

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT – 2007

**2007 Highlights**

- Bob Nakamoto succeeded BG Bert Mizusawa as JAVA President. Elections held on January 20, 2007. [See page 6]
- JAVA participated in the All War Veterans Reunion on February 16-17 in Los Angeles, California. [See page 3]
- Montgomery County Public Schools agreed to expand the Japanese American experience in its curriculum. JAVA, National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, and Go For Broke National Education Center will support and facilitate this endeavor. This is a pilot project. [See page 5]
- The White House invited 16 JAVA members to attend the WH Asian Pacific American Heritage Month event. President recognized Nisei veterans. [See page 3]
- JAVA and US Army Center of Military History launched the publication of *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service During WW II* at a US Senate reception hosted by Senator Daniel Akaka. [See page 3]
- Three JAVA scholarships will be presented on May 17, 2008. [See page 5]
- JAVA is an active participant of the Commemorative Postage Stamp Honoring Nisei Veterans Campaign. [See page 3]
- The face of JAVA continues to be the quarterly *JAVA ADVOCATE*, twice weekly electronic *ROUND ROBIN* and JAVA Website ([www.javadc.org](http://www.javadc.org)). [See page 4]
- JAVA and 20 other Japanese American veterans organizations were recognized on November 10, 2007 by Go For Broke National Education Center for publicizing the Japanese American experience.[See page 7]

**ENHANCE JAPANESE AMERICAN CAUSE: ON-GOING ACTIVITIES:**

- **Nisei Records Digitization Project.** Our NARA [National Archives and Records Administration] documents collection project, a joint JAVA-442<sup>nd</sup>/MIS Hawaii project to digitize all relevant documents related to 100<sup>th</sup>-442<sup>nd</sup> and MIS, has continued unabated. Our team [Fumi Yamamoto, Joe Ichiuji, Chosei Kuge, Dwight Gates, Akira Yoshida, Susan Yoshida, Nami Suzuki, Tino Dinh and Terry Shima] are currently scanning documents into the computer. The data will be archived on the JAVA website and at 442<sup>nd</sup> Veterans Club, Hawaii. When completed, researchers would be able to access the documents electronically from anywhere in the world. Yamamoto and Ichiuji are co-chairs of research and scanning. Over-all Project co-chairs: Dave Buto and Ted Tsukiyama..
- **Oral History Project.** Having completed nearly all oral history interviews of WW II veterans, we have embarked on interviews of the post WW II veterans. The Chair is Dr. Warren Minami and others on the team are Calvin Ninomiya, Esq, Dr. Sue Okubo, Paul Tani, Robert Nakamura, Laurie Nakamoto and Terry Shima. Grant Hirabayashi, videographer, has retired. Our oral histories are archived at the Library of Congress Veterans History Project (LOCVHP). Interviews of three veterans books [Dr. Warren Tsuneishi, Dr. Norman Ikari,

Kelly Kuwayama] have appeared in two LOC VHP and one [Grant Hirabayashi]. will be featured in the next book

- **Speakers Bureau.** The Speakers Bureau [Kelly Kuwayama, Joe Ichijji, Norman Ikari, Warren Tsuneishi, Grant Hirabayashi, Paul Tani, Chosei Kuge, Dwight Gates, Jean Kariya, Mary Murakami, Betty Taira] engagements, especially during the Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month, were intensified at schools, community groups, and government agencies including the military.
- **Memorial Day Programs.**
  - On May 27, 2007 JAVA accepted Dr. Craig Uchida's, President of JACL WDC, invitation to jointly sponsor the traditional Memorial Day Program at Arlington Cemetery. JAVA assisted in arranging for the principal speaker, LTG Joseph Peterson, USA, the highest ranking Asian Pacific American on active duty. The event consisted of a program at the Pavilion near the Columbarium, the laying of flowers at 59 gravesites of Japanese Americans and Caucasians assigned to the 100<sup>th</sup>-442<sup>nd</sup> RCT, Marty Higgins, Commander of the Lost Battalion, the USS Maine monument which lists 7 Japanese sailors who perished with the vessel in Havana, Cuba, harbor in 1898, and the laying of the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown.
  - On Memorial Day, May 28, JAVA engaged in two national events: in the morning JAVA attended the Department of Defense-sponsored program at Arlington Cemetery where the Commander-in-Chief addressed the Nation and in the afternoon JAVA participated in the American Veterans Center-sponsored parade down Constitution Avenue. Aside from their patriotic value, these events spotlighted JAVA's name and helped direct the public's attention and recognition about Japanese American contributions to national defense.
- **Veterans Day Programs.**
  - JAVA had two events on Veterans Day, November 11, 2007. In the morning representatives of the Veterans Day National Committee (VDNC), of which JAVA is a member, participated in a breakfast hosted by the Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs followed by a program at the Arlington Cemetery where JAVA and other representatives of the VDNC viewed Vice President Richard Cheney lay the national wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown and address the nation from the Amphitheater. Representing JAVA was Kelly Kuwayama, 442<sup>nd</sup>, who stood to be recognized when his name and JAVA were announced. Bearing the US and JAVA colors during the parade of flags, were Chosei Kuge and LTC Martin Herbert, USA (Ret), who marched in with the other VSOs carrying their respective organization colors.
  - In the afternoon, JAVA and the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) jointly held their 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Veterans Day Program at the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism. George Joe Sakato, Medal of Honor recipient, was the principal speaker. Chair: Lt Col Michael Yaguchi, USAF (Ret). JAVA Veterans Day activities came to a close on November 13 at the Spark Matsunaga Elementary School, located in Germantown, Maryland, where 400 students honored the veterans, including a JAVA 442<sup>nd</sup> veteran, with an evening of patriotic music.

- **Nisei Commemorative Postage Stamp Campaign.** JAVA is supporting the campaign for the creation of a commemorative postage stamp honoring Nisei WW II members of the armed forces by soliciting letters of support and signatures from dignitaries, schools, organizations and private citizens. This grass roots effort is coordinated by Wayne Osako of Garden Grove, California.
- **Cherry Blossom Week Programs:**
  - **Freedom Walk.** Like in previous years during the Cherry Blossom Festival, JAVA and the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) sponsored the Freedom Walk on April 7, 2007 which included a program at the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism. JAVA also staffed an informational booth. Chair: Barbara Nekoba.
  - **Sakura Matsuri.** The following week, on April 14, JAVA manned a booth at the *Sakura Matsuri Japanese Street Festival*, organized by the Japan America Society of Washington, DC. This year's event was marred by heavy rain and wind. Chair: Dr. Warren Tsuneishi.
- **Quarterly Lunch.** 70 - 90 members have attended the quarterly luncheons. There are usually two speakers. JAVA's principal speakers in 2007 included Mr. Glen S. Fukushima, President and CEO of Airbus Japan, KK; Col Brian Shiroyama, USAF, (Ret) creator of the Japanese American exhibit on the USS Hornet; and Dr. Brian Hayashi, Associate Professor at Kyoto University. Social Committee Chair: Grant Ichikawa.

#### **ENHANCE JAPANESE AMERICAN CAUSE: ONE-TIME ACTIVITIES**

- **White House Recognition.** On May 10, 2007 sixteen JAVA members were invited to the Asia Pacific American program in the East Room of the White House. Six JAVA members were assigned front row seats to hear the President say: "WW II veterans and Japanese American veterans have joined us today. We are proud to have you here and thanks for the great example you've set for those who wear the uniform." When the six JAVA members stood up and saluted their Commander-in-Chief, he smartly returned the salute. Ben Kuroki, one of only three Japanese Americans who served in the US Air Corps as gunners and who "had to fight like hell to remain in the Air Corps", had lunch with JAVA members the following day and was made an honorary member of JAVA.
- **All Wars Veterans Reunion.** JAVA participated in the All Wars Veterans Reunion on February 16-17 in Los Angeles, California. Mike Yaguchi delivered an address on behalf of JAVA and an informational booth was set up.
- **Tribute to former Secretary Mineta.** On February 6, 2007 JAVA cosponsored the Asian Pacific American Community Tribute to former US Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta at the Smithsonian Castle Building. Secretary Mineta is a Honorary Chair of JAVA.
- **Public Launch of Nisei Linguists.** On March 20, 2007, JAVA arranged the public launch of "*Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service During WW II*", a documentary on the 3,000 Nisei who served in the Asia Pacific Theater as translators, interrogators, communication interceptors, cave flushers, and as infantryman/intelligence collectors who operated behind enemy lines. The "roll out" was at the Russell Senate Office

Building and was hosted by Senator Daniel Akaka, who was instrumental in getting the US Army to commission command historian, Dr. James C. McNaughton, to write this long overdue story. Members of Congress, officials of the executive branch, diplomats and veterans organizations, including MIS Hawaii President Dr. Glenn Masuyama attended the event. Lt Col Michael Yaguchi, USAF (Ret), whose uncle Michael Matsudaira served in the MIS, was the Master of Ceremony.

- **Sgt Leana Nishimura Fund Drive.** JAVA mounted a nationwide campaign to assist SGT Leana Nishimura, USAR, who returned from duty in Iraq to a less than desirable situation (no home, her three small children in the care of her mother in Hawaii, and in dire straits financially). The response from JAVA members, friends, and concerned citizens nationwide was spontaneous and remarkable. JAVA members and friends across the nation donated \$6,500. When Nishimura and her family attended the JAVA quarterly lunch on January 20, 2007, CNN sent a team to record her story and her appreciation to JAVA members. Coordinator: Grant Ichikawa.

#### **ENHANCE JAPANESE AMERICAN CAUSE: MEDIA ACTIVITIES.**

- ***JAVA ADVOCATE***, quarterly newsletter with color photographs, has drawn favorable reactions from members and other readers. JAVA appreciates President Nakamoto's generous donation to have Base Technologies print the *ADVOCATE* in color. The *JAVA ADVOCATE* has featured the following Asian Pacific Americans on its "Meet the generals and admirals page: VADM Robert Kihune, USN (Ret), LTG Joseph Peterson, USA; RADM James E. Beebe, USN; MG James Mukoyama, Jr., USAR (Ret); RADM Connie Mariano, USN (Ret), Brig Gen Susan Mashiko, USAF, BG Albert Lyman, USA (Ret) and BG Charles Lyman, USA (Ret). Editor: MAJ Kay Wakatake, USA.
- ***Round Robin.*** This twice weekly electronic newsletter keeps members apprised of developments in near real time basis, continues to draw favorable comments from members. Editor: Grant Ichikawa.
- **JAVA Website** ([www.javadc.org](http://www.javadc.org)), revamped in 2006, has been accessed by students, researchers and the press for information and leads. Webmaster: Dave Buto.
- **50 press releases** were issued. Asian American newspapers and veteran organizational newsletters' use of these press releases justify continuation of the program.
- Three JAVA members were interviewed by *The Capital*, Annapolis, Maryland, Daily newspaper. The favorable article led to a long interview by an Annapolis radio station.
- **COL Renita Menyher't's, USA**, series of nine articles about Nisei veterans in 2006 won the 2007 US Army-wide Keith L. Ware Award for Journalism Excellence and thereby made her eligible to compete for the Department of Defense-wide Thomas Jefferson Literary Award. She won that coveted journalism award too. Menyher't's articles were published widely in armed forces publications and is currently on display in the foyer of Fort Monmouth Public Relations Office.

- The Department of Veterans Affairs produced a **29 minute DVD entitled *Face Behind the File, Japanese Americans***, based on consultation by JAVA, which has been shown to VA and DOD employees worldwide and is being shown in Montgomery County high schools.
- JAVA members Dr. Norman Ikari and Dr. Warren Tsuneishi's life stories appeared in the ***World War II magazine***, September edition.
- At **Producer/Director Ken Burns and Lynn Novick's** request, JAVA provided names of Nisei veterans to PBS local stations so they could contact them for local promotional spots preceding and during the course of the serialized national broadcast of *The War*, the epic 15 hour documentary of WW II. Nisei 442<sup>nd</sup> veterans and internment camp internees in Sacramento were featured in the documentary.
- **The Ben Kuroki life story, *The Most Honorable Son***, was a prime time broadcast over PBS national network on September 17.
- **Shinkichi Tajiri's, 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT veteran, sculptured pieces**, called *Sentinels*, posted two on each side of a bridge in Venlo, The Netherlands. The sculptures were dedicated by Queen Beatrix. Tajiri, a renowned sculptor in Europe, was promoted to the highest grade of "kighthood" by the personal order of the Queen..

#### **ENHANCE JAPANESE AMERICAN CAUSE: NEW ACTIVITIES**

- **Education**
  - **Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)** plans to expand its high school curriculum pertaining to the Japanese American experience during WW II. JAVA, National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF), and Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC) will provide support. GFBNEC will conduct a teachers' workshop on February 2, 2008 for social studies teachers of MCPS and neighboring counties. NJAMF, in addition to an education curriculum, will subsidize the transportation of students to the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism for an on-site briefing. JAVA will provide written material and speakers, participate in the production of video programs and serve as a consultant to the writing of textbooks.
  - **Scholarships**. Announcement was made that JAVA will offer three scholarships from its three Memorial Scholarship Funds at the May 17, 2008 quarterly luncheon. Scholarship Chair: Calvin Ninomiya, Esq.
  - **A panel discussion** on WW II experience was held at the American Veterans Center Conference on November 8 in Washington, DC. Some 300, including 70 high school students, attended. Following this discussion, JAVA members held a Q & A in an adjoining room with the students of Osbourn Park High School located in Manassas, Virginia.
  - **JAVA members manned an informational booth**, arranged by Warren Minami, at the Unity Day Observance at the Maryland National Guard headquarters at Baltimore, Maryland, where they explained to the visiting public Japanese American experiences during WW II.

- **Survey of Japanese Americans in Military Aircraft .** JAVA has undertaken a research project designed to show Japanese American competitiveness for key positions in US military aviation. In WW II there were only three Japanese Americans who served in air combat aircrafts, all as gunners. This limited number was due to discrimination and prejudice against Japanese Americans. The WW II generation of Nisei settled the question of loyalty and leveled the playing field for future generations of Japanese Americans in the armed forces. Fast forward to the Vietnam War, when there would be over 35 Japanese Americans who served in combat aircrafts as pilots and navigators, all with commensurate ranks. This survey is being compiled by Col Bob Kan, USAF (Ret), F-4C fighter pilot who was shot down in North Vietnam and rescued. Five others would not be so lucky. Similarly shot down over North Vietnam, they were captured and were guests at Hanoi “Hilton”.
- **Japanese American Leadership Delegation.**
  - Consistent with Japanese Ambassador Ryozo Kato and Japanese American National Museum President Irene Hirano’s promotion of the Japan America Leadership Delegation (JALD), JAVA has expanded its relationship with the Japanese Embassy. JAVA has a productive relationship with several officials of the Embassy of Japan.
  - Glen Fukushima, President and CEO of Airbus Japan, KK and unofficial advisor to the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Japanese-US relations described at a quarterly JAVA luncheon on April 28, 2007 the Japanese American relationship with the Japanese government and people and his advisory role in the JALD program. Sandra Tanamachi of Texas, a member of the 2007 JALD delegation to Japan described her experiences as a delegate and emphasized the importance of Nikkei and Japan relationship.
  - JAVA assisted the visit of (1) Mr. Fumiaki Fujimoto, a high school teacher in Ehime Prefecture, and his two students who came to Washington, DC in early August to conduct research at the National Archives and to interview JAVA veterans [Kelly Kuwayama, Joe Ichiuji, Norman Ikari, and Terry Shima], and (2) Ms. Yuka Fujioka, a lecturer at Kansai International University and PhD candidate at Kobe University, who was in Washington, DC to interview Japanese American political leaders and Japanese American veterans for her dissertation on Japanese Americans views of the Japanese people and government .
- **Link to PPALM.** JAVA has established a link with the Pan Pacific American Leaders and Mentors (PPALM), a non-profit organization designed to counsel interested US Army personnel, especially Asian Pacific Americans, to achieve their career goals. The chairman of PPALM is MG Antonio Taguba, USA, (Ret), who is also a JAVA member.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE:**

- **Elections.** At its Annual General Meeting on January 20, 2007, JAVA members elected the following slate of officers for a two year term:
  - President, Robert Nakamoto
  - Vice President, CDR Cal Shintani, USNR (Ret)

Secretary, Maj Kim Luoma, USAFR  
Treasurer, Earl Takeguchi (re-elected)

- In addition to these elected officials, President Nakamoto appointed the following to serve on the Executive Council: Gerald Yamada, Esq [General Counsel]; Calvin Ninomiya, Esq; Grant Ichikawa; Lt Col Michael Yaguchi, USAF (Ret); MAJ Kay Wakatake [Editor of *JAVA ADVOCATE*]; COL Phil Ishio, USAR (Ret) [JAVA Founding President] and Terry Shima [Executive Director].
- BG Bert Mizusawa, USAR had served as President for four years (two terms) raising JAVA from a local fraternal organization to a nationwide organization, accredited to the Department of Veterans Affairs and the White House, and, in terms of relationship with Veterans Affairs, placing it on par with other major veterans service organizations (VSO).
- **JAVA-Asian American Veterans Association (AAVA).** The Executive Council decided on September 5, 2007 that JAVA should be maintained as an independent organization. In addition, it was decided that JAVA would support AAVA when it is established, that AAVA should obtain its own 501(c) 19 status, and letters to obtain members' votes should be sent when AAVA is activated.
- **JAVA Members Honored.** JAVA and its members received various awards during 2007:
  - JAVA and 20 other Japanese American veterans organizations were recognized on November 10, 2007 by Go For Broke National Education Center for publicizing the Japanese American experience. President Nakamoto received the award at the *Evening of Aloha Dinner* at the Anaheim Hilton Hotel, California.
  - The American Veterans Center presented to JAVA's 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT veterans [Kelly Kuwayama, Joe Ichiuji, and Terry Shima] on November 10, on behalf of the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT, the Audie Murphy Award for courage.
  - California Superior Court Judge Vincent Okamoto was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame at Fort Knox, Kentucky
  - Former Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta received the Japanese Government Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun. Presentation was made by Ambassador Ryoza Kato at his Residence on July 3, 2007.
  - MAJ Kay Wakatake, USA was appointed to the prestigious American Bar Association Standing Committee on Armed Forces Law; also, the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association appointed Wakatake to chair the Military and Veterans Committee;.
  - MG Antonio Taguba, USA (Ret) received the US Citizenship and Immigration Service Award for outstanding achievements.
  - MG James Mukoyama, Jr., USAR (Ret), a former member and vice chair of the Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans (ACMV), was appointed to serve as its Chairman. ACMV, mandated by Congress, is administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.
  - Sus Satow, 442<sup>nd</sup> veteran and resident of Sacramento, California, was featured in the Ken Burns documentary, *THE WAR*. Lawson Sakai and Donald Wakida, on behalf of President Nakamoto, presented Satow with a

letter of commendation and a JAVA memento coin at a luncheon in Sacramento in Satow's honor.

- **JAVA Presents Honors.**
  - JAVA's *COURAGE, HONOR, PATRIOTISM* plaques were presented to Senator Daniel K. Akaka, Dr. James C. McNaughton, and former Secretary of Veterans Affairs R. James Nicholson.
  - BG Bert Mizusawa, USAR and Dave Buto, outgoing President and Secretary respectively, and COL Phil Ishio, USAR (Ret), were presented with a token of appreciation [JAVA coin embedded in lucite] for their long service to JAVA.
  - Betty Taira, Marcia Mau, and Barbara Nekoba were recognized for their superior work on the reception committee. They were presented with an inscribed JAVA memento coin.
- **Membership.** JAVA membership increased by 47 in 2007. 89 applied for life membership.
- **Financial.** Members donated \$3,262 during 2007 to JAVA general fund and specific operations. JAVA's 3 scholarship funds total over \$53,000. Our financial assets is \$45,000.
- **Taps.** JAVA played Taps for the following stalwarts:
  - Marty Higgins, Commander of elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> BN, 141<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 36<sup>th</sup> (Texas) Division ("Lost Battalion") which were trapped by German forces and rescued by the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT.
  - Bill Hosokawa, Editor and war correspondent (Korean and Vietnam Wars) of the Denver Post, an internee who made it his life's mission to educate the Americans so the incarceration of a minority group of US citizens does not occur again.
  - Gene Takahashi, Korean War veteran, who escaped from Chinese Army captivity and whose story was written by David Halberstam in his book, *The Coldest War*, and in his (Halberstam) article that was reprinted in the July 2007 *JAVA ADVOCATE*, p. 11.
  - Shoji Iwahiro (died on April 12, 2007) from Marina, CA.
  - Robert Ota ( died on May 25, 2007) from Potomac, MD.
  - Max Yano ( died on April 27, 2007) from Burke VA.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Terry Shima, Executive Director