

SEATTLE CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

August 1997

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'The debate has just begun!'

Chapter challenges anti-affirmative action initiative; joins coalition opposing State Initiative 200

by Akemi Matsumoto

On July 16, the Seattle JACL Board voted to join the "NO! 200 Coalition," a broad-based group of civic organizations and concerned citizens. In joining, JACL opposes Initiative 200's attempts to prohibit governments from using affirmative action programs to ensure equal opportunity for all.

Initiative 200 has almost the same wording as the anti-affirmative action referendum that recently passed in California. Its devastating effects have already been dramatically demonstrated in college admissions, employment, and government contracting.

NO! 200 Coalition currently includes Washington Association of Churches, National Organization of Women, Washington Chapter, American Association of University Women of Washington, American Civil Liberties Union, National Association of Human Rights Workers, Washington State Jobs with Justice, Hands Off Washington, and Equality Washington.

More endorsements and support of NO! 200 come everyday. We need your help! We need your name as an endorser of NO! 200, your volunteer labor, and your money. The Coalition meets the first and third Mondays of each month from 6:30—8:30 at the Urban League, 105 - 14th Avenue (14th & Yesler). It is a very exciting group of diverse, dedicated and skilled people who are deeply committed to a more just society. Send contributions to NO! 200, PO Box 567, Seattle, WA 981 11-0567.

JACL will be sponsoring educational forums about affirmative action, some of the common misconceptions about it, and information about the beneficiaries of the thirty-year program. Affirmative Action debate challenges our cherished beliefs about American society: Has equal opportunity ever existed? Does hard work really pay off? Will racism ever end? What are the most effective ways to eliminate both conscious and inadvertent discrimination? The debate has just begun.

President's Report

Bi-District Meeting/Youth Conference

Building momentum and leadership, and having fun

by Jeffrey Hattori

Bi-District Meeting/Youth Conference Review

The Bi-District Meeting/Youth Conference has come and gone but the positive reverberations continue. The intent of the three day event was to create an environment that: 1) provided JACLers with an opportunity to come together to learn, share and build from the new momentum and direction that has emerged over the last year; 2) followed through on our ongoing commitment to providing leadership information, training and resources for our youth; and 3) was fun! I feel we hit the mark on all three!

Interactive workshops that addressed political empowerment, education and multi-racial families were developed. Both the District and Bi-District meetings, proved to be more than update sessions but provided useful information and time for discussion on how we can further the National Program for Action and increase membership. Our keynote speaker, Warren Furutani, delivered an impassioned speech on the need for organizations like JACL, but

Keynote speaker Warren Furutani delivered an impassioned speech on the need for organizations like JACL, but also challenged us to become more global and diverse in our thinking and actions.

also challenged us to become more global and diverse in our thinking and actions. The Youth Conference pulled numerous community leaders and individuals who shared their knowledge and experiences to enhance career development opportunities for

youth attendees while intertwining the notion of community involvement. A golf outing, hospitality event, an excursion to the "Obon" festival and "Nihon Machi" tour provided attendees with "fun" activities.

Well over 100 individuals attended and/or participated in the Meeting/Conference including most of the National Board: Helen Kawagoe, President; Lori Fujimoto, VP-Public Affairs; Gary Mayeda, VP-Planning and Development; Richard Uno, VP-General Operations; Hiromi Ueha, National Youth Council Chair; and, Nicole Inouye, Youth Representative. From National Headquarters: Herbert Yamanishi, National Director; and Bob Sakaniwa, Washington DC Representative, and Chapter officers, members

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and guests from Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Utah.

What did I get out of the Bi-District meeting? For me, I was encouraged and proud to be a part of JACL. It also reinforced my belief that we have "a window of opportunity" to move JACL into the 21st century and continue as a viable and vibrant organization. We have the key ingredients an enthusiastic National President and local Chapters actively marketing JACL. This has resulted in increased membership and more diverse participation. At the local level, I believe the work and direction of the Seattle Chapter has led to positive systemic results and building blocks and expanded relationships with our neighboring Chapters and other community groups. However, we can do more.

At the end of the Bi-District meeting we discussed the National Program for Action. Though it describes the "what" (identifies issues to address) we must do more work on the "how" (in regards to strategies on how it would be implemented from a national to local level and a way to measure progress). By doing this, we will create a structure and strategy that can be more easily coordinated as a national effort which, at the same time, will create more depth, breadth and impact to our work. As a start and at a "micro" level, this is what we are trying to do within the Seattle Chapter.

A Regional Effort

Though the Seattle Chapter was the host, the meeting/conference was truly a regional effort involving many of the local Chapters. Lake Washington organized a highly informative presentation session and tour of Seattle's "Nihon-Machi"; Puyallup Valley took the lead in organizing the golf outing (By the way, your President shot/hacked a healthy 120!); and Olympia co-chaired and provided funding towards the Youth Conference. Many thanks to each of our Chapter friends! I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the hard work of the Seattle Chapter Board and volunteers who made this all possible. It is certainly a privilege (and a comfort!) to be in the company of so many individuals who eagerly take the lead to ensure that we have an enjoyable and successful meeting. Special thanks to Elaine Akagi, our resident "Superwoman," for chairing the planning committee.

We would like to hear from you...

I had an opportunity to host three JACLers at the Bon Odori festival. What struck me was the language they used in reference to their Chapters, or in their words "Clubs," and how their membership activities largely revolved around social/cultural activities. This is what makes the JACL so unique and important in that we not only address civil rights issues and leadership development but that we also serve as an organization that maintains a sense of community and preserves our culture. Most importantly, the JACL represents and serves a membership and community.

The litmus test of community organizations like JACL is how well they engage their membership. I'm sure it is interesting to read about Chapter activities in the newsletter but it is far more meaningful if the membership had participated in these activities in some fashion, whether as attendees and/or volunteers. This has been one of our primary guiding principles in any activity or event we plan. However, we feel we can do more, but we need your input.

I encourage you to join us at our monthly Board meetings to share with us your thoughts and ideas or perhaps join a committee. Board meetings are held every third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Chapter office. Please feel free to come by anytime! President-Elect Janice Yee and I have also discussed developing a membership survey to distribute in the near future to get a better "pulse" of what you are thinking and would like. This information will be very helpful in the future for us for planning purposes.

As always, you are welcome to call me at (253) 630-4854!

Mayoral Candidates Forum

As a follow-up to last year's highly attended, collaboratively organized Gubernatorial Candidates Forum, the Seattle Chapter JACL in partnership with the Seattle Chapter Organization of Chinese Americans, Filipino-American Political Action Group of Washington, Indian American Political Action Committee, and the Asian Management Business Association are pleased to announce the sponsoring of a Mayoral (Seattle) Candidates Forum

See "President's report" on next page ➡

Aging Nikkei focus of four-part symposium on aging

by Greta Hoshibata

By the year 2025, 20% of all Americans will be age 65 or older. Aging brings special challenges, and with so many of us living longer, it makes good sense to give consideration to these issues.

Following the outstanding success of last year's event, Nikkei Concerns, the Kame Project, and Nikkei Long-Term Care Project will again present a symposium on aging. *Health and Wealth: A Forum on Aging*, is a four-part series of educational seminars to be held on September 27, October 8, October 25, and November 5, 1997 at Blaine Memorial United Methodist Church, 3001 24th Avenue S., Seattle. The seminars will feature lectures and resource information to help older adults and adult children look at options and devise strategies to cope with the shifts and adjustments of aging.

The September 27 program, "Changing Perspectives on Health," will address alternative medicines and health systems, and osteoporosis. On October 8, "Through the Maze: Paying for Health Care" will focus on Medicare/Medicaid, and long-term care. "Is it Alzheimer's?" on October 25, will explore the signs and symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease and the latest research in this area. The final session on November 5 will focus on estate planning.

The Saturday sessions on September 27 and October 25 will be held from 9 a.m. to noon. The Wednesday sessions, October 8 and November 5, will be from 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free and refreshments will be provided.

For more information, please contact Greta Hoshibata, 3262409 or Darlene Suyematsu, 323-7100.

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on Thursday, August 28, 1997, at the Nippon Kan Theater. The forum, endorsed by a number of Asian Pacific Islander groups, is intended to provide our community with an opportunity to meet and learn more about the candidates, in particular, their views and priorities on issues that are of importance to us. To date, Charlie Hong, Cheryl Chow, Greg Nickels, Jane Noland, and Paul Schell have confirmed their attendance. Individuals will also have ample opportunities to ask questions of the candidates either formally during the public question and answer session or informally during the reception.

This forum also represents something that is equally meaning-

ful and imperative, a collaboration of different groups who each have a common goal of advocating for and serving the communities they represent. A collective and singular voice speaks loudly. Your voice can be heard! There are many ways in which our community can ensure that our issues and questions be addressed and here is one opportunity. I hope to see many of you there. Please invite your family members and friends!

Many thanks to the Anti-Discrimination Committee, in particular, Seattle Chapter Forum Co-Chairs, Frank Kiuchi and Sid Kuboi for their leadership on this event.

Congratulations Belle!


Belle Nishioka has recently been awarded the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara National JACL Scholarship as she continues her education in graduate school. Belle has been an active contributor to the Seattle Chapter through her participation as a past board member. She had served on a number of committees revolving around political education and legislative and was instrumental in reviving the Seattle Japanese American Youth Society (JAYS). Congratulations Belle!



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The Seattle Chapter JACL Newsletter

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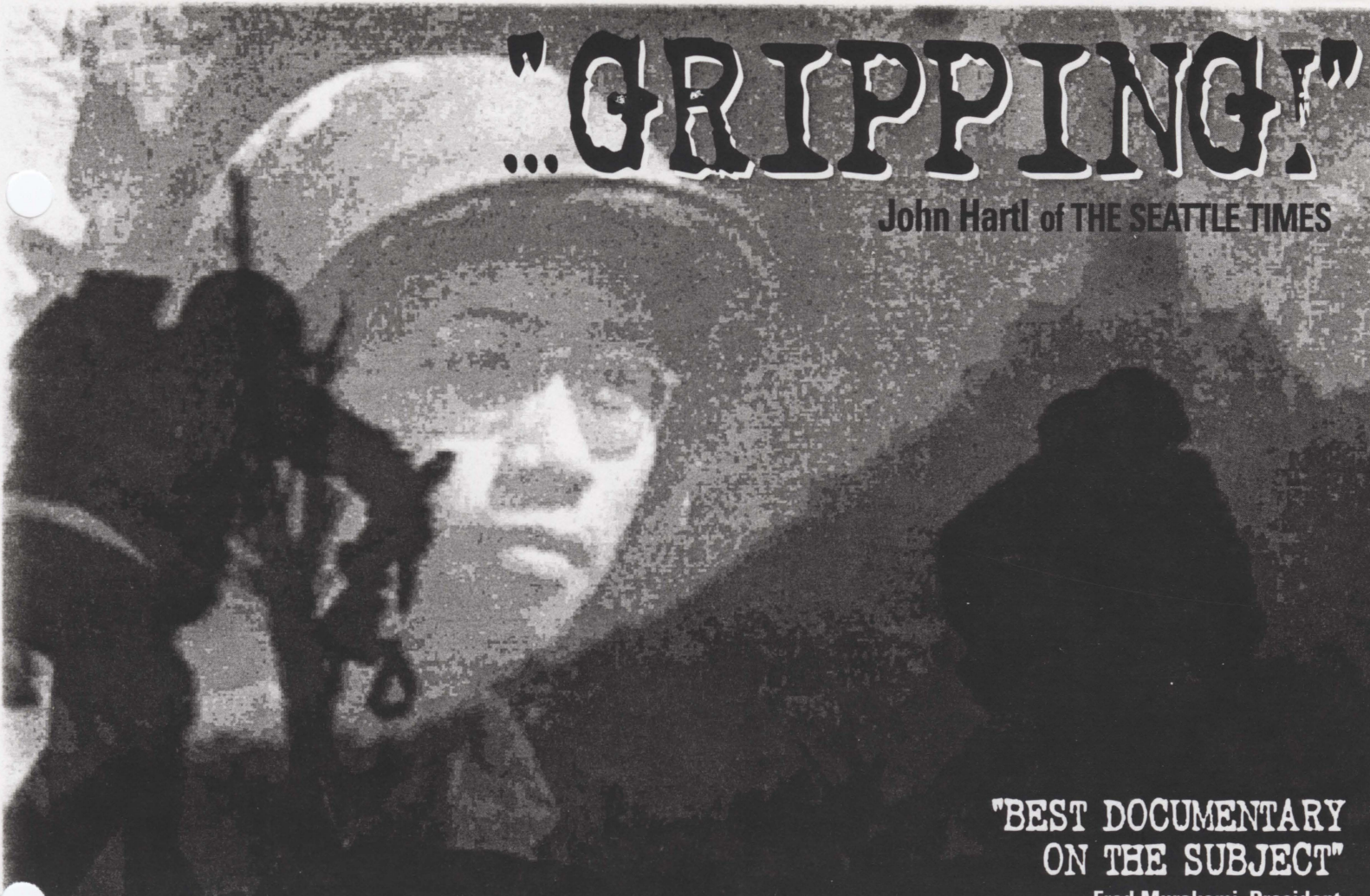
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Chuck Thurman, COAST WEEKLY

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Seattle Sansei is a Nisei Veterans Committee support group. Proceeds will fund educational programs and community events such as the Senior Citizens Luncheon.

Seattle Mayoral Candidates' Forum

**Thurs
Aug 28
6 - 9 p.m.**

**Nippon Kan Theater
628 S. Washington St.**

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and many others...

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