

# SEATTLE JACL CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

July 1995

VOLUME 32, NO. 7

## Spokane Democrats apologize for racial slurs

After over 2 1/2 years, officials from the Spokane County Democratic Central Committee (DCC) and the Washington State DCC, publicly apologized to the Spokane Chapter-JACL, the individual plaintiffs in a suit against the Spokane DCC, and the Asian American community for racially derogatory slurs and gestures made by party officials. After an overwhelming vote by the membership of the Spokane County DCC on June 20th, party officials in Spokane and Seattle issued the apology and announced the adoption of a formal grievance procedure at the County level. Jimmy Sirmans, Chair of the Spokane County DCC, also extended an apology to "the Plaintiffs and other individuals who have sought to address the racial slur incidents for any alienation, disrespect, or retaliation that any of (them) have experienced." In addition to the grievance proce-



Denny Yasuhara, foreground, with attorney Rod Kawakami—Dean Wong/International Examiner photo

dures, the Spokane County DCC has made a commitment to adopting effective policies with specific goals, timetables and effective monitoring procedures in order to achieve full participation by all groups of people as a part of negotiations towards a settlement of the lawsuit.

Paul Berendt, Chair of the Washington State DCC, also extended his apologies and commended all the parties involved in working hard to resolve this issue. Berendt described the incidents as "personally embarrassing," and one of the reasons he ran for the position as state chair.

"What began as a racial slur incident has culminated in a process which allows the Democratic Party to be more inclusive toward participation by people of color in its political affairs. This case was one of principle, a principle

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## President's Report

by Cal Takagi

### A time 'to mount an extensive membership campaign'

A recent memo received from national president Denny Yasuhara urges us to mount an intensive membership campaign both in terms of recruiting new members and in securing renewals. The reason for this is that 70 percent of JACL revenues are derived from membership dues, and with declining membership, revenues for the year have dropped off significantly. In conversations with some people, I have been told that the ongoing problems in the national office, the seemingly endless charges and countercharges showing up on the pages of the PC, and the divisiveness of certain issues within the organization have all contributed to a reluctance on their part either to join or to continue their support. These are understand-

able reasons and they deserve some kind of response.

The current disagreements about whether or not the National Board made the right decisions to handle the fiscal crisis have often been nasty and public, but they miss the point that the decisions were made by the proper people, in a proper way, and in good faith. The inability of the protesters to accept the decisions and their subsequent behavior is somewhat reminiscent of the kid who picks up the ball and goes home if he isn't allowed to win. They seem to be saying that if they don't get their way, they will break up the ballgame. I am not concerned about this possibility. The organization will survive this threat and, in

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## Chapter Focus

from Arlene Oki  
2nd vice president

### Doshi-Kai

Wayne Kimura, chair of the Doshi-Kai, reports that the group is having its usual active year and continues to have its monthly dinner meetings. Although at one time, the group sponsored career oriented activities, recently it has become more social and downright outdoorsy. Among activities this year, the group has skied on Whistler and Blackcomb mountains, rafted on the Wenatchee River, and is currently planning a hiking expedition to Snow Lake. When asked what the criteria are for membership, Kimura offered: (1) like to eat, (2) like desserts and (3) be a (vigorous?) young adult.

Members also are indispensable volunteers at the Seattle Cherry Blossom and Japanese Cultural Festival and our annual Installation Dinner.

If interested in joining this active group, please call Wayne at 869-5174.

### Pacific Citizen

Among responsibilities assigned to the Second V.P. is serving as a liaison to the Pacific Citizen. Articles involving local events and Nikkei are submitted to the national publication so that communities across the nation might be informed about Seattle's active community.

### Asian Pacific Islander Homophobia/ Homosexuality Education Project

by Zone Montoya, a Filipino immigrant lesbian  
and Jill Beppu, Japanese American lesbian

This is a big step for us, to come out in print. It's an even bigger step to do so in an Asian and Pacific Islander newsletter. We feel emotionally touched.

We are part of the Asian Pacific Islander Homophobia/Homosexuality Education Project (APIHHEP). We would like to thank JACL for your support and for being our fiscal sponsor. THANK YOU.

Our mission is to eliminate homophobia in our commu-

### Political Education

The Seattle Chapter has worked with the local chapter of the League of Women Voters, a non-partisan organization, to help them diversify their membership and identify issues of concern to communities of color. To this end, our Chapter co-sponsored a political forum with the League and worked to develop strategies on outreach and involvement from representatives from diverse ethnic communities.

The Chapter also co-sponsored a forum with the Asian Pacific Americans for Political Action group earlier this year. Chairs of the Republican and Democratic parties were present to listen to the concerns of many APAs regarding racial harassment, lack of equal opportunities in education and many other venues, and proposals, such as California's Proposition 187, which deny public services to immigrants.

Future activities include other forums to continue efforts to motivate Nikkei to become involved with the political system and to understand issues important to APA communities.

### Newsletter

Newsletter mailouts are held on the second Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Seattle JACL office, 316 Maynard Avenue S., Rm. 111.

nities. We accomplish this by telling our "coming out" stories and through the support we give each other as gays, lesbians, bi-sexuals, and transgenders, as we did most recently at Asian Counseling and Referral Service for their clinical staff. If you are interested in more information or would like to know how we can be of service to your community or organization, please call us at 467-0884, ext. 3.

### Seattle-Kobe Kids Camp

Seattle JACL board voted to support the *Seattle-Kobe Kids Camp*, which will bring 45 Kobe students left homeless by the Great Hanshin Earthquake in January. During their two-week stay in Seattle, the students, between the ages of 10 and 18, will live with volunteer host families. Local students will join the groups as "American Buddies," giving the Kobe students the opportunity to meet and build friendships with young people their own age.

Japanese- and English-speaking volunteers are needed to help organize the program. Call International Language Institute at (206) 682-7080 or send a fax to (206) 621-7161 if you would like to volunteer. Messages can be left in either Japanese or English.

## Redress Update

The Office of Redress Administration announced that as of June 29, 1995, they have completed a total of 79,572 redress payments, classified by rank as primary 76,267; spouse 1,846; child 1,387, and parent 72. A total of an additional 168 cases are ready to be paid in the next disbursement, which will bring the total to 79,740. Congress has appropriated sufficient funds to cover only 80,000 cases.

Being processed are an additional 144 cases which have been determined as potentially eligible, but needing proof of identification documentation, and 339 cases which require more information in order to make an eligibility determination. Cases pending appeal in the Appellate Section of the Civil Rights Division currently number 332.

In a June 23 letter sent to various Nikkei community organizations and leaders, ORA Administrator DeDe Greene has requested the Japanese American community's help in finding more than 4,000 internees, relocatees, and evacuees who are potentially eligible for redress payments,

but whom the ORA has been unable to locate.

Six lists of "unknown cases" classified into the following categories, have been provided: WRA internees - approx. 2400; Immigration & Naturalization internees - approx. 870; Voluntary Evacuees - approx. 360; Crystal City, Texas internees - approx. 46; Persons in institutions under -WRA jurisdiction - approx. 138, and Military District of Hawaii internees - approx. 280.

With the unknown list material, a "Community Outreach Form" has been provided to facilitate the recording of information and processing. If any individuals in the community at large would like further information, please call the ORA Helpline at (202) 219-6900, and leave a message for Kathleen Roso to return your call.

All the lists will be available for viewing in the JACL/PNW District Office at 671 S. Jackson, Rm. 206, Seattle, WA 98104 after July 10. Please call ahead at 623-5088 to arrange a time as the office is open only certain days during the next few months.

## Let's support the Pacific Citizen

by Cherry Kinoshita

Just a reminder that the first 100 donors of \$100 or more toward the *Pacific Citizen* will receive a handsome color poster by artist Pete Hironaka as an appreciation gift. Already over 30 donors have received this very attractive 21'x28' lithograph titled "Issei."

Why a fund raiser for the PC? Although downsizing of national and PC staff has cut down salary costs, membership revenue has dropped \$2870 for the first three months of this year compared to last year. To help the budgetary crisis that our organization faces, the PC began a fund raising effort to alleviate its projected deficit of more than \$40,000 by year end if the twice monthly publication schedule is maintained. As to resuming a weekly schedule, unless the dues apportionment is raised by \$6-\$8 from

its current \$12 yearly allocation (which has not been raised since 1989), the PC will face a shortfall of \$140,000 in 1996. By comparison, yearly subscription rates for other Seattle vernaculars are: *Northwest Asian Weekly* - \$17.50, semimonthly *International Examiner* - \$18, and monthly *Northwest Nikkei* - \$15.

How can we help keep the Pacific Citizen meeting its publication schedule without having to drop back to a monthly issue again or in a worst case scenario, suspend publication altogether?

Just mail donations (any amount is welcomed) to: PC/SAVE, 2 Coral Circle, Suite 204, Monterey Park, CA 91755.

Let's show how generous Seattle JACLers can be, especially when it means keeping the *Pacific Citizen* coming.

## Kip Tokuda named interim Northwest regional director

Kip Tokuda was named interim Northwest District regional director while Karen Yoshitomi is on maternity leave. Tokuda, who was appointed by JACL director William Yoshino, is presently a Washington State Representative from Seattle's 37th Legislative District, and was also Seattle chapter president in 1993.

### CREDITS

The Seattle JACL Newsletter is edited by Bob Shimabukuro. Proofreader: Alice Ito. Contributors: Jill Beppu, Cherry Kinoshita, Zone Montoya, Arlene Oki, Ed Suguro, Cal Takagi Anne Uemura and Dean Wong.

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**Denny Yasuhara:**

**'Principle was non-negotiable'**

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of respect, fairness and equal opportunity. This principle was non-negotiable," stated Denny Yasuhara, National President of the JACL.

Pacific Northwest District Governor Terry Yamada commented, "The DCC has illustrated today that it will conduct itself consistently with these Democratic principles by making this apology and by enacting a permanent grievance procedure jointly authored by the plaintiffs and the DCC so that any future demonstrations of racial or ethnic bias will be handled in a fair, expedient and proper manner."

The long running controversy began in Spokane at a November 1992 Democratic Party meeting, when two party officials used the racial slur "Chink" while referring

to Asian owners of the historic Davenport Hotel. The situation was further exacerbated in early February 1993, when the Washington State Vice Chair made a demeaning bowing gesture to a Japanese American businessman who was critical of the party's handling of the initial incident. This occurred in the presence of all five (5) officers of the Spokane JACL Chapter.

In November of 1993, after ongoing efforts to resolve the issue had failed, a lawsuit was filed in federal court, by the Spokane Chapter of the JACL and five individual plaintiffs. The plaintiffs were: Edward Thomas, Jr., an African American, Terri Anderson, a Japanese American, Susan F. Strauss, a Caucasian American, and Debbie Abrahamson, a Native American, all of whom are members and officials of the Spokane County Democratic Party, and Denny Yasuhara, Chair of the JACL Ad Hoc Committee formed to pursue this issue.

**Need for JACL is greater than ever**

Continued from page one

time, the problems will no longer be considered newsworthy. Thus those who are tired of reading about the disagreements can come back. It will be over soon.

Those who are dropping out over substantive issues are another matter. The redress bill is probably destined to be one of the last projects to receive unified support in the Japanese American community. It is not likely that there will be similar strong programs in the future that will find such widespread support. Most socio-political and human

rights issues are complex, and our community is now diverse enough that opinions about them are bound to be in conflict. Thus, the positions taken by the JACL in these matters will inevitably be controversial. Still, it seems to me that a broad-based national organization ought to have a membership that believes strongly enough in its mission that individuals will not find it necessary to drop out because of their feelings about single issues. We ought to be cultivating what we have in common rather than emphasizing our differences. At a time when human and minority rights are under frontal attack, the need for the JACL is greater than ever.

**Captain Bruce Yamashita:**

**If you start something, you have to finish it"**

Note: Captain Bruce Yamashita will keynote the 1996 JACL Installation dinner January 27, 1996. The following is an edited reprint of an article which first appeared in the International Examiner in March 1994. Part I was reprinted in the June newsletter.

by Robert Shimabukuro

Back home in Hawaii, Yamashita began asking questions. He learned the Army and Navy had strict policies against making racial remarks. According to Yamashita, even the Marine recruiting officer in Hawaii was appalled by his story.

His self-doubt and humiliation turned to anger with the way he was treated. That anger and the sacrifices of our preceding generations, said Yamashita, gave him the moral legitimacy to rise up, take a stand and fight back. So in 1990, he wrote to then-Marine Commandant Alfred Gray, explaining the situation, concluding that he was entitled to the officer commission. The resulting investigation report, said Yamashita, "concluded that nothing happened and implied that I was a liar and I was making it all up."

Friends and family told him to get on with his life. They said that's just how it is with minorities. "But just when I was about to give up, Bill Kaneko, president of the Honolulu JACL, offered to provide resources," recalled Yamashita. Attorneys Clayton Ikei and Ernie Kimoto, former CBS producer Steve Kinno, and Kaneko planned a legal, political and media onslaught. A legal petition was filed with the U.S. Naval Discharge Review Board. National JACL, 442nd Regimental Combat Team Vets Club, 100th Battalion Vets Club, National Asian Pacific Bar Association, Hawaii State Legislature, Hawaii's Congressional delegation, California Representatives Norman Mineta and Bob Matsui, all offered their support.

USMC reopened the case and a second Inspector General investigation substantiated the racial harassment, attacks and unfair treatment incidents, but also concluded that Yamashita would have failed the program anyway. So in 1991, Yamashita was offered a chance to go back to Quantico and re compete for an officer's commission. "We refused," explained Yamashita, "because the Marine Corps broke the law. The burden rested with them. They had to provide an immediate commission that accounted for the years that had passed since I was released in 1989."

In 1992, Yamashita presented his case to the Naval Review Discharge Board. By then his legal team was armed with expert

witnesses and reports which showed a recurrent pattern of discrimination in recruitment and retention at the OCS. Major media jumped on the story. Politicians became interested. Training manuals were revised.

In early 1993, the Marine Corps offered Yamashita a commission as a second lieutenant. Again Yamashita refused, explaining that he would have been a captain by then.

Then, in October, on a CBS "Sixty Minutes" segment on institutional racism in the Marines, Commandant General Carl Mundy told correspondent Lesley Stahl and millions of viewers that minority Marines do poorly. "We find that minority officers do not shoot as well as non-minorities. They don't swim as well. And when you give them a compass and send them across the terrain at night in a land navigation exercise, they don't do as well at that sort of thing."

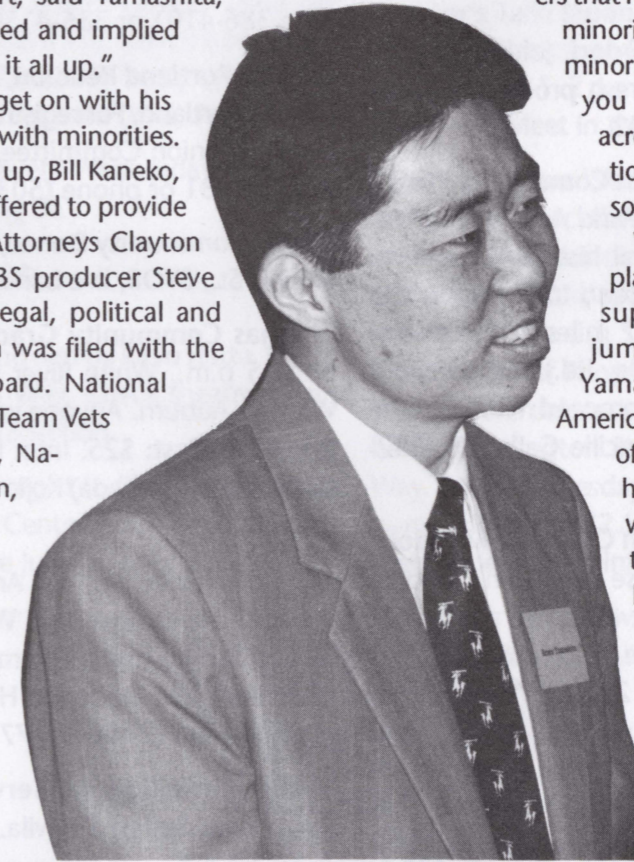
While Marine officials scrambled to explain away Mundy's remarks, it coalesced support for Yamashita. Organizations jumped on the bandwagon after that, Yamashita said. Organization of Chinese Americans, Council of La Raza, State University of New York Asian Student Union, and a host of others saw that Yamashita's case was not just his case, it was a case of institutional bias against all minorities. It had been from the very beginning. Only now, it was out in the open.

Soon after, Yamashita began negotiating a settlement with Assistant Secretary of Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Frederick Pang, who then recommended to Navy Secretary John Dalton that Yamashita be commissioned a captain.

Yamashita formally accepted Dalton's offer December 31, 1993, saying that it would help in his appeals he plans to make to the Navy administrative boards for back pay.

Why did he take on Goliath? Why continue? Says Yamashita, "I was brought up to believe, if you start something, you have to finish it. Whether it's college, whether it's officer candidate school, whether it's a lawsuit. Make it, fine. Fail, that's okay."

"I went to OCS just an American. There, I became an Asian American when society just didn't let me be anything else."



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## Calendar of Events

Compiled by Ed Suguro

### MEETINGS

**Seattle JACL Board Meeting**, everyone invited, July 19, 7 p.m., 316 Maynard Ave. S., room 111.

Doshi Kai meeting, August 2, 7 p.m. Call Wayne Kimura for location, 827-0460 day, 869-5174 eve/weekend.

### COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL EVENTS

**Seattle Buddhist Church Bon Odori**, July 15-16, 4-10 p.m. Saturday, 4-9 p.m. Sunday, 1427 S. Main St. Foods, artwork, taiko and a beer garden will be featured. Info: 329-0800.

**Farewell Appreciation Dinner for UW Law School Dean Wallace Loh**. Seattle JACL is one of the sponsors, July 20, 6 p.m., Four Seas Restaurant, 714 S. King St., \$25. Tickets and info: 223-0623.

**White River Buddhist Church Bon Odori**, July 22, 5-9:30 p.m., 3625 Auburn Way N. Foods, fresh produce, flowers and art will be featured. Info: 833-1442.

**Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community Picnic**, July 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Battle Point Park. Activities will include games, races and recording oral history. Directions: From ferry terminal, go straight to second traffic light, turn left (High School Rd.) and go about 2 miles to the end of High School Rd., turn right (Fletcher Bay Rd.) and go about 2 miles to Arrow Point Dr., turn left, proceed 1 mile to the entrance of Battle Point Park. Info: Lucille Galbraith, 842-5914.

**"Minidoka Remembers" and Southern California Minidoka Internees Get-Together**. The Japanese American National Museum this year is featuring one or two camps per month alphabetically beginning with Amache in January and ending with Tule Lake in October. On July 29, JANM will feature Minidoka in a program called "Minidoka Remembers" with a tour of the Museum exhibit at 1 p.m. and a panel discussion at 2 p.m. Reservations: (213) 625-0414. Admission: Free for members, regular admission price for nonmembers. Later

in the afternoon, there will be a mini-reunion get-together at the Ocean Seafood Restaurant, 747 N. Broadway, in Los Angeles' Chinatown for Minidoka internees, ex-Northwesterners and current Northwesterners. Social hour will begin at 4 p.m. and dinner at 5 p.m. Cost: \$20. Info: Bette (Yamauchi) Endo (310) 321-5279, Yuki (Sato) Lee (213) 664-0835, Lily (Kaneko) Takaki (310) 515-0377, Toshi (Shoji) Ito (909) 861 9676. Deadline July 15.

**Hiroshima Commemoration Program**, August 6, Bathhouse Theatre, Green Lake, picnicking 4:30 p.m., children's program 6:30 p.m., adult program 8 p.m. Keynote speaker will be Judith Lipton. Also speaking will be Martin Fleck of Physicians for Social Responsibility. Entertainment will be provided by Seattle Peace Theatre, Diversity Dance Group, Esther Little Dove John, Kokon Taiko and Dappin Butoh. Lantern floating will be included in both the children's and adult program. Info: 386-4101 or 386-4150.

**Greater Portland Reunion**, August 11-13, Red Lion Inn, Lloyd Center, Portland. For registration forms, contact Greater Portland II Reunion Committee, P.O. Box 133731, Portland, OR 97213-0731 or phone (503) 639-5166.

**Nikkei Community Dance**, August 12, Nisei Vets Hall, 1212 S. King St., BYOB, live band, \$3 per person. Info: 772-1160

**Thomas Community Grade School Reunion**, August 27, noon-5 p.m., White River Buddhist Church, 3625 Auburn Way N., Auburn. Anyone who lived in Thomas before WWII is invited. Cost: \$25. Info: Momoko (Morinaga) Kido, 722-6725; Esther (Yamada) Kojima, 725-6329; Mae (Iseri) Yamada, 852-5005.

**"Come Alive in '95,"** 7th Annual National JACL Singles Convention, September 1-3, Westin South Coast Plaza, Costa Mesa, CA. Registration forms available from Irene Kubo, 927 Folkstone Ave., Hacienda Heights, CA 91745. Deadline August 26. Info: (714) 496-7779.

**Military Intelligence Service Reunion**, September 7-9, Doubletree Suites, Tukwila. Info: George Koshi, 772-2930;

Roy Inui, 868-7935; Tak Matsui, 322-3111, Ken Sato, 363-1414.

**State High School All Classes Reunion**, October 9-15, Marriott Hotel, Marina Del Rey, CA. Although it was originally planned for just the class of 1945, which will host the event, it is now open to anyone who attended the Tule Lake high school during its operation. A cruise to Mexico will precede the activities; sign-ups may be made for individual events. Info: Aiko (Outa) Kusaba (310) 391-3890, Roy Higa (310) 477 4891, June (Manji) Oga (209) 369-9063, Mary (Kawano) Fong (916) 446-5423, Tom Matsuda (409) 453-7967, Tsutomu Ota (916) 428-5310.

**Heart Mountain All School Reunion**, November 17-19, Plaza Hotel, Las Vegas. Everyone who attended school in Heart Mountain from elementary to high school is invited, plus any other interested parties. The high school class of 1945 will host. Info: Bacon Sakatani (818) 338-8310, Keiichi Ikeda (213) 293-6887, Tom Hide (714) 826-2211, Betty (Fujimoto) Fujiwara (818) 240-6677, Eileen Fujiwara (818) 768-4046.

**Weekly ballroom dance class**, every Wednesday, from 1-3 p.m., Nisei Vets Hall, 1212 S. King St.

### ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS

**"Picture Bride,"** an award-winning film by Kayo Hatta, Metro Theatre, NE 45th and Roosevelt Way. Check theatre listing to see if it is still playing or call 633-0055.

Hyogo Cultural Center Cinema Night II: **"Black Rain,"** July 20, 5:45-8 p.m., Hyogo Cultural Center, 2001 6th Ave., suite 1101. Free. Registration deadline July 18. Info: 728-0610.

**"Dreams/Visions,"** art dealing with dream imagery, fantasies, hallucinations and visions including works by Linda Okazaki, through July 22, Seattle Art Museum Rental Sales Gallery, 1334 1st Ave., suite 140, Monday-Friday 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Info: 625-8997.

**Tea Ceremony Demonstration by Sohen School**, July 23, 2:30 p.m., Teahouse in the Japanese Art Gallery, Seattle Art Museum, third floor, 100 University St. Tickets: \$4 members, \$10 nonmembers. Info: 654-3121.

**"Northwest 1930s,"** a group exhibit that includes works by Kenjiro Nomura and Kamekichi Tokita, through July 30, Seattle Art Museum, fourth floor, 100 University St., Tuesday Sunday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursday till 9 p.m. Admission: \$6 general, \$4 students/seniors, free first Tuesday of the month. Info: 625-8900 or 654-3100.

**Curator's Talk: Japanese and Korean Art**, hear a lecture by William Rathburn and tour the Japanese and Korean art galleries, August 1, 2 p.m., Seattle Asian Art Museum, Volunteer Park. Free. Meet in the Garden Court. Info: 654-3100.

Repertory Actors Workshop presents **"Prelude to a Kiss"** by Craig Lucas, back by popular demand, the play features a multicultural cast directed by David Hsieh, August 9-27, Wednesday-Saturday 8 p.m., Sunday 7 p.m., Theatre Off Jackson, 409 7th Ave. S. Tickets and info: 364-3283. Harmony in Conflict: Forest Phoenix," sumi paintings by Fumiko Kimura that explore deforestation in the Northwest, through October 1, Washington State Historical Society, 315 N. Stadium Way, Tacoma, Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday 1-5 p.m. Admission: \$2.50, \$2 seniors, \$1 youth, \$6 family, children under 6 free. Info: (206) 593-28300



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*The Seattle Chapter JACL newsletter is published the 2nd Wednesday of each month by the Seattle Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League. Send items for inclusion by the 1st of the month to: JACL Newsletter, c/o Bob Shimabukuro, 6621 S. Bangor St., Seattle, WA 98178.*

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