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PACIFIC CITIZEN

Jan. 23-Feb. 5, 2015



THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JACL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Japanese immigrants are living in global diaspora — from the Andes to Los Angeles, from São Paulo to Seoul, Nikkei nomads have settled into a vast constellation of countries in the 150 or so years since Japanese *isolationism* was officially squashed.

One of the many beautiful countries into which Japanese expatriates have assimilated — while boasting a great diversity of thought and unique culinary delicacies — is also internationally known for its barbaric penal systems and the sky-high rates at which it imprisons more people than any other society in history. A gargantuan network of steel and concrete penitentiaries dot this nation's landscape, representing the continuation of an embarrassing legacy that shamelessly profits from human suffering.

Critics trace the roots of this current infrastructure to what activist Jim Wallis has called "America's original sin." That is, this nation was founded by — in the simplest terms — ideological white supremacists, racist men who ontologically believed that white meant right and that blacks were, at best, three-fifths human. Sadly, this age-old philosophy continues to haunt our republic today.

For the budding historian, it's not hard to detect the painful similarities between our ancestors' generations and our own. Evidently, North American racism — which is historically embodied as a racial hierarchy that places whites at the top and blacks on bottom — did not miraculously vanish with the formal abolition of slavery or the noted achievements of the civil rights movement. While society has given us a rain check on politicians openly wearing white hoods and burning crosses, it keeps in place a system where black males are shot and killed by police officers, security guards and vigilantes on an average of every 28 hours. Modern manifestations of racism spare us the Reconstruction-era murder mobs and kangaroo courts and instead criminalize black men for pointing and being in nice neighborhoods.

Lynching blacks for bloodsport may no longer

be in style, but racial disparities continue to plague the death penalty to such an extent that dozens of states (including my own) have abolished it or placed *indefinite* moratoriums on its practice. And while black Americans can now buy homes in previously off-limit neighborhoods, cast ballots and be buried in the same cemeteries as white folks, recent national unrest has revealed the extent to which this country still has to come; to those who insist that Judge Lynch no longer holds his sway, the fact that Mike Brown's body can lie in the sweltering street for hours before it's taken away, the fact that Eric Garner's illegal killing can be caught entirely on video, declared a homicide and that his assailant can still walk away badge intact says much.

Though the cherished Southern practice of chattel slavery was formally put to an end in 1865, this quarter millennia period of American history was naturally followed by nearly a century of unyielding state-sponsored terrorism popularly carried out under Jim and Jane Crow laws. As Ta-Nehisi Coates so carefully documents in his superb work "The Case for Reparations," this tradition collapsed only to morph into a set of blatantly racist housing policies and loan prohibitions that then snowballed into intense policing of low-income black communities under the dual mantles of federal "wars" on drugs and crime. These civil wars pumped adrenaline and nonviolent offenders into our modest prison network until the system bottlenecked and exploded into the multibillion-dollar industry we see today.

Like many black Americans, Japanese Americans also know firsthand of the horrors of mass incarceration. While significant discrepancies have marked our respective experiences, the analogy isn't an inappropriate one: We have both seen how mass incarceration has torn apart our neighborhoods, how its violent assault upon our quarters has left an indelible stain on our

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Dear Editor,

After 25 years of service as the director of the PNW office, Karen Yoshitomi suddenly resigned last September. It wasn't because she wanted to retire because she was immediately hired as the executive director of a major Seattle nonprofit as soon as she became available. That's how good she is: Others recognize her value even if the JACL doesn't.

With Karen's departure, the JACL has lost a remarkable senior staff member. Karen worked tirelessly as the PNW regional director, often working long hours and weekends and even holidays. In my seven years as National Director, never once did she ask for comp time even when I ordered her to take it. She didn't just work for the JACL: She gave her soul to the organization.

As the JACL's director, I found that Karen could be a challenge at times because she never shied away from representing the staff's or her own views where we may have had differences. Her tenaciousness could sometimes be aggravating as well, but I always knew it was only because she had the organization's best interest in mind. That's exactly what you want in your working colleagues if you're smart enough to realize it.

Given Karen's devotion to the organization for over two decades, it's disappointing that no one — not the president or national director or the P.C. staff — has bothered to publicly acknowledge Karen's incredible dedication and commitment to the JACL. But maybe that's just a reflection of why she chose to leave.

Sincerely,

John Tateishi

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NIKKEI VOICE

WHAT ARE WORDS WORTH: HAPA, HAFU OR MIXED RACE?

By Gil Asakawa

I've just finished writing revisions for a new edition of my book, "Being Japanese American: A JA Sourcebook for Nikkei, Hapa ... & Their Friends," which will be published this July by Stone Bridge Press. I mention this not just to pimp the book to you all, but because I wrote in the new foreword how I have decided not to use the word *hapa*, at least for now.

Instead, I wrote that I'll use "mixed race" instead.

Hapa is a word originally used in Hawaii to describe mixed-race people, like half-Asian, half-Hawaiian. The term was used as a slur, but over the years, it's become commonly used even by mixed-race people. In fact, I've heard mixed-race people other than Asian combinations refer to themselves as hapa.

But in 2008, when I moderated a panel in Denver titled "The Bonds of Community: Hapa Identity in a Changing U.S." for a conference sponsored by the Japanese American National Museum, a man stood up during the question-and-answer period and said he thought it was a racist term. At the time, I pushed back gently and noted that it's already a pretty common term.

The interchange with this man has stayed with me ever since.

There are lots of uses of "hapa" on- and offline, including mixed-race author, filmmaker, standup comic and certified lifeguard (really) Kip Fulbeck's "Hapa Project" and one of his well-received books, "Part Asian, 100% Hapa," of photographs of mixed-race subjects along with their personal statements about their identity. There are also websites, including *hapavoice.com*, which invites mixed-race people to post stories about their identities or about growing up mixed race. Hapa in its original context is used as the name of a Hawaiian music band.

Last year, I moderated a mixed-race panel following a screening of the powerful documentary "Hafu," which follows mixed-race people in Japan. The screening was sponsored by the Mile High chapter of JACL, and most of the panelists were profoundly moved by the movie, even to the point of tears. A majority of the panelists agreed that

they thought "hapa," like the Japanese term *hafu* (half) was a slur.

In December, NPR's "Codeswitch" team, which covers racial issues, ran a story about being hapa. I shared the story on Facebook, and it generated a lot of responses addressing both sides of the issue. I asked the commenters if I could use their comments and their names:

Patrick Yamada was forthright about using hapa. "I think eventually someone will be offended by any words we use," he commented. "We're a nation of over-sensitive *monkutare* (complainers)," he said.

Rob Buscher made a good point, though I'll continue to use "mixed race." "I prefer to use the term multi-racial," he wrote, "because mixed race conjures images of racial purity."

The Hawaiian origin was expressed by Stacey Shelton Ferguson, who said, "My family has been using the term *hapa* for as long as I can remember, with family members living in Hawaii. They always used that term referring to the mixed kids in the family. Growing up in the '70s half-Japanese, half-Caucasian, I never fit in, living in a very Caucasian neighborhood as a child. I often felt like an outcast.

"I identify with the term 'hapa,'" she continued, "and I always felt proud to be able to call myself hapa! I am not offended by the term at all. It's my vehicle's license plate!"

"My son is half-Korean, and on census records crosses out all the racial identities and writes in 'American,'" explained my friend Justin Mitchell, who is Caucasian. "Years ago, there was a pretty good mixed Western-Asian cuisine restaurant in Boulder called 'Hapa' that he and I used to go to occasionally frequent, and he wore their T-shirt for awhile. But it was because he liked the restaurant and not

out of any sense of biracial pride."

Emily Kikue Frank said, "I sort of feel like only other hapas and Hawaiians know the word *hapa*, so I don't generally use it, though I've always liked it. I'm fine with biracial, too, and have been known to self-identify as a mutt." She added, "Mostly people just assume I'm white until they see my mom."

Linda Allen doesn't like individual labels. "I was recently asked: white, Hispanic, Asian, African American, other: I chose 'other.' Depending on the situation, if they need the affirmative action: I use Asian most of the time. When in Hawaii — *hapa* — I love that term," she said.

Janis Hirohama wrote, "I prefer 'multiracial' or 'multicultural' to 'biracial' or 'mixed race.' 'Biracial' implies a mixture of two races, and some people have more than two races in their backgrounds. 'Mixed race' ... I may be overanalyzing, but to my ear it sounds a bit like 'miscegenation' (an antiquated term) or 'race mixing' (a term used by white supremacists)."

Alice Yoon gave a West Coast perspective. "Living in L.A., there's quite a lot of hapa kids here," she said. "My son's pre-school has at least three, and it's a small preschool. His particular class is about half white, half other. It's interesting that my husband is pretty much a result of a lot of Western Europe and half-Polish, but he's always going to be called white. He's more of a 'mutt' than I am."

Sandra Mizumoto Posey had the last word. "Ultimately, I think *we* choose how we want to identify and be identified," she said. "I like hapa. It was always affectionate in usage and gave me something to claim when neither white nor Asian seemed to completely fit me. It was only around other hapas that I felt like I belonged somewhere."

Many thanks to everyone who joined the discussion! What do YOU think about these terms? If you're mixed race, how do you describe your identity?

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 at www.nikkeiview.com, and he's on Facebook, Twitter and lots of other social media. He is the 2014 Asian American Journalists Assn. AARP Social Media Fellow.



The 2013 docu focuses on the lives of mixed-race Japanese and their experiences in Japan.

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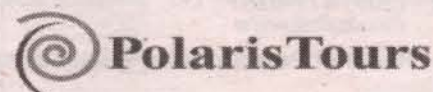
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DAVID LIN

National President

Operational Efficiency, Maintaining a Solid Financial Foundation and Enhancing External Partnerships Chief Among 2015 Goals

*Happy New Year! Shin-nen akemashite omedeto gozaimasu!
Welcome to the New Year's issue of the Pacific Citizen!*

It has been a tremendous honor and privilege for me to serve as the JACL National President since July 2012. Leading this prestigious organization for the past two and a half years has been an extremely rewarding experience for me, both personally and professionally. I have learned so much from the JACL members, staff and board members during this period. I have also seen so much progress being made to improve the organization's financial stability and effectiveness. But most importantly, I have seen our members, staff and board coming together and working toward creating a better JACL for tomorrow, one step at a time. It is that unwavering commitment and dedication to the JACL that has set this organization apart from others. For that, I am grateful to you for all that you have done, and I am proud to be part of this great organization.

I am very excited as I look forward into 2015, and I see many great opportunities for us to take the organization to a whole new level, building upon the successes and momentum that we have achieved in 2014. In 2015, there are three major areas that I intend to focus on:

1. Continuous improvement to achieve greater operational efficiency and effectiveness.

We have been working toward greater operational efficiency and effectiveness with a more streamlined and accountable organizational structure. We have recently realigned the project assignments of the National Staff given project evolution and staff movement. The *Pacific Citizen* launched its redesigned website late last year, positioning itself very well as the premier communications vehicle for the JACL. We are also in the process of refreshing the National website so that it will deliver timely content and enhance engagement with JACL members.

2. Continued focus on improving financial results.

Kudos to everyone, we have been able to manage our national budget in an effective manner while accomplishing established business objectives. The financial forecasting process that we instituted has proved to be of great value to our ongoing financial management. At this moment, we are still in the

midst of finalizing the 2014 financial results, but I am confident that our 2014 results will be favorable. On an on-going basis, we need to continue to manage our expenses prudently and look for new funding sources to ensure we are on a solid financial foundation. We will also continue to place great emphasis on membership by renewing current members and recruiting new members. Membership is the lifeblood of the JACL, and we must do well to sustain and grow the organization.

3. Enhance external partnerships and elevate JACL's standing in the community.

Another critical initiative that we will place even more energy and focus on is building stronger relationships with external partners and stakeholders. Under the leadership of Executive Director Priscilla Ouchida, we conducted a very successful youth exchange program, the Kakehashi Project, which we partnered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Japan Foundation. We brought 92 youths in four groups to Japan in 2014. I know that this program was extremely well-received by all youth participants, and it was truly a win-win for the JACL and our partners. We certainly hope to have similar opportunities like this in the future to engage and energize our youth members and our entire organization. In 2015, we will also partner with the Smithsonian

Institution to co-host the Day of Remembrance events in Washington, D.C. Again, it's a great opportunity for us to educate external partners and the general public while elevating our standing in the community.

In closing, I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding work of our staff and the National Board for the past year. In my opinion, JACL has one of the most talented, experienced and dedicated staff and National Board of any Asian American community-based organization. They work hard every single day to make JACL an even stronger organization.

With that, my heart-felt thanks to the JACL staff under the leadership of JACL Executive Director Ouchida and *Pacific Citizen* Executive Editor Allison Haramoto, and all my fellow National Board members! I also want to thank all of our members and supporters for your dedication and commitment to the JACL. I am grateful for all that you do, and I look forward to an exciting and successful 2015! ■

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from the Ikemoto Family
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PRISCILLA OUCHIDA

Executive Director

A Powerful Year

Two thousand and fifteen is already shaping up to be a promising year that will set the stage for 2016 and 2017.

I started the year with a meeting with the Smithsonian National Museum on American History about a 2017 exhibit commemorating the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066. The exhibit is scheduled to open on Feb. 19, 2017, for a 10-month run and will contain objects from the "More Perfect Union" exhibit mounted in 1987.

JACL will work with the Smithsonian to create an exhibit that explores a period when racial prejudice and fear upset the delicate balance between the rights of the citizen and the power of the state.

The story will be about Japanese Americans who suffered a great injustice at the hands of the government and who have struggled ever since to ensure the rights of all citizens guaranteed by the Constitution.

Through Executive Order 9066, the exhibit will look at how the document changed and reshaped the history of Japanese Americans in the United States and brought about changes in how we look back at that time and event in history, and its relevance to today, particularly after the 9/11 attacks.

What a powerful start to a year that will elevate JACL! Two thousand and fifteen will also be a year of education, historic milestones and commitment to an organization that

will use its rich history to address contemporary issues.

On Feb. 3, JACL will kick off the opening of the Art of Gaman exhibit at the Holocaust Museum Houston in Texas. Supplementing the exhibit, JACL will hold a teacher training workshop funded through a National Parks Service JACS grant.

On Feb. 19, JACL will partner with the Smithsonian on a Day of Remembrance program at the National Museum on American History.

On March 8, JACL will return to Selma and participate in the 50th anniversary of the crossing of the Pettus Bridge. In 1965, JACL was in Alabama in support of voting rights, and we will continue to push for passage of the Voting Rights Amendment Act.

Bridging Communities, a multicultural program for high school students that explores the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans, begins on March 14 in Chicago. And a new class of JACL leaders will travel to Washington, D.C., on March 21 for the JACL-OCA D.C. Leadership Seminar.

That is just the first quarter of the year.

The need for civic engagement will increase. The 114th Congressional Session, which includes three new AAPI congressional representatives, will continue the battle over immigration reform, voting rights and data disaggregation.

There will be challenges to the Affordable Care Act and to

President Obama's Executive Order expanding DACA and providing limited protection to undocumented parents of American children.

Pursuant to resolutions adopted at the San Jose National Convention in July 2014, JACL is pushing the White House to bestow the 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom on Min Yasui and Mitsuye Endo.

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear cases that challenge the civil rights advances of 50 years ago, such as *Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. The Inclusive Communities Project*, which seeks a determination on whether policies that have a disparate impact on communities of color are a violation of the Fair Housing Act.

In addition, JACL will continue to be a strong advocate for the establishment of Hawaii's Honouliuli as a national park site.

It is always the right time to thank our members. We couldn't do many programs without the support of members like Grace Kanda of Auburn, Wash., who made a large donation to JACL, or Donna Cole and George and Darlene Hirasaki of Houston, Texas, who contributed to the Art of Gaman exhibit.

There are still curtains that are waiting to be opened this year for a big reveal. I am on pins and needles about 2015. It is a great year to be a member of JACL. ■

MATTHEW FARRELLS

National Secretary/Treasurer

Improving Financial Stability Remains Key in 2015

Happy New Year! I wish everyone a healthy and prosperous 2015. As I look back on 2014, I'm proud of the accomplishments that have strengthened the financial position of JACL.

I attribute our success to several key factors. First, the National Council passed a balanced 2015-2016 biennial budget. Second, we continued to work closely with staff to ensure our financial reporting and forecasting is accurate and timely. Third, we were disciplined in managing our expenses and ensured funds were being effectively allocated to projects critical to the success of JACL.

Now, as we enter a new year, our focus will be two-fold — continue to execute on what we've done well in 2014

and seek out opportunities to improve the relevance and financial stability of JACL moving forward.

A key initiative for 2015 is onboarding a new fund development director. This position is critical to jump-start our fund development efforts. With more resources focused on strengthening existing corporate partnerships, identifying new funders and expanding awareness of JACL throughout the community, I anticipate greater potential to raise funds for ongoing programming.

Another key effort is to more proactively identify financial risks, whether it is revenue shortfalls or unanticipated expenses, and quickly engage program managers and owners to mitigate the risks as greatly as

possible. To do this successfully, we are working to foster an internal culture that is collaborative and supportive, while putting a structure in place that promotes financial accountability and transparency.

In closing, I'd like to thank the members of JACL for their vote of confidence in my ability to serve as National Secretary/Treasurer. I also owe a big thank you to the staff and my fellow colleagues on the National Board for their continued and steadfast support over the past two and a half years. It's been a great pleasure to serve, and I look forward to working with members, staff and fellow board members to continue to improve the financial stability of our organization for years to come. ■





JEFFREY MOY

VP of Public Affairs

Bridging Past and Present: 2015

As 2015 begins, I want to wish everyone a happy and healthy new year. As I reflect on 2014, I find myself thinking of the continued evolution of JACL, as well as the constants. Our staff underwent changes, with the arrival of several new people, including a new wave of fellows. We also thanked Karen Yoshitomi for over 24 years of outstanding service as she moved on to new ventures. We worked on new initiatives, such as a civic engagement outreach program leading up to the election, and continued to maintain and strengthen existing programs such as the Kakehashi Project and our teacher education workshops. We enjoyed a new level of visibility, with media coverage of our advocacy, our programming and a taste of our culture. And we had another strong convention, with so many of our members and their families enjoying San Jose, Calif.

In the months that I have been supporting our president and executive director with communications and policy decisions, we have also dealt with a number of critical social justice issues. As always, we have continued to

speak out against racist portrayals of Japanese Americans, whether in the theater or on the news. We worked closely with our partners on a wide range of areas, including marriage equality, voting rights and immigration. We had robust discussions around how to create a more open and accessible Internet, as well as what we can do to reform the justice system and ease the growing racial tension in this country stemming from a number of tragic cases.

In 2015, I expect more of the same: a continued growth in everything we do, while always being mindful and reflective of our past. Although there will assuredly be those in the media who will make ignorant statements, we are also seeing several positive signs, most notably the debut of the first Asian American sitcom in over 20 years. For JACL, we are excited to debut a brand new website. This may not be the first time you have heard this, but I assure you, thanks to the hard work of our board and staff (and my predecessor, Craig Tomiyoshi), we have plans in place to have a new website up and running in the first half of this year. It will be cleaner and more contemporary, as well as easier to use, and we look forward to sharing more with you in the coming months.

With the 50th anniversary of the marches from Selma to Montgomery coming up, we are reminded of how

important it is that we continue our work on voting rights as well as our greater legacy as a civil rights organization. At the beginning of this year, I was lucky enough to attend an event where Todd Endo spoke about his experiences in Selma during that time and the impact that work had on his life. In listening to Mr. Endo, it was clear how far we have come in becoming a more equal country, but also how far we have to go, and that in order to make lasting progress, we need to continue to build bridges to other communities. JACL will continue to fight for the rights of all oppressed, standing up for our community with our partners in these great struggles.

I want to close by thanking the staff, interns and volunteers of the JACL and the *Pacific Citizen* for all of their hard work. It is really remarkable to consider how much we accomplish year after year, regardless of the challenges we are presented with. A special thank you goes to Bill Yoshino and Christine Munteanu in the Chicago office, who do so much great work for this organization and still find the time to support me in my role. I would also thank our members for their comments and questions, as it is critical that we continue an open dialogue as we move forward. Thanks again for your support. I look forward to seeing everyone in Las Vegas at the National Convention. ■

NY/SC Looks to Expand and Continue Programs to Engage and Empower Youth

**NICOLE GADDIE, NYSC Chairperson and
MICHELLE YAMASHIRO, NYSC Representative**

Happy 2015 from the JACL National Youth Student Council!

The NYSC celebrated an eventful 2014, and we are extremely grateful to be able to continue in our positions as National Youth Chair and National Youth Representative, respectively, as we head into 2015.

First, we would like to thank JACL board members who have supported the youth and heard their opinions. We are especially thankful for PSW Regional Director Stephanie Nitahara, who has worked so hard in supporting the NYSC. Stephanie is our compass and an integral part of our success.

Second, the NYSC had quite a few new members join in 2014, and we met many new JACL youth. We held our fall retreat in September in Los Angeles, where we bonded and strategized for the upcoming year. Our new members are young and eager to plan and mobilize the JACL youth.

Third, our council worked hard to host two summits, one in EDC and one in CCDC. This spring, we are planning two more summits in PSW and PNW. In addition, we held biweekly conference calls with our full council and weekly calls with our executive board.

We are always surprised at how much work the NYSC can do. Many of the NYSC youth representatives and at-large members are students or have recently begun careers. However, they take the time away from their jobs and studies to create programs that engage and empower youth.

We appreciate all that you do and are so glad that we have such intelligent, giving and inspiring people motivating us to do the best we can.

As we continue to perform outreach and increase the number of youth programs, we hope to create better structures for districts and chapters to follow in order to continue



NY/SC youth reps and at-large members held their September 2014 retreat in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo. Pictured are (top row, from left) Nicole Gaddie (youth chair), Macy Elliot (CCDC youth rep), Michelle Yamashiro (National youth rep) and (front row, from left) Kurt Ikeda (at-large member), Ryan Kuramitsu (MDC youth rep), Kota Mizutani (EDC youth rep), Emi Kamemoto (at-large member), Kristy Ishii (PSW youth rep) and Charles Aoki (IDC youth rep).

welcoming new youth to the JACL. Additionally, the executive board of the NYSC plans to create more committees within the NYSC so that more youth can give input for programs and events.

We hope 2015 is just as productive and empowering as was 2014. We, along with the rest of the NYSC, are energized to not only continue the programs we have but also expand the NYSC, JACL and its capabilities.

We hope you have a happy and healthy 2015! If you would ever like to discuss youth programs, or learn more about how to get involved, please do not hesitate to contact Michelle Yamashiro at myamashiro@jacl.org or Nicole Gaddie at nicolegaddie@gmail.com. ■



TOSHI ABE

VP of Membership

Fostering Chapter Development and Increasing Membership Remains Essential

The JACL faces many challenges in the coming year, and JACL staff and board members are working to fulfill our mission as one of the premier civil rights organizations in the country.

One of the biggest challenges we face in JACL is our declining membership base. We are working to reverse that by trying to find ways to bring more value to being a JACL member. This past year, we completed an agreement with the Japanese American National Museum, and now JACL members may visit JANM for free. If you are a Thousand Club member, you received a copy of a wonderful book, "Twice Heroes: America's Nisei Veterans of WWII and Korea," by Tom Graves. The book was also made available from the author's website at a discount for JACL members only. We plan to do more this coming year to bring more value to you for being a member, and we welcome your suggestions.

This past year, we hired Matthew Walters, membership coordinator. Matt has quickly come up to speed and has already brought about many changes to the membership department. If you receive his chapter reports, you'll have noticed that you are receiving them in a new format, which

I hope you find more user friendly. He and Tomiko Ismail are doing a great job handling the duties of the membership department.

We will also continue to hold conference calls with interested chapters to discuss membership concerns. We learned quite a bit from our last call. One thing we learned was the importance of the chapter making a personal contact with their lapsed or soon-to-be-lapsed members. The personal touch seems to work more often than not. Another good idea we heard was to gift a membership to your non-JACL guest speakers (who live locally) at chapter events. These new members often become engaged members. Our next membership call is in February, and we look forward to having your chapter call in.

This year, we are also hoping to roll out a program that will foster chapter development. We would like to develop a set of practices for chapters to use that would increase the chapters' value to the communities they are located in.

At the National Convention in San Jose this past year, I met San Francisco Chapter board member Haruka Roudesh, and I learned about the Nakayoshi Project. The program is made up of young professionals who meet

and hold a number of events for the community, often on a monthly basis. The events involve educational activities, community service and social get-togethers. The program originated as a project of the NCWNP District and has since evolved into a financially independent program that no longer requires district help. If approved, we'll begin by holding workshops in each district to introduce the program. By applying their model to JACL chapter development, it could, with National JACL resources, help struggling chapters improve.

I also want to recognize our youth and young professional members, who are the future leaders of our organization and our community.

We received a very generous grant from the Coulter Foundation, in large part because the grantee was impressed by the energy and spirit they observed in our youth at the San Jose convention.

Finally, thank you from the bottom of my heart to all of you who support JACL, whether it's by renewing your membership, giving to our annual fund drive or volunteering. My best wishes to all of you for a prosperous and happy new year.

MIYOKO 'MIKO' SAWAMURA

VP of General Operations

Announcing the 2015 National Convention



Happy New Year JACL members and friends! May 2015 bring you good health, happiness and prosperity! Thank you for your support and commitment to JACL.

I continue to envision JACL's future as a diverse, dynamic and financially stable organization. I also envision JACL's continued success as a major leader in the fight for civil rights and historical/cultural preservation. I foresee JACL engaging diverse youth and enhancing our youth activities.

The 2015 National Convention will be held in Las Vegas, Nev., from July 13-16 at the Monte Carlo Las Vegas Resort and Casino. The JACL staff is hard at work preparing for our National Convention. We hope you will be able to join us. For more information, please visit the JACL website.

The 2015 National Convention Committee Chairs are as follows: Ron Yoshino, chair of credentials; Debbie Ikeda, chair of program for action; Dale Ikeda, chair of constitution and bylaws, and Paul Uyehara, chair of resolutions. Thank you to these chairs for their commitment to JACL. If you are interested in becoming a committee member, please contact me as soon as possible.

The 2016 National Convention will also be held at the

Monte Carlo Las Vegas Resort and Casino from July 11-14. In conjunction with National JACL staff, I will be reviewing options for the 2017 National Convention. The 2017 convention recommendations will be presented to the National Board in the near future.

The Personnel Committee will continue to address personnel/operational matters, including policies and procedures and other health/personnel benefits. Another area of interest for 2015 is to review the organizational structure of National JACL. The review should also include personnel positions (current and future), strategic planning, budgets and a fund development plan.

I want to again thank Wayne Tanda, 2014 Convention chair; Leon Kimura, president, San Jose JACL Chapter; Sharon Uyeda, San Jose JACL Chapter; Priscilla Ouchida, executive director; and Karen Yoshitomi, National JACL staff, for the 2014 National Convention's huge success. There were, of course, many additional volunteers, committee members and National JACL staff involved in the success of the convention as well.

Thank you to everyone!

I would also like to thank the Personnel Committee

members for their hard work to update the 2005 JACL Personnel Manual and addressing other issues such as health benefits.

The Personnel Committee included David Lin, president; Priscilla Ouchida, executive director; Floyd Shimomura, legal counsel; David Unruhe, chair, Governor's Caucus; Carol Kawamoto, *Pacific Citizen* board chair; Stephanie Nitahara and Annie Noguchi, National JACL Staff; Jenny Hanold, member-at-large; and Gary Mayeda, member-at-large. I want to specially thank Gary for his expertise in tracking the many edits and versions of the personnel manual for us. We would not have an updated personnel manual without him.

I am honored to be reappointed as the vp for general operations and appreciate the support from the National Board. I am very lucky to work with a diverse group of extremely dedicated individuals. If you have any questions/concerns, please feel free to contact me at msawamura@jacl.org.

A ROCKY AND SLANTED BATTLE

Rock band 'The Slants' continues to fight for its name at Federal Court after a six-year battle.

By Tiffany Ujiye
Assistant Editor

Oregon-based Asian American rock band "The Slants" argued in court Jan. 9 that its name was reappropriation despite the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office calling it a racial slur at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

A decision from the Federal Court should come within the next several months, and depending on the outcome, the case might advance to the U.S. Supreme Court.

For more than six years, "Slants" founder and bass guitarist Simon Tam has been fighting to trademark the band's name in hopes of reclaiming racial stereotypes.

Band members including Tyler Chen (drums), Will Moore (lead guitar), Thai Dao (guitar/keys) and Ken Shima (vocals) are all of Asian American descent.

After applying for the trademark back in 2010, the application was rejected, citing Section 2(a) of the 1946 Trademark

Act in part that the name "consists of or comprises immoral, deceptive or scandalous matter; or matter which may disparage..."

The rejection went on to say that the name might "disparage or falsely suggest a connection with persons

...or bring them into contempt, or disrepute."

Tam and many AAPI community members disagree.

"Ultimately, we deserve the right of self-determination, choosing what we consider social empowerment," Tam told the *P.C.* several days after the Jan. 9 hearing. "It's



(From left) Slant's Simon Tam, Tyler Chen, Ken Shima and Will Moore

The band's latest album, "The Yellow Album," dives into its quest for ethnic pride and awareness. This tongue-in-cheek soundtrack surfaced just before the band's hearing in court over its appeal.

disempowering when a government decides what is sensitive for you because for us it's about principal. It's about Asian American activists using the term in a positive manner, using it as a way to create social change."

>> See BATTLE on page 12

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SUKIYAKI AND A JAPANESE GARDEN'S DREAM

Dave Kenney's book shares the Normandale Japanese Garden's history as the garden's committee announces its second annual festival.

By Tiffany Ujiye
Assistant Editor

Dave Kenney's book along with the Crabapple trees and sculpted bonsai fill the Normandale Japanese Garden as it celebrates its 31st anniversary this year at its second annual festival, which is scheduled for Sept. 23, accompanied with the "Normandale Japanese Garden: Celebrating a Dream" book written and published by Dave Kenney.

The two-acre botanical oasis, complete with a koi pond, three stone islands and green marsh, sits in the middle of Bloomington, Minn., on the Normandale Community College campus.

The Normandale Japanese Garden Committee created a new festival to replace the 27-year fundraising event last year. After a seven-year hiatus, last year marked the first festival that included live entertainment and an optional dinner in hopes to raise funds for the garden's maintenance costs.

In past years, attempts to restart fundraising efforts were halted due to construction work and renovation on the surrounding campus.

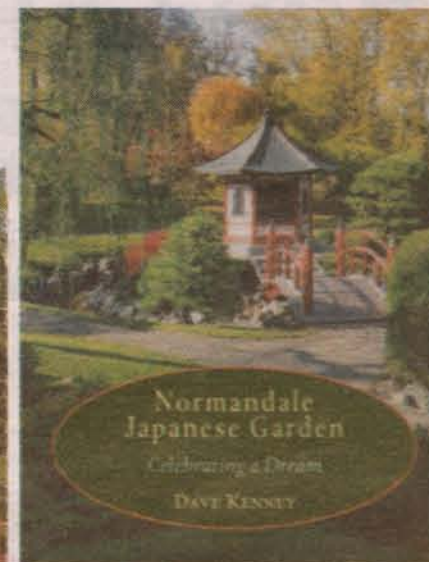
The annual sukiyaki dinner, once famous for its recipe by one of the garden's founding members, Kimi Hara, was canceled due to the construction and a change in campus regulations that no longer allow volunteers to use the campus' kitchen.

"Last year's festival was a success despite the poor weather we received," said Shirley Huskins, vp of the Normandale Japanese Garden Committee. "But we still get calls from people asking us when we'll do the sukiyaki dinner again." Huskins took over planning in 1980 and remembers serving the Japanese beef dish to 1,200 people. The last dinner was in 2007 before the campus began its renovation and policy changes.

"This special garden didn't just pop out of the blue, nor did it develop overnight," wrote the garden's committee members in its historical background letter.

In the late 1960s, the Bloomington Affiliated Garden Club conceived the project, and by 1972, the campus began its groundbreaking. The swampland that was once an eyesore for the community college was transformed into a Japanese garden, requiring ongoing maintenance, which past fundraising events helped to support. In 1980, the Normandale Japanese Garden Committee was formed to ensure the garden's proper maintenance and care.

The garden's architect, Takao Watanabe, incorporated the



The "Normandale Japanese Garden" book celebrates the Bloomington Japanese American community and remembers its founders.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE NORMANDALE GARDEN COMMITTEE

principles of the *shakkei* technique, meaning "borrowed scenery," which allows the outside spaces to be seen inside the garden.

However, Watanabe noted that cherry trees were unable to bloom inside the garden, and in 1984, seedlings from Hokkaido, Japan, were sent to the garden. Only a single variety survived — it is planted just inside the garden's stucco walls.

In 2012, the Japanese government commended the Normandale Japanese Garden Committee for its efforts in nurturing the cherry tree as part of the garden.

"We haven't done anything to block the view of the outside world," Hara said in an interview last year with Minneapolis' *Star Tribune*. He noted that the garden has stuck to its original philosophy in keeping with "shakkei."

Inside the garden is a waterfall, symbolizing a carp gazing upward. The imagery of the carp echoes an old Japanese folklore tale that it would one day turn into a dragon, reflecting the garden's perseverance over time.

"Everyone gets so captivated when they walk in from the gate," Huskins said. "You just walk in and you view this space and enjoy the tranquility it brings."

Perhaps the garden's most eye-catching pieces include the bentendo, a small building sitting on the largest island. The structure was donated by the Japanese veterans of the

Military Intelligence Service Language School in appreciation for the garden's space.

Along with fundraising events, the book "Normandale Japanese Garden: Celebrating a Dream" was released in June. Publisher-writer Kenney chronicled the garden's history and the individuals behind its story.

"We are truly indebted to Dave Kenney, writer; John Toren, designer and editor; and to Norton Stillman, Nordin Publishing," the committee said, "to bring to life for all to see and enjoy this historic document into a printed book."

The collection of stories and histories includes a variety of pictures of the garden through the years. Hara, one of the founding members of the garden committee and the sukiyaki dinner, was a large part of the garden's history. She died in 2007 and was one of the 120,000 Japanese Americans living in Pearl Harbor during the attack in 1941.

As a nurse, she was relocated to the Midwest with two suitcases, where she helped found the JACL Twin Cities Chapter and later the Japan America Society of Minnesota.

While Hara's popular sukiyaki dinner has ended, the spirit in keeping the garden alive endures.

Stay tuned for additional details and scheduled programming for this year's annual festival at the Normandale Japanese Garden.



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JACL >> continued from page 7

CHIP LAROUCHE

Vp of Planning and Development

Hail & Farewell

Happy New Year! I hope 2015 is off to a good start for all of you.

As I look back on 2014, I think it was a wonderful year for JACL. We provided thousands of dollars to our future leaders to go to college with our national and local scholarship programs; we co-sponsored the Kakehashi Project with Fulbright Japan, the Japan Foundation and the Laurasian Institution and led youth to Japan for a cultural experience of a lifetime. We had a lovely convention in San Jose, which included an awesome Obon Festival, certainly the largest I've ever seen. We had "The Art of Gaman" open in Sacramento, Bellevue and Houston to very appreciative crowds, and the Annual Gala was held in Washington, D.C. This is in addition to all the normal advocacy and watchdog work that the staff does every day that often doesn't make any headlines, and the production of the *Pacific Citizen* and the JACL Digest that keep us all up to date on what is happening in JACL.

Some of you may know that I retired from the United States Army. One of the monthly social events we had when I was on active duty was called a "Hail & Farewell," where we welcomed all the new members of the unit that had come in since the last event and took time to pause and thank those who had done so much for the unit who was now being reassigned to a different installation or often a different country overseas.

So in that tradition, I'd like to welcome a couple of key members of the staff who have decided to take up the challenge of the great work that JACL does and join the

team that Priscilla so ably leads.

The first is Matthew Walters, who works out of the San Francisco office and who was a member of the 2014 class of the JACL/OCA Leadership Summit. He has done a terrific job taking over the membership duties of Annie Noguchi. Matt has started at full speed to modernize the membership reporting that goes back to the chapters, and as a recipient of these reports for the Portland Chapter, they make tracking membership so much easier and efficient. He has also done great analysis of our membership demographics and trends that I'm sure will help us with future goals. Matt has also been instrumental in getting the organization to FINALLY decide on who will design JACL's new website. You should be seeing it real soon! Welcome aboard Matthew!

The second major newcomer to the staff is Toshiko Hasegawa, who has been selected to be our new fund development manager, and as her title suggests, she will be concentrating on revenue for JACL, and her major programs will be Fund Development and the Annual Gala and Convention. Interestingly enough, Toshiko is also a member of the 2014 class of the 2014 JACL/OCA Leadership Summit. Toshiko will work out of Seattle, and she and I will be working together. Welcome aboard Toshiko!

Alas, for all the good news, we've had to say goodbye to some key staff members as well. I've mentioned Annie Noguchi earlier. She did an awesome job of taking over membership duties for Tim Koide, and earlier this year, she decided that she wanted to move to Korea to take on some cultural growth opportunities at this stage of her life.



We certainly wish Annie the best.

One of the more stunning departures, especially for those of us in the Pacific Northwest District, was the announcement by Karen Yoshitomi that she was resigning her position as the PNW Regional Director to take on the duties of Executive Director of the Japanese Cultural & Community Center of Washington. Karen has been a key civil rights and cultural preservation champion in the Pacific Northwest for over four decades, with 25 of those years spent as a point person for JACL. I have spent many hours on joint programs with Karen over the last 10 of those years, and she was an awesome program manager, and the leadership she provided to JACL will be sorely missed. Good luck Karen in your new leadership role.

And finally, although he is not gone yet, I would be remiss if I didn't mention that Clyde Izumi, the business manager for JACL for as long as I've been in the organization and for many decades before that, will be leaving us soon after you read this article to head off into a well-deserved retirement. Clyde's responsibilities include EVERYTHING that involves finances in JACL. There aren't enough superlatives to describe how important Clyde's contributions have been to JACL, not to mention the institutional knowledge that he has accumulated over these many years as the key-stone staffer in San Francisco. Good luck Clyde, and enjoy your retirement with your family. You certainly deserve it!

I know that 2015 will be another wonderful year for JACL.

Akemashite Omedetō Gozaimasu!



DAVID UNRUHE

Governor, Northern California Western Nevada Pacific District

Remember Ronin

Remember the name *Ronin Shimizu*. That's a statement, not a question.

Ronin was a 12-year-old boy, living in suburban Sacramento with his parents and younger brother. He had lots of interests, including Boy Scouts, crew/rowing and cheerleading. Two weeks before Christmas, Ronin chose to end his life. When I first heard this awful news, I was devastated. What can a young boy experience in life that is so awful, so traumatic, that he feels the only way out is to commit suicide? I soon learned that Ronin had been a victim of bullying for many years and had finally taken more than he could bear.

By all accounts, Ronin was a very happy kid. His creativity and uniqueness were apparent at a very young age. This uniqueness was what ultimately led to the bullying because to some people, uniqueness or specialness is threatening,

and therefore scary.

A few years ago, I attended my high school reunion. I was talking to three kids I had started kindergarten with and ended up attending school with them for the next 13 years. We talked about a couple of the "unique" kids we had gone to school with, the ones who had been picked on for one reason or another. Those kids weren't at the reunion — why would they be?

I was just another kid, not unique, but not a bully either. I never picked on those kids, but what I did was almost as bad. I did nothing. I didn't stand up for these kids when they were picked on. I knew it wasn't right, and I knew I should do something, but I didn't. I was afraid. And for that I am ashamed.

It wasn't until I became an adult that I acquired the courage to stand up to bullies, and then I learned a very important thing: Bullies are usually cowards. As soon as you stand up to them, bullies tend to shrivel up and

crawl away.

I am not naïve. I know that young children (boys usually, but girls, too) often tease and bully other kids on the playgrounds and in school. Young kids don't usually have the courage and strength to stand up to bullies, and they suffer in silence. That's when the adults need to intervene and put a stop to this behavior.

I want to quote from a letter Ronin's parents wrote to the community:

"We always knew that he would make an impact on the world . . . please remember that education in regards to bullying prevention does not only need to occur in our schools but also in the home."

This is my New Year's wish for 2015: Always remember Ronin Shimizu, and always stand up to bullies, whenever and wherever you encounter them.

Ronin's parents are right about Ronin having an impact on the world. He already has.



ROBERTA BARTON

Governor, Central California District Council

Renewal, Rebirth and Reward for the CCDC in 2015

When I was asked to consider serving as Central California District Governor two years ago, the opportunity to become more involved in JACL was exhilarating and at the same time a bit intimidating. I had only recently become a JACL member. There was in my mind a lot of catching up to do following a decades-long disconnect from my Japanese American heritage. The leap from new JACLer to District Governor seemed inconceivable. How would I know what to do as a District Governor? Who would train me? Where would I find the District Governor "instruction manual"?

As it turned out, I got by with a little help from my friends. Thankfully, Robert Shintaku stepped in to take on the District Governor responsibility while I "got my feet wet" serving as Vice Governor. It was truly training on the job; a two-year apprenticeship learning about the inner workings of JACL at both the chapter and district levels. This "learning by doing" approach gave me so much more insight than any instruction manual could have ever provided.

And now I begin my first term as District Governor. My CCDC friends have assured me of their continued support. CCDC will indeed need all hands onboard as we chart a course for the future.

There is a huge challenge ahead of us. With the district at a crossroads after several years of membership and officer attrition, a deep sense of urgency demands that we must find a way to rekindle the passion for JACL. I know this particular challenge confronts the organization at every level — chapter, district and national. Growing membership is a real concern, but it is not enough. Key to restoring vitality to JACL at the chapter and district levels is growing an *active, multigenerational* membership base. For me as the district leader, this is a top priority.

I am confident that our collective district knowledge and expertise can find a way to achieve this goal. Member feedback in this endeavor is welcome and encouraged. I am especially interested in hearing from our Yonsei and Gosei: What can JACL do to make our organization more relevant and valuable to your generations? Our youth have the energy, innovation and leadership skills to take JACL to the next level.

Despite the roadblocks that inevitably crop up with any membership-based organization like ours, the Central California District Council forges ahead. Our financial base is stable. Our council remains committed. Our membership, though shrinking a bit, continues to be among the most passionate group of people you will ever have the pleasure of

working with.

Our slate of events this year will kick off with the annual Day of Remembrance and Officer Installation Luncheon on Feb. 15. The Distinguished American Awards return to the luncheon with recognition of John Tateishi and Rev. Saburo and Marion Masada for their contributions to redress and education.

In late spring, the district will host the annual Shinzen Run at Woodward Park, which serves as a major fundraiser for our annual scholarship program. Scholarships will be awarded to Central Valley students at a ceremony in May, and the keynote speaker will be Dr. Joseph Castro, recently appointed president of California State University, Fresno.

New this year will be a special trip to the Military Intelligence Service Museum at the Presidio of San Francisco. The district is hosting a contingent of Central Valley World War II Nisei veterans on this trip. It is one way that we can recognize the sacrifices of our Japanese American servicemen and servicewomen, who fought so hard for our country despite the injustices and prejudice they faced on their home soil.

The year ahead will be busy indeed. I look forward to renewal, rebirth and reward that 2015 will bring.

TOSHIKO HASEGAWA

Fund Development Manager

Big Plans Ahead Says JACL's New Fund Development Manager

Greetings to all from Seattle, Wash.! As the new fund development manager of the JACL, I am tasked with fortifying the existing relationships we have with funders as well as canvassing for new corporate, foundation and government partnerships. Additionally, I handle logistical details regarding rooms and reservations for July's 2015 National Convention in Las Vegas.

I am the immediate past president of the JACL Seattle Chapter, where I continue to serve as a board member and as chair of the Civil Rights Committee. Proudly, the Seattle Chapter was recognized last summer with the George J. Inagaki "Chapter of the Biennium" award at the 2014 National Convention in San Jose.

My experience with fundraising comes from working on a number of campaigns, most recently as campaign manager for state Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos, the first Japanese American woman to serve in the Washington State Legislature.

In addition, I have also served in multiple political offices, most recently in the 2014 legislative session as staff

for state Sen. Adam Kline. Both of my previous employers represent the 37th legislative district here in Washington-Southeast Seattle, my home, and the location of the JACL PNW District Office, where I will be carrying out my new work.

I have dedicated my time to working locally and in politics to help reconcile the disconnection experienced between we the people and our government. For context, it may interest you to know that the 37th is home to the most ethnically diverse zip code in the United States — 98118 — according to the most recent census.

Although Seattle has a reputation for being a progressive city, there still exist challenges with unequal access to opportunities for minorities. Like other cities in the country, Seattle has its own history of discriminatory policies that have negatively impacted people of color, and we still have a long way to go in our fight for equality for all people.

Yet in the same token, it is here where we have a unique, rich legacy of camaraderie between minority communities who banded and demonstrated the power of solidar-

ity, such as in the undoing of the "redlining" policies that kept people of color from buying property outside of the restricted areas in Seattle.

It is here, in the 37th legislative district, where Japanese organizations from across the country convened in 1929 and decided to band together to form the Japanese American Citizens League, for both solidarity and strength. It is in these neighborhoods that my worldview was shaped and the deep-seeded values of multiculturalism, tolerance and civic activism were born.

I consider it a tremendous honor to serve with JACL in the name of civil rights. Getting to know the National Staff as well as the National Board, I know I will be well-supported in this role.

There is ever more work to be accomplished in the field of fundraising — it will require hard work and perseverance, and I am ready for this challenge. *Gambatte!*

Please feel free to contact me at (206) 992-7156 or thasegawa@jacl.org with questions or suggestions. Wishing you all a year of health and happiness!



LETTER >> continued from page 2

communities' consciences. We have undeniably experienced racial profiling and bigoted enforcement of laws, had our people targeted by race and locked away in barbaric conditions by a system designed to traumatize and reduce us.

When Japanese American families were policed into state-sanctioned ghettos, the government had to scramble to build cabins and mess halls, hire guards to staff the new facilities. Today, prison administrators have had a lot more practice, and a growing swath of independent contractors and private firms are recognizing just how lucrative the prison industrial complex is. Consequently, policymakers remain more than happy to keep the mass incarceration business booming.

In the almost 70 years since the last North American concentration camp was closed in Tule Lake, Calif., thousands of analogous prison fiefdoms have cropped up across the United States, opening their gates to millions of prospective guests. The methods used to wrangle in the new target population have changed: mandatory minimums, "stop

and frisk" procedures, draconian drug sentencing and racially warped policing tactics have replaced the more brazen approach of marching to citizens' doors with rifles and ushering them en masse to open-air concentration camps. But the results are the same: broken families, systematic community disenfranchisement and a lack of opportunity or protections for those who survive the incarceration remain deeply prevalent.

Forty years ago, a federal commission formed to examine the wartime internment of Japanese Americans publicly concluded that the West Coast incarceration held no retroactively justifiable basis. Rather, they wrote, "race prejudice . . . hysteria, and a failure of political leadership" were the leading factors behind this troubling chapter in American history.

The commission's words stand as true today as they did back in my grandparents' time. While many citizens express no desire to see modern mass incarceration ended, Japanese Americans of all people should be publicly opposing this phenomenon, as strongly today as we did then. The socially conscious Japanese American should work collaboratively and creatively to end racial prejudice and reject any political leadership that refuses to endear

justice to the most oppressed. In this case, our community needs to be at the forefront of those calling for both increased fairness and transparency in policing and sentencing as well as the reduction and dissolution of this cruel and predatory system.

Sincerely,

Ryan Kuramitsu,
MDC Youth Rep.

BATTLE >> continued from page 8

In the past, the word *slant* is considered an outdated term to the band and other community members. The long-held racial slur against Asian Americans is now a source of empowerment and change.

"I consider the name a point of cultural pride," Tam wrote in a statement about the Jan. 9 hearing. "One of the first things people say is that we have slanted eyes. I thought, 'What a great way to reclaim that stereotype and take ownership of it.'"

Tam describes when first deciding what to name the band back in 2004.

Inspired by the term, Tam thought the name nodded to slanted guitar scales, slanted perspectives on living and a new way to take back what was once offensive.

"Our band uses our name to refer to our perspective and experiences in life as people of color," he went on to write. "It's our 'slant,' if you will, and we choose to empower others that way."

The Section 2(a) clause has always been a fuzzy line at the U.S. Trademark office. In 2008 when Jewish publication *Heeb Magazine* tried to reclaim the racial slur, the office denied the publication's trademark.

Despite the band's first rejection, its members appealed with an extensive document, containing letters from AAPI community leaders and members responding to the decision.

"This does not disparage Asian identity," Mari Watanabe, then-executive director of the Oregon Nikkei Endowment, wrote in the appeal. "It celebrates it."

The band's attorney, Ronald Coleman, argued at the hearing that the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board lacks the constitutional authority to decide whether a mark is "disparaging" or "scandalous" and therefore unworthy of registration. Coleman also argued that the U.S. Trademark Office denied Tam due process over the first application.

Judge Kimberley Moore described Section 2(a) "as outdated, cursory and a candidate" at the arguments.

This section has gone under heavy inspection as the high court decided last month to review whether the government can withhold vanity license plates on the ground of their offensive character.



(From left) Slants' Simon Tam (bass), Thai Dao (guitar/keys), Ken Shima (vocals), Tyler Chen (drums) and Will Moore (lead guitar) are all of Asian American descent. The government's lawyer explained after rejecting the band's application that "the applicant is a founding member of a band that is itself described as being composed of members of Asian descent 'that the racial slur is thus unavoidable.'"

The band's latest album, "The Yellow Album" echoes its members' rally for ethnic pride and awareness. With a juxtaposing title and lyrically deep tracks on the album, the band hopes to speak to its fans on embracing the struggle and pain of this trail while maintaining "a punk rock swagger."

Today, Tam, along with Slants' other band members, speaks at AAPI conferences and universities across the nation. Tam himself gave a TEDTalk at the University of Washington in June on social justice and activism. "The Slants" have also been featured on BBC World News, NPR's "All Songs Considered," CBS, MTV and in such publications as *TIME Magazine*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

Even without the media attention to the band's trademark battle, "Slant," calling itself Chinatown Dance Rock, has also performed at the SXSW Festival, Comic-Con and for the Department of Defense and Rotary International.

"It's been a blessing and a curse," Tam said about the six-year battle over the band's name. "It's a lot of work, but at the same time, it's opened additional doors to do racial justice work."

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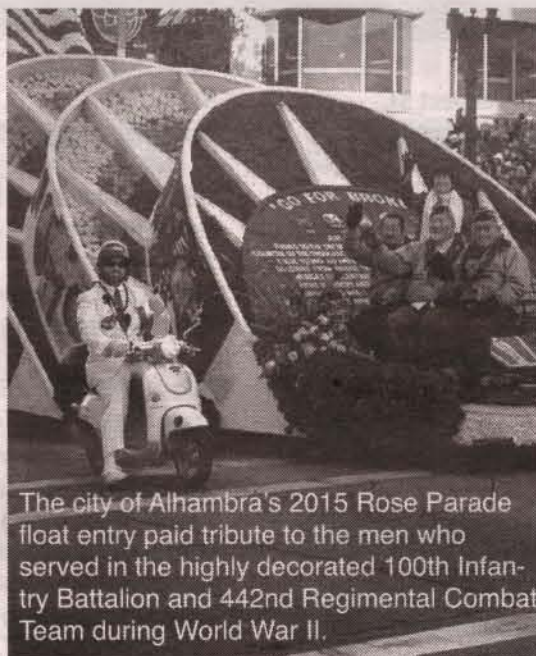
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CITY OF ALHAMBRA'S 'GO FOR BROKE' ROSE PARADE FLOAT HONORS CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL RECIPIENTS

The city of Alhambra, Calif.'s Rose Parade float entry paid tribute to the Japanese American servicemen who fought in World War II as it paraded down Colorado Boulevard on Jan. 1 in the 126th annual event themed "Inspiring Stories."

The float, created in collaboration with the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce and the Go for Broke National Education Center and built by the Phoenix Decorating Company, was based on the Go for Broke Monument in downtown Los Angeles. It honored the men of the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Military Intelligence Service, 522nd Field Artillery Battalion, 232nd Combat Engineer Company and the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion who served in the U.S. military during World War II. Pictured on the float were floral images of the 21 Japanese American soldiers who received the Medal of Honor, the highest civilian award given by Congress, for their actions in World War II, among them the late Sen. Daniel Inouye of Hawaii.

Following a nationwide search conducted by the city of Alhambra and assisted by the Go for Broke National Education Center, five Japanese American veterans of World War II — Roy Fujiwara, 96, of Honolulu (442nd RCT); Susumu Ito, 95, of Boston (522nd Field Artillery Battalion of the 442nd RCT); Yosh Nakamura, 89, of Whittier, Calif. (442nd RCT); Mas Takahashi, 90, of Tor-



The city of Alhambra's 2015 Rose Parade float entry paid tribute to the men who served in the highly decorated 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team during World War II.

rance, Calif. (100th Infantry Battalion); and Tokujii Yoshihashi, 91, of Alhambra, Calif. (100th Infantry Battalion) — were selected to ride on the parade float, along with Alhambra Mayor Gary Yamauchi and his wife, Linda.

"We are grateful to the City of Alhambra for choosing to present the veterans' story at the 2015 Rose Parade," said GFBNEC Chairman Bill Seki in an official statement. "Being able to share their inspirational story on such a large national showcase is a dream come true."

APAS IN THE NEWS



Longtime Anchor Ann Curry Leaves NBC News After 25 Years

NEW YORK — Longtime NBC news anchor and correspondent Ann Curry is leaving her job at the network to pursue a new startup venture, which will be "seeded" by NBCUniversal.

Curry, 58, began her career at NBC in 1990. Through the years, she has served as anchor for "NBC News at Sunrise," "Dateline" and co-anchor of "Today," which ended abruptly in 2012. Since then, Curry has remained at NBC, holding the title of "Today" show anchor at large and reporting in various other capacities for the network.

In her new role, Curry will be able to report on any platform or network via a multiplatform distribution approach.

"I look forward to what we will do ahead. At the same time, I can't wait to expand my reach and work with people I admire in other places," said Curry in an official statement.



Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr. Is Confirmed as Head of the U.S. Pacific Command

WASHINGTON — Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr. was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Dec. 11 as the commander of the U.S. Pacific Command.

As the highest-ranking Japanese American in the U.S. military, Harris will oversee all U.S. military forces (Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force) in the Pacific region.

He previously served as commander of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet since October 2013.

In his 36-year career, Harris has served in every geographic combat command region and been recognized with numerous awards, including two Distinguished Service Medals, three Defense Superior Service Medals, three Legions of Merit and two Bronze Stars.

JAPAN'S ABE 'FIGHTING AGAINST TIME' SEEKING TO FREE HOSTAGES

By Associated Press

TOKYO — Japan is doing all it can to free two hostages the Islamic State group is threatening to kill unless it receives \$200 million, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Jan. 21, vowing never to give in to terrorism.

Abe returned to Tokyo from a six-day Middle East tour slightly ahead of schedule and convened a Cabinet meeting soon after.

"We are fighting against time, and we'll make an all-out effort and use every diplomatic route that we have developed to win the release of the two," he said.

The Islamic State group demanded the \$200 million ransom in a video posted online Jan. 20 that showed a knife-brandishing masked militant standing over the kneeling captives. It gave a deadline of 72 hours, which the video's release time suggests would expire sometime Jan. 23.

Abe and other Japanese officials have not said directly whether Japan will pay ransom for the captives, 47-year-old freelance journalist Kenji Goto and 42-year-old Haruna Yukawa, the founder of a private security company.

Government spokesman Yoshihide Suga confirmed Japan believes the threat is authentic. "Japan's aim is not to kill the Muslim people, as the militant group claims it to be," Suga said. "We strongly urge them not to harm the two Japanese and release them immediately."

Abe has limited choices, among them to openly pay the extremists or ask an ally like the United States to attempt a risky rescue inside Syria. Japan's military operates only in a self-defense capacity at home.

But officials are adamant that Japan will continue to provide non-military aid to the region. "We will never give in to terrorism," Abe said.

Securing the hostages' release will be hard "because all Japanese diplomats left Syria as the civil war escalated," Tsutomu Ishiai, foreign news editor for the major newspaper Asahi Shimbun, said in a commentary.

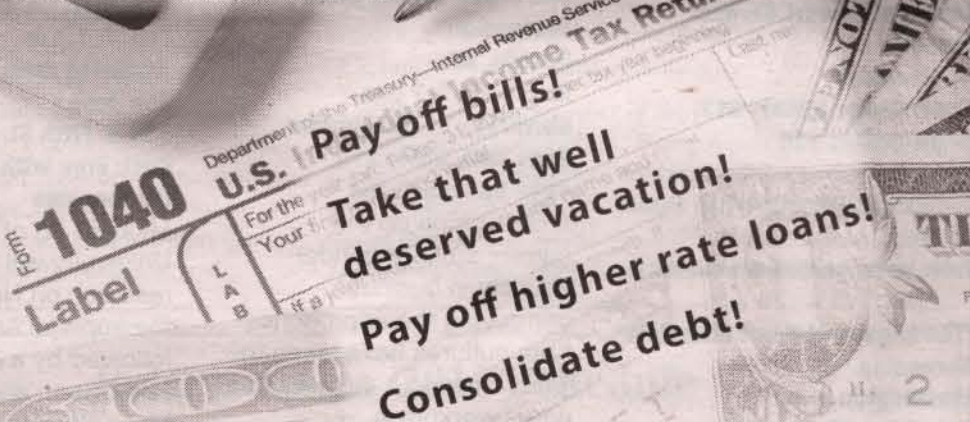
"Japan is in an extremely difficult situation. It needs to find a way to save the hostages by getting in touch with religious leaders and local heavyweights who are in a position to make contact with the extremists," he added.

But the ransom demand appears to have been timed to coincide with Abe's visit, he said.

"I think they were waiting for the best time to release the video and information about them," Hosaka said. "Then Abe happened to be making a visit to the Middle East and there was a reference to the Islamic State and Japanese government aid during the visit. So they may have been this as a good time to use these two Japanese as negotiation cards."

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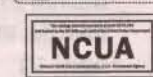
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CALENDAR

>>EDC

'A Screen for the New Year: Pines and Plum Blossoms'

Worcester, MA

Jan. 28

Worcester Art Museum

55 Salisbury St.

Cost: Adult tickets \$14

A rare screen from the 1600s will be on display at the Worcester Art Museum.

Info: www.worcesterart.org.

Program on U.S.-Japan Relations Seminar

Cambridge, MA

Feb. 10; 12:30-2 p.m.

Harvard University

Bowie-Vernon Room

1737 Cambridge St.

The seminar titled "Sino-Japanese Crisis (In)stability in the East China Sea" will include speakers Adam P. Liff and Andrew S. Erickson.

Info: www.programs.wcfia.harvard.edu.

Tour and Discussion of Friendship of Isabella and Okakura Kakuzo

Boston, MA

Feb. 18; 11:30 a.m.

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

280 Fenway

Cost: Senior tickets \$17; adult tickets \$20

Join the tour and discussion with the author of "The Book of Tea."

Info: www.gardnermuseum.org.

'The Legacy of Heart Mountain' Screening

Washington, D.C.

Feb. 19; 6:30-8 p.m.

National Museum of American History, Warner Bros. Theater

14th St. and Constitution Ave.

Screening of David Ono's Emmy Award-winning documentary will include a panel discussion with Franklin Odo, Norman Mineta, Paul Takemoto and Shirley Higuchi.

Info: www.americanhistory.si.edu/.

>>MDC

Women Warriors: From Incarceration to Redress and Beyond

Chicago, IL

Feb. 15; 2-4 p.m.

Chicago History Museum

1601 N. Clark St.

Cost: Free

Guest speaker Peggy Nagae will talk about Japanese American women's leadership and lessons learned from WWII to Coram Nobis to today.

Info: www.chicagohistory.org or call (312) 642-4600.

>>PNW

'Tohoku Tomo' Screening

Seattle, WA

March 7; 1-3 p.m.

Seattle Art Museum Stimson Auditorium

1400 E. Prospect St.

Cost: Adult ticket \$9

In conjunction with the Seattle Asian Art Museum's exhibit on the Tohoku earthquake, JASSW is hosting a documentary film featuring interviews with activists, volunteers, artists and other people affected by the earthquake.

Info: www.jassw.info.

Empowering Women in the U.S. and Japan Round-Table Discussion

Seattle, WA

March 10; 5-7 p.m.

University of Washington,

Kane Hall, Room 210

4069 Spokane Lane

A discussion on the current state of gender equality in business, comparing the approaches both cultures have taken toward creating a more fair and equal workplace.

Info: www.jassw.info.

Lecture: The Camp Without a Fence

Moses Lake, WA

April 2; 7 p.m.

Moses Lake Museum & Art Center

401 S. Balsam St.

'Uprooted' curator Morgen Young will present a history of the Japanese American farm labor camp near Nyssa.

Info: www.uprootedexhibit.com.

Nature and Pattern in Japanese Design Exhibit

Seattle, WA

April 19

Seattle Art Museum

1400 E. Prospect St.

Cost: Adult ticket \$9

This installation includes two rotations of Matsugatani dishes, a type of flat dish with petal-shaped edges from early 18th-century Japanese porcelain.

Info: www.seattleartmuseum.org.

>>NCWNP

'Stand Up for What is Right'

San Francisco, CA

Jan. 30

Nourse Auditorium

275 Hayes St.

Cost: General admission \$25, students \$10, VIP \$100

Celebrate Fred Korematsu Day at the fifth annual Korematsu Day Celebration in commemoration of the life and legacy of Japanese American civil rights hero Fred T. Korematsu. This year marks the 10th anniversary of Korematsu's passing in 2005.

Info: www.korematsuinstitute.org.

Fighting for the Emperor: Nisei Soldiers in the Imperial Armed Forces

San Jose, CA

Feb. 7; 1 p.m.

Japanese American Museum of San Jose

535 N. Fifth St.

Cost: Free with admission to the museum

Michael Jin of Texas A&M University will discuss his research on Nisei soldiers in the Imperial Armed Forces followed by a discussion with Peter Sano and Jimmie Matsuda. Sano and Matsuda were two Japanese Americans who found themselves serving in the Japanese military during WWII.

Info: RSVP at publicprograms@jamsj.org or call (408) 294-3138.

'Gambatte! Legacy of an Enduring Spirit'

Sacramento, CA

Feb. 14; 3-5 p.m.

The California Museum

1020 O St.

Cost: Adults \$15

Sacramento Bee

photojournalist Paul Kitagaki Jr. will present photos of Japanese Americans during

WWII.

Info: Visit www.nctor.org.

35th Annual Day of Remembrance

San Jose, CA

Feb. 15; 5:30-7:30 p.m.

San Jose Buddhist Church

Betsuin

640 N. Fifth St.

Cost: Free

Join the community to honor the memory of the internees at the 35th annual Day of Remembrance and the 73rd anniversary of E.O. 9066.

Info: www.sjnoc.org.

'The Printer's Eye: Ukiyo-e From the Grabhorn Collection'

San Francisco, CA

Feb. 20

Asian Art Museum

200 Larkin St.

Cost: Adults \$15

Art collector Edwin Grabhorn's collection of 88 superb prints acquired by the museum will be on exhibit. The display coincides with the museum's presentation of "Seduction: Japan's Floating World," featuring textile art from the Edo period in Japan.

Info: Visit www.asianart.org or call (415) 581-3500.

Opera at the Asian Art Museum

San Francisco, CA

Feb. 26; 7-9 p.m.

Asian Art Museum

200 Larkin St.

Cost: General public \$30, members \$20

Enjoy a special night of traditional Asian folk songs and Western arias sung by Adler Fellows from the Merola Opera program.

Info: www.asianart.org.

Golden State Warriors With Berkeley JACL

Oakland, CA

March 19; 7 p.m.

Oracle Arena

7000 Coliseum Way

Cost: Tickets \$45

Only a few tickets left for the Berkeley JACL Night at the Warriors. The game is scheduled against the Atlanta Hawks, with seats above center court.

Info: Contact Mark Fujikawa at (510) 232-0724 or fujikawa@sbcglobal.net for tickets and more information.

>>PSW

'Hatsumi: One Grandmother's Journey Through the Japanese Canadian Internment' Screening

Los Angeles, CA

Jan. 30; 7 p.m.

Japanese American National Museum

100 N. Central Ave.

Cost: Free

Director Chris Hope, a member of JANM's board of governors, takes his grandmother, Nancy Hatsumi Okura, to visit the sites in Canada where she was incarcerated during WWII.

Info: www.janm.org.

'China Dolls' Conversation

Los Angeles, CA

Jan. 31; 1 p.m.

Japanese American National Museum

100 N. Central Ave.

Cost: Reception for members only; discussion free with general admission

Museum members are invited to an intimate reception with author Lisa See on her newest book "China Dolls" A Q & A will follow the discussion, with books available for sale at the JANM store.

Info: www.janm.org.

Riverside JACL Installation Luncheon

Riverside, CA

March 7; Noon

Riverside Marriot

3400 Market St.

Cost: \$40

Welcome the new year with an afternoon of music, dance and fun with the Riverside JACL chapter. The program will include the Pineapple Express (Seniors on the Road) from the Valley Wide-Simpson Senior Center in Hemet.

Info: Contact Michiko Yoshimura at (951) 784-7057 or email her at my141@sbcglobal.net

ADVERTISE HERE

Events in the calendar section are listed based on space availability. Place a 'Spotlight' ad with photos of your event for maximum exposure.

FOR MORE INFO:
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In Memoriam

Aono, Mariko, 84, Los Angeles, CA; Dec. 13; she is survived by her children, Liz and Mika; siblings, Lucy, Meri, Sachihiko, Kachihiko and Kimihiko; nieces, Shinobu and Saeko; she is also survived by many friends and other relatives.

Asao, Kazuko, 91, Los Angeles, CA; Dec. 22; she is survived by her children, Connie (Neal) Yahata and Roger Asao; she is also survived by nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 2.

Hiyoshi, Katsuhiko, 73, Los Angeles, CA; Dec. 18; he was predeceased by his wife, Junko Hiyoshi; son, Duke Hiyoshi; he is survived by his children, Katsuya Ray (Reiko) Hiyoshi; gc: 2.

Honma, Tomomi Charles, 83, Torrance, CA; Dec. 9; he was a veteran of the Korean Conflict; he is survived by his wife, June Honma; children, Kathleen (Robert) Katz, Craig (Amy) Honma, Chris (Colleen) Honma, Julie (Kerry) Maetani; sisters, Sumiko Ito and Mitsue Stout; sister-in-law, Ling Lee Honma; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 9.

Ishigo, Mitzi Mitsuko, 84, Gardena, CA; Dec. 21; she is survived by her son, Kelvin (Nina Oshio) Ishigo; daughter-in-law, Nancy Ishigo; sisters, Masako Nakaoka and Kimiko Kitamura; brothers, Yuki and Roy Tanaka; she is also survived by other relatives; gc: 6.

Iwamoto, Jimmy Teruo, 82, Monterey Park, CA; Dec. 25; he is survived by his wife, Mary Rumiko Iwamoto; son, Ray Tatsuo (Janice Eiko) Iwamoto; daughter, Sharlene Terumi (Mark) Hirai; sisters, Chiyo Yamasaki and Hideko Ochi; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 4.

Kimura, Leonard Yoshio, 91, Seal Beach, CA; Dec. 4; he is survived by his wife, Alice Kimura; sons, Keith (Janet) and Vernon (Vanny) Kimura; daughter-in-law, Sharleen Kimura; sisters, Barbara (Rodney) Nishida and Charlotte Hirose; brother-in-law, Peter Fong; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 6; ggc: 5.

Kurakazu, Clifford Sueo, 77, Monterey Park, CA; Dec. 20; he is survived by his wife, Mavis Kazue Kurakazu; daughters, Susan Masae Kurakazu-Scott, Karen Kurakazu (Bob) Onishi and Lori Michie (Todd) Yasuda; sisters, Tazue Hayashi, Masayo (Albert) Abe and Fujie (Noriaki) Otani; he is also survived by nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 3.

Masuda, Yuri, 76, Torrance, CA; Dec. 10; she is survived by her husband, Tom Masuda; children, Kimi (Douglas) Tanji, Miki (Randy) Morris, Tami (Ismael) Rosales and Kosei Masuda; siblings, Judge Hiroshi (Miki), Takeshi, Yasuko and Yoshiko Fujisaki; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 4.

Masuhara, Miyoko, 97, Granada Hills, CA; Nov. 29; she was predeceased by her husband, Joe Masuhara; son, Allen Masuhara; she is survived by her children, Joanne (Mark) Nakamura and Craig (Wendy) Masuhara; gc: 1.

Masuo, Akiyama, 97, Spokane, WA; Nov. 29; he was predeceased by his sister, May; brother, Mickey; he is survived by his wife, Miyo; son, Paul (Linda) Akiyama; daughter, Laura (Steve) Yoshihara; nieces, Carol Akiyama and Mari-Ann Worley; gc: 6; ggc: 8.

Nozaki, Jimmy, 83, Gardena, CA; Dec. 6; he was a veteran of the Korean Conflict; he is survived by his wife, Michi Nozaki; children, Kim Storm, Kent (Janet) Nozaki, Kirk (Anna) Nozaki; sister, Miyeko Nishimoto; brothers-in-law, Tosh (Suzi) Odama, Ron (Marilyn) Odama; sister-in-law, Shigeko (Don) Murashige; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 4.

Onoda, Miyoko, 89, Gardena, CA; Dec. 10; she is survived by her husband, Takeo Onoda; children, Debbie (Glenn) Nagatori, Mark (Lori) Onoda, Vicki (Dr. Richard) Nishikawa and Gail (Robert) Hosozawa; brother, Johnny Moritomo; sister, Kay Neyama; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 11; ggc: 2.

Osumi, Ka Takashi, 88, Los Angeles, CA; Dec. 26; he is survived by his children, Karen M. (Mark) Hoffman, Joan Y. and Dennis T. Osumi; brothers-in-law, Shiz Osumi, Shig (Yumi) and Fred (Patty) Nakata; he is also survived by

many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Sakurai, Sadaichi, 48, Montebello, CA; Dec. 7; he is survived by his mother, Rose Sakurai; siblings, Kathleen Tsuruko Dunlevy and Kenneth Takao (Jennifer) Sakurai; nephew, Brendan Toshio Dunlevy; niece, Kaitlin Chiemi Dunlevy; he is also survived by many other relatives.

Sera, Shizuye, 91, Culver City, CA; Dec. 22; she was predeceased by her husband, Masao Sera; son, Douglas Sera; son-in-law, Roy Miyamoto; she is survived by her sister, Masao (Bunny) Ogimachi; children, Barbara Miyamoto and Ronald (Yvonne) Sera; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 3; ggc: 7.

Shibata, Thelma, 85, Gardena, CA; Dec. 4; she is survived by her husband, Mitsuji Shibata; children, Carol (Michael) Asahara, Cheryl (Joe) Bond; Doreen (Brad) Gruenwald; brothers, Robert (Loretta) and George (Helen) Nagamine; sister-in-law, Harue Kitagawa; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 7; ggc: 5.

Sumi, Aiko, 84, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA; Dec. 31; she is survived by her husband, Dr. Walter Sumi; children, Debbie (Morten Beyer) Sumi, Tracy (Craig) Levasseur, Elliot (Nani) Sumi and Gregu Sumi; siblings, Shizu Watanabe and Masao Sekiguchi; she is also survived by many other nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 3.

Toyoshima, Fujiko, 96, Pacoima, CA; Dec. 19; she is survived by her husband, Dick Toyoshima; son, Ronald Toyoshima; daughter, Joan Toyoshima; gc: 3.

Umekubo, Helen Chiyoko, 88, Torrance, CA; Dec. 26; she is survived by her children, Mary

Anne (Kent Cox) Umekubo, Wendy Lynn (Leonard) Takahashi, Matthew Shoji and Nicole Chiyoko Umekubo; siblings, Thomas Masato (Yaye) and Richard "Babe" (Mary) Karasawa; sister-in-law, Fumi Karasawa; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Yamashiro, Rose Natsuko, 85, Arleta, CA; Dec. 23; she was predeceased by her husband, Jack Mitsuyoshi Yamashiro; she is survived by her children,

Kimiko Ellen (Carl) Larson, Mariko Jean (Bill) Broad and Mark Musashi (Sabrina) Yamashiro; sister, Frances Tsuneishi; brother, Noel Tsuneishi; gc: 4.

Yoshina, James Yukio, 84, Culver City, CA; Jan. 6; he is survived by his wife, Margaret; daughters, Colleen (Frank) Mattoon, Jeanne (Dan) Houlihan, Sandi (Bill) Svoboda and Cynthia (Scott) Lohman; siblings, Kikue Nakahata and Otoo Ebisu; gc: 7.

TRIBUTE

DR. YOSHIO AKIYAMA

AKIYAMA, DR. YOSHIO. Age 84, passed away on Dec. 18, 2014. Beloved husband of Natsuko Okanishi Akiyama; brother of Hideo (Robin) Akiyama and Chizuko Ohira; brother-in-law of Esther Akiyama, Kimiko (Arnold) Maeda and Emiko Okanishi; he is also survived by nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Public visitation was held on Friday, Dec. 26, from 12-1 p.m. at Fukui Mortuary "Chapel in the Garden" in Los Angeles. Funeral services were held on Saturday, Dec. 27, 11 a.m. at West Los Angeles United Methodist Church in West Los Angeles.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to your favorite charitable organizations or Hollenbeck Palms, 573 S. Boyle Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90033.

www.fukuimortuary.com (213) 626-0441.

TRIBUTE

BETTE OKADA



OKADA — Bette (nee Masuda), 95, of Passaic, formerly of Montclair, passed away peacefully on Dec. 22, 2014.

Mrs. Okada was raised in Auburn, Wash., moved to Passaic following World War II and lived there for many years before moving to Montclair, where she resided for 10 years before returning to Passaic. Prior to retiring at age 62, she had been employed as an administrative assistant with Whatman, Inc. in Clifton. Mrs. Okada then worked

at ADP in Clifton until her second retirement at age 74. She was past PTA president, vice president of the Passaic Senior Citizen Center and following her employment with ADP, remained active by babysitting in the nearby area for many families who loved her dearly.

She was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Passaic. Mrs. Okada was predeceased by her husband, Masami Okada; her three brothers: Joe, Hank and James Masuda; her sister, Ruth Tanaka; and her daughter-in-law, Barbara Teri Okada.

She is survived by her son, David Okada, and his fiancé, Isabelle Bernard, of New York, N.Y.; three daughters, Joyce Okada of North Brunswick, N.J., Phyllis Howard and her husband, Randy, of Passaic Park and Carole Quiroz and her husband, Richard, of Montclair; and six grandchildren: Richard, Danielle, Bryan, Karen, Lisa and Michael.

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.

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¹ Global Finance, World's 50 Safest Banks, October, 2013

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