

# KOKORO

THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR COMMUNITY  
SAN MATEO CHAPTER JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE FEB 2005  
[WWW.SANMATEOJACL.ORG](http://WWW.SANMATEOJACL.ORG)  
INQUIRIES: KATE MOTOYAMA 650.574.6676

SAN MATEO JACL IS DEDICATED TO PROMOTING THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND TO PROTECTING AND ADVANCING THE HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS OF OUR MULTETHNIC SOCIETY THROUGH EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS.

Articles must be submitted before the fourth Monday in electronic format [Microsoft WORD, New York font] to  
[katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com](mailto:katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com).

*"Compassion is an unstable emotion. It needs to be translated into action, or it withers.  
The question is what to do with the feelings that have been aroused, the knowledge that has been  
communicated. People don't become inured to what they are shown—if that's the right way to describe  
what happens—because of the quantity of images dumped on them.  
It is passivity that dulls feeling."  
--Susan Sontag*

## DAY OF REMEMBRANCE EVENT AT DE SAISET MUSEUM

As you know, San Mateo JACL will commemorate Day of Remembrance on February 19<sup>th</sup> at the San Mateo County Museum (please send in your registration or call 574-6676 for more information); you can expect coverage in next month's *Kokoro*. In addition, we've learned that the de Saisset Museum is featuring two free programs in February in conjunction with the exhibition Peaceful Painter: Hisako Hibi. Please announce these programs and help spread the word! All programs are free and open to the public.

Day of Remembrance Programs  
Tuesday, February 15  
de Saisset Museum, Santa Clara University

Presented in conjunction with the de Saisset Museum exhibition Peaceful Painter: Hisako Hibi (on view through March 11).

A Special Reading of First-Person Accounts of the Internment  
Tuesday, February 15, noon  
Free

This program will feature Santa Clara University students in Professor Aldo Billingslea's Voice class providing readings of first-person accounts of the Japanese American internment.

Panel Discussion: Perspectives on the Internment  
Tuesday, February 15, 6pm  
free

This panel discussion features moderator Diane Matsuda, Executive Officer of the California Cultural and Historical Endowment and former Director of the California State Library's California Civil Liberties Public Education

Program and panelists: Lawrence DiStasi, scholar and author; Patricia Wakida, Special Projects Coordinator at Heyday Books; and Jimi Yamaichi from the Japanese American Museum of San Jose.

For more information, please call 408.554.4528 or visit [www.scu.edu/desaiisset](http://www.scu.edu/desaiisset)

### SAN MATEO JACL'S ANNUAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE EDUCATION PROJECT

The chapter's Education Committee just completed its Day of Remembrance mailing to all San Mateo County Schools. In the letter we remind educators of the significance of February 19, 1942 and ask that the date is noted in the classrooms. We also offer copies of JACL's curriculum and resource guide, "A Lesson in American History: The Japanese American Experience," at no cost to San Mateo County teachers. The guide provides teachers with historically correct background information, resources, reproducible visuals and source documents, and lesson plans for all grade levels. This year we included JACL's latest educational product, "What It Means To Be An American: Lesson Plans on Race and the Media in Times of Crisis," in our mailing to high schools. This booklet was funded by a grant from the National Conference for Community and the ChevronTexaco Foundation to address the increased bias and racism being faced by some groups and individuals in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. (If you know educators who are interested in receiving these materials please contact Mary Jo at (650) 593-7358.)

For the past three years Mr. Mas Yamasaki of Fremont JACL has generously let us include his name and phone number for teachers who want classroom presentations. Mr. Yamasaki has volunteered his time for many years making presentations in classrooms throughout out the Bay Area. We are grateful that he is willing to tell his first-hand, lived experience of the internment.

Many thanks to April Smith and her children Trevor, Taylor, and Nicole who labeled almost two hundred envelopes for the mailing.

### MY FIGHT AGAINST AMERICAN PHANTOMS—Tariq Ramadan. Part 1 of 2 Parts

Published on Tuesday, December 21, 2004 by the Los Angeles Times

Over the last four years, I have visited the United States more than 20 times. I have lectured on philosophy and Islam at numerous academic institutions from Dartmouth to Stanford and at organizations from the Brookings Institution to the United States Institute of Peace. I was invited to a meeting organized by former President Clinton, and I spoke before officials of the CIA.

So when I was offered a professorship at the University of Notre Dame, I did not see it as anything particularly controversial, and I accepted the position as an opportunity for greater engagement and dialogue with Americans.

After the necessary security clearance, my visa was approved in May. We shipped our belongings and were only nine days away from moving when I was informed that my visa had been revoked. Though no explanation was given to us, government officials were quoted anonymously in the media citing the Patriot Act as the legal basis — but without stating exactly what I had been accused of.

The media speculated endlessly; all my detractors' old and baseless allegations were listed: "possible terrorist links," "Islamist," and the particularly inexplicable "gentle jihadist." I was accused of being an anti-Semite and of engaging in "double talk" by delivering a gentle, moderate message to non-Muslims but a "radical and extremist" message to Muslims. To bolster their argument, my critics pointed to my pedigree — my grandfather was the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt — as if one's thoughts and morals descend from the vices and virtues of one's lineage.

Time and again I fought to disprove these malicious allegations. But it didn't work. In 20 years of studying and teaching philosophy, I have learned to appreciate the inherent difficulty in recognizing "the truth." But I have also learned that in the world of mass media, "truth" is not based on clarity but on repetition. An assumption repeated three times becomes a fact.

Strange truth indeed!

I have written 20 books and 700 articles. Have my detractors read any of them? Are they acquainted with my extensive study of the Islamic scriptural sources and my efforts to help Muslims remain faithful to their principles and, at the same time, face the challenges of the contemporary world? Are they familiar with my statement on Sept. 12, 2001, calling on Muslims to condemn the terror attacks? Or my condemnations of anti-Semitism? Have they read my writing promoting women's rights and Islamic feminism and rejecting mistreatment and discrimination?

Part 2 to appear in March *Kokoro*.

## FAREWELL AND THANK YOU TO CONGRESSMAN BOB MATSUI, A GREAT PUBLIC SERVANT

House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi expressed these sentiments in a statement on the death of Congressman Robert T. Matsui (D-CA), who served 26 years in the House of Representatives.

"In over 30 years of friendship, I deeply admired Bob's personal courage. Despite being imprisoned in an internment camp as a very young boy, Bob always had hope in the promise of America -- taking from his experience empathy for others, a belief in civil rights, and a passion for excellence which was expressed in his public service. Time after time Bob's community elected him to serve as their Representative in the U.S. Congress, where he rose to national prominence as a senior member of the powerful Ways and Means Committee, a national spokesman for Social Security, and as the first Asian American in the leadership of the Congress.

"When it came to politics, Bob Matsui was a maestro, orchestrating campaigns across the country that addressed the aspirations of the American people, particularly on his signature issues of economic opportunity, civil liberties and retirement security. In any given week, Bob would meet with Sacramento-area senior citizens about Social Security as well as direct thousands of young volunteers across America assisting Democratic House candidates who had answered his call to serve our country.

"In recent days, Bob spoke often of his parents, whose fortitude during his youth and grace during his adulthood shaped so much of his respect for America's seniors and his resolve to preserve their retirement security. With dignity, integrity and passion, Bob Matsui served his family, his community and his country. He will be sorely missed and long remembered."

## DID YOU KNOW?

*"San Francisco looks a lot like Los Angeles, Vancouver, Shanghai and Taipei, where a lot of people are comfortable being with other types of people."*  
-Henry Yu, Professor of Asian American History, University of California, Los Angeles

The vast majority of Bay Area Asians are concentrated in four of the region's nine counties. The percentage that is Asian in those counties:

31% San Francisco County  
26 percent Santa Clara County  
20 percent Alameda County  
20 percent San Mateo County

The Bay Area has had a substantive Asian population since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century because laborers were needed for railroad construction and due to the Gold Rush. But these new immigrants were confronted by exclusionary laws, which banned further immigration as well as citizenship. Only in 1965—only forty years ago (where were *you* in this pivotal year?)—did the United States open its borders to extensive immigration from Asia for the first time in nearly half a century. That was when the Bay Area's Asian population began to establish itself.

With new immigrants from throughout Asia, the Japanese population fell to the fifth-largest group of Asians. The other Asian populations are Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Vietnamese.

## OUR PUBLIC LIBRARY NEEDS OUR SUPPORT

In the November and December issues of *Kokoro*, we put out an appeal to support a Japanese American “spotlight” in the San Mateo Public Library. (Please contact Yasuko Ito, 343-9198, if you are interested in making a contribution of money or resources.) Recently, in related news, we learned that the public library in Salinas is dying. This was reported in an article (“Is time running out on public libraries—and literature?” Jan. 6, *San Francisco Chronicle*) that discussed whether public libraries and literature (books being removed and replaced by computers and online resources) could be salvaged from being considered an afterthought. In response, several letters to the editor were submitted to the *Chronicle* that have direct bearing on the need to support public libraries and their collections.

*Editor—*

*Thanks for David Kippen’s nice article supporting libraries. I’ve worked as a librarian for more than 20 years, and currently work for the Minneapolis Public Library. I agree with you: Library service needs to be good in all communities, not just those that have a good tax base.*

*But what scares me these days is that the most wealthy communities often no longer want to be on the library map. Those people buy their books, their magazine subscriptions, their DVDs, their Internet services and, for that matter, their schools. They resent paying taxes to support services they don’t use, which they assume are used by people they don’t want to help: immigrants and the poor.*

*. . .*

*--Cathy Camper, Minneapolis*

Then, extending and seemingly illustrating Camper’s views, is the following:

*Editor—*

*Thank you for a thoughtful and informative article on the challenges California public libraries face. I am the son of immigrant parents, raised by a single mom barely able to speak English and not being able to read it until late in her life. Yet she pushed me to the public libraries in the California Central Valley where I grew up and told me to read.*

*The public library became the vehicle for me to learn and grow as a person, and to become an educated and concerned citizen. Eventually, I graduated from UC Berkeley and later earned a doctorate. Now, I am a retired university professor and senior academic administrator, and your article strikes an important chord for me, as it should for others.*

*--Roberto Haro, Larkspur*

Please act now to show your support of the San Mateo Public Library.

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| A REQUEST TO JA CL MEMBERS |
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The following is a letter excerpted from our National Director and Vice President of Membership:

We ask for your personal involvement to pass on this legacy to younger generations, and to family and friends during this membership drive for the New Year. To continue to build our grassroots membership base, we are asking our dedicated members to become JACL Mentors by recruiting ***one new member***.

The work at the JACL is not done and JACL is remains relevant today. During this past year, we have continued to promote tolerance and understanding through education.

- Met with Rep. Howard Coble, North Carolina and head of the House Subcommittee on Homeland Security regarding his comment supporting FDR's decision to intern the Japanese Americans, implying that similar action might be warranted relative to Arab Americans. Following this meeting, a letter of regret was issued by Rep. Coble.
- Jap Road, Jap Lane, Jap Rock - eliminating derogatory terminology. National JACL testified at the Jefferson County hearing to urge Commissioners to rename "Jap Road" after decades of challenges. Continuing work to change the names of Jap Lane in Orangefield-Vidor, Texas area and Jap Rock, in Palm Beach Co, Florida.
- Strongly criticized Dallas Cowboys coach Bill Parcells for his reference to trick plays as 'Jap plays.' To compound this offensive remark, Parcells prefaced the term with an insensitive disclaimer of "*no disrespect to the Orientals,...*" JACL offices placed on alert after serious threats received at Headquarters.
- JACL's objection and public challenges to Michelle Malkin for her book "*In Defense of Internment: The Case for 'Racial Profiling' in World War II and the War on Terror*" which purports to present the "truth" about the historical facts of the internment. It attempts to impugn the loyalty of Japanese Americans during WWII to justify harsher governmental policies today in the treatment of Arab and Muslim Americans.
- JACL signs on to an amicus brief with the NAACP and the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) on the Muslim Community Association of Ann Arbor vs. John Ashcroft case. JACL specifically challenges Section 215 as a threat to membership-based organizations, which could allow government access to its members' information.

With the good work that JACL provides today, ***it is time for each of us, each individual member, to be a mentor and ask one person to join.***

There are 2 ways you can help:

1. The direct method is to ask someone to join. It can be a very pleasant surprise how many people are glad join but have never been asked. Others may not be aware of the JACL and is a great opportunity to tell them the JACL legacy and the good work it is doing today in American society.
2. Provide a JACL gift membership to introduce someone to our organization.

This membership drive for the New Year can only be successful if everyone takes a few moments from their busy schedule to participate. With the collective force of over 20,000 JACL members across the country and beyond, our organization can continue to meet the needs of the future generations.

As mentioned before, the work of the JACL is not over. There is still a need to uphold our civil liberties that so many courageous people have fought for in order to provide younger generations with the opportunities they now have and to build a better society for the future. Your support allows us to live out the JACL's motto, "***For Better Americans in a Greater America.***" Please fill out the attached membership form if you can gift a membership. All we ask is that you help us get **ONE NEW MEMBER**.

Thank you in advance for your participation and your commitment to our great organization.



Edwin T. Endow  
V.P. 1000 Club, Membership and Services



John Tateishi  
National Executive Director

All new members, all members who gift a membership and all members who refer a new member will be put into a drawing for a 4 day Carnival Cruise to Mexico including the airfare to and from Southern California. Current members who gift or refer more than one new member will be entered again according to the number of gifts and/or referrals, thus enhancing their chances to win.

## COMMUNITY CENTER NEWS

### RUMMAGE SALE

The SMJACC Rummage Sale is on Saturday, April 2, 2005 and will be held from 9:30am to 3:00pm. Start collecting clothes, toys, books, blankets, towels, housewares, small appliances, etc. Please no shoes, magazines, mattresses, computers or large appliances. Groups that meet in the Community Center and Gardeners Hall will be called upon to volunteer their time in sorting, pricing, and displaying items in the week prior to the sale. Workers will be also asked to volunteer on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Drop off dates for donated items will be announced in the next Kokoro. A tax deduction form will be available.

### SUNDAY MATINEE MOVIE

February 27, 2005 1:30 PM

At JA Community Center, 415 S. Claremont St., San Mateo. 650 343-2793

“MERRY CHRISTMAS, MR. LAWRENCE”

Rock star and actor David Bowie stars in this taut psychological World War II drama about clashing cultures and survival. British army officer Jack Celliers (Bowies) is sentenced to a Japanese POW camp in Java where he engages in a private war of wills with the camp's commandant (Ryuichi Sakamoto), and a belligerent Sergeant (Takeshi). Directed by Nagisa Oshima. Color, 2 hrs 4 min. R-rated.



**JACL**  
***HealthBenefitsTrust***

1-800-400-6633

**Japanese American Citizens League**  
415 Claremont San Mateo CA 94401

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