JACL Celebrates Its ‘Champions’ at Gala.

JAVA Pays Tribute to Robert Nakamoto.

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Up Close With ‘AGT’ Winner Kenichi Ebina

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‘Marvels & Monsters’ Unmasked

The JAMN exhibit offers comic images that represent four turbulent decades in U.S. history.
Park Fees That Fund Confinement Site Conservation Are Threatened

By Priscilla Ouchida
JACL National Director

JACL asks a lot of the National Park Service. We ask for surveys, acquisitions, conservation, security and personal time. Despite a spartan budget, NPS managers and staff have been generous partners in our quest to preserve our history. Looming on the horizon is a major threat that will impede the NPS’s ability to work with our community.

In December 2014, the National Park Service authorization to collect fees will expire. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) allows the federal agency to charge entrance and recreation fees at national parks — those fees total about $300 million. These monies fund repairs, maintenance, wildlife habitat restoration, education materials and services and law enforcement. NPS has financed more than 9,800 projects and services with fee revenues.

Why is FLREA important to JACL and the Japanese American community? Big parks such as Yellowstone and Yosemite collect a lot of fees, and a percentage of those fees goes to little parks like Manzanar, Tule Lake and Manzanar. As a result, that money helps fund construction, preservation and education programs that help tell our story. With an increasing reluctance in Congress to fund federal programs, efforts to preserve the World War II prison camps will be much harder if FLREA is not extended.

There have been deep cuts to the NPS over the past three years, resulting in elimination of visitor programs, reduced visitor center hours, decreased education programs for children, reduced seasonal employees and a decrease in restoration and conservation programs. Another significant cut will jeopardize the integrity of our national parks and monuments.

JACL needs to advocate for the extension of FLREA from the chapter level to the national level. There needs to be NOISE around this issue, or it will not get addressed.

There is a movement to extend FLREA for at least one year to allow Congress to consider a longer authorization and potential adjustments to the Act. Hearings on FLREA have been held or are in the planning stage in both the House and the Senate.

More than any other community, we have a vested interest in FLREA. And another thing.

I recently attended a meeting of park stakeholders about the plight of one type of fee: entrance and recreation fees. NPS funding. I was the only person of color in the room. But because I was in that room, the conversation had to include the need to diversify national parks to include the stories of communities of color. Tour operators acknowledged that communities of color are a market, and that confinement sites are an important niche market. Making noise is not just about Congress. Making noise is also a demonstration to other park groups — park directors, environmentalists, recreationists, park employees and tour operators — that we count.

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act is important because a percentage of the funds raised goes to smaller sites such as Manzanar, Minidoka and Tule Lake.
**NIKKEI VOICE**

**Japanese Americans Should Travel to Japan**

By Gil Asakawa

I recently returned from a two-week trip to Japan with my wife and mother, and I would love to go back for another trip.

Our journey started with a new direct flight between Denver and Tokyo, which shaved a lot of time and trouble by avoiding a stopover on the West Coast. From Tokyo, we connected to Sapporo in the northern island of Hokkaido, where my uncle and his wife met us at the airport and rode the train with us to our hotel. We were there only for a day, but we had a wonderful sukiyaki dinner with my uncle before taking trains to eastern Hokkaido to Nemuro, my mom's hometown.

There, my other uncle and his wife greeted us and fed us some of the freshest seafood, including ikura salmon roe and the local specialty crab, Hanasaki Kani. We also had a sensational sukiyaki dinner with my mom's old friends. Nemuro is a small fishing town, so all the seafood there is top-notch and incredibly fresh.

The next leg of our tour, which admittedly focused on food — as anyone who follows me on social media knows, I love all cuisines and post lots of photos of food — was Tokyo, where we spent several days. Family friends took us to an amazing tsukiji, or traditional multiserve Japanese meal in a fancy restaurant at the base of Tokyo Tower.

In Tokyo, my wife, Erin, shopped for craft supplies, including hand-made Japanese washi paper, which we found at several shops in the heart of the city. Erin and I took one day to go to Disney land (it's the 30th anniversary of Tokyo Disneyland), and then it was off to an ancient Buddhist temple, Asakusa, then Sky Tree, the tallest tower in the world and the second-tallest structure, next to a skyscraper in Dubai.

After Tokyo, we traveled to Takayama, Denver's Sister City, and enjoyed lots of Takayama's local specialty, Hida beef. We had Hida beef sukiyaki, Hida beef steak, Hida beef sukiyaki and Hida beef ramen. We even had Hida beef on a stick, wrapped around sticky rice. We were also there for a very famous fall festival, during which enormous floats are wheeled through Takayama's quiet and scenic streets. The city is a scenic tourist's delight and is often compared to Kyoto for its riches of cultural attractions and numerous temples and shrines.

Our final day in Japan was spent in Chiba near Tokyo, where Narita Airport is located. Our destination: The first Costco in Japan, which was really fun because it carried many items familiar to U.S. Costco customers but also lots of Japanese products, especially food. It was a great trip, and we made new friends everywhere we went.

I've written before about how Japanese Americans should keep up with news from Japan. After all, even if we feel we're all-Americans and have no real ties to Japan anymore, people in the U.S.-of-A are all too quick to stereotype us as foreigners. The fact is, as JAs we have deep roots in Japanese cultural values, and a visit to Japan can rekindle those ties and remind us why we are the way we are, even in America.

>> See JAPAN on page 16

**FOR THE RECORD**

**A Proposal**

By John Tateishi

The National Headquarters building at 1765 Sutter St. in San Francisco has symbolized much about the JAACL for more than 30 years.

In its heyday in the 1970s and '80s, the building was filled with 16 staff members and overflowed with energy and activity. So crowded was the building with JAACL staff that we had to double up on a few desks for lack of space. Sometimes the back room with the copy and postage machines was so crowded that we had to make reservations for time on the copy machine.

Today, the building seems an empty shell of itself. Where there were nine of us in the building when I took over as national director in 1999, the 2000 market crash forced us to reduce our numbers to three only, the essential number to keep the administrative side of the organization operational.

There are currently four administrative personnel (office manager, bookkeeper, membership data processor, membership coordinator), plus Patty Wada, the NCWNP regional director.

Three of the six vacant offices are rented out to community organizations.

So, what's the point of bringing this up?

I don't know what the building cost originally, but it's easily worth nearly $2 million today, especially given property values in San Francisco, one of the most expensive places in the country to buy real estate.

It's time we sold the headquarters building.

The national director is now located in the Washington, D.C., office, which logically makes that address our national headquarters. It's hard to justify keeping the San Francisco building when it serves very little purpose now.

When times were tough back in the early 2000s, I was asked as director to shut down the regional offices and was told they were major cost centers. True, but those who advocated the shut down of those offices had no clue about what's important in our operations. The regional offices have always been vital to carry out the mission of the national organization.

They are and have always been our front line of defense and the centers from which we excel at what we do. Those offices are what distinguish us from all other organizations in the Asian American community. That's where things happen.

In contrast, the old national headquarters building in San Francisco is now an administrative office and processing center. While we have no mortgage obligation anymore, the building is in need of major repair and maintenance costs.

>> See PROPOSAL on page 16
ANNUAL JACL GALA RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS AND CORPORATIONS THAT PROMOTE DIVERSITY.

By JACL National Staff

Well over 200 guests packed the Capitol Hilton Ballroom at the 2013 JACL “Salute to Champions” Gala in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 10. The annual event recognized the contributions of individuals and corporations that have made outstanding contributions toward promoting diversity in their field or industry.

Awards were presented to Jonathan Jarvis, director of the National Park Service; Daphne Kwok, vp of multicultural markets and engagement for Asian audiences at AARP; and Toyota. Also honored were Congressman Mike Honda as Legislator of the Year and Southwest Airlines as Corporate Partner of the Year.

“The National Gala has been the signature event of the Japanese American Citizens League in Washington, D.C., for the seventh year. This event serves two purposes for the JACL,” said JACL National President David Lin. “The event helps to raise the profile of the JACL in Washington, D.C., with elected officials and partners while raising much-needed funds to support a variety of JACL programs. As such, I am very grateful for the generosity of all the supporters and sponsors of this event.”

Congressional representatives Judy Chu, Xavier Becerra and Ami Bera addressed the crowd at the VIP reception that preceded the dinner. Other dignitaries attending the gala were Congressman Eni Faleomavaega, Congressman Mark Takano, Minister Hideaki Mizukoshi of the Embassy of Japan and Terry Shima, recipient of the 2012 Presidential Citizens Medal. National JACL Board Members Chip Larouche, Toshi Abe, Matthew Farrells, Matthew Newton, Craig Tomiyoshi, Sheldon Arakaki and Michelle Amano greeted guests. Notable JACLers included Lillian Kimura, Floyd Mori and Dr. Ray Murakami.

David Louie, longtime reporter for ABC 7 News in San Francisco, served as the evening’s master of ceremonies. The program opened with greetings from Lin, followed by remarks from Deputy Chief of Mission Hiroyasu Izumi of the Embassy of Japan. Honorary Gala Chairman and former U.S. Secretary Norman Y. Mineta shared his recollections of his introduction to JACL through Mike Masucka, who later became his brother-in-law.

In his acceptance speech, NPS’ Jarvis emphasized the importance of an American story that reflects the contributions of communities of color and women. In her address, AARP’s Kwok spoke about the close relationship between JACL and OCA, and she urged increased collaboration between the two organizations. And Tracey Doi, who accepted the Salute to Champions award on behalf of Toyota, shared stories that demonstrated the importance of corporate programs that lift communities and individuals.

The “Salute to Champions” Gala was supported by Eli Lilly, Diamond Sponsor; Comcast and Southwest Airlines, Platinum Sponsors; AT&T and UPS, Gold Sponsor; and Toyota, Bronze Sponsor. Southwest surprised the audience by presenting every guest with a $55 Southwest voucher.

JACL National Director Priscilla Ouchida closed the program with a presentation to Amy Watanabe, the Daniel K. Inouye Fellow, and Rhianna Tashiguchi, the Norman Y. Mineta fellow, in appreciation for organizing the gala.
Government Shutdown Forces Closure of Manzanar National Historic Site

SIXTEEN EMPLOYEES ARE FURLoughed AND EVENTS ARE CANCELED; TULE LAKE IS ALSO IMPA CTED.

INDEPENDENCE, CALIF. — Because of the shutdown of the federal government caused by the lapse in appropriations, the National Park Service has closed all 401 national parks, including Manzanar National Historic Site.

All visitor facilities, including Manzanar Visitor Center, barracks, mess hall and the auto tour road, are closed. The site will remain closed until the government reopens.

Superintendent Les Inafuku said that all Manzanar group tours and special events for the next two weeks have been canceled. Events scheduled beyond that may be canceled if the shutdown continues.

Manzanar National Historic Site hosts 210 visitors on average each day in October; nationally, more than 715,000 visitors a day frequent the National Park System. Nationwide, the NPS stands to lose approximately $450,000 per day in lost revenue from fees collected at entry stations and fees paid for in-park activities such as cave tours, boat rides and camping.

Gateway communities across the country are about $76 million per day in total sales from visitor spending that is lost during a government shutdown.

At Manzanar National Historic Site, 16 employees are on furlough because of the shutdown and another two Manzanar History Assn. bookstore employees are similarly affected. One employee remains on duty, providing facility security.

Nationwide, the shutdown has also furloughed more than 20,000 NPS employees; approximately 3,000 employees remain on duty to ensure essential health, safety and security functions at parks and facilities. About 12,000 park concessions employees are also affected.

In Northern California, the Tule Lake Unit of the WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument has also been impacted.

“We’ll start the conversation again when we get back,” NPS staff posted on the Manzanar and Tule Lake Facebook pages.

Because it will not be maintained, the NPS website will be down for the duration of the shutdown. NPS.gov has more than 750,000 pages and 91 million unique visitors each year.

As of press time, a bill to reopen the government and end the shutdown was awaiting final approval by President Barack Obama, and the NPS reopened some sites after pressure from state governors and veterans. Among the parks reopened were three of the most iconic sites in the United States: the Grand Canyon in Arizona, the Statue of Liberty in New York and Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. For updates on the shutdown, visit www.doi.gov/shutdown.

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JACL Receives National Park Service Grant for Teacher Workshops

The JACL has received a $62,845 grant from the Department of Interior, National Park Service through the Japanese American Confinement Sites grant program for teacher training workshops in 2014 and '15.

The purpose of the teacher workshops is to increase the understanding of the Japanese American confinement site experience among a broad range of educators. Five separate workshops will be held in Albuquerque, N.M.; Houston, Texas; Minneapolis, Minn.; Phoenix, Ariz.; and the Fresno, Calif., area.

The coordination and planning for the workshops will be accomplished through JACL staff and the JACL National Education Committee. JACL Midwest Director Bill Yoshino and NEC Chair Greg Marutani will be working with JACL chapters at each of the workshop sites.

“We look forward to working closely with our JACL chapters to ensure local participation and to heighten awareness about the Japanese American incarceration experience,” said Marutani.

“These workshops are in keeping with JACL’s long history of providing opportunities for educators,” said Yoshino, “and we appreciate the support of the NPS for providing the JACL with resources to continue our outreach to teachers.”

In the past, the JACL has partnered with a number of organizations to conduct teacher workshops, including the Illinois Holocaust Museum, Atlanta public schools, Chicago public schools, the National Council for the Social Studies, the Holocaust Museum Houston and the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

For more information on this project, contact Bill Yoshino. For questions regarding the JACS grant program, contact Program Manager Kara Miyagishima at (303) 969-2885.

APAs in the News

Rhianna Taniguchi Named Norman Y. Mineta Fellow

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Rhianna Taniguchi of Honolulu, Hawaii, will be joining the JACL’s Washington, D.C., office as the Norman Y. Mineta Fellow. Taniguchi, a specialist in the U.S. Army National Guard, was a Distinguished Honor Graduate from Ft. Lee, Va., where she went on to earn the Army Achievement Medal and a position as a military intelligence analyst.

In 2012, Taniguchi served as a senator in the Associated Students of Oregon State University, and she wrote multiple pieces of legislation that addressed the needs of low-income, multicultural and other underrepresented communities. During her tenure at OSU, she also re-established the Japanese American Student Association. Taniguchi also was a member of the JACL’s National Youth Student Council. Named after the former Secretary of Transportation and former Secretary of Commerce, the Norman Y. Mineta Fellowship position focuses on public policy advocacy in the Asian American Pacific Islander community.

George Takei Honored at Asian Americans Advancing Justice 30th Anniversary Dinner

LOS ANGELES — Actor George Takei was honored Oct. 10 by Asian Americans Advancing Justice (formerly the Asian Pacific American Legal Center) during its 30th anniversary dinner at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel.

More than 1,200 guests were on hand to congratulate Takei, who was awarded the organization’s Public Image Award for his “lifelong efforts to promote positive images of Asian Americans, especially in popular media.”

In his acceptance speech, Takei spoke about the “darker periods of Asian American history, highlighting egregious episodes of discrimination.” He praised the organization for its 30-year-long fight against that legacy.

Kathryn Ellen Doi Is Appointed to the California New Motor Vehicle Board

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Jerry Brown on Sept. 24 announced the appointment of Kathryn Ellen Doi, 53, to the California New Motor Vehicle Board.

Doi, who earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of California, Davis, School of Law, has been a partner since 2008 at Murphy Austin Adams Schoenfeld LLP. Doi also served as senior deputy legal affairs secretary in the office of Gov. Gray Davis from 2002-03.

Doi’s position does not require Senate confirmation and the compensation is $100 per diem.

Christine Kubota, Mitchell Nishimoto and Lori Teranishi Appointed to Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii Board of Directors

HONOLULU — The Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii has appointed three new members, Christine Kubota, Mitchell Nishimoto and Lori Teranishi to its board of directors for the 2013-14 fiscal year.

Kubota, a local attorney and director at Damon Key Leong Kupchak Hastert, will serve as a member of the Facilities & Operations Committee and as co-chair of the Fundraising & Membership Committee.

Nishimoto is senior vp of First Hawaiian Bank and supervises the Kapiolani Banking Region. He will serve on the Facilities & Operations Committee.

And Teranishi is co-founder and principal of IQ PR, a boutique communications firm with offices in Honolulu, San Francisco and New York. She will also serve on the Facilities & Operations Committee.

“We are pleased to welcome these three outstanding business leaders to the board,” said Tyler Tokioka, chairman of the JCC of Hawaii board of directors. “Christine, Mitchell and Lori all have an incredible commitment for the center’s mission to preserve and share the Japanese American legacy in Hawaii.”
WASHINGTON, D.C. — Building on the increase of Asian American Pacific Islander elected officials, a network of AAPI legislators gathered in San Francisco last month at a meeting hosted by Mayor Edwin Lee, the city’s first Asian American mayor, that leverages the influence of state and federal AAPI legislators across the country.

The number of AAPI elected officials has risen rapidly over the past several election cycles. In the 2008 and 2010 election cycles, six to eight AAPI candidates ran for Congress. In 2012, the number tripled to 25 candidates, making the AAPI community crucial in battles to control Congress. A record number of AAPI candidates also ran at the state and local levels, where a record number held office.

“The APAICS Leadership Network is the first of its kind to unite AAPI elected and appointed officials, institutions and challenges,” said APAICS Leadership Network President Floyd Mori. “It provides a platform for direct support and training, networking opportunities at all levels with policy experts from the private and public sectors. There’s no longer any question about the political clout of the Asian American Pacific Islander community — our time has come.”

A roundtable moderated by Asian Pacific American Leadership Project Founder Ron Wong discussed breaking the glass ceiling and running for higher office. The introductory speaker was Betty Yee, a member of the California State Board of Equalization and candidate in 2014 for California State Controller. Panelists included Lacey Tranmait, newly-appointed San Francisco’s Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs; Mary Tang from the San Francisco Association of Realtors and Eric Jaye of Stark’s Frontline Political Media.

Rep. Mike Honda, who began his political career in the 1980s and now represents California’s 15th District, was also among the speakers.

“When I first started, reaching Congress seemed like a far-off dream — there were only seven Asian Americans in the House then,” said Honda. “Today, there are 13 Asian American and Pacific Islander members of Congress, and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus has 42 members and associates. That’s a testament to the persistence, enthusiasm and sheer will of the community to get and stay involved in the mainstream political process of this country.”

California State Controller and Chief Fiscal Officer John Chiang and Christine Pelosi joined Google’s head of political and policy, Randy Raghu, at Google’s San Francisco headquarters to discuss using social technologies to create and scale a network effect.

MSNBC anchor and journalist Richard Lui was master of ceremonies, and Lee greeted participants and spoke to the group. Also featured was a new generation of AAPI elected officials, including Lisa Wong, mayor of Fitchburg, Mass., and Nate Shinagawa, county legislator in Ithaca, N.Y.

“This is the first step of many. We couldn’t start this march without AAPIs who came before us,” said Mori. “The network is grateful to Mayor Ed Lee of San Francisco, Jason Chan and others on the mayor’s staff for hosting this summit and assisting APAICS staff members consisting of Helen Ruggiero, Leila Mohy and Kathleen Iannuzzo. We express thanks to all who attended.”

Currently, one AAPI serves in the U.S. Senate and 12 serve in the U.S. House of Representatives (including delegates from American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands).

Since 1903, there have been five AAPI US. Senators and 21 AAPI U.S. Representatives, including delegates and resident commissioners representing territories. They have come from a mix of ancestors, states and party affiliations.

Founders of the APAICS Leadership Network see involvement at the state and local levels as important to increasing Asian American and Pacific Islander political participation at the federal level.

“Making sure local excitement leads to cadres of AAPI policymakers at the state and federal level is a key goal of the APAICS Leadership Network,” said Washington State Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos, chair of the National Asian Pacific American Caucus of State Legislators and founding board member of the network. “Politics is a tough business and this network will help us ensure that, through mentoring, networking and support, no AAPI leader falls through the cracks.”

Added Evan Low, founding board member and president of the National League of Cities’ Asian American Pacific American Municipal Officials, “As more and more AAPIs get interested and run for local and state offices, they become role models, which in turn fuels the next generation of AAPI policymakers.”
‘Marvels & Monsters’
UNMASKED

THE JANM EXHIBIT, OPEN UNTIL FEBRUARY, OFFERS A SELECTION OF IMAGES THAT REPRESENTS FOUR TURBULENT DECADES IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

By Connie K. Ho
Contributor

The Lotus Blossom who is submissive and demure. The evil villain who is determined to destroy the world. The nerd who is buried in books all day. These are a few of the stereotypes that the Japanese American National Museum’s newest exhibit explores. “Marvels and Monsters: Unmasking Asian Images in U.S. Comics, 1942-1986” made its West Coast debut at JANM on Oct. 10.

The images curated for the exhibit, pulled from four decades, show how racial and cultural archetypes of America’s perceptions of Asians have evolved.

“At its core, it’s an exhibition that talks about this dark path that has traveled with us as Asian Americans since we first encountered, first set foot in this nation. We have always been imagined in the minds of others and as others,” said Jeff Yang, a Wall Street Journal columnist who curated the exhibit. “And, as a result, a picture that most people have even to this day of what Asians are and who Asians are has been shaped by these images that have traveled across decades in the media.”

The exhibit is based on the collection of William F. Wu, a science-fiction author and cultural studies scholar, that was donated to the New York University Asia Library & Special Collections, and “Marvels & Monsters” was first presented in New York City at NYU’s Asian/Pacific American Institute in 2011.

Along the way, “Marvels & Monsters” has made stops in cities like Philadelphia and is heading to New York next for a showing in Soho Brook.

“People have been, generally speaking, blown away by it. More because what William F. Wu did is singular. I don’t think anyone else has spent as much, so much of his time, so much of his life obsessed as he has been with gathering together this amazing trove and all in one place. You can sort of see this secret history of America and its relationship with Asia,” said Yang on the feedback he has received on the exhibit. “There are people who are shocked. There are people who are astounded, in some way, of these things that are out there. It’s these things that you don’t want to confront a lot of times. We don’t want to stare at the darker part of our past, but unless we do, we can’t overcome it. But ultimately, I think that the people who do see it, even if they’re shocked by it — they’re changed in a way that forces them to think a little more about what it means not just for our generation but for future generations.”

“Marvels & Monsters” curator Jeff Yang participates in the exhibit’s interactive experience.
New Crop Shinmai Announcement

Here on our farm in the Central Valley, it’s that time of the year when broad swaths of rice are slowly turning gold awaiting harvest. Year after year, this cycle repeats as we carry on in the tradition of our grandfather and Koda Farms founder, Keisaburo Koda.

Our family has now been farming in California for over 85 years and we look forward to our approaching centennial. To some that may seem far and distant, but in farming, the long term picture is always in sight. This was especially true for our grandfather who during the World War II internment of Japanese Americans lost over 90% of everything he owned. After the family’s release from Amache, Colorado, he fought tooth and nail to re-establish his farm and milling operations and instilled in those around him an indomitable sense of hope for a better future.

With the daily reminders of the changing seasons and imminent harvest, we extend our sincere gratitude to all of you folks that have made the aforementioned possible.

-The Koda Family

Koda Farms is the oldest, continuously family-owned and operated rice farm and mill in California. We oversee all facets of production—from growing and harvesting our propriety heirloom strains, to milling and packaging in our own facilities. Our trademarks and products include Kokuho Rose® Japanese style rice, Sho-Chiku-Bai® Sweet Rice, Mochiko Blue Star® Sweet Rice Flour, Kokuho Rose® Jyoshinko, and Diamond K® Rice Flour. (Organic & conventional versions available.)

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kodafarms.com

NEW CROP 2013

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KOKUHO ROSE®
MOCHIKO BLUE STAR®
Superior Sweet Rice
Heirloom Varietal
Sweet Rice Flour
These archetypes are shown along with comparative discourse by contemporary Asian American writers and creators such as David Henry Hwang and Naomi Hirahara.

“We took these long narratives of history, we showed how they evolved in places like the comics because we had this rich store of color images that depict these recurring archetypes. And again and again, and then we try to put some context around them by getting present-day individuals, writers, authors, playwrights to comment on why these images remain so resilient, why is it that we can’t quite overcome them,” Yang said. “Effectively, the East-West divide has been such a huge part of American geopolitical context that these images that were born out of these dark times, these images keep on getting new energy and keep on getting revived and resurrected in different ways. So, part of what we’re doing here, the best is disseminating the sunlight, we actually want to bring all of this stuff out and show how these images have evolved and show how they are being challenged and overcome.”

The images shown in the exhibit also include drawings from children who were incarcerated during World War II. JANM pulled images from its own archives and unearthed a trove of cartoons and comics created by internees in the camps as well as the letters from the librarians who worked with children in the camps, talking about comic books and explaining about how comic books played a vivid role in the lives of young children who had been incarcerated.

“It adds another layer of conversation — so as all of these things are happening in the funny books, you have a young generation of Asian Americans who have grown up behind barbed wire, yet you have these comic books, not Japanese comic books, American comic books, as a form of resistance. Just as they turned to baseball and other American pursuits because they were American, they are American,” Yang said. “So, I think the nuances and the ironic richness of having these artifacts that show the love of comics and the way comics kind of intersected with the life of people behind barbed wire in one of the most shameful chapters of American history, alongside these artifacts of war that occurred in mainstream comics themselves — I can’t imagine a better place for the exhibition than here, especially with what they’ve added to it.”

Others have noticed the thoroughness of the exhibit materials and the JANM addition of illustrations.

“It’s amazing to have those kinds of records,” said Julie Kang, a Long Beach resident who blogs about comic books in her spare time.

To inspire young children to interact with the exhibit, there are life-size cutouts of the different archetypes and an installation called “Shades of Yellow,” where visitors can match the shades used for Asian skin tones in the comics to a slab of yellow Pantone to their own skin. Next to the cutouts, there are tables, chairs and white pads of paper where kids can draw their own villain or superhero. There is also a small reading corner dedicated to new and emerging Asian American comic book writers.

“My kids are budding comic book geeks, so I thought that they would especially have a good time,” said Kang, who visited the exhibit with her husband, Tim Mansfield, 9-year-old son, Isaac, and 6-year-old daughter, Emi. “I thought that there might be some slightly disturbing imagery here, but then I thought this would be the perfect time to kind of introduce them to that, see the images and see why it’s wrong and why it’s inaccurate. I thought this would be the perfect introduction, instead of them stumbling on to it themselves.”

To celebrate the exhibition, JANM’s Young Professionals Network also hosted a preview reception, “Marvels & Monsters: Unbound.” Attendees sampled bite-sized appetizers and enjoyed performances inspired by the exhibition. The performances ranged from dramatic acts to hilarious song-and-dance pieces.

“I think a lot of what this collection says and does is that we can’t forget the dark parts of our history and, to that matter, our present because they’re never really that far away. The only way that we can overcome them as Asian Americans and as everything is if we confront them first and remember,” Yang said.

“Marvels & Monsters” is on display at JANM until Feb. 9.

“It really doesn’t matter if you’re a Chinese American, Japanese American, Korean American, Filipino American — we all, at some degree, or any ethnicity, suffer as Americans when we succumb to the false consciousness of stereotypes,” said Greg Kimura, president and CEO of JANM. “I felt a responsibility that this museum had to showcase this exhibit for the West Coast and for Los Angeles.”

Curator Jeff Yang (far left) moderated a session that explored how racial and cultural archetypes of America’s perceptions of Asians have evolved.
JAVA Honors Robert Nakamoto With the Terry Shima Leadership Award

KEYNOTE SPEAKER GRANT UJIFUSA RECALLS ROAD TO REDRESS.

FALLS CHURCH, VA — Robert Nakamoto, immediate past president of JAVA and current Executive Council member and chair of the JAVA Finance Committee, was awarded the 2013 Terry Shima Leadership Award on Oct. 12 for his leadership and diplomacy in further establishing the Japanese American Veterans Assn. as a premier nationwide Asian American veterans organization.

The presentation was made at the organization’s quarterly luncheon, which was attended by 70 JAVA members and friends at the Harvest Moon restaurant.


The luncheon’s keynote speaker was Grant Ujifusa, founding editor of the “Almanac of American Politics.”

Ujifusa spoke of his key role and experience in the enactment of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, also known as House Resolution (HR) 442 and the Redress Bill.

Ujifusa said the bill was passed because of the thousands of people, including a key role played by then-Congressman Mineta, who worked to make it happen. In the end, however, it was ultimately approved because of the combat record of the “Nisei soldiers during World War II.”

There were four Nisei soldiers who featured prominently in the approval process, Ujifusa recalled. “They were Mike Masaoka, U.S. Senators Spark Matsunaga and Daniel Inouye and Kaz Masuda. Without them, I think we can also say that redress would have had no chance,” he said.

Ujifusa said Masaoka was the “single most-gifted leader in American history ... a big-time problem solver and as good a lobbyist as the best in Washington.”

He also observed that “no one worked harder to make redress a reality than U.S. Sen. Spark Matsunaga. After three intense years, he put together, largely by himself, a solid bipartisan coalition of 69 Yes votes. And so to him we owe Senate passage of S. 1009. The reason the bill received so much support was that nearly all of Spark’s Senate colleagues just loved him.”

Ujifusa also told the audience that “U.S. Sen. Inouye saved redress from perhaps becoming a grand exercise in symbolism only. An apology is nice, but because of him, money changed hands ... Inouye made those payments mandatory, like Social Security in an appropriations bill. The entirely separate appropriations bill was the work of Sen. Inouye alone.”

Ujifusa recalled how President Ronald Reagan was publicly opposed to HR 442, and it was Masuda, a 442nd soldier, who caused Reagan to sign the bill.

President Reagan was an Army captain when he spoke at Masuda’s funeral in 1945, where the soldier was posthumously honored with a Distinguished Service Cross.

President Reagan was an Army captain when he spoke at Masuda’s funeral in 1945, where the soldier was posthumously honored with a Distinguished Service Cross. Masuda's sister, June, brought up redress to then-President Reagan in 1987, and he produced a letter from Masuda’s sister, June, to the president that reminded him of his 1945 speech. President Reagan then subsequently called Gov. Kea and said, “I remember that day at the ceremony for Kaz Masuda. I think redress is something I want to do.”

On Aug. 10, 1988, President Reagan first reread the same words he had said at Masuda’s award ceremony 43 years before. He then proceeded to sign the historic bill.

(From left) Reuben Yoshikawa, Bob Nakamoto, Terry Shima and Gerald Yamada at the 2013 JAVA Quarterly Luncheon

In the past year and a half, the Japanese American National Museum’s Frank H. Watase Media Arts Center has captured more than 25 first-person accounts of individuals whose lives illuminate the astonishing diversity of the Japanese experience in America. From the little known early settlement of Japanese in a Florida colony to the struggles faced by the first war brides admitted to the U.S. after World War II, these chapters in history remain unfamiliar to the public.

Join us in the Tateuchi Democracy Forum for the premiere screening of this work featuring excerpts from the extensive video interviews conducted with Nisei, Kibei, Hapa and post-World War II Issei. A discussion with project staff and special guests will follow.

Light refreshments will be served after the program.
‘AGT’ Winner Kenichi Ebina Is Too Busy Touring to Cash in His $1 Million Prize

THE JAPAN-BORN DANCER IS THE FIRST PERFORMER OF ASIAN DESCENT TO WIN NBC’S “AMERICA’S GOT TALENT.”

By Nalea J. Ko
Reporter

After eight seasons of NBC’s “America’s Got Talent,” we’ve seen nearly every type of performer win: an 11-year-old singer, a ventriloquist, an opera singer, a country music star, a singer/songwriter, a Frank Sinatra-inspired crooner, a performing dog troupe and then this year, a lone self-taught dancer, Kenichi Ebina.

Japan-born Ebina, 39, is the first contestant of Asian descent to win the talent competition, and his victory immediately prompted un-American-shaming comments to crop up online.

But Ebina, who moved to the U.S. when he was 20 years old, says he wasn’t surprised to see the negative comments about a Japanese man winning AGT. Ebina’s unique performances that blend mime, visual graphics, hip-hop and martial arts early on caught the attention of AGT judges and American viewers. It wasn’t, however, Ebina’s first brush with fame.

Hailing from Tokyo, Ebina formed the all-Japanese dance group BiTrip in 2001 and won Apollo Theater’s Amateur Night. Six years later, he took the grand champion crown at “Showtime at the Apollo.”

Since winning Season 8 of AGT in September, Ebina hasn’t slowed down. He returned to Japan for a couple of days, where his wife and daughter are now living, and then was quickly thrown into the AGT live tour, which is currently crisscrossing the U.S.

Ebina is headlining the AGT live tour until Nov. 17, which features fellow AGT top contestants the KriStep Brothers, Collins Key, Cami Bradley, Jimmy Rose, Taylor Williamson and Tone the Chef/rocca. The Pacific Citizen talked to Ebina via telephone from Nashville, Tenn., where he was in between rehearsals, about what he’ll do with his $1 million prize and how he’s handling his newfound fame.

What happens after the AGT live tour? Do you get your own show in Las Vegas?

Kenichi Ebina: After that, no. What they say, ‘Headlining show in Vegas,’ it’s kind of misleading information (laughs). It sounds like I do my own show in Vegas, but it’s not true. It’s part of this tour.

Oh, I assumed you got your own show on the Vegas strip.

Ebina: That’s what I thought, too (laughs).

Are you disappointed?

Ebina: A little bit. But maybe sooner or later, I’m trying to do my own one with someone else. So, it’s OK. I don’t actually want to stay in Vegas for a long time. I want different things. I’m trying to do maybe a shorter time in Vegas, couple weeks or couple months. I’m from New York right now. So, I definitely want to do the show in New York, then travel all over the world. That’s my plan.

Did you get your $1 million prize yet?

Ebina: Not yet. Actually, I’ve been so busy — I haven’t got the time yet to talk about it. So, after things settle down, then I’m going to ask them how it works.

What did it feel like when you won?

Ebina: I was surprised to be in the finals, surprised to remain in the Top 2 because I didn’t expect that I [would] even remain in the Top 2. So, that was surprising.

Before the finale, judge Howard Stern said on his radio show that he predicted you’d win. Did you know that?

Ebina: All over the place some say: Kenichi should win or Kenichi will win. It’s so much different predictions. It was hard to predict. But it doesn’t really matter for us who’s going to win. It’s all about the media people all talking about us.

What did you do to celebrate after the show?

Ebina: Because we were at Radio City (Music Hall), which is in New York City, I have a bunch of friends there. So, after that I went out with my friends and celebrated in a restaurant, in a bar (laughs).

People on the Internet were very critical of a Japanese man being crowned the winner, saying it’s an American competition. Were you surprised at the negative comments?
Ebina: I think I knew that kind of negative comments were going to come out, so I totally expected it and predicted it. And everyone should have their own opinion. It's fine. But the bottom line is: "America's Got Talent" — they scouted me, they invited me to the auditions and I was like, "OK, why not?" And the eligibility was either you're a U.S. citizen or a green card holder, which I was eligible.

And you've lived in the U.S. for quite some time, right?
Ebina: Yeah, almost half of my life. I moved here when I was 20, almost 20 years.

Are you going to put your $1 million winnings into developing a one-man show?
Ebina: First of all, like two-thirds of the million goes to the tax benefits. What I will get, at the most, is probably like $300,000. And then I don't know, it might be over 40 years.

I might be able to get a lump sum. But it's more for my daughter, my wife.

Will your wife and daughter return to the U.S.?
Ebina: No, they're going to stay in Japan for a while, and I'm going to keep traveling.

Can you tell me about your background? Were your parents artists?
Ebina: My parents were working at the bank. They met in the bank — they were working in the same bank. They got married and had me.

Were you always interested in dance?
Ebina: No, I started dance after I moved to the United States. I started when I was 20.

Was that when you saw the Running Man for the first time and tried it?
Ebina: Yeah (laughs).

As a kid, were you interested in the arts?
Ebina: Not at all. I was more into — like when I was a kid, I was more into sports like baseball, soccer, basketball.

And then when I was in high school, I was more into motorcycles. So, one of my dreams back then was driving Route 66.

Did you get to do that?
Ebina: Yes, but with a car.

The AGT live tour schedule is hectic. Are you exhausted yet?
Ebina: It's kind of overwhelming right now. I might actually [get] some manager or agent. But it's kind of a long process, and I have to find someone I can trust who is good at it, who can handle it better than I do.

How is it touring with the AGT contestants? Are you guys getting on each other's nerves?
Ebina: We're having a lot of fun. We get along very well. Even during AGT, we were already good friends. Only the media tries to make us hate each other.

During the competition, you talked about how your wife encouraged you to show more emotion during your performances. Do you think that ultimately helped you win?
Ebina: Yeah, it was a good reason to bring up that kind of concept. But basically, each time I wanted to do something different. [My] whole AGT [experience was] not for winning. If I really wanted to win from the beginning, I would've done different performances. I did it more for marketing — promoting my one-man show.

It doesn't really matter if you get the Top 2 or Top 6 or if you win — it doesn't really matter. The important thing is what you get after that and out of it.
The Japanese American Museum of San Jose Youth will present a film screening of “Bully: Awareness, Perspective and Prevention,” a documentary that chronicles bullying in America. A discussion about the parallels between bullying and the World War II Japanese American experience will follow the film. RSVP to reserve a seat.

Info: Call (408) 610-8609 or email jeff@jamsj.org.

The National Japanese American Historical Society presents “Issei: The First Generation,” a documentary about the unique experiences of Japanese immigrants who came to the United States at the turn of the century. Skyline College professor Masao Suzuki will lead a q&a with the film's director Toshi Washizu and UCLA professor Lane Hirabayashi.

Info: Call (415) 921-5007 or jeff@jamsj.org.

Japanese American Culture and Community Center
244 S. San Pedro St.
Cost: $75/Reserved sponsor seating; $45/orchestra; $35/balcony
The Grateful Crane Ensemble’s musical production “Nihonmachi” takes viewers on a journey back to the early beginnings of Japantown. The production, presented by Fugetsu-Do Confectionary, benefits the Little Tokyo Public Safety Assn.

Info: Call June Aochi at (818) 400-3273.

Japanese American Teahouse
77 Massachusetts Ave., Building 22/Ray and Maria Stata Center
MIT professor Ken Oye, who is also the New England JACL co-president, will moderate a discussion about Fukushima and its aftereffects. Speakers include scientist Kenneth Buesseler, former retired U.S. Army Col. Patrick Stackpole and MIT professor Richard Samuels. The lecture is sponsored by the MIT Japan Program, Center for International Studies, and the JACL New England chapter.

Info: Email starforum@mit.edu.
Bowen, Reiko, 82, Diamond Bar, CA; Aug. 23; survived by her children, William (Karen) Culver and Cleo Taeko Staley; step-daughter, Deanna (Wendell) Tolman; brothers, Kusuo Miyawaki and Tanigai Miyawaki; sister, Hamako Yamamoto from Japan; also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Hamamoto, Terry Takeko, 78, Monterey Park, CA; Sept. 17; survived by her son, Michael S. (Cherriyn); daughter, Cindy Y. (Dr. Fuyushi T.) Saito and her son, Steve T; also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives here in and in Japan; 5 gc.

Hayada, Grace Takako, 83, L.A., CA; Sept. 11; survived by her husband, Mitsujo Hayada; daughters, Jill (Dean) Katsaya, Ann (Weldon) Nomura and Jan (Daniel) Yoshimizu; grandchildren, Valerie Katsaya, Kyle and Kacey Nomura, Dana and Tracy Yoshimizu; siblings, Kats (Irene), Reiko, and Kenji (Emi) Takai; brother-in-law, Kusua Miyawaki; sister-in-law, Lu Hitomi; also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Hiltomi, Russell Mitsuru, 83, L.A., CA; Sept. 11; survived by her husband; Mitsujo Hayada; daughters, Jill (Dean) Katsaya, Ann (Weldon) Nomura and Jan (Daniel) Yoshimizu; grandchildren, Valerie Katsaya, Kyle and Kacey Nomura, Dana and Tracy Yoshimizu; siblings, Kats (Irene), Reiko, and Kenji (Emi) Takai; brother-in-law, Kusua Miyawaki; sister-in-law, Lu Hitomi; also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Kashiwagi, Tei, 91, Gardena, CA; Sept. 13; predeceased by his daughter, Jo Ann (Glenn) Tague; and other nieces, nephews and other relatives; 1 gc.

Kidoo, Hiro, 89, Pomona, CA; Sept. 21; during WWII his family was relocated to Nevada; predeceased by his wife, Miki, and brother, Mas; survived by his siblings, Nori Kondo, Hisako Yesuda, Bob (Yee) Kidoo and sister-in-law Emi Kidoo, his children Sharienna (Doug) DesFiochters, Scott (Loi Lovelace) Kidoo and Clark Kidoo, 7 gc.

Kiriia, Susie, T., 92, Alhambra, CA; Sept. 22; survived by her loving children, Susan Serras and Melatine (Tim) Ishihara; also survived by many nieces, nephews and other family members; 4 gc; 3 ggc; 1 ggc.

Kiyana, Yoshishia, 78, L.A., CA; Sept. 27; survived by his children, Gary (Darlene) and Linda Kiyana; siblings, Ikuko (Shoichi) Ito, Shigeki (Noboru) Shiman, Yoshimasa (Kyoji) Kiyana and Sadasuke (Tatsuya) Kiyana; surviving in-law, Fusako Nakagawa; also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives in the U.S. and Japan; 2 gc.

Kurata, James Minoru, 80, Vale, OR; Sept. 22; served in the U.S. Army; predeceased by his parents, Jitsutaro and Kun; brother, Tatsuya; sister, Haruyo Kanda and his brother-in-law, Adam Houston; son, Matt and wife Jaime; daughter, Angie and husband Brian Frost and his son, Steve and wife Anita Tucker; 15 gc; 4 ggc; and many nieces and nephews.

Madsa, Shiro, 92, L.A., CA; Oct. 1; survived by his children, Sam (Betsy), James (Martha), Thomas and David Madsa; siblings, Teruo and Hiroko Madsa; also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; 6 gc; 2 ggc.

Matsubu, Thomas Hisashi, 92, Fillmore, CA; Sept. 30, his family was interned during WWII at Minidoka; he was active with the Fruitland School Board, Ueh’s Club, JACL and Church of the Brethren in Fillmore; predeceased by parents, one sister and one brother; survived by sisters, Mary Hamada and Mabel Inamine; brother, Hank; wife, Helen; children Kirk, Francis, Tracey (Doug), Ben and Jeff (June); 4 gc; great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Matsunaga, Aileen M., 83, Gardena, CA; Oct. 4; survived by her children, Lane, Duane (Keala), Kevin Matsunaga, Shawn (Mitsue) Matsunaga and Lorene Matsunaga; siblings, Mitsujo Yamaoka and Gordon Naga; siblings, Mitsuno Yamaoka and Lereen Matsunaga and Mildred (Rudy) Viloria; brother, Kenneth Kenda; sister, Haruyo Kenda and his family members; nieces, nephews and other nieces.

Nakata, Yoshihiko Dick, 91, L.A., CA; Sept. 27; in memory of his family was interned during WWII at Rohwer; predeceased by his beloved wife, Kiyoko; survived by his children, June Junko (Lei) Inoue and James Yoshikai (Susan); 4 gc.

Ono, Kay Emiko, 71, L.A., CA; Aug. 16; survived by her children, Paula Wade and Troy (Kandi); sisters, Leatrice Oniya and Janet (Fady) Vlatka; brother, Kenneth Yoshikai; children, Michael J. (George) Morley, David and Bill Higa; 4 gc.

Sakakiniwa, Margaret Kimiko, 88, Long Beach, CA; Sept. 20; She is survived by her beloved husband, Tak; her children, Lane, Duane (Keala), Kevin Matsunaga, Shawn (Mitsue) Matsunaga and Lorene Matsunaga; siblings, Mitsujo Yamaoka and Kiyoko Kenda and his family members; nieces, nephews and other nieces; 4 gc.

Tokamora, Hideysuki, 90, Torrance, CA; Aug. 27; a veteran of WWII, he was survived by his sons, Gilbert (Seaneide) and Andrew (Detyl); siblings, Hidako Taniya, Roger (Florence) and Lily; brother-in-law, John Lee and members of his family; 2 gc.

Tanaka, Herbert Setsuo, 76, L.A., CA; Sept. 27; in memory of his family was interned during WWII; predeceased by his beloved wife, Kiyoko; survived by his children, Kiyoko's children, including Michael J. (George) Morley, David and Bill Higa; 4 gc.

Monterey, CA; July 5; Herb was a member of the Monterey Peninsula Buddhist Temple, JACL of Monterey and the Monterey Peninsula Nisei Memorial Post 1629 Veterans of Foreign Wars; predeceased by his parents, Fuya and Yoko; and brother, Masaji; survived by his wife, Shizuko "Susie"; children, Randy and Cindy (Eremi) Cortes; 4 gc; also survived by his sister-in-law, Ann; four brothers, Leonard (Alilo), Arthur (Mitsuoka), Norman (Alise) and Roy (Donna) Oku; cousins, Yumiko (Yasuo) Sakaguchi, Fumio (Virgil) Katsuya and Sachiho (Bob) Umematsu.

Taozki, Yoshio, 93, Northridge, CA; Oct. 4; during WWII, he was sent to Poston and Tule Lake; survived by his wife, Jitsuko; sons, Fion (Jeanette), Jeff (Susan), Gary (Grace); half-siblings Kyoko, Hiroshi and Hiroko of Japan; 5 gc; 2 ggc.

Yasuhara, Yuzo, 92, L.A., CA; Sept. 30; survived by his children, Victor Shigoe (Elizabeth), Jose Luis Kase, Paul Akira and Mario Yoshi; siblings, Michiko Yasuhara Garcia, Albert Inoue and Richard Kinzo; siblings-in-law, Meriko Nakashima and Hiroko Tai; 2 gc; 2 ggc.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

'The Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of $20/column inch. Contact: busmgr@pacificcitizen.org or call (213) 620-1767
I also urge JAs to visit Japan. If you have distant family, look them up and let them know you're coming. Even if you don't know anyone, choose an area. Don't be scared, and don't be embarrassed if you don't speak Japanese. Everywhere you go, if you keep asking, "Eigo wakarimasu ka?" ("Can you speak English?") you'll find someone who will be happy to help you out. If you go, be sure to buy a Japan Rail Pass in advance. For one flat price, you'll be able to travel anywhere in Japan, including most of Tokyo's rail system, by just waving your pass. You can even make advance reservations on express trains including the Shinkansen Bullet Trains. It's a terrific deal, but you can only buy a JR Pass if you're a foreigner — it's not available to Japanese citizens. You'll never regret traveling to Japan. You might even find yourself feeling at home even if you've never been there before!

Gil Asakawa is a current member of the PC, Editorial Board and former PC Board Chair. His blog is at www.nikkeiview.com, and he also is the Japanese expert for Answers.com at www.japanese.answers.com.

John Tateishi is a former JACL national director.

From the fields of Utah to California's State Capitol, Floyd Mori continues to drive social change by being a mentor for his community. Former National President of the Japanese American Citizens League, he speaks out on policy issues that affect millions of Asian Pacific Americans. A proud 23-year AARP member, Floyd dotes on his 11 grandchildren and helps displaced Vietnamese fishermen on the Gulf Coast find ways to make a living. Join Floyd today and enjoy the support and resources for life at 50+ by becoming an AARP member. Visit us at aarp.org/asiancommunity.