

San Fernando Valley Japanese American Citizens League Newsletter April/May, 2013

happa girl sushi bar after hour

The San Fernando Valley JACL and Cedar Grove Onstage will present a concert reading of "happa girl sushi bar after hour", a new play by Perry Miyake, directed by Chris Tashima, (Co-founder of Cedar Grove Productions; Director/Co-Writer, Actor for Academy Award Winning Visas and Virtue 1997; Directed, co-wrote, and acted in Day of Independence 2003), on Sunday May 19, 2013 at 2:00 PM at the SFV Japanese Community Center, 12953 Branford St., Pacoima 91331.

A staged reading of the play will be followed by a short questionand-answer session with the author, director and cast, then a bento dinner.

Michael Hagiwara, (Slice; Manzanar, the Musical; Law & Order:LA), plays David, a Venice sansei down-and-out musician who has hit bottom, divorced and working as church janitor while living in its storeroom.

Shuko Akune, (*Tea; General Hospital; E/R-Emergency Room The Sitcom; Seinfeld*), plays Kats, the owner of a neighborhood Japanese restaurant, struggling to survive, years after adding a sushi chef and a karaoke bar.

Kym Hoy, (*Kim in Miss Saigon in 2nd National Broadway company; NCIS; Manzanar, the Musical*) plays Mitzi, an Asian/Caucasian waitress from Iowa, who David discovers, after karaoke time is over at Kats' restaurant, that she has a great voice, but is an uncertain about how to sing as she is about her racial background. As he helps her learn how to interpret a song, and her Asian/American-ness, she helps him rediscover long-dormant feelings and his long-lost talent, and soon it's uncertain who's teaching who, and who's helping who.

Miyake, a former Rockefeller Foundation Playwright-in-Residence with East West Players and recipient of EWP's 2000 "Made in America" Award for his body of work, including 'What the Enemy Looks Like" (1980), "Visitors from Nagasaki' (1984), and "Doughball" (1991), numerous one-acts, skits for Cold Tofu, and "Interracial Relations" (Seattle Group Theater, 1990), is also the author of the novel "21st Century Manzanar" (2002) and the pictorial history "Venice Japanese Community Center and the 100+ Year History of the Japanese American Community of Venice, California" (2011)

See flyer on page 10

UPCOMING EVENTS



COME JOIN US IN THE FUN AND ACTIVITIES

April 13

Manzanar Fishing Club,
Screening

April 16 Third Tuesday Movie Outing

April 27 Manzanar Pilgrimage

May 21
Third Tuesday Movie Outing

May 19 Happa Girl Sushi Bar After Hour

June 6 - Aug.15 (Thursdays) Katarou Histories

June 17-21 Suzume no Gakkou

June 29-30 Obon Festival Booth

Questions or Comments?

Please email kyoshino@verizon.net or send comments to: Nancy Gohata 14229 Carl Street Arleta. CA 91331

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Thank You, Dr. Sanbo Sakaguchi



In the past, I have often spoken about the amazing contributions by the SFVJACL board members, about their dedication to the JACL and about their love for the JA community. I would like to take this opportunity to talk about one of our chapter members who has contributed so much, not only to our community as a legendary doctor, but also as a supporter of the JACL and particularly this chapter.

Dr. Sanbo Sakaguchi is well known in the San Fernando Valley and has been the doctor for several generations of JAs in our community. What a lot of people may not know is his steadfast commitment to the JACL. Dr. Sanbo has been actively involved in the SFVJACC for as far back as anyone can remember (and I checked with some really old time JACLers!). Well, maybe not that old, but at least those who remember back to the 1960s and remember Dr. Sanbo's involvement with JACL back then. Dr. Sanbo and his late wife, **Kay**, would host SFVJACL board meetings in their backyard and they would attend many of our events, including our installations and our Hawaiian Plate Lunch Fundraisers. They were very involved members and always supportive of this chapter.

After over 50 years, Dr. Sanbo continues to be a champion for our chapter as well as the SFV Community Center. He donated funds for the stage curtains so we could bring the Camp Dance production to the valley and he recently gave us a considerable amount of money to assist us with our inaugural *Suzume no Gakko* program which was a huge success! His love for all people and his strong dedication to the preservation of human rights not only shows through how he lives his life, but also in his generosity and philanthropy towards the SFVJACL and the SFVJACC.

The reality is this organization and this chapter could not survive without the help of dedicated members like Dr. Sanbo. We are grateful that this chapter has so many members who help us year in and year out. Whether it is attending our events or providing financial support, our members are the backbone to the

success of this chapter. On behalf of the SFVJACL board, I want to thank Dr. Sanbo and the many other members who help keep this organization strong and who help keep this chapter one of the most active chapters in the JACL.

Sincerely, Brian Moriguchi



Please help us lower our postage cost?

You can greatly help our chapter by getting the Chapter newsletter via email. Please go to **kyoshino@verizon.net** and register your e-mail address.



BLAST OFF - A FIELD TRIP TO ENDEAVOUR

On March 2nd, twenty-three JACLers and friends took a road trip to the California Science Center to see the space shuttle, Endeavour. It was an amazing day spent with friends and loved ones. We started the day meeting at the Metro train station in North Hollywood. I think many commuters thought we were Japanese tourists as we stared at the ticket machines wondering how we get tickets to ride the train. But we eventually figured it out and boarded the train and had a pleasurable ride to the Science Center.

The usual suspects attended this outing including Nancy & Yas Gohata, Harold Kameya (our fearless leader for the day), Mitzi & Al Kushida, Barbara & Dennis Okita, Marion & Phil Shigekuni, Linda Tanaka and Sumi Yamaguchi. Joining us were Emi & Frank Hino, Bob Kobata, Jim Black, Margie & Frank Naka, Barbara & George Nakatsu, Helen Shimizu, Eddie Yoshimura and Annie Wong.

With so many retired school teachers in our group, we had to break into 3 smaller groups like school children and follow the group leaders. I was surprised we didn't have to all hold hands when we crossed the street! It was actually a brilliant idea that kept us all accounted for and together for the whole trip.

When we arrived at the Science Center, we worked our way to the Endeavour exhibit. It was incredible to see the recently retired Endeavour which flew 25 orbital missions in space. Many of us remember its first flight on May 7, 1992 when Endeavour landed at Edwards Air Force Base or remember its final flight on May 16, 2011 marking the end of America's active space exploration. It was a joy to see such a marvelous aircraft and a testament to the abilities of mankind.

Following our visit to the Space Center, we ventured out to LA Live and had lunch at Lawry's where we enjoyed each other's company on this beautiful day. Then, we headed home boarding the train again for a relaxing ride back to North Hollywood. **Yas Gohata** made friends quickly on the train. A young man who proclaimed to be an "ambassador" volunteer for Metro and a multi-millionaire as well as a legendary singer, engaged in an interesting conversation with Yas and occasionally broke into song. This young man may or may not have been all that he claimed, but he was certainly enjoying life and entertaining patrons on the train.

Thanks to everyone who joined us for this special outing and a very special thanks to **Harold Kameya** for his leadership and organization of this trip. A good time was had by all!

Article submitted by Brian Moriguchi



MANZANAR FISHING CLUB

A special viewing of the Manzanar Fishing Club will take place at the community center at 3PM on Saturday, April 13, 2013.

This well-produced film has played to a wide audience in Southern California. To highlight its importance, the community center, JACL, and Athletics are co-sponsoring this event.

Three Valley residents, and former Manzanar internees, **Bob Kobata**, **Mas Okui**, and **Sets Tomita** play key roles in the film. Mas is a retired history teacher at Canoga Park High who also taught at Gardena High where he influenced the makers of the film. He has served for many years as a docent at Manzanar. The three men will be available after the showing to answer questions concerning the film and share their experiences in Manzanar.

The showing will raise funds for the Manzanar Committee which conducts the annual pilgrimage (to be held on April 27.), and Friends of Manzanar, which is collaborating with the National Park Service to restore block 14.

Admission is \$10.00 for members and \$5.00 for children. Payment will be collected at the door. For reservations: Lois Okui at loisokui@aol.com, (818) 899 1989, or Phil Shigekuni, pshig2000@verizon.net, (818) 893 1581.

Photo (L to R): Mas Okui, Bob Kobata, Sets Tomita



VENTURA INSTALLATION

Lily Anne Yumi Welty, Ph.D, was the guest speaker at the Ventura JACL Chapter Installation on Sunday, February 3rd; she spoke to a well attended crowd. She is a researcher, lecturer, and has taught at UCSB. Her topic was titled, "*Current Trends in the Japanese American Community*." Dr Welty touched on a wide array of Japanese American background and culture, beginning with the first Japanese inhabitants to California, The Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony Farm in the Gold Hill region of northern California in 1869. Her studies included the assimilation of Japanese into the American society through geographical integration, marrying—other ethnic groups, and embracing the American traits and trends. For example, the Japanese have the highest percentage of marrying outside as compared to different Asian groups. Currently, the young Japanese Americans are mostly Hapa* which makes for interesting issues.

As always, our chapter members, **President Brian Moriguchi, Doreen Kawamoto, Mabel Takimoto, Phil & Marion Shigekuni, Yas & Nancy Gohata, Al & Mitzi Kushida,** as well as, **Nancy Takayama**, representing both SFV and PSWD office renewed our friendship with the many Ventura members, including President Anne & Mark Chilcott, Aiko King, George & Betty Wakiji and Harry & Janet Kajihara. The Ventura chapter was started by Harry. The chapter recognized the 25th anniversary of Harry's diligent work and attendance at the signing of the Redress Bill by President Ronald Reagan in 1988.

A nine course Chinese lunch was enjoyed by all. Everyone attending received a door prize and a huge bag of fresh vegetables. It's always a warm and wonderful experience to visit the Ventura JACL chapter.

Article submitted by Mitzi Kushida



LAKE BALBOA CHERRY BLOSSOM PICNIC



The annual Cherry Blossom Picnic was held on Saturday, March 23, 2013. We could not have asked for a more beautiful day except the cherry blossoms were ending, but there were a few wisteria blossoms.

It was wonderful to see Judy Tanaka, Aiko King, Lillian Nisho, Atsuko Dougherty and George and Betty Wakiji from Ventura JACL. We appreciate their participation at many of our activities. Gloria Miles (the Shigekuni's neighbor) had a good time and so did Roger and Betty Tamaki and Donna and Tracy Black. We had grandparents (Harold & Ellen Kameya and George & Barbara Nakatsu) with their grandchildren and even great grandmother, Tsuruyo Itai, mother of Linda Tanaka.

Everyone enjoyed the delicious dishes and as usual there was a lot. It ranged from somen, spinach, pasta, Chinese chicken, potato, fruit and chicken cabbage salads to several chicken dishes, stuffed cabbage, meatballs, quiche and bagel pizza. Every Japanese meal needs rice and we had two chirashi rice dishes and fancy onigiri. For dessert we had a luscious cake, cookies, donuts and fruits.

Most of us walked around the lake, did line dancing taught by **Barbara Okita** and Linda Tanaka and was entertained by the line dancing group's performance of *Greased Lightnin'*. Led by **Emi Hino**, the group included Donna & Tracy Black, Nancy Gohata, Barbara Okita, Betty Tamaki, and Linda Tanaka. After lunch we enjoyed the sing-along and music by the guitar and ukulele group composed of **Nancy Gohata**, Barbara Okita, **Dennis Okita**, Barbara Nakatsu, **Evelyn Mitarai**, and **Genevieve Lew.**

We had a great picnicgreat people, great food, great activities and great entertainment. Couldn't ask for anything more. Thanks to **Marion Shigekuni** who organized this outing.

Submitted by Linda Tanaka

Photo (L to R): Standing: Board Members: Dennis Okita, Sumi Yamaguchi, Brian Moriguchi, Barbara Okita, Linda Tanaka, Nancy Gohata, Harold Kameya. Seated: Ventura JACL Friends: George & Betty Wakiji, Aiko King, Judy Tanaka, Lillian Nisho, and Atsuko Dougherty



Christmas in Hanoi/ Giang Sinh O Ha Noi

Written by: Eddie Borey Directed by: Jeff Liu Reviewed by: Jean-Paul deGuzman

While the rest of the city was abuzz, preparing for the annual Academy Awards Ceremony on February 24, SFVJACL members along with family and friends trekked to see East-West Players' performance of *Christmas in Hanoi*. Billed as a story of how "a family returns to Hanoi to face the ghost of the past," this play mapped the legacies of war, colonialism, and intimacy as well as the contemporary circumstances of memory and multiraciality upon the different landscapes of Viet Nam.

The play opens with the Ganley siblings, happy-go-lucky Lou and conscientious Winnie, preparing for a trip to Viet Nam with their Vietnamese mother Oanh looking on, dispensing healthy doses of motherly advice. The audience quickly learns, however, that the children do not and cannot heed the advice since Oanh has passed away and rather, her spirit accompanies Lou. When Lou later reveals this, Winnie expresses frustration, seeing this as one more example of Oanh's favoritism towards Lou. Philip, the Ganley family patriarch who married Oanh during the American War in Viet Nam, then joins the siblings with Winnie chiding him for his alcoholism while Lou suggesting it was a mere vestige of his Irish heritage. The Ganleys, along with Oanh's humorous but ultimately wise father George, then head off to Viet Nam.

Ostensibly, the journey is to return Oahn's ashes to her homeland, but the inquisitive siblings soon discover that the family is there to visit a shaman, presumably to expunge George from ominous spirits. As the family makes their way through Viet Nam, we learn that each member deals with various ghosts from their past, whether a long-departed wartime friend or, for Winnie, the regrets over a complicated relationship with Oanh. Upon meeting the shaman, a torrent of spirits is unleashed threatening harm to Lou and death upon Philip and George. To appease the spirits, the family is charged with excavating the remains of an individual killed during the war, but the responsibility of laying the remains to rest fall squarely upon Winnie who remained skeptical of ghosts and increasingly unsure of her own relationship to Oanh. Overcoming her fear of crossing bridges – indeed a metaphor for reconciling contested pasts and presents, the living and the dead – Winnie crosses over to a cemetery where she deposits the remains. More importantly, she is able to finally communicate with her mother and unearth long-forgotten positive memories of how Oanh raised her. With this, the spirits are appeased and the family, united and strong, can return home.

Editor's Note: **JP deGuzman** was unable to join the twenty-three of us for dinner at Far Bar (formerly Far East Café) after the play. Diners who were disappointed with the menu when the restaurant first reopened were pleasantly surprised with their very eclectic fare. Those who ordered the hamburger with wasabi fries said it was the "best" hamburger ever!





MEMBERSHIP IS IMPORTANT TO OUR OURGANIZATION

We welcome new student member, **Lauren Takeshita**. We continue to need your help in increasing our membership. Please consider "gifting" a JACL membership to your friends and family. All you need to do is buy a membership for the person receiving your gift. (A membership form is included in this newsletter).

This month **Marcia Mahony** shares why she joined JACL and why it's important to be a member.

Both of my parents were involved with the JACL for many years. During that time I occasionally attended JACL events where I was introduced to several of the current board members. At one of those events, Mitzi Kushida asked if I would like to be on the JACL Board and fill the spot left by my mother. How could I say "no" to that?! In addition to carrying on the legacy, I wanted to contribute to the organization that promotes social justice issues, cultural activities, and educational programs for youth.



THIRD TUESDAY MOVIE OUTING



Our **February** movie was *Lore*. At the end of World War II, 14-year old Lore and her four younger siblings undertake a harrowing journey across a devastated country to reach their grandmother in the north. Raised by staunch Nazi believers, Lore faces for the first time the part her SS (Military arm of the Nazi Party) parents may have played in the atrocities of the War. On their journey, Lore, her sister, twin brothers, and a baby meet Thomas, a young Jewish refugee. Against Lore's objections, Thomas travels with the family, helping the young caravan find food and shelter through hostile territory. It's evident that both Thomas and the family need each other to survive and reach their destination. Lore soon finds her world shattered by feelings of both hatred and desire as she must learn to trust the one person she has always been taught to hate.

Our moviegoers left the theatre haunted by the heavy mood of this film, but the theme of this Holocaust movie brought forth much discussion for introspection.

The **March** movie outing had a record 20 attendees to see *Emperor*. **Matthew Fox** (*Lost*) joined Academy Award winner, **Tommy Lee Jones**, Japanese star **Eriko Hatsune** to bring to life the American occupation of Japan in the perilous and unpredictable days just after Emperor Hirohito's World War II surrender. General Douglas MacArthur (Jones) assigns an expert in Japanese culture and psychological warfare, General Bonner Fellers (Fox) to covertly investigate the looming question hanging over the country: should the Japanese emperor, worshipped by his people be accused of war crimes, be punished or saved?

Emperor was not highly rated by critics, but our Third Tuesday Movie Group found the movie highly entertaining and worth seeing.



SFV JACL SUZUME NO GAKKOU SUMMER CAMP JUNE 17-21, 2013

8:30-12:30

\$50 per child

FUN FILLED WEEK FOR KIDS GRADE 2-6 HERE AT SFVJACC

JAPANESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL CLASSROOMS 12953 BRANFORD STREET, PACOIMA, CA

MAKE NEW FRIENDS!!!

LEARN BASIC JAPANESE PHRASES DABBLE IN CALLIGRAPHY

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"HOW BASEBALL SAVED US"
with Auntie Jill
MAKE A HAGOITA TOY
to take home
EXERCISE
DANCE, SING, COOK,
FOLD ORIGAMI

SNACKS DAILY BY PARENTS SIGN UP

FIELD TRIP

HERITAGE BOOK STORE ONSITE To nourish pride in American history through education and hands on activities for young people

To develop programs for youth so they can be well rounded and fair minded citizens in a diverse world

MISSION STATEMENT

TOTAL ENROLLMENT LIMITED TO 40 first come first served

VOLUNTEERS AND COUNSELORS
PLEASE SIGN UP

T SHIRTS ONLY \$10
AVAILABLE AT ORIENTATION
ON MAY 29 AT 7:00 PM
AT DR. SAKAGUCHI HALL

GRANDPARENTS
WELCOME to CLOSING PROGRAM
HELD in Gym
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SFV JACL SUZUME NO GAKKOU SUMMER CAMP JUNE 17-21, 2013
Registration form and field trip consent slip for each child

Name of student	grade in Sept
Contact email	telephone
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Allergies	
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2013 DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The Day of Remembrance program at JANM was well done. It was organized by PSWD-JACL, JANM, NCRR, and the Manzanar Committee. **George Abe**, who was born in Manzanar, set the tone with a soulful rendition on his shakuhachi.

Panelist, **Richard Katsuda** described the redress process and then laid out the challenges to preserve civil rights which lie ahead. **Dr. Mitch Maki**, author of "The Impossible Dream", very eloquently, spoke of the intricacies of the redress process and our community's response to civil rights violations post 9/11. Rose Ochi told of how she was able to influence key members of congress, as well as President Reagan to help in the redress process.

The way the community has come to the aid of Arabs and Muslims after 9/11 has given me a good feeling. It is often stated that we remember so that what happened to us does not happen to any other group of people in this country. Many in our community have spoken out opposing the oppression of Arabs and other middle easterners. NCRR and the Manzanar Committee have done good work to bring about a closeness between young JA's and young middle eastern youth. The closing address by Arab American. **Dr. Anan Ameri**,was inspiring as she described the good that come about because of our community reaching out to the Arab American community.

Emcees for the event were **Stephanie Nitahara** and **Soji Kashiwagi**. Stephanie is the recently appointed Pacific Southwest Regional Director of JACL. Her civil rights experience began at the University of Illinois where she was active in a group organized to raise awareness of the crisis in North Korea. Soji, a native of San Francisco, is a playwright and Director of a non-profit theater group, the Grateful Crane. At the end of the program he made an announcement concerning the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) which allows President Obama to use drones to kill American citizens. Although he signed the authorizing bill in January 2012 and said he would not authorize the use drones, he has not made any statement concerning its use this year. Soji urged the community to take action to oppose this violation of civil/human rights of American citizens.

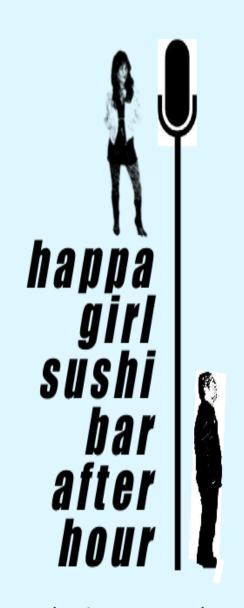
Newly appointed Assemblymember, **Al Muratsuchi**, made a presentation of the resolution which he intends to introduce into the assembly which designates Feb. 19 as the Day of Remembrance in California. His announcement was followed by spirited applause. Al had Stephanie Nitahara's job as PSWDC JACL Regional Director in the early 90's. At that time I was impressed with him and asked him one day whether he had thought about running for public office. He told me he would not run because he would hate asking people for money. Since then, Al has obviously overcome this obstacle. When I saw him at a community event a couple of years ago he was running for some office and was quick to ask for my financial support. I have followed his career as board member and president of the Torrance School District. Al has it all: He is smart, good looking, personable, and I think has a genuine concern for people. He has certainly paid his dues in our community and deserves our support.

The theme for the event was, "Our Struggle, Our Perseverance, Our Commitment". The program cover had a striking drawing of a fist arising from coiled barbed wire. It was beautifully done by artist and long time activist, **David Monkawa**.

The designer of the well designed program booklet was **Renee Nakagawa**, a senior at USC majoring in Communication. Design. She is originally from Honolulu.

As usual, the catered food was delicious. The day's program was a fitting tribute to the 25 Years Anniversary of the signing of the redress bill.

Article submitted by Phil Shigekuni



a play in two acts by perry miyake

directed by chris tashima

San Fernando Valley JACL & Cedargrove Onstage presents:

A concert reading of happa girl sushi bar after hours a new play with old music.

written by Perry Miyake directed by Chris Tashima Starring Shuko Akune, Michael Hagiwara, Kym Hoy

reading followed by Q & A

Tickets: \$15

Bento available after the play \$10

date SUN, MAY 19, 2013

> time 2:00 PM

For tickets contact Nancy Gohata at yaiko16@verizon.net or at (818) 899-4237. Checks payable to SFVJACL.

San Fernando Valley Japanese American Community Center 12953 Branford Street Pacoima, CA 91331



DONATIONS

Beginning with this issue of our newsletter, we would like to acknowledge the generous donations made to our chapter by members and friends. Thank you goes to:

January 2013 – Ballroom Dance Class

January 2013 – Dr. Sanbo Sakaguchi

February 2013 – Harriet Nishizaka

February 2013 – Harriet Nishizaka in memory of Tak Yamamoto

February 2013 – Paul Jonokuchi

February 2013 – Keiko Kuratomi

March 2013 – Dr. Sanbo Sakaguchi



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Make sure to bookmark us to learn more about...

- Our board members and board meetings
- Editorials and opinions on civil rights and other contemporary events
- Upcoming community events
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San Fernando Valley Japanese American Citizens League Membership Application

Membership Categories

Regular/Individual

Regular sustaining members of the organization

Couple/Family

Membership for an individual, their spouse/partner and any children under 25 years of age.

Youth/Student

Members 25 years of age or younger or students currently enrolled in a college, trade school, or university.

1000 Club

A membership category where members make a larger annual contribution to their chapter and national programs of the organization

1000 Club Life

Members who pay a lump sum to establish a lifetime membership

1000 Club or Century Club Spouse

Spouse or partner of a JACL 1000 Club or Century Club member

Century Club

An exclusive membership category where members make a larger annual contribution to their chapter and national programs of the organization

Century Club Life

An exclusive membership category where members pay a lump sum to establish a lifetime membership

□ New Member	☐ Renewing Membership		☐ Gift Membership		
□ Regular/Individual - \$6 □ Couple/Family - \$110.0 □ Youth/Students - \$25.0	00 🗆 1000			☐ Century Club Spouse - \$32.00	
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