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# SEATTLE CHAPTER

## NEWSLETTER

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## Mayoral candidates forum planning underway

by Sid Kuboi

A coalition of Asian Pacific Islander organizations, including the Seattle Chapter JACL, will be sponsoring a Seattle mayoral candidates forum, tentatively scheduled for August 28 at the Nippon Kan Theater, located in the International District.

Of course, the goal of the forum is for candidates to share with us their goals and priorities, so that we may all cast responsible, informed votes.

Based on the number of citizen questions posed at the last candidate's forum (for Governor), the forum organizers plan to limit number of pre-determined panel questions, so as to devote the majority of the time to your questions.

Please mark your calendars and make it a point to attend. In the meantime, consider what you feel are the most pressing issues facing the city. Write down those thoughts and questions and bring them on down to the forum!

## JACL seeking WWII railroad and mining workers' families

by Jeffrey Hattori

The June 20 issue of the Pacific Citizen, reports that the JACL is seeking names of railroad and mining workers' families as part of the effort to support their eligibility for redress. Railroad and mining workers of Japanese ancestry were abruptly fired during World War II. The ORA, in their initial determination, had concluded that these families were not eligible due to the firings being a private action rather than governmental. However, in response to community requests, the ORA has engaged an independent researcher to further investigate any federal government role in the terminations.

If you are aware of any railroad or mining families or individuals who were affected, please write or call: Karen Yoshitomi, JACL Pacific Northwest District Director, 671 S. Jackson St., #206, Seattle, WA 98104, or call (206) 623-5088.

## Public input sought

## National Day of Remembrance set for February 1998 in D.C.

from CLPEF

Ten years after the signing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, Japanese Americans and their friends will gather in the nation's capitol to hold "A National Day of Remembrance."

The Board of the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund (CLPEF) is asking for public comment on plans developed by an advisory committee drawn from residents of Washington, D.C., New York, Chicago, Seattle and California.

"Next year will mark the 10th anniversary of passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 and the 20th anniversary of the very first 'Day of Remembrance' in Seattle," said CLPEF Board Vice-Chair Susan Hayase. "It's a good time to take stock of how far we've come and where we need to go to ensure our legacy."

Among the ideas outlined at the June 28th meeting:

- Recognition of community activists who brought the issue of redress to Congress and the President;
- Recognition of members of the CWRIC and the Office of Redress Administration;
- Public preview of the educational projects being funded by the CLPEF.

According to Frank Abe, an organizer of the first Day of Remembrance in Seattle, " 'Days of Remembrance' are now recognized as an invented tradition, and are observed wherever Japanese Americans live. We've won redress. Now we need to make sure people remember why. Washington, D.C., is where national policy is made, and that's where we need to get our message across."

"We shared many good ideas at this meeting, but now we need to hear what kind of event would bring people out from all parts of the country to Washington, D.C. next February," said Cynthia Sakoda Acott of Chicago. "We want to hear from our own communities on how this event should be staged."

The CLPEF Board is asking for public comment by July 31st. Input from the advisory committee and comments from the public will be used by the CLPEF Board to frame the program for "A National Day of Remembrance." The program is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Smithsonian Museum.

The first "Day of Remembrance" on November 25, 1978, drew more than 2,000 people in a car caravan to the site of the former detention center in Puyallup, Washington, to stand for redress with their families.

Comments on plans for "A National Day of Remembrance" should be directed to the East Coast Office of the CLPEF, 1730 K Street NW, suite 410; Washington, DC 20006. The fax number is (202) 653-2815; the e-mail address is [clpef@worldnet.att.net](mailto:clpef@worldnet.att.net).



# Reflections on the first six months...a Mid-Year Report

by Jeffrey Hattori

It is hard to believe, but we are six months into the Presidency of our Seattle Chapter JACL. It has been a wonderful learning opportunity, with a whirlwind of positive and meaningful activities. This experience has enriched my knowledge and appreciation of the proud history and tradition of the Seattle Chapter and JACL and has furthered my admiration and respect of the hard working Board Members, membership, volunteers and staff.

During last year's preparations for the Seattle Chapter's 75th anniversary year, the Board also planned to create an environment, with regards to infrastructure and philosophy, that promoted a "leaderful" organization seeking to "push the envelope." What this required was a structure and system that supported meaningful participation of the Board, membership and volunteers, building on their strengths and interests, developing and/or expanding relationships with other community groups, and to clearly articulate our goals and workplan.

At the annual Board Retreat in January, the board members collectively agreed that we go "back to the basics" by focusing on civil rights issues, promoting the leadership development of our youth, and to continue being a cultural and community resource. In accordance, we revised our Vice-Presidents oversight role and committee structure to functionally support these goals.

All of this thinking (and writing) is good and fine. However, the true test is in the actions taken and the perceptions and participation of the membership and the greater community. I believe the Seattle Chapter has accepted and acted faithfully on our mandates. Over the last six months the Seattle Chapter has engaged in a variety of activities in pursuit of the goals outlined from our retreat:

- The year was kicked off with a tremendously moving and revitalizing 75th Anniversary Installation Banquet.
- Co-sponsored forums and workshops including a joint venture with the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA) to examine the implications of the Democratic National Committee fund raising scandal to the University of Washington Library's "A

More Perfect Union" exhibit and workshops on the internment experience.

- Successfully secured three Civil Liberties Public Education Fund grants to: 1) honor the role of Japanese American farmers in Pike Place Market; 2) document the significant role and achievements of Seattle in the redress movement; and 3) conduct state-wide teacher trainings in integrating the internment experience into curricula.

- Sponsored youth to attend national leadership conferences and community events, increased scholarship awards and dedicated significant funds towards the PNW/IDC Bi-District Youth Symposium.

- Planning the update and republication of the Japanese American Community Phone Directory.

### What is in the immediate future?

The Seattle Chapter is hosting the PNW/IDC Bi-District Meeting, "Communities Envisioning Tomorrow", July 18-20, 1997 (*Please be sure to register!*). The Anti-Discrimination Committee is planning another Candidates Forum, focusing on the City of Seattle mayoral race, in partnership with OCA, FAPAGOW and other organizations and is participating in a community coalition to counter Initiative 200 which proposes to "roll back" affirmative action in the public sector.

There is certainly much more to do and we would always welcome and appreciate your input and comments. However, to quote Helen Kawagoe, National JACL President, "JACL is well and alive". I certainly feel this way...I hope all of you do as well!

### Thank You Consul General and Mrs. Sugiuchi

As most of you may know, Consul General Sugiuchi and Mrs. Sugiuchi are leaving Seattle to a new assignment in Central America. As some of you may not know, this Consul General has been a unique and wonderful supporter of a variety of Nikkei organizations including the Seattle Chapter JACL. Over the course of the last two years, the Consul General has appeared at many of our functions including our Installation Banquet and Scholarship Cer-

See "President's message" on next page

## Seattle Buddhist Temple

by Joen Eshima

Once again, Bon Odori is approaching. Every July, children, adults and the elderly come from all over Washington to join in this event which is sponsored and held at the Seattle Buddhist Temple since 1930. It began as a church event and then was shared amongst various neighborhoods, communities and neighboring cities.

This spectacular celebration is held in the evening, Saturday, July 19th from 5 to 10 p.m. and Sunday July 20th from 5 to 9 p.m. in front of the Seattle Buddhist Temple, located at 1427 South Main street. There is parking available. However, taking the Metro/bus may be a better option. For questions about Metro/bus schedules, please call 287-8463.

Highlighted will be the traditional Japanese dances, foods, exhibits and entertainment. Bon Odori refers to the time in July when everyone remembers family members who have passed away. In tribute to those family members, traditional Japanese dances are performed in a circle outside the Buddhist temple. The warm summer night welcomes everyone to participate.

For those who are unfamiliar with the dances, Mrs. Kiki

## Bon Odori time is near!

Hagimori, who has taught Japanese dance since 1950, will be teaching 10 Japanese dances beginning Tuesday, July 1st from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Seattle Buddhist Temple. These classes are open to everyone. They run for three weeks and there is no registration or fee. All you need to do is show up. For more information regarding specific practice dates and times, please call the Seattle Buddhist Temple at 329-0800.

*Ed. note: The White River Buddhist Temple will host its annual bon odori on Saturday, July 26, from 5-9p.m. at 3625 Auburn Way N., in Auburn. For information, call the temple at 833-1442.*

### Chapter President-elect Yee chosen to lead Denise Louie Education Center

JACL President-elect Janice Yee was selected as Denise Louie Education Center (DLEC) executive director. Currently the director of development for National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, Yee will begin her new position August 1.

(The 2nd annual DLEC Jazz Night with Betty Carter at the Jazz Alley, takes place July 24. Call Kristen at 621-7880 for info.)

### President's message, continued from page 2

emony. However, his support goes beyond attendance. He has had a genuine and sincere interest of the history and tradition of the Japanese American community and of its significant contributions and challenges. He has also served as a "bridge" between organizations and individuals to ensure and foster open and meaningful relationships. The Seattle Chapter JACL has certainly enjoyed and

appreciated the Sugiuchi's presence and, on behalf of the Board and membership, I want to wish them success in their future endeavors.

### June Newsletter Mail-Out Volunteers

Thank you to the following individuals for their help at the June 12, 1997 Seattle JACL Newsletter Mail-Out:


- Elaine Akagi, James Arima, Mark Fukeda, Jeffrey Hattori, Kazzie Katayama, Mits Katayama, Chuck Kato, Taylor Larson, Chizuko Norton, Kyle Okada, Michelle Ota, Christine Shigaki, Sam Shoji, Cal Takagi, Merilee Tanbara and Karen Yoshitomi.



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## The Seattle Chapter JACL Newsletter

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## Japanese American Citizens League

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