

## ***A Gathering of the Best in Asian Pacific American Literature, History, and Culture***

For Immediate Release  
April 28, 2010  
Foster City, California

In honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, the Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc. (AACP), the Foster City Library, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) of San Mateo and the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA) of San Mateo are pleased to present the:

### **Asian Pacific American Heritage Authors Celebration**

Saturday May 22, 11am - 6:30pm  
Foster City Library  
1000 E. Hillsdale Blvd, Foster City, 94404  
(650) 574-4842 x236

This gathering of distinguished authors has greatly added to our pride in the rich heritage and history of Asian America. Collectively they have brought its impact to a wider American consciousness through their award-winning work.

Cynthia Chin-Lee is the author of many children's books, including *Amelia to Zora* and *A Is for Asia*, named one of the Best 100 American Children's Books of the Century by Ruminator Review. Cynthia graduated from Harvard University and was a graduate fellow at the East-West Center in Hawaii. She lives in California with her husband and two children.

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Jack Matsuoka was born in Watsonville, California. He spent his late teen years interned in the Poston relocation camp that gives his book its title, *Poston: Camp 11, Block 211*, recounting the story of his internment through cartoons. After the war he moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where he spent one semester at the Cleveland School of Fine Arts before being drafted into the army.

His time in postwar Japan was spent acting as an army interpreter and then as a college student. During this period, Jack contributed many sports cartoons to the Japan Times and Japanese sports magazines. In addition, he did political cartoons for the Yomiuri News, drew humorous illustrations for books about Japan, and published his first cartoon book, *Rice-Paddy Daddy*.

Currently, Jack Matsuoka is a San Jose freelance cartoonist contributing to newspapers and magazines in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is the creator of a Japanese American (Nikkei) comic strip character, Sensei. He contributed to the Pacific Tribune

newspaper from 1974 to 2000 as an editorial cartoonist and is a member of the National Cartoonist Society.

The reading will be by Mr. Matsuoka's daughter, Emi Young. She was educated as an elementary school teacher and currently teaches English as a Second Language and Workplace Basic Skills to adults in Union City's adult school.

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Ann Bowler was raised in Ojai, California and has taken many journeys to Asia. She has a BA in Sociology and training as a teacher at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is now a full-time writer living in the Sierra Nevada foothills of Northern California.

Ms. Bowler has written seven books for children, including *Gecko's Complaint: A Balinese Folktale* and *Adventures of the Treasure Fleet*, recounting the adventures of Admiral Zheng He, who led the Chinese fleet to East Africa and Arabia before the Europeans first arrived there nearly 70 years later.

A special Chinese language presentation will accompany her reading of *Adventures of the Treasure Fleet*.

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Using banjos and accordion "Plink and Plunk" offer a selection of sing-along-songs and folk song favorites for people of all ages. The duo, made up of retired

school teacher, George Louzensky, and writer, Charlie Chin, have played their fun-filled presentations at senior centers, yoga studios, schools, and libraries throughout the Bay Area. Their motto is, "High Tone Banter and Tasty Tunes."

Charlie Chin has been recognized with a "Community Folklore Scholar Certificate" by the Smithsonian Institution in recognition of his work in Asian American Studies and is a frequent consultant on Asian American communities for the Smithsonian Office of Folk Life and Folkways. He has also appeared in several PBS documentaries about Chinese Americans.

Margo King Lenson, a native of Honolulu, Hawaii and publisher and editor of *Pacific Voices: Talk Story v1-4*, chronicling the personal experiences of Asian Pacific American Islanders, will be holding a workshop on preserving Asian and Pacific Islander American stories through oral histories.

Ms. Lenson is the founder and owner of Tui Communications. Her writings and business help to keep the spirit and material presence of Island life, history, and culture alive in the American consciousness and in their own hearts.

Hiroshi Kashiwagi, a native of Sacramento, California, is a retired librarian of the San Francisco Public Library. He was interned at the Tule Lake camp during World War II, a subject that he has dramatized in plays, poems, and stories. He is a member of the Dramatists Guild and the Screen Actors Guild. His first book, *Swimming in the American: a Memoir and Selected Writings*, was awarded the American Book Award 2005 by the Before Columbus Foundation.

Mr. Kashiwagi will be performing a reading of his play *The Betrayed* with Sue Asano of the Center Players of San Francisco. She played the lead part in the plays, *Laughter and False Teeth* and *Window for Aya*, both by Hiroshi Kashiwagi. Last year Sue Asano performed *The Betrayed* Act II for the release of Hiroshi Kashiwagi's book *Shoebox Plays*. She is married to David Asano and they are in the recycling business in San Rafael, California.

Mr. Kashiwagi will end this session with a few related poems from his recently released book of poetry *Ocean Beach*.

Rick Rocamora took pictures of Filipino WWII veterans for 18 years as they waited for US Government recognition as equals to American veterans.

His photo-documentary work, including words of supporters, historical anecdotes and chronology is now part of the book *America's Second-Class Veterans*. His images have been credited with inspiring others to advocate for the equity long sought by these veterans.

Eddie Fung, co-wrote with his wife, historian Judy Yung, *The Adventures of Eddie Fung: Chinatown Kid, Texas Cowboy, Prisoner of War*. The autobiographical book covered Eddie's experiences growing up in Chinatown, running away at age 16 to become a cowboy in Texas, then joining the Army only to become the sole Chinese American soldier captured by the Japanese during World War II. Eddie managed to survive three tough years as a slave laborer on the infamous Burma Railroad before returning to the US. Eddie is a Stanford alumnus.

Mr. Fung will be interviewed by Margo King Lenson.

Judy Yung is Professor Emeritus of American Studies at the University of California Santa Cruz. She is co-author of *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940* and the author of *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*. She has been recognized as one of the most distinguished scholars of Asian American and women's history by numerous prestigious awards.

Professor Yung will be giving a sneak preview to her soon to be released book *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America*.

Grace Takahashi, novelist of *To Breathe the Sky*, and others will be on hand to meet the public. Periodically check the [AsianAmericanBooks.com](http://AsianAmericanBooks.com) website to catch the latest additions to our event.

For more information about the event please contact the Foster City Library, Florence Hongo of AACP (650.375.8286), or go to [AsianAmericanBooks.com](http://AsianAmericanBooks.com).

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