

JAPANESE AMERICAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S 2008 ANNUAL REPORT .  
DISCUSSION

**GENERAL.**

In his year end message to JAVA members President Robert Nakamoto said JAVA membership base is growing, its program has made an impact and its finance is sound. The report presented below and the attached 2008 chronology support his conclusion. JAVA was established in 1993 as a veterans social organization by World War II veterans. In 2003 the leadership mantle was transferred to the post WW II generation. COL Bert Mizusawa, USAR (now BG), West Point graduate and Korean Cold War veteran, expanded JAVA's charter to become a nationwide organization, to focus on veterans issues independently and in concert with other veterans organizations, and to perpetuate the legacy of the Nisei WW II generation. He got JAVA accredited to the Department of Veterans Affairs, established the organizational framework so volunteers work at their homes thereby saving on overhead expenses, and outlined his mission. Robert Nakamoto, a Korean war veteran who succeeded Mizusawa in 2007, and his fellow elected officers all represented the post WW II generation thus ensuring continuity of JAVA. Nakamoto has built JAVA into a highly visible national organization respected by its peers and the Japanese American veterans community. The large voluntary donations JAVA has received, the large number who applied for or converted regular membership to life membership, and the recognition JAVA has received, including from President George Bush on two occasions in the past two years, are hallmarks of Nakamoto's leadership.

**JAVA'S MISSION**

JAVA's principal mission is to perpetuate the legacy of the World War II generation. More specifically, it is to describe to the public the Japanese American experience during WW II and how this has impacted on future generations.

**JAVA'S ACTIVITIES TO ADVANCE NISEI VETERAN LEGACY**

**Education Program.** JAVA, in partnership with the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) and the Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC), are working closely with the Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland, and the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), Virginia, to provide students with accurate information on the Japanese American experience during World War II. In addition to a teachers training program, JAVA provides speakers to speak to high school students, educational printed material and DVD. JAVA and NJAMF are working with MCPS to produce a DVD on Japanese American experience during WW II for distribution to 25 high schools in MCPS., If successful, this educational DVD is believed to have potential value beyond MCPS. JAVA independently or jointly with NJAMF spoke at 24 venues during 2008. JAVA issued 27 press releases, which were sent to some 17 Asian American newspapers and Japanese American veterans organizations. Selected releases are sent to

the national press. The topics relate mainly to accomplishments by Japanese Americans in and out of the armed forces. National TV, writers and journalists have sought our support for information, candidates for interview, and advice. JAVA has supported Billy Tucci, prominent creator and artist of the six series *Sgt Rock: Lost Battalions*, which features the 442<sup>nd</sup> rescue of elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 141<sup>st</sup> Regiment, 36<sup>th</sup> Texas Division in the Vosges Mountains of eastern France in late October 1944. JAVA speakers consists of the following: Yeichi Kelly Kuwayama (442<sup>nd</sup>), Joe Ichiuji (442<sup>nd</sup>), Norman Ikari (442<sup>nd</sup>), Terry Shima (442<sup>nd</sup>), Grant Hirabayashi (MIS), Grant Ichikawa (MIS), Warren Tsuneishi (MIS), Internment Camps (Mary Murakami, Betty Taira)

**Memorial Day Flowers.** JACL WDC and JAVA jointly held a Memorial Day program on May 25, 2008 at the Arlington Cemetery to pay respects to our fallen comrades. Our activity consists of (1) a formal program at the Pavilion near the Columbarium, where speeches are made and a US Army bugler sounds TAPS; (2) placement of flowers at the gravesites of over 60 Japanese Americans and Caucasian officers who served in the 442nd, are interred, and (3) the laying of a wreath in a dignified ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown. The following day, a national holiday, JAVA participated in two events. In the morning JAVA participated in the Department of Defense-sponsored program at the Arlington Cemetery where the US President placed the national wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown and addressed the nation in the Amphitheater. In the afternoon JAVA participated in the American Veterans Center's annual National Memorial Day March down Constitution Avenue. JAVA recognized that in participating in these events it is representing the thousands of Japanese Americans and Asian American veterans across the nation. Also, the march down Constitution Avenue is symbolic because on July 15, 1946 the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, fresh from its return from Italy, marched down Constitution Ave and ended at the Ellipse, the outer south lawn of the White House, where President Harry Truman reviewed the 442nd soldiers and said "you fought the enemy abroad and prejudice at home and you won".

**Oral History.** Having completed virtually all oral history interviews of WW II veterans, the project has shifted its emphasis to interview the post WW II veterans. Four post WW II and one WW II veterans were interviewed. The WW II veteran was Senator Daniel K. Akaka, whose interview consumed two hours. The new chair is Dr. Warren Minami. The interview package is archived at the Library of Congress Oral History Project, which is mandated by the US Congress.

**National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Project.** The 100th Battalion-442nd RCT Veterans and Military Intelligence Service (MIS), Hawaii, and JAVA have a joint program to digitize all the data in NARA that pertain to the 100th, 442nd, and MIS. The volume of the data is huge, the research is tedious, and the transfer of the information to an electronic database is time consuming. The data will be stored at JAVA website and Hawaii. The significance of this project is twofold: (1) when completed, the information will be

accessible to any inquirer electronically (i.e via personal computer) from anywhere in the world and (2) it will increase researchers interest in the Japanese American World War II experience.

**Scholarships.** In 2008 JAVA awarded four scholarships of \$1,000 each from the Major Orville Shirey Scholarship Fund [he was the intelligence officer of 442nd Regimental Combat Team); Jack Tashiro Scholarship Fund [he served in the Military Intelligence Service], Douglas Ishio Memorial Scholarship Fund [he is the son of COL Phil Ishio, founder-president of JAVA], and the Gene Takahashi Memorial Scholarship Fund [he is a Korean War hero]. These scholarships were established by the respective families.

**Veterans Day Program.** JAVA participated in two programs on November 11, 2008. In the morning JAVA President and color bearers attended the Arlington Cemetery program that was sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs. JAVA was recognized over the PA system. We are aware that by our participation in this event we are representing Japanese American and Asian American veterans across the land. In the afternoon, JAVA and NJAMF jointly held a program at the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism, located near the US Capitol Building. This program honored all veterans, including Japanese American veterans.

**US Air Force and Japanese Americans.** During WW II only 5 Japanese American served in the US Army Air Corps as gunners. Two of them said they “had to fight like hell” to stay in. No Japanese Americans served as pilots, navigators or bombardiers. The reason for this situation was due to racial prejudice and discrimination. Japanese Canadians served as pilots in the Royal Canadian Air Force. The question of loyalty having been settled by the Japanese American WW II generation, opportunities for the post WW II generation opened up. By the time of the Vietnam War there would be some 35 Japanese Americans serving in combat aircrafts as pilots and navigators. 5 of them were guests as *Hanoi Hilton*. Bob Kan, an F-4 fighter pilot during the Vietnam War, is writing a manuscript of Japanese Americans who served as gunners during WW II and who served in the cockpits of military aircrafts as pilots and navigators during the post WW II periods. Japanese Americans demonstrated they could compete with their peers in USAF.

**Recognition.** At the Asia Pacific Heritage Month program at the White House on May 1, 2008 (1) 6 JAVA veterans met privately with President George Bush in the Blue Room, (2) were subsequently given seats of honor in the East Room ceremony, and (3) listened to the President’s tribute to the bravery of members of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team and the patriotism of Ben Kuroki. On June 24 JAVA Honorary Chair, Senator Daniel Inouye, and JAVA received the Martin Luther King Keeping the Dream Alive Award from President/Founder Wayne Jennings of the New Hampshire Cultural Diversity Awareness Council of Manchester, NH in a special ceremony at the US Senate building. On November

6, five hundred students of the Spark Matsunaga Elementary School performed in a musical program to pay tribute to veterans, especially JAVA veterans present.

JAVA presented the *COURAGE, HONOR, PATRIOTISM* Award, a plaque, to Ambassador Ryozo Kato of Japan for his role in building a strong relationship between the Government of Japan and Japanese Americans. Also, 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary Yudai Ueno of the Embassy of Japan was awarded the JAVA Certification of Distinction for his role in supporting JAVA endeavors.

**Partnerships.** JAVA has partnerships with the following organizations:  
**Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC)** for the Teachers Training Programs in Maryland and Virginia and for the newly created National Japanese American Veterans Conference.  
**National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF)** for the Annual Freedom Walk, Veterans Day Program at the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism, and appropriate speaking engagements.  
**Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) Washington, DC** for Memorial Day Program at Arlington Cemetery.  
**Japan America Society of Washington, DC** for the Washington, DC Cherry Blossom Festival (*Sakura Matsuri*). and  
**442 Veterans Hawaii & MIS Veterans Hawaii** for the National Archives digitizing project.

**Administrative:**

**Communications with members:** JAVA headquarters communicates with its national members primarily through its quarterly newsletter, *JAVA ADVOCATE*, its website ([www.javadc.org](http://www.javadc.org)), the twice weekly electronic bulletin commonly referred to as the "Round Robin", and occasional postal mail and telephone contact with those members who are without email capability. Like other organizations, members with email capability have the benefit of getting real time information.

**Membership:** There were 49 new members in 2008, 22 of who applied for life membership and 27 for regular membership.

**Donations.** Donations, unsolicited, for 2008 was \$5,444.86. In addition, Mrs Kyoko Tsuboi Taubkin donated a large amount of New York Times stock for JAVA's use to promote the Japanese American World War II legacy.

Respectfully Submitted,  
/s/  
Terry Shima, Executive Director  
December 31, 2008

Attachment: Executive Director 2008 Annual Report (chronology)

JAPANESE AMERICAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S 2008 ANNUAL REPORT  
CHRONOLOGY - HIGHLIGHTS

**JANUARY 2008**

- 9 – Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC), National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) and Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) jointly held a teachers' training program at Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland. 17 teachers from Maryland and Virginia participated.
- 19 – JAVA annual meeting lunch, Harvest Moon Restaurant, Falls Church, VA. MG Thomas Bostic, USA, Commanding General, US Army Recruiting Command was the principal speaker.
- 21 – New Hampshire Cultural Diversity Awareness Council, Manchester, NH, invited two JAVA members to speak at its Martin Luther King's Keeping the Dream Alive Award Dinner.

**FEBRUARY 2008**

- 7 – JAVA speakers spoke at Springbrook High School, Montgomery County, MD
- 19 – JAVA speakers spoke at Gaithersburg High School, Gaithersburg, MD
- 25 – JAVA speakers spoke at Wheaton, High School, Wheaton, MD

**MARCH 2008**

- 8 – Executive Council Meeting. Base Technologies, McLean, VA (Bob Nakamoto's office)
- 13 – Asian American veterans representatives were introduced to and received briefings from Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary James A. Adkins and Deputy Secretary Wilbert B. Forbes. Executive Director represented JAVA. Dr. Warren Minami arranged the meeting.
- 19 - JAVA speakers were invited by Springbrook High School, Montgomery County, MD to participate in talks by Japanese WW II kamikaze pilots.

**APRIL 2008**

- 5 – NJAMF and JAVA jointly held the Freedom Walk Program at the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism.
- 9 – JAVA invited by the Philippine Embassy to participate in a flag raising ceremony to honor Filipino veterans.
- 12 – JAVA President and Executive Director spoke at Vietnam Veterans of America conference, Silver Spring, MD.

- 12 – Two JAVA veterans spoke at Library of Congress Veterans History Project seminar.
- 12 – JAVA has booth at Annual Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, DC. Space and tent were provided by the Japan America Society of Washington, DC.
- 13 – JAVA speaker spoke at United Methodist Church, Connecticut Ave, NW, WDC.
- 14-15 – Oral History interview of Senator Daniel K. Akaka. 2 hours, one hour each day.
- 16 – White House invited JAVA to the White House south lawn to participate in the welcoming of Pope Benedict.
- 17 - JAVA speakers spoke at Bryant High School, Alexandria, VA
- 18 – JAVA speakers spoke at Brunswick High School, Frederick County, MD
- 24 – JAVA speakers, Paul Y. Tani and Chosei Kuge, participated in Rocky Run Middle School's, Chantilly, VA, Oral History Day for the fourth year. They were featured on NBC Washington, DC news.

### **MAY 2008**

- 1 – President George Bush, in the White House East Room Asia Pacific American Heritage Month program, paid special tribute to Japanese Americans who served in combat during World War II. JAVA's 442<sup>nd</sup>, 100<sup>th</sup> veterans and Ben Kuroki were seated on the front row.
- 2 – Following the showing of the film entitled *Ben Kuroki: Most Honorable Son* at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, Ben spoke to a packed auditorium.
- 3 – Ben Kuroki had lunch with JAVA members at the China Garden, Rosslyn, VA.
- 14 – Grant Ichikawa, MIS, was one of 5 veterans interviewed by Kennedy and Green Communications of Richmond, VA for the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, which is producing an educational DVD to be distributed to schools in Virginia.
- 14 – Kintaro Hamashige, JAVA member, discussed Japanese American WW II experience with FBI New York office.
- 15 – JAVA presented the ***HONOR, COURAGE, PATRIOTISM*** Award, a plaque, to Ambassador Ryoza Kato of Japan at the Embassy of Japan. He was recognized for his role in building close relationship between the Government and people of Japan and the Japanese Americans.
- 16 – JAVA speaker spoke at US Army Judge Advocate General's office, Ballston.

- 17 – JAVA Quarterly lunch. Harvest Moon Restaurant. Scholarship Awards (4)
- 19 – JAVA veterans honored by US Army Materiel Command, Fort Belvoir, VA
- 20 – JAVA speakers spoke at National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), Reston, VA.
- 25 – JACL and JAVA hold joint program at Arlington Cemetery to mark Memorial Day: Program at Pavilion near Columbarium, laying flowers at over 60 gravesites, laying wreath at Tomb of the Unknown, Lunch at China Garden, Rosslyn. Guest speakers were MAJ Kay Wakatake, USA and George Joe Sakato, Medal of Honor recipient.
- 26 – Morning: Arlington Cemetery. Participation in DOD-sponsored program at the Amphitheater, including color guards. The President addressed the nation.  
2:00 PM: JAVA contingent marched in American Veterans Center 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Memorial Day Parade down Constitution Ave, Washington, DC.

### **JUNE 2008**

- 5 - Participation in 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Unity Day Program at 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory, Baltimore.
- 14 – Executive Council Meeting. Base Technologies
- 17 – JAVA speaker spoke at Rotary Club luncheon at Kenwood Country Club, Chevy Chase, MD.
- 23 – JAVA speakers spoke at EDS Corporation, Herndon, VA.
- 23 – Grant Ichikawa attended the Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) conference at the New York Marriott Hotel at Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn, New York. FAPAC was established in 1985 by Federal and District governments. Its president is Charles Fan of the District Government. JAVA was invited by Ron Sagudan, of Center for Minority Veterans of Department of Veterans Affairs,
- 24 – Senator Daniel Inouye and JAVA received the Martin Luther King Keeping the Dream Alive Award from the New Hampshire Cultural Diversity Awareness Council, Manchester, NH at a reception in the US Senate office building.
- 25 – JAVA speakers spoke at US Department of Agriculture

### **JULY 2008**

- 17 – 442<sup>nd</sup> veteran Kelly Kuwayama participated in the Lost Battalion panel discussion at Austin Texas. Event was to celebrate the acquisition of two “belly tanks”, used by Army Air Corps to air drop supplies, ammo and rations to “Lost Battalion”, which was trapped in Vosges Mountains of Eastern France in late October 1944. Other

JAVA members also participated in the two day event.

26 – JAVA quarterly Lunch. Harvest Moon Restaurant. Guest Speaker: VADM Harry Harris, USN

28 – JAVA speakers spoke at Fairfax County History Teachers meeting at Lake Braddock Middle School, Arlington, VA

### **AUGUST 2008**

14 – Grant Ichikawa spoke to Vietnam Veterans of America, Vienna, VA chapter. 40 veterans and spouses present.

18 – JAVA speakers spoke at Oakdale High School, Frederick County, MD

22 – JAVA recognized Yudai Ueno, 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the Embassy of Japan with a Certificate of Distinction for his role in building a strong relationship between the Embassy of Japan and JAVA.

22 – JAVA speakers spoke at Keese School of Continuing Education, Asbury Methodist Village, Gaithersburg, MD

### **SEPTEMBER 2008**

9 - Dr. Greg Robinson, author of *By Order of the President*, had lunch with JAVA members at the China Garden, Rosslyn, VA following his meeting at Smithsonian Institution. Robinson discussed his research endeavors.

20 – Executive Council Meeting. Base Technologies

27 – Billy Tucci, creator/illustrator/writer/artist of comic books invited JAVA members to Baltimore comic convention. Tucci's six series comic books entitled *SGT ROCK: LOST BATTALION* features rescue of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 141<sup>st</sup> Regt, 36<sup>th</sup> Division by the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT. Elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn were trapped in the Vosges Mountains of eastern France in late October 1944.

### **OCTOBER 2008**

2 – JAVA speaker spoke at Kindly Assisted Living Care Center, Asbury Methodist Village.

6 – Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) video interviewed six JAVA members for educational DVD for use in 25 MCPS.

18 – JAVA Quarterly Lunch. Harvest Moon. Speakers: Brig Gen Edwin Vincent, Jr, USAF ANG and Senator Daniel K. Akaka.

26 - Yeiichi (Kelly) Kuwayama spoke before the Asian American Bar Association of Delaware Valley on October 26, 2007 in Philadelphia at their Annual Banquet in support of the

Honorable William Marutani fellowship.

### **NOVEMBER 2008**

4 – JAVA speakers spoke at Masonic Lodge #195, Rockville, MD. Arrangement was made by Dr. Warren Minami.

6 – Spark Matsunaga Elementary School, Germantown, MD, veterans day program that included 500 students honored veterans. JAVA veterans were honored. Senator Matsunaga was a 100<sup>th</sup> Bn veteran.

7 – JAVA speakers spoke at Southlake High School, Reston, VA

10 – JAVA speakers spoke at Howard County Community College, Howard County, MD.

11 – Morning – A member of the Congressionally mandated Veterans Day National Committee, JAVA President participated in the VA-sponsored tribute to veterans. The Commander in Chief addressed the nation's veterans. JAVA color guards also participated.

2:00 PM – JAVA-NJAMF held its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Veterans Day Program at the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism. BG James Huggins, USA was the keynote speaker.

20 – Eric Nishizawa, Esq represented JAVA at the U.S. Army's Southern California Community Advisory Committee meeting to support Army recruitments. MG Thomas Bostick, Commanding General of the Army Recruiting Command was present.

### **DECEMBER 2008**

7 - CNN Headline News featured two JAVA members in *Solutions with Suzanne* nationwide broadcasts. Broadcast time was 5 minutes at three separate times.

13 – Lona Ichikawa organized a JAVA team to lay wreaths, provided by Worcester Wreath Co, Harrington, ME, at Arlington Cemetery.

20 – Executive Council Meeting. Base Technologies

30 - 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Command Sergeant Major Gomes acknowledged receipt of JAVA's "Soldier Outreach During the Holidays" gift of 25 cards of \$20 each. In addition, Lona Ichikawa sent to CSM Gomes 3,750 pull tabs which provides 25 free telephone minutes. The pull tabs were obtained from the Arlington County American Legion Post. This activity is conducted in partnership with GFBNEC.

31 – JAVA National Archives and Records Administration Team (NARA) scanned documents into electronic files. These documents relate to Japanese American WW II experience, including internment, 442<sup>nd</sup>, and MIS. When completed researchers can access this information electronically from anywhere in the world. This activity

is conducted in partnership with 442<sup>nd</sup> and MIS veterans, Hawaii.  
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