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Shinseki receives JAVA Courage, Honor, Patriotism Award; pays tribute to Japanese American Veterans

FALLS CHURCH, Vir. — General Eric K. Shinseki, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, received the *COURAGE, HONOR, PATRIOTISM* Award from the Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) in recognition of his 44 years of distinguished leadership in the United States Army and in the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Award was presented on January 16, 2010 at JAVA's annual meeting in Falls Church, Virginia. The award is bestowed on persons who exemplify the spirit of courage, honor and patriotism demonstrated by the Nisei soldiers during World War II.



Secretary Shinseki (left) holding COURAGE, HONOR, PATRIOTISM Award with JAVA President Robert Nakamoto (right).

Over 150 JAVA members, families and friends, including veterans of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service, about a dozen flag ranked officers, and veterans who served in the Korean, Vietnam and Gulf Wars expressed their enthusiastic approbation. The Citation, read by Lieutenant Colonel Martin Herbert, USA (Ret.) a veteran of Desert Storm, stated, "General Shinseki's vision in Army Transformation launched an agile, combat ready force that could deploy, fight, and win anywhere in the world, as confirmed in Iraq and Afghanistan." As the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, he is "transforming the VA into a more people-centric, result-oriented, forward looking organization ready to respond to the needs of veterans by providing veterans with benefits

and health care they have earned."

President Nakamoto said Asian Americans, including Japanese Americans, are proud of Secretary Shinseki's accomplishments: the first Asian American to be appointed as Chief of Staff of the US Army and the third Asian American to be appointed to a cabinet rank position. Nakamoto said Shinseki is "our ultimate role model."

In his remarks, Secretary Shinseki thanked JAVA President Bob Nakamoto for the luncheon arrangement and praised former Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta, who was unable to attend due to his late return from overseas travel, for his "legendary service to his country and inspiration to us." He thanked Ms. Connie Ishio, wife of the late JAVA Founder-President Colonel Phil Ishio, USA (Ret.), for the yellow
[continued on page 4 at Shinseki]

President's Message



In my last message I said that we were working on two major events. I wish to report that both were concluded successfully. Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Eric Shinseki attended JAVA's lunch on January 23, 2010, when he was awarded JAVA's *COURAGE, HONOR, PATRIOTISM* award. Over 200 members and friends greeted the Secretary enthusiastically and he remained near the door to speak unhurriedly to each person. When he said he would join JAVA as a paid member we viewed that as a huge vote of confidence for JAVA. The other event went equally well. On January 20, 2010, I had the honor of providing JAVA's testimony on veterans issues, for the first time, to the roundtable organized by Congressman Bob Filner, Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, in the Committee's hearing room.

We grieve at the passing of (1) Millie Ichikawa, a patriot who volunteered for the WAC Corps to serve in the MIS and who talked Indonesian rioters out of desecrating the

American flag, and (2) General Fred Weyand, former Chief of Staff of the US Army. As an intelligence officer in the China-Burma-India theater during WW II he was a strong supporter of the Nisei in the Merrill's Marauders and the OSS.

I wish to convey JAVA's warm thanks and congratulations to (1) MG Tom Bostic for his promotion to Lieutenant General and appointment to the position of J-1; (2) Brig Gen Susan Mashiko for her promotion to Major General and appointment to the position of Deputy Chief, National Reconnaissance Office (NRO); (3) Deputy Assistant Secretary Dr. Lynn Heirakuji for the completion of her assignment at the Pentagon; (4) Lona Ichikawa for her unstinting support of various vital endeavors, including the Honors flights, which bring WW II veterans to the National WW II Memorial in Washington, DC, and JAVA's *Sakura Matsuri* booth at the National Cherry Blossom Parade; and (5) Eliot Frankeberger, recently retired history teacher in Maryland for his support of our Speakers Bureau.

I wish to invite you to read an article on Eric Saul's exhibit at Ellis Island/Statue of Liberty Museum. It will trace the emigration of Japanese from Japan, their struggle to raise their families, the World War II years, post WW II years when they are sharing

responsibility to run the nation, armed forces, business and academia. There is also an article on Montgomery County Public School system's production of a 24 minute DVD, largely based on interviews of veterans and internee. This DVD, which has been distributed to schools, will be used by teachers in their lesson plan.

You know that we are an all volunteer organization. If you can dedicate a little of your time for JAVA please contact anyone listed on the back page of this newsletter. Regardless of your qualification and interests, I am sure we can find an appropriate task for you. Thank you for your support.

—Bob Nakamoto

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Above: Upon the completion of her assignment at the Department of the Army as Deputy Assistant Secretary, Dr. Lynn Heirakuji enjoys lunch with some JAVA members on February 17, 2010 at the China Garden Restaurant at Rosslyn. Seen here with left to right: John Tagami, President Robert Nakamoto and MG Antonio Taguba, USA (Ret). DAS Heirakuji represented the Secretary of the Army at several JAVA luncheons, including the award ceremony of Bronze Star Medal and Legion of Merit to JAVA's 442nd RCT veterans. (Ranger Grant Hirabayashi)

Eric Saul's Ellis Island Exhibit scheduled to open

[Full press release at www.javadc.org]

New York City. Eric Saul, historian, working with Japanese American veterans and historical institutions, is completing the construction of the "Go For Broke: Japanese American Soldiers Fighting on Two Fronts" exhibit, which will open at the Statue of Liberty Museum, Ellis Island, New York at the end of May 2010, the culmination of two years of preparation. A grand opening ceremony is projected for June attended by civilian and military dignitaries, officials of veterans-related organizations and Nisei veterans. It will run for four months and close in September. The National Park Service estimates that some 7,000 visitors per day will see the exhibit.

The focal point of the exhibit is the Japanese American men and women who served in World War II, including the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Nisei in the Military Intelligence Service (MIS), the 300 Nisei women who served in the Women's Army Corps (WAC), the five Nisei who served in the Army Air Corps as gunners, and the Nisei who served in the Occupation Forces of Japan.

The beginning of the exhibit will feature the arrival of the first generation of Japanese Americans, the Issei, including the 200,000 that immigrated to Hawaii and

the 180,000 to mainland America. Their struggle to raise their families to become good citizens and the internment of 120,000 of which over 50% were US citizens will be featured. The closing section of the exhibit will feature the success of Japanese Americans in achieving key positions in the Armed Forces, politics, space, business and the academia. The exhibit will show how Nisei service in World War II led to the elimination of Asian Exclusion Laws and brought about voting rights, land ownership and ultimately, citizenship for Issei; Hawaii statehood; the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; and the construction of the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism. This exhibit will itself speak of the Greatness of America.

Organizations supporting the Go For Broke exhibit include the National Japanese American Historical Society, Japanese American Citizens League, Japanese American Veterans Association, Go For Broke National Education Center, 442nd Veterans Hawaii, Survivors of the Outer Camps of Dachau Concentration Camp, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center-Museum of Tolerance.

Mr. Saul would appreciate any loan or offers of photographs and documents. He would also welcome suggestions and ideas for the exhibit. He can be reached at (304) 599-0614; VisasForLife@cs.com.

Changes in JAVA Board of Directors

McLEAN, Vir. – At the Executive Council meeting on March 20, 2010, President Robert Nakamoto appointed to the JAVA Board of Directors two new members, LTC Alan Ueoka, USA, and LTC Mark Nakagawa, USA. The Executive Council concurred.



LTC Ueoka (pictured) currently serves as the Deputy Director of the Program Management Office in the Joint Task Force - National Capital Region Medical at Bethesda Naval Base, Maryland. He was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps in 1991, entering active duty through the

Army ROTC Scholarship Program. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Boston College. He completed his Masters degree in Healthcare Administration from the Army-Baylor University Program in San Antonio, Texas, in 2003. He has had various command and staff positions in domestic and overseas posts, including Kuwait and Iraq.

Lieutenant Colonel Mark T. Nakagawa currently serves as Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) System Synchronization Officer, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Deputy chief of Staff, G-8, Pentagon. After graduating from Iolani School, Honolulu, Hawaii, LTC Nakagawa was commissioned through the ROTC Program at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California. He also earned a Masters in National Security from the Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, California, and Military Arts and Science from the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He is a rated Japanese and Chinese-Mandarin linguist. His overseas assignments include Germany, South Korea and Iraq.

President Nakamoto also approved the resignation of Lt Col Michael Yaguchi, USAF (Ret), from the Board of Directors, Secretary, and Chair of several committees, due to demands of his professional position. Nakamoto expressed his appreciation to Lt Col Yaguchi for his dedicated, substantive leadership role continuously from 2004.

Shinseki (from page 1)

roses for his wife and recognized the veterans and active duty personnel for their service to country. Shinseki said he became Chief of Staff of the US Army only 50 years after the Nisei in World War II proved their loyalty through their sacrifices on the battlefields of Europe and the Pacific. He said with pride, "this can happen only in America" and that, because of their sacrifices, he has "lived a life without suspicion."

Secretary Shinseki said he welcomed President Barack Obama's

request for him to serve as Secretary of Veterans Affairs because "the position afforded an opportunity to give back something to the veterans who have served their country so nobly." He outlined his major priorities as (1) reducing the backlog of claims, (2) improving health care of veterans of various wars each with its unique problems, (3) homelessness, (4) education, and (5) jobs for veterans. He expressed an urgent need to "get to a veteran before he goes into a downward spiral of depression." He also said there are 131,000

homeless veterans - no American veteran "should be living on the street." He described the importance of education as a potential resource for the building of the national economy and government to perpetuate the great nation.

Following the playing of the US Armed Forces Medley and concluding remarks, Secretary Shinseki stood near the exit where he exchanged greetings with each participant for over an hour. He did not leave until the last participant had left.

Secretary Shinseki recognized for effective service

[From VA Bulletin]

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki was awarded the Gold Good Citizenship Medal by the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) during an honors dinner January 9, 2010 at the Mount Vernon Inn. The gala was hosted by the George Washington Chapter of the SAR.

"Serving as Secretary of VA is a chance for me to give back to those on whose shoulders I stood – those of our greatest generations who served in World War II and Korea, those with whom I went to war in Vietnam, and those young people I sent to war as Army Chief of Staff," Secretary Shinseki said. "Caring for those who have 'borne the battle' is both an honor and a privilege."

Secretary Shinseki's remarks came amid the department's massive payout of educational benefits to Veterans under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. To date, more than 162,000 beneficiaries have received payments and over \$1.3

billion dollars have been paid out. That program, along with plans to expand health benefits to an additional quarter-million Veterans previously not eligible, are part of Secretary Shinseki's transformation of the VA into a more people-centric and results-driven organization.

U.S. News and World Report columnist Paul Bedard wrote that Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki is considered one of the Obama Administrations five best secretaries. "Typically, State, Treasury, and Defense

lead the pack, followed by Commerce," Bedard wrote, "but under Obama, Treasury has fallen." He noted that Washington insiders include Defense Secretary Gates and Secretary of State Clinton on their lists of the best but then add Veterans Affairs, Transportation and Education, usually considered "second tier". "That's because all three secretaries are bringing new energy to the stodgy posts," Bedard wrote.

Reminder for Membership Dues

JAVA has sent notices to some members to remind them to pay their 2010 membership dues. If you have not sent it in, please do not procrastinate, send your check in promptly and forget this chore until you get the next reminder. If you have already submitted your payment, please accept our thanks for your prompt action. Some of the Associate Members paid \$30 instead of the correct amount of \$20. Any overage will be applied to your 2010 dues. Executive Director regrets the misleading statement in his notice. The annual dues schedule is as follows:

- Veterans, Active Duty, Reservists, National Guard: \$30
- Cadets, Midshipmen: \$15
- Life Membership 300

Wounded U of H graduate takes command of Stryker Bde company

[This March 17, 2010 Advertiser article was brought to JAVA's attention by COL Walter Ozawa, USA (Ret). Ozawa said, "Here is a local boy, never expected to walk again, former officer of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry, now commanding a company." We thought ADVOCATE readers would be interested in reading about a remarkable officer, who, with adversities of this magnitude, beat "the odds" and exemplified the spirit of Go For Broke. CAPT O'Donnell is an inspiration to us all. Space constraints prevent us from printing the entire article. Permission to reprint was obtained from Marsha McFadden, Managing Editor for Content, The Advertiser.]

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii. *By William Cole, Military Writer.* The commander of the Army's Stryker Brigade in Hawaii ticked off the injuries that CAPT Ray O'Donnell suffered in a 2007 Humvee rollover in Afghanistan. The list included facial fractures, traumatic brain injury, a crushed pelvis, spinal damage, a fractured hip, dislocated femur and severe nerve damage.

To this day, O'Donnell has near paralysis in his lower left leg. "But what I skipped was the hard part – over 29 months of grueling physical therapy, when many thought he would never walk, would never run, and could never serve again in the infantry," said COL Malcom Frost, the Commander of the 4,300 Stryker Brigade soldiers.

O'Donnell, 29, stood at attention yesterday as the litany of broken bones was read off – then bounded up onto the make-shift stage as if none of that had ever happened, as he took command of about 200 soldiers that make up Headquarters and Headquarters Company. O'Donnell, a 2003 University of Hawaii ROTC graduate, has faced more than his share of adversity – and overcome it.

He was a classmate, trained with and was a best friend of UH ROTC and Kamehameha Schools graduate, 1st Lt Nainoa Hoe, who was killed by a sniper in Mosul, Iraq, on January 22, 2005. Three months ago, O'Donnell returned to duty, and yesterday at "D Quad" took command of the company of soldiers as the larger Stryker Brigade to which it belongs prepared to head back to Iraq this summer.

O'Donnell, who a couple months ago completed a triathlon – 500 meter swim, 12 mile bike segment and 5 kilometer run, admits the road back hasn't been easy. "I cannot even begin to describe to you how difficult it was. It was definitely without question the hardest thing I've ever done in my life" he said of his recovery.

O'Donnell was assigned to the Army Reserve's 100th Battalion, 442 Infantry, which is headquartered in Hawaii, for the 2005 deployment to Iraq.

100th Battalion mail reviewed to determine loyalty during WWII

Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. 1943. On October 2, 1943, the US Army Inspector General issued a report, classified CONFIDENTIAL, of its censorship of personal letters pertaining to loyalty of the men of 100th Infantry Battalion. Part VII of the report discussed "100th Infantry's Patriotism and Desire to Prove Themselves True Americans." Part VII said:

"The strongest emotion expressed by the 100th Infantry throughout their letters is their sincere patriotism combined by an ardent desire to be of credit to Hawaii. The letters indicate a prevalent awareness of the "hades" of distrust of their group because of its ancestry. Their reaction, however, is not one of resentment, rather it prompts expressions of loyalty and pledges to prove themselves true Americans. Most of them seem anxious for overseas actions and consider it the best way to prove their worth. One says earnestly, 'Us [Japanese American] soldiers are different from the others, we have our goal to look for and for this goal lots of us guys in fact everybody of us must sacrifice our lives to this goal to show the rest of the Americans that we soldiers or rather I should say Americans of Japanese ancestries, are as loyal as any of them. And this will be proven in reality.'

"Another tells his sister, 'You will put your chin up and do your best for old Uncle Sam. For my part I'm the same as usual putting my heart and soul for him and you folks at home.'

"Let it be known that whatever we do we'll make Hawaii proud of its own,' proclaims a 100th soldier. The chief aim of the 100th Infantry is defined, 'Wherever we go – whatever we do, always uppermost in our minds are – we must prove ourselves of credit to our friends and folks back home.'

"In another letter, the sender says, 'Truthfully speaking – our main thought is to do a good job on the battlefield – but until that time comes, our behavior on the training field and in these strange cities must do.'

"The views of the battalion are best expressed in the following intercept, 'When you come down to cold facts, I think this eagerness to serve our country in time of need is the only way of showing the rest of the Americans that we too can be trusted and be depended upon to defend America from all enemies.'

"One boy, in a letter to his mother, recites the creed for which he is fighting, 'As you have said to me long before this war ever started, "This is your country so when it needs your service; do serve it well." Now being this far away from home these words are always my only guiding words.'

"The patriotism of the 100th Infantry might be summed up in the words of one of its soldiers; 'I certainly will give all I've got for my country, and it is not for no emperor or a sun goddess, but for God and my country.'"

Japan's top lieutenants visit USA for orientation

WASHINGTON – With the goal of building a cadre of highly professional officers in the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF), 13 lieutenants and two lieutenant colonels visit United States each year since 1993 for a two week orientation tour.

The 2010 JGSDF contingent arrived in Washington on February 24 for a four-day visit. They visited the Marine Corps Basic School in Quantico, Virginia, the United Nations, the US Military Academy at West Point, New York, and the US Army Infantry Training School at Fort Benning, Georgia. The purpose of these visits is to gain first hand knowledge and understanding of the history, culture and military system of the United States, Japan's long standing Pacific partner since World War II.

JAVA was invited to the Embassy of Japan on February 26 to discuss the Japanese American experience during World War II and the impact of that experience on future generations of Japanese Americans. In the lengthy discussion period, the visitors' questions centered on why the Nisei fought so valiantly on the battlefield and what inner strength they possessed to do what they did. JAVA speakers Grant Ichikawa and Terry Shima said that they first needed to fulfill the single objective of proving their loyalty – even if the nation gave up on them, they would not give up on the nation. Second, they fought with the spirit of Bushido, a discipline inculcated upon them by their immigrant parents who trained them in perseverance, to serve his nation with total loyalty, to never bring shame to the family name, to never give up and to fight with honor.

On February 27, the JGSDF lieutenants visited the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism (NJAMP), where Dr. Ray Murakami, Chairman emeritus of the NJAMF Board, and Robert Nakamoto, President of JAVA, provided a briefing on the significance of the Memorial.

Major General Mitsuru Nodomi, the Defense and Military Attache of the Embassy of Japan, attended both the JAVA briefing and the visit to the NJAMP, and remarked "the visiting lieutenants were impressed by the preservation of traditional Japanese culture among the Japanese American veterans. Their strong sense of culture and identity no doubt contributed during combat to galvanize their mental strength."

[full press release at www.javadc.org]



In civilian clothes, L-R: Dr. Ray Murakami; Terry Shima; Grant Ichikawa. In military uniform: L-R: MG Nodomi, 1LT Hosaka, 1LT Kudo, 1LT Kikuchi, 1LT Yahata, 1LT Hiyoshi, 1LT Miyasaka, 1LT Hidaka, 1LT Tetsuka, 1LT Ogura, 1LT Ito, 1LT Iwahashi, 1LT Hirashima, Capt (Dr) Horikawa, LTC Osonoi, LTC Matsunaga. (Courtesy of Grant Ichikawa)

G Company reunion in Vegas



Sitting, L-R: Rocky Matayoshi; Arthur Nishimoto; Fred Ida; Mitz Tagawa; Kats Hikido; Bill Osaka; Tom Nakamoto. Standing, L-R: Stanley Serikaku; Minor Miyasaki; Robert Ito; Ray Handa; Jimmy Doi; Bones Fujimoto; Kazu Hamasaki; Mitsuka Matsunaga. (Dr. Roy Yasui)

LAS VEGAS — Veterans, families and friends of G Company, 2nd Battalion, 100/442nd RCT held its annual reunion from March 2-4 in Las Vegas at the Fremont Hotel. There were about 80 people in attendance, including 15 veterans (8 from 1st Platoon, 3 from 2nd Platoon, 2 from 3rd Platoon, and 2 from 4th platoon). The organizers were Mary Karatsu, Ann Kabasawa, and George Nakatsu, succeeding President Fred Ida's long service as organizer. Judge Brian Yagi of San Francisco gave a moving speech at the banquet expressing his appreciation for the extraordinary role model that the 442nd veterans had been in his life as a Sansei.

MOH and DSC recipients recognized by US Army Museum of Hawaii

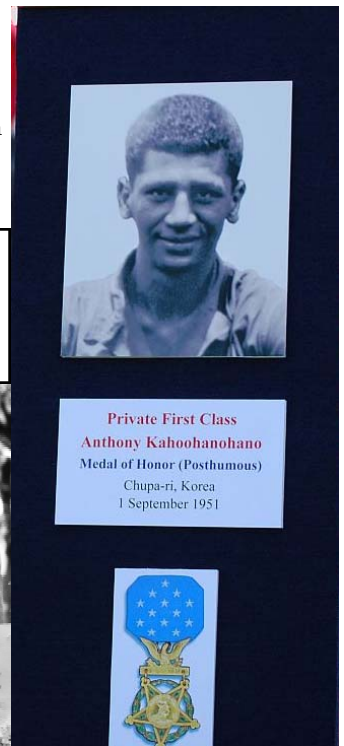
HONOLULU, Hawaii – PFC Anthony Kaho’ohanohano, Medal of Honor recipient (posthumous), and Pvt Thomas Y. Ono, a Distinguished Service Cross recipient, were recognized by the US Army Museum of Hawaii at Fort DeRussy in a Gallery of Heroes ceremony on March 5, 2010.

Kaho’ohanohano’s Medal of Honor was an upgrade of his DSC, which was awarded to him posthumously for his action in Chup’ari, Korea on September 1, 1951, while serving with Co H, 17th Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He fought with a machine gun and grenades and finally resorted to the use of a shovel to hold back the enemy while his buddies retreated. He was killed in action. The MOH was approved in October 2009.

According to the Honolulu Star Bulletin, March 2, 2010, Pvt Ono served with Co B, 100th Infantry Battalion, on June 2, 1944 near La Torretto, Italy. Ono’s squad was the lead for an attack on a German machine gun nest. Ono and two other 100th soldiers crawled 100 yards through a wheat field and were within 10 yards of the enemy. They hurled grenades, killing three enemy soldiers and capturing four others. Later that day, Ono’s platoon was again attacked. Ono and two soldiers crawled through a

vineyard, coming within ten feet of the enemy, and then attacked with fixed bayonets. Eight Germans were captured. Ono later served in the Korean War and was a prisoner of war at Ch’ang Song from April 25, 1951 to August 20, 1953.

Below: Pvt Ono receiving Distinguished Service Cross from LTG Mark W. Clark.
Right: PFC Kaho’ohanohano’s photo at US Army Museum of Hawaii Gallery of Heroes ceremony.



JAVA invited to participate in HOR roundtable on veterans issues; President Nakamoto presents JAVA oral testimony

[Tailored from House Veterans Committee Press Release; full press release available at www.javadc.org]

CAPITOL HILL, Washington – Robert Nakamoto, President of the Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA), was among the 40 representatives of veterans service organizations (VSO) to present oral testimonies and discuss veterans issues with Democratic and Republican members of the House of Representatives Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. Chaired by Chairman Bob Filner, the roundtable was held on January 20, 2010, in the Cannon Building, to discuss priorities for the second session of the 111th Congress.

As quoted in the House Veterans Committee press release, Chairman Filner stated, “Today’s roundtable marks the second time during the 111th Congress that this Committee has met with veterans’ advocates to discuss the important issues facing our Nation’s veterans and plan how best to solve these problems. The purpose of today’s meeting is to build upon the successes of the first session and collaborate on how we can better serve our veterans and wounded warriors going forward.”

Chairman Filner detailed the priorities of the Committee which include ensuring adequate VA budgets for the next two years. He also reminded veterans of the Committee’s commitment to fix the claims processing system, restructure the VA for the 21st Century, conduct oversight of VA spending, and monitor the progress of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill.

In addition to JAVA, VSOs included American Ex-Prisoners of War, The American Legion, AMVETS, Association of US Navy, Association for Service Disabled Veterans, Fleet Reserve Association, Gold Star Wives of America, Jewish War Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, National Association for Black Veterans, Non Commissioned Officers Association, Reserve Officers Association, The Retired Enlisted Association; Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America.

JAVA members who attended the Roundtable were Vice President Col Bruce Hollywood, USAF (Ret), Gerald Yamada, Esq., Dr Ray Murakami, Dr. Warren Tsuneishi (MIS), and Terry Shima (442).

Highlights from the Department of VA

[Drawn from DVA announcements]

Arlington Cemetery. [Fox News](#) (2/12, Hlad) website reported, "Arlington National Cemetery's perfect rows of white gravestones were completely covered with snow by February 10, 2010, but funerals for America's fallen servicemen and women," including two killed in Afghanistan, continued. The Old Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns, performed its duties throughout the severe weather.

Snowfall and VA. Washington's record snowfall didn't keep the VA Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) from its appointed rounds. The Board maintained a full schedule of personal and video teleconference hearings throughout a week of snow storms that shut down federal government in the Nation's capital. Veterans with appeals before the Board are afforded the right to a hearing with a Veterans Law Judge (VLJ). The Board accommodates those requests with either in-person or video-teleconference hearings.

Mobile Clinic. Seventy-four year-old Robert Harig of Guilford, ID., says he's lucky to be alive and credits a mobile clinic operated by the Cincinnati VA Medical Center for saving his life. Harig told the Enquirer newspaper, "I am here today because I walked into that van in Lawrenceburg. Those people saved my life." Nurse Practitioner Kathy Egan lis-

tened to Harig's heart when the clinic made a stop in his town. She noticed an irregular heartbeat and told him to see his family doctor immediately. A few days later he had a successful triple-bypass surgery. Harig, a Korean War-era veteran never enrolled for VA health care until the mobile clinic visited his area.

VA Disability Claims. In continuing coverage, the [AP](#) (3/2) reports Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki and US Senator Daniel Akaka "have agreed that reforming the VA disability claims system must be a top priority." On Friday, Akaka "said...in a Washington news release that he's encouraged by the administration's commitment to add thousands of staff to process veterans' disability claims." But Akaka "adds it appears the situation will get worse before it gets better, because it will take years and significant resources to fully train new VA claims staff."

Gold Star Mothers Monument. [CQ Weekly](#) (2/15, Zeller) reports, "Judith Young, who lost her son, Marine Sgt. Jeffrey D. Young, in the 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon, is trying to persuade Congress to commemorate gold star mothers by authorizing a monument to them in Washington." Congress "periodically passes bills to memorialize people, groups and events, but few make it into stone and bronze." Young, however, "says she's visited every Senate office and 250

House offices to lobby for the bill."

Veteran Service Organizations. The [Imperial Valley \(CA\) News](#) (3/4) reports that the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee held a joint hearing Thursday to receive the legislative presentation of various veterans groups. Wounded Warrior Project Board Member Andrew Kinard "called upon the VA to provide more coordinated care for America's wounded warriors," saying that "far more fundamental changes are needed to provide the kind of help wounded warriors need and deserve," and calling for "a holistic, coordinated approach to help a severely injured veteran to thrive again."

Congressional Gold Star Medal. Women's Air Force Service Pilots (WASP), the "first women to fly military aircraft," were honored with the "Congressional Gold Medal for stepping forward at a desperate time." According to CBS, "1100 women" who "volunteered to fly during" World War II "never saw combat, but they flew just about every other kind of mission. ... There are about 300 WASP still living."

Paralympic Winter Games, Vancouver, Canada. Five veterans are using VA-provided adaptive sports equipment to compete in the Winter Games being held from March 12-21. The equipment are for wheel chair curling, cross country skiing, and biathlon.

White House seeks \$125 billion for veterans in 2011

[Adapted from VA Press Release]

WASHINGTON – In a recent meeting at the Veterans Affairs (VA) Central Office in Washington, Secretary Eric K. Shinseki and VA senior officials briefed Veterans Service Organizations, including JAVA, on the \$125 billion budget submission for 2011. "Our budget proposal provides the resources necessary to continue our aggressive pursuit of President Obama's two over-arching goals of veterans," Shinseki reported in his opening comments.

Secretary Shinseki said, "First, the requested budget will help transform VA into a 21st century organization and, second, it will ensure that we approach veterans' care as a lifetime initiative, from the day they take their oaths until

the day they are laid to rest. VA's 2011 budget request covers many areas but focuses on three central issues that are of critical importance to our veterans – easier access to benefits and services, faster disability claims decisions, and ending the downward spiral that results in veterans homelessness."

The president's budget proposal includes an increase of \$460 million and more than 4,000 additional claims processors for veterans' benefits. This is a 27% funding increase over the 2010 level. The 1,014,000 claims received in 2009 were a 75% increase over the 579,000 received in 2000.

[full press release at www.javadc.org]

Combating piracy off the Horn of Africa

Headquarters, 6th Fleet, Naples, Italy – In view of the threat to international security posed by piracy on the African coast, Vice Admiral Harry B. Harris, Jr., USN, Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet and Commander, Striking and Support Forces NATO was asked for his perspective. He replied, “Piracy is a threat to global maritime security. It is an international problem which demands an international solution built on partnership and collaboration. In January 2009, the Commander, U.S. FIFTH Fleet in Bahrain, in his capacity as the commander of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), established Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151) with a specific mandate to deter, disrupt and suppress piracy in the volatile Horn of Africa region. CTF 151’s counter-piracy operations have had a significant impact. The work of U.S. Navy Lieutenant Janelle Kuroda -- a young Asian American lawyer -- and many others from coalition navies are making a real difference as we fight piracy.”

Lt Kuroda served aboard the USS Anzio, Horn of Africa. As the CTF 151 Staff Judge Advocate, she reviewed rules of engagement and provided counsel on the implementation of counter piracy guidance to seven Coalition navies. In order to coordinate the safety of merchant vessels, face-to-face meetings are held between Coalition vessels and

independent nations to ensure the most effective use of patrol assets. This collaboration at sea proves to be successful, as less than .001 percent of transiting ships become victims of piracy. While the number of piracy attempts has increased over the past year, the number of successful attacks has been reduced by 40 percent over the same time. She is proud to be a part of an exciting mission, sailing the seas onboard the USS Anzio, dedicated to honoring the freedom won on the Anzio beachhead by preserving the freedom of merchant vessels and their crew to safely sail the seas.

[To read Lt Kuroda’s personal account of a day at sea, see full press release at www.javadc.org. Based in Norfolk,

Virginia, the USS Anzio is named after the World War II amphibious assault on the beachhead at Anzio, Italy which commenced on January 22, 1944. Serving on the USS Anzio had a special significance to Lt Kuroda, a native of Hilo, Hawaii, because her granduncle was a member of the 100th Infantry Battalion, the Japanese American segregated unit, which fought in key battles in Italy, including the liberation of Anzio, and France.]



Onboard Japanese Ship Harusame (DD-102) at sea in the Gulf of Aden. (L-R) Capt. Arihara, Commander, Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force’s (JMSDF) Deployment Surface Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement (DSFCPE); Lt. Kuroda, CTF 151 Counter Piracy Legal Advisor; Capt. Nishimura, Legal Advisor to Commander, JMSDF DSFCPE; Rear Admiral Sanders, Commander, CTF 151 Counter Piracy. (Lt Janelle Kuroda)

Japan Ambassador Fujisaki welcomes Japanese and American exchange students

WASHINGTON — Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki received eight students from the Keio School in Tokyo, Japan and three students from St Albans School in Washington, DC on March 12, 2010 at the Embassy of Japan. Keio and St Albans



have an annual exchange program. The Ambassador is a graduate of the Keio School. Another major highlight of the visit was a tour of the Pentagon. The visit to the Embassy was arranged by John Tobe, Special Assistant to the Ambassador, and Pentagon was arranged by Col Bruce Hollywood, USAF (Ret), JAVA vice president. The students said these two events were the highlight of their visit to the nation’s capital. (Taeko Wu)

Meet the Generals and Admirals

Each quarter JAVA features two Asian Americans who have attained the highest ranks in the U.S. armed forces. The present count is that 92 Asian Hawaiian Pacific Islander Americans have been promoted to generals and admirals, including General Eric Shinseki of Kauai, Hawaii, who wore four stars as the US Army's 34th Chief of Staff. Of the other 91, 55 served in the US Army, 17 in the US Air Force, 15 in the US Navy, 2 in the Public Health Service, and one each in the US Marines and US Coast Guard. Broken down in another way, 39 are Japanese Americans, 23 Chinese Americans, 19 Hawaiian Pacific Islands, 10 Filipino Americans, and one Korean American.

BG Thomas S. Ito



Born of immigrant parents on October 16, 1928, BG Thomas S. Ito, USA (Ret), began his military career as a commissioned Field Artillery Officer, in the Officers Reserve Corps in June 1951, upon graduation from the ROTC program at the University of Hawaii. He joined the Hawaii Army National Guard (HANG) and served in a variety of command and staff assignments.

In December 1962, he was ordered to active duty as a Major, with assignment in the Departments of Army & Air Force, the Pentagon, National Guard Bureau, as Assistant and later Chief, Air Defense Branch, Organization and Training Division, to oversee and manage the conversion from The Nike Ajax to the Nike Hercules Missile System. Upon his release from active duty in December 1966, he returned to Hawaii and served in the reserves.

As a Colonel, on March 1974, he was appointed U.S. Property & Fiscal Officer of Hawaii and was ordered to active duty by the National Guard Bureau, The Pentagon. As the U.S. Property & Fiscal Officer of Hawaii, he was responsible and accountable for all Federal funds and equipment in the Army and Air National Guard in Hawaii. He came off active duty in September 1976 and was assigned to the 29th Infantry Brigade (Divisional) and served as the Assistant Division Commander, 25th Infantry Division. He was promoted to Brigadier General on February 1977 and was one of the earliest Japanese American general officers in the HANG.

BG Ito said the reason he selected the military as his career choice was because "of my parents' determination to do the best in any undertaking and living near a military post (Ft Shafter) influenced me greatly. My experience as a Boy Scout, plus the fact that my two brothers who served in the 100th Inf Bn, taught me the living example and meaning of loyalty, obedience and love of country. I was determined to make a difference and utilize the opportunities made available by the sacrifices of my parents and the soldiers of the 100th and 442nd."

BG Ito's decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal (Army) and the Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster. He resides in Honolulu, HI with his wife Doris and they have three children and four grandchildren.

MG Vern T. Miyagi



Major General Vern T. Miyagi assumed duties as the Mobilization Assistant (MA) to the Commander, US Pacific Command (USPACOM) in February 2006. He retired in July 2009.

MG Miyagi is a 1971 distinguished military graduate of the University of Hawaii ROTC program. He earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 1971 and a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Hawaii in 1972.

From 1972 to 1981, MG Miyagi served in the US Army Reserve (USAR) with the 322nd Civil Affairs Battalion and the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry. In 1981 he joined the Hawaii Army National Guard (HIARNG). His duty assignments include: Commander, 2nd Battalion, 299th Infantry; Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Training; Chief of Staff; and Commanding General of the HIARNG. During his tenure, the HIARNG successfully deployed over 2,800 soldiers in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom (OEF). From 2003 to 2006, MG Miyagi also served in a dual-hat position as the MA to the Director of Operations at USPACOM.

As the MA to the Commander, USPACOM, MG Miyagi advised the Commander on reserve component and National Guard readiness and operations and coordinated Homeland Defense activities between state, active military and Federal agencies. MG Miyagi's military education include: US Marine Corps Command and General Staff College at Quantico, Virginia and a US Army War College Fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh's Ridgway Center for International Security Studies. His awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal and Legion of Merit.

Asked why he selected the military as his career choice, MG Miyagi said "I just wanted to serve. In a large part, the brave deeds, selfless service, and humility of our Nisei generation during WW II and subsequent conflicts, motivated my desire for a military career. Our military endures many sacrifices and it is truly gratifying to see the appreciation our soldiers and their families are now receiving from the American people."

MG Miyagi and wife Gail have a son Brent (an OIF veteran), daughter Lorien, son-in-law Kelly, and grandson Landen.

Bostick promoted to Lieutenant General

THE PENTAGON – Major General Thomas P. Bostick, US Army, was promoted to Lieutenant General in a formal ceremony at the Pentagon auditorium on March 11, 2010. General George W. Casey, Jr, Chief of Staff of the US Army, hosted the ceremony. General Bostick's wife, Renee, and son, Joshua, proudly pinned on the third star on this professional officer.

General Bostick has assumed the position of US Army Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, responsible for developing, managing, and executing manpower and personnel plans, programs, and policies for the total Army. Prior to this assignment, he served in a variety of command and staff assignments, both domestic and foreign, most recently as Commanding General, US Army Recruiting Command. He deployed to Iraq with the 1st Cavalry Division initially to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and later as Commanding General of the Division.

General Bostick served as an Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering at West Point and was a White House Fellow, serving as a special assistant to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. He is a 1978 graduate of the US Military Academy and holds Master of Science degrees in civil engineering and mechanical engineering from Stanford University. He is a licensed professional engineer in Virginia and is a graduate of the US Army War College.



L-R: Gen George W. Casey, Jr., US Army Chief of Staff, LTG Thomas Bostick, Renee Bostick, Joshua Bostick. (Kris Ikejiri)

His decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters and the Bronze Star. He and Renee have one son, Joshua. His father is African American and his mother is a native of Japan.

Other Japanese Americans on active duty wearing three stars are Lieutenant General Joseph Peterson, Deputy Commander of US Forces Command (FORSCOM), and Vice Admiral Harry B. Harris, USN, Commander of 6th Fleet with headquarters in Naples, Italy.

Leadership summit features Mineta, Senator Simpson



WASHINGTON — The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, the Japanese American National Museum and the Japanese American National Heritage Coalition jointly held a “leadership summit” at the Madison Hotel in Washington, DC on February 3, 2010 to discuss WW II internment sites. Former US Senator for Wyoming Alan Simpson, former Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta and Director of National Park Service Jon Jarvis and JACL National Director Floyd Mori were the principal speakers. Shig Yabu, author of Hello Maggie and internee at Heart Mountain also attended. (Photo by Donald Tanguilig)

Hawaii MIS Veterans meet Japan Consul General Kamo

by Edgar Hamasu, President, MIS Hawaii

MIS Veterans Club of Hawaii representatives paid a courtesy call on Yoshihiko Kamo, Consul General of Japan, at his office on February 12, 2010; Consuls Shimpei Ara and Akiteru Nogawa participated. MIS representatives were Edgar Hamasu, sitting President, and Andrew Sato and Dr. Glenn Masunaga, past presidents.

The purpose of the visit to the Consulate General was to welcome Consul General and Mrs. Kamo to Hawaii in the aloha spirit, to establish cordial relationships, and to offer assistance by way of briefings to visiting Japanese officials on the MIS activities during WW II. This meeting was facilitated by Minister Kenji Shinoda, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Chief of Mission for the Embassy of Japan in Washington, DC.

Consul General Kamo thanked the MIS representatives for initiating the

contact, adding that the Consulate General wishes to continue the cordial and productive relationship with the people of Hawaii, including the Nikkei. He said as the WW II veterans steadily pass away, there is an urgency to obtain as much personal historical data as possible from them. The MIS representatives agreed, explaining that “our organization has been gathering oral histories from our members over the years.”

Kamo was born and raised in Shizuoka, Japan, graduated from Tokyo University, and was assigned to Japanese embassies in Bangladesh, Thailand, Canada, Myanmar and Finland. Prior to arriving in Honolulu in August 2009, he served as the Consul General in Houston.



Consul General Kamo has reached out to Japanese Americans during his assignment to Houston, where this photo was taken. L-R: Mrs. Kamo, Sandra Tanamachi, her mother Kikuko Tanamachi, and Consul General Kamo. (Sandra Tanamachi) [Not related to article]

JAVA supporter Frankeberger retires from teaching high school

SILVER SPRING, Md. – The JAVA speakers program at high schools in the Washington area has been successful for a number of reasons. One reason is the support JAVA receives from teachers. Eliot Frankeberger, a history teacher at Springbrook High School, Silver Spring, Maryland, recently retired after 28 years of teaching. To learn why Mr. Frankeberger supported the JAVA’s speakers visits so fervently, one must only know his background, including his residence and travel abroad.

Frankeberger’s grandmother came to America in 1915 from Russia, on the border of Ukraine and Belarus, where Tsar Nicholas allowed the Cossacks to maintain security. His ancestor on his father’s side arrived from Frankfurt, Germany and fought in the Philadelphia militia with George Washington. Frankeberger’s two brothers fought in the Korean

and Vietnam Wars. Although Frankeberger did not serve in the wars, he worked briefly at Walter Reed Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland.

Frankeberger instead applied for scholarships and fellowships, including Fulbright, for study in Japan where he excelled in martial arts such as sword fighting and *kendo*. He also learned to play the *shakuhachi*, or traditional bamboo flute. He was fully accepted into the Japanese society and married a Japanese woman in a formal Japanese marriage ceremony.

When he met with members of the JAVA speakers bureau, he discovered they were basically Japanese in terms of national heritage but otherwise totally American. They were basically Japanese in terms of accepting without physical protest the government order to place them in internment camps and their determination to per-

severe. “I think the Nisei found it strange that I was more Japanese than they were in terms of their language, mannerisms and outlook,” Frankeberger said.

He said the Nisei “endured much we cannot imagine, but also came home to America from the war, or took out of this experience the chance to make a difference for those who had given their last full measure.”

As Secretary Eric Shinseki expressed it so well at a recent JAVA luncheon, “Nisei came home to work and make a difference for themselves, and to do something good for the community. They were confident and eager to get on with their lives.”

[Eliot Frankeberger is one example of JAVA’s relationship with teachers in Maryland and Virginia. JAVA wishes Frankeberger Sensei a happy retirement.]

News from other Veterans organizations

HONOLULU, HI. *Puka Puka Parade*, February 2010 monthly newsletter of the **100th Infantry Battalion Veterans**, reported the change of command of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry. LTC Kimo J. Dunn succeeded LTC Michael Peeters. Peeters commanded the 100th second deployment to the Middle East. ... The March issue reported that Tokuji Ono, visited the Mid Pacific Institute and told the sixth grade class his experience on Cat Island, Mississippi in a SECRET dog training army project. Dressed in padded protective clothing, German Shepherds, on command to "Kill" attacked the Nisei. The Army had planned to use the dogs in the Pacific to smoke out Japanese soldiers in hiding. Ono said they were used as "dog bait". The exercise failed because the dogs could not distinguish the Nisei as Japanese.

SEATTLE, WA. **Nisei Veterans Committee (NVC)** February Monthly Newsletter Commander's column reported the departure of Japanese Consul General Mitsunori Namba for his next post as Ambassador to Yemen. ... NVC Speakers Series featured Mary Woodward, whose parents Walt and Milly Woodward, co-editors of the *Bainbridge Review*, were the lone voice in the Pacific Northwest to oppose the internment on constitutional and civil rights grounds. A 7th grade teacher, Ms. Woodward wrote a book, *In Defense of our Neighbors*, when school textbooks failed to mention the internment. ... NVC obtained \$200,000 from the US Congress. This amount will be added to a fund to purchase a piece of land, next to the NVC Memorial Hall, to construct a Memorial Wall.

HONOLULU, HI. **442nd Veterans Club Hawaii's Go For Broke Bulletin** December issue carried as its feature article the role of Gerome Villain and Herve Claudon,

French historians on the US liberation of the Vosges area. They also serve as French Ambassadors of goodwill to assist foreign visitors to the

Vosges and to conduct liaison with foreigners who are interested in the Allied liberation of the Vosges area. They conducted an impressive signature drive and obtained letters from French officials to support the Nisei Veterans Stamp campaign.

SACRAMENTO, CA. **VFW Nisei Post 8985 Newsletter** January 2010 issue reported that the Placer County Memorial of the 442nd RCT was dedicated. 102 Placer County Nisei served in the US Army and two made the ultimate sacrifice. ... February 2010 issue reported that the National Personnel Records Center veterans and their next of kin can now access their military files. They can make copies of the documents including DD-214, the summary personnel statement. The NPRC website is <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>.

MORGAN HILL, CA. **Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans** January 2010 issue discussed activities in 2009, including the FFNV sponsored trip to Bruyeres and Biffontaine France. FFNV outlined its 2010 events including the holding of its third meeting in August on the USS Hornet, where FFNV has built a permanent exhibit on the 442nd RCT and the MIS. FFNV also plans to hold its annual reunion in Las Vegas in late September

HONOLULU, HI. **MIS Veterans Hawaii Newsletter** January 2010 issue announced its 2010 officers: Edgar A. Hamasu (President); Dr. Yoshinobu Oshiro (1st VP); Dusty T. Aoyagi (2nd VP); Glen S. Arakaki (Secretary); Harry T. Kawaoka (Treasurer); and James M. Araki (Auditor). ... The March issue reported that the Club plans to set up a website and begin communicating with its members and families via email.

Montgomery County public school system produces DVD on Japanese American experience as teacher's aid

ROCKVILLE, Md. – Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) system, located in Rockville, Maryland, produced and distributed to its 23 high schools a 24-minute DVD entitled *Japanese Americans and World War II: Fighting for Freedom at Home and Abroad*. The DVD is based on interviews recorded by MCPS audio department about two years ago of JAVA and National Japanese American Memorial Foundation members (NJAMF). They were JAVA members Kelly Kuwayama (442nd), Dr. Norman Ikari (442nd), Terry Shima (442nd), Grant Ichikawa (MIS), Ranger Grant Hirabayashi (MIS-Merrill's Marauders), Mary Murakami (Internment camp) and Gerald Yamada, Esq, then President and Executive Director of NJAMF.

The DVD, inspired by Dr. Donna Shimoda Hollingshead and produced by Todd Hochkeppel of MCPS Instructional TV, is divided into six segments, or chapters as

MCPS calls it, as follows: Japanese Internment (9.4 minutes); From Pearl Harbor to Internment (4.57 minutes); Fighting Two Wars (4.40 minutes); Segregation, Discrimination and Racism (2.39 minutes); The Legacy of WW II (1.18 minutes); and Reflections to Today (1.40 minutes). The teachers will have an option of playing the entire tape in one sitting or playing segments depending on the teacher's lesson plan.

Robert Nakamoto, President of JAVA, said this is a giant leap forward in our education program, and MCPS used excellent foresight in taping the interviews when they did. "Were it to be done today, three of the five veterans might not have been able to be interviewed as effectively, in part, due to their age. I see this DVD as having potential value beyond MCPS, which, by itself, is quite large. I have sent a letter of appreciation to Dr. Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of MCPS."

Honor Flights bring 30,000 WWII veterans to WWII Memorial

By Lona Ichikawa

FAIRFAX, Vir. – Last year, a group of core volunteers joined forces with the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 180 and a non profit **Heroes' Welcome Honor Flight** was born! Heroes' Welcome Honor Flight Hub became official 11 February 2010 and is organized exclusively to support our WWII Veterans on their arrival to Washington DC, to visit memorials dedicated to honor their sacrifices.

All war veterans from across the country are flown in at no cost to them. Guardians and medical personnel who fly in with them pay their own fares. Honor Flight started in 2009 with weekend flights from the West Coast. Approximately 12,000 and 18,000 veterans participated in these honor flights in 2008 and 2009, respectively. We hope to



Above: Senator Bob Dole with 442nd RCT veteran Sus Musashi (center) and Lona Ichikawa during an Honor Flight visit.

dramatically increase those numbers this year if we are successful in fundraising to assist hubs which are cash short. I have been an Honor Flight Coordinator volunteer since 2008 and am now a proud member of this new hub.

Our goal is to ensure that on-going and starter hubs have the resources to bring WWII Veterans to the Nation's Capital. We also hope to eventually be able to provide transportation to local Veterans to the World War II Memorial. We often don't realize how many local Veterans in the Washington DC area have not had the pleasure of camaraderie of one of these trips, and we'd like to be able to remedy that.

Honor Flight Season starts in early April and ends in mid-November. We are looking for ROTC units willing to serve as Honor Guards to greet the WWII Veterans as they land at Dulles Airport during the weekdays or weekends. Also, we are looking for Girl Scout and Boy Scout groups, musicians who can play patriotic music, and just anyone who is willing to come out in the mornings to greet and thank these veterans.

We are looking for a lawyer who could assist us *pro bono* with fund raising questions. We do accept donations, but we will not accept donations from WWII Veterans as they have already sacrificed much, and this program is to honor them. In the near future we will be selling WWII Memorial challenge coins and prints created by two artists from the George Mason Print Guild. Our website is currently under construction. If you would like to donate, please write your check payable to American Legion Auxiliary Unit 180, and note in the memo line "Heroes Welcome HF," and send to American Legion Auxiliary Unit 180, 330 Center Street, N., Vienna, VA 22180.

If you are a WW II veteran with questions concerning honor flights or if you wish to volunteer, please contact me at na-maiki.baghdad2004@gmail.com.

JAVA farewells Minister Kato, welcomes Minister Suzuki



At a luncheon on February 1, 2010, at a private club in Tyson's Corner, Virginia, JAVA said farewell to Minister Motohiko Kato, Head of Chancery of the Embassy of Japan. His next post is Manila, Philippines, where he will be the Deputy Chief of Mission. Minister Kato has worked tirelessly to foster close friendship between the government and people of Japan and the Japanese Americans. Kato's successor is Minister Hideo Suzuki. L-R: Minister Kato, Bob Nakamoto, Minister Suzuki.

Book: *From Internment, to Korea, to Solitude* (by Robert M. Wada)

Memoir *From Internment, to Korea, to Solitude* follows a Japanese-American Marine who faces racial prejudice before and after military service

FULLERTON, Calif. – *From Internment, to Korea, to Solitude: Memoir of Robert M. Wada, Nisei child of a WWII Japanese American Internment Camp and later a Marine Corps Veteran of the Korean War* by Robert M. Wada seeks to offer an intimate glimpse into the soul of a man who overcame discrimination to serve his country in battle.

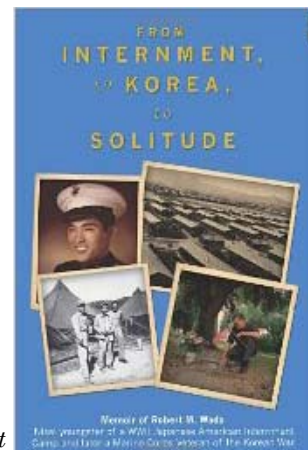
Born in 1930 to first generation Japanese-American parents, Wada and his family were forced to live in an internment camp during World War II. Only 12 years old at the time, the author recalls his feelings on being relocated and effectively imprisoned solely because of his ethnic heritage. Rather than focus on the anger and disappointment he felt at the time, Wada later joined the U.S. Marine Corps and served in the Korean War. During the war, he lost his young wife to illness and his lifelong friend in battle. Reeling from these tragic events, he still went on to begin a new family and embark on a mission to honor those who died in battle.

"I was inspired to write the book after I came in contact with the Marines who were with my friend when he was killed in action in the Korean War," Wada says. "I have dedicated myself to honor and memorialize those who were killed in the Korean War and others who gave their lives in all of the wars and conflicts of the U.S."

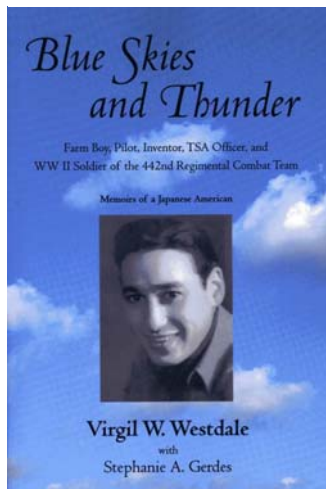
Filled with grief and guilt after the death of his friend in the Korean War, Wada spent many years questioning his relationships and considering the meaning of life. The book aims to create a question in the reader's mind of what would or could have been the author's future had he not suffered such tragedies.

From Internment, to Korea, to Solitude: Memoir of Robert M. Wada Nisei child of a WWII Japanese American Internment Camp and later a Marine Corps Veteran of the Korean War is available for sale online at www.amazon.com and other channels.

[Robert M. Wada is the charter president of the Japanese American Korean War Veterans Association and a registered land surveyor in the states of California and Arizona. Born in Redlands, California, Wada was incarcerated in an internment camp during WW II, completed high school, joined the U.S. Marines, and served with distinction in the Korean War. Following his military career, Wada returned to California.]



Book: *Blue Skies and Thunder* (by Virgil W. Westdale)



GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – *Blue Skies and Thunder* was written by Virgil W. Westdale, with Stephanie A. Gerdes, and published in January 2010. It is the true story of a midwestern farm boy during the depression. He grows up to become a pilot, WW II soldier, inventor, and Transportation Security Administration officer.

Westdale's Caucasian mother was very gentle, but often ill, and his father was a hard-working but quick-tempered immigrant Japanese. He described his father learning to drive a Model T, his life in Amish country, and his

family's tireless commitment to their farm. During college, Westdale enrolled in flight school and found he had a gift for flying. After Pearl Harbor, he volunteered for the War Training Service, where he continued flight school and hoped to fly with the US Army Air Corps. The school's top student pilot, he began rigorous training in acrobatics, instrument, and commercial flight to become a successful commercial pilot instructor.

His pilot skills and his change of name from Nishimura to

Westdale, however, did not protect him when a federal agent arrived to confiscate his license. Because of his Japanese parentage, Virgil found himself reassigned to the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and served in the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion Fire Direction Center. While advancing in Germany, the 522nd freed inmates from the Dachau extermination camp.

After the war, Virgil returned to college and received two degrees. He pursued a career in research and development with large corporations, where he earned twenty-five U.S. patents and was awarded an international research and development award. He also received his university's "Distinguished Alumni Award" for his scientific achievements.

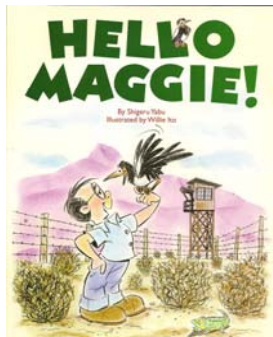
In 1995, at the age of 77, he returned to full-time work with the TSA and retired in July 2009. *Blue Skies and Thunder* can be ordered through Barnes and Noble or from the following link:

<http://www.iuniverse.com/Bookstore/BookSearchResults.aspx?Search=virgil%20westdale>

[Westdale, 93, was asked how he kept himself so healthy and durable. He responded, "Well, I hadn't thought of that but maybe ballroom and tap dancing along with speaking at schools and meeting nice passengers in my airport security work have helped." When speaking at schools he wears his original 442nd Army uniform.]

Shig Yabu, author of book *Hello Maggie*, describes innocence of youths in internment camp

By Shig Yabu



When I left my dog, turtle, canary, and gold fish when we had to depart, it was the last time I saw my pets. When I was in Heart Mountain, I had a lizard, horned toad, salamander, sparrow, and a magpie bird. Ken Suo had a reputation for being the best sling shot shooter, and he was nice enough to teach us how to make and shoot a sling shot.

We decided to go hunting by the

Shoshone River, and we decided to shoot down a magpie nest. After the nest came down from the tree, we just wanted to see what the inside of a nest looked like. We did not realize that there was a baby magpie bird begging for food.

One of the older boys stated that this baby bird would die because the mother is going to reject the bird because it was on the ground. I had adopted this scavenger magpie bird. This bird went through the barbed wire like the rest of us. My mother was very annoyed when she saw this bird because she was afraid of germs. My stepfather seemed to know what this bird liked to eat and made a cage out of leftover scrap wood. I named this magpie bird Maggie, and I would say "Hello Maggie" every time I went by the cage. Maggie's first word was, "Hello Maggie."

Maggie learned many new words, whistled, laughed, and she was allowed to roam between the barracks during the warm summer evening. Magpies are known to be thieves, and she constantly stole and buried our marbles. There were three magpie birds in Heart Mountain, but Maggie was the only bird that had talked. People of all ages had visited Maggie, and Maggie enjoyed having company. August 14, 1945, Japan had surrendered, and the WRA urged everyone to leave as soon as possible. My stepfather was an illegal alien, so we were afraid to leave. Heart Mountain became a ghost town, the school had closed, and there were only a few mess halls open. In the middle of October, Maggie was on the bottom of the cage and breathing hard. I could hear my mother crying behind me as I carried Maggie into my bedroom.

Maggie did not want to leave Heart Mountain nor Wyoming, and she probably felt that she was no longer needed at Heart Mountain Relocation Center. I then wrote a book called *Hello Maggie*. Barbara Bazaldua has written a book called, "A Boy of Heart Mountain," where there is a short story about Maggie. This book should be coming out within the next month or two.

[When the internment camp closed, Yabu and his family returned to San Francisco, where he completed high school. He joined the Navy in 1951 and in 1967 became Executive Director of the Boys Club in Camarillo, California. He is a JAVA member.]

Speaker's Bureau achieves couple of firsts in 1st quarter

JAVA's education program was enhanced by two events that occurred for the first time. Montgomery County Public Schools produced a 24 minute DVD on the Japanese American WW II experience for use as teachers aid in its schools. Also, JAVA speakers were invited to speak by George Washington University

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) produced a 24 minute educational DVD, entitled *Japanese-Americans and WW II: Fighting for Freedom at Home and Abroad*. Divided into six segments, or chapters as MCPS calls it, the DVD has been distributed to some 30 high schools in the County for use by teachers as a training tool. The chapters are Japanese Internment; From Pearl Harbor to Internment; Fighting Two Wars; Segregation, Discrimination and Racism; The Legacy of WW II; and Reflections to Today. Teachers can play the entire DVD in one or several sittings, depending on the teacher's lesson plan. JAVA participants interviewed for this DVD were Mary Murakami

(internment camp), Grant Ichikawa (camp and MIS), Grant Hirabayashi (MIS), Kelly Kuwayama (442nd), Dr. Norman Ikari (442nd), and Terry Shima (442nd). National Japanese American Memorial Foundation participant was Gerald Yamada, Esq. The producer was Todd Hochkeppel, Multimedia writer/producer of the Instructional TV Department.

JAVA was invited for the first time to speak at a university. On March 9, 2010 JAVA and NJAMF speakers were invited to the Pi Delta Psi, George Washington University, an Asian-interest fraternity for discussions on the Japanese American experience during WW II. About 30 ethnic Asian and other students participated in the approximately two hour session. The Pi Delta Psi was founded at Binghamton University, State University of New York in 1994 with a mission to perpetuate the growth and development of the individual. The Pi Delta Psi chapter at GWU was activated in 2003 and is known as the Omricon Chapter. The Chapter president is Ernesto Apreza.

[continued on page 17 at Speaker's Bureau]

Speaker's Bureau (continued from page 16)

JAVA speakers, Mary Murakami, Grant Ichikawa, and Terry Shima, served on a panel at the JAACL Professional Development Workshop held on March 27, 2010 at the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery, located near the White House in Washington, DC. The audience consisted of about 25 teachers from Virginia, Maryland and Washington, DC. The Program was held in conjunction with Renwick's exhibit entitled *The Art of Gaman* (translation: accept with dignity what was imposed on you), a display of crafts made at internment camps from natural and otherwise waste material.

Akira Yoshida, resident of Philadelphia and a member of the JAVA National Archives Digitization group, attended US Congressman Joe Sestak's "veterans summit" held at Ridley High School in Philadelphia on March 8, 2010. Yoshida represented President Bob Nakamoto who received the invitation from the Congressman.

JAVA and NJAMF speakers spoke at Sandy Spring Friends School (Quaker) and JAVA speakers spoke at Springbrook High School, both in Maryland, and Mark Twain Middle School in Fairfax County, Virginia.



Omricon Chapter members displaying their hand sign used nationally to identify the fraternity brothers. Seated, L-R: Terry Shima (JAVA), Kris Ikejiri, Esq., (National Japanese American Memorial Foundation), and Mary Murakami (JAVA). Standing, L-R: Adam Young, Andrew Liu, Ernesto Apreza, Mogin Kim, Justin Wong, Eric Choi, Paul Kim and Robert Ge. (courtesy of Kris Ikejiri)



Above left: JAVA speakers visited Springbrook High School, Silver Spring, Maryland on February 18, 2010. L-R: Renee Atkins, Mary Murakami, Mr. Mark Pim, Head of History Department, Ranger Grant Hirabayashi, and Shannon Parker. Following the presentation, some students, such as Renee, selected the Japanese American WW II story for their history class requirement. In her paper, based on speakers remarks and considerable independent research, Renee said, "I did not know that Japanese Americans had been incarcerated in these relocation camps. Japanese Internment was not for the benefit of the common good, but was the punishment of the Japanese Americans for the bombing of Pearl Harbor. This punishment was not justified because it was solely based on nationality and there was not any evidence to support this decision. In August of 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act, and the United States apologized for the treatment that the Japanese Americans had to experience during the United States' involvement in World War II." Mr. Pim provided his views as to the value of these presentations. He said "I have valued the personal interaction between the JAVA speakers and our students. The students have become more aware of the rights and feelings of others and the need to defend what they believe in."



Above: JAVA speakers visited Mark Twain Middle School, Virginia on March 17, 2010. L-R: Mr. Travis Dickason (teacher); Bonnie Schipper; Grant Ichikawa; Emily Johnson; Terry Shima; Mary Murakami. (Grant Ichikawa)

TAPS

MILDRED ICHIKAWA

By Lona Ichikawa



Mildred Shigeko Yano Yamamoto Ichikawa passed away at the Fairfax hospital at about 2:00 AM Sunday morning, January 10, at almost 92 years of age.

As the result of Pearl Harbor, her father was taken to an internment camp in Santa Fe, New Mexico because he was a

community leader. She volunteered to serve in the US Army as a linguist in order to hasten her father's release from detention. She was in the group of 13 young female American linguists who were trained in mail censorship. After WWII, they were flown to Japan and were the first Japanese American women to enter as members of the occupation forces and were given assimilated ranks of 2nd Lieutenants.

After the Korean War, Mildred pursued a busy social life of being a dedicated CIA wife serving in Japan, Indonesia, and Vietnam with husband Grant until he retired in the mid 1970s. In the 1960s when the Ichikawa family was assigned to Surabaya, Indonesia, the communists were trying to overtake the government and on one occasion, a police official came to the house demanding Mildred take down the American flag. Mildred refused and stood her ground, her daughter Lona, who was approximately 8 years old, watched all this in awe.

Recently, Lona asked an Army coworker in Iraq to fly an American flag in honor of her Mother's service during WWII. When presented with the flag and certificate of appreciation signed by the post commander, Mildred broke down crying because it was the first time she had ever been acknowledged for her service to her country. She loved people and was always a gracious hostess full of life, love and laughter.

SAM SUGIMOTO

Contributed by Connie Ishio

LOVELAND, Colo. — Sam S. Sugimoto, 93, of Loveland, formerly of Silver Spring, MD, died on December 28, 2009, at the Colorado State Veterans Nursing Home.

Sam was born on November 22, 1916, in California and lived in Japan from 1922 to 1932. In September 1941 he joined the US Army, served as a translator-linguist in the Pacific during WW II with the American and Australian forces. His family was interned at the Amache internment camp in Colorado.

Sugimoto participated in the invasion of Attu and Kiska Islands in Alaska, served with front line troops in New Guinea and the Philippines, and served in the Occupation of Japan to 1947. At that time he joined the Central Intelligence Agency, from which he retired in 1975. He received a battlefield commission to 2nd Lieutenant.

His wife, Ruth M. Otsuji, died in 2004 in Silver Spring. He is survived by his daughter, Patricia, who resides in Philadelphia and his son, John, of Loveland, and 4 grandchildren.

HOWARD OKADA REMINISCES ABOUT HIS 40-YEAR ASSOCIATION WITH GENERAL WEYAND

By CW4 Howard S. Okada, USA (Ret)

HONOLULU, Hawaii — There is an old Army adage about being at the right place at the right time. On a beautiful November day in 1970, the day Lieutenant General Fred C. Weyand arrived in Saigon to assume the position of Deputy Commander, US Military Assistance Command, I was approached by General Weyand. I had to look to the sky to make eye contact with this 6'3" general, shook his hand, and he gave me a warm "hello, soldier" greeting. I had a strong instant impression I was at the right place at the right time. I would serve him for the balance of his active duty assignments, including Chief of Staff of the US Army, and in his retirement until he died on February 10, 2010. The relationship continues with his surviving widow.

After preparing General Weyand for duty in Europe during WW II, the Army, in its wisdom, sent him to the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater to serve as an intelligence officer on General Joseph Stilwell's staff. Through this position he came to know of the Nisei who served in Merrill's Marauders and the Office of Strategic Service (OSS), both of which operated in the CBI. He supported these two units, including the Nisei.



Gen Weyand presenting the Legion of Merit to CW4 Howard S. Okada while his wife, Yukiko (right) and daughter Marian (left) witness the ceremony in the office of the Chief of Staff, US Army, at the Pentagon in July 1974. (Courtesy of Howard Okada)

Shortly after arriving in Saigon, LTG Weyand was promoted to full general. For the next twenty-eight months, General Weyand and I shared an apartment, and our families lived in Bangkok. Following our retirement from active duty, I continued to provide him and his family administrative, executive support and assistance.

[Due to space constraints, only a small portion of CW4 Okada's report could be printed. If you are interested in the fascinating full report please contact CW4 Okada (okadahs@hawaii.rr.com)]

From the Editor



Between Death Valley and the Mojave Desert in California: that's between a rock and a hard place three hours south of the Manzanar National Historic Site. It's also the ideal place these days to train soldiers for missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Ft. Irwin, California is surely no garden spot, but for the last couple of months I have been training there at the National Training Center (NTC) with my brigade, the 4th BCT, 3rd Infantry Division. We deploy to Iraq this summer. The training was intense with long hours and realistic scenarios to help us prepare for a combat environment. Whole "Iraqi" villages had been built at the NTC, complete with mock insurgents, pyrotechnic simulations of IEDs, and actors portraying local civilians (hostile and otherwise). Combat veterans watched over us, critiquing our every move. The occasional sand storm just added to the realism.

While at the NTC, I met with Honolulu native and JAVA life member Lieutenant General Joseph Peterson, Deputy Commander of Forces Command. He came to NTC to observe the brigade's training cycle and to confer with staff officers and senior commanders. More than an inspirational leader, LTG Peterson was a welcome friendly face, since I met him at Fort Stewart, Georgia, just a few months ago. He graciously took the time to greet each and every Soldier in attendance and pre-

sent his coin as a token of his appreciation for our work.

Seeing a fellow JAVA member reminded me that our humble service in this desert is an extension of the patriotism shown by Japanese American families held at Manzanar. When I looked at the desolate mountains, I drew strength from the stories I had heard of my own family's internment, and of Japanese American families held in other harsh camps decades ago. I squinted and smiled under a tight-fitting scarf: no sand storm was going to ruin my day. —Kay Wakatake



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Please make checks payable to JAVA and mail to:
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JAPANESE AMERICAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION

c/o Base Technologies
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Memorial Day Parade: Martin Herbert (See above)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Apr 3, 10AM: Freedom Walk; Washington, DC.

Apr 10, 10AM: National Cherry Blossom Parade, *Sakura Matsuri*; JAVA booth. Washington, DC.

Apr 26, 6:30PM: National Japanese American Memorial Foundation Reception at National Museum of American Indians.

May 15, 11:30AM: JAVA quarterly lunch, Falls Church, Vir.

May 20, 6-8PM: Go For Broke National Education Center reception; Hyatt Capitol, Washington, DC.

May 30, 9:30AM: JAACL-JAVA Memorial Day Program at Arlington Cemetery.

May 31, 10:30AM: National Memorial Day Program at Arlington Cemetery. 2PM: National Memorial Day Parade down Constitution Ave., Washington, DC.

Jun 10, 7:30PM: Little Angels of Korea. Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Jul 24, 11:30AM: JAVA quarterly lunch.

Sep 16: JAACL Gala Dinner (Venue TBD)

Training for desert deployment



National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California: Major Kay Wakatake, USA, just before boarding a Mine-Resistant Armored Vehicle (MRAP) at the end of her brigade's training cycle for deployment to Iraq this summer.