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JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 2003

VOLUME XI \* NUMBER 1

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:**

I'm looking forward to seeing all of our members at our first semi-annual general meeting of the year on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. I am anxious to bring all up to date on what we have been doing to meet the future challenges of organizations such as ours.

A major item on the agenda is the proposed changes to the JAVA charter and by-laws that were unanimously approved by a quorum of the executive council, and we will be seeking approval of the general membership at this meeting.

The changes will give the JAVA leadership the authority to position the association for the future, and we request your support. It's important that we have a free exchange of views, which I hope the meeting will provide.

To make it a bit special, we are having the meeting and lunch at the Columbia Country Club in Bethesda. Needless to say, all wives and guests will be welcome.\*

The proposed changes to our charter and by-laws are as follows:

JAPANESE AMERICAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION of Washington, D.C.

CHARTER

Article I. Name

The name of the Association is the JAPANESE AMERICAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION of Washington, D.C., Incorporated.

Article II. Organization and Legal Status

1. The Association, also known as "JAVA," is organized under the laws of the State of Maryland, and has legal status in Montgomery County, Maryland.
2. The Association ~~qualifies as~~ is a tax-exempt "Veterans" organization under Title 26, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 501(c)19, i.e., the Internal Revenue Code, and contributions thereto qualify as charitable contributions under the Federal tax regulations.

Article III. Purposes of the Association

The purposes of the Association are the following:

- To achieve fraternal, patriotic, historical and educational objectives as defined by the Association;

- To preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members;
- To perpetuate the memory and history of our war dead, and of the service rendered by our members to our country;
- To assist the widows and orphans of our war dead, and of our members;
- ~~— To maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America, and fidelity to its Constitution and its Laws;~~
- To foster true patriotism;
- ~~— To maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom; and~~
- ~~— To preserve and defend the United States of America from her enemies whomsoever.~~
- To represent the interests that are of concern to American veterans of Japanese ancestry to the Federal Government in the Nation’s Capital

#### Article IV. Composition of Membership

The membership of this Association shall be open to all persons who have honorably served in the Armed Forces of the United States, and to all other persons who, because of military or cultural interest, present or prior Federal Government service, and/or personal identification with the objectives and purposes of JAVA, desire comradeship as members of the Association. Membership in the Association has heretofore consisted primarily of persons who served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, including units associated therewith, and the U.S. Military Intelligence Service.

#### Article V. Conditions of Membership

The eligibility and qualifications of membership in JAVA, including the classification of such membership, if any; the ownership of property, assets and records, and the management and administration thereof; the voting and other rights and privileges of membership; the responsibility of members for the timely payment of dues and assessments, including methods for their collection; the setting of membership meetings; and, other matters, shall be set forth in the By-Laws, or may be decided by appropriate action of the Executive Council, unless authority to act without separate Executive Council authorization has been delegated to the President of the Association.

#### Article VI. Calendar Year

The Association shall operate on a calendar year basis, beginning on January 1, 2002. ~~Operation on a fiscal year basis has been discontinued, effective December 31, 2001.~~

#### Article VII. Parliamentary Authority

Unless the By-Laws of the Association provide otherwise, the Robert's Rules of Order, as revised, shall govern proceedings at Association meetings.

#### Article VIII. Amendments

The By-Laws of the Association may be amended by a majority vote of those present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the membership, except that the Executive Council, by a majority vote of a quorum attending, may provisionally adopt changes to the By-Laws, subject to confirmation at the next regular membership meeting.

**\*Editor's Note:** JAVA vice-president John Kiyonaga, who is coordinating the lunch, gives the following details:

Date & Time: 22 February, 11:30 A.M. – 2:30 P.M. (bar opens at 11:30, buffet lunch served at noon) Cost per Member or Guests \$15. Men should wear coat and tie. Head count needed; RSVP no later than close of business, Wednesday, Feb. 19 to John's home: 5312 Baltimore Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815 (phone: (301) 657-8880) – E-mail (jkiyonaga@earthlink.net). Pay at the door or by mail. Columbia Country Club (7900 Connecticut Ave.) is at the corner of Connecticut Ave. and the East West Highway (MD Rt. 410) about one mile inside the Beltway. Club in a white building at the end of a lane of trees that gives onto Conn. Ave., entrance bracketed by a golf driving range (with 50 ft. high wire fence) and tennis courts.

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**RELATIONSHIP WITH JAVA, OTHER “PRESSING” ISSUES SET FOR J-A VETERANS COUNCIL’S APRIL MEETING IN HAWAII by Fred Murakami, Council Chairman**

The Executive Committee of the National Japanese American Veterans Council will focus on its relations with JAVA among other “pressing” issues at its meeting next April 3 in Honolulu. The meeting is being held in conjunction with the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the 4542<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team at the Hale Koa Hotel.

The committee will discuss what steps need to be taken to enhance its relationship with the Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) which shares the same “home base” in Washington, D.C.

In addition the committee will deal with the question of “What should be the Future Direction of the National Council?” Included will be the roles to be played by the National Council in two significant organizational responsibilities:

The first (in addition to its relations with Java) to determine if the National Council has taken advantage of the affiliation with the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles which was officially agreed upon in March 2002 (i.e.) what needs to be done to make the affiliation more effective and thereby beneficial to both organizations.

The second issue is the need to substantially increase the membership of the Board to a number closer to that prescribed by the By-Laws, with emphasis on individuals from Hawaii and the West Coast and who are from more recent conflicts, and are from all services.

I believe this is a very timely subject since the number of JA veterans groups are facing the problem of dwindling membership and the longevity of their group has become an open question. Several groups have already taken steps to address this problem; examples: the State of Washington has issued a certificate of incorporation to the NVC Foundation (formerly Nisei Veterans Committee) making them a Non-Profit Educational/Charitable Corporation; another the MISNORCAL has formed an ad hoc committee of three until a president could be elected and a formal agreement with the National Council and National Museum's National Center for the Preservation of Democracy.

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## **A MOST UNLIKELY HERO by Steve Okino**

Bruce Yamashita wanted only to serve his country. Instead, he ended up changing it, and in standing up against racial intolerance and for equal opportunity in the United States Marine Corps, became a most unlikely hero.

His victory, he says, actually is a tribute to the *issei* and *nisei* who struggled before him; in particular to those Japanese American veterans who fought for and in too many cases gave their lives to defend democracy and American values of fairness, justice, and equal opportunity.

A third-generation American of Japanese Ancestry, a graduate of Georgetown law school, and a delegate to the Hawaii Constitutional Convention, Yamashita sought to qualify as a Marine Corps officer. He was denied because he is a Japanese American.

He arrived at Marine Officer Candidate School (OCS) in January 1989. It began with a Sergeant screaming at him—in Japanese. Instead of fitting in, Yamashita immediately was branded a foreigner.

A sergeant comes up to Yamashita in the mess hall. Gets up in his face. Shouts, “you speak English? We don’t want your kind around here. Go back to your own country.”

“During World War Two, we whipped your Japanese ass!”

“Kamikaze man, Yamashita.”

For nine weeks, the racial harassment continued, until on the final day, five candidates including Yamashita were bounced on the final day. Four were minorities.

He went home to Hawaii, but what happened at OCS kept nagging at him. He wrote to Marine Commandant Alfred Gray, who denied that anything wrong had occurred. The staff sergeant who called him Kawasaki, Yamaha, Yamashita did so because of a “reputation for dyslexic pronunciation of names.” The sergeant who only spoke broken Japanese to him did so “to put him at ease.” “No one” believed any of the incidents were racially motivated.

Bewildered and outraged, Yamashita decided to press the fight. Little did he know it would uncover a smoking gun: Marine Corps data that revealed a significantly higher minority dismissal rate at OCS, which analysts concluded could only result from “institutional bias against minority candidates.”

The report pushed the case into the national spotlight. And when CBS News’ *60 Minutes* spoke with the Corps Commandant, he unleashed a firestorm by letting slip another secret: that “minorities don’t shoot that well, they don’t swim that well, and when you give them a compass and send them off on night field exercises, they don’t do well at that sort of thing.”

The reaction was swift. It included Congressional legislation to prohibit racial harassment in the training academies of the U.S. military services, and a massive revision of OCS policies to prohibit the racially motivated behaviors to which Yamashita was subjected. And it included the granting of the officer commission that, were it not for racial bias, Yamashita would have won.

Capt. Yamashita’s story is the subject of the documentary *A Most Unlikely Hero*, which is intended for public television and is now in the final stages of production. Additional resources are needed, though, to complete the program. More information on the project, and on how you can help support it with your donation, is available at our website, <http://www.unlikelyhero.org>.

The project is sponsored by the Matsunaga Charitable Foundation of Honolulu, Hawaii; donations should be made payable to the Foundation, and sent c/o Steve Okino, 94-1263 Lumikula St. Suite 2-B, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797. All donations are tax-deductible, go directly to support completion of the documentary, and are greatly appreciated.

*(Editor’s Note: For those who didn’t know, Bruce is a member of JAVA, lives in Washington, D.C. and is still a member of the Marine Reserves.)*

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## **JA VETS JOIN PROTESTS OVER CONGRESSMAN'S REMARKS ON NIKKEI INTERMENT DURING WWII**

*Nikkei* veterans joined a chorus of protesters incensed over remarks by North Carolina Rep. Howard Coble that he agreed with the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, many calling for an apology and his resignation from his post on the House's Subcommittee on crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security.

Coble, a Republican from North Carolina, said in a radio talk show in High Point, NC, that though he disagreed with a caller's suggestion that Arabs in America should be confined, he did agree with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who established the WWII internment camps for Japanese Americans.

Though most *Nikkei* were not America's enemies, Roosevelt had to consider the nation's security, Coble said, "Some probably were intent on doing harm to us, just as of these Arab Americans are probably intent on doing harm to us."

"I'm disappointed that he (Coble) really doesn't understand the impact of what he said," U.S. Representative Mike Honda, said. "With his leadership position in Congress, that kind of lack of understanding can lead people down the wrong path."

George Fujimori, from Gardena, CA, who joined the U.S. Army after his wife had given birth to a baby in the camp at Manzanar, said in a letter to Coble "Your words hurt like the wounds that were suffered in the battlefields of World War II and felt in the concentration camps."

He was among several veterans who wrote to Coble to call for his resignation from his subcommittee post. The Japanese American Citizens League condemned Coble's remarks as "outrageous."

Coble, under increasing criticism, has said that the internment was wrong and should not be repeated. "I regret that many Japanese and Arab Americans found my choice of words offensive because that was certainly not my intent," Coble said in a prepared statement.

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## **TERRY SHIMA TO COORDINATE LIBRARY PROJECT**

JAVA president Bert Mizusawa announced appointment of Terry Shima to succeed Warren Tsuneishi as the coordinator of the organization's partnership with the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project (LC/VHP).

Terry is currently in the process of forming a committee who will contact all JAVA members to ascertain whether they wish to participate in the activity. Warren, a former official of the Library, has asked to be relieved as coordinator, but has agreed to serve as consultant; thus the committee will continue to benefit from his expertise.

JAVA became an official partner in the project, established by Congress in October, 2000, and as Terry explains, "The legislation requested the Library of Congress American Folk Life Center to collect and preserve audio and video taped histories, along with documentary materials such as letters, diaries, maps, photographs and home movies of American war veterans, their spouses and families.

"JAVA's goal is to make this opportunity available to all JAVA members and other Japanese

American veterans in this area who are not JAVA members.” Terry asks that he be informed of any who know of *Nikkei* non-JAVA members in the greater Washington, D.C. area. (Terry’s phone: 301-279-7823; E-mail: [ttshima@worldnet.att.net](mailto:ttshima@worldnet.att.net)).

“Various Japanese American organizations such as the Go For Broke Education Foundation of Torrance, CA, the Japanese American Museum of Los Angeles, and the JACL have their own oral history projects and some JAVA members have already sent their oral histories to them.

“That’s fine. In order to minimize duplication, the LC/VHP is in the process of arranging with these organizations mutual access of oral history data bases.

“The LC/VHP prefers a video of up to 90 minutes. To those who are camera shy, they will accept, in lieu of video, the oral history on CD, cassette tape, or hard copy.”

**(An added note:** Warren reports that copies of The AMERICAN PATRIOTS: MIS IN THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN are again available. The book gives carries the first-hand accounts of 25 Japanese Americans who served in the U.S. Military Intelligence Service in the Pacific during WWII and is in its second printing. The book was authored by Warren and fellow JAVA member Stan Falk and is available for \$10 plus \$2 handling charge from: JAVA Book, P.O. Box 59, Dunn Loring, VA 22027.)

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**WE THE PEOPLE AWARD, ABOARD THE U.S.S. NEW JERSEY: A Personal Report by Catherine N. Tanaka**

*(Editor’s note: Ms. Tanaka is the Secretary, MIS Service Club SoCal, and Board Member, Go For Broke Educational Foundation.)*

When Christine Sato-Yamazaki, executive director of the *Go For Broke Educational Foundation*, asked me to be her roommate and attend an award ceremony honoring the Japanese American veterans of WWII on board a battleship, I did not hesitate to say “yes”. Just the idea of being able to board a real battleship was terribly exciting.

The *We The People Award* is sponsored by the National Constitution Center based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and is held every year on Veterans Day. This year Ida Chan thought to honor the Japanese American veteran of World War II. NCC’s new home in Philadelphia is currently under construction and will be finished in 2003. Board representatives, Ida Chan and Stephanie McKissic met us at our hotel, *Omni Hotel in Independence Park*, and escorted us by bus to the site of the award ceremony, the battleship *U.S.S. New Jersey*, located on the New Jersey side of the Delaware River.

The *U.S.S. New Jersey* is the most decorated battleship in U.S. History. First commissioned in 1942, it served in 19 “battle storms” (campaigns) from WWII to Desert Storm after which the ship was de-commissioned in 1991. Now 67 years old, she sits berthed on the Camden, New Jersey Waterfront, off the Delaware River across from Center City Philadelphia.

Maintained by U.S. Navy personnel, the ship has been opened for visitors since October 1997. Rear Admiral retired, Thomas U. Seigenthaler, who oversees the maintenance of the U.S.S. *New Jersey*, addressed the attendees at the luncheon reporting that a call went out to ask for help in the *U.S.S. New Jersey*’s restoration and 2000 volunteers showed up to bring her to her present condition. Log on: [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org)

Because of inclement weather, the ceremony itself was held under a tent on the helix-pad part of the 882 feet long deck.

Speakers included General Joulwan, active during NATO's involvement in the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict. He commended the WWII JA veterans with having received the most decorations in U.S. history for length of service and who fought extreme prejudice, volunteering to fight for a country who had placed their loved ones in concentration camps.

In referring to stripping JA citizens of their civil liberties, General Joulwan quoted Santana (?), saying, *"Those who have not learned from their mistakes are doomed to repeat it."*

The recipient representing the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, Stanley Akita of Hawaii, canceled out at the last minute and did not attend the ceremony. The master of ceremonies, Joseph M. Torsella, President and CEO of the National Constitution Center, introduced Christine Sato-Yamazaki, Executive Director of the Go For Broke Educational Foundation.

Christine said a few words with regards to the mission of the Foundation, and then she gave a short intro to the other recipients representing the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT and the Military Intelligence Service. On behalf of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team was representative, Don Seki of Cannon Company (Long Beach), and on behalf of the Military Intelligence Service was representative, Harry Fukuhara, Colonel retired (San Jose). It was very unfortunate that the representative from the 100<sup>th</sup>, Stanley Akita had to cancel out at the last minute and was unable to attend the ceremony.

I wish to thank the Military Intelligence Service Club of Southern California for paying for my airfare. It was truly an unforgettable experience that I will always treasure. I met many wonderful veterans I hadn't seen in quite some time.

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### **MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION SALUTES ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN VETERANS by Joe Ichiuji**

The Maryland Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs in conjunction with the National Aquarium in Baltimore held a salute to Asian Pacific American veterans last November 8. JAVA's Grant Hirabayashi, Joe Ichiuji, Phil Ishio and Kelly Kuwayama participated in the program, telling of their WWII experiences.

Major General John Fugh (retired), the former Judge Advocate General, paid special tribute in his keynote address to the Nisei veterans for their sacrifices and loyalty during the war.

A video presentation, "We Served with Pride," covering the contributions of Chinese Americans in the U.S. Armed Services also was part of the programs.

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### **NATIONAL VETERANS COMMITTEE OF SEATTLE TO SPONSOR INDIANA QUILT**

The National Veterans Committee (NVC) of Seattle is sponsoring a showing next April 18 through 20 of the 120,000-tassel quilt fashioned by the Eighth Grade students of Lafayette, IN, honoring WWII Japanese American veterans.

The showing, Good Friday through Easter Sunday, will be at the Seattle Center during the Seattle Cherry Blossom and Japanese Cultural Festival. The festival, free of charge to the public, attracted more than 30,000 people last year, according to the NVC.

The 19' by 41" tapestry was the work of more than 500 students of the Tecumseh and Sunnyside Eighth Grades who were inspired by their teacher, Leila Meyerratken. The students first constructed a Japanese Zen garden, then went on to make the quilt tapestry. The quilt has been displayed in various parts of the country including Washington, D.C., Honolulu, Los Angeles and elsewhere.

The 120,000 tassels represent the number of Japanese Americans interned during World War II.

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**\* \* \* TAPS \* \* \***

**TOORU JOE KANAZAWA, WRITER, WWII VETERAN by Yeichi "Kelly" Kuwayama**

Tooru Joe Kanazawa, a long time resident of New York City, veteran of WWII and active member of the 442nd Association of New York city, passed away at age 95 on October 2, 2002 in Malibu, CA.

He worked with Stanley Okada of Tairiku Shoji in the New York Travel Agency as general manager. His love, however, was writing and he graduated from the School of Journalism in the University of Washington in 1931

He worked for the Nikkei newspaper in Seattle and in Los Angeles, with the Rafu Shimpō, where he covered the 1932 Olympics. He freelanced for the Christian Science Monitor and Thrilling Sports. He later edited the Hokubei English version after WW II which was the New York Nichibei newspaper.

His crowning achievement was, however, to be a trilogy which was interrupted by his death and which was begun by the published fiction novel of "Sushi and Sourdough," published in 1989 which recounted his and his family's experience in Alaska where they had moved in 1912. He later wrote "Close Support - A History of the Cannon Company" published in 1993 about Cannon Co. to which he was attached and where he won a bronze star for meritorious service as a radio operator.

He was in the process of writing about his East Coast experience, but this was never published.

He moved to the East Coast in 1940 i.e.: New York City and Washington, DC. and was in the East when, with the evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast, his family was sent to the "Relocation Center" in Poston, AZ. He himself escaped evacuation. He, nonetheless, worked with Mike Masaoka, executive secretary of Japanese American Citizens League, and in 1943 with Mike, volunteered for the 442nd RCT.

He was 36 years old, an old man in comparison to most of the other volunteers who were 18 or 19 years old. For a man of 36 to volunteer attests to his character. He was a man of strong convictions, verbally laconic, but a doer.

He was not a theoretical civil rights man, but he acted. I recall, when Dore Schary, Producer and Robert Pirosh, Director produced the film "Go For Broke" with Van Johnson and Lane Nakano. Kei Yamato, Tooru Kanazawa, Bill Kochiyama, Irving Akahoshi, and Yeichi (Kelly) Kuwayama, etc., used to work and spend our evenings in the MGM offices to publicize the film; Tooru Kanazawa and Bill Kochiyama were the men who were producing the publicity releases.

When the film opened on Broadway, we and other 442nders promoted the film. Tooru Kanazawa and Bill Kochiyama were good friends. Bill Kochiyama's wife, Yuri Mary Kochiyama, was a very active civil rights advocate. Tooru Kanazawa was involved in civil rights directly and indirectly in the broadest sense politically and socially.

The 442nd Association of New York City met the last Friday of the month in the 77th Division club house at 28 East 39th St., New York City. We later met at various restaurants in New York City. Tooru Kanazawa was outstanding. He was always calm, cool and level headed. He was not a talker, but his reports of events were detailed and clear.

Tooru was a frustrated writer. He felt discriminated against in the world of journalism. He was in the vernacular press, but never full-time in a major mainstream newspaper. He and Bill felt that they were trained journalists but couldn't practice their profession in the mainstream.

Tooru is survived by his wife Mae and his children Joy, Mark and Teru Sheehan. Mark and Teru are both married and have children of their own.

### **KEN M. ISERI, FORMER CIA, U.S. ARMY**

Ken Iseri was born March 26, 1920, and died March 22, 2002, four days short of his 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday. He died from a difficult recurring colon cancer which had spread to his liver.

Ken was born in Sacramento, CA, but spent most of his adult life working for the U.S. government in the Washington, D.C. area and abroad.

During WWII he and his family were evacuated from El Monte, CA, to the Gila River Relocation Center in Arizona. He later joined the U.S. Army and was one of the first to be sent to Japan with the U.S Occupation Forces.

He eventually joined the Central Intelligence Agency and retired from that agency in July, 1979.

Ken lived in Vienna, VA. His wife, Ruth, passed away June 3, 2000, a few months after they celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He is survived by his brothers George of Gardenia, CA; and Joe of Los Angeles, and sisters Marilyn Hedani, Manhattan Beach, CA, and Kathleen Iseri of Arlington, VA.

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### **CORRECTIONS TO JAVA DIRECTORY 2003**

By now, all JAVA members should have received the new JAVA Directory 2003. If not, please contact either Grant Ichikawa or Paul Tani at addresses given below. In addition, please notify us any changes, errors, or additions, such as the names of Wives. Please note the following corrections/changes in your Directory so that it will be up to date:

#### **IKARI, Norman S**

Kiyoko to replace Kyo

Montgomery Village to replace Gaithersburg

#### **NEKOBA, Barbara**

VA to replace BA (typo error)

22308 to replace 22309

#### **YAMASHITA, Bruce**

[biy@verizon.net](mailto:biy@verizon.net) to replace [biy@bellatlantic.net](mailto:biy@bellatlantic.net)

#### **YOSHIHASHI, Chiyo**

[chiyoyoshihashi@aol.com](mailto:chiyoyoshihashi@aol.com) to replace [chiyoY@aol.com](mailto:chiyoY@aol.com)

#### **CAMPBELL, Kenneth**

#315 (apt) to replace #210

#### **YAMADA, Gordon T**

[gtyamada@msn.com](mailto:gtyamada@msn.com) to replace [gtyamada@aol.com](mailto:gtyamada@aol.com)

**NISHIMOTO, Kanoye** add "and Keiko"

**MARUTANI, William** add "and Victoria"

**MINAMI, Wayde M/Sgt. and Christie** (Warren MINAMI's son; new, on active duty in the Middle East.

Please send further corrections/additions to:

Grant Ichikawa, 114 James Dr SW , Vienna VA 22180; Email: [ichikawa@erols.com](mailto:ichikawa@erols.com)

Fax 703-938-5536; Tel: 703-938-5857 or

Paul Tani, 43353 Grey Swallow Terrace, Ashburn VA 20147 ; Email: [paulytani@aol.com](mailto:paulytani@aol.com);  
Tel: 703-724-1605.

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**CORRECTION:** Red-faced editor admits double booboo. On page 8, JAVA News of Oct./Dec.'02, in **SIX VETERANS INCREASE JAVA RANKS**, it should have read: Duval A. Edwards, special CIC (rpt. CIC), and Kay (nee Kohara rpt. Kohara) instead of as sent.

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