

KOKORO

THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR COMMUNITY
SAN MATEO CHAPTER JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE JAN 2007
<WWW.SANMATEOJACL.ORG>
INQUIRIES: MARY JO KUBOTA-ARCAESE, 650.593.7358

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) and in electronic format [Microsoft WORD, New York font] to katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com.

NEW OFFICERS AND BOARD FOR 2007

We are pleased to announce the board members of San Mateo JACL for this coming year:

Steve Okamoto, President and District Council Representative
Mary Jo Kubota-Arcarese, Vice President of Membership, Secretary and Education Chair
Kevin Wong, Vice President of Programs
Steve Katayama, Vice President of Membership
April Smith, Treasurer
Kate Motoyama, Newsletter
Michael Skipakevich, Youth Representative
Kathy Sneath, Community Center Representative
Jerry Ono

DR. YUKIO TSUDA, FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE



FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE
at COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO
Sixty-five Years of International Educational Exchange

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Dr. Tsuda of Tsukuba University, Japan, will be at College of San Mateo for spring semester (January-May). He is available for meetings or lectures with individuals and community groups. Dr. Tsuda's specialty is communication studies, but he can speak to any number of issues. The Fulbright Program of the US Department of State has, for 65 years, sought to increase international understanding among scholars and students.

CONGRESS FUNDS RESTORATION OF WWII INTERNMENT CAMPS

One of the final acts of a Republican-dominated Congress was sending President Bush legislation establishing a \$38 million program of National Park Service grants to restore and pay for research at ten internment camps. The National Park Service already operates facilities at two of the ten sites, at Manzanar and Minidoka. The remaining eight would be operated by state and local governments or organizations. Nonprofit groups and local, state, and tribal governments will have to come up with 75 percent of the money for projects, and Congress must still find the money for its federal share during the appropriations process.

An article bearing the subtitle “Sites of WWII prisons for some citizens to serve as reminder of U.S. rights abuses,” written by Edward Epstein and appearing in the December 6, 2006 issue of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, states that House leader Rep. Bill Thomas, who urged Americans to protect citizens’ rights during difficult times, gave final congressional approval to the bill. Thomas, a conservative Republican, retired after the 109th Congress adjourned in December. He was quoted as saying, “This has to do with fundamental rights, even of native-born citizens, in a time of war.”

Epstein notes in his article, “That statement has extra poignancy today, given the continuing debate over the Bush administration’s program of limiting habeas corpus rights for suspects classified as enemy combatants in the war [on] terrorism.”

Thomas said he became committed to preserving the sites because his district had for many years included the Manzanar site [Inyo County along Highway 395 in the eastern Sierra]. He said he also pushed the bill because of “his decades-old friendship with former Democratic state assemblyman Floyd Mori, the immediate past president of the San Francisco-based Japanese American Citizens League.”

The bill, first approved by the House in 2005 but voted on again after the Senate’s revisions, also includes preservation of 17 assembly centers, such as Tanforan in San Bruno. The senate had passed the bill in November, even though the Park Service said the program was too expensive. Improvement has begun at Manzanar with a National Park Service visitor’s center; the Park Service also administers a memorial to Japanese American patriotism during World War II near the Capitol in Washington, D.C. The White House has not been opposed to the bill, and President Bush is expected to sign it into law.

EDITOR’S PICKS: TATTOOS FOR TOTS

Every month in 2007, we hope to feature an individual, company, restaurant, or product to our readers. Enjoy this new feature!

This month, we are spotlighting a San Mateo-based company, Tattoos for Tots, that was launched by Jennie Yamagishi and Rhonda Kim. Tattoos for Tots are safe and non-toxic temporary tattoos with the younger set in mind. You know how children love stickers and tattoos . . . so much so that moms, dads, grandpa, grandma, aunties, and uncles need to watch their arms and behinds when they leave the house? That’s how much children adore Tattoos for Tots!

It started when Jennie’s son Tyler came home from a birthday party with a goodie bag that contained “Dora the Explorer” temporary tattoos. According to an interview in *The Oakland Tribune*’s Bay Area Living section, she said, “He wasn’t very verbal at that age (two), but when I put it on him I noticed he started to engage in a lot of conversation about the tattoo.” Jennie, who had taught elementary school [BA, UC Berkeley and MA in Education, San Francisco State University], had the inspiration to combine an image with a word. In this way, the temporary tattoo could become a developmental tool for learning. Together with graphic designer Rhonda Kim [Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA], they began Tattoos for Tots in 2005. Jennie comes up with the concepts and Rhonda, the design consultant, develops the artwork.



There are several age-appropriate images, with words, for children: Space (think planets, rockets, astronauts, spacecraft), Farm Animals (horse, cow, pig, rooster), Vegetables, Sea Life, Reptiles, Trains, and more! With these, a classroom technique of labeling objects with words (the image on the tattoo with the word spelled out) is used to promote early literacy skills in children.

Each set of non-toxic, FDA dye-approved tattoos retails for \$3.99 and contains two sheets of four tattoos. To promote literacy, Tattoos for Tots donates cash and tattoos to PROJECT READ. You may visit their website: <http://www.tattoosfortots.com> and shop online for your children’s favorites.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN CALIFORNIA

Almost 30 percent of non-English speakers in the United States live in California. Many live in “linguistically isolated” households; this means that neither adults nor teenagers in that household are proficient in English. This is an issue that the Nikkei community well understands, though many families have set down roots in the US for generations. However, many have experienced, can remember, or have heard of a time when a grandparent, parent, aunt or uncle, cousin, or friend came to this country speaking little or no English. The fact is, that immigrants may come as English learners, but that, by the third generation, they are monolingual in English.

An article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* titled, “Influx of English learners a challenge for California,” by Tyche Hendricks and Jill Tucker, explored the dynamics of the non-English speaking population in this state. While California has 29% of the nation’s non-English speakers, it has 12% of the nation’s population—in other words, we have a need for ESL teachers. Some immigrants are fluent or nearly fluent in English. Some immigrants will be able to resume professions they left in their native countries provided they have English language skills and a green card. But many will need to go to adult school to learn the basics of survival English. The article quotes Patricia Gandara, professor of education at UC Davis, “They could be teachers, social workers, police officers. . . . We could benefit greatly from having these people in board rooms, in the State Department, or doing international trade and negotiation. We ought to be exploiting the advantages these people have, rather than seeing them as some kind of burden on society.”

The foreign language skills these immigrants bring can be a resource, along with their learning of English. And, in fact, a study of Latin American immigrants found that those who mastered English were more fully involved in their communities and had larger networks of friends than those who did not speak English. One way for Japanese speakers to be connected to with one another and others is by participating in activities at the San Mateo Japanese American Community Center, which invites all to join in planning events for the community.

‘THE FIRST BATTLE’ SCREENING BY JAPANESE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF SAN JOSE

“The First Battle,” a documentary about the efforts to prevent the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans of Hawaii, is a film written and produced by Tom Coffman. In the film, Coffman examines the little-known story of how a small group of community members anticipated and started making crucial preparations for the war between Japan and the US two years before Pearl Harbor. Their work, before and during the war, in conjunction with the courageous actions of Hawaii’s martial law commander Army General Delos Emmons, prevented the tragedy that occurred on the West Coast. The program for “The First Battle” depicts the situation like this:

On one side were raw passions and ancient hatreds. On the other was an evolving civic life that had been nurtured by a wide range of progressive leaders and institutions. Some endure, such as McKinley High School, the University of Hawaii and the YMCA. Some have now disappeared, such as the Japanese-Hawaiian Civic Association, the Institute for Pacific Relations and Hands-Around-the-Pacific.

In the face of impending chaos, an inter-racial coalition came together in 1939 to address the increasing possibility of a war between Japan and the United States. These first efforts at war-time social planning occurred inside a small group called the Inter-racial Council of Hawaii.

Tom Coffman is an independent scholar-journalist and producer who has written extensively about Hawaiian politics and history. Two of his special interests are Japanese and Korean Americans. He points out that if the incarceration of Japanese Americans had occurred in Hawaii, “there would have been this horrible division resulting in our community and it would have endured for generations. “The First Battle” will be screened on public television in 2007.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR CCLPEP EVENT

San Mateo JACL will co-sponsor a CCLPEP program on April 28, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. at the San Mateo Main Library. The "Night of Enemy Alien Drama" will be scheduled for 7:30 p.m., the evening of the 28th, at the Hillsdale High Little Theater. The main feature of this CCLPEP grant is the production of teaching materials and lesson plans for the enemy alien subject. Curriculum packages will be distributed at the San Mateo Main Library Enemy Alien Conference/Symposium on April 28.

HONORING THE ANCESTORS: CURT FUKUDA

Curt Fukuda was raised in east ASan Jose, where he went to school wi3th kids from mostly Mexican and Portuguese backgrounds. Since then, the bulk of his pubolished work has focused on the Latino community, specifically, the celebration of the Day of the Dead in Oaxaca, Mexico.

However, five years ago, Fukuda and his friend, Jim Nagareda, began a photography project of images of Japantown on a CD-ROM. That turned into a 300-page history of one of San Jose’s most cherished neighborhoods. Fukuda says the history of one of three surviving Japantowns in a major American city (the others are in Los Angeles and San Francisco) really begins in the late 19th century with the Chinese community. At that time, Chinatown’s wooden buildings covered about three square blocks of the

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central downtown. In 1887, after a mysterious fire burned Chinatown to the ground (the fire department somehow arrived without water), a sympathetic businessman named John Heinlen built a small brick community on what was then the edge of town, at Sixth and Jackson streets, and rented to displaced Chinese. When the first large wave of Japanese immigrants began arriving in the 1890s, they found lodging in Heinlenville, as it was called. This is excerpted from Kelly Flaherty Curlyey's "Groundbreakers" column in *Silicon Valley Home*, November 2006.

COMMUNITY CENTER NEWS

The remodel of the restroom for the Gardeners Hall will begin on December 19th, Tuesday. Kitami Construction Co. of San Carlos will be the General Contractor. Masa Oshima will be the project manager for Kitami. It will take about a month to complete the project.



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