

# KOKORO

THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR COMMUNITY  
SAN MATEO CHAPTER JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE OCT 2004  
[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 by the fourth Wednesday of each month in electronic format [Microsoft WORD] to [katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com](mailto:katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com). Thank you!

## NEWSLETTER NEWS

If you want to view *Kokoro* electronically, email [katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com](mailto:katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com) to stop receiving paper copies and [san-mateo-jacl-announce-subscribe@yahoogleroups.com](mailto:san-mateo-jacl-announce-subscribe@yahoogleroups.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.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE BIENNIEL JACL CONVENTION, HONOLULU, HI— OUR YOUTH BOARD MEMBER REFLECTS

As I entered the ballroom at the Waikiki Marriott, I took a moment to observe all the people from different cities, counties, and states representing the JACL. I looked at a few of the name-tags of the representatives and saw common Japanese names such as Suzuki, Tanaka, and Kobayashi. As everyone settled into their seats to discuss future JACL issues, the speaker at the podium addressed the crowd in English. Wait a minute; why is this such a surprise to me? Why do I feel stunned to see a person with a Japanese last name speaking English as his first language? Is there anything that can justify why I'm reacting this way? Well, maybe my background can give me some answers.

I was born in Japan and raised by a Japanese mother. The first people welcoming me to this world were my Japanese family. I spent the first four years of my life learning "the Japanese way of living." My American father thought it best for the family to move to America, so when I was five, my family relocated to the Bay Area and I was introduced to an entirely new way of life. I quickly became used to the idea of people from different backgrounds speaking English. So why was I shocked in the ballroom?

Here's what I figured out. I am fortunate enough to still be in touch with my Japanese family, visiting them once a year thanks to my mother's job at United Airlines. The Japanese language is all my mother's side of the family knows. And, as the speaker was talking to the crowd in English, I realized that I don't have a relationship with Japanese Americans--only with Japanese people.

Being introduced to the JACL has helped me understand the definition of being Japanese American—which is who I am. Because of the way I was raised, I expected the Japanese language to be a part of all people from Japanese descent. The JACL has educated me about the immigration of Japanese people to Hawaii and the continental U.S; therefore, I can understand that Japanese families were raised in America

for many generations. I am also learning that Japanese Americans are still dealing with ongoing racial issues from 50-100 years ago.

Seeing the passion and enthusiasm of the JACL has taught me that human rights is worth fighting for. Because of the JACL, I have more knowledge about my own race, which allows me to be open-minded towards the background of others. I am very thankful that I was able to learn about others in Hawaii. I will continue to be apart of the JACL so I can strive to be a better person. *-Julian Antram*

2004 SAN MATEO JACL'S SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT
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The 2004 Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held on Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, at Popular Creek Golf Course for players of all levels. No established handicap is necessary and there will be tee prizes for all entrants and awards for flight winners, closest-to-pin, and longest drive. First group tees off at 10:00 a.m. Entry fee is \$68 without cart; \$80 with cart. Checks may be made out to "San Mateo JACL." Donations are being accepted as well.

San Mateo JACL's Scholarship Program has recognized and provided scholarships to scores of young high school and college students through our chapter's long history. Scholarships are one of our chapter's commitments and we are pleased to fundraise through the golf tournament to support students in our community.

We have already done a separate mailing to our membership to promote this tournament, which raises funds for a Scholarship Program that benefits youth. If you have questions, contact Vince Asai at 650/349-3590.

UNITED AS ONE -THREE YEARS LATER: A CANDLELIGHT WALK FOR PEACE
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Even though the "A Candlelight Walk for Peace" committee planned for 200 participants, over 350 people gathered at the San Jose Buddhist Church to listen to clergy and speakers from the Japanese American community, Muslim community, and political leaders. The speakers focused the group on the losses and meaning of September 11, 2001 in preparation for a candlelight walk to commemorate the date. Following the speeches, Imam Anwar Tahir of the South Bay Islamic Association (SBIA) led Muslim participants in evening prayer while non-Muslims sat quietly, using the time for personal reflection and prayers. Then, several volunteers from the sponsoring organizations lit candles and passed them to the participants, who formed small groups and began solemnly walking towards the South Bay Islamic Association building. As the walkers passed by apartments and houses, neighbors gathered to watch and express their solidarity with calls of "peace" and "we're with you." Reporters and camera crews from Channels 4,5, and 7 wove in and out of the crowd, taping the event and interviewing organizers and walkers.

The weather was warm, the candles glowed softly in an atmosphere of unity, and a commitment was made to honor all who suffered and died. The peace walk presented an opportunity not only to remember our fallen brothers and sisters, but to allow the deep feelings engendered by the events of 9/11 to provide inspiration for personal outreach and activism. When the peace walkers arrived at the South Bay Islamic Association, they congregated to listen to an electrifying speech by Iman Zaid Shakir. The Imam, a former U.S. Marine, reminded all that 9/11 has brought us to a painful epoch in the history of our country and our world. He noted that we are all diminished by the deaths of children, parents, soldiers, civilians--all victims of war, terrorism and hate. He exhorted us to keep working for tolerance and peaceful solutions.

Refreshments were served and participants stayed to visit and enjoy samosa, pakora, sembei, cookies, fruit and vegetables. Everyone echoed the thought that "A Candlelight Walk for Peace" was a great success and should become a yearly event. Event Organizers: South Bay Islamic Association (SBIA), Nihonmachi Outreach Committee(NOC), Council on American-Islamic Relations(CAIR), San Jose Japanese American Citizens League(JACL),Muslim Community Association(MCA), and the San Jose Peace Center.—*Mary Jo Kubota-Arcarese*



#### AN UPDATE ON A COMMUNITY RESOURCE: AACP

AACP, Inc. the award-winning Asian American book service has returned to Downtown San Mateo. Their new address is 529 East Third Avenue, San Mateo, just five blocks west of 101 on the Third Avenue exit of San Mateo. The new phone number is 650/375-8286.

Beginning in October AACP will sponsor author signings, demonstrations, and poetry readings, as well as other educational activities. For example, on October 9<sup>th</sup>, Margo King-Lenson presented *Pacific Voices Talk Stories: Conversations of American Experience*. And mark your calendars for Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1 p.m., for Hazuki Kataoka, who will demonstrate her *kamishibai* or story card theater for children of all ages.

For more information, visit [www.asianamericanbooks.com](http://www.asianamericanbooks.com).

#### A STATEMENT BY FRED KOREMATSU, RECIPIENT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM, CRITIQUES RACIAL PROFILING

Fred Korematsu was awarded the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, in 1998. Mr. Korematsu lives in San Leandro.

*In 1942, I was arrested and convicted for being a Japanese American trying to live here in the Bay Area. The day after my arrest a newspaper headline declared, "Jap Spy Arrested in San Leandro."*

*Of course, I was no spy. The government never charged me with being a spy. I was a U.S. citizen born and raised in Oakland. I even tried to enlist in the Coast Guard (they didn't take me because of my race). But my citizenship and my loyalty did not matter to the federal government. On Feb. 19, 1942, anyone of Japanese heritage was ordered excluded from the West Coast. I was charged and convicted of being a Japanese American living in an area in which all people of my ancestry had been ordered to be interned.*

*I fought my conviction at that time. My case went to the U.S. Supreme Court, but in 1944 my efforts to seek protection under the Constitution were rejected.*

*After I was released in 1945, my criminal record continued to affect my life. It was hard to find work. I was considered to be a criminal. It took almost 40 years and the efforts of many people to reopen my case. In 1983, a federal court judge found that the government had hidden evidence and lied to the Supreme Court during my appeal. The judge found that Japanese Americans were not the threat that the government publicly claimed. My criminal record was removed.*

*As my case was being reconsidered by the courts, again as a result of the efforts of many people across the country, Congress created a commission to study the exclusion and incarceration of Japanese Americans. The commission found that no Japanese American had been involved in espionage or sabotage and that no military necessity existed to imprison us. Based on the commission's findings and of military historians who reconsidered the original records from the war, Congress passed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, declaring that the internment of Japanese Americans was unjustified. Finally, it seemed that the burden of being accused of being an "enemy race" had been lifted from our shoulders.*

*But now the old accusations are back. Fox News media personality Michelle Malkin claims that some Japanese Americans were spies during World War II. Based upon her suspicions, Malkin claims the internment of all Japanese Americans was not such a bad idea after all. She goes on to claim that racial profiling of Arab Americans today is justified by the need to fight terrorism. According to Malkin, it is OK to take away an entire ethnic group's civil rights because some individuals are suspect. Malkin argues for reviving the old notion of guilt by association.*

*It is painful to see reopened for serious debate the question of whether the government was justified in imprisoning Japanese Americans during World War II. It was my hope that my case and the cases of other Japanese American internees would be remembered for the dangers of racial and ethnic scapegoating.*

*Fears and prejudices directed against minority communities are too easy to evoke and exaggerate, often to serve the political agendas of those who promote those fears. I know what it is like to be at the other end of such scapegoating and how difficult it is to clear one's name after unjustified suspicions are endorsed as fact by the government. If someone is a spy or terrorist they should be prosecuted for their actions. But no one should ever be locked away simply because they share the same race, ethnicity, or religion as a spy or terrorist. If that principle was not learned from the internment of Japanese Americans, then these are very dangerous times for*

*our democracy.*

COMMUNITY CENTER NEWS
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**Sunday Matinee Movie on October 24, 2004**

At **JA Community Center**, 415 S. Claremont St., San Mateo.

Ph. 343-2793

1:30 PM "THE LAST SAMURAI"

Tom Cruise plays Civil War hero Capt. Nathan Algren, who comes to Japan to fight the Samurai, and ends up pledging himself to their cause. Ken Watanabe (Academy Award nominee) plays Katsumoto, a Samurai leader facing a vanishing way of life, whose destiny becomes intertwined with that of the American Captain.

Directed by Edward Zwick. Color, 154 minutes.

2004 POTLUCK & RAFFLE. A big thank you to the supporters of one of our annual funding events held on the 14th of August. The winners were as follows:

First Prize: Kaz Oshima, San Mateo

Second Prize: Tamaki Suzuki, Millbrae

Third Prize: Lucy Shin, San Mateo

Also, special thanks to Osho Restaurant of Millbrae for providing two gift certificates which were given as the 4th and 5th prizes.

The San Mateo Japanese American Community Center will be holding its Holiday Boutique on Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup> from 10 AM to 4 PM, at the San Mateo Gardeners Hall, 503 Fifth Avenue at S. Claremont. Please come out and support your organization.

Draft JACL Minutes 9/16/04
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Present: Kitty Hongo, Steve Katayama, Mary Jo Kubota-Arcarese, Kate Motoyama, Brent Nakagiri, Heidi Tanakatsubo

Guest: Kristina Chu

In the absence of the quorum, no business could be conducted; however the following items were discussed.

We welcomed Kristina from Assemblymember Leland Yee's office.

It was announced that the Health Fair would be held at the San Mateo Senior Center on 10/9, followed by the JA Community Center Clean Up on 10/16.

The chapter sent JACL representatives Yasuko Ito and Kimie Watanabe to the OCA banquet; honored at that event was Ros Koo.

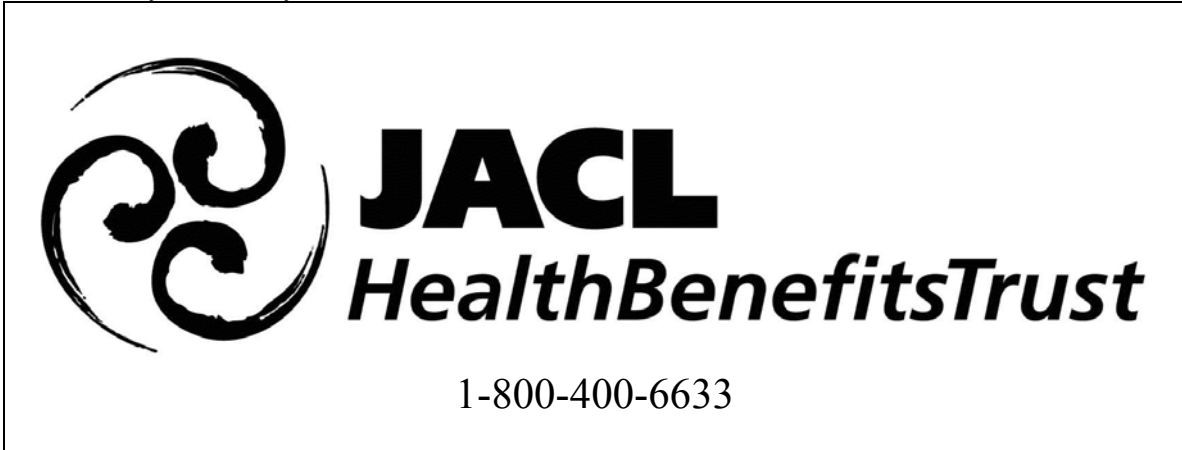
On that same evening, Mary Jo Kubota-Arcarese and Kate Motoyama attended the Candlelight Walk for Peace, memorializing the third anniversary of 9.11. The event was covered by Channel 4 News and endorsed by a number of organizations, including San Jose JACL, Nihonmachi Legal Outreach, and Council on American-Islamic Relations.

The chapter's participation in raising funds for the San Mateo County Museum's Immigrant Gallery was discussed. This is an important permanent exhibit that will honor the contributions of various immigrant groups to San Mateo county.

Board members will revise the parameters of our local Scholarship Program. Notices to eligible high school students should go out in November.

The next meeting is rescheduled to Wednesday October 20<sup>th</sup>. The 2005 budget will be presented at that time and nominees for JACL offices discussed.

Submitted by Kate Motoyama



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If you support our work, join the San Mateo chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League by filling out the application below. You may also visit our website [www.sanmateojacl.org](http://www.sanmateojacl.org) and print out membership forms. The website has more information on pertinent and timely topics of interest.

First name ----- Last name -----

Complete address -----

Home phone number ----- Work phone number -----

Email address -----

Are you willing to read our newsletter electronically? Y

Age ----- Occupation -----

Are you a registered voter? Y/N Are you a new member? Y/N

What are your interests? -----

What attracts you to JACL? -----

How can JACL better serve you? -----

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Circle the category of membership you are interested in:

**Individual - \$67** For members of the national and San Mateo organization

**Couple/Family - \$120** For a person, spouse and children less than 25 years

**Youth/Student - \$21** For a person 25 years or younger or currently enrolled in a college, trade school, or university

**Thousand Club - \$100** For a person who makes an annual contribution to the chapter and national programs of the organization

**Thousand Club Life - \$1000** A lump sum to establish lifetime membership

**Associate - \$45** Associate members affiliate with the local chapter only

To complete the application process, please mail the completed application, along with a check made out to "JACL" to:

Membership, JACL, 1765 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115

You matter to us! If there are issues or concerns with our chapter, or things you wish to bring to the attention of the board, please speak with Kate. Thank you for your input.

Please consider joining our board! We need your ideas and energy.

*You make a living by what you get.  
You make a life by what you give.  
--Winston Churchill*

**Japanese American Citizens League**  
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