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President Bush Celebrates Asian Pacific Heritage Month; Features Nisei Veterans

President George W. Bush told 300 Asian Pacific Americans who packed the East Room of the White House on May 1 for the Asia Pacific Heritage Month Program, "We thank you for helping make America a better place...for loving our country the way you do. Thank you for being great contributors to the life of our fellow citizens."

Following his presentation of a broad view

of US relations with Asian Pacific nations, extolling them for the cordial and productive relations America enjoys, the President singled out Asian Pacific Americans who served in the Armed Forces. Six JAVA World War II veterans were selected by the White House to represent the 360,000 Asian Pacific American veterans and 29,000 active duty personnel for special recognition



President Bush singled out Ben Kuroki for his perseverance and patriotism. Kuroki snapped to a salute and the Commander in Chief returned the salute. White House photo.

Seated at the front row were Joe Ichiuji (442nd Regimental Combat Team), Yeichi Kelly Kuwayama (442nd Regimental Combat Team), Grant Ichikawa (Military Intelligence Service), Grant Hirabayashi (Military Intelligence Service -Merrill's Marauders), Ben Kuroki (US Army Air Corps gunner), and Terry Shima (442nd Regimental Combat Team). The President addressed them saying, "With us today are

[see White House, page 3]

Sgt Rock: The Lost Battalion

Comic book writer and artist Billy Tucci is producing a comic book series on the Rescue of the Lost Battalion. Complete story on page 9.



JAVA Memorial Day Activities

JAVA participated in two major events in Washington, DC, during the 2008 Memorial Day weekend. The May 25th JACL-JAVA joint program at the Pavilion of the Arlington National Cemetery, located on a tranquil hill along the Potomac River, drew approximately 200 members and friends. This was JAVA's second year of participation and JACL's 60th consecutive year of honoring the Japanese Americans, who are interred there. Turner Kobayashi, son of Key Kobayashi,

[see Memorial Day, page 7]

White House

[continued from page 1]

veterans from the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. This was a segregated Army unit composed mostly of volunteers recruited from internment camps in the United States. Isn't that interesting? People whose love of the country was such that they were able to overcome the bitterness of being interned by a country they called home, and they were willing to put on the uniform; and not only put on the uniform – they served America with distinction in eight battle campaigns in Europe. In 1945, members of the 442nd helped liberate the concentration camp at Dachau. They went from an internment camp to wear the uniform of the United States Army, to liberate camps in Europe.

“Yet the 442nd is best known for their mission to rescue the trapped soldiers of the Texas National Guard's 'Lost Battalion.' A lot of Texans are thanking you guys for that, by the way. In the mountains of Eastern France, the 442nd went up against the heavily entrenched Germans and suffered devastating casualties. But their courage saved more than 200 of their brothers. Their valor helped earn them several



President Bush thanks JAVA WW II veterans. Photo by Gerald Yamada.

Presidential Unit Citations, and helped make their unit one of the most highly decorated in U.S. military history. Their sacrifice earns the gratitude of the nation they defended -- an attitude we express

today to the men of the 442nd. Thank you for coming.” As the audience applauded, the Nisei veterans rose spontaneously and saluted their Commander-in-Chief, who returned the salute. This event was reminiscent of President Harry S. Truman's review of the 442nd RCT at the Ellipse, the outer south lawn of the White House, following its march down Constitution Avenue on July 15, 1946, when he praised the Nisei for fighting the enemy abroad and prejudice at home.”

To former Sergeant Ben Kuroki, who flew 58 air combat missions in Europe and Japan, the President said, “I do want to point out one soul who's joined us – and Ben is not going to be happy about it, Ben Kuroki. He probably doesn't want to be called out but I'm going to do it anyway, Ben. I've got the podium and you don't. Two days after Pearl Harbor, Ben volunteered to join the Army, where there is no doubt he met prejudice at nearly every turn. Still, he became one of the few "Nisei" admitted to the Army Air Corps. He flew 58 missions over Europe and Japan, and he earned



JAVA members in private meeting with President Bush in the Blue Room of the White House. L-R: Terry Shima, Grant Hirabayashi, Ben Kuroki, President Bush, Grant Ichikawa, Joe Ichijui, Kelly Kuwayama. White House photo.

three Distinguished Flying Crosses. When he came back home, he turned to another mission: working to overcome the intolerance he had experienced during his early days in the Army. Ben edited newspapers. He spoke to audiences around the country. He

became a strong advocate of racial equality. He knew something – and he knew the subject well, unfortunately. Sixty years after the Japanese surrender, Ben received the U.S. Army Distinguished Service Medal. And at the ceremony, here's what he said: “I had to fight like hell to fight for my country – and now I feel completely vindicated.”

“We are glad you feel vindicated, but I am proud to tell you America is a better place because of you, Ben. Thank you for coming.” Kuroki stood erect and smartly saluted his commander-in-chief; the President returned his salute.

Fourteen other JAVA members were invited to witness this extraordinary program in which Asian Pacific Americans were recognized by the highest authority of this nation. They also participated in an elegant reception that followed in the State Dining Room. Asian American officials invited to the White House event were former Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta, Secretary of Labor Elaine Chow, and Congressman David Wu of Oregon. JAVA President Robert Nakamoto, Japanese America Citizens League (JACL) National Director Floyd Mori, as well as National Japanese American Memorial Foundation President and Executive Director Gerald Yamada also participated in this White House event.

While still reeling from the unprecedented White House attention, Kuroki was honored that evening to a packed audience at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, which featured a documentary of his life, *The Most Honorable Son*, at the Lockheed Martin IMAX Theater. The Museum Director, General John R. Dailey, US Marine Corps (retired), cited Kuroki's courage and perseverance to remain in the Corps which was rife with discrimination and prejudice against Japanese Americans. In the Question and Answer period Kuroki, the only Japanese American who flew in air combat missions in the Asia Pacific Theater, was asked how he felt about dropping bombs on the people of his ancestry. He replied: “I felt terrible for the people, especially women and children, the same way the German American airmen felt about dropping bombs in Germany and the Italian Americans in Italy. But we were in a war against fierce Axis powers, which were determined to abolish our democratic system.”

NH Diversity Group Presents MLK Award

Senator Daniel K. Inouye and JAVA were recipients of the prestigious Martin Luther King Keeping the Dream Alive Award at a dignified ceremony on Capitol Hill on June 24. The awards were presented by the New Hampshire Cultural Diversity Awareness Council (NHC DAC) of Manchester, NH. The ceremony, held in the packed room of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, was attended by two Medal of Honor recipients, members of Congress, officials of the executive branch, diplomatic corps, military officers, college interns, and representatives of veterans organizations. 35 JAVA members participated.

In presenting the award to Sen. Inouye, Wayne Jennings, Founder and Chairman of the NHC DAC, said the Martin Luther King Keeping the Dream Award is presented to Inouye for exemplifying Dr. King's dreams and goals for diversity and equality of all races. The Hawaii Senator, said he is "deeply grateful and overwhelmed by this award," that cultural diversity is found in every day life in Hawaii, that he is proud he had the opportunity to wear the uniform and to serve his country in combat. Col H.C. "Barney" Barnum, Jr., USMC, (Ret.), a Medal of Honor recipient, described in detail Inouye's heroism for which he was awarded the Medal of Honor. Barnum praised Inouye as a champion and inspiration for soldiers, including the wounded in action.

Fmr. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta was re-



L-R: Hon. Norman Mineta, Senator Daniel Inouye, Wayne Jennings, and Robert Nakamoto. Photo by Michael Yaguchi.

sacrifice.

Japanese Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki remarked that the Nisei fought patriotically for the United States during WW II and have since served as a bridge to build goodwill between the governments and peoples of the two nations.

Two New Hampshire senators also made remarks. Senator Judd A. Gregg said New Hampshire is proud to be honoring Senator Inouye, a great hero of the battlefield and the Senate. Senator John E. Sununu, the youngest member of the US Senate, observed that Inouye's views are invariably sought when the Senate reaches an impasse, because Inouye studies the problem and comes up with a bipartisan solution that would say "Let's get it done."

The NHC DAC was formed in 2000 and has since expanded its charter state-wide to cover all ethnic groups, to embrace diversity issues more intensively and, importantly, to promote the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King.

[full press release at www.javadc.org]

Speakers Bureau in Demand

JAVA speakers have discussed the Japanese American experience to 24 groups, including schools, government entities, churches, and civic organizations. Most of the speaking engagements have been in the DC-Baltimore area.

Speakers from the DC area have traveled outside if a JAVA member in that locality is not available and the sponsoring organization underwrites the travel and lodging expenses. Referrals have been obtained from the Go For Broke National Education Center, for which JAVA is grateful.

April 9: JAVA Executive Council members were invited by the Philippine Embassy to participate in the Bataan Day flag raising ceremony at the Embassy front courtyard. JAVA President Bob Nakamoto spoke on the camaraderie enjoyed by Japanese American and Filipino American veterans.



Above: Bob Nakamoto at the Bataan Day anniversary at the Philippine Embassy on April 9. Photo credit: Eric Lachica

April 11: Nakamoto and JAVA Executive Director Terry Shima spoke at the Vietnam Veterans of America meeting in Silver Spring, MD. Nakamoto told the national gathering about JAVA, and Shima described Japanese American (JA) experience during WW II.

April 13: Shima spoke at the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church. He told the group of about 40, who meet prior to the service, about the JA WW II experience.

April 17: JAVA-National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) team spoke at Bryant High School in Alexandria, VA. Mary Murakami spoke on evacuation and internment, Warren Tsuneishi on Military Intelligence Service (MIS), Kelly Kuwayama on the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT), and Gerald Yamada

[see Speakers on page 5]

Speakers (from page 4)

on the significance of the WW II generation's experience and the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism.

April 18: Murakami and Shima spent nearly all day at Brunswick Middle School, Frederick County, MD and spoke to five classes, separately.



April 21: Virgil Westdale spoke to 6th graders at Ridge Park Charter Academy, in Grand Rapids, MI. On April 25, he spoke to 8th graders at Jefferson Middle School, Midland, MI (see picture). On both occasions he appeared in his 442nd uniform. He discussed how he was removed from the US Army Air Corps flight school followed by his service in the 442nd RCT. Westdale re-

sides in Grand Rapids, MI. At 90, Virgil keeps going by working as a full-time TSA inspector at Grand Rapids Airport, doing ballroom and tap dancing, publishing his memoirs, and speaking to future leaders of America.

April 21: Paul Tani and Chosei Kuge served as interviewees at the oral history interview project at Rocky Run Middle School at Chantilly, VA. 84 other veterans were also interviewed. While Tani and Kuge were also veterans, they were interviewed mainly for their experience in the internment camps. JAVA has participated in this program for the past 4 of the 7 years it has run. Chosei and Tani appeared in the NBC4 15 minute broadcast. (See article on page 6)

May 7: Joe Ichiuji was a member of the panel at a program sponsored by the Federal Interagency Holocaust Memorial Remembrance Program held at the Lincoln Theater in Washington, DC. Darek McGinty, Channel 9 (CBS) newscaster was the moderator. Joe was also featured in the May issue of the Washingtonian Magazine.

May 8: Murakami spoke at the Geneva Presbyterian Women's Annual Spring Luncheon on the Japanese American during WWII; many at the luncheon had not heard about the internment.

May 14: Kintaro Hamashige, JAVA member who resides in Brooklyn, NY, spoke to 200 employees at the FBI lower Manhattan headquarters about his experiences in the MIS.

May 15: Wade Ishimoto was the Guest Speaker at the Asian Pacific Heritage Month celebration at the headquarters of the United States Forces Command, Fort McPherson,

GA. He spoke to over 150 attendees on diversity, the extended family, mentorship and championing of others within a context of "Intoku" or doing good in secret, and then led the audience in singing *God Bless America*.

May 16: A few days before, 8th grader Arjun Rao of Ridgely Middle School in Lutherville, MD visited Dr. Ray and Mary Murakami at their home for extensive discussions concerning relocation and internment. The Murakamis visited the school, where Rao presented his project entitled "How was the Life of Japanese Americans in internment camps during WWII impacted socially, politically and economically?" "This type of response from students make our efforts worthwhile," said Mary, who has emailed internment information to other students.

May 19: For the third year in a row, JAVA participated in the Army Materiel Command Asian Pacific Heritage Observance held at Fort Belvoir, VA. Grant Ichikawa, Warren Tsuneishi, Paul Tani, Norman Ikari and Martin Herbert were recognized by many standing ovations during the observance ceremony. MG Jim Pillsbury, USA, spoke glowingly of the Nisei who served in the 100th and 442nd RCT and the MIS. Numerous JAVA memorabilia was on display for participants to view and discuss with our Veterans.

[Editor's Note: In order to maintain historical and editorial accuracy in its articles about battles and campaigns, The Advocate uses the term "100th Battalion" to designate a time before the battalion joined the 442nd RCT or when it operated separately from the 442nd RCT. The term "100th/442nd" is used in reference to the 100th after it became a unit of the 442nd, while the term "442nd RCT" refers to all three infantry battalions and combat units.]

May 19. Ichiuji, Grant Hirabayashi and Shima spoke at the Defense Intelligence Agency headquarters at Bolling Air Field, hosted by BG Fred Wong, USA (Ret). Ichiuji related his experience with the 442nd RCT, Hirabayashi discussed the MIS, and Shima discussed effects of the WW II experience.

May 20: Ichikawa and Shima spoke at the National Reconnaissance Office in Chantilly, VA, which specializes in the collection of intelligence through the use of satellites and other overhead photography.

May 27: Hirabayashi and Ichikawa were keynote speakers at the celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month at the US Army Legal Services Agency (USALSA) in Arlington, VA. USALSA Commander BG Clyde J. Tate II and The Judge Advocate General of the Army MG Scott C Black participated in the discussions. Hirabayashi discussed his experience operating behind enemy lines in Burma, and Ichikawa related his experience in the Philippine liberation. On May 16, the 28-minute Veterans Affairs-produced DVD, *Face Behind the File: Japanese Americans*, was shown to USALSA; Shima discussed the DVD and responded to questions.

May 27: Mary Murakami and Shima spoke at the US Army Family and Recreation Command in Alexandria, VA.

[see Speakers on page 6]

Ambassador Kato Receives JAVA Award

On May 15, 2008, His Excellency Ryozo Kato, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the USA, received the prestigious Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) *Courage, Honor, Patriotism Award* in a dignified ceremony at the "Old Residence" of the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C.

JAVA President Robert Nakamoto recognized the Ambassador and Mrs. Kato's roles for building a strong Japan-US alliance, creating the Japan America Leadership Delegation program designed to invite young Japanese Americans to Japan so they can communicate their experience to the American people. Approximately 30 JAVA members attended the award ceremony.

In presenting the *Courage, Honor, Patriotism Award*, former Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta, honorary chair of JAVA, said the Award is presented to Ambassador Kato in "recognition of your extraordinary leadership in building



L-R: President Robert Nakamoto; Ambassador Ryozo Kato; former Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta holding the Certificate of Appreciation and the Courage, Honor, Patriotism Plaque. Photo: Gerald Yamada.

a higher level of friendship between the people and government of Japan and the Japanese American community in the USA."

In accepting the award, Ambassador Kato said he is proud to receive the Award, which exemplifies the "courage, honor and patriotism" displayed by the Nisei in the combat zones of Europe and Asia and the Pacific. He said, "Literally, with their blood and sweat, the Nisei generation paved the way toward the establishment of a solid Japan-US relation that we enjoy today." He continued, "I, on behalf of the people and government of Japan wish to express our deepest gratitude for the Nisei services and sacrifices."

Nakamoto presented several JAVA souvenirs to the Ambassador, including a baseball which contained an imprint of the JAVA logo and signed by the JAVA attendees to the Award ceremony, an inscribed JAVA coin, and a JAVA baseball cap. Following his retirement from his country's Foreign Service, Kato, a baseball enthusiast, will become commissioner of Nippon Professional Baseball.

[See full press release at www.javadc.org]

Speakers (from page 5)

May 28: Shima joined other veterans to address a full auditorium at Urbana High School in Frederick, MD. Following this, he and his brother Hiroshi Shima of Hilo, HI, spoke to an assembly of three history classes. Hiroshi discussed his experiences in the Korean War.

June 5: Dr. Warren Minami; Bob Manankil, financial consultant; Ronald Sagudan, Department of Veterans Affairs official; and Terry Shima spoke to the cadets at the 5th Regiment Armory (National Guard), Baltimore, MD. Minami discussed how Japan's attack of Pearl Harbor impacted on Japanese Americans, Manankil discussed the history of Filipino Americans, and Shima discussed the 100th-442nd and the Nisei in the MIS.

June 17: Shima spoke to about 80 Rotarians at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary Club at the Kenwood Country Club on the JA experience during WW II and its impact on future generations of Japanese Americans.

June 23: Shima and Mary Murakami held a 90-minute discussion at the Electronic Data Systems in Herndon, VA.

June 25: Shima and Murakami held a discussion at the US Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS), Greenbelt, MD.

June 26: Ichikawa spoke at the "APA (Asian Pacific American) Combat Veterans" session during the Federal Asian Pacific American Council convention in New York. There was great interest in the subject of JA experiences in WWII.

Rocky Run Middle Sch Oral History Day

Unlike the speaking format of most schools, the Rocky Run Middle School of Chantilly, VA invites veterans and civilians impacted by WW II to interview them at the School's World War II Oral History Day. The program is organized by the 7th grade history teachers, led by Jamie Sawatzky. The number of veterans and civilians impacted by WW II, who serve primarily as interviewees, has increased each year to a total of 84 in 2008.

Each 7th grade student is assigned to a cell group of up to eight students. The students study as much as possible about the veterans or civilians they are to interview and generate a long list of questions for each interviewee. During the school's WW II Oral History Day, each World War II veteran or civilian is interviewed by one to six different cell groups.

In the 2008 program, Chosei Kuge and Paul Tani, as a team, were interviewed by five different groups of students. Although both have served in the US Army, they were interviewed as victims of the internment camps.

Two High Ranking Japanese American Officers in Iraq



Baghdad, Iraq. Two high-ranking Japanese American Air Force officers are serving in key positions in Iraq where they are making a difference in maintaining security and

building the Iraqi forces. Major General David E. Clary, serves as the Director, Air Component Coordination Element in the Multi-National Force-Iraq (MFN-I), the forward coordination element between the Combined Forces Air Component Commander and the Commanding General, MFN-I. Colonel Lisa Ann H. Onaga, has been assigned to Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq, since June 2007 as the Director of Collection Management and Dissemination for MNF-I and ensures the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance enterprise and multi-agency partnerships effectively support MNF-I and its major subordinate commands. In August 2008, she will be assigned as the Commander of the Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick Air Force Base near Cocoa Beach, Florida.

Senator Daniel K. Akaka, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, expressed his pride in contributions made by the two ranking USAF officers. He stated, "I want to thank Major General Clary and Colonel Lisa Onaga for their service to this nation and for their leadership. I am proud of the commitment and dedication to duty displayed by the members of the Armed Forces from Ha-

waii and across the nation. My warmest "Aloha" to our troops and their families for the sacrifices they have made in defense of our country."

After graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1976, General Clary, who was born in Osaka, Japan, to Eugene F. and Mineko J. Clary now residing in Hamilton, Texas. Growing up in Yerington, Nevada, he entered the US Air Force Academy in 1976 and was selected for flight training. During the past 32 years, he has served in various staff and command positions, including ten assignments to domestic posts, six overseas posts including South Korea, Italy Turkey England and Iraq, and one assignment on an aircraft carrier upon which he made 160 landings.

Colonel Onaga is a graduate of Kalani High School in Honolulu, Hawaii. A distinguished graduate of the University of Michigan's Air Force Reserve Officers Training Program in 1985, she is a career intelligence officer and weapons instructor. She has served in a variety of positions at the squadron, wing and agency levels. She has commanded an information operations squadron and an intelligence squadron. In her immediate past assignment at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, Colonel Onaga served as the first Deputy Commander for the 57th Adversary Tactics Group, comprised of nine squadrons responsible for analyzing adversary threat capabilities and ensuring applicable threat replication by Air Force aggressors.

[See full press release at www.javadc.org]

Memorial Day *(from page 1)*

and his family were recognized for making the Arlington Cemetery arrangements for the past 60 years.

Medal of Honor recipient George Joe Sakato was the principal speaker. He said, "Most people look at the Medal of Honor as a symbol of a hero. I look at it as an opportunity to talk to people about the accomplishments of the 100th (Battalion) and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. I wear the Medal to honor those who did not make it home. So on Memorial Day it is fitting for us to remember where we have come from, and the sacrifices of our friends and families who made it possible for us to enjoy the freedoms that we have now."

Major Kay Wakatake, U.S. Army JAG Corps, representing the current generation of veterans, also spoke. After paying tribute to soldiers who sacrificed their lives, she said, "We must never forget that freedom is not free. Veterans of past wars, many of whom rest here in Arlington, fought for the freedoms we now enjoy and take for granted."

At the closing of the program, the group laid floral bouquets at the gravesites of the fallen soldiers. Following this, Sakato, Wakatake, JAVA Vice President Martin Her-

bert, LTC, USA (Ret), and Matthew Oelkers, representing Japanese Americans nationwide, laid a floral wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The following day, May 26th, led by students carrying the *GO FOR BROKE* and *JAVA* banners, followed by the colors of the 442nd RCT and *JAVA* and the US flag, as well as a World War II US Army jeep, the 30 person *JAVA* formation marched proudly down Constitution Avenue. As the marchers approached the reviewing stand, the announcer gave a most worthy account to spectators of the history of *JAVA*, the experiences of the 100th Battalion and the 442nd RCT, the wartime role of the Nisei in the Military Intelligence Service, their families in internment camps, and the Japanese Americans who served so valiantly in the post WW II period.

JAVA is grateful to Senator Daniel K. Inouye for loaning the colors of the 442nd RCT for the third year in a row. *JAVA* President Bob Nakamoto said, "*JAVA's* participation in this event is important because we represent the Japanese Americans and Asian Americans nationwide who served in the US Armed Forces."

[full press release at www.javadc.org]

[see photos on page 8]

Pope Visits White House

Pope Benedict XVI was received at the White House on April 16 by a 21-gun salute, a fife-and-drum corps in Revolutionary War attire, the Marine Corps Band, soprano Kathleen Battle singing the Lord's Prayer accompanied by a harpist. Led by Ms. Battle herself, thousands of well-wishers sang "Happy Birthday" to the Pontiff. Five JAVA members received invitations from the White House to witness this welcome ceremony on a beautiful spring day on the South Lawn. Ge-

rald Yamada, Esq., Dr. Warren Minami, Thomas Phan, Stanley Sagara, and

Terry Shima joined political leaders, high school honor guards, wounded soldiers, and thousands of others.

President George Bush and Pope Benedict presented brief speeches to describe the interdependence between freedom and virtue, and order and liberty. The President said, "We believe in liberty...we also believe that a love for freedom and a common moral law are written into every human heart, and that these constitute the firm founda-

tion on which any successful free society must be built.... From the dawn of the Republic, America's quest for freedom has been guided by the conviction that the prin-

ciples governing political and social life are intimately linked to a moral order based on the dominion of God the Creator." He praised the Pope's messages of hope and devotion to religion, which "is the surest way to save men from 'falling prey to the teaching of fanaticism and terrorism.'"

Pope Benedict responded, "America's quest for freedom has been guided by the conviction that the principles governing political and social life are intimately linked to a moral order based on the dominion of God, the Creator." The framers "proclaimed the self-evident truth that all men are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights grounded in the laws of nature and nature's good." The Pope said "Freedom is not only a gift, but also a call to personal responsibility...The preservation of freedom calls for the cultivation of virtue, self-discipline, sacrifice for the common good, and a sense of responsibility toward the less fortunate."

[full press release at www.javadc.org]



White House Arrival Ceremony for Pope Benedict XVI. Photo by Gerald Yamada.

Photos from Memorial Day Events



Left: Arlington Cemetery Pavilion, JACL-JAVA program on May 25. **L-R:** Terry Shima (442nd); MAJ Kay Wakatake, USA; Hiroshi Shima (Korean War); LTC Martin Herbert, USA (Ret); Joe Ichiuji (442nd); Bob Nakamoto (Korean War); Grant Hirabayashi (MIS-Merrill's Marauders); Grant Ichikawa (MIS); Joe Sakato (442nd MOH); Lt Col Mike Yaguchi, USAF (Ret). Photo by Kris Ikejiri. **Bottom Left:** Laying wreath at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. **L-R:** Wakatake, Sakato, Sergeant from Old Guard, Herbert, Matthew Oelkers. Photo courtesy by Mark Uyeda. **Bottom Right:** JAVA-JACL wreath and Old Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Photo by Mark Uyeda.



Comic Book Series on Rescue of Lost Battalion

William (Billy) Tucci, creator, illustrator, writer and artist of comic books, is producing *Sgt. Rock: The Lost Battalion*, which is scheduled to debut as a monthly, six-issue miniseries from DC Comics in November 2008. Debuting in 1959, *Sgt. Rock* has starred in almost 400 comic books but has seen little print since 1988. Now after twenty years, the grizzled veteran and Easy Company return in *Sgt. Rock: The Lost Battalion*. It is October 1944 and Rock and Easy are among the 275 men of the 141st Regiment of the 36th (Texas) Division who were cut off and surrounded on all sides by an enemy force ten times their size in the Vosges Mountains of eastern France. The men of the 442nd RCT, alongside several fictional though legendary DC Comics characters, will play pivotal roles in the series.

A graduate of New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, former paratrooper Tucci is best known for the acclaimed comic book *Shi*. Through Tucci's Crusade Fine Arts Ltd., this modern day samurai fable is published in four languages, has sold over 4 million books and grossed more than 25 million dollars in products and merchandising worldwide. *Shi* has been featured on FOX, NBC, and E! television while also gaining recognition in *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today*. Tucci has won several international creative and printing awards.

"The real life story of the *Nisei* soldiers is central to my *Sgt. Rock: The Lost Battalion* story," the cartoonist stated, "and my speaking with them and their families has made me more determined to tell their story to those who otherwise might never know. The members of the 442nd RCT fought against tyranny and oppression overseas while many of their own family members were interned behind barbed wire in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's internment camps. The unit achieved a 400% casualty rate and remains one of the most decorated units in U.S. military history," Tucci said.

"Since *Sgt. Rock: The Lost Battalion* is based on an actual battle and the soldiers who suffered through it, I felt compelled to write and draw a story as accurate as possible," Tucci continued. During his European trip last Spring to attend a convention, Tucci decided to visit the Vosges region of France to conduct research and photograph reference material for the *Sgt. Rock: The Lost Battalion*. Tucci contacted Vosges region historians Hervé Claudon and Gerome Villain, who literally led him on a journey "in the footsteps of giants" while visiting the actual battle-grounds. They opened their homes and treated him as family, guiding him throughout the region and introducing him to several resistance fighters. "Over the course of several months, Hervé and Gerome not only served as indispensable experts on the region, the battle, and the men themselves, but we became the best of friends as well. With this connection between our soldiers and their land, we've really bonded as brothers," Tucci said.

Other French citizens and officials were similarly hospitable. On March 4, 2008, amid a driving snowstorm, many provincial VIPs from the mountainous region of Lorraine

gathered with Tucci at the 442nd RCT monument for a somber wreath laying ceremony honoring the American soldiers who liberated the town from their German occupiers. The ceremony, which included several regional mayors, vice presidents, councilors, resistance fighters and historians, opened with a moving speech by Monsieur Kronel, mayor of la Housière, and was followed by a wreath laying and the simultaneous raising of the French tricolor and Stars and Stripes. Monsieur Michel Langloix, Vice-President du Conseil General des Vosges bestowed the honor of Ambassador to Tucci in the ancient town of Bruyeres. The citation reads, "William Tucci, Ambassadeur, De La Region De Bruyeres, Vosges, France."



This sketch is from the cover for issue #6, symbolizing trapped T-Patchers fighting from the inside, and the 100-442nd, attacking from the outside. Sketch by Billy Tucci.

"I was stunned by this wonderful surprise. I couldn't believe it. I asked Monsieur Langloix, 'Why me? I had nothing to do with the liberation. I don't deserve this.' But he simply smiled and sternly instructed me that not only were they appreciative of my work but that the ambassadorship means that I am to tell my countrymen that the people of France will never forget their liberators." Tucci said he has taken that task to heart.

Tucci added, "What struck me was that these men, now in their seventies, were just mere boys at the time—boys who risked their lives guiding many Americans safely through the mountains and across rivers to attack the Germans, and now, here they were celebrating with me with all these photos and incredible stories. I couldn't help but keep on hugging them!"

Tucci said that he was simply awed by the experience, and that it was clear that the Vosgiens themselves would never forget the sacrifice of those gallant warriors six decades ago. In the course of his travels, numerous newspapers and even French national television interviewed him. He was also gifted with a champagne celebration in Bruyeres Town Hall and presented with a beautiful lamp proclaiming his Ambassadorship, engraved with images of the Vosges region and a soldier of the 442nd RCT.

Tucci and convention promoter Marc Nathan have invited JAVA veterans to attend the Baltimore Comic Con in Baltimore, MD, on September 27, when *Sgt. Rock: The Lost Battalion* will be featured. *Nisei* veterans will be special guests of the convention and will speak on a panel about their wartime experiences. For more information please visit <http://www.comicon.com/baltimore> or call 410-526-7410.

Meet the Generals and Admirals

Each quarter JAVA features two Asian Americans who have attained the highest ranks in military service. This month *JAVA ADVOCATE* highlights Vice Admiral Harry B. Harris of the U.S. Navy, and Rear Admiral Kenneth Moritsugu of the U.S. Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service.

The present count is that 77 Asian Hawaiian Pacific Islander Americans have been promoted to generals and admirals, including General Eric Shinseki of Kauai, Hawaii, who wore four stars as the U.S. Army's 34th Chief of Staff. Of the 77, 49 served in the U.S. Army, 12 in the U.S. Navy, 15 in the U.S. Air Force, and one in the U.S. Marines. Broken down in another way, 20 are Chinese Americans, 6 Filipino Americans, 18 Hawaii Pacific Islands, and 33 Japanese Americans.

VADM Harry B. Harris



Vice Admiral Harry B. Harris, Jr. USN, is the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Communication Networks and the Deputy Department of the Navy Chief Information Officer. Following his graduation from the US Naval Academy, Harris had sea duty working on operations against Libya and on Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm. He participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom, had three tours in Kami Seya, Japan, served in Yokosuka, Japan, and commanded the joint Task Force in Guantanamo, Cuba from March 2006 to May 2007. The Guantanamo assignment was high profile, politically sensitive, and under intense scrutiny by the national and international press.

Harris had various domestic shore assignments including Washington, DC, and Florida. He was born in Yokosuka, Japan, and reared in Tennessee and Florida. He participated in the Navy's Harvard/Tufts Program and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Selected as an Arthur S. Moreau Scholar, he studied international relations at Oxford and Georgetown Universities, earning a Master of Arts in National Security Studies from the latter in 1994.

Harris had various domestic shore assignments including Washington, DC, and Florida. He was born in Yokosuka, Japan, and reared in Tennessee and Florida. He participated in the Navy's Harvard/Tufts Program and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Selected as an Arthur S. Moreau Scholar, he studied international relations at Oxford and Georgetown Universities, earning a Master of Arts in National Security Studies from the latter in 1994.

As a Naval Flight Officer, Harris has logged 4,400 flight hours, including over 400 combat hours, in U.S. and foreign maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft. He flew nearly 1,000 combat sorties over Afghanistan.

Asked why he chose a military career, Harris said "My father and his brothers all served in World War II, and I knew that, when my turn came, I, too, would serve. From my mother I learned the notion of *giri* (duty). The Navy offered adventure, education, and travel, and I jumped at it. It still does, and I'm still in."

VADM Harris has been awarded impressive decorations including the Defense Superior Service Medal (3 awards), the Legion of Merit (3 awards), the Bronze Star (2 awards).

RADM Kenneth Moritsugu



Rear Admiral (Dr.) Kenneth Moritsugu retired in September 2007 from the position of Acting Surgeon General of the United States after 37 years of duty in the Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service. Since his retirement, he has served as Vice President for Global Strategic Affairs for Life-Scan, a Johnson and Johnson company. In his current position he is responsible for coordinating the strategic efforts of Johnson and Johnson in addressing the increasing diabetes pandemic.

He is Chairman of the Johnson and Johnson Diabetes Institute, a global initiative to provide awareness and training in state of the art science, information, and technology relevant to diabetes prevention, awareness, diagnosis and treatment. Dr. Moritsugu will also work to develop other innovative programs that will help Johnson & Johnson and the healthcare community better address the delivery of diabetes care around the world.

As the Acting Surgeon General of the United States from July 2006 to his retirement, he served as the nation's top doctor, communicating the best available science and information to the American people to help protect, promote, and advance their health and safety. He was also the operational commander of the nearly 6,000 Commissioned Corps health personnel of the U.S. Public Health Service. Hailing from Honolulu, Hawaii, he has earned degrees from University of Hawaii, George Washington University School of Medicine, and the University of California School of Public Health, Berkeley. He completed residencies in Internal Medicine and Preventive Medicine and is Board Certified in Preventive Medicine. He has served his country in numerous capacities and places from Medical Officer on a Coast Guard cutter to US Representative to the health care systems of Kuwait, Mexico, Nigeria, and more.

Dr. Moritsugu is a dedicated advocate for organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

Nisei Retires After 66 Years of Federal Service by Donna Miles

[Condensed from American Forces Press Service]

On May 30 at Andersen AFB, Guam, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates paid tribute to a legendary figure who was retiring from the federal government with 66 years of service. Gates lauded Seikichi "Mr. Paul" Kaneshiro for embodying the principles of Americanism during Kaneshiro's retirement as the 36th Civil Engineer Squadron's vertical repair superintendent during ceremonies at the base theater.

"Our country is only as strong as its citizens and their willingness to serve the greater good," Gates said. "In this respect, Mr. Paul is an example to us all—an example of the extraordinary service required to keep our nation safe, prosperous and strong."

A native of Hilo, Hawaii, Kaneshiro joined the Army in 1943 and served for three years with 522nd Field Artillery in Germany, France and Italy. His unit was part of the famed 442nd "Go for Broke!" RCT made up of Japanese American soldiers who collectively earned 21 Medals of Honor and seven Presidential Unit Citations.

After the war, Kaneshiro began working as a woodcraftsman at Hickam Air Depot in Hawaii. He came to Guam in 1946 for what he expected to be a two-year stint helping to rebuild the island after Typhoon Querida. But 62 years later, Kaneshiro is still in Guam, where he rose through the ranks to become Andersen Air Force Base's vertical repair superintendent.

Gates hailed Kaneshiro as "a man who traveled halfway around the world to fight for freedom on Europe's battleground and who spent the rest of his career supporting generations of men and women devoted to keeping the world safe from tyranny."

Air Force Brig. Gen. Douglas H. Owens, commander of 36th Wing here, praised Kaneshiro for his "distinguished and long-serving career." Owens noted that Kaneshiro recently restored the base's dedication plaque—one originally dedicated when he was on duty here in April 1950—for the Air Force's 60th anniversary. "He has been a valued team member who represents the history of Andersen Air Force Base," Owens said.

Although he has a sister living in Hilo, Hawaii, Kaneshiro plans to spend his retirement years in Guam. "Guam is my home", he said. In his retirement, he is devoted to the maintenance of his yard, gardening and the raising of miniature flowers. Waking up at 8:00 AM every morning since retirement, weeds have no chance to grow in his yard!



U.S. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, left, presents the Outstanding Civilian Career Service award to Seikichi Kaneshiro during his retirement ceremony on Anderson Air Force Base, Guam Friday, May 30, 2008. Kaneshiro retired after 66 years of federal service. Defense Dept. photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jerry Morrison

NJAMF Upcoming Events



"Crane monument" sculpture by Nina Akamu, at the National Japanese American Memorial in Washington, D.C.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, apologizing for the internment of Japanese Americans by the U.S. government during World War II. During the war, more than 120,000 people of Japanese decent were relocated from their homes and businesses. To commemorate the anniversary, the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) will be hosting two events in the weeks leading up to August 10, the date The Civil Liberties Act was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan.

July 31, 6-8pm: NJAMF will host a reception at the US Capitol room HC-5, to educate attendees about the importance of Redress and its continuing relevance today. NJAMF invited all senators and members of Congress. During the program, several significant figures who

assisted in the passage of the legislation will speak, including Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, California's former Congressman who co-sponsored the act and was also an internee as a child. This event is invitation only.

August 3, 2-3:30pm: NJAMF will host a public event commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act at the Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II. This event is free and open to the public. A number of other Japanese American organizations and civil liberties groups, including JAVA and Japanese American Citizens League, will co-sponsor. Secretary Norman Y. Mineta will also be among those speaking at this event.

For further information on these events, contact Gerald Yamada, President/Executive Director of NJAMF at 202-887-1455 or gyamada@oconorhannan.com.

JapanNow has printed a story about JAVA, NJAMF, and Go For Broke National Education Center. Ms. Shiori Okazaki interviewed Terry Shima for the information. The story is available at:

http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jicc/JapanNow/EJN_vol4_no8.htm#java

Leadership of JA Veterans Organizations

Japanese American Veterans Association, Washington, DC. President Bob Nakamoto, Korean War veteran, is Chairman and principal owner of Base Technologies Inc., a 20 year old Information Technology company located in McLean, Virginia. His previous positions included Director of Corporate System, MCI; Deputy Commissioner for Planning in Texas (Honorary Texas Citizen); and Director of Planning for Medicare and Medicaid Programs in the Federal Government. He has served on Presidential Task Forces for both parties. He was born in California and graduated from California State University. He is a life member of JAVA, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Armed Forces Electronic Association. Also, he is a member of Business Executives for National Security, Intelligent Transportation Society, Health Financial Management, Japanese American Citizen League, and the Chamber of Commerce. JAVA was formed in 1992 as an MIS social organization but has expanded to embrace all Asia Pacific American veterans at the national level. It is accredited to the Department of Veterans Affairs and the White House.

National Japanese American Veterans Council

(NJAVC). COL Walter Ozawa,

USA, (Ret.), Chair, born at Tule Lake Internment Camp, California, where his family, from Hawaii, was interned during WWII. Ozawa's father, a Zen Buddhist minister and Japanese language school principal on the Island of Kauai, Hawaii, was arrested following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor and sent to the U.S. Mainland. The rest of the family, mother and four children were also interned in 1942, at Jerome, Arkansas, and then at Tule Lake until the end WWII. All five Ozawa brothers served in the U.S. Army. Following active duty, Ozawa joined the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry, U.S. Army Reserve from 1970 - 1983, the last three years as its commander, and retired from the Army in 1998. Ozawa is a former director of the State Office of Veterans Services (1995 - 2001), was national president of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, and is currently the deputy administrative director of the courts for the Hawaii State Judiciary. The mission of NJAVC is to provide leadership, serve as a clearinghouse for information and to provide guidance in the future planning in Japanese American veterans organizations consistent with its affiliation with the Japanese American National Museum.



Congratulations to Col Derek Hirohata for his promotion to Colonel in the US Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps!

Pictured from left to right: Lt Col Bill McKenna, USAF (ret) Col Hirohata's first Flight Commander in Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM); Col Hirohata; COL Albert E. Vernon III, USA (ret) First Staff Judge Advocate for HQ US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and present director of the Command Operations Review Board (CORB).

Colonel Hirohata is wearing a battle dress uniform because his first promotion in the Air Force was in that uniform, and when he graduated basic GLCM training, GLCM was one of only three units in the Air Force authorized to wear it.

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JAVA Awards Inaugural Scholarships

by Calvin Ninomiya

Two high school seniors, both from the Los Angeles, California area, and two undergraduate college students, one from Falmouth, Massachusetts, and the other from Kahului, Hawaii, were named as winners of \$1,000 memorial scholarships at JAVA's quarterly luncheon on May 17.

The scholarship in the memory of Major Orville C. Shirey was awarded to Daniel E. Minamide of Escondido, California, who will attend Harvard University in the fall. The Douglas Ishio Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Kelly A. Osajima of Yorba Linda, California, who will be attending the University of California at Los Angeles. The Jack Tashiro Memorial Scholarship was presented to Chelsea M. Nagata, who completed undergraduate studies at the University of California-Irvine, and will be starting her doctoral studies in Counseling Psychology at the University of California-Santa Barbara. The Gene Takahashi Scholarship was awarded to Sara K. Trowbridge, who will be entering her senior year at Harvard, majoring in neurobiology. Her future plans are to do graduate work or enter medical school.

JAVA scholarship chair Calvin Ninomiya mentioned that 37 applications had been received vying for the four \$1,000 scholarships being offered. Of that number, 27 applicants were female students. He also lauded the quality of the applicants, many of whom had grade point averages above B-plus. A number had averages over 4 point, as some schools take into account grades received on Advanced Placement Courses.

Given the academic excellence of the applicants, the Awards Selection Committee had the difficult



From Top to bottom: Minamide, Osajima, Nagata, Trowbridge.

responsibility of evaluating the academic records, as well as comparing the quality and contents of the writing samples that entrants were asked to provide. The members of the Selection Committee were James Furukawa, who is professor emeritus at Towson University, Baltimore; Ed Wakayama, now with the Department of Defense, who formerly taught at the Universities of Oklahoma and Nevada; and, Sue Okubo, an economist, who served in a high level management position with the U.S. Department of Commerce. All three hold doctoral degrees.

The luncheon was distinguished by the presence of Mrs. Maud Shirey, widow of Major Shirey; Mrs. Marie Tashiro, widow of Jack Tashiro; Col. and Mrs. Ishio, and Mrs. Takahashi, widow of Gene Takahashi.

These scholarship memorial funds provide an outreach that extends beyond the generational divide, and that the gifts would likely have an effect beyond the lives of those attending the luncheon.



Scholarship benefactors and JAVA officials at Scholarship Awards Luncheon, May 17, 2008. Seated: COL Sunao Phil Ishio. 2nd row: Calvin Ninomiya, Vi Takahashi, Connie Ishio, Maud Shirey, Marie Tashiro. 3rd row: Bob Nakamoto. Photo: Mike Yaguchi

VA Expands Health Facilities

On June 26, 2008, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake announced plans to create 44 new community-based outpatient clinics to bring the world-class health care of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) closer to home for veterans in 21 states.

“VA continues to make access to care easier through an expanding outpatient system focused not only on primary treatment but also prevention of disease, early detection, and health promotion,” Peake said.

The new clinics, scheduled to be activated over the next 15 months, will increase VA's network of independent and community-based clinics to 782, an increase of more than 100 in five years.

This growth in community clinics has helped VA meet veterans' expectations for prompt, quality service, with 98

percent of veterans seen within 30 days in all types of VA primary care facilities throughout the country.

In addition to on-site primary care staff, today's modern outpatient clinics frequently feature state-of-the-art telehealth systems permitting veterans to maintain regular contact with doctors in specialties from cardiac care to mental health at regional VA hospitals linked for video consultations, coupled with telemetry of health data or images.

A highly acclaimed national health records system allows practitioners at even remote clinics to review patient records stored at VA facilities anywhere in the country.

VA's 21 regional networks develop applications for new clinics in consideration of reducing the distance veterans travel to their nearest VA hospital or clinic, as well as local demand, existing hospital, clinic workload and other factors.

[full JAVA press release at www.javadc.org]

Gene Takahashi Memorial Garden



In recognition of his leadership in carrying out the restoration of the Evergreen Cemetery of the Saugatuck Congregational Church in Westport, CT, and the creation of a garden which he designed along with his daughter, Nancy Takahashi, The Gene J. Takahashi Memorial Garden was dedicated and commemorated at a special ceremony on May 25. Nancy Takahashi is a lecturer in the Architecture School at the University of Virginia and is Principal (Headmaster) of Hereford College.



Above: Evergreen Cemetery of the Saugatuck Congregational Church, Westport, CT.

The Evergreen Cemetery, which was established in 1836, and is the burial place of several Civil War veterans and founding fathers of the town of Westport, had fallen into disrepair over the years. It had become

overgrown with brush amid fallen trees, tombstones had been broken and were covered with mold, and stone walls had crumbled.

The restoration of the several acre Evergreen Cemetery began in 2001 and was completed in 2003 after many hours of labor. Today the Evergreen Cemetery is a beautiful and serene park, one which the colonial fathers had envisioned for those laid to rest there.

Takahashi was a long time member of JAVA and served in the Korean occupation following WW II and the Korean War. He is interred at the Evergreen Cemetery.



Above: The Gene Takahashi Memorial Garden. Below: Plaque marker for the Memorial Garden. Photos courtesy of Vi Takahashi.



Sakura Matsuri Recap by Dr. Warren Tsuneishi

For the sixth year in a row, JAVA was an eye-catching presence in the Sakura Matsuri Japanese Street Festival organized by The Japan-America Society of Washington D.C. It was a sunny spring day ideal for the street festival, which attracted a record 140,000 visitors. Large numbers stopped by the JAVA tent. Some simply to wish us well and offer a warm "Thank you for your service!" Others stayed to view our exhibits.

Back at the JAVA tent, greeting visitors were volunteers Stanley Falk, Grant Hirabayashi, Lona Ichikawa, Akio Konoshima, Marcia Mau (who has been responsible for JAVA's participation in the street festival since 2003), Carole Meir, Warren Tsuneishi and Michael Yaguchi. Ambassador John R. Malott, President and CEO of the Japanese American Society of WDC, said the tent is provided free of charge to JAVA to honor Asian Pacific Americans who served our nation.

The table display included a poster

designed by Jack Hirose announcing that Nikkei had served in all major American conflicts since the Spanish American War of 1898; a framed poster of photos taken by Ichikawa during her tour of duty in Iraq; and five flyers on the 100th Bn and the 442nd RCT and the Military Intelligence Service during WWII, and on the Korean, Vietnam, and Iraqi Freedom wars. The display also included copies of JAVA's publication *American Patriots*. About 33 visitors purchased autographed copies to learn from the war stories in the paperback told by Nisei and Caucasian MISers in the war against Japan. Three visitors in fact gave additional donations to JAVA—the first time this has happened since the volume was published in 1995.

On the back table books on Nikkei in military service were

on display for review by interested readers, and various keepsakes donated by Lona Ichikawa. On display also were photo posters created by Norman Ikari on the 100th Bn and the 442nd RCT, above which was a banner bearing the regiment's war cry and motto, "Go For Broke!"

Thanks to all who helped!

[Due to space limitations, the original article was shortened for print; for an electronic copy of the full article, please email javaadvocate@gmail.com]



L-R: Kelly Kuwayama, Grant Hirabayashi, Dr. Warren Tsuneishi, Michael Yaguchi, Akio Konoshima.

Volunteers Welcome Honor Flights

by Lona Ichikawa



USO Volunteers were invited early Saturday morning April 19, to join Veteran groups and US Airways Representatives at Reagan National Airport, Washington, D.C., to greet two Honor Flights arriving from Huntsville, AL and Rochester, MN. WW II veterans and several Vietnam War veterans were arriving to visit the WW II Memorial. It was a day trip planned for them, and many of the veterans had escorts who assisted them with their walkers, wheelchairs and oxygen tanks. Several had EMT volunteers flying over with them, and there were plenty of Boeing Volunteers at this end to assist.

The veterans' hometowns raised money to send these World War II veterans to visit the World War II Memorial for the first time in their lives. They fly in Honor Flights approximately twice a week at Reagan National Airport.

USO volunteers were allowed on the tarmac and were

able to watch two fire engines make the water arch for each airplane to coast

through; that was just awesome! We helped decorate the airplane ramps, blew up balloons, gave out miniature folded U.S. flags, clapped, cheered, and thanked the veterans for their service as they came off the ramp.

The smiles on their faces will be etched forever in my memory! One of the veterans told us that this was the first time he had ever received such a warm, welcoming homecoming!

[Note: Our Lona Ichikawa, a military veteran who served in Iraq, gives her time, energy and funds to various military-related activities such as packing and sending "care packages" to men and women on the war front.]



JAVA Appoints Historians

On May 1, Aki Konoshima, Editor Emeritus of *JAVA ADVOCATE* newsletter, and Dr. Warren Tsuneishi, Chair of *JAVA Sakura Matsuri*, were appointed by President Bob Nakamoto as JAVA Historians. Their task is to compile a comprehensive history of JAVA from its inception in 1992 to December 31, 2008. Since JAVA's inception by Founding President COL Phil Ishio, USA (Ret), it has had five presidents: Ishio (two times), COL Hank Wakabayashi, Fred Murakami, BG Bert Mizusawa, and incumbent Bob Nakamoto.

Upon graduation from Syracuse University in 1943, Tsuneishi volunteered for the Military Intelligence Service. He saw action in the landings on Leyte, Philippines, on October 20, 1944, the liberation of Camotes Island, the Battle of Okinawa, and served in the Occupation of Korea. Tsuneishi's two brothers also served in the Military Intelligence Service in the Pacific. With Dr. Stanley Falk, Tsuneishi co-authored the book *American Patriots: MIS in the War Against Japan*, which was published by JAVA (now in its 3rd printing).

Konoshima graduated from the University of Wisconsin's Journalism School in Madison, WI in 1947. He served in Korea (1951-52) with the 8th Army Interrogation Team. He later worked for UPI in Tokyo, London and Washington D.C. He then served as US Senator Hiram Fong's press officer. Subsequently, Konoshima was appointed to the position of news media chief at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor in Washington, D.C.

Welcome New Members!

- Keith Fukumitsu (Virginia)
 - * Kenneth S. Hayashi (California)
 - Lynn Heirakuji (Maryland)
 - * William T. Honjiyo (Hawaii)
 - * William E. Houston (Virginia)
 - * Floyd Mori (Virginia)
 - * Glenda Nogami (Hawaii)
 - * Larry Oda (California)
- * Denotes Life Membership

TAPS

Captain Woodie Spears, a member of the famous Tuskegee Airmen,

passed away peacefully at his home Monday, May 12th, following a severe heart attack on April 17. We're all deeply saddened by Woodie's death, and will miss him tremendously. He was a true patriot and man of enthusiasm, keynoted by his theme of "Dare to Dream!"

A memorial "Celebration of Woodie's Life" was held on May 21 at the Chapel of the Chimes, Hayward, CA. The service included a military color guard, 21-gun salute, and taps.

[Sadly, JAVA knows of three other Tuskegee airmen who recently passed away: Lt Col Charles W. Dryden, USAF (Ret), 87, died on June 24 in Atlanta, GA. George A. Taylor, 85, of Chicago, IL, a pilot who reached the rank of captain, died on June 25. Retired Major John T. "Jack" Willis, 87, of Madison, WI, a meteorologist, died June 26.]

Right: Spears speaking at Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans meeting in February 2008. Photo by Brian Shiroshima.



Artifacts from Rescue of Lost Battalion

Jeff Hunt, Director of Texas Military Forces Museum (TXMFM) located on historic Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas, said that on July 18-19, the museum will officially bring into its collection several remarkable artifacts related to the saga of the 36th Infantry Division's "Lost Battalion" and the battle to break through German lines in the Vosges Mountains of eastern France during October 1944, code-named Operation Dogface. During that period, elements of the 1st Battalion of the 141st Infantry Regiment of the 36th Division were cut off and surrounded for a week by German forces. The trapped battalion was unable to free itself and repeated efforts by other elements of the 36th Division to attempt the rescue were bloodily repulsed. At that point, Commanding General MG John E. Dahlquist ordered the 442nd RCT to attempt the rescue.

To prevent the men of the "Lost Battalion" from being annihilated or forced to surrender for want of food and ammo, P47 Thunderbolt fighters of the 405th Fighter Squadron, flew several missions under incredibly adverse conditions to drop supplies to the trapped Americans. Initially many of the tanks fell outside U.S. lines, but eventually enough were dropped on the American position to keep the "Lost Battalion" going until Japanese-American troops broke through and relieved the beleaguered Texans. This event is one of the most famous stories to come out of World War II and among the most famous regarding the Texas National Guard.

Recently, a friend of the museum living in France, Mr. Gerome Villain, found two of the belly tanks. With the permission of French officials he recovered them on behalf of the museum. FedEx donated \$10,000 in services to ship these historic materials to Texas where they will go into a major exhibit on the "Lost Battalion" in the TXMFM.

On Friday, July 18, TXMFM will hold a ceremony at the museum to announce to the world the addition of these artifacts to the museum's collection. Then, the museum will host the induction ceremony for the Texas Military Forces Hall of



"Belly Tank" used to air drop supplies, ammunition and rations to trapped battalion in Vosges Mountains. Photo by Gerome Villain.

Honor, where Captain Marty Higgins, commander of the "Lost Battalion" will be among those honored.

A symposium will be held on the Lost Battalion story on Saturday, July 19. Franz Steidl, author of the book *Lost Battalions*, will be the keynote speaker. Lt. Erwin Blonder, who was the forward artillery observer with the 141st, and whose radio was the battalion's sole contact with the rest of the division, will speak on his experiences as a member of the "Lost Battalion," while LTC "Arch" Archilla will discuss his participation in the battle and the role of the 405th Fighter Squadron and its efforts

to drop supplies to the cut off battalion. Mr. Yeiichi Kelly Kuwayama, a combat medic with Company E, 442nd RCT will speak on the part the 442nd played in this historic engagement. Kenneth K. Inada, Co K, 3rd Bn, 442nd RCT, who participated in the Lost Battalion rescue, will attend the event. Inada was wounded on October 28, two days before the rescue. Co K had 17 men standing when the trapped men were freed; Company I had 8 standing,

442nd RCT veterans and families are invited to attend this very special occasion. Special room rates (\$95 for twin beds; \$97 for king bed) have been secured at the Holiday Inn Austin NW [8901 Business Park Dr, Austin, TX 78759; reservations 512-343-0888 or register online at www.hotelatx.com]. The hotel is only 10 minutes from TXMFM. Pre-registration is required. The \$10 registration fee will cover lunch on Saturday, as well as refreshments during mid-morning and afternoon breaks. Please contact Lisa Sharik at 512-782-5394, email lisa.sharik@ng.army.mil for registration form or if you have any question. Also, please visit TXMFM website www.texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org for updates on the event.

From the Editor

What a tremendously busy quarter JAVA had! I always enjoy editing the *JAVA Advocate* because I get to keep up with all the great things these wonderful veterans are doing. For the past year, I wanted to return to Washington, D.C. to catch up with all my JAVA friends, and I finally had the chance when I visited at the end of May.

What an honor it was for me to see them over the Memorial Day weekend, and to share the podium with the humble Medal of Honor Recipient George "Joe" Sakato (pictured at right) at the JAVA-JACL (Japanese American Citizens League) Memorial Day service on May 25. I am in such awe of him, his humility, and his dedication to his fallen comrades for whom he wears his medal. It truly was an unforgettable day.



I also want to thank JAVA and JACL for giving me the opportunity to take part in the wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at our nation's most sacred grounds, Arlington National Cemetery. Participating in such a solemn event made me so proud to wear the uniform and to serve my country.

It was also great to see Grant Hirabayashi and Grant Ichikawa share their stories with my fellow Army attorneys at the US Army Legal Services Agency. You always continue to amaze me with your stories. I am forever grateful to you veterans who preceded me and paved the way for minorities and women in the military.

If you have any questions or comments, please email javaadvocate@gmail.com or contact me by USPS mail at Kay Wakatake, CMR 435 Box 1317, APO AE 09086.



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Round Robin: Grant Ichikawa, g.ichikawa@cox.net

Speakers Bureau: Terry Shima (temporary) (see above)

Webmaster: Dave Buto, admin@javadc.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jul 3: Japanese American National Museum Conference at Denver, Colorado. "Whose America? Who's American? Diversity, Civil Liberties and Social Justice." JAVA is co-sponsor.

Jul 18-19: Texas Military Forces Museum, Camp Mabry, Austin, TX. Display of WW II relic and Seminar. Kelly Kuwayama, Bob Nakamoto, Terry Shima attending.

Jul 26: JAVA Quarterly Luncheon, Harvest Moon Restaurant, 7260 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church, VA (703-573-6000); featured speaker VADM Harry B. Harris, USN; speaker Dr. Brian Hayashi, Associate Professor, Kyoto University.

Jul 31, 6-8PM: National Japanese American Memorial Foundation reception on Capitol Hill, HC-5, to educate members of Congress on the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

Aug 3: NJAMF-JAVA-JACL program at National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism to educate the public on Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

Aug 28, 2-3:30PM: JAVA-NJAMF speakers at Lake Braddock Secondary School Social Studies Teachers meeting, Fairfax County Public Schools.

Sep 20, 10:30AM: JAVA Executive Council Meeting at Base Technologies, McLean, VA.

Sep 22, evening: Mary Murakami, Dr. Norman Ikari, Terry Shima speak at Asbury Methodist Village, Gaithersburg, MD.

Sep 25: JACL Gala Dinner.

Sep 27: Internment camp residents, 442nd RCT and MIS veterans invited to attend debut of Billy Tucci's *Sgt Rock: The Lost Battalion*, a 6-comic book series, Baltimore, MD.

Oct 18, 11:30AM: JAVA Quarterly Luncheon, Harvest Moon Restaurant, Falls Church, VA.

Nov 11, 2PM: JAVA-NJAMF Veterans Day Program at National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism.