

RICE PAPER

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

JUNE 2006



President's Message by Leslie Suzukamo

The month of May was a busy one for the Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League. We're continuing to try new things and look for different ways to advance the organization's mission.

The month's biggest change was the new double-booth at the Festival of Nations, which was held in St. Paul's Xcel Center the first weekend in May this year. The feedback on the larger booth was nearly all positive. Board members and other volunteers enjoyed having the extra room to move about behind the counter and the larger display space. The bigger space gave us a chance to add new items for sale. The whimsical Sushi-Neko and Tofu Robot tee-shirts and tank tops, picked by member Jan Monson, flew off the shelves this year. Thank you Jan for your expert fashion eye!

To operate the double-booth, we handed over the food booth from last year to the Sansei-Yonsei Kai dance troupe headed by Linda Van Dooijerweert. During the four-day festival, our gross receipts came to about \$18,000 but our expenses increased with the extra rent for the additional booth and the additional items we needed to stock it, particularly since we drew down our stock at last year's festival, Treasurer Cary Yamanaka noted.

We're planning on selling more items at the Normandale Japanese garden festival upcoming in August but so far, our net income from the fair this year was about \$7,600. That's far short of last year's profit of almost \$12,900, but keep in mind the food booth last year plumped up gross sales by almost \$11,000.

This year's \$7,600 figure seems more comparable to the pre-food booth days. In 2004, we made about \$8,200 at the Festival of Nations with a single booth and the usual demonstration booth, which we also had this year. I personally think the double booth was a hit, but if we continue with the double-booth format next year, fair committee chairwoman Joyce Miyamoto said we will need more volunteers.

We could have used five volunteers on the busy Thursday instead of four, and we need four volunteers on the other days to cover the wider space at the booths, Joyce said. The board tabled discussion on how to increase the staffing next year. But as chairman for May, I'd like to extend an invitation to our members, particularly the younger folks, to pull a shift in the booth.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Chris Noonan

noonant@comcast.net

Connie Tsuchiya

ctsuchiya@mn.rr.com

TC JACL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jamie Cork

651-450-9459

Gloria Kumagai

763-377-5602

Joanne Kumagai (Membership)

763-420-6639

Joyce Miyamoto (Secretary)

651-636-3222

Carly Miyamoto Faber

651-636-3222

Rachel Matsumoto

612-827-5280

John Nakasone

651-698-3647

Lisa Shakerin (Vice President)

763-537-6829

Les Suzukamo (President - May)

651-653-0377

Cary Yamanaka (Treasurer)

952-432-2055

Peter Yamashiro

612-812-0653

Scholarship Committee holds one seat

TC JACL WEBSITE:

www.twincitiesjacl.org

Rice Paper president's report cont...

The Membership Committee, chaired by Joanne Kumagai, reported that she received 9 new leads on possible members from our outing at the San Jose Taiko performance at the Ordway Center in St. Paul on April 30.

The most enjoyable duty as chairman for the month of May for me was speaking at the annual Scholarship Banquet this year. The banquet, held May 4 at the St. Anthony Event Center in Minneapolis, awarded \$9,000 in scholarships this year. It was the first dinner I had ever attended, and seeing the students reminded me of the importance of JACL. We nurture our future leaders for this organization and our community at large through programs like this one.

I highly recommend checking out the JACL National organization's new Anti-Hate Web site (www.jacl.org/antihate/index.html). Our Hate Crimes Committee chairwoman, Jamie Cork, who is a prosecutor in the Hennepin County Attorney's office, was as impressed as I was by the thoroughness of the site. It included goals and definitions of hate crimes, listed hate crimes reported from around the country, the JACL responses on those incidents and even advice on what to do if you are a victim of a hate crime as well as reference materials.

Regarding district and national JACL news, Gloria Kumagai said the issue of making the national convention an annual event instead of every two years came up for discussion again the recent Midwest District Council meeting. The board decided we would support an annual convention as long as the district meetings that now occur in the off-years are folded into the larger annual convention to save time and money from a separate trip.

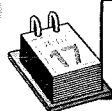
The board voted unanimously to send a letter to Gov. Tim Pawlenty in support of state aid to help preserve Fort Snelling's deteriorating "upper post," which as recently designated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of the most endangered historic places in the nation. I sent a letter to the Governor's office to that effect, with the help of education committee member Cheryl Hirata Dulas. The Education Committee had been approached by the Minnesota Historical Society, which is leading the charge on this project. In our letter, we note that between 5,000 and 6,000 second generation Japanese-Americans received intensive training in the Japanese language at Fort Snelling during World War II when the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Service Language School was transferred to the fort after outgrowing its original home at Camp Savage. Our chapter also intends to write the histories of some of those soldiers too.

We sent a \$300 check help fund the Super Senior's luncheon. Many thanks to stalwart member Sam Honda.

Finally, the board is discussing possibly changing the format of the Chrysanthemum Banquet for our 60th chapter anniversary this year. A California-based Japanese American filmmaker, Lane Nishikawa, has completed a feature length movie on the Nisei soldiers who fought in World War II for the legendary 442nd Regimental Combat Team. "Only the Brave" has been shown in selected film festivals around the country this year as Nishikawa looks for a national distributor to take the film national for general release. We are in discussions with him about showing the film here as a way to help him raise money for the final piece of his project – transferring the movie into a format that can be shown in traditional movie theaters. Nothing is set yet, but we are looking at a date sometime in late October or early November for the event. Tickets would cost roughly the same as for our traditional banquets, but we'd open the event up to the community at large as a way to both cover the costs of the movie and showcase an important part of our community's history to a wider audience.

We think this might also be a great inter-generational experience for our members, since so many of our older JACLers are from that "Greatest Generation" who remember World War II and can share their memories with their children and grandchildren. As chairman of the banquet committee again this year, I'm interested in your feedback. Drop me a line at 4517 Birch Ridge Road, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127, phone me at 651-653-0377 (home) or e-mail me at Suzukamo@comcast.net.

Rice Paper



JACL Calendar of Events

July 8, 2006, noon

Super Senior Luncheon

Grand City Buffet

St. Louis Park, MN

July 30, 2006

JACL Summer Picnic

Rosland Park Pavilion, Edina

Memberships

Membership continues to be a major program for action on the local and national level. If you know of someone who would like to join or needs information about JACL have them contact me.

Please join me in welcoming the following new members:

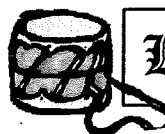
Michael Mizuhata
Glencoe, MN

Meilin Obinata
St. Paul, MN

Reiko Koyama
St. Cloud, MN

Our thanks go out to those who have renewed their memberships in recent months. Remember it is never too late to renew or to become a member of JACL.

Joanne Kumagai
Membership Chair
763-420-6639



Kogen Taiko Calendar

July 6, 5:35 pm

Hilde Outdoor Performance Center

Plymouth

July 20, 2006, 7:00 pm

City of Coon Rapids

Dam Regional Park

free outdoor performance

August 6, 2006, 6:00

City of Roseville

Roseville Central Park Amphitheater

2540 N. Lexington Ave., Roseville

August 11-13, 2006

Midwest Buddhist Temple Ginza Festival

Chicago, IL

August 20, 2006

Como Park Lantern Lighting Festival

October 1, 2006, 1:30 and 3:30

Normandale Japanese Garden

Normandale Community College

Sukiyaki Dinner

**Please consult www.kogentaiko.org for up-to-date Kogen Taiko performance and contact information.*

Rice Paper event reports

2006 FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

We had another outstanding Festival of Nations! For the past several years, the bazaar booth sales have increased every year. This year, our total sales topped out at \$16,500. The origami demonstration booth consistently averages around \$1500 in sales. Taking in \$18,000 in sales is a tremendous fundraising effort and we thank every volunteer who made it possible. After expenses and inventory, our profit will be over \$7,500, which all goes into the JACL budget for operating expenses for our other events.

This year, we had our first double booth. It was a significant extra fee and required more inventory and more volunteers, but the displays looked better, the extra tables made it easier for sales, the extra room was better for stocking inventory and the volunteers had room to move around. We may try it again next year!

Special thanks to Jan Kiriara Monson who always scouts out new products for our booth. This year, we sold tote bags and tee shirts from Spicy Brown. Jan not only found the vendor, she selected the products and made the displays. They were a huge success with requests for more!

Bobbleheads, small Buddha statues and hachimakis were popular, and parasols and lanterns always sell well. We had a good selection of dishware and ordered enough to sell at other festivals.

Thanks to all the bazaar booth volunteers who made this another successful year:

Jan Monson	Lucy Kiriara
Jan Kurata	Chris Noonan
Tom Scott	Diana Scott
Sharon Miyamoto	Chuck Tatsuda
Wesley Kawakami	Tim Thompson & Mari
Cheryl Hirata-Dulas	Carly Miyamoto Faber
Les Suzukamo	Alison Suzukamo
Lisa Tsuchiya	Rachel Matsumoto
Joanne Kumagai	Nancy Kumagai
Gail Wong	Ben Wong
Mark LeGeros	Sam Shimada
Judy Murakami	Stephanie & Kylie Noonan
George Murakami	Sudie Hoffman
Connie Fukuda	Sachi Williamson
John Nakasone	Jim Faber
Peggy Yamanaka	



A continuing thank you to John Nakasone, who generously allows us to store our inventory at his Painting by Nakasone business site.

Joyce Miyamoto and Cary Yamanaka, Bazaar Booth Co-Chairs

Rice Paper event reports

Origami and Ribbon Fish Booth at the FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

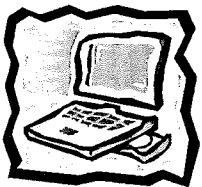
As in the past, Lil Honda and I co-chaired the origami and ribbon fish demonstration booth. The booth did a brisk business this year with volunteers who demonstrated the two art forms and sold the pre-made inventory. In January, both Lil and I turn our homes into origami and ribbon fish factories to ensure a good supply of items that can be sold at the Festival of Nations. The colorful ribbon fish and paper-folded items sell fast when they are on a stick! Interested visitors watched how to do the various paper and ribbon folds. The daring ones tried to make their own. Booth volunteers have fun working with each other and meeting new people. We hope to repeat our successful year in 2007!

Many thanks to the following persons who helped make the booth such a success: Jean Takeshita, Sakai Hinataya, Ken Oyanagi, George Murikami, Matt Walters, Rachel Matsumoto, Jim and Yukiko Chladek, and Sam, Ben, Alex, and Maddie Honda.



Rachel Matsumoto will be taking over as co-chair with me as Lil would like to cut back on those responsibilities. A huge thank you to Lil for her creativity and commitment to the booth as co-chair for so many years.

Gloria Kumagai



HELP WANTED! TC JACL is looking for someone to disseminate news and event information to the membership via e-mail. The list is confidential, and is used only to relay relevant JACL, community news and events announcements. Cheryl Hirata-Dulas will assist in setting up the mailing list. Anyone interested in volunteering for this important post, please contact Gloria Kumagai at 763-377-5602.

The Japanese American Veterans of Minnesota (JAVM) held its annual memorial service on Monday, May 22 at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. JAVM President, Edwin (Bud) Nakasone gave introductory remarks, followed by a tribute by Chaplain Lieutenant Colonel Daniel E. Harrison. After a moment of silence, Mary Tsuchiya and John Takekawa read the names of forty-six deceased Japanese American veterans being honored and remembered. Msg. Eric Powell, senior chaplain assistant NCO at Fort Snelling gave the benediction, and attendees decorated gravesites with flowers. A luncheon followed at the New Century Buffet in Bloomington

Mary Tsuchiya and John Takekawa reading the honor roll call with Edwin Nakasone listening in remembrance.



Msg. Eric Powell, Lt. Col. Daniel Harrison, and veteran Tom Hara.



MIS veterans Seiki Oshiro and Robert Teragawa

Photos courtesy of Cheryl Hirata-Dulas



JACL sponsored a table at the **2006 Annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Dinner**, which is organized by the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans. The dinner was held on May 13, 2006 at the Minneapolis Hyatt and was a memorable event. Cheryl Dulas, Rachel Matsumoto, Joanne Kumagai, Connie Fukuda, Sachi Williamson, Carly Miyamoto Faber, Joyce Miyamoto, Meilin Obinata, Sidney Desouza and Sylvia Desouza had seats at the JACL table. It was a great evening spent celebrating and appreciating the many Asian cultures represented in Minnesota.

Joyce Miyamoto

Second Annual National JACL Credit Union Dinner Banquet and Town Meeting

February 26, 2006, Buffet King, St. Paul

Past TC JACL CU board members:

Front row (l-r): Ed Yoshikawa, Sam Honda, Dr. George Nishida, Warren Kyono

Back row (l-r): Terrell Nagata (National JACL CU President), James Mizuhata, Ron Hirabayashi, George Murakami, George Yoshino and Mikio Kiriara



Photos courtesy of Cheryl Hirata-Dulas

2006 High School Graduates Honored by JACL

The Twin Cities JACL's 43rd Annual Scholarship Awards Program was held on Thursday, May 4, 2006 at The St. Anthony Event Centre in Minneapolis, MN.

The evening began with dinner followed by greetings and introductions by the May board president, Les Suzukamo. Kimi Hara provided a historical perspective of the chapter's scholarship activities and provided recognition for past and present scholarship committee members including Lucy Kirihaara, Reiko Ohno, and Sally Sudo. Fred Tsuchiya acted as the evening's Master of Ceremonies. Matthew Carlson provided musical entertainment and Natalie Nakasone spoke about the impact that JACL has had in her life.

Scholarship awards totaled \$9000.00. The following scholarships were awarded:

Kimi Hara Scholarship / Tom Ohno Memorial Scholarship (presented by Kimi Hara and Reiko Ohno) – Natalie Nakasone
George Yamane Memorial Scholarship – David Motoyoshi
Phyllis Kimitch Memorial Scholarship (presented by Mike Kimitch) – Christine Sako
Earl Tanbara Memorial Scholarship (presented by Tom Kurihara) – Matthew Carlson
Tom and Martha Oye Memorial Scholarship (presented by Asa Oye) – Danielle Tanaka
Ethel Umeda Memorial Scholarship – Rachel Girard
George Hayano Memorial Scholarship (presented by Jane Hayano) – Mariko Yoshimura Rank
Tomo Kosobayashi Memorial Scholarship – Tyler Kempton
Susan Matsumoto Memorial Scholarship (presented by Helen Tsuchiya) – Kay Satoh



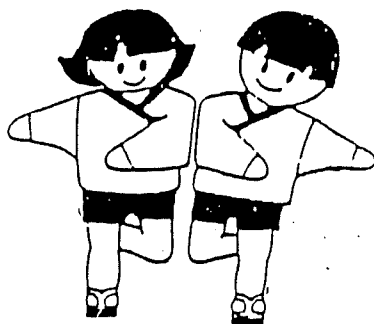
Congratulations and best wishes to the 2006 graduates!

If you know of any 2007 high school graduates, please contact Pam Dagoberg at 763-557-2946 or dagob001@tc.umn.edu. Local scholarship applications will be sent in January. JACL membership is required of scholarship applicants. Some of the known 2007 high school graduates are: Mara Fink (St. Louis Park High School), Jerry Judkins, Paul Kirihaara (Bloomington Jefferson High School), Benjamin Lubet (St. Paul Central High School), Jonathan Morimoto (Bloomington Jefferson High School), Emily Takekawa (Eden Prairie High School)

Graduates from left to right:

Kay Satoh, Matthew Carlson, Rachel Girard, David Motoyoshi, Tyler Kempton, Danielle Tanaka, Christine Sako, Mariko Yoshimura Rank, Natalie Nakasone

Rice Paper



TOMODACHI

SUPER SENIOR LUNCHEON

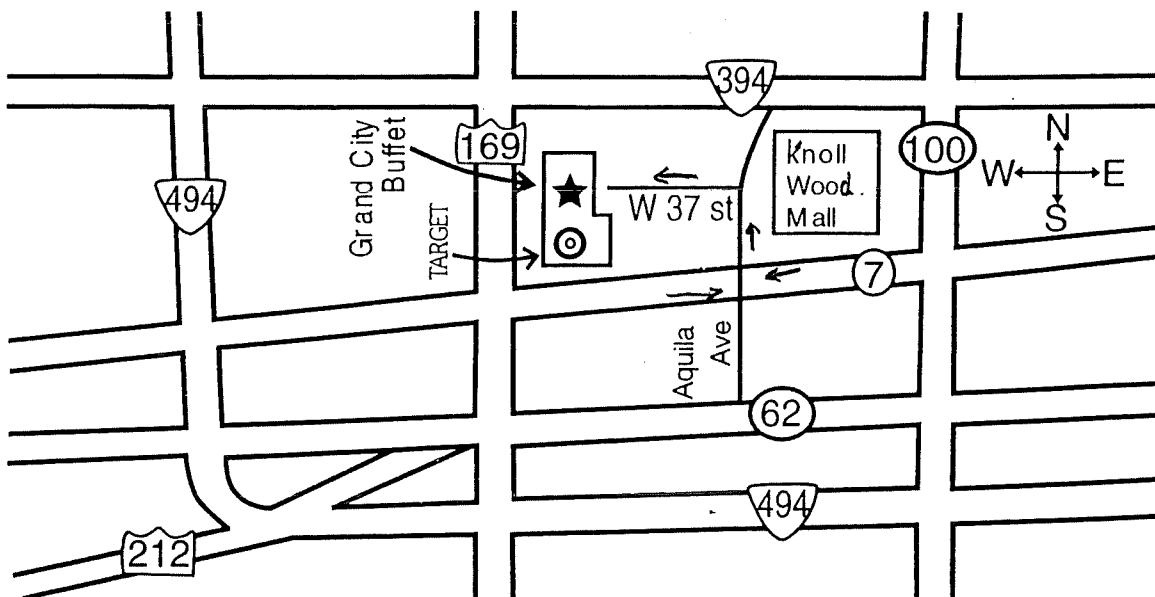
Saturday, July 8th, 12 noon

Grand City Buffet, 8912 Highway 7, St. Louis Park, MN
(northeast corner of Hwy 7 and Hwy 169. Go into Knollwood Mall
from Hwy 7 on Aquila ave. and turn left, the buffet is next to Target
Store.

This event is sponsored by TC JACL, TC Buddhist Association and the Nikkei Project. If you are 75 plus years old (75 in year 2006) you will be our guest. Spouses, Nikkei Project, TCBA and JACL members under 75 years old, you are welcome to join our Super Seniors. Buffet lunch is \$8.75 includes tax, tip and drinks (hot tea, ice tea or pop)

For reservations call Sam Honda (651) 429-3410

Note: Individual invitation will not be sent out this year. This event will be handled like other events..... thru newsletter, flyers, and friends.



Names and faces

Martin R. Asao of Troop 206 of the Boy Scouts of America, chartered from the Trinity Lutheran Church, Long Lake, was honored



Martin R. Asao

for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Martin began scouting as a Tiger Cub and advanced through the ranks, earning 25 merit badges.

One requirement to receive the Eagle award is a service project benefiting the community that is planned, organized and implemented by the scout. In fulfillment of his service project, Martin worked with

the DNR and was responsible for the building and placement of wood duck nesting houses along the Luce Line Trail, Orono.

Martin is a 2004 graduate of Orono High School and is currently a student at North Hennepin Community College.

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WHITE BEAR PRESS/ADONIS HEIGHTS PRESS

Retired professor establishes Century scholarship

Determined to engage students in the study of history at Century College, professor Edwin "Bud" Nakasone of White Bear Lake, who worked at the college from 1967 to 1999, was well known for re-enacting various historical scenes in full costume. He sometimes donned the uniform of a Japanese Zero pilot, for example, and acted out the dramatic moments prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

In his retirement from the college, Nakasone is still determined to engage students — this time through the establishment of a student scholarship to encourage Asian American students to enter the field of education.

Called the Malsukichi and Ushii Nakasone Scholarship, the fund honors Nakasone's parents, who were farmers in Hawaii. The Nakasone scholarship is one of 13 new scholarships set up this year by the Century College Foundation.

"I was a child of the Great Depression, and we were very poor growing up," said Nakasone. "We had 10 kids in our family, and we couldn't go to restaurants, for example. My dad was a non-English speaker, but he believed strongly in education. He knew education was the lightning rod that could change our future. He always



Nakasone

advised us to go as far as we possibly could with our education. This is the advice I want to pass on."

Nakasone said over the years he has advised thousands of students to continue their education. Students who are refugees, immigrants or whose parents are immigrants need extra encouragement, he said. Century College now has more Asian students than any other institution in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, but Nakasone remembers when the first Hmong students began attending Century.

"I kept telling them to go on in their education because it would change their lives," said Nakasone. "Many of them did continue, and they are very successful. America was good to me, and it has been good to them."

Nakasone said he loved teaching at Century, and he loved the Century students. His World War II history courses were especially popular, particularly since Nakasone was an eyewitness to the bombing of Wheeler Army Airfield near Pearl Harbor.

"I was a young kid and sitting in my kitchen, eating Kellogg's Corn Flakes at 7:55 a.m. when the first bombs fell on Dec. 7, 1941," said Nakasone. "One plane flew over our house, and I could see the pilot. I was very much afraid because I knew how tense things were between Japan and America. It was the most impactful day of the 20th century."

In addition to World War II history, Nakasone also taught Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Indian and Southeast Asian history courses at Century.

He is the author of several history books, including the popular "The Nisei Soldier," and "Essays on WWII and the Korean War," and is currently working on the third edition of "The Nisei Soldier." He will continue to dedicate all royalty proceeds to the scholarship honoring his parents.

Nakasone has traveled extensively. He has been around the world three times and has earned two Fulbright Scholarships, and studied in Japan and India. He also taught Japanese students for five months at the Minnesota State University-Akita in 1992.

Currently he teaches history and government to American sailors aboard combat ships as a Central Texas College adjunct profes-

sor under the Navy College PACE Program. This work has taken him to Hawaii, Mexico, Japan, the Persian Gulf, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Aden, Djibouti, Oman and Australia.

Nakasone spent summers in the military when he taught at Century, and he is now a retired colonel in the U.S. Army. He taught and served as the Commandant of the 5th U.S. Army Area Intelligence School, then located at Fort McCoy in Wisconsin. Nakasone and his wife, Mary, are parents to two sons — John, who owns and operates a painting and decorating company in St. Paul, and Paul, an Army colonel currently serving in Iraq.

"I believe in community colleges," said Nakasone. "They are a grand way for people to stay at home and gradually work themselves into their education. People who didn't think they were college material are overjoyed to realize that they can be scholars. I know so many student success stories and hope the scholarship will create more."

Submitted by Nancy Livingston, director of community relations and college advancement for Century College.

When did customer service become an oxymoron?

I am sitting by the telephone, seething and willing it to ring. Three weeks ago, I purchased a Mother's Day bouquet to be delivered by a prominent local florist. I heard about online flower delivery scams, so I intentionally went to the store to order in person and felt comforted knowing Mom would receive her big bouquet the Saturday before the special day.

Mother's Day came and went and my mom remained flower-less. I have called the store and their customer service department twice so far. Each time I was told they were checking into the situation and will call me back. I notice my credit card has already been charged. Still I wait, as my telephone receiver gathers cobwebs.

Customer service, these days, sounds more and more to me like an oxymoron. An incongruent phrase, just like "jumbo shrimp," "plastic glasses" and "head butt."

Two weeks ago, my son and I ate brunch at a new restaurant

in Eden Prairie. The next day, we were both keeled over with what we thought was the stomach flu. He missed two days of school and a baseball game. When I found out the relatives who ate with us were also suspiciously ill, I called the restaurant.

The manager told me their staff was sick and took my name and number. Now I am three pounds lighter and my son's mattress sits in the garage waiting for large garbage collection day. I have yet to hear a word of concern or explanation from the restaurant. I contacted the health department, who indicated I tested positive with a common food-borne illness that is the result of unsanitary conditions... lovely.



CONNIE TSUCHIYA
Guest Columnist

I do know that outstanding customer service exists. Over spring break, I went to visit my sister who is living in Japan. While in Tokyo, arguably the busiest city in the world, we stopped to ask directions from a store clerk. She accompanied us to the street, gave us accurate directions to our next destination and then bowed reverently as if we had done her a favor. We had not purchased anything at her store.

Then, as I was waiting to meet my family at Takashimaya, a Japanese department store, I watched in awe the way people who were shopping for pillows were handled by the sales staff. Each customer was greeted by a white gloved attendant and brought to a bed, where they could try a freshly covered sample of their chosen pillow in the prone position.

The same day, my sister purchased a navigation system for her car. It is a must for the complex street structure in Tokyo. After reviewing the

choices, she made a purchase. Then the salesman proceeded to open the box and patiently explain how to set up each accessory.

I, on the other hand, recently stood clinging to a sandal and looking about hopefully at the shoe department of a local department store. After being ignored awhile, my peppery gray hair was turning even more salty white, so I put it down and left.

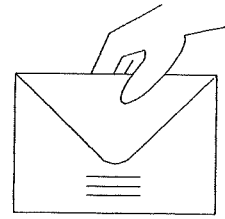
I can chalk up many things to bad luck or cultural differences. Sometimes people get sick from restaurant food. And I would never expect humble bowing or gift wrapping as a courtesy at my local mall. But I do expect someone to acknowledge me as a customer when there has been a problem. And I'd really like my mom to receive the flowers I've ordered on Mother's Day, without having to travel 6,000 miles from my hometown to get it done.

Connie Tsuchiya of Eden Prairie is a frequent contributor to the Sun-Current.

Rice Paper

Testimonial at the JACL/OCA Leadership Conference

Leilani Savitt, our MDC Youth Chair, gave me permission to share her very personal and eloquent reflections on the recent Leadership Conference. (If anyone asks about the need for JACL or the relevancy of its activities, Leilani's letter provides additional examples.) - Ron Katsuyama -
MDC Governor



Hi Ron,

I want to deeply thank you for nominating me to attend this year's JACL/OCA Leadership Conference. The Conference was incredibly life changing for me as well as for the other participants. I was skeptical at going in the first place because I did not feel like I was involved in my community enough to attend a prestigious conference such as the Leadership Conference. As I got to talking with others, I was surprised by the number of similar experiences we had shared in our fight for APA issues and in keeping the organization going.

I know sometimes I struggle with being in an organization such as JACL because of my HAPA identity and because of where I live geographically. When I lived in the Twin Cities area, I was able to be much more involved in educating and understanding the issues that arise in the APA community. I often don't have the opportunity to do civil rights work in Madison.

Before the conference, I had lost a lot of hope in the future of JACL. The events I planned were a bust. Encouraging chapter presidents to get a youth on the chapter board also seemed to fail. As youth chair, I really struggled to see why youth cared anymore which reflected a bigger problem for me. I continually asked myself, If they don't care, why should I?

I think coming back from this conference, I realized that even if other people don't care...it always has been my civic duty to be involved in politics. Both sides of my family history was drastically changed because discriminatory laws were passed. This conference clearly told me that there is much more work to be done. We are still fighting against the wrongs that have occurred against minority groups in the USA. At this conference, I learned the mechanisms that I can use even being in a place in Madison that will allow me to bring about change. This conference taught me that no matter where you are, you can make a difference by participating in organizations such as JACL. There was one speaker from the Anti-Defamation League who said there are three types of people in the world, there are "people who make things happen, there are people who watch what happens, and there are people who ask "what happened"? I hope I can always say that I am a person from the first category - someone who makes things happen.

It was an honor to attend this conference on behalf of the MDC.
Thank you for this amazing opportunity.

Sincerely,
Leilani

Nak Nak News by John Nakasone

Greetings all! Did you see Peter Kiriara on the February cover of Mpls/St. Paul Magazine? He was recognized as one of the 60 hipsters who keeps us on the cutting edge. They mentioned "Moose and Sadie's, Jet Set, and Bev's Wine Bar" as cool places to hang out at!

Congratulations to Jodie Tanaka who was elected new chair person in January of the Asian-Pacific Minnesotans Council. She is the first woman and first private sector chair.

Hats off to Reiko Koyama (Studie Hoffmann's daughter), who received the 2006 Initiative Foundation's Outstanding Youth Volunteer Award. Reiko is a junior at St. Cloud Tech High.

Condolences to the Hoffmann family for the great loss of retired Colonel Spady Hoffman who served in WWII in the MIS as a "Yankee Samurai" and is featured in Bud Nakasone's book "The Nisei Soldier". Spady was a veteran of three wars: WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.

Speaking of WWII, our very active TC JACL Education Committee is busy at work developing curriculum for K-12 students about the Military Intelligence School and the language school at Camp Savage and Fort Snelling for inclusion in the social studies teaching requirement adopted by the Minnesota legislature under MN History and WWII.

Japanese American Veterans remembered their fallen brothers and all the Twin Cities Japanese American Veterans who have served for us at a Fort Snelling Memorial service at their annual Memorial Day Celebration on Monday 5/22/06. Flowers were placed at approximately 46 gravesites.

Speaking of Fort Snelling, President Les Suzukamo sent a letter off to Governor Pawlenty asking that he support the Minnesota Historical Society's request for funds to preserve and revitalize the Fort Snelling complex. This letter followed a KARE-11 news story on 5/11/06 about Fort Snelling upper post being designated as one of the most endangered historic places in the nation.

And speaking of Les Suzukamo, I would like to share with you the wonderful speech that Les delivered as President of JACL to our recent graduating class of JACL youth. Over the years I have had the pleasure of attending this event a number of times and am always impressed with the caliber of the event, and the moving nature of scholarships being given by the donator and their families to the deserving recipients. I am also impressed with the strength of our youth, and found this class of graduates to be especially accomplished. This was definitely a group of over-achievers who I am glad I

did not have to compete against on the grading curve when I was in high school.

Here is what Les told our graduating seniors:

Good evening and welcome to the 2006 scholarship banquet of the Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League.

I'm Les Suzukamo, chairman of the JACL board of directors this month. I should explain: we have a chair position that rotates each month among the board, so it is my honor this month to congratulate the scholarship winners on behalf of our board.

I want to thank tonight's scholarship presenters. It is wonderful to see you all tonight.

I also would like to thank the families whose memorials donated in the names of their loved ones make our scholarships possible. You will hear these gifts presented individually later tonight. We salute their generosity.

Finally, I would like to make one more group acknowledgement if I may: the families of our scholars tonight.

Your parents, your siblings and your ancestors, stretching back generations and across an ocean, all are a part of you — though you probably don't think about it often. I am guessing that some of you — maybe all of you — at one time or another have looked at your mother or your father and denied that you could have emerged out of the same gene pool. I know I did when I looked upon my parents at your age.

I also know that as I have gotten older, I have found, to my horror, that I look more and more like my father with each passing day and each gained pound, and when I open my mouth, it's my mother's voice that comes out. It's the worst of all possible combinations.

So be nice to your parents. Their time of revenge upon you is coming down the road in a few decades.

That's why I bring up family tonight. These scholarships are not an end in and of themselves. They are not a prize.

They are a starting point. A launching pad. An endowment for the future, yours and ours.

When your great-grand parents (or great-great-grandparents, maybe for some of you) walked off the boat 100 or so years ago, they were making a statement. They were starting anew,

Les Suzukamo's scholarship banquet speech, continued on next page.

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Les Suzukamo's scholarship banquet speech, continued from previous page.

embarking on new lives in a new country. They were the first to leave Japan, the first to arrive in America and they called themselves so, Issei. First generation.

When your grandparents, the Nisei, founded the Japanese American Citizens League in 1929, they were fighting discrimination. They wanted a better life here. They wanted a future for their children, your parents.

We, the Sansei and Yonsei, now hope to get you on the road to your futures.

I know that speeches like this sometimes make scholarship winners squirm a little inside.

You're thinking, "Man, I don't need all this heavy guilt stuff. I just want to go to college, get out of the house for awhile, screw around a bit, you know?"

Relax. You do not have to have grandiose dreams of saving the world — though, there's nothing wrong with that.

You do not have to find the cure for cancer, design the rocket ship for the manned mission to Mars or invent the next Google.

I'm even going to tell you something that's going to make your parents angry: you don't have to go to medical school! Though it would make your mothers really, really happy if you did. Just so you know.

All you have to do is become.

Become a poet, a painter, a plumber, a professor. Become someone who wants a lot of money or wants to give away lots of money (by the way, we accept endowment checks).

Become happier, smarter and more ambitious.

Do something dumb every once in a while, just so you know you're not playing it too safe.

And know that no matter what happens, whatever you become, someone believed in you, even if we and you have no idea what that means right now.

That's what these awards are really about. They're a little vote of confidence in you. A little investment in the future, yours and ours.

Thank you and please join me in congratulating this year's JACL scholars.