

RICE PAPER

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

April 1996

Last Chance!

It's not too late to support the Twin Cities JACL and its key fundraiser for 1996.

Kanojo USA makes its Minnesota debut April 13 and 14 to benefit Twin Cities JACL's Scholarship and Operating Funds.



Kanojo USA, a six-year-old fashion company owned and managed by two California-based Sansei women, is committed to the philosophy that retailing and community service can work together effectively to make a difference in the Asian American community.

"We believe it is our mission in life to support positive programs affecting our people," explains Kanojo co-founder and principal Eileen Tabata Fitzpatrick. "Thus, when we started Kanojo, we decided, 'What better way to do this than to give back something from every fundraiser event we do?' We know these organizations need financial support. It is difficult in these times for an Asian youth group to continue, for example. It takes money to continue good community work."

Eileen continues, "When we bring a fashion show event to each community, we donate our services completely." The sponsoring organization publicizes the event and recruits models, and receives 10 percent of the sales proceeds from the fashion boutique. At the Twin Cities event, part of the luncheon ticket price also goes directly to benefit our chapter.

Since February 1992, when Kanojo launched its fashion show fundraiser program with Asian American community organizations, Kanojo has donated more than \$260,000 to its cumulative sponsors.

"Asian Accents"

by

Kanojo
USA

An Asian American fashion perspective

Saturday & Sunday, April 13 & 14
Airport Marriott Hotel Ballroom,
Bloomington

Tickets are \$20 and include a meal.
See back page for a reservation form.
Reservation deadline is April 7.

For more information, call Tom and Reiko Ohno, (612) 831-5869.

HERE IS HOW YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT THE TWIN CITIES JACL

- Join us at the Kanojo Fashion Event and Luncheon. A portion of each \$20 ticket goes directly to our chapter's Scholarship and Operating funds. The reservation deadline is April 7.
- Purchase clothing and other items at the Kanojo event. Our chapter receives 10 percent of the sales proceeds.
- Donate \$5 and receive six entries in our raffle drawing to be held at the Kanojo event. Winners need not be present to win. JACL members received \$5 of raffle tickets with this newsletter. If you would like to purchase tickets contact Cheryl Lund, (612) 884-7420.

- If you are unable to attend the Kanojo event and would like to support this fundraiser, you can send a financial contribution to the Twin Cities JACL in care of:

Tom and Reiko Ohno
3520 Beard Curve
Bloomington, MN 55431

THANK YOU!

Donation requested, but not required.

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See Pages 2-3 for more about Kanojo and the Twin Cities event.

KANOJO

Two exciting days of fun and fashion

"Asian Accents"

by *Kanojo*
USA

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

11:30 a.m. Registration
Noon Luncheon (reserved seating)
1 p.m. Fashion Show (reserved seating)
2 to 5 p.m. Shop, try on and purchase Kanojo fashions (about 2,000 available) from the Spring Collection of Playwear, Daywear and Special Heritage garments.

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

10:30 a.m. Registration
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Buffet Brunch (open seating) and time to shop in the Kanojo boutique
1 p.m. Fashion Show (open seating) with emcee Lori Aoki of KMSP-TV
2 to 5 p.m. Shop, try on and purchase Kanojo fashions (about 2,000 available) from the Spring Collection of Playwear, Daywear and Special Heritage garments.

Each day features door prize and raffle drawings!

In addition to Kanojo designs, customers can purchase merchandise from these special vendors:

Kyodai Origami: Sally Sudo and Saki Tsuchiya present necklaces, pendants, broaches and earrings made of chiyogami, a type of Japanese rice paper, as well as origami earrings.
Joyce Yamamoto: Pins and necklaces incorporate different elements of handpainted, handmade paper, beads and wrapped stones.
Urban Traveler: This trendsetter in travelware presents spring handbags, wallets and cosmetic bags.

*Affordable, unique and clever stylings
not seen in regular mass produced lines.*

Kanojo clothing, not available in any stores in Minnesota, caters to "ordinary people" who cherish ethnic stylings

Here are some examples of the Kanojo's pricing structure and fashion choices.

Casual Weekend Wear - rich colors and washable fabrics - all with ethnic kimono embellishments not found in any store:

Tops \$48; Pants \$46; Jackets \$72

Washable Cotton Career Dresses: \$80

Textured Rayon Blouses: \$50 to \$60

Career Rayon Suit: Jacket \$82; Skirt \$52

Slacks in Textured Rayon: \$82

Slacks in Cotton: \$48 to \$58

Special Heritage Collection - featuring one-of-a-kind obi and kimono designer garments for special occasions:

Kimono vests \$90-\$200; Kimono dresses \$170-\$375

Men's neck ties \$60-\$80; Pre-teen vests \$70-\$80

The upscale Special Heritage items are a small part of the Kanojo designer line. The high cost is due to the rarity and high value of the imported kimonos from Japan.

Not your typical fashion show

Unlike the typical stiff, formal runway fashion shows with professional models and loud, raucous music selling wild, trendy clothing, the Kanojo fashion show is like and Asian play, told in acts. On April 13 and 14, the program features three acts:

ACT I tells the story of the Asian cultures and their painful, arduous struggle to reach America from their native homeland.

ACT II continues the evolution of the culture ... with subsequent generations and their achievements and "modernization" of their lifestyles.

ACT III brings everything full circle. The past meets the present, and a celebration occurs to show the blending of all that is rich and beautiful about our culture ... now mixed with modernday energy and excitement.

The players in the show are volunteers from the Twin Cities JACL, whom Kanojo trains and rehearses to perform in this evolutionary show. The music is authentic to the times being depicted, and the narrative story educates, entertains and impassions the audience to "remember with pride" its roots and own cultural heritage.

Thousands of customers reflect Kanojo's success

Since its inception in 1990, Kanojo has served thousands of customers, most of whom are looking for comfortable fit, classic styling and easy care at a very affordable price.

"We show how garments can be mixed and matched and worn differently. People today are dollar-conscious," explains Kanojo co-founder Eileen Tabata Fitzpatrick. "For example, a simple \$75 basic dress can look five different ways by adding a clever Kanojo obi belt (\$20) or a reversible vest. We offer a very smart way to shop: Clothing is an investment, and we feel our customers' dollar goes further when the fashions can durably last a long time and be extremely versatile in their look."

Vicki Yamagami Ragasa, Kanojo co-founder and designer, explains: "I like to design for people like me who want style and flattering looks but don't go for the trendy and expensive. When I design, I think of myself, my daughter and my mother, and I select colors and fabrics and styles to suit all three age groups. I think females are happiest in a nice-looking outfit that we know is low key, but looks striking without being a spotlight that causes people to stare at us."

Eileen emphasizes that Kanojo's customer base is primarily composed of women ages 30 through retirement, whose lifestyles encompass being young mothers, professional working women, retired women active in the community, and women who travel a great deal.

This spring, Kanojo is debuting a line of neckties for men and vests for pre-teen children, both made from antique kimono cloth.

Practically a household word on the West Coast and in Hawaii, Kanojo attributes its success to the unique aspects of its clothing designs.

- A variety of styles that fit a variety of body types.

Vicki, Kanojo's designer, has spent more than 25 years as a fashion designer, winning national awards for her renowned proportion-fitting skills. Customer testimonials reflect the great fit of Kanojo designs: Women who ordinarily have given up on wearing sheath dresses find Kanojo designs flattering; Kanojo's vast line of jackets fit women of all proportions, contrary to typical jackets designed to fit only the perfect size; Kanojo sells a tremendous volume of casual, daywear and dressy pants because of the attention given to proportioning for the tough areas to fit - leg length and hip and tummy areas.

- The clothing is made of top-quality fabrics and sewn by skilled professionals.

Kanojo offers sportswear, career and special occasion items in silk, rayon, cotton/polyester, pique and wool/rayon blends. The garments hang well and endure for years. The construction of the clothing can be closely examined and withstands the toughest scrutiny. "Our clothing is not mass produced," Eileen says. "Our designer was in the garment business. She saw that quality does suffer when you produce in volume." The clothes are made in a factory in Glendale, Calif. Because Kanojo produces only a few of each of the items it offers, customers can be assured of a unique, individualized look.

- Kanojo is known for its design theory based on comfort.

"Make it easy to wear and comfortable, and make it look good after a long day sitting. That's Kanojo," Eileen says. "We call it soft style or exhale clothing. One can relax and breathe out."

Ethnic Accents:

Using echoes from their Japanese heritage, two designers create a fresh, modern look

by Sally MacDonald
Seattle Times staff reporter

The following is an excerpt from an article that appeared in the Seattle Times (June 22, 1994).

The ghosts of the Japanese samurai are in every piece. In the splash of royal purple silk across a blazer. In the dragons and cherry blossoms gracing the front of a vest. And in the obi-type sashes that lend a graceful Eastern accent to Western-style dress that otherwise might be basic boring.

Kanojo USA (Kanojo means "she" in Japanese) is the fashion design brainchild of two Japanese American cousins who uncovered the ghosts of their samurai ancestors in timeworn trunks, where generations of warriors and women from the noble class tucked away their lavish kimonos and obis for posterity.

Kanojo representatives regularly visit Japan to buy antique garments from families and antique dealers, then bring them back to California where they're resealed into ethnic designs and one-of-a-kind contemporary fashions.

The ancestors knew what they were doing when they used bright silks for their graceful national dress, say Kanojo founders Vicki Yamagami Ragasa, the designer and manufacturer, and Eileen Tabata Fitzpatrick, who runs the business side of the company. The clear, glossy colors they used recognized that Asian skin tones lose vitality swathed in modern muddy colors. And, of course, the ancients always designed for what the women call "the Asian body type."

"Many of us are small, and even if we're taller, our limbs tend to be shorter," said Fitzpatrick. "That means we always have to take up

Kanojo: Ethnic accents, continued on Page 9.

AT A GLANCE

Highlights of JACL board meetings

Following is a summary of the major items discussed at the Twin Cities JACL board meeting February 26, 1996.

BOARD RESOLUTION FOR TREASURER

In order to enable Daryl Johnson to assume the office of chapter treasurer, for Chuck Tatsuda, the board approved this resolution:

"The Board of Directors of the Twin Cities JACL voted in favor of, and hereby resolve that, the following Officers be authorized to deposit, transfer and withdraw funds, sign checks, direct investment of chapter funds, establish accounts, and execute other necessary documentation necessary to carry out the aforementioned functions:

Daryl L. Johnson (Treasurer) and Joanne Kumagai (President)."

KANOJO FASHION SHOW

The board spent some time discussing the publicity and recruiting of volunteers for this fundraiser event.

Festival of Nations

Thursday to Sunday, May 2-5
St. Paul Civic Center

We need our members' help to staff our booths!

Our ribbon fish demonstration booth and gift merchandise booth are major fundraising events of the year. Can you work a three-hour shift at one of these booths? No experience necessary! Each volunteer receives a complimentary ticket to the Festival to enjoy the sights and sounds of this ethnic celebration. We also need help setting up the booths on Wednesday, May 1 and taking down the booths on Sunday, May 5.

If you can help, please call Chuck Tatsuda Jr., (612) 724-7264.



Chapter's 50th anniversary celebration!

1997 will be the 50th anniversary of the Twin Cities chapter of JACL. As part of the celebration, we would like to display photos and other memorabilia from the history of our chapter. So start digging through your storage boxes! We also have all sorts of other ideas of ways to celebrate and reflect on our history. If you are interested in working on the planning committee, please contact Joanne Kumagai, (612) 420-6639.



1996 BUDGET

The board approved the 1996 operating budget. Income is projected at \$7,700; expenses at \$7,700.

1996 OFFICERS

The board approved officers for the year. See the list below.

FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

The Board began plans for this fundraising event May 2-5. Chuck Tatsuda will chair the event.

1996 Twin Cities JACL board of directors

Joanne Kumagai, president	420-6639
Thomas Hara, vice president	420-9562
Ben A. Ezaki III, president-elect	472-1985
Daryl Johnson, treasurer	728-8040
Cheryl Hirata-Dulas, secretary	822-7198
Connie Fukuda, membership chair	927-9126
Cheryl Lund, programs	884-7420
Lance Yoshikawa, programs	487-6314
Chris Murakami Noonan, newsletter editor	486-9150
Lynn Yamanaka, vice president/historian	
David Hayashi, MDC governor	822-3659

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

Upcoming JACL events

April 11-13	"Unpacking Our Bags" Conference, Hamline University
April 13-14	Kanojo fashion event fundraiser
April 17	"Something Strong Within" and "Halving the Bones" films at Walker Art Center
May 2-5	Festival of Nations
May 9	Scholarship Banquet
Summer	Cooking classes
Summer	Annual picnic
Summer	Golf Tournament

PAN-ASIAN CONFERENCE

Twin Cities JACL sent a \$150 contribution to support the "Unpacking Our Bags: 150 Years of Building Asian Pacific America" Humanities Conference at Hamline University, April 11-13.

JACL NATIONAL CONVENTION

The Board began discussing some of the issues and plans for the convention

August 6-8 in San Jose. Joanne Kumagai and possibly Ben Ezaki will serve as chapter delegates.

For information about discussions held at the Midwest District Council meeting in Detroit, see Page 5.

Board meetings are held 7 to 9 p.m. once each month and are preceded by a potluck dinner.

AT A GLANCE

summary of reports by the Midwest District Council chapters

The Spring MDC meeting was held Feb. 16-18 in Detroit.

CHICAGO: This chapter is reviewing all of its programs; rescheduling its inaugural dinner because of the low number of reservations; co-sponsoring the performance of Issey Ogata, Japan's Don Rickles; and evaluating the future of its office building, which also houses MDC's office and the credit union.

CINCINNATI: This chapter is sponsoring a bus trip to Washington, D.C., to view the cherry blossoms. An important money raiser is the garage sales, which are held twice a year.

CLEVELAND: This chapter is undergoing a restructuring of its board, resulting in the cancellation of its installation dinner. Membership is 147, an increase of about 40 in 1995. About 25 percent of its membership is Sansei and Yonsei. The chapter has made a concerted effort to enroll youths into its organization. It will be co-sponsoring the exhibit "A More Perfect Union."

DAYTON: The chapter reviewed its very positive experiences with the "A More Perfect Union" exhibit. Several hundred children in the Head Start program attended the exhibit. To the chapter Christmas party, attendees were asked to bring canned goods and toys, which were given to a local agency for distribution. The Dayton chapter wishes to establish an advisory group to evaluate future directions.

DETROIT: In conjunction with its 50th anniversary, the chapter prepared a photo exhibit titled "Manzanar to the Motor City." This pictorial display will be exhibited at local schools. In

May, the chapter will have a program featuring David Mura, author of *Turning Japanese: Memoirs of a Sansei*. Chapter membership is 197.

ST. LOUIS: The chapter will celebrate its 50th anniversary on March 2, 1996. The chairperson of the National Veterans Memorial will attend. Social programs constitute a major portion of chapter activities. St. Louis has 97 paid members, but a list of 130 on the roster. The sister city in Japan will be sending a contingent to St. Louis before the Olympics; included are koto players and taiko drummers. The annual Japan festival is scheduled during the Labor Day weekend. Nine Japanese-related organizations are involved in the festival.

TWIN CITIES: The chapter has 235 members. Recent activities include support of an "Immigration Workshop and Celebration" and a Pan-Asian conference in April. The Coalition Committee is re-organizing. Cooking classes will be started. Board members are chosen for two-year terms, and there is no limit on the number of terms a person can serve. The chapter is surveying the membership for program ideas and suggestions.

WISCONSIN: The chapter has about 135 members. All board members are Sansei. This year the chapter served chicken teriyaki at the annual folk festival for net earnings of about \$2,000. The Pan Asian coalition in Milwaukee has 10 ethnic groups. Some common concerns include: limited number of members, therefore the need to "recycle" board members; and troublesome record-keeping of membership at National.

NATIONAL

Denny Yasuhara, National JACL president, indicated National's expenses were decreased \$300,000. He reported a decrease in revenue due to

a drop in membership, Pacific Citizen advertisement and interest accrual. National JACL has accumulated \$30,000 in the reserve fund, and expectations are for PC revenues to increase in 1996. \$65,000 in annual giving will be sought. The staff in San Francisco is six, compared to nine in the previous administration. There are hopes to have the Washington, D.C., office staffed this year. An increase in membership fees will be recommended to all chapters by the National Board in April. The Board will request a response from all chapters by June. This timeline will allow this matter to be considered by the National Council at its 1996 meeting in San Jose, Calif. National would like each chapter to establish an advocacy network representative (similar to the Redress network).

National youth representative Kim Nakahara, presently a graduate student at the University of Michigan, reported on the upcoming national youth conference to be held in San Francisco.

In addition to the chapter reports, MDC delegates also discussed the resolution passed by the Eastern District Council (EDC) and MDC at the 1995 Tri-District meeting regarding the establishment of a national Vice President for Fundraising, and the resolution passed by three districts on the restructuring of the nominating committee and process. Carol Yoshino, Chicago, will be the MDC representative to the nominating committee.

The 1996 fall MDC meeting will be hosted by the Cincinnati chapter.

Many thanks to Charles Matsumoto and the Hoosier JACL newsletter, "Bamboo Heritage," for this summary.

MEMBERSHIP

Twin Cities Chapter Japanese American Citizens League

1996 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 membership chair:

Connie Fukuda
4300 Eton Place
Edina, MN 55424

Phone: (612) 927-9126

Make checks payable to Twin Cities JACL.

Just a reminder about these upcoming events!

Pan Asian Film & Video Festival at Walker Art Center features "Something Strong Within" and "Halving the Bones" April 17

Twin Cities JACL co-sponsors this special screening

As part of its Pan-Asian Film Festival in April, the Walker Art Center presents *Something Strong Within* at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 17, in the Walker auditorium.

Through never-before-seen "home movies" shot by inmates themselves, *Something Strong Within* (directed by Bob Nakamura and produced by Karen Ishizuka, 1994, U.S.A., 40 minutes) offers a rare inside view of the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

The 7 p.m. April 17 program also will feature *Halving the Bones* (produced, written and directed by Ruth Ozeki Lounsbury, 1995, U.S.A., 70 minutes). In this film, Ozeki Lounsbury documents her attempts to bring the bones of her grandmother to her mother, who has cut herself off from most of her past. Through original footage, home movies and archival films, we are shown the grandmother's life in Hawaii as a picture bride, and then we hear her daughter's story in her own words.

Tickets are \$5, \$3 for JACL, Asian Media Access and Walker Art Center members. For more information and reservations, call the Walker box office, (612) 375-7622.

The Pan-Asian Film and Video Festival is presented by the Walker Art Center and Asian Media Access, and is supported by numerous community organizations. The festival opens April 12 and continues through April 26. Additional scheduled presentations include "Signal Left Turn Right," "Summer Snow," "Tropical Fish," "The Flor Contemplacion Story," "Redeem Her Honor," "Rice People," "Dirty Laundry," "The Trials of Telo Rinpoche," "Bombay," and "Dust of Life (Poussieres de Vie)." Call the Walker for details, (612) 375-7622.

Prominent Asian American activist Yuri Kochiyama discusses Asian American history and activism

On Sunday, March 31, at 7 to 9 p.m., Asian American Renaissance presents a "One-Night Stand" overview of Asian American history and activism presented by Yuri Kochiyama, an activist who has participated in and led some of the most recent critical political movements in this country.

This whirlwind survey looks at three aspects of Asian America: The history from 1850 through World War II; the Asian American Movement, 1968 through the 1980s, and the impact of the civil rights and black movements; and the diverse, expanded Asian American population in the 1990s – how can we unite and work together?

About the speaker: A community activist in Harlem since the 1960s, Yuri Kochiyama's history-making work for human and civil rights has inspired a generation of Asian Americans. Kochiyama is known for her consistent support of political prisoners, and her work on behalf of reparations for Japanese Americans interned during World War II. Her life was the subject of a recent documentary by award-winning film-video maker Rea Tajiri.

This "One-Night Stand" will be held at the Asian American Renaissance, 1564 Lafond Ave., St. Paul. Tickets are \$5. For more information and reservations, call the Renaissance, (612) 641-4040.

Host families sought for weekend visit of Japanese graduate students

Augsburg College will host a group of 20 Japanese students Aug. 9-18, 1996. These students are pursuing graduate studies in social work at Luther Seminary in Tokyo, Japan. The students will study how social work is practiced in Minnesota.

Augsburg is requesting the assistance of the Japanese American community in hosting these students at the beginning of their Twin Cities study tour, Aug. 9, 10 and 11.

Tentative plans include a welcome dinner reception and a closing picnic for the students and host families. The students will live in the residence halls of Augsburg College Aug. 11-18.

If you are interested in hosting one or two Japanese students, contact Lee-Hoon Wong Benson, (612) 330-1530.

Study reveals Asian-Pacific American voting behavior

Dr. Larry Hajime Shinagawa, professor and researcher at Sonoma State University, has released a study of San Francisco Bay Area Asian Pacific American voters in the November 1994 election. Asian Law Caucus, as part of a larger effort by the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, commissioned the study.

The study found that, contrary to popular belief, Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) are less conservative than what the media depicts, and that APAs use bilingual voting materials when available. The study also found that APA voters who are second generations and beyond tend to affiliate more with the Democratic party than first generation voters. The study also showed that a majority of APA voters voted against Proposition 187.

Dr. Shinagawa based his findings on the over 4,000 responders to an exit

APA voting , continued on Page 8.

RESOURCES

Asian Pacific History Resources at the Minnesota Historical Society

The Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) has been collecting, preserving and interpreting the history of Minnesota since 1849. MHS collections are available to the public in its exhibits, Research Center and historic sites. Since 1958 the Society has been actively engaged in seeking to preserve the papers, photographs, maps, artworks, publications and artifacts that document the history of Minnesota's people of color. Listed below are a few examples of the many resources available to those who wish to study the history of Asians and Pacific Islanders in our state.

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Manuscripts collections include the papers (letters, diaries, scrapbooks, etc.) of individuals and the records (minutes, reports, financial documents, etc.) of organizations and businesses. Many of the Society's Public Affairs collections include material relating to U.S. relations with Asian and Pacific nations, as well as with refugee resettlement; the manuscripts collections also include diaries and letters of missionaries serving in China and other Asian nations. The Society's manuscript collections are strongest in materials relating to Japanese Americans in Minnesota: the papers of Ruth Tanbara (1940s -76); the records of the Japanese American Community Center (1944-71) and the Japanese American Citizens League, Twin Cities Chapter (1946-80); the records of the St. Paul Resettlement Committee (1942-53) and the Minneapolis Committee on Resettlement of Japanese Americans (1942-44), both of which helped move American citizens of Japanese descent out of west coast internment camps to more normal lives in Minnesota; the records of the St. Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee (1955-91), the first sister city effort in the United States.

ORAL HISTORY

In 1978 Edward Sako, with the help of

other Twin Cities Sansei, interviewed virtually the entire remaining Issei community in the Twin Cities (30 individuals) about their immigration to the United States, their internment during World War II, and their settlement in Minnesota. Between 1979 and 1982, the Society undertook an extensive oral history project to interview members of the state's Chinese American community. The Oral History Collections also include a remarkable series of video interviews with Minnesota Cambodian survivors of the Khmer Rouge atrocities.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The Sound and Visual collection at MHS holds many individual photographs relating to Asians and Pacific Islanders in Minnesota. These include portraits of individuals and scenes of group activities.

MINNESOTA STATE ARCHIVES

In 1971, MHS was given responsibility for administering the state archives – the official records of state, county, municipal and township government. Among the record series richest in documents and data on Asian Pacific Minnesotans are those of the Department of Human Services (earlier Public Welfare Department), its Refugee Program Office (1975-85), the State Department of Human Rights (1943-present) and its predecessors, the State Fair Employment Practices Commission, State Commission Against Discrimination and the Governor's Human Rights Commission.

PRINTED COLLECTIONS

The Society holds microfilm editions of virtually every newspaper printed in Minnesota, including *Asian American Press*, *Asian Pages*, and *Asian Business and Community News*, which serve the Asian Pacific community. Here researchers will also find many books, pamphlets and periodicals on the history of Asian Pacific Minnesotans,

including important reference works such as Michael Albert's *Japanese American Communities in Chicago and the Twin Cities* (1980). Library collections also include directories, essays, how-to books for the family history researcher and collaborative works.

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

The Museum Collections document Asian Pacific Minnesotans through acquiring and cataloging three-dimensional artifacts. Objects range from a 1983 toy top whittled by Sying Yang of St. Paul, to cooking utensils belonging to George Wong, owner of the Jade Fountain Restaurant in Duluth. Artifacts originating from Asian countries range from a late-19th century lacquered Korean basin to business cards advertising early 20th century Japanese silk companies.

The Reference staff at the Society will be glad to help you locate material pertinent to your particular research interest. While MHS materials do not circulate, our Research Center is open six days a week. You may also contact the Reference staff about the possibility of orientation programs for classes or other groups using the Society's research collections for the first time.

For further information, call the Research Center, (612) 296-2143.

The Minnesota Historical Society's Research Center is located in the Minnesota History Center, 345 Kellogg Boulevard West, St. Paul, MN 55102.

APA voting, continued from Page 7.

poll survey conducted at voting sites in Daly City, Oakland and San Francisco. Dr. Shinagawa stated that the exit poll is "the most comprehensive study ever conducted on APA voters in the San Francisco Bay Area. It dispels certain prevailing myths about Asian Pacific American voting behavior."

Adapted from the The Reporter/Asian Law Caucus and the newsletter of the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans (Winter 1995).

Make sure you "max out" on your 401(k)

by Cynthia Kocher

Personal Financial Advisor, American Express Financial Advisors Inc.

If you work at a company that offers a 401(k) plan, you've got a *great* way to save money for retirement. But you need to make sure you're taking full advantage of your plan. As the investment professionals say, you need to "max out" on your 401(k).

Why should you focus so much on your 401(k)? There are a lot of good reasons:

- You make contributions to your 401(k) with *pre-tax* dollars, which means you get a dollar-for-dollar reduction in your taxable income.
- The earnings in your account are not taxed until you withdraw the money, usually at retirement, when you're in a lower tax bracket. Because your money is growing *tax-free*, it will accumulate a lot more quickly than if it was put in taxable investments, where the earnings are taxed every single year.
- Most employers chip in from 10 cents to one dollar – usually up to 6 percent of your salary – for every dollar you contribute.

Obviously, 401(k) plans have a lot of benefits. And they've improved a great deal recently, because employers, responding to new Department of Labor regulations, are now offering more investment choices and making it easier to transfer money between them.

To "max out" on your 401(k), you need to contribute as much as you possibly can. At a minimum, put enough

money in to earn the full amount of your employer's match – no matter how much the match is, it's still extra money for you. And, if you can afford it, you should also contribute *after-tax* dollars to your 401(k). Even though these contributions won't lower your taxable income, they will still grow tax-free – and that can mean tens of thousands of extra dollars for you at retirement.

Another aspect of "maxing out" on your 401(k) is the *aggressiveness* of your investment mix. Now that most employers have expanded their 401(k) selections, you should be able to choose between several funds composed of stocks, which typically offer the highest return potential of any investment. In fact, stocks have returned an average of around 10 percent a year since 1926, and nearly 13 percent annually over the past 50 years. Despite these returns, people are putting only 20 percent of their 401(k) assets into stocks, with the other 80 percent going into money-market funds and other conservative, low-yielding investments.

Of course, you don't want to have an investment mix that feels too risky to you. And if you're fairly close to retirement, you will want some more conservative investments. But if you've got many working years left, you really should tilt your 401(k) holdings toward the aggressive end. You'll have the time to make up for any short-term market downturns – and, over the long term, the market has *always* risen.

So, if you haven't started "maxing out" on your 401(k), don't delay. The earlier you start, the longer your savings will grow.

Kanojo: Ethnic accents, continued from Page 3.

hems, and pants always bag on us. Asian women tend to choose classic colors, not neons or muddy colors. Subconsciously we like simplicity. We grew up knowing our mothers had a problem finding clothes off the rack."

Ragasa says she doesn't "follow Paris or Milan. I follow my sister, my mother and the woman in the grocery store, all of whom want to look their very best when they go somewhere."

"We look for fabrics with serenity and richness, not the nondescript ones," said Fitzpatrick. "As with any culture there's the run-of-the-mill, but there are also the things worn by royalty and the wealthy. We find many [kimono cloths] that have developed rust or mold over the years, and we work around that. Sometimes we can't save the fabric, but we can save the family crests they wore."

The result, Fitzpatrick said, is styling that is "classic, uncluttered and seasonless. They are things women can wear now or 10 years from now. They are not trendy."

Kanojo's way of doing business is as unusual as its

fashions.

The cousins began selling their designs four years ago at home parties, "Tupperware-style," according to Fitzpatrick. "We didn't want to be in the malls. We wanted to know the faces of our clients and be able to respond to them."

Word of the parties spread, and soon community groups were signing up for the benefit shows that grew out of the home parties.

"We have a story to tell, a history lesson and a fashion lesson, that should be interesting for just about anyone," said Fitzpatrick. "The reason we're doing it this way is because we're afraid that might get lost in a store."

Editor's Note: Kanojo was recognized by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and had one of its Heritage Collection masterpieces on display there October 1993 to January 1994. "This was an unexpected honor for us; we were stunned," Eileen Tabata Fitzpatrick said. "The invitation was based upon a study done by the Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum, who had a multiculturalism exhibit at the Smithsonian. The museum selected Kanojo to represent the kimono era due to our uniquely clever concept of bringing our Japanese ancestral heritage forward for modern day remembrance through our fashion designs and styling."

Twin Cities JACL Kanojo Event... Hurry! Reservations due April 7

"ASIAN ACCENTS" BY KANOJO USA ❖ RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

☐ SAT., APRIL 13: # of seat(s) _____ @ \$20 each = \$ _____

(For April 13, reserved seating closest to the fashion show runway will be assigned in the order reservations are received.)

☐ SUN., APRIL 14: # of seat(s) _____ @ \$20 each = \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Sorry no refunds. Make checks payable to Twin Cities JACL. Those who wish to be seated together should submit their reservations together.
Tables seat 10 people. Requests will be accommodated in the order reservations are received.

Mail this form & payment to: Tom and Reiko Ohno
3520 Beard Curve, Bloomington, MN 55431

For reservation information: (612) 831-5869

RAFFLE!

*Benefitting the Scholarship & Operating Funds
of the Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League*

Drawings held at the

Kanojo "Asian Accents" program

Saturday & Sunday, April 13 & 14, 1996

Airport Marriott Hotel Ballroom, Bloomington

➤ You need not be present to win!

\$1 per entry; 6 entries for \$5

For information, call Cheryl Lund, (612) 884-7420.

Many thanks to our raffle prize contributors:

Chong's Oriental Grocery (ginger jar)
Great Wall Restaurants (gift certificate)
Kikugawa Restaurant (gift certificate)
Kim's Oriental Food & Gifts (50 lb. rice)
Kanojo Fashions (gift certificates)
Airport Marriott Hotel (gift certificates)
Painting by Nakasone (gallon of paint)
Saji-ya Restaurant (gift certificate)
Urban Traveler (handbag)
Yamato Imports (wood carving)

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

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