

# KOKORO

the heart and soul of our community  
san mateo chapter Japanese American citizens league nov 2008  
[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)

## VOTER EDUCATION AND REGISTRATION PROJECT



*JACL, OCA, and other organizations sponsored a voter education event at the San Mateo Public Library. Jerry Hill is pictured.*

## FILIPINO VETERANS CLOSER TO GETTING BACK PAY

In article authored by William C. Mann, Associated Press, that appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* [September 24, 2008], it was reported that the House of Representatives passed legislation to reward belatedly more than 18,000 Filipinos for their service with the U.S forces during World War II. The amounts fall short of what was promised for their service. The Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2008 passed 282-23 makes a one-time payment of \$15,000 to Filipinos who are United States citizens and \$9,000 to noncitizen Filipino veterans.

The article reports, "After President Franklin D Roosevelt conscripted Filipino men and boys into the U.S. armed forces in the Far East on July 26, 1941, they were promised full benefits as veterans of the U.S Army. After hostilities ceased, however, Congress reversed the promise in the Rescissions Acts of 1946."

**AN INTERNEE'S STORY: CARMEN MOCHIZUKI—from *Campaign for Justice Newsletter*,  
Summer 2008**

Carmen was born in Peru, near the capital of Lima. She was eleven when she and her family were forcibly brought to the United States and sent to the Department of Justice camps in Crystal City, Texas. Carmen recalls the Peruvian police coming into her community and seizing Japanese Peruvian teachers, religious leaders, and business owners. She understood that taking community leaders would make it easier for the officials to frighten the rest of the community members.

At the end of the war in 1945, Carmen's father took the family back to Japan, where he had been born. Like many Issei, he believed that Japan had won the war and realized too late that Japan had in fact been demolished from the war. Carmen's family moved from Miyazaki Prefecture to Okinawa where they resided for several years. At the urging of her brother, Carmen came back to the United States on a student visa and attended adult school.

In 1996, Carmen became the primary plaintiff of the *Mochizuki v. United States* court case. "I will never forget what we accomplished," Carmen recalled her trip to Washington D.C. in 1997. She says her story is just one of many Japanese Latin Americans. "Everyone has a different story." While she considers the *Mochizuki* settlement as an admission of wrongdoing, she feels we must still continue efforts for equitable redress.

Let's not forget theirs is an important issue to us as defenders of social justice and civil rights.

**ED ENDOW, JACL LEADER, PASSES AWAY**

Members and friends within the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) were saddened to learn of the passing of Edwin Endow, JACL leader from Stockton, California, on October 25, 2008.

Edwin served as Stockton JACL Chapter President and Northern California-Western Nevada-Pacific District (NCWNP) Membership Chair. He was elected as National JACL Vice President for Thousand Club, Membership and Services at the National JACL Convention in 2004. He was re-elected to a second two-year term in 2006. He was a recipient of the JACL Sapphire Pin for his years of dedicated service to the JACL. It became necessary early this year for Edwin to resign from the National Board after being diagnosed with cancer.

As Vice President of Membership, Edwin worked hard for the JACL to increase membership and to bring new benefits to members of the JACL. He encouraged members to each "get a member" to help increase the membership numbers in the JACL.

Edwin has long served the JACL as a leader in the Stockton Chapter, the NCWNP District, and the National JACL organization. He has been a strong financial contributor as a Thousand Club Life member and a charter member of the Millennium Club. He has demonstrated a total dedication and commitment to the JACL.

**NAKAYOSHI YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SPONSOR HERITAGE NIGHT WITH GOLDEN  
STATE WARRIORS**

Nakayoshi Young Professionals - an affiliate of the JACL - is selling tickets for Asian American Heritage Night with the Golden State Warriors. If there is a big attendance at this game, we will expand it to host a Japanese American Heritage Night with the Warriors in the future! This is a great opportunity for our community, so please come out and support!

Asian American Heritage Night  
Friday, December 12th, 7:30 pm  
Oracle Arena  
Golden State Warriors vs. Houston Rockets  
\$40

To purchase your tickets either:

- 1.) Fill out the attached form and mail it to the enclosed address
- 2.) Go to <https://oss.ticketmaster.com/html/go.html?l=EN&t=warriors&o=8444506&g=716> and enter the code nakayoshi. Then either create an account or login with your existing Ticketmaster account to purchase tickets.

The ticket price also includes a commemorative T-shirt and an invitation to an exclusive pre-game mixer! A portion of ticket proceeds will also go back to benefit Nakayoshi.

**THE 100/44 IS ALIVE AND WELL, final excerpt**

The war changed the lives of the Hawaii Nisei soldiers who survived it. Many used the GI bill for college and became professional people and political leaders. There's the story of Kauai taxi driver Henry Kono, who was training for war in Mississippi. He used to go into Hattiesburg. That's where he met his future wife, Jean

Francis Fleming. And Sakae Takahashi of a Kauai plantation family, recuperating in New York City, met and married very blond, haole, Danish-to-the-core, would-be-opera-singer Bette Wulf.

There was a sea change in our cultural baseline happening in Hawaii and it all started with “the boys” of the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion and the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team.

The above article, authored by Bob Jones, is excerpted from *MidWeek*, March 28, 2008.

### ENGLISH ONLY? NOT IN 43% OF STATE'S HOMES

In last month's *Kokoro*, we presented the JACL' position about the LPGA's English proficiency policy. The LPGA would require all players to be proficient in English starting in 2009, and those who cannot pass an oral evaluation of English skills would face suspension from the Tour. There are currently 121 international players from 26 countries on the LPGA Tour. In an article by the above name, authored by Tyche Hendrichs, *San Francisco Chronicle* [September 23, 2005], it is reported that 43 percent of Californians speak a language other than English at home.

Hendrichs's article includes the comment of Victor Davis Hanson, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, who feels, “It's very disturbing when 1 in 5 people is not communicating in the common language. Culturally, it creates a sort of tribalism. This country doesn't have a predominant race or religion; it just has values. That's a very thin bond. We have shared values and a shared Constitution; we also have to have a shared culture and language.”

A view counter to Hendrichs's position about enclaves of non-English language speakers is expressed by Jin Sook Lee, assistant professor of education at UC Santa Barbara. Lee believes that immigrants need more opportunities to learn English. She does not feel that the many languages spoken in our state is “something to fear:” “The fact that people speak a different language in their homes is one of the most untapped resources in our country. With globalization in economics and politics, we need language competence. These speakers have a great potential to fill out this language gap in our society.” As you remember, many elderly Japanese who came to the United States and the Territory of Hawai'i seeking to build a better life were unable to master English as a foreign language. When you are working so many hours to establish yourself in a new country, perhaps you find it challenging to also attend night school or adult school so you can learn survival English. That is why many immigrants rely on their children, who pick up a new language with greater facility than do their older parents, to serve as translators to them. Very often, it is less a matter that an immigrant does not wish to learn the new language of his or her country, but that it is extremely difficult to do—both in terms of mastery of the language, which takes about seven years of study, and in more practical terms of logistics—that is, how do you find enough hours in the day to learn, practice, and study that language?

Data from the 2007 American Community Survey shows immigrants entering the US has slowed down as the economy faltered. California has the largest proportion of immigrant residents in the country, at 27%. We hope that we regard this as an asset to us, as opposed to a liability.

### STILL HOPE IN '08 FOR FILIPINO VETERANS

In an article by this title by Dennis Camire [*Star Bulletin*, October 22, 2008], Sen. Daniel K. Akaka, D-Hawai'i, chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, said if Congress meets in a lame-duck session after the November 4<sup>th</sup> elections, he would try to negotiate a bill with opponents that would give Filipino veterans the equity and recognition they seek. This session is being considered to deal with an emergency economic stimulus bill.

Art Caleda, 85, a former intelligence officer with the guerrillas fighting against the Japanese in the Philippines, said the \$300-a-month pensions are secondary to the recognition of military service: “It's very, very important. We cannot carry the pension when we pass away, but the honor of our full recognition would be carried through the generations. Even our grandchildren will know by that recognition that we fought for them and remember that we were war heroes.”

Sen. Richard Burr of North Carolina, top Republican on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, has said that the one-time payment proposed in a bill passed by the house—about \$15,000 for Filipino veterans who are U.S. citizens and \$9,000 for those who are not—is the wrong priority when the nation is fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. But Burr told several Filipino veterans at Davidson College in North Carolina that he would be willing to talk with Akaka about a more limited pension in the next Congress, which meets in January. Akaka responded, “The veterans waiting for passage of the equity provisions in (this bill) are not someone else's veterans—they are our veterans. I am willing to negotiate the extent of those benefits with you if you are prepared to recognize them as U.S. veterans.”

Some Filipino veterans would prefer a \$900 a month pension, like other veterans. They also said that the \$15,000 could only go to living veterans, not spouses or other survivors, and that an estimated 18,000 veterans could not file further claims with the U.S. for their service.

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**DENSHO POLL OF WHO ARE OUR FAVORITE NIKKEI AUTHORS**

The results for Densho's October poll of favorite fiction and memoirs are as follows: First - *Farewell to Manzanar*, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston; Second - *Looking Like the Enemy*, Mary Matsuda Gruenewald; Third - *When the Emperor Was Divine*, Julie Otsuka.

Who are your favorite Nikkei authors?

**A THOUGHT EXPRESSED BY GEORGE TAKEI, WHO PLAYED HELMSMAN SULU ON  
"STAR TREK"**

*"I went to school in a black tar-paper barrack [as a child in internment camps] and began the day seeing the barbed-wire fence, and thank god those barbed-wire fences are now long gone for Japanese Americans. But I still see an invisible, legalistic barbed-wire that keeps me, my partner of 19 years, Brad Altman, and another group of Americans separated from a normal life."*

-- George Takei, during a 2006 interview on National Public Radio, referring to the No on 8 campaign



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