

SEATTLE CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

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An event for the ages

by Ryan Chin

Here is a quick "heads up" to everyone involved in JACL. During late August the Seattle Chapter is planning to hold a fundraiser for youth programs. All proceeds will benefit JACL youth in the form of scholarship money, leadership conferences, and activities generating new membership. These funds will help ensure the continued success of the largest APA organization in the United States.

The bazaar is tentatively scheduled to include a dinner, bake sale, used book sale, and silent auction. Of course, this is all "up in the air" as we quickly hustle for donations and support. We are actively seeking donations for our bake sale, silent auction, and used books. We would be very happy to receive your donations.

How else can you help make this a successful fundraiser? Please make sure you purchase tickets to this event, not only for yourself, but also for your family and friends. The reason we wanted to incorporate so many different parts to this fundraiser is to have something for everybody. Many fundraisers are often too expensive or targeted to a particular crowd. This will be an affordable and fun event for all ages!

Tickets should be available for sale no later than the end of July. Please contact a member of the board to purchase them. Please contact Ryan Chin at (206)985-7928 or rchin@u.washington.edu if you would like to make a donation. Please remember, this event can not take place without your support. We would be happy to accept any donations, even if it is "only" used books. Buy your tickets and prepare to have fun!



The Seattle Chapter wreath, laid at the JA Vets monument on Memorial Day

President's message

Yes Yes, No No No Yes, Yes No

by David Yamaguchi

On June 29th, I received a call from Art Gorai, a member of our chapter and of three veteran's groups. He asked why we hadn't mentioned anything here about the chapter's position on the WWII/JA draft-resisters issue. While our final board vote is still coming in as I write, I'll give it a first cut here because it appears to be potentially divisive. But background for younger readers is in order.



In February 1943, the encamped JA community was caught in a dilemma by two questions in a loyalty questionnaire given to all over 17 years old. Were draft-age males willing to serve in active combat for the US military (even though their civil rights had been blatantly quashed by the government)? Were all willing to swear unqualified allegiance to the US? Since the questions were asked of thousands, it is not surprising that all possible replies came back, for many reasons. To simplify a complex issue, the two extremes of these were "Yes, Yes" and "No, No." The former is the response encouraged by *individuals* then associated with the JACL. The latter was the reply of most, but not of all resisters. Still, the name "No No Boys" has stuck to them like *nori* to *musubi*.

Well, the volunteers went on to fight in battle, and many died. The resisters went to beatings, months of jail, and decades of shunning by the rest of the JA community. The chasm silently splits Nisei to this day.

Fast forward to 1999. The resisters issue has resurfaced nationally (see the *Wall Street Journal* page-one story on June 25th, brought to my attention by **Cherry Kinoshita**; the thought-provoking "Rabbit in the Moon" documentary [www.naatanet.org], and recent weeks of *Pacific Citizen*).

What does this all of this have to do with Seattle JACL? The resisters topic touches our chapter because **Elaine Akagi** will present the PNW chapters' position on a resolution hailing from Northern California at a regional meeting in Ogden this month. That text proposes that the JACL *apologize* to the resisters and *honor them at an appropriate public ceremony*.

The issue hit us shortly before our June meeting. There, lacking adequate background, we voted unanimously in favor of an apology in principle, pending further study by a committee. Our largely Sansei view was to try to bury the hatchet.

A week later the committee met, composed of Elaine, **Arlene Oki**, **Gil Hirabayashi**, **Sharon Sobie-Seymour**, new chapter member **Mike Fuchigami**, and myself. By then we realized that the new resolution builds on a JACL resolution adopted at the 1990 con-

See "Draft Resisters" on page 2

'Hey You Guys...Take A Closer Look' at UC Irvine, 1999

By Ryan Chin

"Hey You Guys... Take A Closer Look," marked the last major convention for JACL youth during this millennium. The 1999 BI-Annual JACL National Youth Conference coincidentally occurred this last year of this century. The timing could be viewed as symbolic as these future JACL leaders who met will be the ones continuing the fight for equal rights for the next 100 years. During the June 25-27th weekend, the University of California at Irvine played host to nearly 80 participants from around the country. The ages of the youth participants varied significantly, as some were as young as 13.

Most of the participants resided in the Pacific Southwest (PSW) District which encompasses the Southern California area. The Pacific Northwest District (PNW) sent four representatives: Michelle Sugahiro and Marci Ozawa from Oregon, and Kelvin Setzo and myself from Washington. The turnout from PNW seemed respectable as the number of attendees from our region placed us fourth in attendance among districts. California residents dominated the conference in terms of attendance as their home state once again served as the location of the conference.

The National Youth Conference featured a wide range of activities during the brief three days. The weekend contained workshops,

Draft resisters, continued from front page

vention in San Diego that recognizes the validness of the resisters' WW2 stances, but which stops short of an apology.

After discussion, our view was that it's fine and good to pass "position" resolutions, but that without deadlines, in reality things don't get done. So, we proposed an amendment that the action needs to start in the year 2000 because the Nisei are not getting any younger. We added that the JACL needs to make an effort to integrate information about the resisters into its educational materials about the JA wartime experience.

The tide of other PNW chapters is rising toward an apology and public recognition, so it might not really matter what we think here. Logical venues might be biennial JACL meeting(s).

My personal "take" on the issue is that both veterans and resisters were exceptional, brave men. I see it as sad that some in each group will carry their grudges to their graves, when all were pawns of an all-powerful government. I find it enlightening to see the resisters issue being openly discussed, especially since much of the nation lacks basic knowledge of JAs and their wartime incarceration, to say nothing of the complexity of the latter. The debate and this waiting column have forced me to learn more about an issue I previously knew little about. Its revisit is timely because Sansei are now experienced working adults whose numbers include journal-

Asian Pacific American (APA) movies, a dance, and a performance by Asian American impromptu performers Cold Tofu.

Keynote speaker Rose Ochi, Director of the US Department of Justice Community Relations Division, kicked off the conference, which concluded with California Assemblywoman-hopeful Carole Hayashino. Topics of the workshops ranged from Census 2000 to how Manju is made.

Rose Ochi, started the first day of workshops by discussing many of her experiences throughout life. She stressed the importance of APAs becoming as active and visible as possible. Citing the recent exploitation of Chinese Americans in the media she explained how APAs often seem easy targets in our society. Ochi pointed out how APAs many times become victims of these attacks because they are not seen as a threat. According to Ochi, entities such as the media carefully calculate who will put up the least resistance, then attack that group. In essence, groups who put up little fight are picked on by "bullies" such as the media. A stronger voice and more visibility will lead to a decrease of the scapegoating of APAs.

Concluding the ceremonies was Carole Hayashino, who currently serves as the Director for the Office of University of Development at San Francisco State University. She also encouraged APAs to become more proactive in the community. Through examples

Continued on next page

ists, academics and filmmakers. There is still time for these writers, although not much, to revise the simple view of JA history that pervades today: that JAs went quietly to the camps, and then responded to the call for army volunteers as one.

I believe that acknowledging a past error, even if only perceived by a few resisters, is worthwhile, and am voting accordingly. In doing so, I realize that I was not even a twinkle during WWII. I hope that my vote will not harm the bridges we have been building with groups like the Nisei Vets. The reality is that both of our organizations face an uncertain future. As we draw from small numbers of JA-community-minded Sansei and Yonsei, we need to learn to work together if we are to ensure the existence of these and other Seattle JA groups for the next 20 years.

Community calendar [contact person in brackets]

Wed., July 21, 7 p.m. Board meeting, chapter office, all are welcome [Dave Y.].

Thurs., July 22, 6 p.m., Candidates' forum, Seattle City & King Co. Councils. Nisei Vets Hall, 1212 S. King St., Seattle [Asian Pacific American Coalition for Equality, APACE, c/o Akemi Matsumoto or Jeffrey Hattori].

UC Irvine conference, continued from page 2

of her personal history she noted how people sometimes restrict themselves through personal mental barriers. During her speech she constantly referred to "just trying" and taking risks. Rather than becoming sidetracked by the idea of failure, people should make an attempt for their goals. Hayashino pointed to her history as friends encouraged her to apply for the San Francisco State position even though she was not completely sure she would be hired. Her willingness to take risks has helped her achieve many of her goals.

Once again the message seemed to ring loud and clear: APAs must remain active to further equal rights. Increased activism will help break stereotypes, provide more opportunities for APAs, and decrease discrimination. Being heard is a must to stop APAs from becoming scapegoats and "easy targets." The JACL National Youth Conference remains essential by serving as a great way to train and inspire future community activists.

Aki Kurose Memorial Scholarship Fund

Elaine Akagi	Kallio & Carol Suguro	Suma Yagi (in
Frank McClain	Masako Tomita	memory of Katsuko
May Namba	Takako Yoda	Hayashi and Mieko
Mack & Aiko Shoji		Jonokuchi)

Donations for directory

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Minako Kitahara	Richard Okada	Tak & Flo Tsuchida	
Joan Kobayashi	Shigeko Okada	Ben & Kiyoko	
Ken & Masako	Yoshitaka & Jane	Sugawara	
Kodama	Okada		



Ayako Hurd (left), Linda Tanouye, and Shea Aoki, who are working on archiving chapter documents with Jill Beppu (not shown).

New Members & Renewals

Hisako Funai	Richard Kats	Frank Yanagimachi
Marcia Fujimoto	Okamoto	Yoshi Yatsu
Jeffrey Hattori	David Okimoto	Fusako Yonemura
Mack Harada	Kenji Onishi	Molly Yoneyama
Fumiko Hayashida	Marilyn Suzuki	Yukio Yoshihara
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William Kawahara	Hideo Watanabe	Etsuko Tanino
Yuko Kodama		
Wakao Matsushita		
Mitsue Mihara		
Mike & Margaret		
Mizumoto		
Barbara Nagaoka		

Paid membership (as of December 1998): 623

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Chizuko Nagaoka (In memory of Eira)
Fumiko Maeshiro

Membership Categories

Individual	\$50
Couple	\$85
1000 Club/Century	\$70-\$140
Spouse	\$40
Lifetime	\$1,000-\$2,000
Student/Youth	
(up to 25 years of age)	\$20
Boosters (Seattle JACL only)	
Regular	\$20
Seniors	\$15

Membership payments and questions should be directed to May Namba, 2324 NW 94th St., Seattle, WA 98117 (206-784-3824).

Thank You!!!

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Seattle Chapter JAACL is a non-profit, grassroots civil rights organization dedicated to empowering our local community through high-quality programs and strategic partnerships focusing on activism, education, and youth leadership development. As a chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, we strive to be a leading Asian American advocacy group for civil and human rights while promoting and preserving the values and cultural heritage of Japanese Americans.

Our primary means of carrying out our mission is a monthly meeting, held at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the chapter office (316 Maynard Ave. S., Seattle) except August. All are welcome. (Those wishing to make presentations or be added to the meeting agenda should contact David Yamaguchi.)

Seattle Chapter JAACL Newsletter

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Board members should submit materials to the editor (shimaito@foxinternet.net, fax 206-722-2044, 6621 S. Bangor St., Seattle, WA 98178) by the first Thursday of the month.

Non-board members and readers should send items for inclusion to David Yamaguchi, preferably in electronic format, by the last Thursday of the preceding month.

Calendar items emphasize chapter or community events not likely to be covered by community newspapers or by other newsletters. Business-card advertising space is available at a rate of \$10/issue or \$120/yr (circulation is about 1000).

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