

## Book Project

by David Yamaguchi

SIX YEARS AGO, writing from Japan, I described the start of a research project I was helping get off the ground as a Seattle Japanese American. Now I am happy to report that the fruit of that effort will be appearing in late 2005 as *"The Orphan Tsunami of 1700, Japanese clues to a parent earthquake in North America"* (UW Press).

More than the book, however, working closely on it with lead-author geologist Brian Atwater has provided a priceless gift: experience creating a coffee-table book from scratch. It is how to best apply this new skill that I am writing now.

To capture the momentum, these past few months I've been dusting off a long-dormant manuscript based on the WWII letters of my grandfather, Tadashi Yamaguchi. Those who attended "Minidoka Remembered" may recall that he traveled from the Immigration and Naturalization Service jail in Seattle to Missoula, to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and then to Lordsburg, New Mexico, before rejoining the family at Minidoka. His correspondence across this period brims with names, such as those pictured from December 20, 1941. His story thus becomes *our* story as Seattle JAs. But as a Sansei, I will need community help sketching in the humanity behind the names, as well as listing a few more of the 2,000 who made similar journeys.

NISEI: I would appreciate names of any Issei held in Department of Justice (DOJ) camps. These can be submitted on postcards, complete with any supporting information (pre-war city of residence, employment, and community activities; date of arrest and camps; date of return to family and where; your name, relationship, and contact information). Send to me at 5630 200th St. SW #B-202, Lynnwood, WA 98036.

I will strive to include as much of this material as possible in the text or appendices. That way, in the future others will know something about these men, and better understand how the 21st-century Seattle JA community came to pass.

VOLUNTEERS: Anyone else willing to roll up their sleeves and help can contact me at trringzrus@aol.com. Such volunteers can be young, as a variety of skills are needed. By project-end, all such volunteers will have a deeper understanding of JA history. They might even know enough to write books of their own.

## 83rd Installation Banquet

On behalf of the Seattle Chapter Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) Board and Membership, we would like to cordially invite you to our 83rd Annual Installation Banquet on Saturday, January 22, 2005. Our theme for the banquet is "Building on a Legacy of Justice and Equality".

The Banquet will be held at an exciting new location--the Seattle Waterfront Marriott, 2100 Alaskan Way, Seattle, WA 98121, (206) 443-5000.

This year's Mistress of Ceremonies is Joy St. Germain, a past president of the Seattle Chapter and currently the Human Resource Director and Diversity Manager at the Washington State Department of Ecology.

See "Banquet" on page 3

## Civil Rights Committee

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### KISW Incident

On September 30th, I wrote the following in an email to the Program Manager of radio station KISW:

*"This past week our organization received a complaint from a member of the general public that alleges that at approximately 2:40 PM on Wednesday, September 22, 2004 one of your DJ's used racist and lewd comments "on-air" while talking a listener on the telephone."*

I repeated the disgusting and insulting comments that were allegedly made. I continued in my memo:

*"We are writing to learn if you are aware of this incident and if so, what action was taken regarding it. As you know, radio is a very powerful medium for the public. As a local civil rights organization, we are working to protect and uphold human and civil rights for Asian Pacific Americans and all people."*

In a conversation with the Program Manager later, he acknowledged the facts as I had stated them and apologized to me and our organization for the comments. He also promised that something like this would "never happen again." I offered the assistance of our group to support his staff in their desire to be culturally appropriate and sensitive, but he felt this was not necessary. We will continue to monitor comments that may be offensive on our radio stations as well as other media in our area. Following up on our Northwest Forum on Asian-American Images in Media: FILM, on October 4th, we are planning subsequent forums on this issue in other media formats such as advertising, news and television.

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## JACL: behind the scenes

by Ryan Chin

JACL, similar to any productive organization, has contributors that enjoy the spotlight, as well as its share of "behind the scenes" workers. Ryan Minato undoubtedly falls in the latter category. Our organization bears its vocal leaders who are needed to provide a face and communications outlet for the JACL, but it also derives great value from the people who work to advance the organization from within, usually without recognition.

Ryan, who recently worked for Washington's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (CAPAA), has been involved with JACL for the past four years. Some Nisei may be familiar with his grandfather, George Minato, one of the local leaders who helped reestablish Seattle JACL after World War II.

While you may not have met Ryan, you probably have seen or utilized his work. On a continual basis Ryan: maintains the websites for National JACL ([www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org)) and Seattle JACL ([www.jaclseattle.org](http://www.jaclseattle.org)); lays out the monthly chapter newsletter; designs the annual installation banquet booklet; and assists with the chapter's Cherry Blossom booth -- making or distributing sushi. During his involvement, Ryan

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www.jaclseattle.org  
email@jaclseattle.org

SEATTLE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

JACL



## President's Message

by Bill Tashima, President

### Retrospectives

In November, I had the opportunity to visit Washington DC. It's been a while since I was last there and many things have changed (however, the tired feet and legs are still outcomes of any visit). I wanted to relate about three areas that I visited.

My first stop was to the National Holocaust Museum. We are familiar with the story of the Holocaust; however, this museum stands out in the detail and frankness of this horrific part of history. The many exhibits go beyond dates and numbers, and give a personal face to the anguish and aftermath of this dark period.

I left the Museum with three thoughts:

- ✧ that a civilized people, like Germany (and most of Europe) could institutionalize genocide of races;
- ✧ that the Nazi genocide only occurred in countries in which the people and the government permitted genocide;
- ✧ and that the rest of world, including the US did virtually nothing as the genocide proceeded.

I visited the World War II Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, and the Vietnam War Memorial. Each memorial was a somber reminder of the price we pay when we go to war. Each death represents personal tragedy and loss to families and friends. One saying stated that "the price of freedom is not free."

I also visited the Japanese American Memorial. This small park, which is somewhat off the main path of the Mall, is striking in its message and content. One wall contains a brief history of the internment. There are quotes from various politicians and prominent Japanese Americans. There is a listing of the internment camps and an Honor Roll of the Japanese Americans who died in service during the War. The centerpiece is a downed tsuru (crane) wrapped in barbed wire. Very poignant, very moving.

As I left Washington DC, I thought about all three areas. I thought about what is happening in the Sudan and Iraq. I thought about the JA Internment and the 442. I thought about many issues in which the Seattle JACL has been involved with this past year. I thought of this year's theme of "Building

Legacies across Generations." I thought of our cultural ethic of bringing forward what has gone before.

All three areas had a common theme to me. In the stark words of Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, "For the dead and living, we must bear witness."

### Acknowledgments

The year has gone by quickly. This will be my last President's column. It has been an honor to be Seattle Chapter JACL President. I am always humbled when I see the pictures of our past Presidents in the JACL office. I have tried my best to continue with the efforts that they began.

Our Chapter's success this year is due directly to the hard work and dedication of our chapter Board and various committees, plus the commitment of our membership. I thank you all.

I congratulate our new incoming President, Joy Shigaki. It is very exciting to have a person like Joy who is so focused and energized to lead us next year.

I want to recognize several people for their role in the past year. Sorry, that space prohibits me from listing more people.

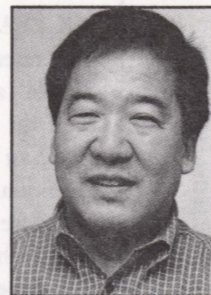
Ryan Chin—For his dedication as a JACL National Vice-President for the last two bienniums. Ryan made an impact in both Public Affairs and Membership.

Sharon Tomiko Santos—For her overwhelming support and energy for the Seattle JACL and for our community as a whole.

Elaine Akagi—For her guidance and assistance throughout the year. I met Elaine as a Jr. JACler 40 years ago and I can't think of anyone more dedicated to the JACL than her.

Ken Kurata—For all his help and support in the last year. Ken is the "go to" guy in any situation.

Finally, I want to acknowledge my parents, Howard and Kiyoko Tashima, who taught me to have pride in being a JA and instilled the value of community volunteerism in our family.



## Announcements

### Thank You

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### Events Calendar

**Jan. 22, 2005** – Seattle JACL Installation Banquet with keynote Peggy Nagae; Seattle Waterfront Marriott, 2100 Alaskan Way, Seattle, \$60 before January 14 and \$70 thereafter, 5:30 PM with a cocktail reception and raffle ticket sales, followed by dinner at 6:30 PM; Contact: May Namba, (206) 784-3824, maynamba@comcast.net or Ann Fujii Lindwall, (206) 367-8749, fujiiindwall@comcast.net.

**Jan. 29, 2005** – Anniversary & Golden Circle Awards Dinner of the Organization of Chinese Americans - Greater Seattle Chapter; Asian Resource Center, 1025 S King St., Seattle. Contact: (206) 682-0665, dinner@ocaseattle.org, www.ocaseattle.org.

## Banquet, continued from page 1

Former chair of the Civil Rights Committee, Joy Shigaki, will be sworn in as the 2005 Seattle Chapter President, with her term focusing on critical civil rights and social justice issues, developing meaningful coalitions with other civil rights organizations and communities of color, shaping the strategic direction for the chapter, and honoring the stories of the Nisei and others who came before us in the struggle for equality and social justice.

This year's keynote speaker is Peggy Nagae who is known in the Pacific Northwest for her leadership as lead attorney in *Yasui v. United States*, a federal case involving a petitioner who was convicted of violating a curfew imposed upon Japanese Americans during WWII.

"I can't remember when I first started thinking about community, justice, and struggles for dignity," stated Nagae, in a 2003 law review article. She explains that her path to a career in law began when she was a waitress at the Lake Placid, New York resort where she worked for several months during college.

"I tried to convince the waitresses to threaten to strike because of inequitable treatment by the maitre d', which led to gross differences in pay," she wrote. Nagae left because she was unwilling to work in such an environment.

But at that time, Nagae didn't know about the law. She just felt it wasn't right. So she decided to attend law school because "I wanted to have the same power that the board of directors from the New York resort wielded, but I wanted to use it to change things--to pursue justice and right for others who did not have the education or knowledge to fight for themselves."

As Nagae worked on *Yasui v. United States*, she wondered if she had the courage to put her liberty and professional status on the line for justice, the way Minoru Yasui did. She says that question remains unanswered. But she does have answers for the young waitress in Lake Placid, "I would tell her, you're right on track. Activism for justice and equity is your calling in this lifetime; it is your mission to fulfill. You can be a prophet for justice. Just keep going."

Tickets for the Banquet are \$60 per person if payment is received by January 14, 2005 and \$70 if postmarked after January 14. The evening will have a cocktail reception and raffle ticket sales starting at 5:30 PM, followed by dinner at 6:30 PM. All proceeds from raffle sales will support the JACL Scholarship Fund.

For more information, please contact May Namba, (206) 784-3824, maynamba@comcast.net or Ann Fujii Lindwall, (206) 367-8749, fujiiindwall@comcast.net.

—Ann Fujii-Lindwall and Marcine Anderson,  
2005 JACL Installation Banquet Committee Co-Chairs.

## Behind, continued from page 1

has also: created the chapter's membership brochures, designed the chapter's 75th anniversary booklet, produced scholarship dinner programs, and computerized National JACL's photos for its recently released 75th anniversary picture book. Basically, if you read or touch something produced by Seattle JACL, there is a high likelihood that Ryan contributed.

While we need members who are in their element speaking in public and developing relationships, we also need the people who do the type of work that is often done behind the scenes, just as Ryan illustrates.

## Committee, continued from page 1

### Seattle City Council Testimony about "Drug buy-bust money and the East Precinct" on behalf of the Budget for Justice Campaign

At its October meeting, the JACL Board voted to support the Budget for Justice Campaign, an effort to divert city funds into more effective activities to deal with the drug abuse problem. On November 4th, Howard Martin, Civil Rights Committee Chair, was asked to testify before the Seattle City Council as a representative of the Budget for Justice Campaign, a coalition of community groups, regarding the 2005 Seattle City Budget. In preparation for this testimony, I prepared some notes. An excerpt is as follows:

*I believe you have heard from others about some of the concerns community members have about the "Buy-Bust" program here in the city of Seattle. You have been presented with information showing that the average Seattle sting operation aimed at "dealers" yielded less than one gram of narcotics per arrest. You have also seen data that indicates that a majority of recent users and deliverers of serious drugs in Seattle (including heroin, methamphetamine, powder cocaine, crack cocaine and ecstasy) are white. However, 64.2% of those purposefully arrested for delivery of serious drugs in Seattle were African-American, during the sampling period January 1999-April 2001. I am aware that this situation exists because of the SPD focus on those who use and deliver crack cocaine, the drug that is most likely to be used and delivered by African-Americans. I am also aware that the overwhelming majority of delivery arrests occur outdoors in the racially diverse downtown area. Residential neighborhoods, predominantly white outdoor drug markets, and indoor settings are largely ignored.*

*These "elective tactical operations" are costly. Approximately 800 officer hours are spent conducting buy-bust operations each month. Many studies indicate that people arrested for drug crimes are more likely to re-offend after they are released than if they had not been arrested. This is because people convicted of a non-violent drug crime are less able to find employment after they are released. In addition, they are then ineligible for federally funded low-income housing or educational loans.*

*We believe the following are the preferred strategies supported by the research that promise to provide the most benefit to community members:*

- ✧ Shift some of the resources currently devoted to the "Buy-Bust" into an investment in drop-in centers with needed counseling, job training, as well as youth and public health programs.
- ✧ Invest in human services and housing programs for low-income community members.
- ✧ Make visible police presence in high-crime areas and the detection and investigation of personal and property crimes the highest priority of local law enforcement.

*We believe these are the strategies that will yield significant outcomes in community safety and well-being. They can be delivered at a cost-effective price. They will yield results that "elective tactical operations" alone will never deliver.*

Unfortunately, in the budget passed by the City Council on November 12th, the funds for the Police Department's "Buy-Bust" activities were not reduced. We will continue to advocate for a more effective use of city funds to deal with the drug abuse problem as a part of the Budget for Justice Campaign.



**Mission Statement:** The Seattle Chapter JACL 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.

**Chapter Board Meeting:** Our primary means of carrying out our mission is a monthly meeting, held at 6 PM on the third Wednesday of each month, except August, at the chapter office, 316 Maynard Ave. S, Seattle. Those wishing to make presentations or be added to the meeting agenda should contact President Bill Tashima prior to the meeting.

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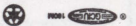
**Article and Event Submission:** Board members should submit materials to the editor (ryanminato@hotmail.com) by the Friday after the monthly board meeting. Calendar items emphasize chapter or community events not likely to be covered by community newspapers or by other newsletters.

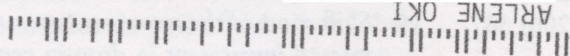
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