



# Riverside JACL



September 2011

## President's Message

One of our special events of the year is the annual picnic. Everything went smoothly and a good time was had by all. It doesn't happen without the hard work of the usual suspects. George Kanatani and Norm Hamada get there early each year to clean and paper the tables. Meiko and Mits Inaba and family bring the paper goods, buckets, soda, ice, pop up tent, etc. Helen and Akio as usual had lots of games and prizes for all ages. Didn't Bev Inaba do a great job in getting the raffle and bingo prizes? Thank you goes to Tony Inaba for donating the watermelons. Special thanks goes to Resa and Doug Inaba for donating the ice, syrup, and running the snow cone machine. As usual Doris Higa and Lavinia Tubbs were busy selling the raffle tickets. I just wanted to thank all those that make my job as President easier by being willing to volunteer.

By the time you read this several members of Riv-

erside JACL will have attending the Grand Opening of the Interpretive Learning Center at Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Mits & Meiko Inaba, Nancy & Willie Takano were planning to visit the place where their families were interned. RCC Chancellor Gregory Gray was also attending. He said that before coming to California he really didn't know much about the internment camps. I asked Nancy and Meiko to take lots of pictures and jot down notes about their trip.

As you travel down Magnolia Ave. I'm sure all of you have seen the work on the RCC Center for Social Justice and Civil Liberties. This building will house the Miné Okubo Collection. We've met with the Chancellor several times and he would like our support and participation.

Please consider joining the Riverside JACL Board. We're looking for a corresponding secretary and a youth representative.

Michiko Yoshimura  
President

## JACL General Membership Meeting October 22, 2011

- Location: First Christian Church, 4055 Jurupa, Riverside, CA 92506
- Time: Noon
- Light lunch will be served
- **Speaker: Mr. Rich Davis, Vice Principal, North High School.**  
**Topic: Journey to Sendai**
- RSVP to Michiko Yoshimura at 951.784.7057

## Riverside JACL selects Clyde Wilson for PSWD Award

Clyde has been chosen as the Riverside JACL Chapter honoree at the annual Pacific Southwest Division Awards Dinner. The Board unanimously selected Clyde because of his many years of dedicated service, for his service as President in the past, and especially for taking on the duties of the Treasurer. He also serves as the Chapter's Civil Rights Chairman. If you would like to join us in honoring Clyde at this dinner, please contact Michiko Yoshimura.

Date: October 29

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Rose Center Theater, Westminster, CA

Tickets: \$125

More info:  
[www.jaclpsw.org/Annual\\_Awards\\_Dinner](http://www.jaclpsw.org/Annual_Awards_Dinner)





**Pacific Citizen**

**Holiday Issue 2011**

If you would like your name and/or business to be mentioned in this year's PC Holiday Issue, please send an e-mail to our Youth Rep. Jennifer Okabayashi at: **jen\_akiko@yahoo.com.**

# *JACL National Convention 2011*

The JACL National Convention was held this year in the heart of Hollywood. This was our first convention which will now be held annually and the first which did not involve an election of officers. It was a busy convention with business sessions and a lunch and dinner that honored Asian American leaders,

both in our community and from a diverse group. It was nice to see old friends and make new ones. I met 97 year old Shea Aoki from Seattle who has never missed a convention since the very early days. You can read about the topics we discussed and voted on and the financial concerns for the organiza-

tion. I was encouraged by the number of younger people (40 and under) who participated. Jennifer Okabayashi and I attended from our chapter and she was able to see friends she had made from prior youth activities.

Doug Urata

*California State Controller, John Chiang (l) and Doug Urata*



*Jennifer Okabayashi with Warren Furutani*



*Secretary Norman Mineta and Mark Takano*



*Doug Urata addresses the luncheon crowd on a moment's notice.*



## Miné Okubo: Still Fighting for Social Justice

On a beautiful June morning some members of the Riverside Chapter of the JACL listened to Riverside Community College District (RCCD) Chancellor Gregory Gray along with RCCD Board of Trustee Member (and fellow JACLer) Mark Takano, presented an overview of the Okubo Project at the RCCD Alumni House. The Miné Okubo Collection will be showcased in the Center for Social Justice & Civil Liberties. The Center will be located at the corner of Mission Inn Avenue and Market Street in the historic Citrus Belt Savings and Loan Building. Construction is underway.

Miné Okubo was a Japanese-American artist, writer, and social activist. (I heard she added the accent mark over the "e" in her first name to avoid having it pronounced similarly to a famous mouse down the road a bit.) She was born in Riverside and is an alumna from (then) Riverside Junior College. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Masters Degree from the University of California, Berkeley and

later studied with Diego Rivera. As a result of the outbreak of World War II and Executive Order 9066 she was interned with her family at the Central Utah Relocation Camp in Topaz, Utah.

Subsequently, Ms. Okubo worked for *Fortune* Magazine, then later other publications including *Time*, *Life*,



*The New York Times*, and others. She used line drawings to tell of her experiences in camp in her book *Citizen 13660*, published by Columbia Press in 1946. *13660* was the number given to her by the authorities while interned.

The Miné Okubo Collection is quite extensive and consists of 27 document boxes, 1 photography box, 9 flat

storage boxes and 47 bankers boxes. Currently, it is housed in the Salvatore G. Rotella Digital Library/Learning Resource Center at RCC. Dr. Elena Tajima Creef of Wellesley College has commented that "there is simply nothing like this that exists." Dr. Creef further noted that the collection covers many

Mexico, "In no other state of this union is the trend of life so shaped by art as in New Mexico. Art has rescued the state from the commonplace and made it conscious of its own fine character." With the development of the Center for Social Justice & Civil Liberties and The Miné Okubo Collection, and the many other local projects and artists, we can say the same of Riverside.

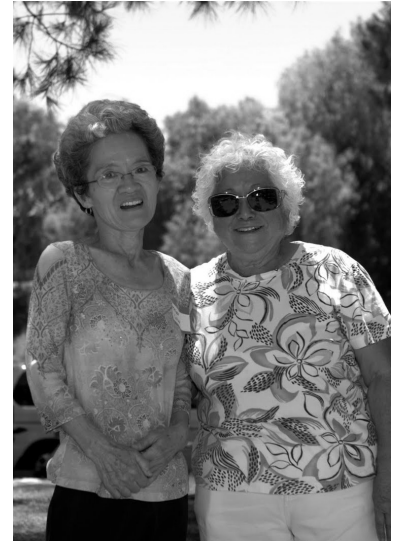
How can you help? The RCCD Foundation is asking for support for all aspects of the Center. For more information contact 951-222-8627.

Clyde Wilson, Ph.D.  
Civil Rights Chair

academic disciplines such as art history, women's studies, Asian-American studies, as well as American History. The Collections presence at the Center for Social Justice should greatly aid in its use in academic research.

A final thought, the New Mexico History Museum's first director, Edgar Lee Hewett, stated about New

# JACL PICNIC



## Thank you to our 2011 Picnic Donors

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 Matt Dickerson  
 Gordon & Rei Okabayashi  
 Jose & Alice Lopez  
 Lily Taka  
 Doug & Resa Inaba  
 Tony Inaba



## “Goodbye for Now, But Not Forever...”

Jennifer Okabayashi, Youth Rep.  
 August 10, 2011

I just wanted to thank you for allowing me to serve as your Youth Rep. for a little over two years now. I can honestly say that I have truly enjoyed each and every minute of it. It has been really nice meeting and getting to know you at many of our annual events. However, I can assure you that I am not formally resigning until a later date once I am no longer able to carry out my duties. Since graduation, I have moved back to south Orange County and have started interning for a produce distribution company.

I became involved with the Riverside JACL back in 2009 when former Youth Rep, Frank Hiroyasu, invited me to a monthly board meeting. I met Frank through *Nichibei Bunka Kai* at UCR and instantly felt welcomed by the board. Before I knew it, I was being installed as the new Youth Rep. at our Annual (2009) Installation Awards Luncheon and found myself attending my first Annual (2009) Scholarship Awards Dinner that May. Shortly thereafter,

I jetted off to St. Paul, Minnesota for the 2009 JACL National Youth Conference. This is where I made a lot of life-long friendships and realized that I want to be an active member within the Riverside JACL.

Since then, I have attended General Membership Meetings, Annual PSW Awards Dinners, an Annual Picnic, and two National JACL Conventions. I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you at these events. After attending these very events, I was finally able to see how important it really is to be an active member of the JACL and be involved with its inspiring youth programs. It has been an honor serving as your Youth Rep.



Jennifer with her Mother, Rei Okabayashi, at the recent JACL Picnic

## *The Heart Mountain Interpretive Learning Center opens*



According to Shirley Ann-Higuchi, Chair of the Heart Mountain Interpretive Learning Center, the new center is designed to resemble three barracks allowing visitors to “really capture a sense of what it was like to live at Heart Mountain.”

Among its features are an introductory film by Academy Award-winning director Steven Okazaki, a model of the camp complete with interactive displays and exhibits and two re-created barrack rooms.

“I think people will find the re-created barrack rooms particularly moving because you can imagine yourself standing in that room as a child, as a parent, as a grandparent,” said Higuchi.

Christy Fleming, a Powell, Wyoming native, is the learning center’s incoming local manager. She describes the center as being all from the first-person perspective complete with life-size cutouts in the exhibits.

“Visitors become part of the experience ... It will be a very powerfully emotional experience for the people that come through,” she said.

The HMWF has already been responsible for restoring the honor roll marker at the site and cre-

ating a paved 1,000-foot walking tour of the camp. Since then, the focus has been on the construction of the new learning center.

The theme for the grand opening weekend was: “Lessons from the Past, Guidance for the Future.” Influential leaders from across the country speak on their perspectives of the Japanese American experience.

**Official name:** Heart Mountain Relocation Center Location: Northwestern Wyoming, in Park County, 13 miles north-east of Cody

**Land:** Federal reclamation project land

**Size:** 46,000 acres

**Climate:** Severe, even by WRA standards, with winter lows dipping to -30 degrees.

**Elevation:** 4,600 feet.

**Origin of camp population:** Mostly from Los Angeles (6,448), Santa Clara (2,572), San Francisco (678) and Yakima, Washington (843) Counties

**Via "assembly centers":** Most came from Pomona (5,270) and Santa Anita (4,700) "Assembly Centers"

**Rural/Urban:** Mostly urban Peak population: 10,767 Date of peak: January 1, 1943 Opening date: August 12, 1942

**Closing date:** November 10, 1945

**Project director (s):** Christopher E. Rachford and Guy Robertson

Community analysts: Asael T. Hansen and Forrest La Violette

**JERS fieldworkers:** None  
**Newspaper:** *Heart Mountain Sentinel* (October 24, 1942; July 28, 1945)

**Percent who answered question 28 of the loyalty questionnaire positively:** 95.9

**Number and percentage of eligible male citizens inducted directly into armed forces:** 385 (4.8%)

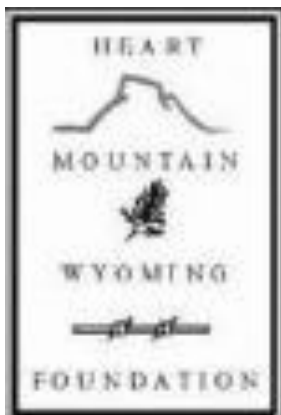
**Industry:** Heart Mountain had a garment factory, a cabinet shop and a sawmill that produced goods for internal consumption. A silk-screen shop produced posters for the other camps and for the navy

**Miscellaneous characteristics:** The weather, along with the shoddy construction of the barracks and a population mostly from Southern California unaccustomed to the cold, contributed to a great many illnesses that resulted in hospital overcrowding in the winter of 1942-43. In addition to the severe climate, Heart Mountain, like many other camps, was also plagued by dust storms and rattlesnakes.

Source: Japanese American National Museum—August 2011

*Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*

George Santayana



## *Culture: It should be JACL's Cup of Tea*

The Japanese American Citizens League is a civil rights organization. It says so right on its website, "Founded in 1929, the JACL is the oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States." The JACL uses the usual tools to "promote a world that honors diversity by respecting values of fairness, equality and social justice. For example, the JACL seeks to influence legislation by supporting the DREAM Act. The efforts of the organization was pivotal in the passing and signing of S. 1055 which will grant the Congressional Gold Medal, the nation's highest civilian award, collectively, to the U.S. Army's 100th Infantry Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service for their extraordinary accomplishments in World War II.

Additionally, the JACL has issued press releases condemning Rush Limbaugh's "racial mockery" of Chinese President Hu Jintao. In a separate press release last year, the organization stated its "deep concern" over the "racial overtones" made by Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-CA). The Congresswoman stated that the Vietnamese and the Republicans are trying to take away her congress-

sional seat.

I choose these examples posted on the JACL website to be illustrative, not encyclopedic. I suggest the reader go to that website ([www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org)) for other examples. But after reading about these areas of JACL efforts, it seems that one tool that the JACL seldom reaches for in its efforts to "secure and maintain the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry" is culture. In 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposed a people-to-people, citizen diplomacy initiative. The idea was that people are better at diplomacy than governments. If people got to know each other, the world would be less likely to slip into another war. Well, what better way to understand another culture than through its customs and art?

This conclusion was reached by Gil Asakawa as he discussed in his column *Nikkei Voice* ("Appreciating Asian American Culture at the Colorado Dragon Boat Festival") in the August 5-18, 2011 issue of the *Pacific Citizen*. He writes about the varied cultural offerings at the Colorado Dragon Boat Festival ranging from hip-hop, traditional Okinawan dances,

to Bon Odori dance. He concluded of his experience about "the power of culture to bring people together ... We're breaking down barriers between people by introducing and educating everyone to the richness of our varied traditions as well as the vitality of our Asian American identity."

This concept of the power of art and culture to bring people together was demonstrated in the same issue of the *Pacific Citizen* in an article by Audrey McAvoy's entitled "Tea Ceremony at Pearl Harbor." The wounds of the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor run very deep and are still fresh in the minds of some. According to the article the organizers performed the ritual at the USS Arizona Memorial and hoped the



ancient art would promote peace and reconciliation. While officials reached out to Pearl Harbor survivors, the article went on to point out that not all were able to forgive. However, three survivors did attend.

No doubt, influencing legislation and speaking out against bigotry are important and useful tools in the fight against social injustice. However, I wish to point out that art and culture can also be powerful tools. I think back to our Chapter's support of the Tea Ceremony and Bonsai Demonstration at the Lunar Festival. I think about our involvement in the RMA Multicultural Council's Family Village Festival and wonder how much we are promoting diversity and fairness.

Towards the end of the tea ceremony article, one survivor, Sterling Cale, was quoted in the article as saying, "They had the tea ceremony on the Arizona to honor the men who are still there – those 900-plus men are the heroes of World War II and Dec. 7. Having it there was a good idea. I liked that." Sounds to me like the organizers' efforts were successful.

In closing I encourage everyone to read Gil Asakawa's column and then Audrey McAvoy's article and see if you don't agree that art and culture are powerful tools that we can employ to achieve social equality.

Clyde Wilson, Ph.D.  
Civil Rights Chair

*Photo courtesy The Straits Times, Singapore, July 20, 2011*

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**djdurata@gmail.com**

Thanks! Let's stay in touch!



**RIVERSIDE JACL ANNUAL MEETING** October 22nd at the First Christian Church, Riverside

Speaker: Mr. Rich Davis, Vice Principal, JW North High School, Riverside

Topic: Journey to Sendai—As member of the Mayor's Delegation to Riverside's Sister City

### **LOOKING TO THE Future**

The JACL- Pacific Southwest District 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Dinner  
Saturday, October 29, 2011

Rose Center Theater 14140 All American Way  
Westminster, CA 92683

Tickets \$125 6:00 -9:00 p.m.

**Check out our website:**

**[www.riversidejacl.org](http://www.riversidejacl.org)**