# The AACP Newsletter

**Since 1970** 

#### Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc.

April 2008

AsianAmericanBooks.com - The Most Complete Nonprofit-Source for Asian American Books

# An Interview with Norman Masuda of Kariyushi Kai

By Norman Masuda and Leonard D. Chan

Kariyushi Kai (http://www.kariyushikai.org/), the Okinawan (performing arts) to the community and also to help Okinawan-Classical Music and Dance Society, is one of several interesting Americans to keep in touch with their culture. groups that will be performing and presenting at our 8th Annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration in San Mateo on How did it all begin? May 10, 2008. Norman Masuda is the Executive Director of A group of students of music and dance decided to start this group Kariyushi Kai.

Here is our interview with Norman Masuda.

#### Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I have been studying Uta-sanshin (Okinawan classical music) since July 1979 when I was introduced to and began taking lessons from my teacher, Harry Seisho Nakasone. Nakasone During our first meeting, I learned a little about how Sensei (Teacher) was the first American-born Okinawan American to attain the highest degree in the Nomura School of Okinawan music. Thanks to my teacher, I have learned Okinawan music and have been able to continue studying under him.

#### Tell us about Kariyushi Kai - what does your name mean?

Kari means "luck" and Yushi means "good," and Kai means "organization or society"= The Good Luck Society

#### What is your mission?

Our mission is to introduce Okinawan culture and music/dance (Continued on Page 2)

in 1984 and we have been doing it ever since.

#### What does Kariyushi Kai current do?

We have practices on Sunday mornings twice/month and perform for various functions. Last year, we performed at Los Gatos High School (five evenings) for their production of "Rashomon."

Okinawan culture shared similarities with Chinese culture. This was completely new to me. I believe most Americans share my ignorance about Okinawa and might at most remember it for the WWII battle fought there. Please tell us a little bit about the history and culture of Okinawa.

Okinawa was an independent kingdom called Ryukyu until the 15th century. Later, Okinawa paid tribute to Ming and Qing China as a tributary and was also subject to control from Japan. In the late 19th century, Okinawa was annexed to Japan and has been so ever since.

# Cressey A Place and Time

AACP is proud to introduce our latest book Cressey: Land of Cressey is a wonderful memoir that also serves to tell a slice of Sand and Stars.

This is AACP's first published book not written by an Asian Pacific American. The reason I feel compelled to mention this is that some of you may assume that Eugene Lee is of Chinese descent. Since we are an Asian Pacific American (APA) organization some of you may believe that APAs write all of our So much of the history we may read or see is about grand or books.

During the course of my tenure at AACP, I've had this conversation with many people about who is more qualified to write about Asian Pacific Americans than APAs. This is one area that I have always wanted to dedicate a whole editorial to because I am of the opinion that this attitude, that only APAs should write about APA related issues, borders on chauvinism and is an attitude that I hope we could get away from.

Unfortunately, I don't have the time to write this editorial right now and this article is meant to celebrate the wonderful achievement of Eugene Lee.

history about small town life in California - specifically the Central Valley town of Cressey during the Depression Era. Cressey was a racially diverse community, which included many Japanese settlers. The better known Japanese American colony called Yamato is within the greater region of Cressey.

major events. Often what is lost are the personal aspects of life and how we lived. Cressey is a valuable record of just that - life in a period personally known by a generation that is fast disappearing.

Thank you Eugene Lee for allowing us to help you preserve these memories.

We hope many of you readers out there will enjoy this book as much as we enjoyed making it.

### Give Us Your Feedback

Please feel free to send us your reviews, comments, and book suggestions. You can contact us at aacpinc@asianamericanbooks.com

# **Up Coming Events**

Here are some events that AACP will soon be attending. Invite us to vour events.

Date/Time	Event	Location
May 10	8th Asian Pacific	Central Park
	American Heritage	Recreation Center
	Celebration in San Mateo	San Mateo, CA
June 28	San Mateo Buddhist	2 S. Claremont St.
4-10pm	Temple Annual Bazaar	San Mateo, CA
Other Event of Interest that AACP May Not Attend		
April-May	San Mateo Library Asian	San Mateo Main
	Film Festival	Lib.
		San Mateo, CA
May 4	5th annual Foster City	Leo Ryan Park
10am-5pm	Pacific Islands Festival	Foster City, CA
May 4	Nikkei Matsuri Arts and	San Jose, CA
	Crafts Festival	
May 27-31	National Conference on	Coronado Springs
	Race & Ethnicity in	Res
	American Higher	1000 W Buena
	Education	Vista Dr
		Lake Buena Vista,
		FL
June 21	Japanese Cultural Fair	Mission Plaza Park
11am-6pm		Santa Cruz, CA

# **Editor's Message**

Hello Everyone,

Yes, this was suppose to be the April Newsletter and for those of you living in Hawaii and reading this right after I send this, it still qualifies.

Our upcoming event, the 8th Annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration (APAHC) in San Mateo, has been keeping us very busy this year. After I finish this newsletter, I'll probably have to do a few more things for this event before I go to sleep.

Please come to our May 10th event. AACP and the local Chapters of the JACL and OCA have worked hard to make this event the best ever. We invite you all, especially non-Asian Pacific Islanders, to come to our event. In order to truly bridge communities we require all to participate and not just our own APA community.

Okay on to other business - my apologies to all of you that wrote me after the last newsletter. Thank you very much for your feedback, I hope to reply to you all some time after the 10th:).

Thank you Norman Masuda for our interview. We look forwards to having you at this year's APAHC.

Thank you to the APAHC committee for all of your hard work and bearing with my often absent leadership (especially while working on this newsletter and on the book). Thanks especially to my co-coordinator Martin Jung - we couldn't do it without you.

Thank you Sharon for your help on the newsletter.

Hey Uncle Gaing, I'll try to get to an article on Oroville for our June travel newsletter. That's right everyone, summer time is just around the corner. Send me your suggestions on APA significant travel destinations for our June newsletter. I got dibs for the inside scoop on the Oroville Chinese Temple - you other APA news organizations, hands off, this one is really mine:). Stay tuned everyone. Bye for now.

Leonard Chan **Executive Editor** 

#### An Interview with Norman Masuda of Kariyushi Kai With issues of Tibet in the news and how many Tibetans are (Continued from page 1)

Please tell us about Okinawan music and dance - the differences and similarities to other forms and its uniqueness. Okinawan music and dance owe much to the cultures of Southeast Asia, China and Japan. The musical tonal system is similar to that Okinawans, although citizens of Japan still retain an identity as of Indonesia, the costumes owe much to Chinese and Japanese clothes, and the themes of the dances have been influenced by those of China and Japan.

Okinawa developed its own music and dance and poetry that were American population? Chinese sanxian) later transmitted to Japan as the Shamisen. The American population. Kutuu (Japanese koto), Hanso (flute), and teeku (Taiko drums).

struggling for some autonomy and cultural freedom, do some Okinawans also wish for more autonomy and cultural preservation? Is Okinawan culture even being lost in Okinawa?

Okinawans and have a language and culture that are unique and different from that of Japan.

# Do you have some idea about the size of the Okinawan

set to music. Musical instruments include the Sanshin (from the In Hawaii, Okinawan-Americans are about 10% of the Japanese-

#### There seems to be a sizable population in the San Francisco What will you be performing at our event? Bay Area region. Are most Okinawans American Our group will be performing: concentrated in this area or where else?

The largest group of Okinawan Americans are first in Hawaii, then Los Angeles and San Francisco. San Francisco once had a large population of Okinawan American, but they moved south following the 1906 earthquake.

# arrived in the US? Any idea as to when that might be?

The first Okinawans arrived in Hawaii in 1900.

#### Tell us about your appearance and performance at the San **Mateo Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration**

Our music teacher: Harry Seisho Nakasone, honored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Japanese Government for a lifetime achievement as a career in Okinawan music

Our dance teacher: Mitsuko Toguchi, head of her school in Hawaii and part of the Ryusei Honryu Yanagi no Kai in Okinawa.

Kajadifu - Performed on all happy occasions as the first dance and music of the program. The words are:

To what do I owe the happiness I feel today.

It is like the morning dew on the budding flower.

Musical Interlude - Tachiutushi and Aha-Bushi (a song of celebration)

Are there any records about when the first Okinawans Kayui buni - The ferryboat - about a ferry that traveled between Okinawa and the Japanese mainland.

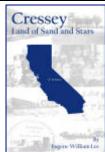
> Nubui Kuduchi - A young man's dance about an envoy from the Ryukyuan court traveling to the Satsuma Clan in Kyushu.

# Tell us about the discussion/demonstration that you will also be doing after the performance, in our in door demonstration

We will be showing the musical instruments and talk about the dances performed.

### ADDITIONS TO OUR WEBSITE

The following books are discounted for subscribers to our newsletter. The discounts on these books end May 18, 2008.



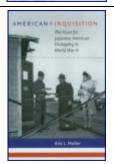
### Cressey

### Land of Sand and Stars

By Eugene Lee 2008, 217 pages, Paperback.

See the article on page 1 about this book.

Item #3500, Normally \$18.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$15.16



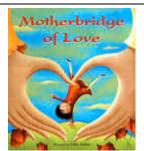
# **American Inquisition**

# The Hunt for Japanese American Disloyalty in World War II

By Eric L. Muller 2007, 197 pages, Hardback.

American Inquisition is a fascinating new study of the draconian system that was used during World War II to determine if Japanese Americans were disloyal or not. In any era, especially in times of paranoia, it is important to examine the failings of our past to avoid making the same mistakes in the present. This book helps to shed some light on another awful facet of the Japanese American Internment.

ORDER -- Item #, Normally \$27.50 ... for newsletter subscribers \$22.00



# **Motherbridge of Love**

Illustrated by Josée Masse 2007, 28 pages, Hardback.

Motherbridge of Love is a beautifully illustrated and poetic story that splendidly broaches the issue of adoption for young adoptees.

ORDER -- Item #3502, Normally \$16.99 ... for newsletter subscribers \$13.59



#### In the Leaves

By Huy Voun Lee 2005, 24 pages, Hardback.

This is a nicely illustrated story that shows how Chinese characters are shorthand symbols for the words they represent. As told in a story about a boy and his friends' trip to a farm it both amusing and educational.

ORDER -- Item #3503, Normally \$16.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$13.56



#### **Fortune Cookie Fortunes**

By Grace Lin 2004, 24 pages, Hardback.

This is a charming tale that captures the fun involved in opening and reading fortune cookie fortunes.

ORDER -- Item #3504, Normally \$15.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$12.76

© 2008 by **Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc.** (a **non-profit** organization since 1970) Visit our website at **AsianAmericanBooks.com** 

> 529 East Third Avenue, San Mateo, California 94401 Tel 650-375-8286