

RICE PAPER

The newsletter of the Twin Cities chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League

July 1994

Internment camps, racism and identity issues woven into award-winning comic whodunit authored by Japanese Canadian

Yellow Fever, a play written by R.A. Shiomi, is a comic whodunit full of wit and social commentary.

Set in Vancouver's Japantown, the play follows Sam Spade-style Sam Shikaze as he tries to solve the case of the missing Cherry Blossom Queen. Along the way, Sam discovers a trail of racism, romance and political intrigue.

Yellow Fever, directed by Marc Hayashi of the Asian American Theater Company in San Francisco, will be presented this month at the Southern Theater by Theater Mu, Minnesota's renowned Asian American theater company.

Opening Night Performance to benefit the Twin Cities JACL

Thursday, July 14, 1994

Performance 7 p.m.

Dessert reception and discussion to follow; lobby exhibit by Twin Cities JACL Coalition and Civil Rights Committee

Southern Theater
1420 Washington Ave. S.
Minneapolis (Seven Corners area)

Tickets: \$20 (\$10 tax-deductible)
For tickets, call 340-1725. Specify JACL Benefit.

If you have questions about the benefit, call David Hayashi, 822-3659.

by Rick Shiomi
Artistic director of Theater Mu
and author of *Yellow Fever*

I've always wanted to write something worth reading. As a high school senior, I dreamed of writing the valedictorian speech. But I couldn't write a single sentence. I didn't feel I had anything to say. Writer's block at the age of eighteen.

It took over 10 years for me to write my first short story, and that was like running uphill through mud. But then I had a major revelation of my own personal, family and Japanese Canadian community history. I was born and raised in Toronto, but by the mid-1970s, ended up in Vancouver, where I first learned about the internment camps during World War II. My family had made vague references to the camps, but they were never explained to me, and I never wanted to know. But working in Vancouver, where the Japanese

Yellow Fever, continued on Page 2.



"Yellow Fever." Photo by Charissa Uemura.

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WELCOME

We would like to welcome these people who recently joined (or re-joined after an absence) the Twin Cities JACL.

Kimi Aisawa, Minnetonka
Janet L. Carlson, Lake Elmo
Takuzo and Noriko Ishida, Woodbury
Kaye Matsumoto, Minneapolis
Kyle Mary Samejima, Minneapolis

Congratulations, Twin Cities chapter!

Our chapter has reached a 10 percent increase in membership over 1993. The Midwest District Council had challenged its chapters to increase membership by 10 percent in 1994, and the Twin Cities has met the challenge!

Just a reminder: Current JACL members will receive renewal notices from the national office of JACL via a new computerized membership system. Payment for membership renewal can be made directly to the national office. People wishing to join the Twin Cities chapter can complete the membership form contained in this newsletter or contact Sam Honda, Twin Cities membership chair, (612) 429-3410.

COALITION BUILDING

Twin Cities JACL's Coalition Committee establishes phone tree: Volunteers needed

by Zaidée Rollins
JACL board member and
Coalition Committee member

The Coalition Committee is busy implementing many of its goals, which were established last year. A phone tree is just one of the ways the committee is hoping to increase its effectiveness.

NEEDED:

People to help with the Coalition Committee phone tree. Duties include occasional calling when an event regarding civil rights or unity building among minority communities occurs.

The goal of the Coalition Committee is to build working ties with all of the minority communities in an effort to organize social and political action.

If you're interested, contact committee co-chair Charissa Uemura, 225-8219, or another member of the JACL board (see Page 10 for phone numbers).

Also, if you hear of or know of an event or concern that the Coalition Committee should respond to, please let us know.

Thanks to all for your help.

Yellow Fever, continued from Page 1.

immigrants originally settled, I came upon a history that totally changed my understanding of my identity as a Japanese Canadian.

I was also in the midst of coordinating a new festival that was creating some controversy in the Japanese Canadian community. The whole project was saved by the intervention of a Nisei businessman, an extraordinary man with a martini-dry sense of humor and the look of Columbo on a bad hair day. I was inspired to write a detective comedy short story, with the private eye based on this Nisei man. It turned out to be a 100-page ramble that surprised me.

When I showed the short story to my playwright friend Philip Gotanda, he pulled out one page and said he

liked it. One page out of a 100. Not to be discouraged, I asked him what he liked about that particular page. He said the dialogue. I wasn't sure what he meant but he explained and directed me to the Asian American Theater Company in San Francisco. I sent them the short story, and they sent it back asking for a play outline. I returned an eight-act, 45-scene epic. They asked me to write the first act, and I did. From that point, through two years of rewrites and development (with Marc Hayashi as my dramaturge and Lance Nishikawa as my director), I wrote my first play.

Yellow Fever is about a mythical Japanese Canadian detective, Sam Shikaze, who takes on the case of the missing Cherry Blossom queen. He has as much trouble with a young female reporter and an old Nisei rival

as he does with the kidnappers. But the substance of the play is more about the traumatic effect of the internment camps during World War II, about racism in North America, and about Asian North American identity.

When it premiered in San Francisco in 1982, *Yellow Fever* won the Bay Area Theater Circle Critics' Award and a Bernie Award for original script. It played in New York and received rave reviews in *The New York Times* and the *New Yorker Magazine*. It was a dream come true for someone who had struggled mightily to become a writer (I was 35 at the time).

In addition to the July 14 benefit for the Twin Cities JACL, Yellow Fever will be presented Thursdays through Sundays July 15 to 31 at the Southern Theater. For details, call the Southern Theater, 340-1725.

Notes from the Midwest District Council (MDC) governor

by David Hayashi

MDC governor and Twin Cities JACL member

As many of you know, I was elected to a two-year term as MDC governor last August and stepped down as Twin Cities chapter president in December to better fulfill my new responsibilities. I must admit, I was very apprehensive about the time commitment and responsibility of being MDC governor; however, I am happy to report that I am truly enjoying the experience and feel that I can make a positive difference for JACL and our community. It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to get to know the organization at a higher level and also to meet so many of the dedicated and motivated JACL members across the nation. It also has been an inspiring and invigorating experience to meet the many folks, especially other Sansei, who are getting involved and taking leadership roles within the community.

So, you might ask, "What exactly are you doing?"

MDC goals developed

District goals were developed at an October Executive Board meeting held in Minneapolis. At this meeting we also clearly defined the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the MDC officers. In February, at our MDC meeting in Indianapolis, I presented the MDC goals for 1994. The following were topics for our roundtable discussion focusing on the importance of vision and goals for the future:

1. Importance of strategic planning and goal setting.
2. Membership goals: 10 percent increase and 100 percent retention; district membership handbook distributed; guidelines on member brochures and recruitment established.
3. Communications: Increase dialogue within district and among

chapters, sharing knowledge, resources, successes and failures.

4. Coalition building: Establish documentation of current ties; develop outreach programs to other community groups.
5. Increase JACL visibility: Uphold and promote the image of JACL as being a viable organization within the general community.
6. Financial planning, fundraising and corporate funding: Evaluate the fiscal needs of the chapter and pursue corporate funds, as well as develop new fundraising activities.

Over the past six months I have been able to visit most of the MDC chapters to install their board officers. All of the MDC chapters have strengths in many of the areas outlined above. It is my hope that we will be able to keep these goals in front of us and build an even better organization on the strong foundation that was built before us.

Grant received from IDS

I am pleased to announce that I was successful in obtaining a grant of \$3,000 for the district. The gift of support was given by IDS Financial Services Inc. Philanthropic Program on behalf of the American Express Minnesota Foundation. The grant proposal was written to cover the cost of registration for sending three district representatives to the 1994 JACL Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. I view the cost of \$2,400 (\$800 per person) as an excellent investment in people. The remaining \$600 of the grant will go to district general operations.

Getting the word out in schools about the Japanese American experience

I am in the process of distributing copies of "The Japanese American Experience," which is the curriculum guide developed by the JACL National Education Committee. It is an excel-

The Midwest District Council includes chapters in Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, Detroit, Indiana, St. Louis, Twin Cities and Wisconsin.

lent resource for teachers in the kindergarten through 12th grade arena.

I recently organized a presentation at the Great Lakes Regional Social Studies Conference to present the guide. Twin Cities JACL members Bud Nakasone, Esther Suzuki and Zaidee Rollins assisted me in making this presentation a success. We were able to tell the story of the internment and distribute about 20 curriculum guides to social studies teachers. The guide sells for \$15. If you are interested in a copy, you can contact me at 671-3735 (my office number).

Twin Cities appointed youth representative

I have made several appointments to various positions within the organization. Among these, I am pleased to announce that Zaidee Rollins, a member of the Twin Cities chapter, has accepted the responsibility of MDC youth representative. Zaidee has shown outstanding leadership qualities and dedication with JACL and other Asian American organizations and is making significant progress in forming a youth group here in the Twin Cities for the first time in a long time.

Your input is appreciated

Most of you have been following the National Board meetings in the *Pacific Citizen*. If anyone wishes to give me feedback or engage in any discussion, I encourage you to give me a call. I would be very open to talk about any matters pertinent to JACL.

AROUND TOWN

Japanese Fellowship Church launches fund drive

by Charissa Uemura
Twin Cities JACL board member

The Japanese Fellowship Church in Minneapolis is progressing nicely in the renovation of its recently purchased building at 4217 Bloomington Avenue South. The finished church will have a chapel seating 80 to 100 people, a small meeting hall and three small rooms including a nursery.

Rev. Takashi Matsuda said the interior walls still need to be built, though much work, including plumbing and wiring, has been done.

The effort requires funds of \$65,000 as well as volunteer labor. The fellowship will be greatly appreciative of any donation of funds, time and/or labor that JACL members can offer toward finishing the renovation. Work crews started working on the interior during May.

For information on volunteering, or to make a donation, please contact Rev. Matsuda, 869-0469.



This recently purchased building at 4217 Bloomington Avenue South, Minneapolis, will be renovated to be the new home of the Japanese Fellowship Church.

Japanese garden open for the season

The Como Ordway Memorial Japanese Garden in St. Paul will remain open daily through Labor Day from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., as well as evening hours on Tuesdays until 8 p.m.

Because of its fragile nature, the garden is open only when staffed by volunteers. For this summer, more than 90 volunteers have offered their time to staff the garden as tour guides.

They have completed training and are ready to share information with individual visitors as well as tour groups. There is still a need for weekend tour guides. Call Jean Hammar, 489-0868, if you would like to volunteer. Twenty additional volunteers assist Conservatory gardener Joan Murphy with weeding and maintenance of the garden.

Otsu-e: Japanese folk painting from the Edson and Harriet Spencer Collection on view through July 31

Comical demons, benevolent gods and earthly beauties all populate Otsu-e, folk paintings produced in Japan between the 17th and 19th centuries.

An exhibition of 25 Otsu-e paintings on loan from the collection of Harriet and Edson Spencer is on view at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts through July 31 in the museum's Gale Gallery.

Characterized by their spontaneous style and vigorous brush work, Otsu-e are simple yet expressive images painted by anonymous artists. They were named after the town of Otsu, located on the Tokaido, a major roadway linking Kyoto and Edo. Otsu was a stopping point for pilgrims and travelers who purchased Otsu-e as souvenirs at roadside shops.

The earliest images in the exhibition are of Buddhist subjects. According to Matthew Welch, assistant curator of Asian Arts at the Institute and organizer of the exhibition, these Buddhist paintings were originally purchased by peasants for private devotion.

The greatest number of exhibited works, however, date to the 18th century when secular themes predominated. Falconers, samurai, kabuki actors, folk heroes and beautiful women were boldly rendered in bright, fresh colors. Later, Otsu-e were even believed to be talismans with powers that could help to find a mate, lessen pain of childbirth or offer protection from lightning.

For more information, call 870-3000.

This notice appeared in Asian Pages, April 15, 1994.

Japanese Language and Culture Camp sponsored by Science Museum of Minnesota

Do you want to know what *zashiki*, *tokonoma* and *ro* are? Perfect your origami skills? Make and eat Japanese food and write Kanji characters with a bamboo brush? Get in touch with traditional and modern Japan this summer and learn the Japanese language through authentic games, songs, folk tales and language exercises.

August 1 to 5
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Ages 6 to 13

Fee is \$130 for Science Museum members and \$140 for non-members.

The camp will be held at the Edina Community Center.

For more information, call the Science Museum of Minnesota.

Hmong Theatre Project presents "The Orphan Boy & the Dragon Princess"

"A magic-filled play based on three traditional Hmong fairy tales."

Thursdays through Saturdays
July 7 to 9 and 14 to 16, 7:30 p.m.

At the History Theatre, 30 East 10th Street, downtown St. Paul (across from the Science Museum of Minnesota)

Tickets are \$8, children under 10 are free. For ticket reservations, call the History Theatre box office, 292-4323.

Co-sponsored by Hmong Youth Association of Minnesota and the Playwrights' Center.

Reflections on the Japanese American experience: A panel with John Nobuya Tsuchida, Ruth Tanbara and other authors published in new anthology

Tuesday, July 19
Noon to 1 p.m.
St. Paul Public Library
90 West Fourth Street, St. Paul

Ruth Tanbara and several other Japanese American women [many of whom are long-time Twin Cities JACL members] will participate in a panel discussion of their recently published anthology, *Reflections: Memoirs of Japanese American Women in Minnesota*, at noon on Tuesday, July 19. Panel moderator will be Dr. John Nobuya Tsuchida, editor of the book.

Sponsored by The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library, the event is free and open to the public. To register by phone, call The Friends at 222-3242.

The anthology consists of autobiographical essays by 14 Japanese American women in Minnesota, including Mrs. Tanbara. The authors describe their experiences during a 50-year period, from 1942 to 1992, and vividly tell the story of the United States' treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Aquatennial features many Senior Days events

The 1994 Minneapolis Aquatennial will present a variety of events for seniors:

- **Senior Walk**
Friday, July 15, 10 a.m. to noon, Minneapolis YWCA (1130 Nicollet Mall) to Loring Park and back. For information, 332-0501 ext. 3143.
- **Senior Square Dancing and Line Dancing**
Friday, July 15, 1 to 3 p.m., Minneapolis YWCA (1130 Nicollet Mall).
- **Senior Tea Dance**
Sunday, July 17, 2 to 5 p.m., Normandy Inn Provincial Room, 405 S. 8th St., Minneapolis. Waltz and Foxtrot for prizes. For more information, 935-7857.
- **Arts and Crafts Fair**
Monday and Tuesday, July 18 and 19, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Hennepin County Government Center, 300 S.

6th St., Minneapolis. One of the largest senior arts and crafts fairs in the U.S., featuring over 150 artisans and three floors of booths.

- **Senior Bingo**
Monday and Tuesday, July 18 and 19, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Hennepin County Government Center, 300 S. 6th St., Minneapolis.
- **Senior Days Tennis Tournament**
Wednesday, July 20, 9 a.m. to noon, Nicollet Tennis Center, 4005 Nicollet Ave. S. For information, 663-6189.
- **Senior Festival**
Friday, July 22, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Minnehaha Park, 4825 Minnehaha Ave. S., Minneapolis. Bingo, bowling, prizes, and Japanese dancers.
- **Seniors "500" Card Tournament**
Saturday, July 23, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Hennepin County Government Center, 300 S. 6th St., Minneapolis. For information, 331-8371.

David Mura and other artists part of "Fireside Chats" exploring "What is Asian American art?"

The Asian American Renaissance presents a series of informal, intimate discussions with Asian American artists about their work. These talks are aimed at exploring the questions: What is Asian American art, and is there an Asian American aesthetic?

All discussions are free and will be held at the Renaissance office, 1564 Lafond Ave., St. Paul.

Mark Izu, jazz musician
Friday, July 15, 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Mark is a well-known jazz musician and composer from San Francisco. He has recorded many albums and performed throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. He has scored music for several films, most recently to accompany Sessue Hayakawa's 1924 silent feature *The Dragon Painter*.

David Mura, writer/performance artist

Tuesday, July 26, 7:30 to 9 p.m.

David, who lives in Minneapolis [and is a JACL member], is the author of the award-winning book *Turning Japanese: Memoirs of a Sansei*. With writer Alexs Pate, he has also developed a performance piece *Colors of Desire*. David is the artistic director of the Asian American Renaissance.

Vu Xiong, photographer/videomaker
Monday, August 15, 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Award-winning photographer and videomaker Vu Xiong of St. Paul has exhibited his photography at places such as Intermedia Arts Gallery. He also received a fellowship to film the Hmong Festival in Beijing, China.

Please join us for lively and informative conversation and cookies by our fireplace. For more information, or to make reservations, call 641-4040.

Jazz musician presents score of Japanese film

As part of the Walker Art Center's Summer Movies and Music Program, composer/jazz bassist Mark Izu and his ensemble will perform Izu's original score for *The Dragon Painter*. Incorporating elements of traditional Japanese, classical European and jazz music, Izu's live performance sets a powerful mood for the story of a mad genius living in the mountains who paints only dragons while searching for a lost lover (1919, Japan).

The performance will be Saturday, July 16, 8 p.m., at the Walker Art Center Auditorium. Tickets are \$12 general admission; \$10 Walker members. For information, call 375-7622.

"The Hungry Stone" dance drama based on North Indian classical dance

The Hungry Stone, an adaptation of a classical Indian story and based on the classical North Indian dance Kathak, will be performed August 11 to 13 at the Great American History Theater in downtown St. Paul.

The Hungry Stone, which features 40 performers, includes dance, music, drama, video and film production. Rita Mustaphi, artistic director and choreographer, performs the lead role; Dipankar Mukherjee, resident director at the Guthrie Theater, directs the project, which is presented by the Nritya Jyoti Dance Theatre. *The Hungry Stone*, written by Rabindra Nath Tagore, made its debut in Chicago in early July.

Performances are Thursday, Friday and Saturday, August 11 to 13, 8 p.m.; and Saturday, August 13, 2 p.m. Tickets for Thursday are \$5; tickets for all other performances are \$7 students, seniors and children, and \$9 general admission.

For more information, call Rita Mustaphi, 537-8291.



Workshop targets substance abuse prevention in the Asian and Pacific Islander communities

Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use affects all of our communities in the Twin Cities. This August we have a unique opportunity to work together to address this concern in Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.

The U.S. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) will conduct an Asian and Pacific Islander Institute August 17 to 19 in the Twin Cities. The purpose of the three-day Institute is to increase involvement of Asians and Pacific Islanders in CSAP partnerships and to increase the effectiveness of the partnerships in addressing the substance abuse needs of Asians and Pacific Islanders in their communities.

There is no charge to attend the institute; expenses will be covered through CSAP funding. Attendance is limited to 60 participants. The program will be held at the Earle Brown Center on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota.

CSAP trainers will be Karen Yanagisako, senior curriculum development specialist and facilitation coordinator, and Julia Kim-Sung, lead facilitator.

For more information, call the Hennepin County Prevention Center, 348-6122.

Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will be commemorated locally

A Hiroshima and Nagasaki Remembrance, commemorating the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, will take place at the Harriet Island Rock Garden, Minneapolis, on Saturday, August 6, at 7:30 to 8:15 a.m. and will include a ceremony of cranes.

A lantern-floating ceremony, also featuring music, poetry and storytelling, will take place on Tuesday, August 9, at 6:30 p.m. at a location to be determined.

The remembrance is sponsored by Friends for a Non-Violent World, Peace Links, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

The Hiroshima and Nagasaki Commemorative Committee offers these events to the community as a time for reflection on the past and hope for the future through action in the present. It calls for an end to testing and proliferation of all nuclear weapons as a measure to ensure a just and lasting peace.

For more information on these events, call Friends for a Non-Violent World, 870-1501.

Lens Media Workshop provides unique opportunities for high school students

The Asian American Renaissance presents an opportunity this summer for Asian American youths to construct their own images through photography and video projects. The workshop also will teach Asian American youths basic photography and video production skills and create dialogue among Asian American youths.

A group of 10 to 15 students of various Asian American ethnicities

will work together to develop photography and video projects. A short video production will be produced and built upon a photography project.

Charissa Uemura will teach the two-week photography class, and Karen Muckenhirn will teach the two-week video class. Various artists in each discipline will be invited to present and talk about their work and share their expertise in their field with the students.

The workshop will take place in August. Students will meet three times each week for two hours each day.

For more information about the Lens Media Workshop, call the Asian American Renaissance, 641-4040.

Twin Cities International Program in need of hosts for mid-career professionals from around the world.

Gain international friendship and increase cultural awareness. TCIP invites individuals, couples and families to host for up to five weeks. Social workers, teachers, health care workers and other professionals (English speaking) will be arriving at various times of the year.

The Twin Cities International Program (TCIP), a volunteer-supported and directed organization affiliated with the University of Minnesota's School of Social Work, has welcomed more than 1,000 people from 95 countries during the past 30 years. This non-profit organization facilitates an international program of cultural and professional exchanges in human services and other professions. It is an opportunity for mid-career professionals to gain and share

expertise and knowledge. Participant backgrounds include: mental health, social work, education, public administration, engineering, environmental protection, health care administration, journalism, planning, disability care, and other work.

Each visiting professional lives with three different hosts during the initial few months of their stay, in order to gain a firsthand view of everyday life in the United States. This is an important component of our program, giving both participants and host families a unique experience with another culture. Hosts are expected to provide meals and a private room and share family activities. Hosts also must live in areas with good access to bus transportation.

A host is someone who shares their home and friendship with an international participant. Living with a host is often the participant's first opportunity to experience our culture. Hosts provide participants with knowledge and support while they are becoming acquainted with U.S. attitudes and ideas.

Hosting is a great way to develop international friendships and learn many things about other countries, languages and cultures. Hosts are not reimbursed monetarily, but receive many other rewards in return for their hospitality.

In addition to hosting, we have a wide variety of other volunteer opportunities available: committee work, special events organization, mentoring, all aspects of newsletter publication, bulk mailing assembly, transportation, fund raising, data entry, and more.

Please consider becoming involved with TCIP and informing others about our program. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please call (612) 624-3694.

MEMBERSHIP

Twin Cities Chapter Japanese American Citizens League

1994 Membership Application (for new members only)

Thank you for your interest in the Twin Cities JACL. If you would like to become a member of this chapter, please check which membership category you would like, and complete the information at the bottom of the form. Membership is in effect for 12 months.

- _____ Trial membership (for first-time JACL member) \$ 20
- _____ Regular membership \$ 40 *
- _____ Spouse of a regular member \$ 30 *
- _____ Family membership \$ 70 *
- _____ Student membership \$ 15 *
- _____ Youth membership \$ 5 *

For those who are interested in making a larger contribution to JACL,
these membership options are available:

- _____ Thousand Club membership \$ 60
- _____ Century Club membership \$120
- _____ Spouse of Thousand/Century Club member \$ 29

** Rate has not increased since 1989.*

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

ISSUES/CONCERNS/SUGGESTIONS OR OTHER COMMENTS FOR THE TWIN
CITIES JACL BOARD: _____

Send this form to 1994 membership chair: **Sam Honda**
3935 Lakewood Ave.
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Phone: (612) 429-3410

Make checks payable to Twin Cities JACL.

WRAP UP

JACL helps create peace crane display

As part of a Day for Families to celebrate the diversity within the Asian American community, our chapter sponsored a "peace crane" display. Visitors folded origami cranes, signed their name on the cranes and strung them up as part of our display. The event was held April 10 at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul. Three hundred cranes were created for the display.

*Children gathered to learn how to make origami cranes to contribute to the peace crane display.
Photo by Charissa Uemura.*



AT A GLANCE

Highlights of JACL board meetings

Following is a summary of the major items discussed at the Twin Cities JACL board meetings on March 30 and May 3, 1994.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Membership chairperson Sam Honda reported at the March 30 meeting that there are 235 members.

SUKIYAKI DINNER UPDATE

The Sukiyaki dinner was held on Sunday, March 20 to benefit the Twin Cities JACL scholarship and operating funds. This year 535 dinners were sold. Chairperson Tom Hara reported that the ice cream dessert served this year, in lieu of fresh fruit, was well received. Tom has agreed to serve as event chair for next year's dinner.

THEATER MU "YELLOW FEVER" BENEFIT FOR TWIN CITIES JACL

Rick Shiomi, artistic director of Theater Mu, and Diane Espaldon, managing director of Theater Mu, visited the March 30 board meeting to propose that JACL collaborate with the Asian American theater company

on its presentation of the play *Yellow Fever*. The board approved sponsoring an opening night benefit for JACL (July 14), as well as a lobby exhibit during the play's run at the Southern Theatre. David Hayashi will be liaison between JACL and Theater Mu.

COALITION COMMITTEE

The committee is considering a process on how to create letters in a timely basis to respond to crisis civil rights issues.

FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

The board discussed procedures for merchandise to be sold in the bazaar booth. This year, sales depleted our stock. Concern was raised regarding the high price for items from Japan.

SOCIAL STUDIES CONFERENCE

JACL will make a presentation and distribute 50 copies of the new JACL curriculum guide to be purchased by the chapter. Presenters will include Bud Nakasone, Esther Suzuki, David Hayashi and Zaidee Rollins.

AKI MATSURI/FALL FESTIVAL

Due to the expenses incurred by the chapter and the large amount of time required to plan the free event (presented with the Normandale Japanese Garden Sukiyaki Dinner), the board explored options to recoup some of the expenses or scale back the project. Unable to develop options that seemed acceptable, the board voted not to hold a fall festival in 1994.

YOUTH NEWS

Youth rep Zaidee Rollins continues to search out youth interested in participating in a youth group.

FUNDRAISING

The board approved the formation of a fundraising committee. Members will include Cheryl Hirata Dulas, David Hayashi and Connie Fukuda.

Board meetings are held 7 to 9 p.m. once each month. The meetings are preceded by a potluck dinner. The board welcomes any visitors. If you would like to attend, call Joanne Kumagai, (612) 537-8076.

JACL members recognized as 1994 Asian-Pacific Distinguished Awardees

by Cheryl Hirata Dulas
JACL board member

The following article also contains information that appeared in *Asian Pages*, June 14, 1994.

As part of Asian-Pacific Heritage Month (May 1994), the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans hosted an awards ceremony May 21 to recognize the contributions of 26 distinguished Asian awardees. The theme for this year's celebration was "Education is the key to self-sufficiency and financial independence."

Kimi Hara and David Hayashi were the 1994 awardees from the Japanese American community.

Among her many contributions, Kimi was recognized for service in the field of nursing and within the Asian-Pacific community. She currently serves as the JACL Scholarship Committee co-chairperson.

David was recognized for his leadership in JACL as past president of the Twin Cities chapter, and currently as Midwest District Governor.

Thomas Takekawa, the Japanese representative to the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, presented the awards during the ceremony, which was held in the State Capitol Rotunda in St. Paul.

The Council is composed of representatives from 18 different Asian ethnic groups.

Congratulations David and Kimi!

Penelope Haru Snipper, JACL member, recognized as part of magazine's Twin Citian Volunteer Hall of Fame

The following article by Elizabeth Kaibel appeared in *Mpls. St. Paul* magazine, September 1993.

Mpls. St. Paul magazine's fifth-annual tribute to special volunteers recognizes nine people whose gifts of giving begin with one, embrace many and inspire all.

Among the nine people recognized as part of the magazine's 1993 Twin Citian Volunteer Hall of Fame is Penelope Haru Snipper.

Three years ago, health problems forced Penelope Haru Snipper to take time off from her catering business and "rethink my life ... I'd spent years putting 18-karat-gold-leaf touches on chocolate tortes and I felt twinges of guilt." Today, Snipper is so busy fighting racism and orchestrating benefits and delivering meals to people with AIDS that going back to "work" is out of the question.

Snipper, 46, is a Sansei (third-generation Japanese American) whose multiple volunteer activities combine her love of the theater with her advocacy of diversity in race, gender, abilities and orientation. After moving to Minneapolis from San Francisco in 1983, she plunged into volunteer activities at the Cricket Theatre, Theatre de la Jeune Lune and Chrysalis. In 1992, she joined the Playwrights' Center board, whose outreach committee she now heads. She also donates one day a week to Open Arms of Minnesota, a food-delivery program for homebound people with AIDS, and she chaired a Sept. 11 fundraiser for Asian Media Access, Theater Mu and Asian American Renaissance. And as a member of the Japanese American Citizens League, she is striving to build coalitions with communities of color.

Volunteering "is not only time, talent and treasure," Snipper says, "it's total commitment." Indeed.

1994 Twin Cities JACL board of directors

If you have questions, concerns or suggestions for the Twin Cities JACL, please feel free to call one of the board members.

	Phone
Joanne Kumagai, president	537-8076
Kyle Samejima, vice president	798-5829
Chuck Tatsuda Jr., treasurer	724-7264
Connie Fukuda	927-9126
Tom Hara	420-9562
David Hayashi	822-3659
Cheryl Hirata Dulas	822-7198
Mark Honda	458-5258
Elaine Lyford-Nojima	724-9578
Chris Murakami Noonan	486-9150
Zaidee Rollins, youth representative	647-5666
Charissa Uemura	225-8219
Lynn Yamanaka	729-0813

JACL RESPONDS

Stereotypic portrayals of Asians in violent video game

A message to JACLers from Bill Yoshino, JACL's Midwest District director:

Dec. 14, 1993 – A situation that raises concerns over a video game produced by Konami for Sega and Nintendo game systems was brought to my attention by John Nakahata (Washington, D.C. JACL chapter), who serves as a staff member to Senator Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut. John has been working on the issue of violence in video games. Last week Lieberman's Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Regulation and Government Information held hearings which will lead to an industry-imposed rating system for these games.

During John's preparation for the hearing, he ran across promotional information (the copy is contained below) produced for the game *Lethal Enforcers*. John called me with concern about Asian depictions in the contents of the game. I have responded by writing to the president of Konami. I will also be sending similar letters to officials at Sega and Nintendo:

Tom Kalinske - CEO
Sega of America, Inc.
255 Shoreline Drive
Redwood City, CA 94065

Minoru Arakawa - President
Nintendo Corporation of America
4820 150th Ave. N.E.
Redmond, WA 98052

I encourage people to send a letter of concern, so that proper concern is registered. Please feel free to use comments contained in my letter. Please send me copies of your letters and any responses you receive (JACL Midwest Office, 5415 North Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60640).

Promotional copy for the *Lethal Enforcers* video game:

News that hits home. Lethal Enforcers comes to Sega CD.

Directly translated from the deadly arcade hit, *Lethal Enforcers* is out to clean up the streets in the baddest parts of Chicago. Digitized human terrorists, intense graphics and painful sound will slam you into cold reality and heated action. Your job is to defend the innocent and protect yourself from a fatal case of lead poisoning.

Your side iron, The Justifier, is packed inside and ready to blow you away with a true arcade experience. Just like the arcade game, you've got the quick reload feature. Time it just right so you don't run out of ammo while you're trading bullets with the scum of the earth. Upgrade your firepower along the way to magnum, 12-round automatic, assault rifle, shot gun, machine gun or grenade gun.

Your type of street cleaning takes place where the dirtiest deeds go down. But first, a training level lets you take target practice and take out

your frustrations, then on to reality. Be on the lookout for bank job in progress, high speed chase, ninjas in Chinatown, hijacking at the international airport, drug deal at the shipping dock, helicopter chase, chemical plant sabotage with volatile Heat of the Night Vision. The pressure under fire is so intense you'll be sweating bullets. At the end of each level, you'll get your hit percentage and your performance rank, from patrolman to commander. You'll need to obtain a certain accuracy percentage to proceed.

When you're a top cop, you see and hear it all. And you will, in incredibly lifelike, digitized graphics, realistic settings and totally intense sound effects. Hot shots can earn extra lives. But watch out for the innocent bystanders or you could lose a life.

And hey, let's be careful out there. Hit the streets alone, or take along a partner to cover your butt.

JACL responds

December 10, 1993

Mr. Kenji Hiraoka
President
Konami (America) Inc.
900 Deerfield Parkway
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

Dear Mr. Hiraoka:

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States, is concerned over your recently released video game *Lethal Enforcers*. Even though we have not had an opportunity to preview the game content, your promotional material describing the contents of the game raises troubling concerns regarding stereotypic depictions and the negative portrayal of Asians.

The material indicates that the object of *Lethal Enforcers* is "to clean up the streets in the baddest parts of Chicago [of] human terrorists." The material

JACL responds, continued on Page 12.

JACL RESPONDS

JACL responds, continued from Page 11.

goes on to describe the so-called street cleaning as occurring "where the dirtiest deeds go down" and for the need to be on the lookout for "ninjas in Chinatown ..."

We are concerned because "ninjas" are often seen as sinister Asian assassins which has an effect on the manner in which Asians are perceived in our society. We find it especially troubling because children, adolescents and young adults – the market for these games – can be left with negative impressions which can cause an

association between Asian Americans and the actions of these so-called "ninjas." Much of this plays into the attitude and stereotype that Asians are invaders in America who are to be viewed with fear and suspicion.

The material also implies that Chinatown is an unsavory place. This reinforces attitudes that Chinatown is mysterious, dangerous and impenetrable. This too, nurtures fear and alienation and plays into our fears of "us" and "them" thereby contributing to xenophobia and racial intolerance.

It's unfortunate that Asian Americans and the places where we reside,

are often perceived in a distorted and superficial manner based on stereotypes, ignorance and even racist images. And, it is unfortunate that stereotyping has contributed to a rising trend in hate crimes toward many groups of Americans including significant increases in incidents of anti-Asian sentiment and cases of violence directed Asian Americans.

Sincerely,

William J. Yoshino
JACL Midwest Director

PERSPECTIVE

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The "Perspective" articles on pages 12 and 13 are presented here as points of view that can contribute to the discussion on an issue currently facing JACL on a national level. The opinions presented here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Twin Cities chapter or of its board of directors.

An open letter to the community

May 10, 1994

Dear Friends:

I am writing to ask for your support in the rapidly emerging Asian Pacifica Lesbian and Bisexual Women's (APLBs) movements in the Twin Cities, across the United States as well as around the world.

We are a group of womyn who, in spite of multiple oppressions (racism, heterosexism, sexism, etc.) which put us in self hate, shame and despair, came out of our own isolations and found each other by various means and ingenuities. From each other, we found strength and inspirations. We are now jetting forward with fiery, with strong self and social consciousness – developed and shaped by our past personal struggles.

It is already an incredible experience to have the rare opportunity to merely

see images of other Asian Pacifica Lesbians and Bisexual Women. It is indeed a spiritual high to come out of our own isolations, to meet and work with other APLBs in grass-root activism. It is this unquenchable flame which pushes us forward, to fight for our fundamental rights, and to help create a more supportive and nurturing environment for our Sisters and others who are also struggling and resisting.

Inspired by our Sisters on the west and east coasts, the APLBs in the Twin Cities have been organizing and doing activist work for the past few months. For the first time in November last year, we started organizing to bring Trinity Ordone (a Filipino American lesbian activist from Santa Cruz) to the Twin Cities to give a first-of-its-kind multimedia presentation on the emerging national network and movement of APLBs. Since then, we have been organizing locally for AIWA's (Asian Immigrant Workers'

Advocate) national campaign to boycott Jessica McClintock (a major garment manufacturer in the Bay Area) because of her exploitation of Asian immigrant garment workers. Just recently, we basked in positive and jubilant energy marching at the May Day parade to increase our visibility and also to raise public awareness about the exploitation of Asian immigrant garment workers who are not adequately protected by existing labor laws.

The APLBs movement has come to the Twin Cities, and it will soon spread to other major cities in the Midwest as we plan on forming a Midwest coalition.

In June this year, an estimated one million gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and transgender people from around the world will gather in New York City to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Stonewall Riot – an event which sparks the various gay rights movements. The Asian Pacifica Lesbian and Bisexual Women across the country and around the world will

meet in New York for that long weekend. On Sunday, we will all march in an Asian Contingent within the Pride March demanding our human rights, as we end our routes in front of the United Nations building.

We are now living in a world where people and events are linked and entwined together as in a huge, colorful fabric, more so than many national political leaders want to admit. We in the APLB movements recognize the necessity as well as the strength of networking globally. Lesbians and bisexual women in countries all over Asian and the Pacific Islands are coming out and coming together. In countries like Japan, Taiwan, India, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, women are organizing and are planning on sending representatives to the Stonewall March. However, traveling to the U.S. is very costly. The lack of scholarship funding has unfortunately reduced the number of APLBs representatives from Asia and the Pacific. Many APLBs in the U.S. are trying to raise funds to help bring a few more of our APLB sisters from abroad to the March.

The experience of marching in Gay Pride is self-transformative. Many participants will return home with inspired energy which very often is channeled to local activism.

For those of us in the Twin Cities, the Stonewall March has come at the right moment, as we are coming out of isolations and beginning to organize. However, many of us cannot go simply because of budget constraints. To overcome this obstacle, we are raising funds through a march-a-thon organized by the APLBs national network (APLBM). The money we raise will also go toward funding the national network and a few APLBs from abroad. I hope you and your friends/colleagues will show your support.

Thank you.

Li Voon

In you are interested in contributing, please contact Lynn Yamanaka, 729-0813. For more information about APLB, call GLAC 822-0127.

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What are we afraid of?

by Lynn Yamanaka
Twin Cities JACL board member

Homophobia is the fear and hatred of people who prefer those of the same sex, emotionally and sexually; fear of same sex intimacy. Homophobia is pervasive in our society through our government, our community, our neighborhoods and even our families. It is estimated that at least 10 percent of the population is comprised of those who prefer people of the same sex. For many, sexual orientation was not much of an issue. Sure, surviving puberty was no easy feat. But, social roles as "heterosexuals" were reinforced, with heaps of social approval for marrying and having children, and for males, carrying on the family name.

Why would someone intentionally "choose" a life of potential isolation, loneliness, ostracism, shame, rejection, inner turmoil, violence and depression? People who are born preferring those of the same sex have many obstacles to overcome. Some people are harassed, physically or mentally abused or disowned by family because of their sexual orientation. Many of us can relate to harassment rooted in how we look or because we are perceived to be different. Often times, people of color who are also of different sexual orientations are not accepted by either community. Many face the double and triple oppression, being people of color, of a different sexual orientation, and women. It hurts that much more when you are rejected by your own community and family.

The fear is based on ignorance. There are very few positive people of color role models and even fewer images of people who are also of various sexual orientations. The images we do see are often stereotypical: the hairdresser, the gay waiter and so on. Often times, there is a lack of or limited interaction with people of various sexual orientations. We don't see people of various sexual orientations in leadership roles, hear of or learn about them. Individuals may base their perceptions of an individual to an entire group. Many of us perpetuate and reinforce negative stereotypes about people who prefer the same sex through our neglect (not saying or doing anything), oversight, or simply ignoring "them."

What are we really afraid of? Does it challenge the very nature of who we really are? As a community that prides itself on diversity and tolerance, we need to remember we are only one part of many communities. Maybe it's only through understanding on a personal level that we can respect and be respected by our fellow citizens.

UPCOMING JACL EVENTS!

Opening night performance of "Yellow Fever" to benefit Twin Cities JACL

Thursday, July 14, 1994

Performance 7 p.m.

Dessert reception and discussion to follow;

Lobby exhibit by Twin Cities JACL Coalition and Civil Rights Committee

Southern Theater

1420 Washington Ave. S.

Minneapolis (Seven Corners area)

Tickets: \$20 (\$10 tax-deductible)

For tickets, call the Southern Theater, 340-1725. Specify JACL Benefit.

If you have questions about the benefit, call David Hayashi, 822-3659.

If you cannot attend, but would still like to make a donation, please send a check to: JACL Benefit, c/o Charles Tatsuda Jr., 2546 39th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55406.

Golf Tourney to be held Sunday, July 31

Gross Golf Course, Minneapolis
First tee time is 10:30 a.m.

Entry fee: \$5.50 JACL members;
\$8 non-members (includes \$.50 course
reservation fee).

Entry deadline is July 20.

Green fees should be paid at the
course.

See the enclosed green flier for more
information or call Sam Honda,
429-3410.

Send entries to: Sam Honda, 3935
Lakewood Ave., White Bear Lake, MN
55110.

We appreciate hearing from readers with comments and suggestions on improving this newsletter. We also appreciate news items and articles from the Japanese American community. Rice Paper is published four times a year. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue!

The Twin Cities JACL Rice Paper

Chris Murakami Noonan, editor 148 Hemlock Place, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127 (612) 486-9150

**Japanese
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League**

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