

KOKORO

THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR COMMUNITY
SAN MATEO CHAPTER JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE JUNE 2005
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 MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY THROUGH EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS.

Articles must be submitted before the third Friday in electronic format [Microsoft WORD, New York font] to katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com.

CONGRESSMAN MIKE HONDA CONGRATULATES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



San Mateo JACL is proud of our scholarship winners for 2005. All of them are pictured with Congressman Mike Honda, who delivered the keynote address at the luncheon.

On April 30, 2005 San Mateo JACL held its first Scholarship Luncheon at Dominic's Restaurant at the Poplar Creek Golf Course. Our chapter honored four local high school students with scholarships. Kristine Chiba, Kelley Hasegawa, Justine Morey, and Robert Takahashi were the 2005 recipients. United States Congressman Mike Honda was the keynote speaker. Congressman Honda delivered an uplifting speech which encouraged and informed the student recipients and others in attendance. He commended each student individually as he presented them with a special certificate. Assemblymember Leland Yee and South San Francisco Councilwoman Karyl Matsumoto were in attendance, as well as Wade Loo from Organization of Chinese Americans. It was an outstanding event!

Many thanks to Brent Nakagiri and Heidi Tanaksubo for their leadership in developing a revitalized scholarship program. Our chapter plans to make this a yearly event. Thanks also to committee members: Craig Ichiuji, Steve Katayama, April Smith, and Mary Jo Kubota-Arcarese.

JACC RUMMAGE SALE THANK YOU

A HUGE thank you to all who helped made the SMJACC Rummage Sale a success. There was a concerted effort of children, teens, and adults working diligently together, filling the hall with lots of bustle and laughter. Everyone demonstrated a spirit of giving and enthusiasm resulting in a profitable fundraiser event. In addition, there was a tremendous amount of goods donated by a most generous and caring community. To top it off, the spring weather was ideal in making the Rummage Sale a great success. Again, THANK YOU VERY MUCH and ARIGATO! -- Rummage Sale Committee

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY FOR NATIONAL JAPANESE AMERICAN MEMORIAL

2005 is the fifth anniversary of the National Japanese American Memorial, which you helped build. The National Parks Service is charged with maintaining the Memorial, such as tending to the cherry trees in the landscaping and the beautiful crane sculpture. In honoring the anniversary, the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation solicited comments on what it was like to have this tribute to Japanese American patriotism in our Nation's capital. One person wrote:

"I am not of Japanese ancestry and was not incarcerated. But to me, the Memorial symbolizes that things can go terribly wrong—even in a great nation like ours—when fear is the motivator. I hope that the bound wings of the elegant Cranes struggling for freedom remind each of us that we must be continually on guard against fear-inspired tyranny."

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM AFTER SEPTEMBER 11th—MARWA RIFAHIE, Part 1 of 2.

People of Arab and Muslim descent have constantly struggled to survive and succeed in the U.S. However, racism stood and continues to stand as a social barrier to hinder and impede the development of these communities in the U.S. Although racism towards these respective communities was limited primarily—but not exclusively—to the social sphere: schools, neighborhoods, the workplaces, etc., the attacks on the World Trade Centers on September 11, 2001, gave the Bush Administration the political leverage to allow racism to manifest itself institutionally.

Prior to the attacks, my family was aware of the anti-Arab/Muslim sentiments in the United States, but this awareness quickly became a constant experience for my family and many families like us. After the attacks, I began inquiring as to why the actions of a few men who acted in the name of Islam, stand as the symbol and honest representation of the religious practice of one-fourth of the world's population—Islam? Yet, why is it that when the KKK commits a hate crime, white people as a whole are not vilified in the same manner? This question can be applied to the manner in which many minority groups are stereotyped and vilified in the United States.

Too many people became victims of the 9/11 attacks; those who were wrongfully killed, those who lost loved ones, and those who became victims of hate that crossed the nation. My family felt the immediate exacerbation of hysteria and paranoia as we became "the other" in the eyes of many, including the U.S. Government. My mother, an outspoken business owner and a feminist who defies all ethnocentric stereotypes and stigmas about Muslim women, was forced to close her restaurant in downtown Oakland, California from fear of being the victim of a hate crime. She would open the doors of the restaurant in the morning and find a pile of feces waiting at the door. It was easy to spot her in a crowd; she wears modest attire, and the Muslim head scarf—hijab. My family is lucky we have experienced the least violent of the injustices that plague our community: mistreatment at airports, deportations to anonymous locations, harassment by the FBI, occasionally called terrorist, sand niggers, and other such derogatory terms.

--continued in July *Kokoro*

INFORM YOURSELF ABOUT MONGOLIAN SPOTS

The following is a letter sent by co-presidents Mary Jo Kubota-Arcarese and Kate Motoyama to all elementary schools in San Mateo County. It asks that intake forms for children enrolled at a school or district include information on any identifiable birthmarks, including Mongolian Spots. In drafting the letter, the San Mateo JACL board received assistance from a JACL member who is works with the Sheriff's Department in San Mateo County. The letter was proofed for accuracy by a physician. The board is asking each elementary school's board to consider taking action on this matter. We are grateful for the advice provided us on this issue as we have worked on this project over the past months.

Last fall our board learned about a child abuse report that had been filed. The student involved had a birthmark called a "Mongolian Spot" [congenital dermal melanocytosis]. Mongolian Spots are flat, bluish in color, and resemble a fresh bruise; they occur in a high percentage of Asian and Pacific Islander children (up to 90%) as well as in Hispanic children (46%). Mongolian spots are present at birth, often on the back, spine, and buttocks, and can

be mistaken for bruises caused by abusive treatment. Mongolian spots typically disappear spontaneously within four years

It is vitally important that our children be protected. This is why educators, child care providers, and medical professionals are legally mandated to report suspected cases of child abuse. However, unfounded reports cause unnecessary trauma to both children and parents, taint home-school relationships, and take up the time of school personnel, police, and social workers.

In light of what we have learned, we propose that student Emergency and Information Forms contain a section for parents to record their child's birthmarks and other identifying marks. This information, which is much like data parents are asked to provide on their child's allergies and medical conditions, would help prevent unnecessary child abuse reports and provide a source of identification in any emergency situation. In the same way in which a physicians' written instruction must accompany medications used at school, the family physician could be asked to include a note describing the birthmarks.

San Mateo JACL is eager to work with San Mateo County schools to educate parents and school personnel about Mongolian Spots and the importance of documenting them on school emergency forms. We look forward to scheduling a meeting to hear your thoughts. Please call Mary Jo at 650/593-7358. Thank you very much for your consideration.

SUNDAY MATINEE MOVIE

Sunday Matinee Movie on June 26, 2005 at 1:30 PM
At JA Community Center, 415 S. Claremont St., San Mateo, CA
Phone 650 343-2793

“LATE CHRYSANTHEMUMS” (BAN GIKU)

Retired geisha Kin (Haruko Sugimura) has settled into a comfortable existence as a money-lender who extracts substantial interest payments even from her closest friends, Tamae (Chikako Hosokawa) and Nobu (Sadako Sawamura), both retired geisha. When Kin learns that her former lover Tabe (Ken Uyehara) is in town, she musters up as much of her old glamour as she can, only to find -----

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Directed by Mikio Naruse. B & W, 1954, 101 minutes.
Japanese with English subtitles.



JACL
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Japanese American Citizens League
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NEWSLETTER NEWS

To view *Kokoro* electronically, email katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com to stop receiving paper copies and san-mateo-jacl-announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to subscribe to electronic notification. The group has been set up for people who want to receive email announcements from the San Mateo JACL. These announcements include notification of the monthly newsletter being available on the San Mateo JACL's web site, and might include other items of importance to members.

