

Japanese American Smithsonian internment camp exhibit visits Santa Cruz

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SANTA CRUZ — An exhibit chronicling a time in recent American history when fear and prejudice were used as tools to override the US Constitution, by the very people who were sworn to uphold it, opened in Santa Cruz Thursday. The traveling exhibition of the Japanese American internment camps during World War II is featured at the Central Branch of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries

The thought-provoking exhibition, which is touring nationally, uses photographs, documents and an interactive video unit to portray the experience of nearly 12,000 Japanese Americans — most of them United States citizens — who were removed from their homes and imprisoned in relocation camps.

Titled "A More Perfect Union," the exhibition addresses several

aspects of the internment such as infringement of constitutional rights, wartime fears and prejudices and the court cases that sought redress. The outstanding record of the 25,000 Japanese Americans who enlisted in the US Armed Forces during World War II is described as well.

The exhibition is a project of the American Library Association and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History (NMAH) with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, a federal agency. It is based on an exhibit of the same name currently on display at the NMAH in Washington D.C.

The Santa Cruz Public Library is one of only 20 libraries throughout the United States selected to display the exhibition, which has been traveling since the fall of 1995. It was selected after the American Library accepted a grant proposal which was written and submitted by the UC San-



Michael Merrill

Event organizer Susan Cooper, author and internee Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and internee Mas Hashimoto at the Santa Cruz central library branch opening Friday.

United States Department of Justice

NOTICE

ENEMY ALIEN PROHIBITED AREA NO. 28

The United States Government requires all aliens of German, Italian, or Japanese nationality to vacate this area by midnight, February 24.

Go to the nearest local public employment office of the United States Employment Service for details.

AVVISO

AGLI STRANIERI DI NAZIONI NEMICHE È PROIBITA LA ZONA NO. 28

Il Governo degli Stati Uniti richiede che gli stranieri di nazionalità tedesca, italiana, o giapponese sgombrino questa zona, non più tardi della mezzanotte del 24 Febbraio.

Rivolgetevi per dettagli all'ufficio di collocamento pubblico più vicino del UNITED STATES EMPLOYMENT SERVICE.

A portion of the posters put up in Watsonville at the beginning of World War II, announcing the exclusion of enemy aliens from the coastal area.

ta Cruz Library and the Santa Cruz Public Library.

Event coordinator Susan Cooper has the difficult task of organizing a series of speakers who will make presentations throughout the exhibit's run.

On September 18, author and filmmaker Geoffrey Dunn will speak at the McPherson Center about an aspect of this dark time many people are not aware of. His lecture, "Male Notte: The Relocation of Santa Cruz Italians During World War II," deals with the little known persecution of other races as well. According to Dunn, not only were Japanese Americans singled out and relocated, more than 14,000 German and Italian Americans were imprisoned, some were held for the entire length of the war.

September 27, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston will host the showing of the docudrama "Farewell to Manzanar," based upon the book she co-authored with her husband James Houston.

R-P 9-697
Jeanne Houston was the youngest of 10 children. When war broke out, her entire family was imprisoned for three and a half years. At the time, her father George Wakatsuki was a strawberry grower on Amesti Road, as were many internees.

"Telling Stories from the Internment," a presentation by storyteller Megumi, is scheduled at the Central Library on September 18. Megumi said the tales she tells are about a people who would not allow the indignity of imprisonment to tarnish their souls. "Through strength and intelligence, they managed to preserve their integrity," Magumi said.

Auxiliary exhibits on local events of the time of the internment will be featured at the Watsonville Public Library and will run concurrently with the main exhibition.

The exhibition will be open to the public until Oct. 16.