

THE GRAINS OF RICE

Cincinnati Chapter Japanese American Citizens League

Published Quarterly

June 2007

A Report on the First-Annual Asian Summit

by Chad Yoshikawa

The first-annual “Asian Summit”, sponsored by the Asian Community Alliance (ACA), was held the first Saturday in May at NKU’s University Center Ballroom. I attended the event with one of our newest members, Emily Momohara, and other Cincinnati JACLers at the Summit included Dr. Shiro Tanaka and Helen Rindsberg. Sitting at our table during the luncheon was a familiar face – Tomiko Ford of the Sakura Ladies’ Chorus group. In total, about 50 people attended from a diverse set of Asian backgrounds, including: Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Vietnamese, and Sri Lankan, among others.

The purpose of the event was to determine the issues unique to Asians who are living in the area and also to help inform members of the AA community of the services available to them, such as language translation and immigration law consultation services.

The welcoming address was given by the organizer of the event, Dr. Yasue Kuwahara, Professor of Communications at NKU. After the overview of the agenda, the participants broke off into ‘focus groups’, including: Adoption, Aging, Cultural Issues, Education, Health, Housing, Immigration, Mental Health, Recreation, Retirement, and Small Business Needs. In

addition, an attendee requested that “Discrimination” be added to the list of focus groups for next year’s Summit.

I attended the “Immigration” focus group which included two local immigration lawyers. Other focus groups included experts in the area of interest, e.g. the Mental Health focus group was attended by a local physician from Milford.

At the time of this writing, preliminary notes for three of the focus groups were available, including: Aging & Retirement, Health/Mental Health, and Small Business. The full set of notes will be posted to the Cincinnati JACL web site, www.geocities.com/cincinnatijacl, when it becomes available.

Useful Web Sites

Asian Community Alliance

www.acacinci.org

International Family Resource Center

(for new immigrants)

www.servingfamilies.org

American Immigration Lawyer Association

www.aila.org

Council on Aging in Greater Cincinnati

www.help4seniors.org

Catholic Social Services (CSS)

www.cssdoorway.org/

PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

The Chapter website is up and running. Check it out at: www.geocities.com/cincinnatijacl.

Thanks to Emily Momohara and Chad Yoshikawa for bringing the chapter into modern times. We will be posting announcements of events and other information. If you have something you want to post, Chad will be webmaster for the summer while Emily is in New York.

On April 19, Cincinnati JACL became a Freedom Station Partner of the National Underground Railroad Museum for "its commitment to helping communities overcome unfreedom." The six unfreedoms are: racism, illiteracy, genocide, hunger, tyranny and slavery. We are honored to join an august list of organizations who will work together to combat unfreedoms in Cincinnati and wherever we find them.

This summer, and perhaps well into the fall, Congress will be struggling to produce a revised immigration bill. There are no easy answers to all of the issues surrounding immigrants, those who came through sanctioned channels and those who didn't. National JACL will be watching the process and making JACL's position known to Congress. Unless some of us have Native American ancestors, we are all immigrants, some more recently than others. We need to keep reminding our Congressional representatives that we are interested in fair treatment and justice for those who have opted to come to the United States.

Please watch the National JACL website for legislative alerts: www.jacl.org

We will attempt to keep up with the links from our new website.

See you at the Potluck on August 19th.

Betsy Sato

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome new members

Bernd and Margaret Phoenix
7476 Country Village Drive
Cleveland, OH 45002

Yasue Kuwahara
11043 Wood Avenue
Cincinnati OH 45242

Friend of Cincinnati Chapter

Haruko Hood, Cincinnati OH

We also welcome renewals from:

Keiko Alexander, Vancouver BC
Yoko and Ken Oya back from Japan

Cherry Blossom Festival Ohanami, April 28, 2007

Saturday morning brought out early birds to look over all the various items on display covering about eleven tables. Star gazer telescope, shoji screen and easy assemble portable hammock frame were some of the floor items. Japanese books, magazines and dictionaries went quickly.

Thanks to all who donated items for sale. We also appreciate the work of the volunteers who sorted, priced, and sold the items. Volunteers included:

Judy Ibarra, Sachi and Tak Kariya, Kayoko Longbottom, Gail Murao, Kono Naegele, Hiroko Nishiyama, Helen Rindsberg (who also brought the cherry tree), Betsy Sato, Yoriko Suhr, Ruth Takeuchi, Fumiko and Shiro Tanaka, Frances Tojo.

Thanks also to the volunteers who provided items for our bake sale: Bernice Hashimoto, Judy Ibarra, Kayoko Longbottom, Jane Murata, Hiroko Nishiyama, Betsy Sato, Sami Smith, Frances Tojo, Cathy and Gordon Yoshikawa.

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES

Kelly Suyeko Kato graduated from the University of South Florida with a Bachelor's of Arts and Sciences with a major in History and a minor in Religious Studies. She is the daughter of Jan and Denny Kato and granddaughter of Mitzi Kato.

Miyoko R. M. Conley graduated from New York University with a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Drama with honors. She plans to work in New York City. She is the daughter of Peggy Shimko and granddaughter of Ruth Takeuchi.

Kenjiro David LeCroix graduated from Vanderbilt University with Bachelor of Science from the Colleges of Arts and Science. His parents are Charles and Setsuko LeCroix.

Lindsey Michelle Wade graduated from Ohio University with a Bachelor's in International Business and Finance. She is the daughter of Kenneth and Peggy Wade and granddaughter of Tokie Wade. Tokie will be taking Lindsey to Japan as her graduation gift.

James Scott Yamamoto graduated from the University of Colorado at Denver on May 12 with a Bachelor's degree in Arts. He is the son of Dorothy and Dr. Steve Yamamoto. Lillian Yamamoto of Morrison, Colorado is his grandmother.

CINCINNATI JACL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Scholarships for 2007 have been announced by Ruth Takeuchi, Scholarship Chair. They are:

Ryan A. Sand graduated from Lakota East High School with high honors. His activities and honors are too numerous to list. In his senior year, he was the managing editor of the Spark, the school's newspaper. His aspiration is to become a doctor. His parents are Mary Jo and Alan Sand. Mary Okura Gabbard and the late Bob Sand are the grandparents.

Donald B. Okura, Jr., graduated from Dublin Jerome High School in Dublin, OH. He plans to attend Columbus State University for two years and then transfer to Ohio State University's engineering program. He is the son of Marilyn and Donald Okura, Sr. Joan and the late Frank Okura are the grandparents.

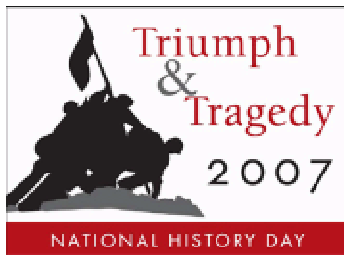
Joseph Lah graduated from Kings High School in Kings Mill OH. He plans to attend Ohio University and has an interest in pursuing an MBA degree. His mother is Mary Steffel and his father is Chris Lah. His grandparents are Peggy and Dr. James Tojo.

Breaking News! We have a Website

Thanks to our new member, Emily Momohara, the Cincinnati Chapter JACL has a website. It is: www.geocities.com/cincinnatijACL

Log on and you will be stunned by the photo of the Ohio River with the JACL logo. Contents include: Our Mission, JACL today, Cincinnati JACL board members, Grains of Rice (coming soon with the June issue), events including eight photos of the Installation Dinner last January. The board is open to suggestions about what you would like to see on the website.

Emily is Assistant Professor of Art at the Art Academy in Cincinnati, Ohio.



National History Day This year's theme was Triumph and Tragedy in History. Ashley Clary and Allie West, 11th grade students of South Gallia High School, Crown City, Ohio, contacted Dr. Roger Daniels for assistance in their study of the internment policies of the U.S. and Canada. They wanted to secure information with former internees to discuss the impact of this policy on their families. Sachi and Tak Kariya, Cincinnati, Ohio participated in this project.

For this year's exhibit Ashley and Allie traveled to Arkansas in November to visit Rosalie Gould who has an extensive collection of primary source materials from the Rohwer and Jerome Relocation camps. They spent twelve hours in her home combing through her collection. They also interviewed Mr. Richard Yada, who was born in the Rohwer camp and Mr. John Ellington, who was a young boy at the time the camps were established in Arkansas.

Their thesis statement: After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the United States and Canada implemented tragic policies forcing the mass evacuation and relocation of individuals of Japanese ancestry from their homes on the West Coast. The U.S. implemented Executive Order 9066 and Canada enacted provisions of its 1914 War Measures Act. We believe the tragic policy of both countries was not the result of a threat to national security. However, these policies were the direct result of racism. The foundation of the policy was in place years before as demonstrated through the multiple attempts to deny individuals of Japanese ancestry basic civil rights.

In May, Ashley and Allie earned honorable mention at the State Contest. They also received the 20th Century History Award for their study of the internment policies of the U.S. and Canada.

Toyota Motor Manufacturing North America has donated ten Reds Suite tickets for JACL

Kazuya and Betsy Sato will again host ten lucky winners for the July 8, 2007 game Reds vs. the Arizona Diamondbacks at 1:15 p.m. The Box/Suite seats are located on the third base line. The five pairs of tickets will be raffled off June 24, 2007. Winners need not be present. The first two pairs of tickets include a parking pass in the Great American Ball Park Garage. All tickets include a pre-game lunch in the suite. Donation is \$10 for one ticket; three for \$25. No more than 200 tickets will be sold. Sellers will notify the winners by phone. Contact any of the board members for tickets.

Indianapolis Picnic – Sunday July 15th @ 1pm

The Hoosier Chapter JACL has invited us to their annual pitch-in picnic on Sunday, July 15, at 1:00 p.m. Location is the Eagle Creek Park, Shelter D in Indianapolis. There will be delicious food, fun games, and plenty of time to relax and visit. Cold drinks and table goods will be provided. They are asking us to bring a covered dish to share (salad, rice, vegetable, meat or dessert). They are looking forward for us to join them.

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

On April 19, 2007 the eBay Foundation and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center held an induction ceremony to celebrate a collaborative effort to impact social change in the Greater Cincinnati area. The Cincinnati Chapter JACL was selected to be one of more than 20 non-profit and community-based organizations and the media as a Freedom Station Partner. Betsy Sato represented the Cincinnati Chapter JACL. The commitment is to overcome the six unfreedoms by mobilizing volunteers through the launch of Freedom Radio and community engagement programming. Currently this program has more than 69 active affiliates of non-profit and historic sites. By accepting this nomination, they will promote our organization on their website and in the final exhibit as a key volunteer opportunity in Greater Cincinnati where visitors can continue the journey for freedom. This event also served as the official launch of Freedom Stations Radio, in which we will be able to experience this new online program with host Carl Westmoreland.

Bento Box in the Heartland: My Japanese Girlhood in Whitebread America – A Food Memoir by Linda Furiya

Linda grew up in a small southern Indiana farm community where she was the only Asian in her school – the only girl whose mother packed rice balls and chopsticks in her lunch box. Furiya tells of a childhood that was profoundly affected by her family's obsession with food, the care taken in the preparation of each recipe and the importance of savoring every meal.

From a Silk Cocoon

This is a powerful documentary which delves into the experience of a Japanese American couple who respond to the loss of their civil liberties and incarceration during WWII by renouncing their citizenship in hopes of finding dignity and safety for their children. It is a story based on personal documents that reveal the painful and traumatic experience of a family in crisis. It was scheduled for a May broadcast during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

The Cats of Mr. Mirikitani

Eighty-five year old Jimmy Mirikitani survived the trauma of WWII internment camps, Hiroshima, and homelessness by creating art. Living in New York City, Linda Hattendorf met Jimmy on January 1, 2001 on a bitterly cold night. She saw an elderly man wearing many layers of coats and gloves calmly drawing a picture of a cat. Linda was curious and concerned. On impulse, she asked if the drawing was for sale. He didn't say much but gave her the drawing – asking a favor in return that she take a picture of it for him. Like any artist Jimmy wanted his artwork documented. What impressed Linda was his determination to talk about the past. What happened to him and thousands of other Japanese Americans during World War II remains only visible in mainstream history today. Jimmy recently made a pilgrimage to Tule Lake, California. By September 1 Linda had been filming Jimmy for nine months. Linda was born in Cincinnati and attended College Hill Elementary School where she was a third-grade student of Sachi Kariya in 1967. Linda's mother remembers that Sachi telling Linda that she would be a writer someday. Linda's mother called Sachi to let her know that the documentary Linda wrote and produced, *The Cats of Mr. Mirikitani*, would be shown on PBS on May 13.

Focus Group: Aging and Retirement

Attendee backgrounds included: Korea (3), India, Vietnam, and U.S.

Major Issues and Highlights:

Resources

- We should develop a resource guide and appoint a contact person for the aging Asian community
- Often, churches (e.g., Korean or Catholic churches) can be depended upon for help
- The local Indian community is building a self-funded 100 acre retirement community near the Eastgate area

Language/Cultural Issues

- Will our busy kids be there to take care of us when we are no longer able, as we have taken care of our parents?
- Language barriers often make it harder to get adequate help in nursing homes
- There is a stigma in the AA community associated with accepting government assistance (e.g., food stamps)

Focus Group: Health/Mental Health

Attendee backgrounds included: Korea, China, Vietnam, Japan, and the U.S.

Major Issues and Highlights:

Physiological Differences

- Asians have higher rates of liver cancer and stomach cancer than the general population.
- Asians find some prescription drugs hard to tolerate – doses that seem appropriate to Caucasians can induce illness and vomiting – especially sedatives.

Social/Language Issues

- There is still a stigma attached to mental illness in the community. Asian mental health patients “wouldn’t want to go to an Asian psychiatrist” – for reasons of shame and confidentiality.
- It is difficult to deal with hospitals and clinics. We need a “translator bank” where the doctors and nurses could get someone to help with language issues.
- Asians may be more stoic in enduring pain longer and thus the illness may get worse before professional health care is sought out
- Asians may “fall back on” traditional folk medicines before getting professional help and may prolong their disease.
- For immigrants, there may be “a fear of the government and the unknown.” A feeling that “if I’m sick, they might take my kids away.”

Health Care Costs

- One participant said she had bought short-term insurance for her parents while they were here and it cost thousands of dollars for just a few months.
- It was pointed out that many hospitals and nursing homes do not offer Asian food to their patients/residents. The hospice-volunteering former pathologist pointed out that families can bring their own food to hospice.

Focus Group: Small Business

Attendee backgrounds included: Korea (2), China (4), Thailand (2), India

Major Issues and Highlights:

Starting a Business

- Many Asia-Americans have the desire to start a business but didn’t know how to go about it.
- Finding money was a key problem; prospective entrepreneurs did not know who has the funds for small new businesses and then how to apply for loans and how to qualify for them

Cultural Issues

- A lack of language skills leads to difficulties in finding resourceful people and also in interacting with customers and local community. Cultural adeptness (or lack of it) also hinders adaptation of merchandise or service to American tastes.
- Isolation is reported to occur both with “native” communities but also within Asian communities. Small business people do not have many opportunities of interacting of meeting their own community and ethnic folks, and their long hours also leave little time.
- Fellow business persons of the same ethnic/regional identity tend to view each other as competitors (e.g., two Korean restaurants); so rather than helping each other, the established person begins to shun the newcomer.

Discrimination

- Several members voiced feeling discriminated by locals. They feel that local communities continue to look at them as “outsiders” and they have difficulty assimilating and mixing. In fact, they feel discriminated against. This is a major issue in need of discussion to identify approaches to mitigate this problem.

PERSONALS

Weddings

Jane Miwako Tanaka and John Phillips were married on May 12, 2007 at the Sycamore Presbyterian Church on Mason Road in Mason, Ohio. Jane is the daughter of Kinji and Reiko Tanaka. Brother Luke came from Japan to join in the festivities. Jane and John will work and reside in Rochester, Michigan.

Sara Evonne Takeuchi and Gordon Pettit were married in the Mandarin Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville, Florida on May 26. Sara is the daughter of Stephen and Rita Takeuchi of Jacksonville, Florida. The couple will make their home in Houston, Texas.

Condolences

We extend our sympathies to Ken and Yoko Oya. Ken's father, Thomas Yoshinori Oya, age 75, passed away on March 19, 2007 in San Jose, California. Thomas Oya was born in Maui, Hawaii, the youngest of 13 siblings.

Reunions

In May, Sachi and Tak Kariya traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, for the 55th year reunion of Tak's Drake University Pharmacy Class of 1952. A number of classmates attended the reunion and came from all parts of the country from Palm Desert, California to Sarasota, Florida. Tak enjoyed getting re-acquainted with old friends and finding out what they have been doing after leaving Drake. Also attending was one of his old professors, who later became the Dean of the College of Pharmacy at Drake.

Drake University has grown with a number of new buildings, but enrollment has intentionally been kept down. Last year, enrollment for the whole university was less than 4,000, and the Pharmacy School graduated 128 students. That is a big increase from his class of 1952 which numbered about 40 students. A tour of the facilities brought back many memories of the time they were student there.

Many of Tak's classmates went into fields other than retail pharmacy. Among those who were there, one had gone on to study medicine and became an anesthesiologist and several had become involved with the marketing division of pharmaceutical companies. One classmate had an interesting hobby of playing the "bones." The "bones" can be made of anything. He had made bones made of various woods, animal bones, antlers and plastic. The bones are held loosely in the hand and are played by rhythmically flicking the wrist. This person had been playing the bones from age 6 and, at one time, was recognized as the National Champion Bones Player.

In June, Tak and Sachi will be making another trip to Des Moines, this time to attend a reunion of Sachi's high school class.

Move to New Carlisle, Ohio

Marie Matsunami has moved to 8045 Scarff Road. She is still working part-time with the Cincinnati Red Cross but has been contacted by the Red Cross Chapter in Troy, Ohio.

DONATIONS

Cincinnati Chapter gratefully acknowledges the following donations:

General Fund Reiko Powers \$250

To the James Takeuchi Scholarship Fund

Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Takeuchi of East Amherst, New York, in honor of the birthday of mother, Ruth Takeuchi, of West Chester, Ohio
In honor of Stephen & Rita Takeuchi, Ken & Esther Takeuchi's May anniversaries by Ruth Tkeuchi

Lorraine Tokimoto of Sunnyvale, California, in memory of Ichiro Bill Kato to commemorate his death on May 3, 2006.

To the Grains of Rice

Yoriko Suhr of Cincinnati, Ohio
Frances Tojo in honor of Cathy and Gordon Yoshikawa's 50th wedding anniversary.

An Invitation to the Annual Potluck Dinner

Sponsored by the Cincinnati Chapter of JACL

Date: August 19, 2007

4:00 p.m. Socialize and look at many items and books for sale

5:00 p.m. Potluck Dinner (Bring a covered dish to serve 8 persons)

6:00 p.m. Entertainment

Internationally renowned Sumie artist, Setsuko LeCroix
Japanese ink painting

Sakura Ladies Chorus

Bon Odori – Get in the mood by wearing Japanese style apparel

Location: Hyde Park Bethlehem Church
3799 Hyde Park Avenue at Madison Road
(Parking in back of church off Hyde Park Avenue)



Cincinnati Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League
7761 Gwenwyn Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45236

2007

CALENDAR

June 10 1:30 pm	Board Meeting Home of Lois Nizny, 3953 Rose Hill Ave. Cincinnati OH
June 24 1:30 pm	Reds Raffle Drawing at Essencha Tea House 3212 Madison Road, Cincinnati OH
July 8 1:15 pm	Reds vs Arizona Diamondbacks Baseball Game Great American Ball Park, Cincinnati OH
August 9-12	EDC-MDC Council Meeting Washington Hilton, Washington DC
August 19 4 pm	Annual Potluck Dinner Hyde Park Bethlehem Church