

FOOTPRINTS

Impressions from where we were to where we will be

The Newsletter for the Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego

Fall Issue 1996

Volume 7



Presenters at M.C.R.D. Command Museum, on May 16, 1996, : l to r, Colonel North, U.S. Marine Corps, Colonel Christopher Keegan, U.S. , Army, retired, Frank Wada, Hank Wada, Bob Wada

"A MISTAKEN IDENTITY BY LOOKING LIKE THE ENEMY"

by Robert M. Wada

Before I begin, I would like to thank Major Gallagher for inviting my brothers and myself to participate in this special Asian Pacific American Heritage Month program and to share our experiences as Americans with oriental faces. To begin with, I want to emphasize that I have never considered myself an Asian. I have always considered myself an American and a Marine and am only an Asian by birth and not by choice.

In 1950, I went through this boot camp and I have never regretted for one day of my life for having joined the Marines. The days I spent in the Corps were the proudest days of my life. Even today, at age 65, I have an office with plaques, photos and Marine Corps stickers and banners.

See "Mistaken Identity, page 12

TO PARKER AND BACK

By Mitch Himaka

PARKER, Ariz.— Some 200 people turned out April 21, 1996, for the Parker Area Historical Society meeting where members of the Japanese-American Historical Society of San Diego were invited to relate their WWII experiences while interned at Poston.

It wasn't Gorbachev meeting George Bush but JAHSSD Pres. Ben Segawa did meet PAHS Pres. Bob Drew and we went from there to what those attending thought was a rather good meeting.

Others we met included Don Sullivan, society vice president; Patti Silvestri, society oral history project director; her husband Bert Silvestri; Deanna Beaver, society secretary; Ron Moore of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Council; and Elizabeth Solper, the society's 89-year-old treasurer who still lives on the Colorado River Indian Reservation in one of our original old, but remodeled tar-papered barracks.

Okay, so you old timers knew this but I didn't until we came here for the discussion. The construction of the tar-papered barracks was one of Del Webb's early construction projects, which helped make him a millionaire.

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WHICH SIDE ARE YOU GOING TO FIGHT FOR? *Frank Wada's story as presented by Bob Wada at MCRD on May 16, 1996.*

Before I begin with my own talk on "A Mistaken Identity by Looking Like the Enemy," I've been asked by my brother Frank to speak on his behalf and tell a few of his experiences. Frank in his modesty and strong emotions, preferred to have me present his past experiences as a American of Japanese ancestry.

May I first enter a short comment here of my own. Frank is the fourth oldest in our family of nine brothers and sisters and I have to tell you in all sincerity, Frank has always been my favorite among my brothers and sisters. Mainly, I guess because when I was a small boy, he would take the time to help me, explain things to me and take me to my different married sisters' homes for visits.

Frank was my military role model when he volunteered for the Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

As for Henry, he and I used to argue and fight constantly. But the day we first got together in Korea changed all that. It is a feeling I cannot even begin to describe when I try to tell you how happy I was to see him. We have been very close brothers from that day on. I just wanted to share that with you.

Back to Frank's experiences. For Frank's title, I call it, "Which Side Are You Going to Fight For?" Frank recalls his boyhood days in Redlands, California as having to always sit in the balcony of the local theatre with all the other minorities.

In 1938, during his senior year and a full three years before Pearl Harbor, Frank was asked by a fellow student, "Which side are you going to fight for when the war comes with Japan?" That's three years before the war started...Who was this guy? Frank sure didn't have to say anything because what did during the war answered that student's question tenfold.

Just before he was evacuated to an internment camp, Frank and his friend Charlie Iguchi went to collect money for the produce purchased by a market owner on 12th Street in San Diego. The owner told them, "Get out you so & so's. I'm not going to pay you because the government is going to haul you away anyway!" Not long after that

See "Which Side", page 7

LIGHTENING DOES STRIKE TWICE
by Mitch Himaka

PARKER, Ariz.—They came to the Colorado River Indian Reservation just outside this small town more than 50 years ago. It was mid-August. The hot desert sun drove temperature to the 110-120-degree range.

It wasn't like the home they one knew when the temperatures were moderate. Almost cool, in fact.

Our government gave the people little notice except to tell them they were going to a new home."

When they got to their "new home" called Poston, they opened the doors to the tar-papered barracks.

It was so hot, the families would take months, perhaps years, before they would become accustomed to it.

Story sound familiar? It happened. Not once. Twice. The second time before the ink on Exec. Order No. 9066, which led to the evacuation of the Nikkei from the West Coast, was barely dry.

See "Lightening", page 11

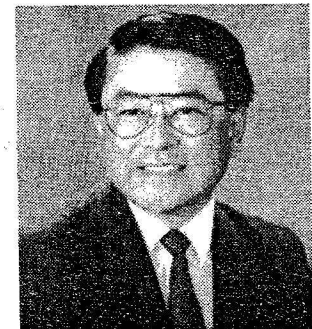
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First Lt. Alice Kurashige receives her bars from her parents, Kiyome and Akira.

A FIRST FOR THE CORPS

by Don Estes

A little known, but none the less notable "first" for both the Nikkei community in San Diego and the United States Marine Corps took place on Wednesday, June 3, 1964. On that day Alice Kiyoko Kurashige, the daughter of Akira and Kiyome Kurashige, became one of the, "Few, The Proud, The Marines." Commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps she became the first American woman of Japanese ancestry in the history of the Corps, to become a Marine officer.

Alice's parents were born in Hawaii, and her grandparents were natives of Yamaguchi-ken which is located in the extreme Southwestern corner of Japan's main island, Honshu. She was born at San Diego's Mercy Hospital on January 22, 1941.

On April 8, 1942, under authority granted the Army by Executive Order 9066, the Kurashige's along with other San Diego Nikkei were expelled from San Diego, and confined at the Santa Anita Assembly Center in Arcadia, California. Four months later the family was moved again to Poston, Arizona, Camp I. While residing in Block 30-3-D, Alice's brother Shoichi Richard was born in 1943. She still remembers Poston as a place where she was frequently hungry, and the barracks as, "...Little more than shacks." At the conclusion of World War II the family re-settled in San Diego.

See "A First", page 7

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

by Ben Segawa, President

Many exciting events have been happening these past few weeks. Parker Area Historical Society asked if we would share our experiences of the internment. Historian Don Estes and eleven of us made the Pilgrimage. Our photo exhibit video slide presentation and panel discussion had the over-flow audience of over 200 spellbound. Many heard the story for the first time. With sharing these deep rooted emotions openly, I can feel the healing process taking place. One on one discussion creates a greater understanding and respect for one another. We came away with a warm feeling that we did make an impact of greater understanding.

Keep in mind the San Diego Museum of History Project that your Historical Society will be exhibiting on the Nikkei Experience in January, 1997 thru the summer.

A More Perfect Union: Japanese Americans and the U.S. Constitution" is scheduled for display at the San Diego Public Library July 10-August 21, 1997. Your Historical Society and the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) will be co-sponsoring this event. Your participation will be appreciated.

Welcome to Ms. Maki Okamoto, the future Mrs. Tom Darwin to our Board of Directors. Maki a graduate of Waseda University in Tokyo, also has a Masters Degree in History from San Diego State University. She brings new blood into the Society.

I ask for your continued support and participation with the coming events as they will show who we are and where we came from.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The JAHSSD Fourth Annual Business meeting is scheduled for Saturday, October 12, 1996, at 11:00 a.m. Colonel Christopher Keegan, U.S. Army, retired, former commanding officer of the 442nd, H Company has been confirmed as the guest speaker. Further program and location will be announced when these areas have been confirmed.

KISMET

by Fudo Takagi

Sometimes things happen that really make you wonder about the random nature of events that we tend to pass off as "coincidences." Take for example the story related below by Fudo Takagi..The "toy" Fudo refers to in his article is one that is familiar to most children. Composed of a twisted piece of metal, a propeller, and a wooden spool. The spool is pushed up by hand, and the propeller rotates up the twisted column, as it gains speed it then flies off into the sky. -editor

During the month of September, 1954, Robert Y. Takagi and his friend Raymond Fuller decided to take a trip to Poston, Arizona to see what was left of Camp III. Call it coincidence, but the only block of barracks still standing at Camp III was Block 329. All the others had been torn down. As Robert wandered about, looking at what had been his former abode (Building Six, Apartment B), much to his surprise, he came upon a toy, still hanging in its resting place where it had been forgotten and left when the Takagi family departed from Poston on August 4, 1944, ten years previously. In the same area, Robert also found a spatula that he had made for his mother prior to the war, when he was in junior high school.

Was it coincidence: these items were waiting to be rediscovered, or found by Robert, ten years later?

Unfortunately, during the ensuing years, the toy remained undetected amongst other items in the Takagi garage when, one day, in the process of looking for something else, it was again discovered, in this case by me. During this second period the toy had been left near some corrosive substances which had caused it to rust otherwise it would have been in a pristine condition-just like it was in 1943.

This rediscovery took place immediately following the publication of an article which had appeared in the March 20, 1996 issue of the *Rafu Shimpo*. The story reported the impending trip of the Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego to Parker, Arizona, to present a panel and photo exhibit on life in Poston. I immediately called Elaine Hibi Bowers and offered the toy to the JAHSSD.

After fifty-three years, call it "KISMET."

Fudo neglects to mention his gift to our Society came in a beautiful handmade display box.



Robert Y. Takagi is shown in 1954 photo by Ray Fuller inside 329-6-B with his "rediscovered toy."

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CAUGHT DOING SOMETHING NICE

The JAHSSD can really only be as successful as the assistance we receive from our members and friends. In this issue we would like to thank the following people for their ongoing support of our organization.

Mrs. Alice Yano, and the Oyama family.

Thank you for your donation of the **Oyama** family vegetable label dating from the 1940's recently discovered during an attic cleaning. We are adding the label to our growing collection. We also appreciate the loan for our museum exhibit of a hand forge and blacksmith tools used by **Mr. Kajiro Oyama** on his farm. Also loaned was the heaviest anvil any of us have ever touched.

Reverend Tom Fujita and Mr. Duane Siefers.

We appreciate the gift of a folding chair that "traveled" to Santa Anita, Poston III, and back to San Diego, that was also recently found while cleaning the Church attic. The Church is, by the way, selling off a number of their "experienced" wood folding chairs. Just in case you're in need.

Mrs. "Bubbles" Shimasaki and her brother, **Mr. "Fatty" Tsuida** ardent supporters of the JAHSSD. Our gratitude for the loan of a variety of fishing gear for our museum exhibit including, a helmet, tuna hooks, swivels, rain slicker, a portion of a tuna net, and net needles.

Mrs. Alice Kiyoko Williams, and her brother, **Mr. Richard Kurashige**. We would like to acknowledge the loan of photographs and other memorabilia supporting the story on **Alice's** Marine Corps career that appears in this issue, and which will also be used in our museum exhibit.

Mr. Robert Wada, Mr. Henry Wada, and Mr. Frank Wada. Thank you for agreeing to appear at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, and sharing your military experiences for National Asian-Pacific Week.

Mrs. Hatsune Mukai, Who has made donations in the past, has come through once again with her gift of a splendid copy of a panoramic photograph of a Nikkei community picnic taken in Chula Vista around 1935. We appreciate your continuing thoughtfulness.

Mr. Toki Yano. We would like to express our appreciation forr copies of **Mr. Yano's** lug labels,

which will also be happily added to our label collection.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy and Aiko Muraoka. We appreciate the loan of two photographs of **Mr. Saburo Muraoka**, pioneer South Bay farmer, for use in an upcoming book on the South Bay Nikkei.

Mrs. Patty Silvestri of the Parker Valley, Arizona Historical Society. We gratefully acknowledge the special gift of the child's toy, glass battleship, unearthed at Poston and donated to the JAHSSD on the occasion of our presentation to the PVHS.

The Parker Valley Historical Society. Thank you so very much for being such gracious hosts, tour guides, and friends during our recent visit to Parker and Poston.

Sea World of California. Our gratitude for their permission to use photos from their Japanese garden, and Ama divers, and the assistance of **Ms. Carolyn Pang** of their Public Relations office.

We also wish to recognize and thank the following organizations and individuals for their welcome financial support in assisting us to underwrite the five to six thousand dollars in expenses involved in the preparation of our 1997 exhibit on the history of the Nikkei in San Diego County.

California First Bank.....	\$1,000
Sumitomo Bank of California.....	\$ 500
San Diego JACL.....	\$ 300
Dr. and Mrs. Frank Kastelic.....	\$ 500
Dr. and Mrs. William Loomis.....	\$ 200
Mrs. and Mrs. Joe Owashi.....	\$ 100
Mr. Carl Neuman.....	\$ 50

Your tax deductible donation in any amount supporting our nine month exhibit would also be gratefully appreciated.



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To Parker and Back continued from page 1

Some of the barracks were made of redwood and when the government sold them for \$100 each after the Nikkeis left in December 1945, people bought them up real fast, Parker residents said.

Some of them still stand in their original form, although the tarpaper is somewhat worn and torn.

Mr. Silvestri took us to see several of the barracks still standing and in use today. Ben and Grace Segawa, Yuki and Mits Kawamoto, Don Estes, Toshiko Springer, Mas Honda, and I took the trip adjacent to the Lemon Tree Nursery on Eagle off of Riverside Drive.

One-quarter of the barracks at the site have been cutoff. Some of the tarpaper remain on the buildings. The double-roof is intact. The door from the section that was removed is in the back of the barracks. Behind that building, the floor of another barracks stands bare with the ends of tin cans that were used to cover the knot holes in the floor.

Next door to that barracks is another with the familiar double-roof. However, this building has been stuccoed over as were a number of the barracks purchased by Parker residents.

Mr. Silvestri said the nursery owner, who owned those barracks, told his heirs they could not sell those barracks until his wife died.

Society members said the turnout was bigger than any meeting they had in the past. Without a doubt, the reception we received was more than just cordial. It was a complete contrast from the one we received when we first arrived in Poston in August, 1942.

Residents said they remember the hotel where the familiar "No Japs Allowed" sign prominently displayed in old photos was posted. The hotel has since burned down, they said.

Whatever apprehension I had

when I arrived here for the panel discussion disappeared when we checked into the KoFA Inn in the 1700 block of California Avenue. We were welcomed with open arms. When we went to the Coffee Ern's, a restaurant near the motel, the reception was equally warm, despite the fact they were busy.

From the KoFA Inn, turn right on to California Avenue, go a couple of blocks and turn right on Mohave Road and go past the C.R.I.T. Museum about 12 miles and you will hit Poston.

On the left side of the road, there is Woody's II Convenience Market where you might run into Carla Poole, the owner. She might have some picture of Poston on the wall. A friendly lady, Carla attended a funeral but chose to attend the historical society discussion rather than the reception that followed the funeral.

A few feet from Woody's is the CRIT Fire Station and a few feet from the station is the Poston Memorial Monument, which CRT folks are looking after.

Opposite Woody's is a road that leads to Camp 1 where remnants of the old Poston I High School buildings still stand — barely. The old adobe walls of the auditorium appears to be eroding away with a gaping wound in the side.

Travel a few more miles on Mohave Road, and you run into the road that led to Camp 2. There stands a familiar looking, but now stuccoed, auditorium for the La Pera School.

The meeting drew people from Los Angeles, including Dr. Lane R. Hirabayashi of UCLA; Takashi Takemoto of Montebello, who videotaped the meeting; Parker Valley high school students; and folks from Havasu City, about 45 miles away.

Don gave an overview of what led to the mass evacuation and then Mas, Ben, Yuki, and I gave preliminary statements concerning our experiences in camp ranging from the camp government aspect, every day living, entertainment, schooling and problems we encountered.

The questions asked of us dealt mainly with expansion of our statements and our view of the relocation issue.

During our dinner hosted by the Parker Area Historical Society board members, we learned that
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after we left the camps, Hopi and Navajo tribes people from Flagstaff, Ariz., were moved to Poston 2 where some still live on the reservation alongside members of the Mohave and Chemehuevi tribes.

A highlight of our visit was a trip to the CRIT Museum where we viewed videotapes of former internees relating their camp experiences.

Don Estes' camp photo and camp memorabilia were well received as always and were the big hit of the program.

We would like to thank the Parker Area Historical Society and its members for their warm hospitality in receiving us as visitors to our former home.

It was a lot of fun to go back.

A First, continued from page 3

Educated in the San Diego City Schools, Alice attended Pacific Beach Junior High School where she joined the Civil Air Patrol, a civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force. Later, after graduating from Mission Bay High School, she entered San Diego State College and received a B.A. in home economics. "I saw the recruiter before I graduated."

From the time she entered junior high school, Alice says that she had always felt proud of being an American, and had a desire to be of some material service to her country. Her entrance into the Marine Corps, as she explained in a 1965 *Rafu Shimpō* article, was motivated in part by this desire to serve.

Her basic training took place at the Marine facility at Quantico, Virginia, and was, as she described it, "...very tough." However, with two uncles who had served in the Marine Corps she was surprised by the intensity of the training. Besides military subjects, officer training for women Marines in the early 1960's included what Alice now refers to as "women skills," like how to get in and out of a sports car. Her class started with fifty-one women and graduated twenty-one. Alice Kiyoko Kurashige received her commission as a Marine Officer on June 3, 1964.

The Marine Corps gave Alice a chance to travel. Her first assignment was as the Assistant t Exchange

Officer, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, California. After two years at MCRD, and now a First Lieutenant, the Sansei officer was assigned as Food Service Officer at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and charged with the supervision of the post's twenty-one mess halls. Promoted to Captain on September 8, 1967. At this time, Alice's additional duties were Educational Officer and Platoon leader of the Women Marine Company.

On January 10, 1968, Captain Kurashige reported aboard the Marine Corps Air Station at Iwakuni, Japan as the Food Services Officer, and designated officer in charge of the air station's Women Marine detachment. By one of those coincidences of life Iwakuni is located in Yamaguchi-ken, her grandparents native prefecture. After eighteen months duty at Iwakuni Alice was transferred to the Marine Corps Supply Depot at Barstow, California as the depot Manpower Management Officer, and once again, Commanding Officer of the Women Marine detachment. While a Marine she had met Master Gunnery Sergeant John Williams and they began dating. Because of Marine Corps regulations relative to officer and enlisted fraternization, they kept their relationship discrete, but on deciding to marry, Alice resigned her commission and left the Marine Corps on October 7, 1970.

Today, Alice and John Williams live in Old Town, Florida where she is a teacher of home economics. She is still proud of her service as a United States Marine. Her father Akira, and brother Richard reside in San Diego.

Which Side, continued from page 2

Frank and all Americans of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast were evacuated to internment camps.

When the request from Washington D.C. was issued asking for volunteers for the new Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Frank was one of the first to volunteer from the internment camp at Poston, Arizona.

I remember that week because my Japan born father and mother received a threat from within the camp that they better not let their son volunteer or

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Which Side, continued from page 7

harm would come to the family. But they didn't give it a second thought or try to stop Frank. They were very proud of their two sons fighting for their country.

When Frank came to Poston from Camp Shelby for our father's funeral, he was informed that the 442nd was shipping out as soon as he got back. The 442nd then went into combat with excess 25 man squads instead of the normal 12 in anticipation of heavier than normal casualties.

Frank now got his chance to answer his fellow student's question as to who he was going to fight for.

When Frank first hit the front lines of combat, he was a 2nd scout. By the end of the first week, he was the assistant squad leader. By the end of the 2nd week, he was acting squad leader. After about a month of combat, they reached their objective, the Arno River in Italy. By then, he was acting platoon sergeant.

At this point they didn't have enough men to fill two full squads. Since all replacements had to be Japanese American, the depleted ranks were being filled by the wounded who had healed sufficiently and asked to return to their company. His former assistant squad leader was wounded three (3) times.

His happier moments were when the first new replacements arrived; he helped the mess sergeant feed the men so he could see who the replacements were. Lo and behold, he sees his next door neighbor, George Kanatani, who later was awarded the Purple Heart, his buddy from Colton, Joe Sakato, who later received a Purple Heart and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, plus a friend from San Diego. He then learned his brother Ted, who later received two Purple Hearts, was over in "K" Company. Happy times for a short term.

On October 16, 1944, Frank was wounded on a hill overlooking the village of Bruyeres, France. The village was taken and liberated from the Germans on October 18th. When he returned to his company in January, he learned that in the one week after he was hit, his squad was down to one man.

In Washington, over the last years, the question has been raised over and over again, "Was the

442nd exploited because they were Japanese Americans?" In the famous rescue of the "Lost Battalion" of the 36th Texas Division, which was encircled and trapped by the Germans in the Vosges Mountains of France, the 442nd lost 800 men to rescue 200. Was this a "suicide" mission?

Recently a well known artist has been commissioned by the government to paint the 10 most historic battles in the history of the U.S. Military. The rescue of the "Lost Battalion" of the 36th Division by the 442nd has been selected as one of the ten.

There is one more very important aspect to the story of the 442nd. That is the question of who were the officers. Senator Daniel Inouye, earned a Distinguished Service Cross and lost his arm while a 1st Lt. with Frank in E Company. But a majority of the officer who were first assigned to the 442nd while training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, were officer referred to as "Haoles," a Hawaiian term for white or Caucasian.

These men fresh out of Officer Candidate School had a lot to write home about. They were not fighting the Japanese, they were training with Japanese Americans from Hawaii and from internment camps. Their main fear was what was going to happen to them in battle. Would these guys run away, chicken out, go to the German side or even perhaps shoot them in the back? It wasn't long before they found themselves leading some of the best and most loyal troops this nation could offer. "E" Company lost one such officer during basic training. The 2nd platoon had two leaders wounded and two other were killed in action.

As in any military unit, the leadership and the responsiveness of the men go hand in hand. Frank credits a lot of the accomplishments of the 442nd to its many Haole officers. One such officer is here today, Colonel Christopher Keegan, U.S. Army, Ret'd. Colonel Keegan was a captain with H Company and was wounded twice while serving with the 442nd.

The one moment that upset Frank the most was at the end of the war, when they were assigned the pleasant noncombatant duty of processing prisoners at the Ghedi Airfield in Northern Italy. At that time a younger replacement, who Frank

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FOOTNOTES...

by editor, Jeanne Marumoto Elyea

When Ben Segawa, our president, was contacted by The Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) requesting a speaker for their Asian Pacific Month presentation on May 16, there was not question, my Uncle Bob Wada was the best choice. Bob is a living example of "*once a Marine always a Marine.*" Without hesitation, Bob agreed to make his presentation, then I also asked my Uncles Frank and Hank to cover their experiences in camp and the military. I have taken editorial license and printed Bob Wada's entire presentation and Frank Wada's speech as given by Bob Wada.

This issue is also my final edition as enrollment in a UCSD post-graduate program and personal commitments do not leave enough time to adequately devote the necessary time and effort to produce a quality publication. I will continue in the capacity of Board Member and assist in any other way possible.

Please continue to support the new editor and staff, by contributing any and all stories, comments, and antidotes. Dedications of the newsletters can be made as living tributes to friends and loved ones as well as in memorium.

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LIST OF KOREAN WAR DED AND MISSING RELEASED BY VETS...

(see page 10)

The Japanese American Korean War Veterans Memorial Committee has released the tentative compiled names of the 218 Japanese Americans who died or are listed as missing in the Korean War. Name verification Chairman Roy Shiraga is urging public to review the list for any omissions or spelling errors. The proposed 18' granite memorial wall will be engraved with the 218 names of the deceased from throughout the United States. Shiraga stated, "Accuracy is essential in this project and we need the public's help in making sure the list is accurate and the spelling of the names are correct."

Anyone with information regarding the next of kin is urged to call Shiraga at (818) 968-6385 or fax (714) 525-9761.

The Memorial Committee also advised that due to the inability to accurately verify all those of Japanese ancestry, only those with Japanese surnames are to be presented on the monument. These names will be representative of all the men and women of Japanese ancestry who died or are listed as missing during the war in Korea.

President Robert Wada assured donors and the public that all funds solicited and received for the memorial will be used to design, construct and pay for the permanent perpetual maintenance of the 18' memorial wall. Dedication deadline is May 25, 1997.

Anyone interested in supporting the Memorial Committee in various parts of the country are asked to call Coordinating Co-Chairperson George Tabata at (310) 323-3398 or fax (714) 525-9761 or for additional information please call President Robert Wada (714) 992-5461.

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**IN MEMORY OF THE AMERICANS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY
WHO DIED OR ARE LISTED AS MISSING DURING THE KOREAN WAR**

Azumi Akazawa	Hawaii	Robert Imabukuro	Hawaii	Shigetoshi Kusuda	Alameda, CA	Raymond J. Namba	Hawaii	Nobuyuki Takeshita	Hawaii
Clarence H. Aki	Hawaii	Mark Inokuchi	Cook, IL	Kiyomitsu Kutsunai	Hawaii	Richard K. Nishida	Hawaii	Kaneme R. Tamashiro	Hawaii
Yutaka Amano	San Diego, CA	Edward M. Ishibashi	Hawaii	Shoso Kuwahara	Los Angeles, CA	Warren Nishihara	Los Angeles, CA	Charles Y. Tamura	Hawaii
Tatsuo Arai	Hawaii	Hidemaru Ishida	San Francisco, CA	Lawrence Machida	Hawaii	Charles Nishimura	Hawaii	Osamu Tamura	Los Angeles, CA
Reichi Arakaki	Hawaii	Mitsuyoshi Ishida	Hawaii	Hanford K. Maeda	Hawaii	Fredrick Nitta	Hawaii	George H. Tanonaka	Hawaii
Wilfred H. Arakawa	Hawaii	Wallace K. Ishikawa	Hawaii	Haruo Maeda	Hawaii	Milton T. Nomura	Hawaii	Kiyoshi Tanouye	Hawaii
Hiroschi Asada	Hawaii	Kiyoshi Ishimizu	San Francisco, CA	Ralph S. Masatsugu	Hawaii	Tadashi Obana	San Francisco, CA	Yukiwo Tanouye	Los Angeles, CA
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Samuel A. Fujii	Los Angeles, CA	Yukinobu Ito	Hawaii	Jun Matsushige	Hawaii	Arthur I. Okamura	Hawaii	Jack S. Tsuboi	Alameda, CA
Junichi Fujimoto	Hawaii	Yeikichi Itokazu	Hawaii	Jimmie Mayemura	Los Angeles, CA	Togo Okamura	Hawaii	Sueo Tsunoda	Hawaii
Hitoshi Fujita	Hawaii	Konomu Iura	Hawaii	George Y. Minakata	Cumberland, NJ	Hiroschi Oku	Hawaii	Noboru Uehara	Hawaii
Takeshi Fujita	Hawaii	Osamu Iwami	Hawaii	Alan T. Miyahira	Hawaii	Milton Onamura	Honolulu, HI	Seiho Uejo	Hawaii
Haruo Fukumizu	Hawaii	Shogo Iwatsuru	Sacramento, CA	Samuel S. Miyahira	Hawaii	Paul H. Oshiro	Hawaii	Mitsuo Uemura	Hawaii
Ralph T. Fukumoto	Hawaii	Isamu Izu	Hawaii	Donald S. Miyajima	Hawaii	Mitsuyuki Ota	Hawaii	Yukio Ujimori	Hawaii
Yoshimi Fukumoto	Hawaii	Herman Kamai	Hawaii	Robert K. Miyamoto	Cook, IL	Thomas N. Otaguro	Hawaii	Thomas Y. Unakoshi	Hawaii
Isaac Furukawa	King, WA	Benjamin S. Kamoku	Hawaii	Ichiro R. Miyasaki	Madison, ID	Bill M. Otomo	Los Angeles, CA	Archie M. Uno	Hawaii
Mitsuru Goto	Denver, CO	Hayato Kanashiro	Hawaii	Wilbert Y. Miyasato	Hawaii	Masaya Saito	Hawaii	Akira Uota	Fresno, CA
Raymond Goto	Hawaii	Fred T. Kanekura	Hawaii	Daniel Miyashiro	Hawaii	Tsugio Saito	Hawaii	Takaya Urugami	Los Angeles, CA
Tatoshi Goto	Hawaii	David T. Kaneshiro	Hawaii	Tamotsu Miyashiro	Hawaii	Allen T. Sakamoto	Hawaii	Robert T. Uyeda	Hawaii
Masao Goya	Hawaii	Harry Y. Kaneshiro	Hawaii	Tomoyoshi Miyashiro	Hawaii	James N. Sakamoto	Hawaii	Alfred S. Uyehara	Hawaii
Gilbert Gushiken	Hawaii	Jack S. Kaneshiro	Hawaii	Harry Y. Miyata	Hawaii	Minoru Sasaki	Alameda, CA	Takeo Uyehara	Hawaii
Yoshinobu Gusukuma	Hawaii	Masayoshi Kawahara	Hawaii	Shigeo Miyazaki	Hawaii	Takeshi Sasaki	Hawaii	Andrew R. Watada	Colorado
Yoshio Hagiwara	Hawaii	Suyeo Kawahara	Hawaii	Tsunematsu Mizusawa	Hawaii	Hiroshi Shibao	Los Angeles, CA	Richard M. Watanabe	Hawaii
Mitsuo Hamada	Hawaii	Masami Kawamura	Hawaii	Akeji Morinaga	Hawaii	Nubumi Shibao	Hawaii	Nobuji Yamagata	Hawaii
Patrick K. Hamada	Hawaii	William Kawashima	Hawaii	Tetsue Moriuchi	Los Angeles, CA	John S. Shima	Hawaii	Tsugio Yamaguchi	Hawaii
Kenichi Hamaguchi	Los Angeles, CA	Minoru Kaya	Hawaii	Kiochi Moriwaki	Hawaii	Lawrence Y. Shima	Puerto Rico	Yeiji Yamaguchi	Hawaii
Godney Hamaguchi	Hawaii	Masayuki Kihara	Hawaii	Fumio Moriyama	Hawaii	Shingo Shimabukuro	Hawaii	Taketo Yamane	Hawaii
Richard Hayakawa	Hawaii	Hisao Kimoto	Hawaii	Haruo Miriyasu	Hawaii	Calvin Shimata	San Francisco, CA	Harold S. Yamasaki	Hawaii
Adayasu Higa	Hawaii	Seiki Kimura	Hawaii	Shizuo Motoyama	San Joaquin, CA	Kenneth Shimogawa	Hawaii	Joichi Yamashita	Los Angeles, CA
Yutaka Higa	Hawaii	Clifford H. Kinaga	Hawaii	Tadao Murakami	Hawaii	Toshio Shimonoya	Hawaii	Gary K. Yasunaka	San Mateo, CA
Walter W. Higashida	Hawaii	Richard Kinoshita	Hawaii	Tsukasa Muraoka	Hawaii	Nobuo Shishido	Hawaii	Tatsumi Yokoji	Hawaii
Yanari Hiraga	Los Angeles, CA	Hiroshi Kiriu	Hawaii	Yukio Murata	Hawaii	Takashi Shishido	Hawaii	Thomas H. Yokomichi	Hawaii
Edward K. Hirakawa	Hawaii	Tetsuo Kiyohiro	Los Angeles, CA	Ernest A. Nagai	Virgin Islands	Herbert H. Suzuki	Hawaii	Katashi Yokotake	Hawaii
Yin Hiraoka	Hawaii	Robert Kobashigawa	Hawaii	Hideo Nakama	Hawaii	Horace S. Tabusa	Hawaii	Kanji Yoshida	Hawaii
Louis M. Hirata	Los Angeles, CA	Takashi Kochi	Hawaii	Seiso Nakama	Hawaii	Theodore Takafuji	Hawaii	Elmer J. Yoshihara	Pierce, WA
Yaro Hirokane	Hawaii	Satoru Kojiri	San Francisco, CA	Noboru Nakamura	Hawaii	Sam O. Takahara	New York, NY	Toshihara Yoshikawa	Hawaii
Clark A. Hiwatashi	Hawaii	Ken K. Kondo	Sacramento, CA	Wataru Nakamura	Cook, IL	George Takahashi	Kings, CA	Tatsuo Yoshino	Hawaii
Yigeo Hiyan	Hawaii	Muneo Koshimizu	Hawaii	Satoshi Nakasato	Hawaii	Richard Takahashi	Hawaii	Don Yumori	Los Angeles, CA
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Yoram L. Ike	Hawaii	George M. Kumakura	Hawaii	Roy T. Nakashima	Hawaii	Herbert Takamatsu	Los Angeles, CA		
Yumiya Ikeda	Sacramento, CA	Masaru Kumashiro	Hawaii	Shinichi Nakata	Hawaii	Mitsugi Takamoto	Sacramento, CA		
Yoshio Ikeda	Hawaii	Susumu Kurosawa	Hawaii	Seinojo R. Nakatani	Hawaii	Harry F. Takebuchi	Hawaii		

Due to the inability to accurately verify all those of Japanese ancestry, only those with Japanese surnames are presented on this monument and represent all of the men and women who died or are listed as missing during the war in Korea.

Special Notes: This list of names may contain errors or omissions. Please contact: Roy Shiraga, 2738 Jurado Ave., Hacienda Heights, CA 91745, telephone (818) 968-6385 or fax (714) 525-9761.

The constructed monument will not list the cities or states; only the first, middle initial and last names will be engraved. Locations shown above, other than Hawaii, are county names only.

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recognized as being from his wife's Block 327 in Poston, Arizona came up to Frank and said, "Gee Frank, if I knew it was going to be this much fun, I would have volunteered." After what Frank had seen and gone through it upset him so much he just walked away from the young inexperienced replacement.

After volunteering for the 442nd, Frank said that he and his friend from San Diego, Abe Takehara, would argue every night with others about the merits of their volunteering. They were even made to think it may make the situation worse for their families in the camps.

To Frank, my brother Ted, to Abe and the thousands of Japanese Americans who gave all they could to help prove the loyalty of the Japanese Americans, my answer, without question is that you all made the right decision and the records set by the 442nd was that made America take notice of the hearts of the Japanese Americans.

The blood they spilled and the lives that were lost are merely listed in the records at Washington, D.C., simply as Americans who were wounded or died in the service of their country. Personally, I think there is a lot more to the story than just statistics.

Yes, I think Frank and all these men of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team answered that classmates question, "Which side are you going to fight for?"

Hank Wada's presentation was basically featured in Footprints, fall issue 1994. If you would like a copy of the article, contact the newsletter editor.

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But shortly after the Nikkei families left Poston, Ron Moore's family and other families from the Hopi and Navajo tribes were moved here from the Flagstaff, Ariz., area.

Gakkari! Like those of us who got their first look at Santa Anita's horse stables and our first look at the duty tar-papered barracks of Poston, you might say it was the Moore family's first impression of their "new home."

Ron Moore, a jovial man probably in his forties, said they lived in what used to be Camp 2 of Poston's three camps.

It was not easy for Ron and other Hopi and Navajo tribes people being moved to Poston. They would be joining people from the Mohave and Chemeheuvi tribes who had lived on the 278,000-acre reservation since 1865 creating a class of cultures, language, and traditions.

Ron and Geneva Moore, their daughter, Tracy, and her high school friends, Linell and Leon (whose last names slipped my feeble mind) were among the estimated 200 people who came to the Parker Area Historical Society meeting April 21, 1996, to hear a group of us from San Diego discuss our experiences in Poston during WWII.

If you happen to visit the Poston Memorial Monument just south of the Tribal Frie Station and read the dedication plaque, you will see Ron Moore's name as a representative of the Colorado River Indian Tribal Council.

Ron recalled that it took a little effort to obtain Tribal Council approval to build the monument because there was some opposition among council members.

I sat with the Moores at the dinner the Society had for their visitors from San Diego. Ron talked of hiking to the river as others had done before him.

He wondered what the little shacks they found on the river front were for and I explained that some men used to go there and spend days at a time there fishing and camping.

He also wondered why some of the barracks had holes in the floors, and I explained that some people had dug out cellars under the barracks because it was cooler there than sitting in the barracks during the hot summer evenings.

I related how some of our more imaginative bachelors used to collect leftover grapes and bread from the mess hall and press their own...up...homemade "grape juice."

(They enjoyed that story.)

It's too bad we didn't get to spend more time with the Moores. I think it would have been a mutually beneficial moment for all of us. Perhaps some day we'll go back and run into them and gather more tidbits of their experience in Poston.

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But as a Japanese American, my brother, Henry, and I certainly earned our right to wear the uniform of a Marine.

To earn it, we had to overcome the problem of looking like the enemy and facing what I consider the mistaken identity syndrome.

For you to better understand what looking like the enemy can mean, let me take you back a few years, quite a few in fact.

Let's go back to my childhood. We didn't have an enemy during the first 10 years of my life, so how was I supposed to look like the enemy? One thing for sure, we all had no choice as to what we look like or to choose our ethnic background.

As a youngster, I learned that the hard way. I can vividly remember going to the public swimming pool in my hometown of Redlands, here in California, with the grammar school friend Bob Madrid. There we would look through the chain link fence at all the white kids, and some were our friends, running, jumping, splashing and having a great time. But Bob, being of Mexican descent, and myself had to wait until each Monday to go swimming, which was the day they drained the pool. I guess our color or something came off and polluted the water.

At age 11, when World War II started with the attack on Pearl Harbor, I suddenly found I was no longer considered an American attending a grammar school with 80% Mexican Americans, 19.99% white and 0.01% being myself as just one Asian.

My first experience as an 11 year old looking like the enemy was on a Sunday School picnic with my Sunday School class. We were at a picnic on the eastern part of Redlands. Our class went to the nearest house to get a drink of water. Once inside the house, an older man living there saw me. He then walked into the kitchen, started to open a drawer and yelled, "You little Jap, I'm going to cut your head off." Needless to say, I ran out of there and ran a full 10 miles to my home. This was my first encounter of looking like the enemy and being personally exposed to the derogatory term "Jap."

But don't get the impression that during my younger days, it was always someone threatening to cut my head off. Redlands had its good side.

There were a few professors' wives from the University of Redlands and the Baptist Church who for many years before World War II formed a youth group mainly of minority and other neighborhood kids. Immediately after World War II, the YMCA was my haven for minorities.

In high school from 1945 to 1948, I had little trouble and was well accepted by most students. One of my best friends, a classmate and a YMCA buddy, is here today...Retired Navy Captain Bob Lage. He was one person who gave me a lot of confidence in myself during some very scary days after World War II.

As a youngster, I looked like the enemy and was even considered a potentially dangerous saboteur. So much so that the U.S. Government decided they wanted to be safe from within so the government rounded up all persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast, regardless if they were U.S. citizens and placed them in internment camps. The radicals refer to them as concentration camps but I personally prefer to just call them internment camps.

We lost our home, furnishings and everything else we owned except what you could carry or place in trunks, suitcases or boxes tied with rope. Even with an older brother serving in the U.S. Army, we were still evacuated from our home and were bussed to the camps known as Poston, Airzona. There we lived in 20' x 100' long barracks, each divided into four 20' x 25' rooms and housing one family per room. The rooms were divided by hanging sheets or other material for privacy but were no help in the sounds within the room. For winter, we had a coal oil small heater and during the summer we had homemade air coolers utilizing dripping water on straw with a fan drawing outdoor heat through the wet straw like an air filter. To keep us from being lonely, occasionally a scorpion or a rattlesnake would visit to excite us.

I spent my entire three years of junior high school in the camp. We formed a Boy Scout Troop and obtained an official Troop No. 100 after the 100th Battalion of the all Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team fighting in Europe. The 442nd was the most decorated unit
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for its size in the World War II. Even though I had two older brothers in Europe with the 442nd and fighting for the United States, we were still kept in the internment camp.

During WWII, American families that had a relative in the service displayed a small hanging flag with a blue star on it for each person serving our country. When the relative was killed, the blue star was exchanged for a gold star.

Can you picture in your mind or understand what it was like for thousands of Japanese Americans living in internment camps who were just as proud of their men and women who were serving their country by displaying the same flag in the window of their wooden barrack? And sporadically, a gold star would appear.

We had a flag with two stars at that time and by the time the Korean War started, our window would have had five stars and a total of five Purple Hearts. Two of my brothers were wounded twice. Since there were very few Japanese Americans serving in the Marines in the '50's, in all probability my brother Henry and I were the only Japanese American brothers serving at the same time in Korea with the Marines.

One day during World War II, for the war effort, our Boy Scout troop in Poston went all over the camp and collected scrap paper and loaded two large semitrailers provided by the government with the paper. We then went into the nearby town of Parker and transferred all the paper to a train box car. After finishing, tired, hungry and thirsty, we went to the nearest restaurant. We sat down and waited and waited and waited. Finally we stopped the waitress and asked if we could order a hamburger and a drink. She responded, "I can't serve you so will you please leave?"

My reaction with the other scouts was to start throwing things around. We picked up the salt shakers and a chair, but our older scout leaders' cooler heads prevailed and they had us leave peacefully. Since we apparently looked like the enemy to the restaurant people, I can only presume the Japanese army must have worn Boy Scout uniforms during World War II.

At the end of World War II, Kazuo Masuda, an Orange County resident, who gave his life and had

earned the Distinguished Service Cross while serving with the Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team, was brought home to Orange County for burial. But again there must have been a case of mistaken identity-someone at the cemetery in Westminster, California, must have thought he died while serving with the Japanese army because he was refused a desirable burial plot because of his ancestry. It took General Joseph Stillwell, a young army captain named Ronald Reagan and the public outcry to correct the situation and obtain a decent burial place instead of at the edge of the undeveloped part of the cemetery for an American hero also mislabeled by a mistaken identity.

For me as a Japanese American, life in boot camp initially created a deep fear that never materialized. My drill instructor, Sgt. McGovern, had a chest full of ribbons from the South Pacific. I was scared to death that I was going to get my head cut off and a treatment in hell from a hardcore Marine who probably hated anything Japanese. But during training I received equal treatment and a graduating comment from Sgt. McGovern that I shall never forget. He told me, "Wada, you'll be a good Marine. I'll be glad to serve with you anytime!"

While in the Marine Corps, circumstances way beyond my control seemed to direct my life and set my destiny. War, death or survival is and always will be a matter of being in the right place at the right time or the wrong place at the wrong time. Are we here by fate, mere coincidence or by the hand of God? We certainly have no control over that. I feel our life is in the hands of God or the powers that may be. My reason on which I base this starts in 1948 while a senior in high school. I joined the Marine Corps Reserves and in the summer of 1948 I went for a two week training at Camp Pendleton. This was the extent of my training.

In May 1950, just one month before the Korean War started, my two year enlistment expired and I was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps Reserves. As Marines, you all know, had I not been discharged, it's a guarantee that I would have been immediately placed on active duty and with or

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without boot camp, I probably would have found myself in Korea in a few short months and during the worst part of the war.

When the Korean War started a month later, I immediately decided to join the Marines but for personal reasons, a person close to me at the time asked me to wait until I receive my draft notice before joining. I hesitatingly agreed, but after waiting a few months, the greetings from Uncle Sam came. I promptly called my lifelong Mexican American friend, Bob Madrid, from Redlands to tell him I was joining the Marines. The next day he met with me in Los Angeles and we enlisted together.

We came here to San Diego, trained together in the same platoon, and in the meantime, the delay in joining had kept us out of the Inchon landing and the bitter winter fighting at the Chosin Reservoir.

After graduation from Boot Camp while we were home on boot leave, the person who asked me to wait suddenly became ill and died from an unexpected acute blood poisoning. I was granted a two week extension and my lifelong friend Madrid returned to Camp Pendleton for advanced infantry training. Two weeks later I returned to Camp Pendleton and was assigned to tank school. I became totally separated from Madrid. I tried very hard to get out of tank school and transfer to his unit, but my request was denied.

I would like to add a humorous incident. When I was assigned to Tank School, three officers interviewed each new Marine and gave us a choice of land or amphibious tanks. I strongly asked to be transferred to Madrid's infantry unit. They denied it.

After telling them over and over again that I didn't want tanks, they asked, "Why don't you want tanks? It's the best outfit in the Corps." I responded, "Sir, every movie I've seen shows a guy burning and jumping out of a burning tank. I don't want to die that way." They chuckled, then answered, "Wada, you'll find out this isn't the John Wayne Marine Corps. You have to hurry and choose a land or amphibious tank. We have a lot of guys to go through!"

I finally said, "Well, sir, if that's my only choice, I'll take the land tanks because I don't want to die drowning either." Boy, they must have been

thinking, "Wow, what happened to this guy? I thought these guys were supposed to be brave soldiers."

It was the death of the person who asked me to wait that separated Madrid and myself. I feel it was something God had planned for me. That person's life was abruptly taken to spare mine. God's other plans took Madrid's life just a few hours after I saw him. For an unknown reason, God blessed me with the opportunity to briefly visit with Madrid just hours before his unit went on to capture Hill 749 in Central Korea. I was his very last link to home just before he died. It apparently was not meant for me to be with Madrid and his unit when God took him along with so many other Marines at the same time. Today I live with the memory and inspiration of my friend Bob Madrid. I shall never forget him.

I tell you this because sometimes we all face situations in life that in an instant means the difference between life and death. What happens and how it happens seems to come from someone or something way beyond our control. How many times have you just missed by moments or inches of a possible disaster or even death? Or did I return home with the help and prayers of a group of ladies in Japan? Just before we arrived in Korea, the ship docked in Yokosuka for the evening while they unloaded our seabags and loaded equipment and supplies. We received a liberty pass that evening and as my friend, Ray Spradling, from Texas and I were returning to the ship at midnight, I saw this little girl about 8 to 10 years old holding a bunch of artificial flowers and a fistfull of money. I approached her and gave her all my money. I took all of her flowers and told her to go home. I told her not to come back because it was too dangerous for her to be there so late and with all that money. She said "arigato" and ran off down the street.

The next morning, the ship was still docked and the loading continued. We were again given a short liberty the next evening. Ray and I again went in to Yokosuka and when returning about midnight again, lo and behold there was this same little girl. I scolded her and told her, "I thought I told you not to come here anymore." As I started

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to buy all her flowers again, she said, "Chotto-matte," meaning wait just a moment.

She ran down the street to a small group of ladies. There were six or seven of them and the little girl brought them to me, tugging one of the ladies by the hand. The lady she had by the hand was the girl's mother and said she and neighbors all came and waited all evening to see and meet the American Marine who had a Japanese face and spoke their language.

She thanked me for my concern for her daughter and that she and her neighbors would constantly pray for me. To this day, the thought of that evening brings tears to my eyes for I now feel perhaps their prayers also helped me return home safely.

Not in the bragging sense, but I can't begin to tell you all the tremendous things I have accomplished in the community of Japanese Americans in Orange County. A community of people that previously look and were treated like the enemy. I feel God spared me to return home to start a youth basketball program that has grown to over 1100 Japanese American boys and girls in Orange County. He spared me to start a large extremely active Japanese American Optimist Club in Buena Park and he spared me to start the Japanese American Korean War Veterans organization which is in the process of raising funds to build a memorial monument honoring over 227 Japanese Americans who died in the Korean War. My involvement in other projects and organizations is well known in Orange County. Almost every Japanese American in the area either knows me or has heard of me. Again, I'm not bragging; I'm just trying to relay to you what God did for our community.

You're probably getting bored and asking what's all that got to do with looking like the enemy. Really, nothing other than I wanted to share with you as to how and why I feel I was able to return and become totally involved in the Japanese American community and why and how I was spared by God. Perhaps if I had not been discharged one month before the war started, had I not waited to join the Marines, if death in the family did not occur, then I feel I would have been

together with Madrid on Hill 749 or had we joined earlier we both would have participated in the landing at Inchon or the terrible winter at the Chosin Reservoir. If that were the case, I probably would not be talking to you here today.

But let's go back to looking like the enemy. You may ask, so what? Looking like the enemy doesn't make you the enemy does it? My answer to that is you, you're right, it doesn't make you the enemy but it sure creates a lot of problems with mistaken identity. Let me give you a few real life examples. Let's start with the more humorous ones.

As I mentioned earlier, while the ship was docked in Japan and we were on liberty, my friend from Texas and I went to a store to buy souvenirs to send home. The owner asked me how I felt about going to war. It told her I wasn't afraid only I didn't know what to expect and was more scared that someone would shoot me by mistake. She said, "Oh, don't worry, tell all your friends that the back of the heads of Koreans are flat and Japanese are rounded." She then demonstrated the difference. I thought, oh boy, that's a good idea... But later as I was returning to the ship, I began to wonder about that. I thought, gee, if I have on my helmet, how are other marines going to see the back of my head before they shoot me?

While in Korea, I went to a rear area shower with my buddy from Texas. After we stripped and went in to the showers, my friend came up to me and laughingly said, "Hey, you can't take a shower in here!" I looked at him and said, "Why, what do you mean?" Then he started laughing and said, "That fresh looie at the door said tell that gook he can't take a shower in here." My friend laughing said, "I told that looie he's no gook, sir, he's a Marine."

On a more serious note, another mistaken identity story takes place in Vietnam. In the middle of the night, a young Japanese American army captain named Vince Okamoto is checking his men's positions for an expected VC attack. An additional new unit was brought in to support the captain's position. In the light of the flares, one of the new support unit's men saw the captain with the face looking like the enemy and, again though

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a mistaken identity, yellow out "VC" and they were about to fire at the captain... But suddenly a barrage of cuss words came flying back at them, including words they never heard before. They immediately knew that no VC could know such words let alone pronounce them.

In Korea at the historic Chosin Reservoir, a Japanese American Army Military Intelligence interpreter Roy Shiraga was attached to the Marines during the massive attack by the Chinese. Roy was lying on the side of the road in the snow, badly wounded and asking passing G.I.'s and Marines for help. He was bypassed and ignored by the U.S. troops, apparently thinking he was a Chinese or North Korean soldier. A case of mistaken identity. Eventually another Japanese American came by and recognized him as a personal friend and immediately stopped a passing jeep and had Shiraga evacuated. Later that day, the good Samaritan friend was himself killed. Perhaps he wasn't as lucky as Shiraga to have a friend help identify him and get evacuated.

On the more positive side of looking the enemy, Jerry Kobayashi was in his bunker in Vietnam. They were attacked by a very large number of Vietcong. He came running out of his bunker dressing only in his flak jacket. His weapon misfired so he fixed on his bayonet. About that time, a VC came running by him and, the way Kobayashi was shabbily and half dress, mistook him for another VC. After clearing his M-16 and before he got a second look, Jerry was able to shoot the VC.

My last mistaken identity story is about a young army soldier from La Mirada, California named Bruce Nakashima who had his face and jaw badly shattered and his jaw was bandaged and taped closed. Half naked, he was lying in a helicopter along side some wounded VC, who were being evacuated for interrogation. As the helicopter was taking off, it was too heavy and taking ground fire, so the pilot's order was to jettison the prisoners. Well, as you probably have guessed, another mistaken identity. Just about the time Bruce was about to go skydiving without a parachute, a fellow wounded black soldier who knew Bruce yelled out, "Hold it, he's a G.I.", thus saving Bruce from being ejected as a VC.

Then while being treated in the hospital and while Bruce was conscious and unable to talk, the nurse standing over him commented to the doctor. "These guys are killing our boys, we should let him die." Bruce was almost courtmartialed for refusing to return to his unit. His feelings and attitude was, "Hell, I'm not going back; I'm in a no win situation. Both sides are trying to kill me!" That's looking like the enemy at its worst.

Over the years, I have come across many former Marines and I have to tell you that I have never received any negative feelings or prejudicial attitudes from any person who was a Marine. It's always been an instant friendship. There is a very familiar phrase, "Hey, I was a marine too." That sure makes one's ears perk up. My decision to join the Marines was a choice I shall never regret.

Well, that's my story for your Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Program. It brought you some experiences that most of you will never have to face in your life. But perhaps someday you will or may be in a position to help avoid making that mistaken identity. Just don't be too quick and make a snap judgment in dealing with others who may look like the enemy or who are different looking. That person or Marine could someday be the one person who may save your life.

All I can tell you as my closing statement to you as a fellow Marine and in your future civilian life, you can't judge a book by its cover so don't try to judge your fellow Marines or other people by their cover.

Inside, we are equally all humans with a heart, feelings, and emotions.

Thank you.

Editor's note: I remember "Bat" Bob Madrid as tall and handsome. It is ironic that on the very day Uncle Bob spoke at MCRD, CBS national news featured the Madrid family in their coverage of Mexican Americans and undocumented aliens. Bat's brother Rudy and family have shops in Olivera Street in Los Angeles, having lived for several generations in Redlands, CA.

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SPECIAL DEDICATION

Sir William Cockerell wrote:

IF WITH PLEASURE YOU ARE VIEWING
ANY WORK A MAN IS DOING
IF YOU LIKE HIM OR YOU LOVE HIM
TELL HIM NOW
IF YOUR THINK SOME PRAISE IS DUE HIM
NOW'S THE TIME TO SLIP IT TO HIM
FOR HE CANNOT READ HIS TOMBSTONE
WHEN HE'S DEAD



*Ted Wada, Frank Wada, Bob Wada
Hank Wada, Bessie Doiguchi, Mary Marumoto*

In keeping with this concept, the entire cost of printing and mailing this edition is paid for by the editor as my personal living tribute to Ted, Frank, Hank, and Bob Wada, Bessie Wada Doiguchi, and Mary Wada Marumoto for their nuturing and support of our family and our community.

Jeanne Marumoto Elyea, editor

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