Director Andrew C harnesses the power of the Internet to stream his new Web series.
THE OKURA FOUNDATION HONORS ITS FOUNDERS’ LEGACY

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Pat and Lily Okura Mental Health Leadership Foundation celebrated its 35th Anniversary and honored the Okura’s legacy May 13 at the Cosmos Club in the nation’s capital.

Attendees included former U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, JACL National Director Priscilla Ouchida and Glen Komatsu.

Stories shared by Okura Foundation board members Berrema Brown and Philip Halik, along with Mineta, detailed their experiences with the Okura’s long career and ongoing contributions to the mental health community.

OKURA FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS (FROM LEFT)
Ford Kuramoto, Philip Hallen, Karen Ishizuka, Berrema Brown and Glen Komatsu are the niece and nephew, respectively, of the late Pat Okura.

Recipients of Okura Foundation grants include Los Angeles-based Kizana, which was represented by Craig Ishii.

Under the 1988 Civil Liberties Act, which granted reparations to Japanese Americans who were interned during WWII, the Okura’s used their reparations to establish their foundation and provide leadership development for promising young professionals.

Pat Okura was one of the leading Asian American figures in the health field and a civil rights leader who served as JACL National President in 1962.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In John Tateishi’s recent column “The No-No Boys” (April 4-17, 2014), he expresses puzzlement over why the NCWP civil rights committee has raised the issue of the Nikkei who were defined as disloyal for their dissent during WWII. Tateishi says, “I’m curious to know what the recent historical research is because, frankly, I’m not exactly sure what this new enterprise hopes to reveal that isn’t already known about the infamous Questions 27 and 28 and their impact on the lives of Japanese Americans.”

To answer his query, he might take a look at Roger Daniels’ newest book “The Japanese American Cases: The Rule of Law in Time of War” (2014). Daniels is the pre-eminent scholar of the Japanese American experience, and his work provides the foundation of Japanese American historical research. Daniels also served as a consultant to the Presidential Commission on the Wartime Relocation of Civilians throughout its existence.

In “The Japanese American Cases,” Daniels provides an eloquent response to Tateishi’s question:

“The battles of Tule Lake still lie heavily on the only people who continue to care deeply about it, many members of the mainland Japanese American community. For many of the majority of Japanese American families whose incarceration experience and traditions were associated with one of the other main WRA camps, Tuleans were those who had soiled their collective reputation. For the minority who had actually been at Tule Lake, it was a shame, even for those who met the capricious standards of wartime loyalty. Such former Tuleans often did not volunteer the name of their camp and sometimes even concealed it from postwar children or those too young to remember where they had been. Tuleans in general and renunciants in particular are the only groups of wartime Nisei who have never been celebrated, never been forgiven.”

Although John Tateishi believes that no one in the community “buys that old nonsense that the No-No Boys were disloyal,” he might learn more if he sought out those “No-No” and renunciants whose choices were never validated, in fact were denounced by the organization. One only needs to look at the JACL’s 1946 National Board meeting minutes to understand why Tule Lake’s “No-Nos” and renunciants might feel the sting of condemnation by this organization of self-proclaimed “loyal” Americans. This is the position the JACL National Board took on the issue of Tule Lake’s renunciants:

“It was argued that since those Tulelake ‘troublemakers’ would always be in the forefront of anti-American and anti-JACL movements, steps ought to be taken to curb them now. It was also stated that they would serve as a reminder that there were some Japanese who waivered [sic] in their loyalty to the United States and would always be a source of irritation to local Japanese communities. To avoid such difficulties, it was recommended that JACL go on record favoring their deportation immediately. Others recommended that released Tuleans be required to carry on their persons at all times special identification.”

Given the passage of 70 years, isn’t it about time for the oldest and largest Nikkei civil rights organization to seek “an honest reckoning” on this issue?

Sincerely,
Barbara Takei
NIKKEI VOICE

GODZILLA, THE WORLD’S MOST FAMOUS JAPANESE AMERICAN

By Gil Asakawa

A

though Hollywood has been making monster movies since the original 1933 film “King Kong,” the monster with the most staying power and screen incantations didn’t come out of California, but from Tokyo.

Godzilla is back with another cinematic reboot produced by Hollywood featuring the usual array of megaspecial effects, including a digitized monster instead of a man in a monster suit.

Whether costumed or computer-generated, Godzilla is the most famous Japanese American in the world. He’s starred in 28 movies, stomping his way through cities on both sides of the Pacific.

Godzilla, or the Japanese pronunciation “Gojiro” (a combination of the words for gorilla, “gora,” and whale, “kujira”) made its first Japanese appearance in 1954, but the film was edited and scenes were inserted starring Raymond Burr as an American journalist for its 1956 release in the U.S. as “Godzilla, King of the Monsters!”

I always thought this was to make the movie more palatable to American audiences, but now I realize there was a more political reason for the reworking of the first film.

In the decades since then, Godzilla/Gorjira has battled a bevy of baddies equally monstrous, such as Mothra, Gaigan, Hedorah, Mekagojiro and, yes, even King Kong. There was a millennium edition Godzilla in 2000 that destroyed Nemuro, my mom’s hometown. And in 2004, Toho Co. allegedly put the monster to rest for good in “Godzilla Final Wars.” But Godzilla is good business, apparently.

All of the movies in the franchise were produced by the Japanese studio Toho Co., except for Sony’s 1998 Hollywood take, the first time the monster was created digitally instead of the traditional Japanese approach of a guy wearing a rubber suit. Toho co-produced that one, and the studio also profits from the new Warner Bros.-produced movie that premiered stateside May 16.

I have the 1956 version with Burr, and I like it because it’s more of a serious movie than the campy approach most of the movies have taken over the years. It’s an unabashed statement, created early in the post-war Atomic Age, that reflects Japan’s terror at the U.S. and other countries’ testing of atomic bombs in the Pacific. The original film’s clear message is that if you mess with Mother Nature, Mother Nature will mess with you right back.

That original 1956 version of “Godzilla, King of the Monsters!” has been rereleased in the U.S. in a two-DVD set that includes the original, longer Japanese version, which is more upfront about its anti-nuclear message. The New York Times wrote about the 2006 DVD release:

>> See GODZILLA on page 12

FOR THE RECORD

THE BOMB

By John Tateishi

I remember one day in camp, something terrible had happened. There was a buzz going on all over, and wherever you went around the camp, you would see the adults in small groups murmuring, whispering as if some great secret had been found out.

Some were crying. They all tried to hide their fear.

I don’t remember much else about that day other than those whispered conversations. Any semblance of normalcy was gone, the laughter was gone, and we kids knew some terrible event had taken place somewhere distant. It wasn’t until a while later that I learned about Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but I couldn’t comprehend the magnitude of it all. To me, a bomb was a bomb, just like the adults in small groups murmuring, whispering as if some great secret had been found out.

I don’t remember much else about that day other than those whispered conversations. Any semblance of normalcy was gone, the laughter was gone, and we kids knew some terrible event had taken place somewhere distant.

For a few years after the war, we would hear our parents now and then mention Hiroshima and how terrible it was for the kind of devastation it had wreaked on Japan’s spirit and soul. That was our connection, its unimaginable power and destructive force and the obliteration of two entire cities and the vaporization of the Japanese in those cities. That was our relationship with what occurred at the end of the war.

I think for us Japanese American kids, the idea of the atomic bomb had a kind of significance our white schoolmates couldn’t possibly have understood. I don’t know that even we fully understood or appreciated its significance for our families or our community. In some perverted way, what the bomb represented for me was a sense of guilt for being like the people it killed, looking like the enemy when my teachers and white schoolmates had no such resemblance to the unknown enemy. I suppose that was one of the cruelties of being too young to understand the guilt others placed on me. People who looked like them dropped the bomb on people who looked like me, and for that I somehow felt guilty. Go figure.

It’s not like I thought about these things all the time or even much at all. But the atomic bomb came to have a presence in our lives as the Cold War with Russia grew after WWII, creating a sense of paranoia in this country. As kids, we were taught bomb drills - teachers would write about the 2006 DVD release:

>> See GODZILLA on page 12

>> See BOMB on page 12
JACL Announces National Board Nominees

JACL is set to elect its next slate of national leaders.

The National Nominating Committee, in accordance to the JACL Bylaws (Article VIII, Section 1b), has reviewed and approved the candidate applications for the following people for national office.

The offices for National Vice President for General Operations and National Vice President for Public Affairs did not receive any applications.

Although the regular filing period has passed, candidates can still run for office in accordance to the JACL bylaws (Article VIII, Section 1c), where a member in good standing may run for any national office as a late filer.

To have one's application considered and processed, all late filers must submit a completed application form with the signatures of the majority of chapter presidents or chapter delegates from his/her district council to the Nominations Committee on Wednesday, July 9, at 1 p.m.

The term of office will be for the 2014-16 biennium.

The JACL National Council will elect its officers at the July 9-12 JACL National Convention in San Jose, Calif.

Following are candidate statements from this year’s nominees.

National President
David Lin

I am a master’s degree in computer science, a M.B.A. and a B.A. degree in mathematics, all from Rutgers University. I am also a graduate of the Program for Management Development Executive Education from Harvard Business School.

My motivation to run for re-election of National President is exactly the same as why I volunteered to serve as the VP of Membership in February 2010: to support JACL so it can be a stronger, more vibrant and influential Asian American organization for all of us and for all Americans.

JACL is a nationally recognized civil rights organization, and I want to continue the reputation and position of JACL to an even higher level by continuing to focus on the following key areas:

1. Financial Stability
2. Membership
3. Civil Rights Advocacy
4. Culture & Heritage Preservation

If elected, I pledge to do my best to carry out the mission of this great organization.

Of these four areas, I think the most difficult issue that JACL must continue to address is the financial challenges we face. The fact is that our members are aging, and the membership dues as the largest revenue source will have to decline. In response, we need to keep diversifying our revenue sources by focusing on getting foundation grants and corporate sponsorships.

Additionally, we need to continue to place an intense focus on our membership, so we can minimize the decline of this revenue stream.

Our priority will continue to be retaining current members and recruiting new ones with relevant and impactful programs.

National VP for Planning and Development
Chip Larouche

I am Chip Larouche, and I respectfully request that you consider me for election for National Vice President for Planning and Development, a position I currently hold since being appointed to fill a vacancy in 2012. I have a Bachelor of Science in industrial engineering from Northeastern University in Boston and a Master of Science degree in logistics management from Florida Institute of Technology.

For the last 15 years, I have served as the chief technology officer for the City of Lake Oswego in Oregon and was the Governor of the Pacific Northwest District for three years prior to filling the vacancy for VP of Planning and Development. I currently serve as its Treasurer.

I think the most challenging task ahead for JACL is learning to remain relevant and nimble with its work in civil rights advocacy as the organization gets smaller with the passing of many in the Nihon Ouran. I think my skill with organizational effectiveness and knowledge of governance will be helpful to JACL as it tackles this chapter of its historical significance. This will mean changing our structure so that we can meet today’s challenges in a more efficient way and improving our communication tools to be more effective. I look forward to the challenge.

National VP for One Thousand Club, Membership and Services
Toshi Abe

My name is Toshi Abe, and I present myself to you as a candidate for the office of National Vice President of the Thousand Club, Membership and Services. As many of you know, I held this title since July 2013. In that time, I have heard from many of you about your concerns and have reached out to you for your suggestions about how to make JACL more relevant to our members. I hope to vigorously carry out JACL’s Program for Action to ensure that our organization remains strong into the future.

I first joined JACL in the 1990s when I became a member of the Philadelphia Chapter. Within a few years, I became a board member and worked alongside individuals such as Gnyre and Hiroshi Uyehara, Herb and Miko Horikawa, Teresa Kabe and Ed Nakawatase. I have also served as their Chapter President, Vice Governor and from 2009-13 as Governor of the Eastern District Council.

As your current VP of Membership, I have learned much about the challenges of this national position and truly appreciate the hard work and effort it takes to run the membership department. I especially appreciate the skill and talent of our membership coordinator, Annie Noguchi (who has recently left JACL to further her career), and her assistant, Tomiko Ismail.

Our organization has been coping with declining membership these past few years, and one of our current projects is to see if our dues structure is too high for some of our members who are on fixed incomes or others who have been negatively affected by the current economy. Our hope is to find a solution that is sustainable and results in increased numbers of memberships. If elected, I pledge to do my best to carry out the mission of this great organization.

Secretary/Treasurer
Matthew Farrells

Thank you for the honor of serving as National Secretary/Treasurer during the 2012-14 biennium. It has truly been a great pleasure to fulfill this role and lead JACL Toward continued financial stability. I owe the success of this term to my fellow colleagues on the JACL National Board, the dedicated and hard-working staff and to the membership, who have given me their trust to serve in this important role.

When I ran for office during the period leading up to the 2012 National Convention, I was committed to four vital initiatives:

1. Stringent financial oversight through thorough financial analysis
2. Financial transparency and accountability through effective financial reporting
3. Ensuring the JACL remains relevant within our changing environment
4. Streamlining the biannual budget process

Today, I am still firmly committed to these ideals, and I am happy to say we’ve made tremendous progress toward each of these principles over the past two years. However, as with other ideals we live by, I believe they can never be fully attained but where purpose is to cause continual improvement by always striving for better. So, as I am preparing to serve as your National Secretary/Treasurer for another term, I look forward to continually focusing on and improving our financial stability, reporting and relevancy as an organization.

In closing, I believe my experience serving as National Secretary/Treasurer, working in project management and my business education will greatly aide me in contributing toward the success of the organization during the 2014-16 biennium. In addition, serving consecutive terms is beneficial for continuity's sake, specifically containing the initiatives that were pursued during the 2012-14 biennium.
National Youth/Student Council Chairperson
Nicole Gaddie

My name is Nicole Horinouchi Gaddie, and my aim is to increase the relevancy of the JACL to youth while giving them the tools necessary to advocate within their communities.

I'm originally from Salt Lake City, Utah, and I moved to Seattle to attend school at Seattle University. During my time in Seattle, a socialist city councilman was elected, gay marriage was legalised and we are now in a battle to increase minimum wage. More important, youth have been at the forefront of all these social movements.

I have served on the National Youth Council as an At-Large Representative and later the Pacific Northwest Youth Representative and am excited to continue working with such passionate and motivated individuals.

As the NY/SC Chairperson, I plan to continue our youth summits held at various districts throughout the year. We will build coalitions and am excited to continue working with such passionate and motivated individuals.

I have served on the National Youth Council as an At-Large Representative and later the Pacific Northwest Youth Representative and am excited to continue working with such passionate and motivated individuals.

Finally, I plan to increase transparency between the executive board and youth so we can stand in solidarity and create change.

National Youth/Student Council Representative
Michelle A. Yamashiro

After working with the National Youth/Student Council as the PSW Youth Representative, I am excited to announce my candidacy for the National Youth Representative position. I have worked with different community service and culture preservation clubs, and I hope to bring innovative ideas to help improve the youth recruitment and retention within the JACL.

As a current master’s graduate in education, I have done an extensive amount of research on our education system. It is imperative that youth and students of all ages and backgrounds learn about the social injustices within U.S. history and learn to grow an appreciation for community service and advocacy.

I would like to create more programs for students of all backgrounds to learn about the past injustices done to marginalized groups in the United States. In addition, I would like to increase awareness of the JACL and build bridges with different communities. By working with the JACL as the National Youth Representative, I hope to grow and build stronger relationships with various educational organizations and sponsors to ensure that the vision and mission of the JACL is upheld.

Monterey Hosts Japanese American Heritage Days Event

Thousands of attendees gathered at Monterey’s Old Fisherman’s Wharf to celebrate Japanese culture in the community’s first-ever Japanese American Heritage Days event, which was held on May 3 and 4.

Co-sponsored by Monterey’s Old Fisherman’s Wharf Assn. and the JACL of the Monterey Peninsula, the weekend’s festivities included taiko drum performances, interactive and educational presentations by local historians and authors, cooking demonstrations, Japanese Ikebana and bonsai exhibits, live musical performances, gyotaku (Japanese stencil fish painting) and a traditional Japanese tea ceremony.

As in previous years, whale watching and sport fishing trips also were taken by visitors.

Kicking off the festivities was the ceremonial Kagami Wari (opening of the sake cask), which was provided by Ozeki Sake from Hollister, Calif. On hand to welcome attendees were Mary Alice Cerrito Fettis, president of Monterey’s Old Fisherman’s Wharf Assn.; Jeff Uchida, president of JACL Monterey; Monterey Mayor Chuck della Sala; Japan Consul General Masato Watanabe; former Monterey Mayor Dan Albert; local historian Tim Thomas; and an official delegation from Tateyama, Japan.

The Tateyama delegation was on hand to formally present a beautifully hand-crafted and painted traditional-style Japanese Maiwai jacket. Saturday’s festivities also included a colorful procession featuring dignitaries, lion dancers and musicians that began at the Wharf and continued through downtown Monterey to the JACL Hall in Monterey, where a special reception was held.

“We are so pleased to present this outstanding event with the Japanese American Citizens League to our community and all of the visitors to Monterey,” said Fettis. “We very much look forward to working with them again next year!”

Added former JACL National President Larry Oda, “This was a wonderful event to celebrate and share the rich cultural heritage of the Japanese in the Monterey Peninsula and to remember the important contribution and leadership of the early Japanese immigrants to the development of the fishery in the region.”

Prior to World War II, the Japanese had a dominating presence on Fisherman’s Wharf, as a majority of the businesses were owned or operated by Japanese. At the beginning of WWII, 120,000 people of Japanese heritage who lived on the Pacific coast of the United States were forcibly removed from their homes and livelihoods and incarcerated in internment camps and federal detention facilities for the duration of the war, thus ending the Japanese presence on the wharf. The U.S. government legitimized the internment by issuing Executive Order 9066 on Feb. 19, 1942, shortly after Imperial Japan’s attack at Pearl Harbor.

After the war, many Japanese Americans returned to the Monterey Peninsula, encouraged by a well-organized petition signed by approximately 1,000 local notables, including John Steinbeck and Edward “Doc” Ricketts. These petitions were recently discovered amongst documents housed in the JACL Heritage Museum by Thomas, a local archivist and historian. Faced by the disappearance of the sardines (they run in cycles every 60 years approximately), the returning Japanese Americans ventured into other fisheries, pursued entry-level jobs such as gardening, restored or opened retail businesses, gained employment with local agencies and established a presence in the medical professions.

The Japanese American Citizens League of the Monterey Peninsula was established in 1932 to provide leadership in the community. This organization grew out of a community group that helped the Issei (first-generation) community with the English language and provided immigration, tax and contract information. Today, the JACL building in Monterey is used as an Asian Cultural Center.

For more information, go to www.montereywharf.com.
PURSUING ‘MILLIONS’

Director Andrew C decides to harness the power of the Internet to finance and stream his Web series about a group of twentysomethings trying to find their place in the world.

By Connie K. Ho
Contributor

Andrew Chung is someone who wears many hats. Known as “Andrew C” in the film world, he writes, edits, produces and directs — all skills seen in his directorial debut “Millions,” an award-winning Web series that was recently released online.

Chung’s foray into film began when he studied screenwriting at the Vancouver Film School in Vancouver, Canada. In film school, he was inspired to write the script for “Millions,” and he decided to develop it on his own as a Web series. The story has elements of friendship and tragedy and centers on a group of young adults in their 20s who make a pact in high school to become millionaires by the time they turn 30. Along the way, they encounter drugs, love, sex and greed.

Despite not having a lot of experience in production, Andrew C jumped straight into making this project, working with his sister, Melanie Chung, who co-directs and executive produces the series. The 32-year-old writer/director/creator took some time recently to chat with the Pacific Citizen about his creative journey.

The Pacific Citizen: What inspired the story of “Millions”?
Andrew C: When I wrote it, I was first starting film school, and I didn’t know what I wanted to do with my life. I knew I loved film, but before that, I had studied business — I have a business degree, and I studied in university before I jumped into film. When I went into film school, I knew I wanted to pursue film, but I didn’t know whether it would actually turn into something. I was going through a period in my life that was like a midlife crisis, and I was trying to figure things out. I was seeing my peers figuring out their careers, kind of doing well, starting to settle down. And then you see a lot of images in media where you see young people getting rich very quickly, the advent of reality television and young kids, like the Mark Zuckerbergs, becoming so rich at a young age. I wanted to explore that [and see] what that does to our generation.

Is that how the concept of “Millions” came about?
Andrew C: “Millions” was the result of me trying to explore characters — not outright showing these societal conditions but showing the result of how kids grow up these days and what drives them to pursue something like money when passion is what makes you happy.

The Web series got its start on Kickstarter four years ago. What was the experience like?
Andrew C: We used it back in 2010, and I wouldn’t call it an infancy, but it was the beginning — it wasn’t as popular a thing as it is today. When we were telling people about the project, it was kind of a new experience for everybody. It was a great experience. I think back then it might have been easier to get pledges because there wasn’t an oversaturation of projects coming out looking for crowdfunding. Back then, we were kind of like one of the firsts, especially in Canada. When we did go out for pledges, it was great — we managed to raise our funding goal of $8,000.

Andrew C’s directorial debut “Millions” centers on a group of young adults in their 20s who make a pact to pursue success and fortune — at all costs.
Why did you decide to go with Kickstarter in 2010 as opposed to traditional ways of funding the Web series?

Andrew C: In Canada, there's a lot of funding options. There's a lot of grants and funding agencies that finance these kind of things, but no so much for Web series. That and, on top of the fact when you apply for funding in Canada, it's a pretty long process even if you do get accepted, so at the time, I wanted to just make it. I started seeing these Kickstarter projects come, and I saw how quickly they were raising funding. I also thought it was a great option because you're kind of in control of how much work you put into that campaign. I just feel like, in terms of a personal project, I would have more control as opposed to applying for funding, which we did try. But we were pretty unsuccessful, so we knew that this would be the next big option to try. We tried it out, and it worked.

The cast is diverse in terms of skills and experiences. What was it like working with the different actors?

Andrew C: It was a traditional casting process in terms of we just went out and had an open casting call, but we had non-traditional casting in that we were reaching out to communities outside of the acting world. We reached out to dance organizations, schools, and we just posted the city. I knew that I wanted an Asian cast, so I knew that in order to find the talent, I really needed to scour the whole city. It's true to some extent that there aren't a lot of Asian actors in Hollywood, but I knew that in order to find this raw talent, I would have to be really proactive about it and open people's eyes to it and get people interested.

Can you elaborate more on the casting process?

Andrew C: Part of the whole casting process to me was also to inspire people to go into the field because I feel that a lot of Asians don't go into entertainment. I wanted to inspire them and give them a platform and say, "Hey, there's this series with Asian leads, and it might be something that you might be interested in." We had a massive audition process and a ton of submissions after doing an open call. We were extremely happy with the cast we ended up with because we felt that they were stereotype-busting. I wanted to prove that there were talented Asian actors out there, and I feel that we did accomplish that. We had Asians of all ethnicities come out, and the cast came from all different backgrounds, but it was kind of my intention and my hope that that would happen. We were just really lucky.

The MarseilieWeb Festival is one of the largest and premier Web festivals in the world. What was it like to win an award there?

Andrew C: We went to France, we went to New York, we went to L.A. as well. We won an award in France for best direction and, finally after all our festival runs, we had a screening in Toronto and then put it online.

Tell us more about that whole experience.

Andrew C: It was an amazing experience. The festival itself is great and, of course, being in France, Marseille was a beautiful city. Just being around my peers and other people who had started their own Web series — they all had similar experiences. They just wanted to do something on their own without being shackled by the barriers of trying to get financing. So, a lot of the creators of Web series at this festival did it on their own. It was great seeing that there were people just like you who wanted to do something, and just did it. It was a pretty inspiring experience.

Now that the first few episodes of the Web series have been released, how does it feel to have your project out there online?

Andrew C: I feel it's very satisfying to finally see it out there. Over a four-year period, you're living with this project for so long — I've seen it a million times having edited it myself, so now that it's out there, I'm just happy that people can finally take a look at it for themselves. I'm excited to hear what people think of it and how the audience reacts to it.

The show premiered on April 28. What has been the response from viewers?

Andrew C: So far, the response has been positive. It's still pretty early, but so far, the reception has been pretty positive; I've been happy to hear that. One of my favorite scenes is in the first episode. It's in a bookstore between the characters Brandon and Jay. Jay and Brandon have a conversation, and Jay gives his philosophy about relationships — he kind of plays the field too much even though he already has a girlfriend. I really like that scene because it's the most complete scene in my mind in terms of writing and acting and often the way that it looks. There are a lot of scenes that I like that haven't come out as well, so I hope people stay tuned.

What do you hope people take from these episodes?

Andrew C: I hope people can relate to it. I hope people can relate to the experiences that the characters in their 20s are feeling. I hope that kind of makes them look at how they see their dreams and their passions; and I hope it will inspire them to actually take control of their own lives to some extent — although the characters in the Web series sort of go in the wrong direction, it's kind of a morality tale in that respect. I hope it inspires other Asian kids to go into entertainment. That's why I put Asian faces on screen — I'm hoping it inspires people to see themselves on screen when they see the series and hopefully inspire other filmmakers.

Watch "Millions" on MillionsTheSeries.com and youtube.com/millionswebseries.

"Millions" received funding through Kickstarter back in 2010, going this route allowed Andrew C to have more control over his project as opposed to applying for funding.

Following an open casting call and non-traditional casting efforts such as contacting dance organizations and schools, the cast of "Millions" features Asians of all ethnicities.

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JAVA’s Wade Ishimoto Inducted as Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — In a packed auditorium at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, Japanese American Veterans Assn. VP Wade Ishimoto, retired Army captain, was inducted as a Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment.

Accompanied by his wife, Bobbi, Ishimoto is the sole living inductee to the Special Forces Regiment, also known as the Special Forces Regimental Hall of Fame.

On hand to witness the historic moment were several family members and close friends, including Command Sgt. Maj. Ernie K. Tataba, the first Japanese American Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment; 2nd Lt. Yohei Sakamoto and his wife, Jacklynn, and Karen Conlin, civilian aide to the secretary of the Army in Virginia, accompanied by her husband, Sean, and their son, Maclaine, who is Ishimoto's godson.


Ishimoto's dedication to military service has made him a legend in the Special Operations community. He began his affiliation with the Special Forces Regiment in 1968, conducting classified human intelligence cross-border operations in Vietnam. He continued service with the 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) while leading a civic action and humanitarian relief mission to the Miyako Islands, Okinawa.

He was also the intelligence officer and road block security team leader on the ill-fated 1980 mission to rescue 53 American hostages in Tehran, Iran. Even in retirement, Capt. Ishimoto continued to contribute to the Special Forces community, including planning and directing national interagency exercises against terrorism, developing the Nuclear Emergency Support Team Key Leader training program and improving recapture/recovery operations of nuclear weapons.

Ishimoto of receiving this recognition: "The term 'Quiet Professionals' is often used to describe those in Special Forces, and it describes a person who serves with honor and humility that never seeks self-recognition but who seeks to help others. Those traits were taught to me by many in the military and especially in Special Forces. I just wish that I could have honored them at the ceremony because any induction is because of who they were and what they taught me. The true honor of the induction belongs to them, as I am simply the embodiment of each and every one of them. I salute them for making what I am today and for the induction."

The 11th Minidoka Pilgrimage Set for June

The Minidoka Pilgrimage Committee welcomes former incarcerees, their families and friends from across the nation to the 11th Minidoka Pilgrimage from June 19-22 near Twin Falls, Idaho.

Unlike previous years, the committee will conduct its own education programming, as well as host a Civil Liberties Symposium at the College of Southern Idaho on June 20.

In addition, participants in this year’s pilgrimage with have the opportunity to access an original barrack building and mess hall, including a tour of the Minidoka National Historic Site by the National Park Service Staff. A reconstruction of the guard tower and fence is also complete.

Senior scholarships for this year’s program will once again be offered to those 80 years of age or older who were imprisoned in any of the American concentration camps during World War II. The scholarship covers the registration fee, hotel and transportation from Bellevue College to Minidoka.

For further details and information, please contact the Minidoka Pilgrimage Committee at minidokapilgrimage@gmail.com or call (206) 681-4000.

APAs in the News

Jenny R. Yang Appointed Vice Chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The EEOC announced on April 28 that President Barack Obama has appointed Commissioner Jenny R. Yang as vice chair of the EEOC. Yang, whose term expires on July 2, 2017, was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate on April 25, 2013.

As a member of the EEOC, Yang is leading a comprehensive review of the agency’s systemic program, which addresses issues of alleged discrimination that have a broad impact on an industry, profession, company or geographic area.

Prior to joining the EEOC, Yang was a partner of Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll, where she represented employees across the country in numerous civil rights and employment actions.

Yang received her B.A. from Cornell University and her J.D. from New York University School of Law.

Indira Talwani Confirmed to the U.S. District Court for Massachusetts

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Indira Talwani was confirmed to the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts on May 8. Talwani will be the first person of Asian descent to serve as a federal judge in the commonwealth of Massachusetts, the first person of Asian descent to serve as an Article III judge in the courts covered by the First Circuit and only the second female Article III judge of South Asian descent nationwide.

Prior to her confirmation, Talwani was a partner at the Massachusetts law firm of Segal Roitman and the San Francisco law firm of Altshuler Berzon LLP. She received her J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law and a B.A. from Harvard Radcliffe College.

Mary Yu Becomes First Asian Pacific American on Washington State Supreme Court

OLYMPIA, WASH. — King County Superior Court Judge Mary Yu has been appointed to the Washington state Supreme Court, becoming the first gay justice and the first Asian Pacific American/Latina to serve on the state’s high court. Gov. Jay Insee made the announcement May 1.

Yu was appointed to the King County Superior Court by former Gov. Gary Locke. She has served 14 years on the King County Superior Court; she fills the seat of Justice Jim Johnson, who retired from the court due to health issues.

Yu earned her B.A. in religious studies from Rosary College (Dominican University), a master’s in theology from Mundelein College of Loyola University and her law degree from the University of Notre Dame Law School.

She will be officially sworn in later this month; she will run for election this fall for the two years remaining on Johnson’s six-year term.

Theodore Chuang Confirmed to U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Senate on May 1 voted 53-42 to confirm Theodore Chuang to the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland. Chuang becomes the first person of Asian descent to serve as an Article III judge in the state of Maryland.

Chuang’s historic confirmation triples the number, from eight to 24, of Asian American and Pacific Islander judges on the federal bench since President Barack Obama began his presidency.

He previously served as deputy general counsel of the U.S. Homeland Security Department. Prior to that, Chuang also served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the District of Massachusetts.

Claire Kohatsu Honored by Nevada Society of Professional Engineers

LAS VEGAS, N.V. — Claire Kohatsu received the Nevada Society of Professional Engineers’ 2014 “Engineer of the Year” award recently at the Engineers Week Banquet held at the Gold Coast Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Kohatsu, an engineer at Aztech Inspections & Testing, was recognized for her contributions to the NSPE and for her 15 years of leadership and volunteerism for the Nevada and Southern Nevada MATHCOUNTS organization, which is a nonprofit national math competition for middle school students.
The Way to San Jose Is Through the ‘Valley of the Heart’

By JACL National Convention Committee

Known as “The Valley of Heart’s Delight,” San Jose, Calif.’s, highly fertile soil and climate is naturally suitable for agriculture. Today, little remains of this past.

This year’s convention host chapter, San Jose JACL, is proud to feature this history and the important role that Japanese Americans played in shaping and contributing to the Valley’s agricultural growth through a theatrical reading of “Valley of the Heart.”

This special reading will be held on July 9 at Le Petit Trianon Theatre in downtown San Jose. Built in 1923, the Le Petit Trianon building is a replica of the Petit Trianon in Versailles, France, and is home to many of San Jose’s arts groups.

Sponsoring the reading are CATS (Contemporary Asian Theater Scene), Joyce Iwasaki and Judy Nizawa.

“Valley of the Heart” is a love story rooted in true historical events. Set in the Santa Clara Valley, it begins in the days leading up to Pearl Harbor and features the dramatic interaction between two families, the Yamaguchi family and the Montano family, and their respective fates during World War II.

Ichiro Yamaguchi, an Issei first-generation Japanese American, is a strawberry farmer working the land with his family. Cayetano Montano, a first-generation Chicano immigrant from Mexico, lives on the Yamaguchi ranch with his family as neighbors and sharecroppers. Emerging from the Great Depression, both immigrant families struggle to provide for the future of their American-born children.

“Valley of the Heart” is the latest offering by playwright/director Luis Valdez. In all his works, which also include feature films “Zoot Suit” (1981) and “La Bamba” (1987), as well as the George Peabody Award-winning TV movie “Corridos: Tales of Passion & Revolution” (1987), Valdez remains true to his original vision of addressing the Chicano experience in the U.S. in a context meaningful to all Americans.

Prior to the reading of “Valley of the Heart,” the JACL National Convention will host a Welcome Reception at the San Jose City Hall Rotunda. Designed by renowned architect Richard Meier, the rotunda is a glass-encased gallery stretching more than 100 feet high and is the showpiece of the environmentally friendly City Hall complex.

The reception will offer a celebration of food and company to officially open the JACL National Convention, which runs from July 9-12 at the Doubletree Hotel.

The events on Day 1 of the 2014 JACL National Convention are included with a full Convention Package registration. Additional tickets for these events are available.

The early bird registration deadline ends on June 15. Don’t miss out on these Day 1 events. Sign up early to guarantee your admission. Additional à la carte tickets for workshops, tours and other events, as well as general information about the National Convention, may be found on the Convention website at http://www.2014.jacl.org.
The 2014 JACL National Convention's theme is "We Are America." Early bird expansion. With 853 stores registration deadline ends and 446 abroad as of August 2013. Meyer addresses the differences in both cultures in his lecture but also highlights his business strengths.

Info: Visit www.jaschicago.org or call (818) 889-4417.

'Growing a Community'
Screenings and Discussions
SAN LORENZO and OAKLAND, CA
July 13, 1 p.m.; July 19, 2 p.m.
Eden Japanese Community Center and the Buddhist Church of Oakland
710 Elgin St. and 825 Jackson St.

Cost: Class rates vary from $40-$120 and are open to ages 9+
Seasoned performers and novice enthusiasts are welcome to participate in the Portland Taiko Summer Program. Join them for their upcoming Taiko 101 Workshop with no experience necessary.

Info: Visit www.portlandtaiko.org or call (503) 288-2456.

>>PNW

School Time program is
Spreading Japanese Fast Fashion to the World: UNIQLO's International Growth Strategy
New York, NY

June 17, Noon-2 p.m.
Japan Society
333 E. 47th St.
Cost: General Admission, $65 with lunch and lecture; lecture only, $15
UNIQLO's CEO Larry Meyer discusses how he aims to combine Japanese and American retail culture to accomplish the brand's expansion. With 853 stores and 446 abroad as of August 2013, UNIQLO's ambition is to become the largest fast fashion retailer in the world by 2020. Meyer addresses the differences in both cultures in his lecture but also highlights his business strengths.

Info: Visit www.jaschicago.org or call (312) 263-3049.

>>MDC

Japan America Society of Chicago's 21st Annual Sake Tasting
Chicago, IL
June 10, 6:30-9 p.m.
Roka Akor Restaurant
456 N. Clark St.
Cost: $60 for JASC Members; $70 for Nonmembers; $14 Valet
Experience an evening of premium sake from seven Japanese breweries with Chef Ce Bian's contemporary appetizers at Chicago's Michelin Guide-recommended restaurant Roka Akor. Guests will have a chance to win a $300 Japan Airlines gift certificate along with other prizes in the evening's raffle event. Space is limited, and attendees must be over 21.

Info: Visit www.jascchicago.org or call (312) 263-3049.

>>NCWNP

The Manzanar Reunion
LAS VEGAS, NV
July 21-23
California Hotel and Casino
12 E. Ogdon Ave.
The Manzanar Committee invites all to attend this year's reunion in Las Vegas, honoring those in all camps as well as the park rangers of the Manzanar Historic Site. Registration opens June 15 and forms for previous attendees have already been sent. The reunion will feature Mixer Night, "Manzanar," Bingo, a reunion banquet and a slot tournament.

Info: Call Grace Anderson at (818) 889-4417.

'Journeys' Culminating Performance
OAKLAND, CA
June 1, 2-4 p.m.
Oakland Asian Cultural Center
388 9th St., Suite 290
Come celebrate the different stories told by our elders through movement, dance and visual art. The performances will touch on Asian Americans and Asian Pacific Islander Americans' experience in the United States, unraveling their struggles through immigration. The program hopes to build and connect vibrant communities through Asian and Pacific Islander American arts and culture programs like "Journeys."

Info: Visit www.oacec.co or call (510) 637-0456.
In Memoriam

San Jose, CA; April 27; former Internee at Gila, AZ.; she is predeceased by her husband, Rikio Dol; daughter, Judie Sumiko (John), Betty Michiko (Jack) and Katherine Sachiko; gc: 3, ggc: 5, gggc: 2.

Fukumoto, Masako, 87.

San Jose, CA; April 27; former Internee at Manzanar; predeceased by his Wife, Betsy Serine; daughters, (John), Betty Michiko (Jack) and Katherine Sachiko; gc: 2.

Matsunaka, Takeshi "Blackle," 94, Papakou, HI; April 23; survived by son, Wayne Waga­tsura; brother, Yoshimi (Grace) Matsunaka; sisters, Hanako Mayashi, Yoshiko Eisler Otani, Misao Janice (Hisashi) Okamoto, Kazue Koyama; sisters-in-laws, Shirley Matsunaka and Sadako Nakamoto; brother-in-law, Clifford "Gabby" (Sayko) Nakatani, also survived by nieces and nephews; gc: 2.

Mayeda, Ray Kuniteru, 91.

Terreno, CA; May 1; he is survived by his wife, Theresa Imiko Mayeda; children, Grace Ann (Paul) Mayeda-Ced, Daniel Mark (Susan Rosales) Mayeda and Dean Richard (Jean) Mayeda; sisters, Yoko (Ryo) Hasima; brother, Frank (Kyoko) Mayeda; gc: 3.

Nagano, Mary Michiko, 89, Los Angeles, CA; May 5; she is survived by her husband of 69 years, George Nagano; sons, Lance (Julia) Nagano and Mark (Laurie) Nagano; daughters, Lynn (Chester) Cohn and Dawn Nagano, also survived by many nieces and nephews; gc: 4, ggc: 2.

Nakasono, Alice Sachiko, 81, Huntington Beach, CA; May 5; she is survived by her husband, Masao Nakasono; also survived by her children, Randy (Jane) Nakasono and Lorene (Bill)

San Jose, CA; May 1, survived by her husband, Grace Mayeda; daughters, Mark (Susan Rosales) Mayeda and Claude Kim Seu.

Sadanaga, Shizuno, 95, Papakou, HI; April 23, survived by son, Garrett Sadanaga; daughters, Eileen Hirata and Martene (Scott) Oda; brother, Mitsuo Nakamoto; sister-in-laws, Chiko Nakayama, Asako Sadanaga, Atsuko Kitagawa, Priscilla Sadanaga and Lourdes Sadanaga; gc: 1.

Soda, George K., 87, Santa Monica, CA; April 29; she is predeceased by her husband, Mitsugi Also; survived by her sister, Kiyomi Nakamoto; also survived by her nieces and nephews.

San Jose, CA; April 29; he is predeceased by his wife, Mitsuji Also; survived by her sister, Kiyomi Nakamoto; also survived by her nieces and nephews.

Yonezaki, Shirley, 89, Los Angeles, CA; April 27; she is predeceased by her husband, Roy Ogata; also predeceased by her daughter, Janie; survived by her daughter, Shari Ogata; Shari's children, William G. Davis, William Davis, sisters, Geraldine Yung and Made Ann McKeague; brother, Claude Kim Seu.

OKI, Funi, 90, San Jose, CA; April 20; she is predeceased by her beloved husband, Sadako Oki; survived by her son, Naoki (Gardys) Sano; brother, Toru Sano; sisters, Yoko Matsuoka and Yostie Sano; also survived by other family members; gc: 6, ggc: 12.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

In 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:
tiffany@pacificcitizen.org
or call (213) 620-1767

Tributes appear in a timely manner at the rate of $20/column inch.

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tiffany@pacificcitizen.org
or call (213) 620-1767
**GODZILLA >> continued from page 3**

"Generations of critics who have congratulated themselves on decoding the pacifist, antinuclear message of 'King of Monsters' will be startled by the explicitness of the Japanese version, in which Gojira (as the Japanese transliterate his name) is repeatedly identified as a result of testing in the Pacific and the embodiment of the nation's nuclear trauma.

"Images of a devastated miniature Tokyo (quite effective in black and white) have been modeled on the newsreels of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the film concludes with the scientist solemnly declaring, 'If we keep on conducting nuclear tests, it's possible that another Godzilla might appear, somewhere in the world, again.'"

This was one of the lines cut from the movie for American audiences, which was being pruned in the mid-1950s by the U.S. government to accept nuclear power as the future and a necessity in the growing paranoid fight against the Russkies and their atomic arsenal. Maybe the movie was recut and Burr's parts were inserted for mere entertainment reasons to appeal to an American audience.

But maybe it was done to keep Americans complacent and in the dark. In a way, that makes Godzilla even scarier, doesn't it? In post-Fukushima, Japan, where people are once again jittery about the dangers of nuclear energy, the message at the core of Godzilla resonates with fresh urgency.

The new film, which opened May 16 in America, won't open in Japan until July. But the early reaction across the Pacific seems to be mockery and ridicule, that this Japanese export has now become too Americanized. Forget the radiation fears...the trailers released in advance of the opening reveals flashes of a chunky monster, which has Japanese fans mocking him on social media as a fat, supersized bloated original.

One of the stars of the new movie responded in an article about the criticism by saying, "You know what? Give him a chance. It's been 60 years. He's allowed to pack on some pounds."

Tell that to the healthy elderly who live in Japan, the country with the longest lifespan in the world.

Gil Asakawa is a member of the Pacific Citizen Editorial Board and the author of "Being Japanese American." He blogs about Japanese and Asian American issues on his blog at www.nikkeiview.com, and he's on Facebook, Twitter and lots of other social media. He was recently named the 2014 AAJA-AARP Social Media Fellow.

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**Embattled VA Secretary Eric Shinseki Refusing to Resign**

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki brushed aside calls for his resignation on May 8 and got an unexpected political lifeline that day from House Speaker John Boehner in the wake of reports that 40 patients died because of delayed treatment at an agency hospital.

"I'm not ready to join the chorus of people calling on him to step down," Boehner (R-Ohio) said at a news conference, adding that there is a "systemic management issue throughout the VA that needs to be addressed."

He said the House is working on legislation that would give the head of the agency "more flexibility to fire people."

The Department of Veterans Affairs has long had a seemingly endless backlog and exceedingly long delays for treatment.

For his part, Shinseki emphasized his own determination to remain in the Cabinet in an interview on CBS.

"I take every one of these incidents and allegations seriously, and we're going to go and investigate," he said.

Shinseki, a retired Army general, said in the interview that he sent inspectors to Phoenix immediately when he learned of reports about the deaths.

The White House has voiced support amid the calls for Shinseki's ouster from the American Legion as well as from Republican Sens. Richard Burr of North Carolina, John Cornyn of Texas and Jerry Moran of Kansas.

Legion National Commander Daniel Dellinger accused Shinseki, Under Secretary of Health Robert Petzel and Under Secretary of Benefits Allison Hickey of poor oversight and leadership failures.

"The existing leadership has exhibited a pattern of bureaucratic incompetence and failed leadership that has been amplified in recent weeks," Dellinger said during a news conference at the organization's Indianapolis headquarters.

The Department of Veterans Affairs issued a statement rejecting the call for the VA spokesman Drew Brookie issued a statement praising Shinseki's record leading the agency.

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"Secretary Shinseki has dedicated his life to his fellow veterans, and nobody is more committed to completing the work that lies ahead," the statement said.

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After you pay off your loan, you still have money from your tax return in your savings account!

**BOMB >> continued from page 3**

pretty stupid if you dove under your desk anticipating the command when the teacher said nothing. That would always get you an amused look from the teacher and the ribbing from your classmates for the rest of the day.

In looking back on the years of the Cold War, I realize it was a kind of cultural lesson we learned, a culture of fear and paranoia and distrust. One thing I was glad of was that the Russians were now the bad guys instead of us. Boy, was that a relief!! "Those dirty Japs" was replaced with "those dirty commies," and you can bet your bootie that I joined in on that chorus. And why not? Being the bad guy was tough on a kid.

John Tateishi is a former JACL National Director.

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By John Tateishi