

KOKORO

THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR COMMUNITY
SAN MATEO CHAPTER JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE OCT 2005
WWW.SANMATEOJACL.ORG
INQUIRIES: KATE MOTOYAMA 650.574.6676

SAN MATEO JACL IS DEDICATED TO PROMOTING THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND TO PROTECTING AND ADVANCING THE HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS OF OUR MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY THROUGH EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS.

Articles must be submitted before the third Friday in electronic format [Microsoft WORD, New York font] to katemotoyama@sanbrunocable.com.

JACL BOARD SEEKS INDIVIDUALS COMMITTED TO SERVICE

The San Mateo JACL Board is seeking individuals committed to our mission (see below the masthead). We are a hard-working team. Currently, we meet once a month on the third Thursday at the Japanese American Community Center at 7:15 p.m.. The San Mateo JACL Board has sponsored or completed many service and educational projects. Please contact Kate Motoyama if you are interested in joining us.



*Some board members at our installation on Day of Remembrance.
Pictured from left is Kevin Wong, Craig Ichijū, Steve Katayama, Steve Okamoto, Brent Nakagiri,
April Smith, and Ted Yamagishi*

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM AFTER SEPTEMBER 11th—MARWA RIFAHIE, Part 2 of

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Thank you to the interested reader who reminded me that part 2 was missing! -kate

Nonetheless, there have been more extreme cases of discrimination. In December of 2004, a young North African man from San Jose, California, was murdered and burned in the street and the San Jose police department has yet to call it a hate crime. Contrary to the beliefs of his murderers, he was not Muslim but Christian, but he was very much a part of the Muslim and Arab community. The lack of effort put forward for this case has reminded me of the injustice that was imposed during the Jim Crow Era. The murder was not mentioned in the local news until ten days after his death.

Growing up, I could have never imagined that such a diverse region as the Bay Area could be passive and apathetic to a tragic and racist action such as this murder. During the time of his murder, a pregnant Muslim woman was shot to death in her house. Despite the repeated violent hate crimes against the Muslim and Arab communities, there has been a wave of silence. Many fear that they, too, will become victims, or that they will be stigmatized. What many do not realize is that we are stigmatized by default. Through films, TV shows, images and reports in the media, Arab/Muslim men are portrayed as terrorists and abusive spouses, while women are portrayed as being submissive, oppressed objects of sexual use. Honest portrayals are seldom put forth through the media. It is ironic that the country, which was built on the backs of people of color and on the soil of the Native American peoples, has succumbed to ethnocentrism and racism against millions of its own citizens.

Marwa Rifahie is a student at the University of California, Davis.

TRI-DISTRICT CONFERENCE: HONORING MARY JO KUBOTA-ARCARESE

San Mateo Chapter's Mary Jo Kubota-Arcarese was NCWNP's nominee at this year's Tri-District Awards Luncheon. The District's Executive Board selected Mary Jo as this year's awardee. An excerpt from the nomination letter provides a glimpse into her many contributions:

Mary Jo is Italian American and, for this reason, I feel she has often been underestimated or misjudged by some conservative members of the Japanese American community. What is amazing to me is that Mary Jo always moves past the initial hurt feelings and focuses instead on serving the community as best she knows how. Sometimes, this comes in the form of having a vision and authoring a grant proposal to the California Civil Liberties Public Education Fund or to the Peninsula Community Foundation; at other times, this means staying up late to print, address, and stamp envelopes to mail out invitations to a JACL event or to write a personal thank-you note to one of our supporters.

The Tri-District Conference was hosted by the PSW District and held at the Irvine Marriott.

If you see Mary Jo at community events, please thank her and congratulate her for her continuing work.

MARY JO RECEIVES TAKEO OKAMOTO COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC) announced **Mary Jo Kubota-Arcarese** of San Mateo as the recipient of the 2005 Takeo Okamoto Community Leadership Award.

The award was presented at the Japanese American Hall of Fame "A Salute to the Stars" event on September 17th.

The Takeo Okamoto Community Leadership Award is presented to a person who embodies a spirit that is modest, scholarly, and who has positively impacted the Japanese American community through their long-term commitment. Created by his children, this award honors the memory of Mr. Okamoto who was renowned for his leadership and dedication to the community, consistently exemplifying a strong, yet quiet and unassuming manner. Ms. Kubota-Arcarese exemplifies the leadership 'spirit' found in Okamoto's modest and scholarly demeanor, and she has demonstrated commitment and dedication to the Japanese American community.

The Takeo Okamoto Community Leadership Award was presented at the Japanese American Hall Of Fame "A Salute To The Stars" on Saturday, September 17, 2005 at the Palace of Fine Arts. It included a tribute presentation to Japanese American entertainers: Pat Morita, Pat Suzuki, Mako, James Shigeta, and George Takei; a tribute to other Japanese American entertainers who have since passed; and performances from contemporary actors including Clyde Kusatsu, Christine Toy Johnson, Sophie Oda, Gedde Watanabe, Yuka Takara, Alvin Ing, and Tamlyn Tomita, Momo Yashima, Philip Kan Gotanda, and many more.



CLARIFICATION OF HATE CRIMES & BIAS INCIDENTS

A hate crime is a crime of violence, property damage, or threat that is motivated in whole or in part by an offender's bias based on race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin.

Some states, such as California, cover hate crimes based on an offender's bias based on gender, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation. A hate crime must meet two criteria:

- A crime must happen, such as physical assault, threat, and/or vandalism
- The crime must be motivated by bias.

It is important to note, too, that the offender's bias can be motivated by actual or *perceived* traits.

Bias incidents are conduct, speech, or expression that is motivated by bias based on race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or sexual orientation, but don't involve a criminal act. However, bias crimes may violate campus codes or policies, so they may be handled by campus grievance procedures. Examples of bias incidents are degrading, derogatory comments or e-mail messages, such as in *United States v. Machado*, involving a former student who was convicted by disseminating an e-mail containing racially derogatory comments and threats to 59 college students, nearly all of whom were of Asian descent.

Sometimes victims are unsure if a crime has been committed, so they do not report the incident to campus officials or to the police. If a person feels that he or she may have been the victim of a hate crime or bias incident, report it to the proper officials and let them make a determination.

AB 849 AND SAME SEX MARRIAGES

An article in the September 9, 2005 edition of the *New York Times* titled "Where's the Governor Now?" responded to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's vow to veto a pioneering bill authorizing same sex marriage in California. The bill, which would expand the definition of marriage to include a civil contract between two people—not exclusively a man and a woman—had passed both houses of the Legislature by narrow margins.

The article goes on to point out that some have accused "activist" judges of deciding social issues that ought to be left to legislators; now, the governor wants to ignore the legislature and leave same sex marriage to the courts or voters at large to decide. He is using as a defense the fact that, five years ago, Californians voted overwhelmingly for a ballot measure that recognized only heterosexual marriages as valid.

To this, the article states:

This ignores the fact that five years is an eternity in the fast-moving arena of gay rights. Even though 61 percent of the voters approved the ballot measure, recent polls show the electorate is now evenly split, with Democrats and independents favoring same-sex marriage and Republicans

strongly opposed. The Legislature is hardly a renegade body if it roughly mirrors popular opinion.

This nation, founded as a republic, has citizens elect legislators to govern in their behalf. A representative democracy is important when it comes to protecting the fundamental rights of minorities.

The JACL is on record as supporting same-sex marriage as a human right that should not be denied. Assembly Bill 849 was passed by the Legislature and has been sent to Gov. Schwarzenegger for his signature. He needs to hear from Californians who believe in equal treatment for all, regardless of sexual orientation.

You may send the Governor an email urging his signature by logging onto: www.eqca.org and following the directions, phone his office, or send a letter. All options are posted on the Equality California website.

Remember, from our own experience, that minorities face bigotry from some segments of the electorate and take action. A representative democracy that works means that you, too, will do your part.

TOMODACHI HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE ON NOVEMBER 12 th

The Tomodachi Club, along with help from other members of the San Mateo Japanese American Community Center, will be holding its Holiday Boutique on Saturday, November 12th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the San Mateo Gardeners' Hall, 503 Fifth Avenue at South Claremont. Please come out and support your organization.

Sadly, this may be the last boutique sponsored by the Tomodachi Group as most members are in their eighties and can no longer do the things they have been doing. We thank you for your support over the years, and hope that younger members of the Community Center will be able to sponsor the boutique in the future. The boutique is one of the main fundraisers for the Center, which is going to require some renovations to its buildings.

JA COMMUNITY CENTER COLLECTS DONATIONS IN THE AFTERMATH OF KATRINA
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The Community Center is fundraising for hurricane relief efforts. We realize that you may have already donated to the cause. We have a collection jar for any amount that you are able to give. The community at large has always been generous in its response to those victimized by circumstance. Please make a donation if you use the Center and support its mission of service. Thank you.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES: FLU SHOTS, HOLIDAY LUNCHEON
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The Community Center will have flu shots available on November 2nd, from 1-2:30 p.m. The cost will be \$5. The Center is also planning a Holiday Luncheon that is scheduled for December 8st, 11-2:30, and will feature an obento (box lunch). The cost of the party,

held at the San Mateo Senior Center at Alameda de las Pulgas, will be \$5. For both activities, contact the Center for information, 343-2793.

SUNDAY MATINEE MOVIE AT JA COMMUNITY CENTER

Sunday Matinee Movie on October 23, 2005 at 1:30 PM, Free Admission.

At JA Community Center, 415 S. Claremont St., San Mateo, Ca

Phone 650 343-2793 “A Story of Floating Weeds” (Uki gusa)

In 1959, Yasujiro Ozu remade his 1934 silent classic, “A Story of Floating Weeds”.

Setting his later version in a seaside location, Ozu otherwise preserves the details of his elegantly simple plot wherein an aging actor returns to a small town with his troupe and reunites with his former lover and illegitimate son. This scenario enrages his current mistress and results in heartbreak for all.

1934 version: 86 minutes, Black & White, Silent Movie.

1959 version: 119 minutes, color, in Japanese with English subtitles.

Due to time limitation, we plan to shorten the 1934 version, and show 1959 version in full.



JACL
HealthBenefitsTrust

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