

# KOKORO

the heart and soul of our community  
san mateo chapter Japanese American citizens league jan 2010  
[www.sanmateojacl.org](http://www.sanmateojacl.org)  
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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 multi-ethnic society through educational and community programs.

Articles must be submitted before the first Friday (one month prior to publication) to [katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com](mailto:katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com)

## ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER FILM FESTIVAL AT COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO

Saturday, March 20, 2010, will be the date of the Asian Pacific Islander Film Festival at College of San Mateo, 1700 W. Hillsdale Boulevard, San Mateo. From 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., there will be an afternoon matinee of California Civil Liberties Public Education Program films. These will be:

"Stand Up for Justice: The Ralph Lazo Story." John Esaki and Amy Kato.

2004, running time: 33 min.

"Ruth Asawa: A Community Artist." SFSU Journalism Department and Dianne Fukami.

running time: 9 min.

"Hidden Internment: The Art Shibayama Story." Casey Peek and Irum Shiekh.

2004, running time: 26 min. 40 sec.

"Piecing Memories: Recollections of Internment." Dianne Fukami.

2000, running time: 17 min.

"Pilgrimage." Tadashi Nakamura.

2005, running time: 17 min.

The evening program will run from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. and be kicked off with the San Mateo Taiko Dojo.

"Big Drums: Taiko in the United States." JANM.

Running time, 22 min.

"Colma: The Musical (sing-along)."

2006, running time 100 min.

Synopsis: In the town of Colma, just south of San Francisco, the dead outnumber the living one thousand to one. Here, one wouldn't expect teenagers to burst out in song, or dance around cemeteries and streets. But, that's exactly what happens. Best pals Rodel,

Billy, and Maribel find themselves in a state of limbo; fresh out of high school, they are just beginning to explore a new world of part-time mall jobs and crashing college parties. As newfound revelations and romances challenge their relationships with one another and their parents, the trio must assess what to hold onto, and how to best follow their dreams. It's a love song to the city, and to the residents who dream of a better (and more musical) life.

#### A RIVETING ORAL HISTORY FROM THE DENSHO PROJECT, EXCERPTED NEXT MONTH

George T. Sakato is the great-great-great-grandson of a samurai. Perhaps that explains his father's choice of a birth name. Sakato says, "Dad wanted to call me Jyotaro Sakato, after a sword-bearer for Musashi samurai." But when the doctor submitted the vital statistics for the baby, "Jyotaro" became "George." An unassuming man, Densho's interviewee says simply, "All my life I've been called Joe." On October 29, 1944, in the Vosges Mountains of France, Private Joe Sakato's warrior ancestry saw him through a critical juncture in the storied Battle of the Lost Battalion.

Before being deployed to Europe, Joe and friends took a side trip from the New Jersey base. Joe had a bright idea: "So me, Tanimachi, John Tanaka and Sho Tabara and another fellow, we all went to New York City, and we're looking up, all these big high rises, and so we says, 'Why don't we check into the Waldorf Astoria to say that we stayed at the Waldorf Astoria?' So we each put ten bucks apiece, cost us forty dollars to go to this Waldorf Astoria, and we only stayed there for five, three or four hours looking out the windows."

Stay tuned for the February edition of *Kokoro* to learn Sakato's story.

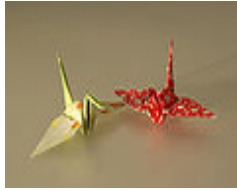
#### KANSHA: GRATITUDE

A generous donation was made in honor of Robert Suzuki "Bochi." Thank you, Kay T. Takahashi.

#### ASIAN-AMERICAN MAJORITY TAKES OATH ON CITY COUNCIL

An article in the December 2, 2009 issue of the *San Jose Mercury News* by Sandra Gonzales stated that Cupertino made history when it swore in yet another City Councilmember; it is the third city in the country and the only one in Northern California with an Asian American council majority.

Barry Chang joined Gilbert Wong and Kris Wang on the five-member body. Asians are a majority in both Cupertino and Milpitas, with Cupertino's Asian population making up 57 percent of its residents. James Lai, associate professor and director of the Ethnic Studies Program at Santa Clara University, said, "This is an exciting time for Asian-



Join with San Mateo JACL and  
friends of the Topaz Museum Board  
to see the plans for the Topaz Museum on

Saturday, January 23, 2010  
San Mateo County History Museum Courtroom A  
2200 Broadway, Redwood City, CA at 1:00 P.M.

We will be unveiling the architectural plans by  
Alan Kawasaki and the exhibit design by West Office  
Exhibition Design, located in Oakland. Both principals and  
members of the Topaz Museum Board will be on hand to  
discuss the designs and hear your comments.

The new Topaz Museum will be located in Delta, Utah,  
sixteen miles from the Topaz Internment Camp that held  
over 11,000 Japanese Americans during World War II.  
Please help us make sure this important part of history is  
never forgotten and never repeated.

Visit our website to view museum design,  
[Topazmuseum.org](http://Topazmuseum.org)

American politics in California, and I believe the suburbs are leading the way.”  
Councilman Wong added, “It’s been a long journey. We should celebrate, but we should also look to one day that five Hispanics or five Chinese on a city council will not be looked on as being unique and different.”



**JACL**  
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