed the JACL national board meeting? Read a summary of action taken below.*

By Pacific Citizen Staff

New V.P. of Membership, IPC Member are Confirmed

David Lin, a JACL, 100 Club, Life and Millennium Club member, has been confirmed as the new JACL vice president for membership.

Lin was appointed by Larry Oda, JACL national president, to fill the post left vacant since Ryan Chinn stepped down last February. He was unanimously confirmed by the JACL national board at its Feb. 13 meeting in San Francisco, Calif.

He will serve as vice president for membership for the remainder of the biennium.

"I view this as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me personally to make a small contribution to JACL," said Lin. "I am also very grateful to President Oda and the entire national board for placing their trust in me to lead this very important area of JACL."

He has worked closely with the JACL to develop a strong corporate partnership with AT&T, according to the JACL in a Feb. 24 press release.

The “Power of Words” resolution introduced by PNW District Council, states that words like, “evacuation,” “relocation” and “internment camp” do not accurately describe the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II.

If adopted by the national council, the resolution would authorize actions to promote the use of correct terminology and empower the JACL Education Committee to help promote the substitution of the new terminology in all published documents, in future publications and in teacher training.

JACL Chapter Dissolves

The Sawtooth JACL chapter in Idaho has dissolved because of low membership, according to Sawtooth JACL Chapter President Don W. Morishita in a letter to Brian Morishita, IDC district governor.

"Unfortunately, we were never able to sustain an active membership greater than twenty people to remain in good standing with the national JACL," wrote Don W. Morishita in the letter.

At the 2006 national JACL convention in Salt Lake City, the national council did not pass an IDC-backed resolution to reduce the minimum number of members needed to keep chapters in good standing, according to the letter.

Most former Sawtooth chapter members are joining other local chapters.

*This is not a complete summary of events at the Feb. 13 national board meeting.
APA Leaders Call For Policy Review After Racial Incidents at UC San Diego

After the controversial ‘Compton Cookout’ party, a noose was found on campus.

By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

The JACL is calling on University of California, San Diego officials to clearly reject racial intolerance and review internal policies on hate incidents after an off-campus party mocking Black History Month ignited racial tension.

The February party organized by some students reportedly urged people to dress as ghosts and put on假白 makeup. Some said there would be chicken, watermelon and malt liquor. The controversial event sparked national headlines, launched a university investigation and ignited debate about racial tolerance at a campus where 2 percent of the student population is African American.

Some believe that attention was focused on the wrong issue.

“Instead of being outraged over the party, I believe people need to realize that there are deeper problems that need to be addressed, rather than treating the symptoms as they pop up,” said Grant Fukui, an undeclared freshman at UC San Diego.

In general, said Fukui, fraternity parties “regularly feature racist and sexist themes” similar to the so-called “Compton Cookout” party.

“I believe that the ‘Cookout’ was a symptom of widespread insensitivity,” added Fukui.

In a Feb. 23 statement, the JACL and the JACL National Youth/Student Council (NY/SC) expressed outrage at “the shocking lack of judgment and racial insensitivity displayed by the students who organized and participated in this event.” It is also called for a review of internal policies and racism.

The Associated Students president called funding from a student-run TV station after the Koala—a campus media outlet with a reputation for being offensive—came out in support of the party, called black students ungrateful and used a derogatory term for African Americans during a program.

On Feb. 25, a noose was found dangling from a light fixture on the seventh floor of Geisel Library. A University of California statement said a student admitted she and two other people were responsible. The statement did not identify the students or their race or include a motive.

In a Feb. 26 news conference, Fox said the student had been suspended but declined to discuss her motive or other students involved.

“I was heartbroken to see that an issue like this could hit so close to home. I am outraged that such behavior could still occur today,” said JACL NY/SC Youth Chair Kimberly Shinault, a UC San Diego alumna and current staff member.

In response to the incident, campus administrators held a “teach-in” against intolerance Feb. 24. The same day, hundreds of students from UC San Diego and other universities staged a campus protest, demanding that officials make more efforts to combat racism.

The school has also launched a campus-wide “Battle Hate” campaign.

“The month of February, Black History Month, should be a time to embrace our diversity, not mock it,” said Shinault.

WA Legislature OKs Internment Camp Degrees

OLYMPIA, Wash.—The Washington state Legislature has passed a measure that allows honorary degrees to be granted to students who were interned during World War II.

The measure was approved unanimously by the House Feb. 28 and now goes to the governor. The Senate passed the measure earlier last month.

The degrees may be conferred by state universities or colleges upon people who were students at those institutions in 1942, but did not graduate because they were denied into a camp. A representative of a deceased person may also request an honorary degree.

Preservation Projects Included in the 2011 Budget

WASHINGTON—In addition to the $3 million for camp grants funding, President Barack Obama’s fiscal year 2011 budget includes funding initiatives for camp preservation.

Budget requests include preservation projects like the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Memorial at the Eagledale Ferry Dock, among others. JACL has been advocating for camp preservation projects to raise awareness about the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II.

“The JACL met with Sec. of the Interior Salazar and National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis, to request this funding,” said Floyd Mori, JACL national director. “We will continue to work with Sens. Inouye and Feinstein as well as CongressmenHonda to assure these items remain in the budget as it moves through Congress.”

Duckworth Rejects Lt. Governor Offer

CHICAGO, Ill.—Iraq war veteran Tammy Duckworth doesn’t want to be Gov. Pat Quinn’s running mate as lieutenant governor.

Quinn said Duckworth told him Feb. 23 she is keeping her job as assistant secretary at Washington’s Veterans Affairs Department. Duckworth said she asked that her name be withdrawn from consideration, although she said she had kind words for Quinn.

Poll Shows Minority Advocates and Constituents Differ on Immigration

WASHINGTON—A New York poll found that U.S. minority voters and advocacy groups have differing opinions about illegal immigration.

Contrary to advocacy groups, 57 percent of Asian Americans said, “Immigration is too high.” Many advocacy groups said illegal immigration is caused by limits on legal immigration, according to the survey.

In contrast most minority voters said a lack of enforcement is to blame for illegal immigration: 65 percent of Asian Americans, 61 percent of Hispanics and 70 percent of African Americans.

The survey, which was commissioned by the Center for Immigration Studies, was conducted for about 18 days beginning Nov. 13.

Lawsuits Accuse Chinese American Assoc. of Fraud

SAN FRANCISCO—The Chinese American Mutual Association has been accused on fraud and breach of contract in a lawsuit filed by former members’ relatives.

They said that their parents paid more than $15,000 in a span of about a decade, thinking that the association would assist with funeral expenses. Nonprofit officials collected money although, allege the former members’ relatives, they never intended to pay death benefits.

RI Judge to Hear Arguments in Detainee Death Suit

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—A judge is scheduled to hear arguments soon regarding the death of an immigration detainee in Rhode Island.

Hee Lim “Jason” Ng died of liver cancer in August 2008 in custody of Donald W. Wyatt Detention Facility, where his family said he was abused before his death. He was detained for overstaying his visa.

His family sued the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The agency says it’s not responsible.

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APAs in the News

By Pacific Citizen Staff

Yonsei Becomes Youngest Member of Washington, D.C. Chapter Board

Jack Tobe, 13, has become the youngest member of the Washington, D.C. JACL chapter board of directors. Tobe, a Yonsei, attends community events with his father, John Tobe, who currently works for the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C.

“Whatever all the time when my dad takes me to JA events, is the lack of kids,” said Tobe. “Whatever I hope to accomplish as a JACL board member is to get kids more involved in the JACL.”

Liu is Nominated to the Ninth Circuit

If his nomination to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals is confirmed Goodwin Liu, a law professor at the University of California, Berkeley, would be only the fifth Asian Pacific American federal appellate court judge in U.S. history and the only active judge on the Ninth Circuit. Currently, there are no APAs serving in the Court of Appeals, according to the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Los Angeles County (APABA).

President Barack Obama nominated Liu, 39, to the post on Feb. 24. Judge Denny Chin has been nominated to the U.S. 2nd Circuit Court in New York, but has not been confirmed.

JACler Inducted into the Huntsman World Senior Games

Hachiro “Hachi” Aoki, 82, was entered into the Huntsman World Senior Games Oct. 7, becoming the first APA to receive the honor. The JACL member won World Senior Games gold medals for golf, cycling and triathlons.

APA Searching For Blood Cell Match

Tomsuki Hazley was diagnosed with leukemia over a month ago and is searching for a blood cell match to extend her life expectancy. APAs and other ethnic minorities are critically needed to register with the National Marrow Donor Program. Those between the age of 18 and 60, who are healthy, can register as a donor. Free, home test kits can be ordered with the Asian American Donor Program.

Shiu Named ‘Caregiver of the Year’

Shiu, whose sister battled cancer, received the recognition for her legal and legislative advocacy for caregivers.

Nikkei Selected to Asian Health Care Leaders Association

Dennis Sato, a former Marin County JACL president, was selected to the national board of the Health Care Leaders Association, a leadership organization focused on increasing the representation of APAs in health care.

Igasaki Named ‘Parent of the Year’

Hiroyuki Komiya, 40, a Tokyo restaurant employee, was named to Asia Pacific American Legal Affairs

Igasaki is Appointed to U.S. Dept. of Labor Review Board

Igasaki was named by Sec. Hilda Solis to lead the five-member board. Gasaki has served as deputy chief executive officer for Equal Justice Works. He also served as the JACL Washington, D.C. representative.

Mike Murase says Americans are ‘fed a constant diet of xenophobic, jingoistic diatribe about Toyota.’

The Danger Behind Toyota Woes

Wall-to-wall media coverage of the Japanese car company’s woes signals a new wave of Japan-bashing, some say.

By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

Mike Murase says his 2007 Toyota Camry Hybrid is the best car he has ever owned. And like many other Toyota owners, he received a notice from the car company recently that instructed him to take the floor mats out of the car and place them in his trunk until further notice.

“Whatever it [Japan bashing] has already began,” said Larry Shingagawa, a professor and director of the Asian American Studies Program at the University of Maryland. “Whatever’s a quality control issue,” he said about Toyota. And over the years there have been similar examples of quality control issues with American car companies that have not received the same treatment.

“Whatever is it that? And what is it that? And what is it that?” said Shingagawa. “Whatever racing bias. We should call spades and spades.”

In February, the California State Assembly adopted a “Buy American” policy for all future vehicles bought for its fleet.

The policy’s most vocal proponent, Assemblyman Ted Liu, said he wants to encourage other state agencies to only buy vehicles that are at least 50 percent manufactured in the United States.

But Toyota makes more of its cars and trucks in the U.S. than it imports there. Last month it had 14 percent of the U.S. market, third behind General Motors Corp. and Ford Motor Co.

Some say the days of emotional fears of Japanese products that emerged during its economic boom of the 1980s are long gone. Toyota, Honda and Sony are some of the most-trusted brands in America.

But the revival of terms like “Buy American” evokes memories of a darker time in American history when a Detroit man named Vincent Chin in 1982 was mistaken to be of Japanese descent and beaten to death by two out-of-work autoworkers.

Murase remembers the case vividly. He flew to Michigan after Chin’s murder and took part in community gatherings and protests. Some fear a revival of this type of racial scapegoating.

He said many Americans are fed a constant diet of xenophobic, jingoistic diatribe about Toyota, “Whatever the Japanese car maker,” he said, “Terrible does feed into the stereotyping of a whole nation, and unwittingly associates Asian American people to the negligence and arrogance of a profit-motivated corporation,” said Murase.

Qo’s Web site, for example, recently drew a parallel between the reversal of fortunes of Toyota and golfer Tiger Woods, whose image has been tarnished by extramarital affairs.

The Japanese too have periodically worried about the revival of Japan-bashing, when U.S. politicians and automakers accused Japan of unfairly blocking access to its market and stealing American jobs.

“I think the Americans are going overboard,” said Hiroyuki Komiyu, 40, a Tokyo restaurant employee.

“Whatever it’s Japan-bashing because the trouble at Toyota, which has the world’s No. 1 share, is a big opportunity for America’s rivals.”
**Merced Memorial**

On Feb. 20, I had the pleasure of attending the dedication ceremony of the Merced Assembly Center Memorial on the county fair grounds where the temporary camp existed back in the early days of World War II.

Under the authority of the Wartime Civil Control Administration, the Merced site was home to 4,669 Japanese Americans, who were imprisoned there from May 1942 until September, when they were shipped off to Amache in the desolate plains of Colorado.

According to the ceremony program notes, construction on this particular site began on March 26, 1942. That was a little over a month after FDR issued E.O. 9066 and just five days after Congress passed PL 77-503. Just five days! The program notes go on to tell the story how, working 24 hours a day in 12-hour shifts, the construction of the entire compound took only 11 days to complete.

The notes continue: "The work of the Merced community in the building of the assembly center was viewed as ‘wholehearted cooperation given the United States by the citizens and authorities of Merced, according to the Merced Sun-Star.'"

Two things I’m struck by: the “wholehearted cooperation” of the citizens and authorities of Merced to get the prison built in just 11 days. Eleven days to build a compound that would house 4,669 people. Granted, this was not some upscale housing project but was one that did little more than put a roof over people’s heads and a place to sleep. But still, only 11 days to construct a compound that large? One wishes government could fight so hard to educate them through the Redress campaign.

By the dedication of the Merced memorial is significant in many ways, not least of which as a reminder to the citizens of Merced now and in the future of one of the darkest chapters in the constitutional history of this country. Its educational value is inestimable, and the cooperation and enthusiastic support of the local governing bodies of Merced is evidence of that. Americans throughout the country now know what a horrible mistake was made decades ago and what other wise would have been a fundamental constitutional policy. But the attack put aside any constitutional considerations and cast a dark shadow over the entire episode.

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**Sashimi Sickness**

By Ema Nakao

I am Japanese American and I have never eaten sashimi. People find it astonishing that I have never, ever had a piece of maguro, tako or inii in my life.

My severe allergy to seafood and shellfish has been a lifelong medical condition in which even tiny amounts of fish or shellfish protein cause immediate swelling and itching of my mouth, lips and tongue, wheezing and itching all over my body.

Actual ingestion of any seafood and shellfish most results in a severe allergic reaction called anaphylactic shock, which is pretty much swelling up from the inside and choking to death if proper medical help is not received in time.

Over the years, I’ve heard many statements about my condition including, “Oh, I feel so sorry for you!” I often remind people that I’m a pretty good cook when it comes to creating a variety of fish-less Japanese meals. And sushi and sashimi is just a small part of traditional Japanese cuisine.

But on a recent trip to Japan, it was impossible to eat out due to the high risk of cross contamination, so I ate all my meals at my grandmother’s house. Even then, I was called ohimesama (“the princess”) of the house because I was unable to help out with washing the dishes that once contained fish meals.

These severe allergies lead me to play Russian roulette when I eat out at a restaurant or purchase Japanese food items. Many restaurant servers or chefs do not understand the potentially deadly effects of a food allergy. Persistence once saved my life. At a local ramen shop, I asked the server numerous times to ensure that bonito dashi was not in the ramen soup stock. Before my first bite, a subtle scent of fish hit my nose and after speaking to the chef, I found out that the bonito was indeed in my miso ramen.

Had I been unaware, it would have been yet another potentially deadly click on the Russian roulette game. These incidents remind me that I should maintain a long distance friendship with Japanese restaurants.

Luckily, my father is an excellent chef and has been very aware of my allergies after I, at the age of three, landed in the hospital after suffering from my first anaphylactic episode. Many hearty and filling meals can be created by replacing bonito dashi with wakame (seaweed) or mushroom dashi in soups and stews. I’ve learned to substitute fish with tofu, chicken, beef or nutso and even kamaboko can lead to a great variety of traditional meals.

Every New Year, I make ebi uramaki using bonito dashi.

Translation problems have also been a problem, especially when the ingredients are not fully disclosed or are improperly translated. When the Japanese ingredient label on a food product is covered up by the English label, I have to peel off the top label and read the Japanese ingredients at the store to ensure I don’t consume any seafood by accident. This worked for many years until one day I bought a container of miso that failed to disclose its benito content. I had a reaction after the first sip and sat patiently with my Epinephrine injection kit to see if my allergic reaction was going to get worse or subside.

After this incident, my father began making me a batch of miso soup paste each year. He grinds the soybeans by hand, purchases the fermenting bacteria at the local tofu shop and mails me a batch of miso when it has properly fermented. I am so very lucky to have a father that has been able to provide me with such great guidance in learning how to cook traditional Japanese meals as well as eating.

Ema Nakao is a Kentucky-born Shin Nisei who grew up in Hawai'i. She is working to receive her bachelor's degree in molecular, cellular and developmental biology at the University of Washington.
Before Koli Palu appeared on NBC’s “The Biggest Loser,” he made a bet with his brother not to cry on TV. Nearly two months after the first episode aired, Palu has become emotional on more than one occasion, and for good reason. The 29-year-old first weighed in at 403 pounds. Everyday contestants like Palu are challenged at “The Biggest Loser” ranch to change their bad eating habits and laziness. Of week six, he has not only shed over 70 pounds, but also lost the bet with his brother. But Palu said this is the happiest he has ever been. “Koli’s brother, he told him that Koli needed to pay him $100 for every time he cries on TV [laughs],” explained 24-year-old Sam Poueu, Palu’s cousin and “gray” teammate on the show. “As of right now, Koli is broke.”

Poueu joined 10 other family teams of two for the heaviest cast ever on “The Biggest Loser,” which premiered Jan. 5. Together the Polynesian cousins weighed 775 pounds at the start of the season. Poueu has also lost over 70 pounds since the last episode aired. To beat out their competitors for the coveted phone call before the weigh-in was rare. For the challenge Palu and Poueu were strapped into a cage, which was dangling from a crane 120 feet above ground. They had to pull themselves to the top.

The contestants weighed in at home before they stepped on the treadmills at “The Biggest Loser” ranch. Getting on the scale shamed in their homes in front of their family and friends was daunting at first, they said. But seeing their weight publicly displayed in bright lights helped the cousins kick off their journey to a healthier lifestyle. “I had not gone swimming for years because I was too embarrassed to take my shirt off. The home weigh-in was more of a realization that I was obese,” Palu said, who was inspired to audition for the show after watching former Tongan contestant Stoney and Filipe Fa.

“It was very embarrassing at the time, but it was definitely the push I needed to start this journey.”

No Pain, No Gain
When not on the weight loss show, Palu and Poueu both work in Rohnert Park, Calif. doing security. They also coach football. Their late-night security shifts make it difficult to work out and eat right, they said. And being overweight in their Polynesian family was never out of the norm.

Poueu is one of 105 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Guilt, diabetes and hypertension run in the family. The weight loss show was not the only wake up call for them. Days before leaving to the ranch, Poueu’s uncle died. “He had battled weight issues through all of his life, like many Polynesians do. He had gotten severely sick and really depressed,” Poueu said about his uncle who had diabetes and gout, among other health issues. “Three days, honestly, three days before we arrived on the ranch I walked into him lying dead on the floor.”

Being on the show, Poueu was not able to attend the funeral. And due to the confidentiality of the show, the cousins are allowed limited access to the outside. He did not have time to grieve the loss of his uncle until week four on the show when the gray team won a challenge and a coveted phone call home. For the challenge Palu and Poueu were strapped into a cage, which was dangling from a crane 120 feet above ground. They had to pull themselves to the top.

That challenge that Sam just spoke about was our hardest challenge to date,” Palu continued. “And when they told us that we could win a phone call home, Sam and I just went up. We wanted nothing else more than to talk to our parents and our loved ones.”

Losing weight on national television has inspired some of the gray team’s family to head to the gym as well.

Palu’s sister Leseli and mother Seini do “The Season of Sam,” and create T-shirts reading, “I Heart Sam.” Spin-off show or not, the gray team has a renewed appreciation for life.

Looking back at their journey, the cousins said they would never go back to being obese.

“(Koli) told me you I was a wreck prior to coming here,” Poueu said, adding that he used to drink nearly every day of the week. “He was that guy that got me home safely every night. And was there to clean up my mess, and now it’s an opportunity here at the ranch to realize my mess and clean it up myself.”

With the weight loss and new fame, the cousins said they would never be the same after appearing on “The Biggest Loser.”

“It’s crazy because producers and every one they tell you, ‘You’ll notice that there is life before the ‘Biggest Loser’ and then life after.” Poueu explained. “I can already see that that’s going to be a major factor in my future.”

By Naole J. Ko
Reporter

The process of losing weight on national television is a difficult, personal and emotional journey, they said. But there are phases to becoming a reality TV star.

“The single ladies we’ll be out in a little bit,” Poueu said jokingly. Since they are not allowed Internet access, the cousins have not been able to read the adoring comments some female admirers post online.

“For Sam this isn’t a new thing. He’s always had girls after him even when he was obese. This is probably new for me,” Palu said. “Sam’s quote of his life is, ‘I love me some me.’”

Both said that his cousin was going to start a spin-off show called, “The Season of Sam” and create T-shirts reading, “I Heart Sam.” Spin-off show or not, the gray team has a renewed appreciation for life.

While the weight loss and new fame, the cousins said they would never be the same after appearing on “The Biggest Loser.”
Metro Board Agrees to Explore Alternative Build Option in Little Tokyo

MTA will study the fully grade-separated alternative, which will pass under First and Alameda Streets.

By Naen K. Jo

Los Angeles' Little Tokyo stakeholders voiced their support of a new alternative option in the bid to expand the light rail transit system in the area.

The fully grade-separated alternative, or third build option, was created in response to community concerns. On Feb. 25 the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Board of Directors approved adding the alternative to the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project, MTA's plan to connect the Blue Line and Gold Line transit systems.

The nearly two-mile-long project would include Little Tokyo as well as Bunker Hill, the Civic Center, the Toy District, the Historic Core, the Arts District and the Jewelry District, among others.

The Feb. 25 meeting followed the Little Tokyo Community Council's (LTCC) Feb. 18 meeting where members voiced their approval of exploring an alternative build option. LTCC represents over 90 businesses and organizations in the area.

Last November, LTCC sent a letter to the MTA, asking officials to pursue the underground emphasis option, which would run below ground at Second Street. They also emphasized protecting the Nishi Hongwanji Temple's property. Other options encroached on the temple's property. Community leaders expressed concern about the impact of construction that would likely take 3 to 4 years.

"What will it do to us as an institution that's mission is to tell the story of the history of the Japanese here?" said Komai, public relations officer for the Japanese American National Museum at a community meeting last November. If you know anything about the history of the Japanese, you know that Little Tokyo has been constantly pushed around. And you know that, we're getting tired of it.

JANM sees about 100,000 visitors annually. Komai said. He said museum officials are concerned about how the construction phase would impact visitor rates, including school tour programs. The new third build option is, however, favored among most.

"This third build alternative — which is an all underground alternative — is pretty much acceptable to all the parties involved including the folks at the museum," said Bill Watanabe, executive director of the Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC).

In addition to the third build alternative, MTA has put four other options on the table: a no-build alternative, a transportation system management alternative, an at-grade light rail transit alternative and an underground light rail transit alternative. Project Manager Dolores Roybal Saltarelli said MTA would designate a "locally preferred alternative in the fall."

Taking a unified stance, Little Tokyo business leaders said they favor the third build alternative.

"JACL-PSW is in strong support of further exploring the third build alternative," explained Kristin Fukushima, JACL-PSW public policy coordinator. "The PSW board earlier passed a resolution stating our opposition to the original build options proposed, as we found both to be inadequate and damaging to the community."

Most are in favor of the newly introduced alternative, but hope the proper mitigation efforts are implemented to minimize the impact to businesses and residents.

"There are concerns," said Chin Aihara, executive director of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center. "I think it's an important step that we have made. I think there is agreement that the underground alternative is the most viable option."

MTA officials said there is a need to increase the connectivity of the transit system to meet the needs of the growing population. They estimate that by 2035, the population in Los Angeles would grow to nearly 2 million. According to the Southern California Association of Governments, the population in Los Angeles has grown by 12.81 percent since 1990.

Without the regional connector there is a gap in the transit system. MTA officials said the connector would benefit all of Los Angeles not just downtown. It would provide a "continuous trip between the Pasadena Gold Line and Metro Blue Line, and between the Metro Eastside Gold Line and Metro Expo line."

Riders, who have to transfer at Union Station because of the gap, are delayed about 20 minutes and have to pay additional fees. Further reasons why MTA officials said expanding the transit system would be necessary.

"The study is a work in progress and is being developed with the community," Saltarelli said. "Impacts will be identified. Through the efforts of the project team and the community, mitigation measures will be developed."

The cost of each option varies. Saltarelli said the underground emphasis alternative is estimated to cost $1.27 billion and the fully underground alternative $200 to 300 million more. The Regional Connector is expected to receive some funding from the 2008 voter-approved Measure R, the half-cent sales tax increase.

MTA will study the fully grade-separated alternative, which will pass under First and Alameda Streets and create a proposed station between Spring Street and Broadway.

The transportation system management alternative would provide a shuttle service from 7th Street to Union Station. With the at-grade light rail transit alternative the route would head westbound on Main Street and north on Temple Street. The underground light rail alternative would run along Second Street and go into Little Tokyo.

Most in Little Tokyo are in favor of expanding the transit system. But they want the MTA to implement appropriate mitigation efforts during construction as well as iron out a fifth build option.

"I think long term it's going to be great," said Joshua Money, of J.C. Money Company. "But I'm sure it's going to affect our business."

Construction has not begun. MTA is conducting a 18-month environmental impact statement/environmental impact report. That EIS/EIR is expected to be complete in the summer of 2010. The new third build option will be added to the draft EIS/EIR for analysis.

"Although it is still unclear what the full impact of the new third build option will be, the third build alternative appears to be the best option at this point," Fukushima said.
Merced Memorial Honors JA Internees

Mitsunori Fong was the model for the bronze statue named, "Little Girl Sitting on Suitcases." By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

A new memorial now stands in Merced County, Calif. to remember the thousands of Japanese Americans who were incarcerated there during World War II.

More than 150 former Merced Assembly Center internees and their families gathered at the Merced County Fairgrounds Febr. 20 to dedicate the plaza with the statue of a little girl sitting on a pile of suitcases. One of those former internees is Rep. Mike Honda, who was sent there as an infant.

The event took place a day after the 68th anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signing of Executive Order 9066, which authorized the forced removal and incarceration of over 100,000 Japanese American families.

"It is neither a day to celebrate, nor a day to mourn. Rather, it is a day for reflection, dialogue and education of Americans on a very important event in our nation's history," said Honda in a Feb. 19 statement about the Day of Remembrance.

During World War II, over 250 buildings were set up at the fairgrounds to imprison local Japanese Americans from Merced, Livingston, Turlock and other surrounding areas.

More than 4,600 JAs were incarcerated in unroofed barracks at the Merced County Fairgrounds, beginning in 1942, after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Sherman Kishi and his family were forced to leave their Livingston grape farm behind for a black-tarred barack. They arrived at the Merced Assembly Center on May 13, 1942 — Sherman's 17th birthday.

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

To memorialize the fairgrounds' unique past, a local committee — which includes the Center and Merced JACL chapters — raised $250,000 for the project, with a $25,000 grant from the National Park Service.

The bronze monument depicts a young girl sitting on top of a stack of suitcases.

This memorial will not only honor the former internees, but will also be a lasting reminder to the community that this happened to...”

— Robert Taniguchi

"This memorial will not only honor the former internees, but will also be a lasting reminder to the community that this happened to," said Robert Taniguchi of the Merced Assembly Center Commemorative Committee.

"It will serve as an educational tool that will make people aware they must be vigilant to uphold the basic rights granted by our Constitution."

The Merced County Fairgrounds is located at 900 Martin Luther King Jr. Way.
JA Man Accuses Chevron of Allowing Harassment

Sansei John Suzuki said racial slurs are intolerable.

By Pacific Citizen Staff

A longtime employee of Chevron Corp. in Northern California is accusing the multinational energy company of allowing a supervisor to harass him and call him a “stupid Jap.”

John Suzuki, 57, who worked for over 35 years as a technical patent liaison in Chevron’s Law Department, said he was forced to take an early retirement because Chevron officials allegedly refused his doctor’s recommendation to transfer him to a different department, according to a Feb. 19 press release from Suzuki’s attorney John Ota.

Suzuki also charges his former supervisor Alan Klaassen of threatening him and calling him a “stupid Jap.”

“I don’t normally try to publicize my case, but this case was so outrageous to me,” said Ota, “and Chevron’s hypocrisy so extreme that I thought people should know about it.”

Suzuki, a Sussex Berkeley JACLer, said he is filing a complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. And according to the press release, he wants Chevron to conduct a fair and thorough investigation of his charges. He wants to return to work in a different department.

Last August, Suzuki alleged that Klaassen waved his fist in his face and falsely blamed him for problems in the workplace. Suzuki told Klaassen and a manager, Frank Turzon, about his doctor’s recommendations, he said they laughed at him and told him that he would be fired if he did not return to his department.

To avoid possibly losing his retirement benefits, Suzuki said he had to take an early retirement in February.

Chevron officials told the Pacific Citizen that they are conducting an investigation.

“Chevron is committed to equal employment opportunity. Chevron takes all claims of discrimination seriously,” said Ota. “We are in the process of conducting a thorough investigation of this matter and will take appropriate corrective action for any substantiated allegations,” said Sean Cornely, a Chevron media adviser.

Chevron hired attorney Susan Kamagui to investigate Suzuki’s charges, according to Ota’s press release. Her investigation reportedly concluded that Suzuki’s charges were unsubstantiated, and according to the release, Chevron informed Suzuki of this on Feb. 16, but refused to provide a copy of the report.

“In this day and age, everybody, from the CEO down to the janitor, knows that you can’t use racial slurs in the workplace,” said Ota. “Surely a supervisor in Chevron’s Law Department has to know that using a racial slur is wrong. I am disturbed and appalled that Chevron’s lawyers have tried to deny and cover up such an extreme and inexcusable matter.”

Under California law, Chevron should have separated Suzuki from Klaassen, said Ota.

Asian Pacific American organizations have been contacting Chevron to express their concerns.

“We find such reported behavior appalling,” as ‘Jap’ is a racial slur and should not be tolerated by Chevron managers,” said NCWPFA regional director Patty Wieds in a Jan. 22 letter to Chevron chief executive officer John Watson.

What is important to him, said Suzuki, is “the principle of the matter — racial remarks like this cannot be tolerated.”

Doctors had diagnosed Suzuki being at high risk of having a heart attack, according to press release, after he had at least two episodes of severe chest pains following incidents in which Suzuki said Klaassen harassed and threatened him.

Suzuki told his cardiologist and primary care physician advised him that severe stress had led to a permanent heart arrhythmia — a heart rate or rhythm disorder and advised him to reduce his stress levels to avoid a heart attack.

His doctors put him on medical leave and, according to Suzuki, told Chevron that he would have to work only if he received a new transfer to a different department, according to a Feb. 19 press release from Suzuki’s attorney John Ota.

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IDC JACLers Mark Day of Remembrance

For the ninth consecutive year, the Idaho Office of the Governor hosted a Day of Remembrance proclamation signing ceremony at the newly remodeled Idaho Statehouse. Attendees included former interns, representatives from the Boise Valley JACL, Boise Valley JACL Youth Council, Snake River JACL, Idaho Japanese Association, National Park Service, and the Ontario High School Japan Club.

Lt. Gov. Brad Little commented on the historical achievements of the 442nd RCT. Former IDC ELC McGv Kowaki and Idaho State Rep. Pat Takasugi provided brief comments as part of the program.

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Last August, Suzuki alleged that Klaassen waved his fist in his face and falsely blamed him for problems in the work. Klaassen, said Suzuki, also called him a “stupid Jap.”

His work relationship with Klaassen was fine until 2006, Suzuki wrote in an e-mail to the Pacific Citizen.

“And then it changed and I don’t know why.”

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JA Bar Association Pays Special Tribute to Nisei Veterans

Nisei World War II veterans were honored at the Feb. 19 Japanese American Bar Association's 34th annual installation dinner at the Center at Cathedral Plaza in Los Angeles.

The WWII Nisei veterans who were honored included: Sam Fujikawa, Mark Edward Nakazawa, "Toké" Yoshihara, Manabu Hirokawa, Robert Ishikawa, George "Jim" Makino, Ken Miya, Ocean Miyake, Don Seki, Ken Takahashi, Ken Kume, George Fujimoto, Jon Fukuhara, James Hamai, Norman Hashisaka, Tohito Hirose, James O. Ishii, Ralph Kaneshiro, James Murata, Hitoshi Sanoshiba, Yonekazu Satoda, George Yamaguchi, and Harry Honda, editor emeritus of the Pacific Citizen.

District Court Judge Jacqueline Nguyen administered the oath of office to JABA's new officers: Diana E. Hashisaka, secretary; Kenneth T. Tanaka, treasurer; Katherine M. Hikita, immediate past president. Nguyen is the first Vietnamese-American judge, first appointed to the California superior court in 2002 and unanimously confirmed in 2009 by the Senate to the federal bench in California's Central District.

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Bob Naka (pictured above) is scheduled to receive an honorary degree.

The University of California, Los Angeles is seeking to right a historic "wrong" by bestowing honorary degrees to its former Japanese American students who were forced to abandon their education during World War II because of the government's forced removal and incarceration. JABA is searching for its students from the early 1940s to honor in a May 15 ceremony.

Some of the former students, most now in their 80s and 90s, are expected to attend the ceremony, and family members will receive diplomas on behalf of others who are unable to attend. Still others will receive diplomas by mail. Many former students are deceased.

Approximately 700 University of California students were affected by the WWII directive, more than 300 attended UCLA. The UC Board of Regents voted last July to suspend its moratorium on honorary degrees in order to recognize the students forced from UC classrooms.

"It's never too late to join with others throughout the nation in recognizing that the mass removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II was wrong," said Dan Nakahara, who is chair of UCLA's honorary degree task force, professor emeritus and director of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center.

The keynote speaker at UCLA's honorary degree event will be Calif. Assemblyman Warren Furutani, who carried legislation in the Assembly calling on California's higher education institutions to extend honorary degrees. The UCLA ceremony is the fourth of the UC campuses to bestow these honorary degrees.

Send information to help identify former Nisei UCLA students who were unable to graduate to Patricia Lippert, tricia@support.ucla.edu or 310/794-8604.
APA Leaders Criticizes Report on Racial Violence

The report on South Philly High doesn’t assign blame for the incidents between African American and Asian American students.

By Pacific Citizen Staff

A long-awaited report has concluded that race and ethnicity “were contributing factors” in a series of violent incidents at South Philadelphia High School between African Americans and Asian Pacific American students.

On Dec. 3 about 30 APA students were attacked again throughout the day and after school. Ten students — four APA and six African American — were suspended.

The report, released Feb. 23, was commissioned by Philadelphia Schools Supt. Arlene Ackerman and performed by retired federal Judge James T. Gile. It focused solely on the violent incidents that took place Dec. 2 and 3, and, critics say, was based on interviews with only some administrators, witnesses, and victims.

Helen Gym said in a YoungbloodPolitics.com blog post that the report did not provide a resolution for the “widespread violence” at the school.

“The investigation was based on interviews with only some administrators, witnesses, and victims. Gym, an APA community organizer said the ten students shielded their faces at a Dec. 9 school board meeting.

APA community organizers said the tension between students began about a year ago when five to six APA students were chased into a subway station and allegedly assaulted. Students reached out for help, according to organizers. They described routine harassment at school, milk being thrown at them in the cafeteria, kids assaulting them in the cafeteria and bathrooms, money being stolen from them in the bathrooms, and more.

The report graphically describes some of the violent outbursts and concluded that the Dec. 3 incident was triggered by rumors.

On that day, some African American students walked from room to room in search of APAs. When a group of APA students entered the lunchroom, they were attacked.

One student suffered a broken nose that required two surgeries.

The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund has filed a federal civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice.

House Gives Boost to Native Hawaiian Government

By P.C. Staff and Associated Press

Congress has moved closer to allowing Native Hawaiians to establish their own government despite objections from the state’s governor.

By a vote of 245-164 on Feb. 22, the House passed a bill that gives Native Hawaiians the same opportunity provided to Alaska Natives and 564 Indian tribes — the chance to govern their own affairs in partnership with their state and the federal government.


It’s been 117 years since the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. Hawaii’s senator and representatives say the legislation would partially make amends for the downfall.

But the legislation goes beyond securing the right to self-governance for Native Hawaiians. The reconstituted government will eventually negotiate terms for acquiring land that’s in a trust the state oversees. Those lands make up one-quarter of Hawaii’s mass acreage and are worth billions of dollars.

Prospects for the legislation have never looked brighter with President Barack Obama hailing from Hawaii and giving his backing. The White House has issued a statement reaffirming its support.

“(He) looks forward to signing the bill into law and establishing a government-to-government relationship with Native Hawaiians,” said White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs.

Hawaii’s congressional delegation has long championed the legislation, but it has yet to clear both chambers. There is no timetable for consideration in the Senate.

About 240,000 people on the islands identify themselves as Native Hawaiians.

Inouye Faces Little Opposition For Ninth Senate Term

By Herbert A. Sample

Associated Press Writer

HONOLULU — Democrats may be jittery about holding their majority in the U.S. Senate, as some incumbent retirees and others face stiff Republican opposition in November, but they can count on 65-year-old Daniel Inouye, who in seeking a ninth six-year term representing Hawaii.

The venerable World War II hero faces no established Republican or Democratic challenger, as of yet.

In an announcement that was no surprise, Inouye told 2,000 supporters at a Feb. 17 $200-a-plate Waikiki fundraiser, “I’m asking you to just give me another opportunity to continue this work. I can assure you of one thing, I’ll do my damnedest.”

The third-longest serving senator in U.S. history had, as of Dec. 31, amassed a war chest of $3.2 million even without marquee opposition.

At one point, Republican Gov. Linda Lingle’s name was bandied about as a potential Senate candidate, particularly after her strong re-election victory in 2006. But she repeatedly has said she will not seek another office until she finishes her final term as governor.

Which leaves the GOP, so far, with a 44-year-old social worker named John Rooco, who has never before sought elected office.

State Republican Party chairman Jonah Kauwai, admiringly calls Inouye “the godfather” of Hawaii politics and acknowledges he will be difficult to beat. Yet he insists the senator’s time has come and gone.

“He’s a necessary evil because we depend on him fiscally even though all of the money that he brings into Hawaii is pork,” Kauwai said.

That’s something Inouye is proud of, describing himself as “the No. 1 earmarker on the U.S. Congress.”

But the senator actually grabbed the second highest amount of total earmarks — worth $391.4 million — in fiscal year 2010 appropriation bills, about $105 million less than Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., according to Taxpayers for Common Sense, a Washington D.C. watchdog organization.

While Inouye at times is criticized for his earmarking prowess, those dollars gain him support among voters and influential power brokers, regardless of party affiliation, said Neil Milner, a UH political scientist. Still, Milner added, earmarks only explain part of the senator’s enduring appeal.

Inouye lost his right arm during WWII, and decades later was awarded the Medal of Honor for his service. He got his political start in the territorial Legislature. He later was elected to the U.S. House and in 1982, to the Senate.

Inouye became an icon symbolizing both the social and political upheaval of the mid- to late-1950s that led to statehood, and the increase in the political power of Japanese Americans, resulting in near-total Democratic control over Hawaii’s politics since statehood in 1959, Milner said.

Inouye himself says he wants a ninth term because he can help pull the country out of its current economic doldrums.

“In my capacity as chairman of the appropriations committee, I would be called upon to play some role,” he said in an interview.

Hovering over discussions about Inouye’s latest campaign is his age and health.

He appears spry though diminutive. He frequently uses a cane - the result of a fractured knee suffered in 2008 while practicing the tango step and his brain obviously is perking on all cylinders.

The senator said longevity has its benefits.

“By a vote of 245-164 on Feb. 22, the House passed a bill that gives Native Hawaiians the same opportunity provided to Alaska Natives and 564 Indian tribes — the chance to govern their own affairs in partnership with their state and the federal government.”

Sen. Daniel Inouye is committed to running for a ninth Senate term.
George Muneichi Yamasaki
July 13, 1904 - February 13, 2010

On Sat., Feb. 13, 2010, George Muneichi Yamasaki, passed away peacefully at home in Auburn, Calif., at the age of 105 years. He was born in Osaka, Japan, July 13, 1904, to Zenichi and Kikuyo Yamasaki, and came to the United States at the age of 13 to join his father in Auburn, Calif. He married Shigeyo Fujitani in 1926, and celebrated 81 years of marriage before her death in 2007. He is survived by his seven children, Jean Kaneko, Umeda (Herb), Betty Nishikawa (Eddie), Don Yamasaki (Chere) and Edwin Yamasaki (Robert), 14 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren.

He attended Edgewood School, a one-room school house, located on Mt. Vernon Road in the Edgewood district of Auburn. In 1917, he joined his father growing fruit trees for sale to orchards throughout California, and together they started a fruit tree nursery. In 1928, he and his wife Shigeyo expanded the nursery to include ornamental plants, landscape construction, rock walls and bonsai. Except for the three years spent at the Tule Lake Internment camp during WWII, he lived in Auburn, Calif.

In 1953, Yamasaki Nursery was moved from Bear and Kemper road to Highway 49 and New Airport Road where his sons Ray and Don joined their parents in the family business. George's artistic talents and achievements in landscape are evident throughout the region in both public and private Japanese gardens including the Wakeamasu Siki and Tea Colony Memorial in Gold Hill, the Plaza Buddhist Church in Penny, the Sacramento Buddhist Church, and the San Francisco Community Center Garden.

George has received many prestigious awards and recognitions in his lifetime including: Japan Agricultural Society's Award — for work in agriculture, nursery, landscape and bonsai; Circle of Sensei Award — from the Golden State Bonsai Club to honor individuals for the teaching of the art of bonsai and to the cultural understanding of the art form; Japanese Counsell General Keizo Kaji Award — A Day of Respect for the Aged award given to centenarians.

He had a passion for bonsai and sukutai (the Japanese art of stone appreciation). He enjoyed gathering and collecting native conifer specimens from the Sierra's and would train and shape them into magnificent bonsai. One of his most prized living works of art was a native Sierra juniper that he shaped for years which was prominently displayed in the California State Capitol for the Queen of England's visit in 1983 to California; which he fondly named the Queen's Tree.

As a founding member of both the Sacramento Bonsai Club and the Sierra Bonsai Club of Placer County he shared his talents with many through bonsai demonstrations and classes.

George and his wife enjoyed traveling, and visited throughout the contiguous United States. He also traveled internationally to Canada, Mexico, Italy, France, Switzerland, Korea and took many trips to Japan. He will be remembered for his devotion to his family. He loved to have his house full of his grandchildren and great grandchildren. The family is thankful for all the time and experiences he shared and will greatly miss his presence.

Funeral service was held Sat., Feb. 20, 2010, at 1 p.m., at the Placer Buddhist Church, 3162 Boyington Road in Penny, Calif. Private family burial services were held at the Auburn Cemetery.

William Kajikawa, Father of Arizona State Sports, Dies at 97

By Pacific Citizen Staff

William (Bill) Kajikawa, a World War II veteran and legendary coach at Arizona State University, passed away Feb. 15 from pneumonia, according to family members. He was 97.

He was born in Oskara, Japan, July 13, 1904, to Zenichi and Kikuyo Yamasaki, and came to the United States at the age of 13 to join his father in Auburn, Calif. He married Shigeyo Fujitani in 1926, and celebrated 81 years of marriage before her death in 2007. He is survived by his seven children, Jean Kaneko, Umeda (Herb), Betty Nishikawa (Eddie), Don Yamasaki (Chere) and Edwin Yamasaki (Robert), 14 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren.

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Hugo Kaji
September 23, 1921 - February 15, 2010

Hugo Kaji was born in Livingston, California on September 23, 1921. He passed away on February 15, 2010 at the age of 88. He will always be remembered for his wonderful smile, good nature and hard work.

Hugo was a 1939 graduate of Livingston High School. When World War II broke out, he was executed with his family to the Merced Assembly Center and then sent to the Amache Relocation Center in Colorado. After being allowed to leave, he moved to Chicago where he worked briefly in Chicago where he met and married his wife, Marion. They returned to Livingston in 1951 where he resumed farming, established Hugo Kaji Trucking and raised a family.

Hugo is survived by Marion, his devoted wife of 60 years, sibblings Lily Hirata, Huber Kaji and wife, Martha, Snow Shoji and husband, Arthur, his four children (spouses), Jeanette (Anthony Ishii), Naomi (Michael Nakata), Devonka (James Johnson), Melvin (Shary Kaji), and his nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.
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