

# KOKORO

the heart and soul of our community  
san mateo chapter Japanese American citizens league mar 2010  
[www.sanmateojacl.org](http://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 first Friday (one month prior to publication) to [katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com](mailto:katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com)

## SAN MATEO JACL 2009 REPORT

Under the leadership of President Kate Motoyama, our San Mateo Chapter JACL Board participated in several community activities. We added some new board members and accomplished many positive goals to further our chapter's mission in 2009:

- Published and mailed our monthly newsletter *Kokoro*.
- Raised funds with Art in the Park Burger Booth and *Pacific Citizen* Holiday Ads
- Advertised and provided refreshments for the San Mateo Library's promotional event for John Cristgau's book *Kokomo Joe*.
- Donated funds to support the Japanese American Community Center.
- Collaborated with College of San Mateo to host a reception honoring Nikkei students receiving honorary degrees from the college. These students were unable to complete their education due to Executive Order 9066 in 1942.
- Supported May 2009 Immigrants Day Festival at San Mateo History Museum.
- Awarded scholarships to two local Japanese American high school seniors.
- Provided Day of Remembrance educational materials to all San Mateo County schools.
- Assisted with planning and implementation of May 2009 Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration at Central Park in San Mateo.
- Assisted Topaz Museum Board in 2010 to arrange a presentation to our community featuring the new Topaz Museum exhibit and design.
- Will participate in the July 2010 JACL Biennial Convention in Chicago

We look forward to a busy and productive 2010 with new president, Steve Okamoto.

## TOPAZ MUSEUM, A GUEST ARTICLE BY JANE BECKWITH, TOPAZ MUSEUM BOARD

We have been talking, thinking and yes, dreaming of a Topaz Museum to display and preserve artifacts and tell the full history of Topaz. It is now time to build a facility that

will tell the history and educate people about Topaz internment. Currently we are renting a small space from a local museum in Delta. We need our own space to ensure that Topaz will not be forgotten.

To that end, the Topaz Museum has combined efforts with the City of Delta, the Great Basin Museum and a chapter of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers to build a beautiful complex on Delta, Utah's Main Street. We have hired an architect, Shah Kawasaki Architects, and an exhibit planner, West Office Exhibition Design, to create initial designs for the fundraising phase of the project.

Those designs will be on display and fundraising plans will be discussed at a variety of meetings in the San Francisco Bay Area during January and February. There are seven meetings currently scheduled throughout the area. You, your family and friends are invited to join us at any of the meetings. This is your opportunity to gain insight and provide input for your Topaz Museum project. You can be a part of making this happen in the very near future! **For additional information please call Jane Beckwith at (435) 864-2098 or e-mail [topazmuseum@frontiernet.net](mailto:topazmuseum@frontiernet.net)**

Note that the Topaz Museum Board set up meetings for the month of February in the Bay Area: San Francisco, San Jose, San Lorenzo, Alameda, Berkeley, El Cerrito, and Redwood City.

FACTS ON S.1055, SENATE BILL TO HONOR THE 100 <sup>th</sup> BATTALION and 442 <sup>nd</sup> RCT
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- This bill will grant a congressional gold medal, collectively, to the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion and 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team who served the United States military during WWII. S.1055 has 37 co-sponsors on a bi-partisan basis including California Senator Barbara Boxer (the bill's creator) and Hawaii Senator Daniel Inouye who served in the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team. The House version passed with no objections
- This bill is URGENT and should pass while as many World War II Veterans are still living; we estimate that there are about 4,900 Japanese American WWII veterans living today and by 2014, this number will drop to 2000
- This bill NEEDS to pass by September 2010 when the second session of the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress ends

**Background on the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion and 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team**

- After the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese Navy on December 7, 1941, the United States Army discharged all Japanese-Americans in the reserve and changed their draft status to enemy alien. Then on February 19, 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 forcibly removing 120,000 Japanese Americans to concentration camps

- On June 5, 1942, 1,432 predominantly Nisei (second generation Americans of Japanese ancestry) members of the Hawaii Provisional Infantry Battalion were given the opportunity to serve in a new US military unit called the 100th Infantry Battalion
- The excellent training record of the 100th Infantry Battalion and petitions from prominent civilian and military personnel helped convince President Roosevelt and the War Department to re-open military service and in February 1943, 3,800 Nisei soldiers joined this new unit called the 442nd Regimental Combat Team
- The 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion bravely fought in Italy, southern France, and Germany and became the most decorated unit in the United States military for its size and service
- The 100th Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, received 7 Presidential Unit Citations, 21 Medals of Honor, 29 Distinguished Service Crosses, 560 Silver Stars, 4,000 Bronze Stars, 22 Legion of Merit Medals, 15 Soldier's Medals, and over 4,000 Purple Hearts, among numerous additional distinctions.



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## **Come to the Kimochi Town Hall**

**On Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, the San Mateo Chapter of the JACL is hosting an event for the community to come to hear and ask questions about Kimochi's plans to offer some of their programs to the residents of the Peninsula.**

**Anna Sawamura, Program Director for Kimochi, will discuss Kimochi's plans and ask the attendees which of those programs and services would be most utilized and needed here on the Peninsula.**

**Kimochi, founded in 1971, is a non-profit organization dedicated to the well being of Seniors in the San Francisco Bay Area. Continuing the Japanese tradition of care and support for Seniors, today Kimochi is focusing and developing services to meet the emerging needs of Sansei Baby Boomers and their families.**

**The Town Hall event will be at 1:00 PM at the Social Hall of the San Mateo Buddhist Temple. Light refreshments will be served.**

**For more information and to reserve your space please call Ms. Sawamura at 415-931-2294 or email her at [asawamura@kimochi-inc.org](mailto:asawamura@kimochi-inc.org).**