

## My Experience at the JACL National Youth Conference

by *Derrick Hattori, 15 Years Old, Yonsei, Japanese/African American, Kentridge HS*

During the weekend of June 24-26, 2005, I had a great experience at the National JACL Youth Conference in Salt Lake City. Over 150 people my age were there and I made a lot of new friends from across the country and learned a lot about the history of the Japanese American community and where it is going.

While I was there, I learned about the impact World War II had on the Japanese American community. How the Japanese Americans were sent to concentration camps that were held in the middle of no where. I learned that many families lost their jobs and homes and suffered in the camps. They were also challenged in their faith of America and its values.

I also learned that the Japanese American community is becoming more "Americanized" and is losing their traditions. That is part of the reason why I attended the Taiko workshop. I learned how to play the Taiko drums and it was very interesting and fun because it was very upbeat and has been around for many years. I have been playing drums myself since the 4th grade.

With all of the information I learned from this conference, I now better understand and can explain more about the World War II experience of Japanese Americans.

I would like to thank Seattle JACL for sponsoring me and my friend Mori Kurose to go on this great adventure. I would also like to thank Karen Yoshitomi for being a great chaperone. I really had a great time and it will be an experience that I won't forget!

## Lake Washington Chapter Cookbook Sale

*A Taste of Celebration* cookbook, honoring the Lake Washington Chapter 25th anniversary, will be ready in mid-August and selling for \$15 a book. This cookbook represents the efforts of many who joyfully shared traditions and ethnic tastes. *A Taste of Celebration* will make a unique gift as well as an excellent addition to your cookbook collection. Profit from the sale of cookbooks will be dedicated primarily to the scholarship and leadership programs.

To order a book, contact Rose Nohara at [redacted] or email [redacted]

## Board Member Corner: Binah Palmer

Binah works as the Field and Legislative Associate for the ACLU of Washington. A Seattle native and a graduate of Chief Sealth High School, she attended Colby College in Maine and worked as an environmental organizer while in Massachusetts before returning home to the Northwest. This is her first year on the board of JACL. She also currently serves on the Seattle Human Rights Commission. Further, Binah has experience doing volunteer PR for nonprofits, helping out with local political campaigns, and advocating for after school programs.



## Minidoka Pilgrimage 2005

Forty-nine people boarded the charter bus at 5:45 AM on June 24, 2005. The bus ride symbolically represented the original passage from Camp Harmony to Minidoka Internment Camp. But, there were vast differences: the windows were not covered; we were not limited to the worldly possessions that we could carry; we were not being guarded by soldiers with rifles; we had volunteered to take this journey to a known destination; and we knew when we would be returning as we waved, see ya later, to friends and family members.

The bus ride was long but we had activities to help pass the time. We ate our bentos and snacks and became acquainted with the other bus riders from California, Japan and around Washington. Some had been interned in Minidoka as infants, children, teenagers and young adults. Others joined in the Pilgrimage to experience what life had been like over 60 years ago for the people of Japanese Ancestry that were incarcerated by the Federal Government without due process of law as a result of racial hysteria.

There were several persons from Japan, wanting to experience and learn with greater understanding what happened to the Japanese living in America during WWII. They stated that there is very little written in Japanese history books. We explained that there is little written in the US history books as well and that is why the Pilgrimage is so important. It is with this same sense of importance and concern that Minidoka Remembered 2003 awarded scholarships to: Danielle Higa, Brian Imanishi, Ivy Ng and Tomoko Yamaguchi, insuring our

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# President's Message

by Joy Shigaki, President

Half of the year is official over! This doesn't mean I'm counting the days until my term is over...really! It's a matter of knowing how much work there is to do on behalf of Seattle Chapter (yes, that overachiever syndrome that so many of us have!) and yet realizing how much we have done.

I am very pleased that the Seattle Chapter has been out in front on many critical areas and issues from the Patriot Act to the WSU racial harassment issue to our Strategic Planning Process to hosting educational workshops for K-12 students on the WWII Incarceration to developing meaningful relationships/ collaborations with other civil rights/ community based organizations to increasing our membership base. This is our responsibility and our charge.

I am so grateful for the commitment of the Executive Committee, Board, committee members, and volunteers. As an entirely volunteer driven organization, it's amazing that our volunteers put in at least 260 plus hours monthly into JACL board and committees, serving on community committees, developing relationships with community members/ organizations, advocating on pressing issues, maintaining our operations and membership, tracking the budget, and so much more. This truly shows the commitment people have in keeping the work of this organization alive.

### Candidates Forum - Racial Profiling and Housing

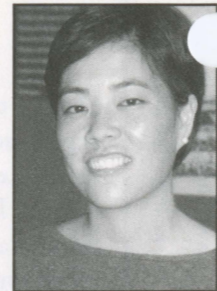
The Chapter and Civil Rights Committee is deeply committed to working with communities of color to build effective coalitions as well as other communities. One of the main events we are planning for the general election, along with a large network of organizations, is a Seattle City Council Candidates Forum focusing on the issues of racial profiling and housing. There are two issues that we feel have great impact on our city. How do these issues directly affect our local communities? How can we keep our elected officials accountable and informed on the impact of city policy? The idea is to go deeper into the issues, educate ourselves, and empower our community to be fully engaged in the political process.

The groups that have initially come together include the People's Coalition for Justice, Racial Disparity Project, Arab American Community Coalition, NAACP - Seattle Chapter, OCA - Seattle Chapter, Minority Executive Director Coalition, Lake Washington JACL, People's Institute Northwest, and many others. Stay tuned as we plan this exciting and dynamic event together.

### Day of Redress - August 10

On August 10, 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 into law. This authorized formal reparation for individuals who were incarcerated. It also authorized the creation of the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund, which was intended to fund research and education about the incarceration so as to prevent similar injustices in the future. This was a major victory for our community, the movement, and our nation. Share this with a friend or colleague.

Today we would like to remember the tenacity, passion, and selfless individuals who were involved in the Seattle Evacuation Redress Committee (of the Seattle Chapter, JACL), the National Council for Japanese American Redress and the National Coalition for Redress/ Reparations who were among many groups that built the redress movement.



Plus, we remember and honor the many quiet individuals who gave tirelessly to this effort that set an important example of demanding justice and righting the wrongs during WWII.

### Many Thanks

There are many people to thank for their outstanding work in pulling together our first Annual JACL Picnic. I'm especially grateful to Bill Tashima and Dave Cunningham who took the lead in organizing this fun filled event. Thanks also to all of the committee members and volunteers including: Elaine Akagi, Devon Abdallah, Mariko Sata, Howard Martin, Binah Palmer, May Namba, Kenji McCullough, Akiko Sakurai, Ken Kurata, Doug Honma, Tatsuo Nakata, and so many others. Special thanks to Karen Akada for the cool taiko workshop at our picnic!

Thanks to all of you for supporting the work of JACL TOGETHER, we can preserve our legacy of working for justice and equality!

### Announcements

Aug. 27 - Annual Clean-up of Aki Kurose Middle School Academy with lunch provided; [redacted] Seattle, 9 AM to noon; contact: Mori Kurose-Rothman, [redacted]

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# Minidoka, continued from page 1

younger generation's awareness of the concentration camps and how the Nikkei were able to survive the harsh and demeaning during this period.

We met over 70 other Minidoka Pilgrimage attendees who had arrived by their own transportation at Malad Gorge State Park, Idaho. Many old acquaintances were reunited as we indulged in an oven-baked dinner of trout, chicken and bread.

The next day we visited the Minidoka Internment Site and were greeted by the National Park Service Superintendent Neil King. We learned where various buildings and barracks were located, and then we went on a walking tour of the site. Throughout the tour many memories and questions were shared. "I remember when..." "Where was the guard tower with the machine guns?" Hopefully the revisit to Minidoka was a catharsis for the Nisei to bring the many repressed memories to the surface.

We also visited the IFARM, Idaho Farm and Ranch Museum, where a barrack is on display. There was much discussion of the size of the windows and how much the dust was blown through the cracks and floorboards. Being back in the barrack brought a rush of memories long forgotten. One person who had only been 1-4 years old during her incarceration stated she didn't realize these memories were even repressed until she entered the barrack and it was like "being punched in the stomach" the memories were so strong.

Memories were shared in an atmosphere of safety. Mako Nakagawa, the moderator, began the session by sharing a few of the stories she had written about Minidoka. Mako's stories triggered others to talk story, so much so the time period was extended. Emotional, educational, humorous describes this very valuable part of the Pilgrimage. How the Issei and Nisei practiced *gaman*. This is how life in the internment camps will be passed on. This is such a valuable part of our Japanese American legacy.

Pilgrimage attendees were invited to a dinner barbeque at the Prescott Ranch, owned by a local rancher. Also in attendance were many invited local residents, some of which are local Nikkei. The purpose was to initiate the building of a bridge between the locals and those who had been incarcerated in Minidoka. The hospitality was warm and we enjoyed the beef raised on the Prescott Ranch. A very moving speech was made by Bill Vaughn, son of a local farmer who hired workers for his farm from Minidoka Internment Camp. Mr. Vaughn explained how the Japanese Americans saved their farm and he is still thankful today. Other speakers that made the evening so meaningful and historical included Dr. Bob Sims; professor Emeritus of Boise State, a Minidoka historian for the State of Idaho; Hero Shiosaki, local 442nd RCT; Yosh Nakagawa, liaison between the local residents; NPS and the Pilgrimage; and Rick Phillips, a representative of Simplot, one of the sponsors of the BBQ Dinner.

On the last day a moving ceremony was held at the Minidoka Site to close this year's Pilgrimage. The morning started off with members of Seattle's NVC comprising the

honor guard, a gun salute by local veterans, and the reading of the Honor Roll by Hero Shiosaki. An update of the Bainbridge Island Memorial was presented by Dr. Frank Kitamoto. Rev. Koichi Barrish, a Shinto Priest, performed a purification ceremony of the site. The finale to the closing ceremony was when everyone was able to write a message/dedication on a colorful tag designed by May Namba. Each year attendees are asked to participate in placing a memento at the site in remembrance of a family member or friend who was incarcerated at Minidoka.

The final activity of the Pilgrimage was a luncheon. Rev. Brooks Andrews related how he remembered the dedication of his father, the late Rev. Andy Andrews, to the Japanese imprisoned in Minidoka. The luncheon program also had a moving performance of Living Voices: *Within the Silence* written by Ken Mochizuki and narrated by Kim Ima.

We then rushed about saying our farewells to old and new friends, thankful for the three days of sharing and remembering. Remembering how our people were incarcerated behind barbed wire as a result of racial hysteria. Remembering that we must not allow our Government to repeat an Executive Order 9066 under the guise of national security. Remembering that we must not forget!

### Pilgrimage 2005 (The Generations Remember)

*wasurei nai de—forget not...  
Pearl Harbor was attacked.  
Tsunami of hatred forced hundreds of  
thousands out of their homes;  
afloat in camps—our freedom lost.*

*Life-line extended changing the  
course—seeking freedom.  
A new beginning burying the past;  
scars of injustice and hatred concealed.  
Shame buried. War was over.*

*Setting a new horizon riding  
the waves of an American dream.  
Social unrest in the sixties; seeds of  
resentment beginning to sprout—  
questioning why we did not resist.*

*All in the past—shi kata ga nai—it couldn't  
be helped. The forgotten scar of resentment  
and hate ripped open by stronger voices.  
Looking back a lifetime—a changing world;  
Progression of generations: issei, nisei, sansei, yonsei,*

*wasurei nai de—for a better tomorrow.*

Osame Doi, June 29, 2005  
Minidoka Internment Camp, Hunt, Idaho

**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 Joy Shigaki prior to the meeting.

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**Article and Event Submission:** Board members should submit materials to the editor, \_\_\_\_\_, 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.

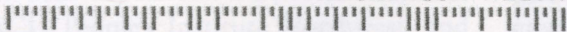
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