

The Asian Reporter

Volume 25 Number 14
July 20, 2015
ISSN: 1094-9453

The Asian Reporter is published on the first and third Monday each month.

Please send all correspondence to: The Asian Reporter
922 N Killingsworth Street, Portland, OR 97217
Phone: (503) 283-4440, Fax: (503) 283-4445

News Department e-mail: news@asianreporter.com
Advertising Department e-mail: ads@asianreporter.com
General e-mail: info@asianreporter.com
Website: www.asianreporter.com

Please send reader feedback, Asian-related press releases, and community interest ideas/stories to the addresses listed above. Please include a contact phone number.

Advertising information available upon request.

Publisher **Jaime Lim**
Contributing Editors

Ronault L.S. Catalani (Polo), Jeff Wenger
Correspondents

Ian Blazina, Josephine Bridges, Pamela Ellgen, Maileen Hamto, Edward J. Han, A.P. Kryza, Marie Lo, Simeon Mamaril, Julie Stegeman, Toni Tabora-Roberts, Allison Voigts
Illustrator **Jonathan Hill**
News Service **Associated Press/Newsfinder**

Copyright 2015. Opinions expressed in this newspaper are those of the authors and not necessarily those of this publication.

Member

Associated Press/Newsfinder
Asian American Journalists Association
Better Business Bureau
Pacific Northwest Minority Publishers (PNMP)
Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon

Correspondence:

The Asian Reporter welcomes reader response and participation. Please send all correspondence to:
Mail: 922 N Killingsworth Street, Portland, OR 97217-2220
Phone: (503) 283-4440 ** **Fax:** (503) 283-4445
News Department e-mail: news@asianreporter.com
General e-mail: info@asianreporter.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (U.S. rates only)

Individual subscription (sent bulk rate):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Half year: \$14	<input type="checkbox"/> Full year: \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> Two years: \$40
Individual subscription (sent first class mail):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Half year: \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> Full year: \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> Two years: \$72
Office subscription (5 copies to one address):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Half year: \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> Full year: \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> Two years: \$145
Institutional subscription (25 copies to one address):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Half year: \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> Full year: \$180	<input type="checkbox"/> Two years: \$280

NEW SUBSCRIBER / ADDRESS CORRECTION INFORMATION FORM:

Subscriber's name: _____
 Company name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, ZIP: _____
 Phone: _____
 Fax: _____
 E-mail: _____

Mail with payment or Fax with credit card information to:
 The Asian Reporter, Attn: Subscription Dept.,
 922 N Killingsworth Street, Portland, OR 97217-2220
 Phone: (503) 283-4440 * Fax: (503) 283-4445

For VISA, Mastercard, or American Express payment only:

Name (as it appears on the card): _____
 Type of card (circle): VISA Mastercard American Express
 Card number: _____ Security code: _____
 Expiration date: _____ Address of card: _____

The last four issues of *The Asian Reporter* are available for pick up free at our office 24 hours a day at 922 N Killingsworth Street, Portland, Oregon.

Back issues of *The Asian Reporter* may be ordered by mail at the following rates: First copy: \$1.50
 Additional copies ordered at the same time: \$1.00 each
 Send orders to: Asian Reporter Back Issues,
 922 N. Killingsworth St., Portland, OR 97217-2220

The Asian Reporter welcomes reader response and participation. If you have a comment on a story we have printed, or have an Asian-related personal or community focus idea, please contact us. Please include a contact name, address, and phone number on all correspondence. Thank you.



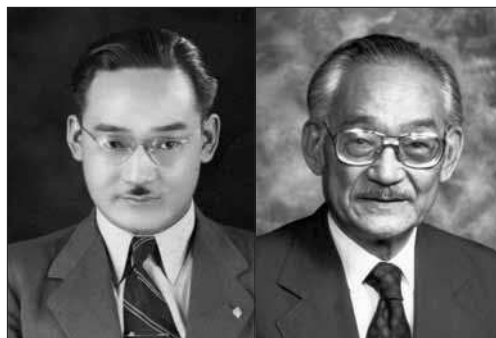
MY TURN

■ **Dmae Roberts**



Citizen Min: Never Give Up!

On March 28, 1942, just three months after opening his law practice in Portland, 25-year-old Minoru Yasui decided to become a test case to challenge the curfew imposed on persons of Japanese ancestry at the start of World War II. He went up to a policeman after the curfew and demanded to be arrested for breaking the curfew he thought unconstitutional. He then spent nine months in the Multnomah County jail in a 6' x 8' windowless cell awaiting his appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. Yasui was convicted and sentenced, and later sent to Minidoka internment camp in Idaho until he moved to Denver, Colorado where his mother and sister lived.



Pictured is Minoru Yasui in 1945 (left) and in 1983 (right). (Photos courtesy of the Yasui family)

After the war ended, Min Yasui spent the rest of his life not only challenging the forced removal and incarceration of the more than 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II, but fighting for civil rights for all disenfranchised Americans. In the 1970s and '80s, he was instrumental in the creation of a congressional commission that heard testimony about and eventually recommended reparations for all Japanese who had been imprisoned in the camps. He also helped establish many civil-rights organizations in the Denver area — groups such as the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL); the Urban League; Denver Native Americans United; and the Latino American Research, Advocacy, and Service Agency. Min was named as one of the five great lawyers in Colorado's history. Yasui died on November 12, 1986, while in the process of appealing the lack of an evidentiary hearing regarding the test case. Oregonian Peggy Nagae served as his lead attorney in the proceedings. His legacy and accomplishments live on.

On May 7, 2015, the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) honored the legacy of Minoru Yasui with its "Voices of Change" award, an honor that will now be given annually in Yasui's name. His younger brother, Homer Yasui, who currently lives in Portland, accepted the award on Min's behalf. Homer spent his teenage years at Tule Lake internment camp and became a respected surgeon. The Yasui family was not only one of the earliest merchants in Hood River, Oregon, but a prominent, respected family.

Two other people who challenged the unconstitutionality of the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II and re-opened their cases in the early 1980s were Gordon Hirabayashi and Fred Korematsu. Both were awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Min's daughter, Holly Yasui, an author and artist, is the co-chair of the Minoru Yasui Tribute Committee, which has

been working with Hawai'i senator Mazie Hirono to nominate Min for the 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom, an honor usually awarded in the fall. If bestowed, the president would complete the recognition of three petitioners in Japanese-American *coram nobis* cases (a legal writ issued by a court to correct a previous error to those who were convicted and served sentences).

Holly has been working on a second play about Min. The first one, *Unvanquished*, created in 1993, covered her father's test case. The new play, *Citizen Min*, details the nine-month period her father spent in the Portland jail awaiting his appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Excerpts of the play, by dramaturg Nikki Nojima-Louis (of *Breaking the Silence*), will be performed at 6:00pm on Wednesday, July 29 at the Jade/APANO Multicultural Space, located at 8114 S.E. Division Street in Portland. A panel discussion led by community leaders follows the presentation. Chisao Hata, the director of the event, which is hosted by MediaRites' Theatre Diaspora, has titled the event, "Never Give Up!"

Inspired by the title, Holly is also working on a short film called *Never Give Up! The Story of Minoru Yasui*. Narrated by George Takei, the film will be released in 2016 on the 100-year anniversary of her father's birth. The Minoru Yasui Tribute Project is also planning multiple events and celebrations next year.

"I'm a bit overwhelmed by the enormity of what Min Yasui accomplished in his life," Holly said when asked about her father's legacy. "The influence he had on people who worked with him; his passion and commitment."

Holly also said the totality of who Min was and what he did can be summed up with a passage attributed to Bertolt Brecht, which is loosely

Continued on page 7