



Banner

Winter
2017

Congressman Mike Honda to Keynote DOR 2017

By Kay Ochi

“Unite to Uphold Our Civil Rights” is the theme of the 2017 Day of Remembrance (DOR) program.

This year marks the 75th Commemoration of President Franklin Roosevelt’s signing of Executive Order 9066 on Feb. 19, 1942. The order authorized the forced removal and incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans based solely on their ethnicity and has impacted generations of JAs.

Congressman Mike Honda will present the keynote address at the DOR on Saturday, February 18 from 2 to 4 PM at the Japanese American National Museum (JANM), 100 N. Central, Los Angeles.

Congressman Honda was the representative for the 15th Congressional District of California in the House of Representatives from 2001 until 2013. Due to redistricting, he represented the 17th Congressional District of California until the recent election.

“As the Honorable Mike Honda was unsuccessful in his recent re-election race, the Japanese American community has lost a fierce and tireless advocate in Congress. However, he would be the

first to proclaim that now is the time to step up our efforts to resist any efforts like Muslim registry, as our WWII experiences must be told over and over to remind our government and nation ‘Never again!’,” stated Richard Katsuda, NCRRC Co-Chair and DOR committee member.

In addition, NCRRC member, Haru Kuromiya will share her thoughts about her wartime incarceration and her family’s experiences. Other speakers representing communities that have been similarly targeted, include Sahar Pirzada, Khallid Al Hassien, and Adriana Cabrera.

This year’s program will feature highlights from Traci Kato Kiriyama and Kennedy Kabasares’ PULL project sharing stories of Japanese American former incarcerated, and performances by Maceo and the East LA Taiko, and UCLA’s Kyodo Taiko. The performances are being coordinated by Dan Kwong.

NCRRC began sponsoring the Los Angeles DOR in 1981, and has continued for 35 years. NCRRC Treasurer and DOR Committee member Suzy Katsuda remarked, “I continue to work with the DOR committee because I believe the issue of incarceration and its effects



on innocent Japanese Americans based solely on their ethnicity need to be acknowledged and remembered to prevent the same injustice to occur to another group of innocent people.”

The DOR organizing committee includes representatives from NCRRC, JACL/PSW, Go for Broke, JANM, the Manzanar Committee, the Progressive Asian Network for Action, United Teachers of Los Angeles, and the Storrier Stearns Japanese Garden. UCLA’s Asian American Studies Center has provided major sponsorship.

A reception catered by Carrie Morita’s Community Caterers will once again follow the program.

Post-Election Plans: Vigilant Love and Nikkei Progressives

By Kathy Masaoka

The Vigilant Love Coalition continued to meet after organizing the vigil after Paris and San Bernardino attacks in 2015. In the first meetings, the group defined itself as “a coalition of allies using the power of solidarity and #vigilant LOVE to actively defend the safety and justice of the communities and individuals affected by Islamophobia

in the Greater LA area.”

The coalition included representatives from the Council on Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), JACL and NCRRC who served as the steering committee for the group. Because of the limited capacity of all the groups, it was decided that the group would share

information and actions as well as try to build relationships with each other since many of the groups did not know each other’s work. However, it was difficult to build the coalition due to high expectations and limited energy along with some changes in the lives of the steering committee members. Since the election and the increased need

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1981 CRWIC VHS Tapes Converted to DVDs

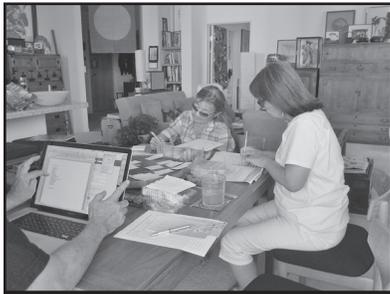
By Janice Yen

A grant from the National Park Service enabled the NCCR Education Committee to put all of the Visual Communications/NCCR taped testimonies from the Los Angeles Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) onto digital media. The 13-volume set of DVDs is menu-driven, meaning that individual testimonies can be located and played almost immediately after a DVD is placed into a DVD player.

In addition to the 12-volume set, 20 testimonies were selected and put into a single DVD for educational use. The testifiers in the “highlights” DVD give their first-hand accounts of the impact of the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, covering economic and constitutional losses, psychological impact, the toll of resettlement on the incarcerated, and comments by the Commissioners. The DVD also has an insert which summarizes each of the testimonies.



Patty Nagano points to one of the testimonies selected for the “highlights” DVD (Photo by Janice Yen)



Ed Committee works at their “office” (Patty and Steve’s dining room) (Photo by Janice Yen)

The DVD set and the shortened version of the testimonies will be available in Spring 2017. The committee is looking forward to the launch party (date to be determined) and announcements of the availability of the DVDs in local print and social media!

The members of the Ed Committee that worked on the DVDs are Steve and Patty Nagano, Suzy Katsuda, Kathy Masaoka, and Janice Yen.

Tuna Canyon Detention Station History on Exhibit

By Kanji Sahara

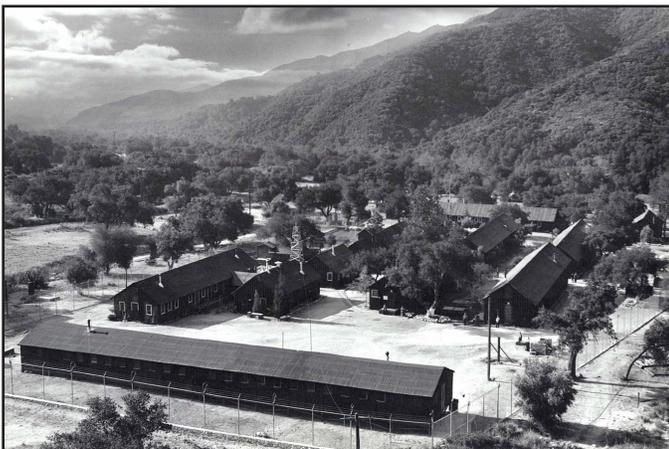
At the beginning of WWII, the FBI and other law enforcement agencies arrested enemy aliens. They were detained by the INS in Temporary Detention Stations such as Tuna Canyon in Tujunga, CA. A traveling exhibit titled “Only the Oaks Remain, the Tuna Canyon Detention Station Traveling Exhibit” was created to show this overlooked part of American History. This exhibit is currently at the Japanese American National Museum in Little Tokyo and will be there until April 9, 2017.

The legal ability to arrest and detain enemy aliens indefinitely without trial goes back all the way to the founding of the country. In 1798, President John

Adams signed the Enemy Aliens Act. The Act stated that in the event of war, the President need make a “Public Proclamation” and all enemy aliens over the age of 14 could be interned indefinitely without a trial. In the event of war, citizens of the enemy country living in your country are often the subject of investigation, registration and detention.

On Dec 7, 1941, President Roosevelt issued Presidential Proclamations 2525, 2526 and 2527 so that Japanese, German and Italian aliens could be arrested and detained without trial. If a German immigrated to America and subsequently became a naturalized U.S. Citizen, he would be immune from Presidential Proclamation 2526. If a German immigrated to America and lived here many years and did not become naturalized, the FBI would be concerned about his loyalty. But the immigrant from Japan could not become an U.S. Citizen. Therefore, all immigrants from Japan fell under Presidential Proclamation 2525.

In the years before 1941, the FBI originated the Custodial Detention Index (CDI) which contained the list of enemy aliens that they considered “dangerous” and would arrest in the event on war. On Dec 7, 1941 and in the following days, the FBI went to the homes and business of the enemy alien listed in the Index to arrest him. After days of questioning by the FBI, the enemy alien would be sent to a Temporary Detention



Aerial view of the Tuna Canyon Detention Center (photo courtesy of Merrill Scott Family)

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NCCR Book Project Nearing Completion

By Richard Katsuda

Well, we're finally on the homestretch toward publishing our book—our story of the grassroots struggle for redress. But it's much more than that. As NCCR, we are especially proud that we stayed in the trenches when we started hearing that people were being denied redress. So for another ten years after the Civil Liberties Act, we fought for the Japanese Latin Americans, the railroad and mine workers and their families, those born after their parents "voluntarily evacuated" from the West Coast—and the many other redress claimants who were initially denied redress.

Plus we remained true to our founding principles of unity as an organization. Promoting education about the WWII incarceration was one of those founding principles, and we have stayed the course in education, even creating the video "Stand Up for Justice: The Ralph Lazo Story," working jointly with Visual Communications.

We also have steadfastly supported others in their fights for justice, another founding principle, whether it's defending and working closely with Muslim and Arab Americans, promoting the cause of the so-called Comfort Women, supporting Officer Ehren Watada in his refusal to fight in the War in Iraq, or the many other issues in which NCCR has mobilized people to take stands.

All of that is in our story. In addition, our editor, Prof. Lane Hirabayashi, recommended that we include

extensive oral histories that we did several years ago. He thought that, since we're trying to appeal to students and scholars as well as the Japanese American community and general public, the oral histories would provide an opportunity for readers to dig more deeply into the life experiences that motivated NCCR members to join and dedicate so much time and energy to our work.

So the book will be in two volumes. Volume 1 will include an edited version of Glen Kitayama's master thesis on NCCR as well as the oral histories. In Volume 2, NCCR members and friends tell their stories of how diverse members of the community were inspired to come together to fight for redress with the grassroots community.

We're almost there! After Lane Hirabayashi took a quarter off from his busy UCLA teaching schedule to focus on the book, the Editorial Team—Kay Ochi, Kathy Masaoka, Janice Yen, Suzy Katsuda, and Richard Katsuda—took all of his work, and looking at the whole body of NCCR work, made edits and additions. We also appreciate the valuable feedback from our panel of reviewers—June Hibino, Jim Matsuoka, Tony Osumi, and Jan Tokumaru—who really helped to make sure we didn't overlook important points. The Editorial Team has submitted the text for copy editing and is now looking for photos to enhance the book. Look for announcements for a book party!

PULL Project Update

By Suzy Katsuda

Traci kato kiriyama and Kennedy Kabasares are cutting edge artists who have created performances for numerous community events, including the Day of Remembrance programs in Little Tokyo.

As Zero 3 and now as a duo, Kennedy and traci have accepted the challenge of highlighting the voices of former incarcerated who spoke at the 1981 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) hearings in Los Angeles. They have collaborated with NCCR for the PULL Project: "Tales of Clamor" which explores the silence and collective noise necessary to create great change, inspired by the CWRIC hearings.

They have received a grant award from the NET/TEN Exchange Grant that is built on and deepens an existing relationship between the NET (NET is the Network of Ensemble Theaters) and the PULL Project and its partner, NCCR. The grant was a highly competitive national grant award and "Tales of Clamor"

is one of nine recipients from across the country, and the only one from Southern California to receive this award.

The project is focused on the "EXCHANGE" between the PULL project and NCCR. It is about the process and not the "product" of a show. There will be workshop sessions on January 21st between 3 to 6PM and on February 3rd at 8:30PM at Kinetic Theory Circus Arts in Culver City. They will be featuring new actors/performers for the project. It should be an unusual and challenging experience. Come join us with NCCR!

A five to ten minute video of the PULL Project is going to be presented at the February 18th Day of Remembrance program at JANM.

to protect many vulnerable communities, the steering committee is looking into grants to help with the logistics and management of the coalition. In addition, the grant will help the group conduct workshops on building solidarity using the work that NCCR has done since 9/11 and the Japanese American history as a guide.

Nikkei Progressives (NP) became activated after the November 2016 election with the realization that the rights of many communities would be under attack by the new President and that it would be necessary to combat the divisive and frightening policies promised by Trump. Although NCCR, through its 9/11 Committee, did extensive work supporting the Muslim community since 9/11, it has become harder to continue to provide the same kind of leadership.

There has been a need for an intergenerational progressive group in the community to carry on the legacy of NCCR for quite a while. Often when there is an issue within the community, others will look to NCCR to respond and act as we did when we learned about the criminal background of the CEO of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC). Fortunately, the JACCC is on a good course under the leadership of the current CEO, Leslie Ito. Over the past few years, there have been groups like J-Town Voice which challenged groups that opposed the building of the Recreation Center on First Street North but it eventually became inactive. Some NCCR members have met with younger activists to try to get a group going but these attempts have always lost steam after a couple of meetings/discussions. Though people saw the need for a group, there was not enough energy to build and sustain a new group because of the busy lives of most of the younger people and the lack of a real issue. Now there is a real issue.

NCCR, the Nikkei Progressives (NP) and the Vigilant Love coalition sponsored the vigil and march on December 7 in response to the election and the call for a "Muslim registry" with speakers from the JA, Muslim and Immigrant communities.



At December 7 Vigil and March: From left, Kristin Fukushima (Nikkei Progressives), Jim Matsuoka (NCCR) and Asiyah Ayubbi, performer and Nobuko Miyamoto's granddaughter. (Photo from nccr-la.org)

Close to 200 people braved the cold at the JACCC Plaza, wrote messages for the Wall of Solidarity, made buttons and heard the Nikkei Progressive

statement by Kristin Fukushima. They were warmed by the singing and drumming of Asiyah Ayubbi, a Japanese American/ Black Muslim, inspired by the poem from Ruben Guevara and were roused by NCCR's Jim Matsuoka who blasted Trump and shared his experiences in the camps. The group marched to the Japanese American National Museum where we ended in a chant of "Muslims are welcome here," "Immigrants are welcome here," and "LGBTQ are welcome here."

NP held its first meeting on January 11 and will continue to meet every other month on the second Wednesday. It will take time to form but it is off to a good start - organizing a contingent in the Million Women's March in downtown Los Angeles.

NCCR 2016 in Photos



NCCR presents Shakeel Sayed a gift as he leaves his position at the Islamic Shura Council. (Photo by Janice Yen)



Asian Americans assemble before the LGBTQ vigil in downtown Los Angeles. (photo credit JK Yamamoto)



Nancy Oda thanks Kanji for spearheading the Tuna Canyon Coalition exhibit, "Only the Oaks Remain". (Photo by Janice Yen)

Station or released.

Tuna Canyon was a Temporary Detention Station in Tujunga in the City of Los Angeles. Angel Island in San Francisco Bay and Ellis Island in New York Harbor were also Temporary Detention Stations. Tuna Canyon was a Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) camp built in the 1930's. On the evening of the 7th, 1941, it was commandeered by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Guard towers were built and a ten feet tall fence encompassed the CCC camp. It received its first detainees on Dec 16. The capacity of Tuna Canyon was 300 men. Japanese, German and Italian aliens lived together in dormitory style barracks.

A special train, called the Kline train after its Director, took the detainees to Permanent Internment Camps such as Missoula Montana, Ft Lincoln North Dakota and Santa Fe New Mexico.

In 1938, an INS Immigration Station and a separate Federal Prison were built in San Pedro. In March of 1942, about 60 Issei women Japanese language school teachers were arrested and sent to San Pedro. When the number detainees in Tuna Canyon exceeded its capacity of 300 men, the overflow was housed in TCDS offsite Camp; in Griffith Park and/or in San Pedro.

There is no known photograph of the Camp in Griffith Park. Its construction is supposed to have started before WWII and was located near where Travel Town and the model train are presently located. It is amazing that after all these years; we do not know the basic facts about the Camp in Griffith Park.

We know more about Tuna Canyon Detention Station because the First Officer Merrill Scott took photographs of it or had photographs taken of Tuna Canyon. These photographs show a clean well run camp. The most important point of Merrill Scott's governance was that he stressed to the guards that the detainees were not prisoners because they were criminals—they were prisoners because there was a war going on between two countries. The guards were to treat the detainees with respect.



Dormitory-style barracks at Tuna Canyon (photo courtesy of Merrill Scott Family)

Merrill Scott had the guards eat the same food in the mess hall with the detainees.

The purpose of Tuna Canyon was to serve as a temporary prison and transit point. Out of 1,800 TCDS detainees (excluding the Latin Americans), only a few dozen had hearings in LA. The vast majority had hearings at their next destination, for example Ft. Missoula or Santa Fe. The possible decisions were to release the detainee because he was not dangerous, or if he was considered dangerous, to send the detainee to a Permanent Internment Camp such as Crystal City, Texas. For the German or Italian alien, "release" meant he was going home. For the Japanese alien, "release" meant he was sent to where his family was

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NCCR continues to Support *Halmonis*

By Kathy Masaoka

On January 18, 2017, the San Francisco's Visual Arts Committee under the Arts Commission unanimously approved the proposed inscription for the 'Comfort Women' memorial. The inscription represents the history, the survivors struggle for justice, government responsibility, and the relevance to our present and future.

"Our worst fear is that our painful history during World War II will be forgotten" – former "Comfort Woman"

Right: David Monkawa, Grace Shimizu of Comfort Women Justice Coalition, SF, Phyllis Kim of the Korean American Forum of California, Grandma Yongsoo Lee of Korea and other supporters in Tokyo. (Photo courtesy of David Monkawa)



Tuna Canyon Detention Center, continued

incarcerated e.g., Santa Anita Assembly Center or the permanent WRA Camp such as Manzanar.

Because Tuna Canyon was a CCC Camp, it was located in pleasant surroundings, in a grove of oak and sycamore trees, and the weather was not harsh. The 10 WRA Concentration Camps were built in remote and desolate places. Relatively speaking, Tuna Canyon had a nice surrounding.

In 1940, Congress passed the Alien Registration Act (Smith Act). All Issei over the age of 14 had to register and be fingerprinted. This was followed by Presidential Proclamation 2525 and EO9066. Now President Elect Donald Trump wants to register the Muslims. His supporters are claiming EO9066 as a "precedent" for the incarceration of Muslims. Barracks can quickly be constructed at Tujunga, CA to create a new Temporary Detention Station. The traveling exhibit, "Only the Oaks Remain" will show what this new 2017 facility could look like.

Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress

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DOR 2017: February 18, 2017

"Unite to Uphold Our Civil Rights"

Details Inside!

