

# KOKORO

the heart and soul of our community  
san mateo chapter Japanese American citizens league april 2009  
[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) and in electronic format  
[Microsoft WORD, Calibri font] to [katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com](mailto:katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com)

## MAYOR MARGARET ABE-KOGA, FORMER SAN MATEO JACL BOARD MEMBERS, INSTALLS 2009 BOARD



*Board Member April Smith reads a newspaper article naming Margaret Abe-Koga, Mayor of Mountain View, "Woman of the Year." Mayor Abe-Koga installed this year's board and reminisced about her time with San Mateo JACL.*

## SAVE SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13<sup>th</sup> FOR SAN MATEO JACL'S GOLF TOURNAMENT

Our annual golf tournament fundraiser for student scholarships will be held Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, at Popular Creek in San Mateo. Please come and tee off!

## SAN MATEO JAPANESE AMERICA COMMUNITY CENTER 2009 ACTIVITIES

March 28 (Saturday)

Shinnenkai at SACBT, 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

April 19 (Sunday)  
Hotel) San Francisco, 9 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Cherry Blossom Senior Appreciation Brunch at Kabuki Hotel, (Formerly Miyako

May 2 (Saturday)

Rummage Sale at SMJA Hall, 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

May 9 (Saturday)	Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month, San Mateo Central Park
June 6 (Saturday)	SF Opera Dress Rehearsal – “Porgy and Bess”
August 29 (Saturday)	Potluck and Raffle, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.
September 15 (Tuesday)	Volunteers Appreciation Luncheon
October 10 (Saturday)	SMJACC Fall Clean-up, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
November 14 (Saturday)	Holiday Fair, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
December 14 (Monday)	Holiday Luncheon, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

### AN HONOR FOR ASSEMBLYMEMBER WARREN FURUTANI

The Faculty Association of California Community College's Board of Governors unanimously voted to award its Legislator of the Year Award to Assemblymember Warren Furutani (D-Long Beach). A former Los Angeles Community College District Trustee and strong supporter of Proposition 92, Furutani has dedicated his time in the Capitol to improving workforce development and stabilizing community college funding. He is introducing legislation to provide community colleges with a funding backfill whenever property tax revenues fall below projection.

Recently, San Mateo JACL wrote a letter of support for AB 37, authored by Furutani, which requests that colleges and universities consider awarding honorary degrees for Nikkei students interned during World War II because of Executive Order 9066. An excerpt from the letter reads as follows:

*It is with great pleasure that I write on behalf of the San Mateo chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) to express support for AB 37, a bill to extend honorary degrees to members of the Nikkei community who were unable to complete their post-secondary education in California's public institutions. This violation of the rule of law resulted when, during World War II, Nikkei were forced from their homes and businesses in the Western states to concentration camps in the interior of the United States.*

*AB 37 is consistent with our state's promise of higher education, and the conferral of honorary degrees will honor these Nikkei elders and their families. Furthermore, the surviving population of these former students is waning, as these Nikkei are now well into their eighties and older. The necessity of AB 37 is even more apparent and appropriate.*

College of San Mateo, which is in San Mateo County, will commemorate at its commencement ceremonies nearly 50 Nikkei students whose lives were unalterably changed as a result of EO 9066. In the *Hokubei Mainichi News* [March 6, 2009], it was reported that social science faculty Lewis Kawahara identified 45 Japanese Americans who were pulled out of CSM in 1941-42 and sent to concentration camps or who chose to enlist in military service. Of these, 21 have passed away: “A few graduated in the fall of 1941, but by June 1942 all persons of Japanese descent on the West Coast were interned.” Kawahara has located seven individuals who will be able to attend the ceremony. This is a huge honor for College of San Mateo, as well. Kate Motoyama, professor at CSM and board president of San Mateo JACL, will participate in commencement.

Assemblymember Furutani will also be commencement speaker at these same ceremonies in May 2009, adding to the meaning and significance of the day for the honorees and the college.

### SUPREME COURT HEARS ARGUMENTS ON UNILATERAL SALE OF HAWAII'S “CEDED” LANDS

On February 25, 2009, hundreds of supporters in Hawai'i and other places, including northern California, rallied to protest the State of Hawaii's plan to sell off parts of Hawaiian public lands without respect for the special nature of public trust lands in the Hawaiian Islands. On the day that the U.S. Supreme Court was scheduled to hear oral arguments in [State of Hawaii, et al v. Office of Hawaiian Affairs, et al](#), Docket No. 07-1372.

The JACL submitted a friend of the court brief because of its substantial and longstanding interest in the case. We supported numerous state redress and reparation programs, including Congress's Joint Resolution Acknowledging the 100th Anniversary of the January 17, 1893 Overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii. Further, the JACL has committed to and adopted Resolutions supporting Native Hawaiian reparations, sovereignty, self determination and federal recognition at the JACL National Conventions in 1984, 1986, 1992, and 2000.

The “ceded” lands hold unique cultural, spiritual, and political significance for the Native Hawaiian people – they are not fungible or replaceable. Those lands, which belonged to the last Hawaiian monarch and the sovereign Hawaiian nation, were taken by the United States pursuant to annexation of Hawaii following what is now admitted to be the United States-aided “illegal overthrow” of the Hawaiian nation in 1893. The ceded lands were transferred to the State upon statehood in 1959, to be held in trust for the betterment of living conditions for the Hawaiian people. The State of Hawai'i's desire to sell off parcels of Hawaiian public trust

lands was met by a challenge by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in State of Hawaii, et al v. Office of Hawaiian Affairs, et al. The case had gone to the U.S. Supreme Court for oral arguments by these parties.

Protest events in San Francisco began with prayer/meditation at 7:00 am PST, simultaneous to the start of the oral arguments in Washington, D.C. Supporters will then gathered downtown at the Civic Center Plaza. Rally co-organizer Jessie Minier, a Silicon Valley attorney, said, "Many of the people gathering on Wednesday are from Hawaii, have old ties to Hawaii, or are people who know and understand the specialness of the Hawaiian Islands. Our message is simply that Hawaiian public trust lands should be protected from sale and that a deeper, more appropriate notion of public trust needs to be brought back into political discussions regarding Hawaiian public lands."

Rally co-organizer, Dr. Lehua Yim (San Francisco State University) added, "We as organizers hope that Wednesday's gatherings lead to more community-based, grassroots events aimed at education, community empowerment, and respectful political discussion of the issues involving Hawaiian public lands."

There will be continuing workshops in the Bay Area for discussion of issues. If you are interested, contact [kuiikalono2009@gmail.com](mailto:kuiikalono2009@gmail.com).

#### PURIKURA FAD

Purikura is part of a fad that started in Japan in 1995 and spread throughout Asia, especially in Taiwan. Purikura is *purinto kurabu*, or print club in Japanese, which allows people to customize the pictures taken in their photo booth. You can change the background so it looks as if you are under the palm trees next to an azure ocean or put your face into a frame that has hearts and flowers or Hello Kitty. The prints are delivered in a 4-by-6 sticky backed postcard, and you can peel off tiny photos of yourself that can be stuck onto letters you write, refrigerators, or even the photo booths themselves.

In an article titled "Purikura fad is clicking with Asian American young people," written by Patricia Yollin in the *San Francisco Chronicle* [January 23, 2009], Kimiko Ryokai, a UC Berkeley assistant professor says, "Purikura is the opposite of serious. It's just for fun." Dr. Ryokai, who grew up in Tokyo and now teaches in the School of Information, adds, "It is always a social activity. Nobody really takes purikura by him- or herself." It allows people to be silly in groups, like karaoke.

There is a purikura shop, PikaPika, below Kinokuniya Bookstores in San Francisco's Japan Town. It's owned by Ryan Kimura, a fifth-generation American who said he's a "50/50 descendent—Japanese on his father's side, Chinese on his mother's—and his parents.

#### GRACIOUS GUESTS AT SAN MATEO JA CL'S INSTALLATION DINNER



*Elaine Skinner and Tomoko Streets joined us for our board's installation and dinner party at April and Bob Smith's home. It is widely known that Elaine makes the best potato salad in the universe.*

UPDATE ON SAN MATEO JA CL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS, turn the page!!

Many of you have contributed to support scholarships for high school seniors through generous donations and helping out or buying hot, fresh food at our Annual Burger Booth. This year's Art in the Park Fundraiser Burger Booth will be Saturday, June 13 and Sunday, June 14 in Burlingame. Remember that on Friday, June 12, we wash, cut, and package the "fixings" for our hamburgers. Kevin Wong will chair this event and we ask that you commit to helping or else to coming out to help eat our delicious Harris Ranch burgers, dressed as you like it, with fixings atop a toasted sesame seed bun.

By the stated deadline, San Mateo JACL has received applications for 2009's scholarships. Applications for this year's scholarships are now closed. Our designated subcommittee will review applications, interview applicants, and announce the recipients of the scholarships in *Kokoro* and through press releases to the Pacific Citizen and other newspapers.

Thank you very much for your support of San Mateo JACL. Thanks to you, we are able to recognize and honor the academics and civics of young people. Stay tuned for an announcement of a special event planned in honor of our scholarship recipients for 2009. It is so important to invest in the young adults who are the future of JACL and of our larger community.



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