

From the Director: Tom Ikeda

For us in the nonprofit sector, the effects of the economic downturn show up daily. We see our donations dropping, our services in more need, and more and more, people we work with looking for a job. Although Densho doesn't have the resources to hire more employees, we try to help by providing meaningful volunteer positions that put volunteers in contact with other professionals.

This month's "From the Archive" article is written by a volunteer, John Iwasaki. John has been a journalist for 28 years in Washington and Oregon, the last 21 years at the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. He has reported on everything from education to religion to immigration. With the *P-I* scheduled to cease publication in mid-March, he is searching for a new career in the communications field and welcomes job leads and referrals. He can be reached at johniwasaki@gmail.com.

I know and appreciate John's work as a longtime reader of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. He has written articles with depth, nuance, and sensitivity about Japanese American history. Please contact him if you have ways of helping him.

We look forward to brighter economic times to come.



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From the Archive

Integration of East and West: Faith among Japanese Americans

"If somebody asked me what religion I am, I would like to tell 'em, 'All of 'em.'"
-- George Morihoro

For many Japanese Americans in the first half of the 20th century, the Buddhist and Christian church served as much more than a spiritual home. They were gathering places, cultural centers and safe spots for "socializing and feeling comfortable with your own," said the Rev. Paul Nagano, a former pastor of Seattle's Japanese Baptist Church interviewed by Densho.

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Densho News

Densho Office Remodeling

Densho headquarters, in an annex of the Seattle Buddhist Temple, are receiving a much needed face lift thanks to generous donors and contractors. Densho board member Brenda Handley, proprietor of Gobo Enterprises, and her husband Chuck Handley are covering the cost of the painters' and contractor's many hours. They've also donated materials, including an antique Japanese ranma, or decorative transom. Densho is also grateful to Michael Fujii for giving us beautiful new doors, and to Jose Flores for donating paint.



If you would like to contribute to Densho's remodeling, here is a wish list:

- * Paint and painting supplies
- * Table and two chairs for reception waiting area
- * Tile and tile supplies for the floors of a small bathroom and entry areas
- * Commercial carpet, vinyl tiles, or linoleum flooring for the main public room
- * Fluorescent light fixtures for the main room

Contact Densho: info@densho.org or 206-320-0095

Densho Monthly Poll: Japanese American Entertainers

Several eNews readers have suggested polling people's favorite Nikkei entertainers. Now is your chance to vote for Captain Sulu or the Karate Kid's *sensei*. Will the winner be George Takei or Pat Morita? We invite you to tell us about a new generation of actors, singers, and performers. We're noticing an increasing number of hapa rock musicians, for instance. Linkin Park's Mike Shinoda, under the name Fort Minor, recorded the song "Kenji" about his grandparents' years in the World War II camps.

Last month, we asked readers to tell us their perceptions of Densho in a "branding" survey. Poll takers ranked Densho's three most important activities as 1) collecting oral histories, 2) educating the public about history and civil liberties, and 3) preserving other historical resources. The overwhelmingly chosen definition of Densho is "Japanese American legacy," with "living history" being second, and "educational resource" third. Suggestions for areas of improvement for Densho were outreach to educators on a national scale. We concur with this need and are seeking funding to do just that.

>> [Take the Densho poll](#)



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New to the Archive

Look Inside the Archive: A New Mexico Story

Among the new additions to the Densho Digital Archive is a video interview with Roy Ebihara, whose World War II incarceration was unlike that of many other Japanese Americans. Growing up in the railroad town of Clovis, New Mexico, Roy and the handful of other Nikkei families endured segregation and discrimination from the townspeople before the war. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Ebihara lived "in mortal fear" of possible violence. He recalls the night in January 1942 when the state patrol rushed the Nikkei out of town as an angry mob descended on them. For nearly a year, the Justice Department held the families under guard at Old Raton Ranch Camp, a bleak former CCC camp that provided no school for the children or work for the adults. Ebihara and his family were then transferred to the Topaz incarceration camp in Utah.

>> [See the featured sample from the Densho Digital Archive](#)
>> [Register for the free Densho Digital Archive](#)



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National News and Events

"Living History, Writing History"

The University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, will present a Day of Remembrance event to commemorate thirty UPS students who were removed from campus and sent to



"assembly centers" in May 1942. Cherry trees on campus are dedicated to the students whose education was interrupted. A panel will focus on their stories and on writing about the incarceration experience. The event will take place on March 10, 5:00 pm, in the Rasmussen Rotunda on the UPS campus. Panelists will be Hiroshi Kashiwagi, author of the memoir *Swimming in the American* and *Shoe Box Plays*; David Patneau P '09, author of the young adult book *Thin Wood Walls*; and historian Ronald Magden, author of *Furusato: Tacoma-Pierce County Japanese, 1888-1977*. "Living History, Writing History" is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be served. Densho is co-sponsoring the event.

>> For more information



"History without Boundaries"

The Organization of American Historians is holding its annual national meeting at the Washington State Convention and Trade Center in Seattle, March 26-29. Taking as its theme "History without Boundaries," the meeting will present a program that highlights the creative use of history in research, education, the media, and public presentations. Densho executive director Tom Ikeda will co-present a workshop on March 28 at 1:30, "Speak to Us All: Innovative Oral History for the Public."

>> Register for the meeting



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Donor Profile

Seattle Civic Partner Status

This year for the first time the Seattle Office of Arts and Culture opened its Civic Partners funding program to heritage groups. Densho applied and received Civic Partner status, which brings two years of funding for core operations. Civic Partners include senior institutions serving the entire region, established organizations serving a more specialized cultural or community niche, and many small or emerging organizations. Densho is pleased to be recognized as a respected cultural provider.

>> For more information



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