



From the Commander

Those of us who were in the Japanese internment camps remember the many kindnesses provided by the Filipinos. People in the communities surrounding us provided packages of foods and other items that made life more bearable, they sent messages about relatives and friends who were elsewhere, and they provided comfort in many other ways. When the Japanese administration became harsh and forbid any outside contact, the Filipinos still found ways to smuggle medicines, food, and messages of hope. Fighting an underground war with the Japanese, Filipino guerillas disrupted their supply lines, intercepted messages, and fought pitch battles while supplying the U.S. forces with desperately needed intelligence, and played an important role in the liberation of the camps.

For a long time, BACEPOW has been seeking a way to repay the Filipinos in some small way for their support. In the last two years our treasury has been supplemented by generous donations from the Guitard family, Lou Gopal, and many others, as well as from donations for the BACEPOW challenge coin and from advertising in this journal. We now feel prepared to initiate a program to express our gratitude to the Filipinos.

We have just launched the **BACEPOW History Project**. This is an essay contest for students in the Philippines, who are invited to submit essays on subjects of their own choosing that deal with wartime interaction of the community with the prisoners in the Japanese camps. They may be based on interviews with people who were there, or by library or Internet research on people in the camps or those in the community who were providing help to them.

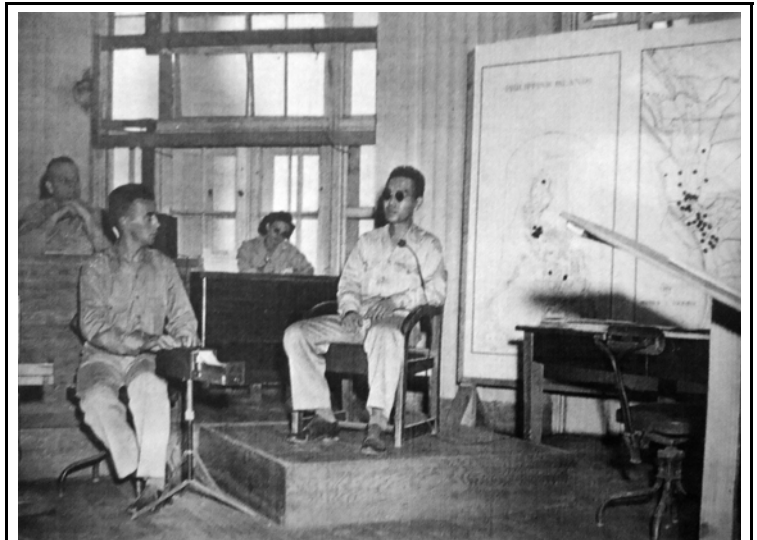
The essays will be judged by a panel and the best essays will be awarded prizes of \$1,000 First, \$500 Second, and \$300 Third, and two \$100 for Runners-up. The best essays will also be published in *Beyond the Wire*.

We will keep our membership apprised of the success of this program, so you can all share in the accomplishments of the contestants. Hopefully this will be just the first of many successive History Prizes that we can award with your continuing generous support.

Angus Lorenzen

Hero or Turncoat

In the January and May 2011 issues of this journal, we published the serialized story by Louis Lee Jurika of his father's 1945 search in war-torn Manila for his mother, Blanche Walker Jurika, Louis's grandmother. The search ended when Tom Jurika discovered a Japanese-American named Richard Sakakida being interrogated by Military Intelligence who admitted to being present at Blanche's 1944 trial and execution by the Japanese. What happened to Sakakida after he pointed out the location of the mass grave in which she was buried? Louis personally interviewed Sakakida twice, once in 1991 and again in 1992, at Sakakida's home in Fremont, CA., and spent the better part of the last year further researching his background, drawing on a large group of others in both the U.S. and the Philippines. He summarizes his research in this article, and points out fraudulent claims that leave the reader to question whether Sakakida was a hero as he claims, or an opportunist who embellished his own history. He starts with an obituary from the Chicago Times, January 26, 1996.



Sakakida returned to the U.S. Army after the Japanese surrender in the Philippines. He was intensely interrogated by Army Intelligence, which was suspicious of his wartime role with the Japanese Army. The claims in his 1995 book reopened the issue of what he did for the Japanese.

“Richard Sakakida, 75; U.S. spy in WWII

“Associated Press, PALO ALTO, Calif. – Richard Sakakida, whose controversial role as a spy in the Philippines during World War II made him a hero to some but a collaborator to others, died Tuesday of lung

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A Desperate Drug Smuggler

When you have a population of almost 4,000 people, what happens when you don't have drugs and medicines? People start to die! That's what happened in Santo Tomas when the Japanese shut down all access to outside resources in January of 1944.

Wanda Damberg, the daughter of a Dutch diplomat in Manila, entered Santo Tomas with her family in early 1942, where she volunteered to work in the hospital. Recognizing the desperate situation as the supply cupboards in the hospital emptied, she volunteered to work with the Dominican fathers in the adjacent seminary to smuggle in the needed supplies. Her contact would signal her during the daytime that a package would be left buried under the fence that separated the seminary from the camp. All she had to do was slip out in the dark after curfew and retrieve the package.

It sounded easy, except that there was a guard that patrolled the road along the fence. If she was caught, she would be interrogated to reveal her co-conspirators, then possibly executed. The Japanese made a habit of torturing prisoners before executing them.

With her heart in her throat, she made her first excursion, slipping out of her dormitory and through the rear entrance of the Main Building. In hiding, she timed how long it took the guard to pass the pick-up point before turning at the end of the road and marching back down it. She had to make her dash to retrieve the package while his back was turned.

After that, every time she checked to see if there was a signal for a pick-up she hoped there wouldn't be, but the reliable fathers kept a steady stream of medicines coming into the camp, and there were many nights that she would have to slip out in the dark. One night, as she dug up the package, she looked up and saw a pair of Japanese officer's boots just a few feet away. She froze. Had he seen her? She waited, fearing at any moment that he would call the guard to arrest her. Finally the boots turned, and the officer walked away giving her the chance to quickly scurry back to her dormitory.

Wanda's actions were a lifesaver for many people, until she was transferred to Los Baños in December of 1944, where the Dominican fathers who were not Filipinos had now been interned. They asked her to assist in smuggling food and drugs into that camp, which was more difficult to do here. Within just a few weeks the camp was liberated, and Wanda thankfully gave up her smuggling career.

Wanda told this story to a large turnout of ex-POWs, family, and friends at the Southern California BACEPOW luncheon held at the Long Beach Petroleum Club in August. Her humor and self-deprecating presentation was a great hit.



Setting the Record Straight

Because so many "statements of truth" and "true facts" have come across my desk on a daily basis regarding our WWII prison history, I decided to do something about it and attempt to set the record straight. Or at least, try to. It boggles my mind and sometimes causes me frustrating moments of shoulder flinching when dealing with these statements.

One of my favorites is, "When General MacArthur came into Santo Tomas standing on the back of a flatbed truck...". Now, this person was not in Santo Tomas, but her mother was. She emphatically assured me her mother would not make up this story. She saw him on the truck.

My response to her was that he came into camp in a Command car, as a flat bed truck was wide open and dangerous to be so exposed for the enemy to see. On his arrival on February 7th, just 4 days after our liberation, as the Manila battle was raging, no one rode around on a flatbed truck, let alone a General of the opposing army. What a target that would have been! We saw General MacArthur arrive and leave in a Command car. There are pictures to prove this. I still have that nagging feeling I did not make any points.

Recently, this query came to my attention. A woman wrote that she heard from the son of her father's good friend. His father was in the U.S. Military and came in with the liberating troops to Manila. He himself was not assigned to the 1st Cav's Flying Column, but talked his way into hitchhiking with the lead tank, Battling Basic, to liberate Santo Tomas. He did so because he had a gal friend in this particular camp who he wanted to see. Upon crashing through the front gate with this tank, he saw his friend standing with other women teachers by a building. His heroic gesture of scooping up these women onto the tank and going out the front gate immediately to freedom became a little too much for me to bear. Talk about flinching and wincing!

Those of us who were in camp or in Manila at the time know this is not true. We all know the answers. Battling Basic did not turn around to leave camp as soon as it arrived. They did not scoop up anyone. The machine gunner of said tank, John Hencke, became our good friend till his passing three years ago. We got the real story from him through the years. They had to secure the camp and to keep us safe. They had a job to do for the whole camp, not flee the grounds with a bunch of women taking them straight into the arms of a hot war in the city. The ending? I put my spurs on for this one. It pained me to hear this delightful lady keep saying to me, "But, why would he tell such tales?"

Write to me if you have any questions on particular points of interest or historical fact or fiction needing clarification. If I do not know the answer, I know people who do. You can bet on it! Maraming Salamats!

Bahalana!

Sascha Jansen

Mabuhayma@aol.com

Donation to Veterans Hospital

BACEPOW made a donation to the VA Volunteers Services, which provides books and other sundries to patients who can't afford them, at the San Francisco Veterans Medical Center. This is to commemorate the troops of the 1st Cavalry, 37th Infantry, and 11th Airborne Divisions who liberated the camps in February 1945, where we were being held by the Japanese.

Ingenuity

The Japanese concentrated American and Allied civilians in the three camps on Luzon during WW II, not realizing that by doing so they had created a pool of exceptional people and forced them to use their ingenuity to be creative beyond anything that they would have accomplished had their lives remained normal. The camps held engineers, technicians, business leaders, artists, and others with unexplored talents. The harsh conditions meant that they could not acquire what they needed as they had before the war, and so they became creative.

The prisoners put their minds and hands to work to fill their needs. They created governments to administer the every day activities and programs for health, entertainment and sports, building and maintenance, arts and crafts, food farming, and built clandestine radios. There was no way anyone could run down to the local store to buy needed materials or parts, so they had to make them from what was available - bamboo, odd pieces of metal, and wire from disassembled appliances.

One of the more challenging projects was accomplished in Camp Holmes in Baguio. Fabian Ream and his family were held in the camp, and with the course of time, he lost so much weight that his denture would no longer fit his mouth. Aluminum had been used by the American Expeditionary Force dentists in France during WW I to quickly make replacement dentures for troops in the field. When an aluminum pot fell into his possession, Fabian set out to make his own replacement denture with the assistance of a dentist in the camp.

He made an impression of his mouth using the wax from a candle. He needed to make a heatproof mold from this impression, and to do this he heated some old discarded gypsum wall-board to dry it and used the powdered gypsum to make plaster of Paris that he formed into the mold. He melted the aluminum pot in an old blacksmith's forge, and then poured it into the mold, which he had placed in the bottom of a bucket. In order to fill all of the cavities in the mold, he swung the bucket around his head, using centrifugal force to push the molten aluminum into the mold. After a couple of tries, he got a decent casting, and finished it with a penknife.

Fabian wore his denture throughout the rest of his time as a Japanese prisoner, though at first he had a problem with the thermal conductivity when he drank hot liquids. He continued to wear it after liberation until his family convinced him to see a dentist and get rid of his metallic smile. After his death, the aluminum denture lived on as a family icon until it was donated to the Samuel D. Harris Museum of Dentistry in 1999.

The story of this amazing feat is described in *The "Amex" Cast Aluminum Denture of World War I* By John M. Hyson, Jr. DDS, MS, MA & Joseph W A. Whitehorne, AB, MA, LHD, Ded.



Fabian Ream made this denture for himself out of an aluminum cooking pot in Camp Holmes

Reunion

The 2012 reunion memorializes 70 years since most of us were interned by the Japanese and is a good time to renew friendships we made, and reminisce about the good and bad things that happened. We have planned an excellent program, and this reunion should be the best ever. We encourage all ex-POWs, their families, and friends to join us for an exciting weekend.

When: Friday, April 27 through Sunday April 29

Where: Embassy Suites, Old Sacramento, California

Call 1-800-Embassy and ask for **Bay Area Civilian Ex-POW's** discount rate, or www.sacramento.embassysuites.com and make a reservation using the group/convention code: **BPW**

The rate is \$129 per night and \$5 reduction from \$25 per day parking. Included is free hot breakfast, hosted evening cocktails, and free Sacramento airport pick-up and delivery. This rate will be valid through Monday night. For airport pickup call 1-800-Embassy. **Deadline for reservations is April 6, 2012.**

Program

Friday Check-in, meet friends, get together for the hosted cocktail party.

Saturday: Affinity groups breakfast gatherings.

Morning and afternoon forum on historical events in wartime Philippines. This will include several speakers who will cover topics pertinent to the camp experience. With questions and answers, it will expand our knowledge about what was happening inside and beyond the wire that was affecting us

Evening hosted cocktails will be followed by a program by Baguio internees.

Sunday: Affinity groups breakfast gatherings - Memorabilia display - Book signings - Oral history recordings. Noon banquet with keynote speaker.

Other Activities The hotel is in the center of Old Sacramento and there are many nearby activities. The California Military Museum is within walking distance and is offering a special low rate for reunion attendees.

Reunion Sign-up: The reunion fees are as follows:

	<u>Members</u>	<u>Non-Members</u>
Full Reunion—all events	\$54	\$58
Saturday forums only	\$15	\$18
Sunday Banquet only	\$41	\$44

Please make checks payable to BACEPOW and mail to:

Sally Connelly
#4 Hidalgo Ct.
Santa Fe, NM 87508

<u>Name</u>	<u>Member(Y/N)</u>	<u>Amount</u>
_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____
Total		_____

For more information, write Sascha Jansen at mabuhayma@aol.com, or write 213 Grand Canyon Drive, Vacaville, CA 95687, (707) 448-2909. **Reunion reservations deadline is April 13.**

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cancer. He was 75.

“A native of Hawaii, Mr. Sakakida was sent to the Philippines by the Army six months before Pearl Harbor to spy on Japanese nationals. He was captured shortly after the fall of Bataan.

“An Army sergeant, he eventually won the confidence of his captors and served as an interpreter. While posing as a friend of the Japanese, he passed on information to U.S. forces and once helped free 500 Filipino guerrillas from prison.

“However, last year three former guerrillas, including a Roman Catholic priest, charged that he wore a Japanese uniform and sword and fabricated his role in the escape.”

The three were Father Jaime S. Neri, Gustavo C. Ingles and Frisco San Juan. Their counterclaims should begin with a review of the events as described in [A Spy In Their Midst – The World War II Struggle Of A Japanese-American Hero. The Story of Richard Sakakida as Told to Wayne S. Kiyosaki.](#) (Madison Books, 1995. Lanham-New York-London). Published six months before Sakakida died, it is dedicated, *“To the members of the Corps of Intelligence Police, Manila Detachment G2, Headquarters Philippine Department, U.S. Army”*. The preface by Hawaii Senator Daniel K. Akaka says, *“... the work that follows is the most detailed and accurate account to date of his (Sakakida’s) wartime service.”* What is not mentioned anywhere in the book is that author Wayne S. Kiyosaki is Sakakida’s brother-in-law.

That Sakakida *“...once helped free 500 Filipino guerrillas from prison”* is the topic on pages 155-156. Sakakida tells how he was involved in the planning and execution of a raid/assault on Muntinlupa Prison outside Manila, which was used by the Japanese during WWII to hold ordinary criminals, plus captured guerrillas and many civilians suspected of various offenses against the Japanese. At the time, Sakakida was employed in Japanese Army Headquarters as an interpreter and billeted with Japanese officers in the old Manila Club founded by the pre-war British community in the Ermita district.

Sakakida writes, *“We scheduled the breakout in August 1944”,* and that he posed as a Japanese officer in full uniform and met at *“...a designated time and place”* with four Filipino guerrillas who he then had change into four stolen Japanese Army uniforms. *“Just before midnight, we moved silently toward the prison gate. We were blessed that night because there was no inspection by the duty officer. We began marching to the gate. As soon as the guard spotted the red sash of the officer of the day, which I was wearing, he and the other guards bowed deeply. Without a word, we disarmed the guards who were taken completely by surprise. Within five minutes we had the prison office under our control. This allowed the other guerrillas who were in hiding outside the gates to rush in and secure the prison armory. Simultaneously, Tupas, who positioned himself in the power plant, short-circuited the entire prison network. All of the ROTC guerrillas and anyone else wishing to be free were released from their cells. Within half an hour we were able to clear out of the prison. I immediately returned to my billet in Manila while the liberated prisoners raced toward Mount Rizal.”*

This is a fantastic account except for two critical points. The prison raid/assault he describes happened in June, not August, and Sakakida wasn’t there. He wasn’t involved in any way. It is a complete invention on Sakakida’s part. Not one of the attacking guerrillas or escapees even saw him around or knew him to be involved. He has never been mentioned in any of the eyewitness accounts of the assault/raid, he appears in no memoirs as having anything to do with it, and he and Kiyosaki get events confused as well. The raid/assault on Muntinlupa Prison, an assault by guerrillas from outside the prison, occurred on June 25, 1944, with the objective of liberating about 20 captured guerrilla prisoners, including Gustavo Ingles. The breakout/mass escape from inside Muntinlupa occurred August 25th, two months later with around 80 prisoners escaping, among them Father Neri, one of the ringleaders. No one saw Sakakida there, either.

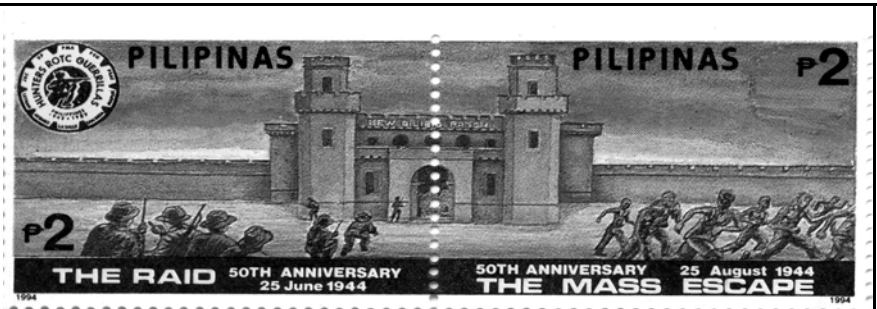


Photo of above stamp courtesy of Mario Feir/Asian Rare Books, Ricardo Trota Jose, and MacArthur Memorial

Both the **Raid/Assault** on Muntinlupa from outside and the prison **Breakout/Mass Escape** from inside are important, well documented events in WWII. Both were celebrated on a Philippine postage stamp issued on the 50th anniversary of the events, with a centerline perforation dividing the Raid from outside Muntinlupa, on the left side of the stamp, while the Breakout from the inside of the prison is depicted on the right side of the stamp.

If Sakakida was involved as he claims, he would be in the published eyewitness accounts. History professor Dr. Violeta S. Ignacio of the University of the Philippines (U.P.) - Pampanga is a recognized authority on the WWII guerrilla movement. She submits in order the books published about the events:

- 1) Forbes J. Monaghan: [Under The Red Sun. A Letter From Manila.](#) New York, The Declan X McMullen Co., 1946 (pg. 194-195)
- 2) Proculo L. Mojica: [Terry’s Hunters.](#) Manila, Benipayo Press, 1965.
- 3) Conrado Gar Agustin: [Men and Memories In Confinement.](#) Manila, MCS Enterprises, Inc., 1972.
- 4) Vidal Brigoli Armamento: [The Indomitable.](#) Pasay City. The Viking, 1972
- 5) Gustavo C. Ingles: [Memories of Pain, Kempei-Tai Torture In The Airport Studio, Fort Santiago And The Old Bilibid Prison. To Redemption In Muntinlupa.](#) San Juan, Metro Manila, Mauban Heritage Foundation, 1992.
- 6) Jesselyn Garcia de la Cruz (ed.): [Civilians In World War II, One Brief Shining Moment, An Eyewitness History.](#) Manila, The James B. Reuter, S.J. Foundation, 1994. This

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book contains the eyewitness accounts of Conrado Gar Agustin, Emmanuel V. de Ocampo, Gustavo C. Ingles, Clodualdo Manas, Eriberto B. Misa, Jr., Fr. Jaime Neri, S. J., Raul S. Manglapus, and Earl Hornbostel.

In none of these books is Sakakida connected to the Muntinlupa events. However, Ingles's book mentions Sakakida in a wartime eyewitness account by a civilian Filipino named Jimmy Mauricio, hauled into court as a suspected subversive. When Mauricio complained to the Japanese military judge about his detention and lack of rights, English-translator Sakakida told him to shut-up. Continuing to complain, Mauricio was then struck a blow by Sakakida.

Dr. Ignacio has never come across anything elsewhere to substantiate or hint of Sakakida's claims. To the list above, WWII historian Dr. Ricardo Jose at U.P. in Manila adds Maximo Fabella's seminal 1961 masters thesis, The Hunters ROTC Guerrillas, Quezon City: University of The Philippines. An edited version appeared in *The Philippine Journal of History*, June, 1962. Again, there is no mention of Sakakida.

In the U.S., author and historian Chris Schaefer has researched the WWII Philippine guerrilla movement. He has dissected Mojica's account of the events and concluded that if Sakakida was going to be anywhere, he would be in that book because "Terry's Hunters" was the guerrilla group that assaulted Muntinlupa, the group with whom Sakakida claimed to have been working. Except that no one in that group, or any guerrilla group in the Philippines, has confirmed they ever communicated with or encountered Sakakida as claimed in A Spy In Their Midst.

Sakakida has no verifiable record of passing intelligence to guerrilla groups as he claims. And all the guerrilla groups around Manila have no record of contact with him. He claims to have sent out radio messages to Australia, but through a guerrilla group that did not even have a radio at the time. Archivist James Zobel at the MacArthur Memorial in Norfolk, VA, wherein reside the files of all wartime messages between the Philippines and MacArthur, has tracked this controversy for years and has never come across any evidence to support Sakakida's claims that he had any contact with any guerrilla groups or ever passed along any intelligence to MacArthur or Australia. If so, Zobel would know about it. And in Manila, Frisco San Juan, former guerrilla intelligence chief, is on record that Sakakida never collected anything, no intelligence ever, for anyone.

Also, if Sakakida had been involved with the raid/assault in June, he would not have mentioned prisoner Ernesto Tupas dimming the lights, as Tupas was not involved with the June Raid. Tupas dimmed the lights for the August breakout/mass escape. Sakakida says that his "attack" took place in August, in which case he could not have been leading the raid/assault of June 25th. The events of the August breakout/mass escape sprang to life from within the prison when a crowd of some 80 prisoners coalesced around Jaime Neri's excuse of meeting for choir practice. Then Tupas dimmed the lights and they escaped through a prison door into the night. Sakakida is completely confused. He has merged two events into one, and for good reason – he wasn't involved with either event.

In Manila, attorney James Litton, a survivor of the Battle of Manila familiar with local distances and pre-war geography, notes the logistical improbability of Sakakida slipping out un-

seen from the old Manila Club on San Marcelino Street before midnight, getting all the way out through the countryside on various roads roundabout to Muntinlupa (a straight-line distance of 15 miles), linking up with the attacking guerrillas in the darkness, personally leading the effort to disarm the prison guards, freeing the prisoners, and then getting back to Manila past checkpoints and sentries and into bed before sunrise and roll call. Not a single author perpetuating Sakakida's claims has ever thought to question this time-and-distance impossibility.

A last sighting of Sakakida, a day or two after the May 6, 1942, surrender on Corregidor, is from Col. Carl Englehardt who writes in 1989 in *The QUAN*, official publication of The American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor, that, "A day or two later, I ran into Staff Sergeant Sakakida near the West Entrance to Malinta Tunnel. Sure enough, he was wearing a Japanese uniform. He hurriedly told me that he had been impressed into the Japanese army because he was obviously of Japanese (sic) descent." From that moment on, Sakakida is alone in his version of events until wandering back into American hands in September, 1945. However, wartime prisoners like Father Neri encountered Sakakida in courtroom appearances wearing the uniform and sword of a Japanese officer in his role as translator.

Sakakida's unverified claims were first documented in March, 1955, when he was interviewed by Major Ann Bray for an official history of the Counter Intelligence Corps. That document then became the basis for even wilder claims not described in A Spy In Their Midst as various authors accepted the story without anyone ever checking the facts. Even before publication of Sakakida and Kiyosaki's book there began an effort within the Hawaii Japanese-American community, with both Senators Akaka and Inouye involved, to award Sakakida the Congressional Medal of Honor for his claims. Lobbying of the U.S. Army and American and Philippine governments began in earnest. Japanese-American newspaper writers and communities elsewhere climbed aboard the bandwagon. On March 15th, 1995, Sakakida's claims were read into the Congressional Record with many submissions of support signed by prominent members of the Japanese-American community in the U.S. All parroted the same fraudulent claims.

Then the U.S. Army turned down the effort with a terse statement in January 1996, ostensibly that time had run out for awarding the Medal of Honor. No further explanation was offered. Instead, Sakakida was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and Bronze Star from the U.S. based on the same untruths, and several medals from the Philippine government, including the Philippine Legion of Honor, bestowed in Washington, DC by the Philippine Ambassador in 1994. Although Father Jaime Neri and his ex-guerrilla colleagues had done their part to expose the claims, to date no one has yet published a definitive history of the case and how the fraud was enabled and perpetuated by military intelligence alumni and various writers, authors and politicians. Father Jaime Neri passed away in 1998, ending a singular effort to combat the fraud, but Gustavo Ingles and Frisco San Juan are still alive in the Philippines.

The author wishes to acknowledge the research assistance of those mentioned in this article as well as Federico Baldassare and Bonnie Rowan in the U.S., and Dulce Festin Baybay, Waldete Cueto, Leslie Murray, Edgar Krohn, Marisse Ochenada, Ernie de Pedro, Myleen Abrigo, Patrick Parsons, and Peter Parsons in the Philippines.

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BACEPOW Membership

Membership in BACEPOW is what holds together those of us who were in the prison camps and provides a forum for us, our families and friends to share our common heritage. BACEPOW membership ensures that you continue to receive our newsletters, notices of luncheons and meetings, information about fellow prisoners and friends, and keeps you connected with others who have shared your experiences. You also receive discounts on our luncheons and reunions.

For those of you who haven't yet renewed your BACEPOW membership for 2012, it is time to do so. Please send your \$15 dues as follows:

Make your check out to: BACEPOW

Mail to: Richard Laurence – Membership Chairman
120 Canal Street
San Rafael, CA 94901
(415)-457-2965

If you are a new member, please also include the POW camp in which you were held, or let us know the reason for your interest. And please include your e-mail address and phone number for quick notices.



The Belles of Santo Tomas (and a few ringers) gathered from all over the U.S. and Canada for a reunion at the Karen and Craig Lewis home in Ojai California in October. Starting at the bottom left: Sally Edgar Van Camp, hidden behind her, Judith Bonniface Johannes, Helen Feldman Dalton, Rosemary Bonniface Burley, Karen Kerns Lewis, Reva Feldman Jolovitz, Maureen Edgar Matthews, Back row: Louise Howard Hill, Lindsay Nielson, Mike Browning, Angus Lorenzen

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