

THE RICE PAPER



OCTOBER 2013

A NEWSLETTER OF THE
TWIN CITIES CHAPTER OF
THE JAPANESE AMERICAN
CITIZENS LEAGUE

WEBSITE:
WWW.TWINCITIESJACL.ORG



Wanted: Silent Auction Donations

The annual JACL Chrysanthemum Banquet will be held on Saturday, November 9, 2013, and will include a silent auction. If you would like to donate an item(s), please contact Gloria Kumagai, Gloriak377@aol.com, 763-377-5602, by Friday, October 15.

The Chrysanthemum Banquet invitation is attached, please respond with your reservation by October 31st!

Did you catch the latest TV episode of Bath Crashers on the DIY network?

TV host, Matt Muenster, ambushes homeowners while they're home improvement shopping. When he identifies the ultimate bathroom challenge, he follows the lucky homeowner home and totally overhauls a bathroom in need of repair. The episode "Treetop Tub" features Emily Miyamoto & husband James Densley. They make a beautiful Shoji screen & the bathroom turns out modern Asian chic!

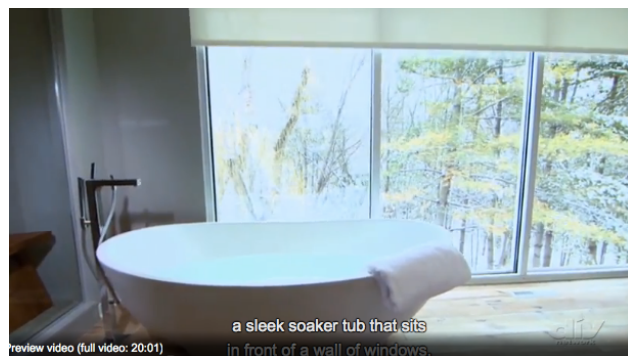


Treetop Tub will be rebroadcast on the DIY network:

October 28, 8:30 pm cst & 11:30 pm cst
November 25 1 pm cst

The link to the 2 minute promo piece-

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMyj5N0D4M8>



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JACL NATIONAL CONVENTION

National Convention Reflections

Submitted by Matthew Farrells, Twin Cities JACL Chapter Board Member

As I think back on the 2013 National Convention in Washington, D.C., commemorating the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, also known as Redress, what I remember the most are the legislative visits. This memory truly stands out as a unique experience for a young professional such as myself, but was only one of the many opportunities offered at this year's convention.

The legislative visits were an amazing experience. For someone who is not well experienced with direct advocacy, I found the whole experience extremely educational. A lot of preparation went into the event: briefing the delegates on the issue of Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) during an hour long workshop; researching our Representatives and Senators' stance on CIR; thinking of personal stories and tailoring them to support arguments in favor of CIR; conducting a mock dialogue with other members from our district to practice our visit agenda; and not to mention all of the staff and volunteer time to schedule, coordinate, and execute 64 legislative office visits on one day.

Once the big event arrived, the whole process was smooth and efficient. After being adequately briefed, all teams of convention delegates marched to Capital Hill to meet with their members of Congress. The team from Minnesota included all young professionals: Jim Kiriara, Matt Walters, and Cece Campanella. We were guided by an advocacy volunteer who aided in directing us to the proper offices and gave us pointers to make our time with the Congressional staffers the most effective. That day, we met with Senator Amy Klobuchar and Representative Erik Paulsen's staffers. Considering the Senate passed a version of CIR prior to convention, which then passed the bill to the House, and that Rep. Paulsen was a "persuadable" GOP target, we knew meeting at Paulsen's office was going to be our biggest challenge. And by the end of the day, it was. But, despite us not convincing Rep. Paulsen's staffer to support CIR, I came away with a strong sense of why JACL is still relevant today.

JACL is relevant today because we have a strong presence in Washington and in most state capitals around the nation, an ability to organize and advocate for inequality on behalf of other communities who struggle to stand up for themselves. JACL is relevant today, because it exposes and instills in community members the importance of advocating for injustice. Each and every day we are able to represent the underserved. During the Convention, we celebrated how far the JA community has come since its inception, 84 years ago. It is essential we ensure JACL remains relevant in the future.



pictured l to r: Jim Kiriara, Matt Walters, Matt Farrells, and Cece Campanella

2013 JACL National Convention - submitted by Matthew Walters

The 2013 National JACL Convention was held in Washington, D.C., July 24-27. The theme was “Justice for All,” as this year marks the 25-year anniversary of the passing of the 1988 Civil Liberties Act (H.R. 442). This legislation secured an apology and reparations for victims of the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans, as well as the establishment of an education fund. I was honored to attend this event as a delegate for the Twin Cities chapter, and wanted to share my experiences.

Arrival and Orientations After five hours of buses, trains, and planes, I finally arrived at the hotel in Washington DC’s Chinatown around noon on the 24th. After checking into my room and registering for the convention, the first agenda item was the delegates’ orientation. At this session, we learned about voting, raising amendments, seconding motions, and other procedures that would be of importance during the plenary sessions.

The delegates’ orientation was followed by a legislative visit briefing that prepared us to meet with our respective members of Congress the following day. We broke into small groups based on our districts. Three other Minnesotans and I discussed what we would say during our visits to Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Rep. Keith Ellison, and Rep. Erik Paulsen. Our task was to assist the JACL in its mission to support three major policy reforms: (1) streamlining procedures that allow legal residents to be reunited with their families in a timely manner; (2) ensuring a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million illegal immigrants currently living and working in the U.S.; and (3) the DREAM act, which would make college-bound individuals brought illegally to the U.S. as minors eligible for permanent residency under certain conditions.

As I reviewed the materials provided and discussed with fellow Minnesotans, I began to feel increasingly nervous about these visits. We were told that although Sen. Klobuchar has a history of supporting immigration reform, Rep. Paulsen was only a “persuadable” candidate at best. The importance of these reforms to millions of individuals, coupled with my own political inexperience, created a lump in my throat that would continue well into the following day. Incidentally, it was during these group meetings that Thomas Kurihara stopped by to say hello. I was surprised to learn that he was a member of our chapter, although he has not lived in the Twin Cities for many decades.

Opening Reception Dinner It was already time for the opening reception dinner, and I found myself seated at a table with other delegates from the Midwest District Council. The JACL President’s Award went to Wade Henderson (CEO of The Leadership Conference) and members of Congress instrumental in the passing of the 1988 Civil Liberties Act: Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, Sen. M. Matsunaga, Rep. Robert T. Matsui, and Sec. Normal Y. Mineta. Both Henderson and Mineta attended and gave speeches so inspiring I could feel chills run down my spine. Henderson reminded us of the oft-quoted (but always relevant) truth that “eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.” Mineta stressed that as we climb the ladder of success, we must always be sure to reach behind and help someone up with us.

Following the reception, I attended a late evening screening of a new short film called “Lil Tokyo Reporter,” set in 1930s Los Angeles and based on the life of *issei* journalist Sei Fujii. While the plot was not as engaging as I had anticipated, the cinematography was impressive. It was something of a film noir, but featured mostly Japanese and Asian American actors. I found this an exciting development and hope to see more Asian American historical dramas about this time period in the near future.

Thursday Plenary Session The following morning, I attended the opening reception, which included a speech by Japanese Ambassador Kenichiro Sasae. Ambassador Sasae discussed the Kakehashi (“Bridge”) Project, a large-scale youth exchange program between the U.S. and Japan. In efforts to strengthen ties with the JACL, 100 seats will be reserved for youth of Japanese ancestry. This was great news to me, as it acknowledges the many Japanese Americans like myself who are both involved in JACL and interested in Japan.

Following this, Professor Carol Izumi moderated a panel with Norman Mineta, Wade Henderson, and John Tateishi. They discussed a number of issues surrounding redress, including JACL’s unpopular 1970 resolution to publicly seek reparations, formation of the commission, debate over whether the redress strategy should be judicial or legislative, and the challenge of convincing other congresspeople to support the movement.

Visits to Congress and the National Archives After the plenary session, it was off to the capitol for legislative visits. The visit with Senator Klobuchar’s aide went well as expected. She listened to what we had to say and assured us that Klobuchar had similar feelings about immigration reform. However, the conversation with Rep. Paulson’s aide was less productive. He lectured us endlessly about how complex immigration issues are, which felt condescending and somewhat distracting from the purpose of our visit. It became clear that unless we interrupted him, our opinions as district constituents would not be heard. As time drew short, we interjected and argued that accommodating both timely family reunification and college-bound DREAMers would complement Paulson’s efforts to strengthen the Minnesota state economy by attracting and retaining educated foreigners.

That evening we visited the National Archives, where both Executive Order 9066 and the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 were on display. Remarks were made by JACL Executive Director Priscilla Ouchida, Rep. Mike Honda, Richard Foltin (AJC), and United States Archivist David S. Ferriero. I was impressed to learn that the AJC, premier Jewish advocacy group and honored guest that night, was the first non-Japanese group to come out in support of redress in the 1980s.

2013 JACL National Convention cont... Matthew Walters

Friday Morning Session The next morning was spent in the second plenary session. At this session, we listened to Floyd Mori moderate a panel of Stuart Ishimaru (former Acting Chairman of the Equal Opportunity Commission), Hillary Shelton (NAACP Washington Bureau Director), and Mee Moua (executive director of AAJC and former congresswoman in the Minnesota state legislature). I felt Mori did an outstanding job as moderator, and a fascinating discussion ensued. The aspect of this panel I most remember was the inspirational Mee Moua. An eloquent and engaging speaker, she relayed a story that particularly impacted me. She said that when she was serving in the Minnesota State House of Representatives, a Hmong man shot and killed six people during a hunting trip in Wisconsin. Although the crime was not committed in Minnesota and the man did not even reside in her district, her phone immediately began ringing off the hook because she was Hmong. The first person Moua called was Floyd Mori, then executive director of the JACL. Mori advised her that the number one priority was to prevent hate crimes against the Hmong community. This story really drove home to me the importance of the JACL and the respect its legacy commands.

I was also intrigued by Shelton's response to Mori's question about what the next major civil rights issue might be. Shelton observed that increasingly clever tactics to control voting rights are emerging as a new tool of suppression. Surely, the recent attack by the Supreme Court on the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is clear evidence of this emerging theme. At one point, Mori thoughtfully asked panelists what JACL, as an organization, should remember moving forward. Moua's response that JACL's "strength is embedded in [its] membership" resounded most with me. But it also raises questions: What does a refocus on our membership look like from a policy perspective? How specifically can National leverage the strength of the chapters more effectively?

Next, we reviewed and commented on JACL's strategic plan for the next few years. While I was admittedly bewildered by the complexity of editing a document together with over 100 other delegates, I did stand up to propose one additional education objective. I argued that all of the education objectives concerned the role of JACL in educating the *outside* community. However, with an increasing number of *yonsei* (like myself) and *gosei* represented in the membership, the importance of intergenerational education *within* the organization cannot be overlooked and should be considered an important objective moving forward. We then recessed for the legacy luncheon, during which it was my honor to accept a 2013 Legacy Fund Grant on behalf of the amazing work of the Twin Cities Chapter Education Committee. The Committee will be using this money to promote a curriculum about the Military Intelligence Service Language Schools at Camp Savage and Fort Snelling at conferences such as the Education Minnesota Professional Conference this October. I was seated with other recipients and had the chance to hear about many interesting projects, such as a public Japanese garden and a youth scholarship to tour internment sites. Doua Thor, former executive director of the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center, gave an inspiring speech during the lunch. I recall in particular how she stressed that to inspire a younger generation, there needs to be real opportunities for youth to engage at all levels of the organization.

The remainder of the day was spent in session. Much of our discussion was minor, regarding wording changes in bylaws and resolutions. We later voted to resolve three major issues: (1) a proposed reduction in membership fees (to \$25) for the Japan chapter; (2) whether the JACL should issue a statement about the growing problem of discrimination against AAPI's with chronic hepatitis B; and (3) whether JACL should issue a resolution written by the Seattle chapter to support further investigation of racial profiling in the Trayvon Martin case. Unfortunately, I received little information beforehand and did not feel sufficiently informed to weigh in on these issues. Formal discussion rules also made any deep analysis of the facts a slow process.

All three resolutions passed, although I did not support all of them. First, I voted in favor of the chronic hepatitis B statement, as I felt it was important that the high prevalence in our community is not used to legitimize discriminatory practices. Second, while I felt the Trayvon Martin resolution was poorly written, I favored the underlying request for continued investigation as to whether racial profiling played a role in the shooting. Regardless of what we as individuals believe about these cases, JACL, I reasoned, must continue to raise flags when questionable issues like this arise. Third, I voted against the reduction of membership fees for the Japan chapter.

My opposition to the reduced membership fees for the Japan chapter was not on account of the principle of lower membership dues, but rather on the justification put forth. The Japan chapter stated that they were unique in that they did not face the kind of racial discrimination AAPIs face in the US, were ineligible for some benefits provided through JACL partners, such as AARP, and that many were not US citizens and therefore not benefiting from civil rights lobbying at the national level. While I sympathized with their plight, I opposed the resolution because I felt much of this rationale actually opposes the foundational social justice principles of the JACL and set what I felt to be a worrisome precedent.

Reception at Japanese Ambassador's Residence That evening, we attended a reception at the Japanese Ambassador's residence. This was an incredible honor. In fact, I was so inspired that I updated my Facebook for the first time in two years! It was at this reception that the JACL presented the Governor Ralph L. Carr Award for Courage to three individuals. The first went to the late President Ronald Reagan, for signing H.R. 422. According to the speaker, after signing the resolution, Reagan said that "no payment can make up for those lost years. So, what is most important in this bill has less to do with property than with honor. For here we admit a wrong; here we affirm our commitment as a nation to equal justice under the law." The second award went to Speaker Jim Wright, who, as Majority Leader, introduced H.R. 442 in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1985. The third went to Glenn Roberts, who, early in his career, was asked by Secretary Mineta to draft the bill that became H.R. 442. He is credited with framing the bill as correcting a Constitutional infringement, which made the legislation significantly stronger.

Remembrance Ceremony The final activity of the conference for me before my flight home on Saturday afternoon was the remembrance ceremony at the Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism. I was surprised by how beautiful the bronze monument was, depicting two cranes entangled in barbed wire. The size of the sculpture was ideal, neither large and overbearing nor small and insignificant. Surrounding the monument were large stone tiles with quotes and other information about the internment, including the number of individuals incarcerated in each camp. During our ceremony, a tourist bus stopped quietly for a few minutes to observe the memorial. I overheard someone comment that buses did not used to stop at the monument. Incidentally, I also caught up with Thomas Kurihara again. We ended up chatting long after the ceremony ended about everything from the Twin Cities to the meaning of the JACL.

It was truly an honor to attend the convention on behalf of the Twin Cities JACL, and I wish to thank the chapter for giving me this opportunity. Next year's convention is in San Jose. It has been scheduled to end right before their Obon festival, which is well-known for being a spectacular production. Based on my wonderful experience this year, I highly advise everyone to consider attending the conference next year. Meeting other Japanese Americans, learning new ideas from inspiring speakers, and weighing in on important JACL issues are all meaningful experiences I hope others will also have the opportunity to experience.

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TC JACL Scholarships

2014 High School Scholarships

Scholarship applications for 2014 high school graduates will be available in January 2014. Please contact Pam Ohno Dagoberg (763-557-2946, dagob001@tc.umn.edu) if you are interested in obtaining a scholarship application or would like to recommend someone for a scholarship.

Scholarship recipients must be current JACL members. Individual Student or Family membership status is required (Individual membership of a parent does not qualify the student to receive a scholarship). For information on membership, please visit www.twincitiesjacl.org

Applications will be sent to the following students:

Mariko Akimoto, St. Paul,
Matthew Dulas (Edina High School),
Karin Edwards (Lakeville North High School),
Dani Honda (Mounds Park Academy),
Parker Morehouse (Buffalo High School),
Matthew Murakami (Eden Prairie High School),
Roy Ramstad (Cannon Falls High School),
Kyle Tsuchiya (Eden Prairie High School)
Noah Tanaka Willmert (Minnetonka High School)



In addition to completing the application form and submitting a transcript, students must write a short essay entitled “The Value of Further Education.” Applications are evaluated based on the student’s scholastic achievement, extra-curricular activities, community service and the essay. Completed applications must be mailed by March 31, 2014.

Many National JACL scholarships are also available. Information about National JACL scholarships can be found on the Youth page at the JACL website (www.jacl.org).

To make a tax deductible donation to the TC JACL scholarship program e-mail Connie Tsuchiya at ctsuchiya@comcast.net for details.



2013 Chrysanthemum Banquet

Please join us Saturday November 9th at:

The Chateau
10715 South q Shore Drive
Medicine Lake, MN 55441

Social Hour, Hors D'Oeuvres and Silent Auction to begin at 5 o'clock.
Buffet Style Dinner will be served at 6 o'clock.

We are pleased to have Mr. Wing Huie, of Wing Young Huie Photography Gallery, as
our guest speaker.

Tickets prices are:
Adults \$35.00 Nisei \$25.00 Children 12 and under \$15.00

If you should require more information feel free to contact: Dan Motoyoshi at 651-338-8243

Reservation Deadline is: OCTOBER 30th

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Reservation for the Twin Cities JACL's Chrysanthemum Banquet
with guest speaker Wing Huie
Saturday, November 9th 2013

Name: _____ Phone: _____

I would like to make a reservation for _____ number of individuals.

Names of all people included in your reservation:

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Make checks payable to Twin Cities JACL

Please return form and payment by October 30th to:

Daniel Motoyoshi
6344 Bloomington Ave S
Richfield, MN 55423

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To receive information on JACL activities, relevant opportunities and events that occur on shorter notice than our Rice Paper can communicate, please sign up for the TC JACL "E-Mail Blast" by contacting us at twincitiesjacl@gmail.com. Sign up now. Don't miss out. Update us when your e-mail changes.

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Thank you -
Your TC JACL Board of Directors



Congratulations to Steve Ozone whose photo of Tomie Conaway was selected and displayed in the Minnesota State Fair Fine Arts show. It is the largest juried art show in the state. This year there were 2,200 entries from Minnesota artists with only 350 selected to showcase their piece. This was Steve's 5th consecutive year being selected for the exhibit. Last year he won 1st prize in the photography category.

NEWSLETTER

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