

From the Director: Tom Ikeda

When you receive this eNews I will be in Japan as part of the 2008 Japanese American Leadership Delegation, sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition to reconnecting with the culture of my ancestors, a highlight of the trip will be to get to know Japanese American leaders from other parts of the United States. On the delegation's theme of "Reconnecting with Japanese Americans - Beyond 100 Years of Emigration," I will speak briefly about Japanese American history and my family's roots in Fukuoka at a symposium sponsored by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership. To learn more about the symposium, visit this link:

http://www.jpf.go.jp/cgp/e/exchange/event/080306_e.html

In the next eNews I will recap the trip and share some photos.



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From the Archive

Evacuation or Exclusion? Japanese Americans Exiled

*"They came here to be American."
-- Earl Hanson*

As we trace the calendar of Japanese American history through the images and words preserved in Densho's Digital Archive, we come upon dismaying news photos dated March 30, 1942. On that day, the first Japanese American families were taken from their homes by armed soldiers under the authority granted by President Roosevelt to Western Command General John L. DeWitt. The general had won the cabinet-level argument in favor of removing every man, woman, and child of Japanese descent from declared military zones of the West Coast. Up and down the coast, stunned Japanese American communities were paralyzed by curfews, frozen bank accounts, and the arrest of their community leaders. Then on March 24, General DeWitt's Civilian Exclusion Order No. 1 appeared on public walls and telephone poles of a small island in the Pacific Northwest.

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Densho News

4Culture Features Tom Ikeda

Densho's Executive Director, Tom Ikeda (pictured with his wife, Sara Yamasaki), wrote the "My Point of View" article for the February issue of 4Culture's e-newsletter. Tom traces his journey from business and technology positions to discovering his passion for preserving the Japanese American legacy. Tom says, "After my very first interview of a Japanese American elder who lived through the tumultuous period of World War II, I realized I had never really known what happened to my parents, grandparents, and broader community." Densho's mission became clear: "As story after story unfolded, I felt



more and more grateful to the community elders for the sacrifices they had made. My commitment to share these untold stories and to teach people about civil liberties grew. I knew with technology we could digitally preserve and share these stories around the world."

>> [Read Tom Ikeda's article](#)

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Community Events

Japan in America at Town Hall Seattle

"Japan in America" brings together an ensemble of master musicians from Japan and the United States for a concert of contemporary and traditional taiko drumming, music, and dance. The performance at Town Hall on March 22 culminates a week of community programs celebrating the Japanese American experience as seen through the performing arts. Featured artists include Chieko Kojima of Kodo, Japan's most renowned taiko ensemble, and Kenny Endo (pictured), a legendary Japanese American taiko performer, along with Japanese master musicians. Seattle Kokon Taiko will also appear. Tom Ikeda will join the artists and other speakers at a related admission-free community program, "Voice of the Drum: Taiko and the Japanese American Experience." The program will take place at the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, March 20, 7:30 p.m. Copresented by Town Hall Seattle and Wing Luke Asian Museum.

>> [For information on the Japan in America programs](#)



Documentary on Poston Debuts

The new documentary *Passing Poston: An American Story*, by James Fox and Jim Nubile, focuses on four Japanese Americans who were incarcerated at the Arizona detention camp situated on the Colorado River Indian Reservation. Poston had a different purpose than the nine other War Relocation Authority camps. The government had detainees build the infrastructure that helped recruit Native Americans from surrounding reservations when the Japanese American incarceration ended. After premiering in New York, the film will be shown on March 29 at the Sacramento International Film Festival, and will later be screened in cities around the country, including Seattle.

>> [For more information about "Passing Poston: An American Story"](#)



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