



# PACIFIC CITIZEN

CELEBRATING 93 YEARS

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Dance group NYC Yosakoi Team Kogyoku performs a traditional Japanese dance born in the post-WWII era that embraces jazz and hip-hop.

PHOTO: GIULIA CIOFINI/COURTESY OF JASGP

# NORMAN MINETA, FORMER U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY, *DIES*



**Norman Y. Mineta dedicated his life to public service. He passed at age 90 on May 3.**

By Associated Press

**ANNAPOLIS, MD** — Norman Y. Mineta, who broke racial barriers for Asian Americans serving in high-profile government posts and ordered commercial flights grounded after the 9/11 terror attacks as the nation's federal transportation secretary, died May 3. He was 90.

John Flaherty, Mineta's former chief of staff, said Mineta died peacefully at his home surrounded by family in Edgewater, Md.

"His cause of death was a heart ailment," Flaherty added. "He was an extraordinary public servant and a very dear friend."

Mineta broke racial barriers for Asian Americans in becoming mayor

of San Jose, Calif. He also was the first Asian American to become a federal Cabinet secretary, serving under both Democratic President Bill Clinton and Republican George W. Bush.

Bush went on to award Mineta the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In a statement, the former president said Mineta was "a wonderful American story about someone who overcame hardship and prejudice to serve in the United States Army, Congress and the Cabinet of two Presidents."

"As my Secretary of Transportation, he showed great leadership in helping prevent further attacks on and after 9/11. As I said when presenting him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Norm has given his country a lifetime of service, and he's given his fellow citizens an example of leadership, devotion to duty and personal character," the former president added.

The son of Japanese immigrants who spent two years of his childhood at a World War II internment camp, Mineta began his political career leading his hometown of San Jose before joining the Clinton administration as commerce secretary and then crossing party lines to serve in Bush's Cabinet.

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## Utah Governor Signs Day of Remembrance Bill



**Utah State Sen. Jani Iwamoto and Governor Spencer Cox**

**SALT LAKE CITY** — Although Utah has had a Governor's Proclamation in the past to commemorate Feb. 19 as a Day of Remembrance for Japanese Americans, it has been done on a temporary basis. A bill to make a permanent Day of Remembrance on Feb. 19 was sponsored by Utah State Sen. Jani Iwamoto (D-Salt Lake City). The bill passed the Legislature and was signed by Gov. Spencer Cox and Lt. Gov. Deidre Henderson on April 18.

Among those present at the signing representing the Japanese American community of Utah were Iwamoto's husband, Steve Fukumitsu, and her mother, Yas Iwamoto; Judge Raymond Uno (who had been at Heart Mountain); Ted Nagata (who had been at Topaz) with his wife, Yeiko, and daughter, Susan; Jeanette Misaka (who had been at Heart Mountain); Jason Kunisaki, Mike Iwasaki and Floyd Mori.

The JACL, other civil rights organizations and individuals have regularly commemorated a Day of

Remembrance on Feb. 19 to remember the World War II incarceration experience of Japanese Americans. On that day, Feb. 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066.

EO 9066 gave military commanders in certain areas the authority to remove Japanese Americans and people of Japanese descent who were living on the West Coast of the U.S. — primarily in California, Oregon and Washington — to 10 incarceration centers that were built in remote and desolate areas of the U.S.

The point of remembering is to try to ensure that no one else will ever have to suffer such an egregious violation of their constitutional rights as American citizens. It is hoped that the general public will become educated on this part of American history, which is not well-known.



**Utah State Sen. Jani Iwamoto (left) speaks at the April 18 bill signing ceremony, which was also attended by Judge Raymond Uno (past JACL National President), Ted Nagata (at Topaz as a child), Jeanette Misaka (at Heart Mountain and former JACL IDC Governor) and Floyd Mori (past JACL National President and Executive Director). Seated are Gov. Spencer Cox and Lt. Gov. Deidre Henderson.**

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FLOYD MORI

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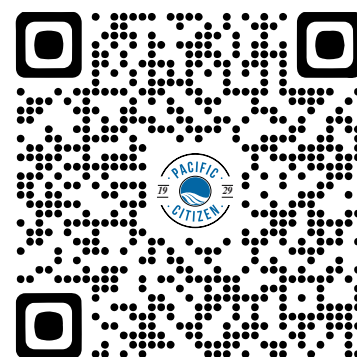
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*'I'm glad to see the Pacific Citizen growing and evolving with its website, and especially LOVE the much easier-to-navigate digital archives. It's a treasure trove for JAs to learn about our community's history, and for scholars and journalists looking to connect the past with the present. Thanks for the improvements, P.C.!'*

— Gil Asakawa



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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED

By David Inoue,  
JACL Executive Director

In Japanese American politics, it can easily be said that the three men I admired the most were Sen. Daniel Inouye, Bob Matsui and Norman Mineta. And, of course, we can't ignore Patsy Mink and Spark Matsunaga. Growing up, these were the names that I knew, even in Ohio, that represented me as a Japanese American in Congress, even if they weren't my representatives.

Growing up in the Chicago suburbs, I recall reading the children's book biography of Inouye and saw myself in the drawn illustrations of the senator when he was a young boy. Later, when I was in medical school and planning a conference,

I used the fledgling internet to reach out to Congressman Matsui on a whim, not actually expecting a response. He wasn't able to attend our conference in Columbus, Ohio, but he did respond personally, and we emailed back and forth, which made an early impression on me.

I had the opportunity to meet Sen. Inouye a few times before his passing, but the one person I could almost always count on to see at any Asian American community event was Sec. Norman Mineta. By the time I had already arrived in D.C., he had already been elevated to Secretary of Commerce at the end of the Clinton administration and following a mildly contentious election compared to more recent history, had stayed on as Secretary of Trans-

portation in the Bush administration.

When he took the position of Secretary of Transportation, he famously noted that there are no Democratic or Republican highways. It was almost a perfect culmination of his career to serve in a bipartisan cabinet going back so many years to his childhood friendship with Sen. Alan Simpson of Wyoming. Out of that friendship and spirit of bipartisan collaboration, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation will be breaking ground on the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain in what will surely be a bittersweet ceremony later this summer.

It was that sense of willingness to collaborate and work within his own party and across the aisle that helped to secure passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 for which he is revered in the Japanese American community.

Mineta's stature extended beyond the Japanese American community, but it was because he was always willing to show up. He was always present for the entire Asian American community. He understood his role as a leader, but he was a leader

because he put in the time and effort to support so many of us.

These past two years have been especially challenging, as we have been starved of that personal interaction that Sec. Mineta was so generous. One of my favorite memories is from what was one of his last in-person appearances before Covid.

We had participated in a Day of Remembrance panel at the Smithsonian Museum of American History, and after the event, we were all doing the typical milling around and talking. My son was with me at my side, and Norm reached out to Akira to ask him how he was doing and if he enjoyed the program. The two of them got into what was probably a five-minute conversation. About what? I have no idea.

That to me highlights why he was such a revered leader in our community. It didn't matter who you were — everyone was important to him. Even as so many others would seek him out for conversation and a picture, he would instead seek out someone like my son and make him feel important, that having been at that event was important.

My son is now 10, the age Sec. Mineta was when his family was sent from their home in San Jose, Calif., to Heart Mountain, Wyo. Sec. Mineta was always a great storyteller, and one that he told often, but also one of my favorites, was when he first saw the exclusion orders directed to "all persons of Japanese ancestry, including aliens and non-aliens."

He asked his brother what a non-alien was. He was told that that term referred to him, a U.S. citizen. As a result, Sec. Mineta always exalted the status of U.S. citizen, but more importantly, he lived his life as one trying to honor that status. He exemplified our duty as citizens to serve our nation and work for the good of everyone, alien and non-alien.

May we, as an organization, continue to live up to our responsibility as the Japanese American Citizens League and meet the standards of citizenship set by Sec. Mineta.

*David Inoue is executive director of the JACL. He is based in the organization's Washington, D.C., office.*



## REFLECTIONS

# NEW SEATTLE TORII CELEBRATES FRIENDSHIP AND A FAMILY CONNECTION

By April Hattori

My grandparents met and married in Seattle in the 1930s. Their journey took them to Los Angeles, internment camps in Arkansas and then Chicago, where they raised their four children after World War II. But their final wishes were for their ashes to be spread in Lake Washington in Seattle.

A new Japanese torii in Seattle's Seward Park on the shores of Lake Washington stands as a symbol of friendship among all people and also a memorial to my grandparents.

In April, the Seattle community, including Mayor Bruce Harrell, celebrated the torii, which replaces a 26-foot timber torii given to the city by Seattle's Japanese American community in 1934. It fell into disrepair in the 1980s, and the Friends of Seward Park, with the support of the Seattle Parks Foundation, raised funds to replace it. My family

proudly contributed to the effort, which in total benefited from the support of over 300 donors.

Aligning with the symbolism of the torii, the celebration was a multicultural event including the visceral drumbeats of the Seattle School of Taiko, graceful Japanese dancing, the exuberant Washington Diamonds Drill Team and Drumline and the entertaining Mak Fai Chinese lion dancers.

In addition to Harrell, speakers included Duwamish Tribal Chairwoman Cecile Hansen; Washington Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos; poet Lawrence Matsuda; Joey Manson, director of the Seward Park Audubon Center; and Paul Talbert, president of the Friends of Seward Park. Japanese Consul General Inagaki Hisao was also in attendance.

Harrell noted that the torii represents "oneness."

"It tells us about our commonality," Harrell said. "If you are of Japanese descent, as I am, or are part of the

Indigenous peoples' culture or if you are not of those cultures, that is what it represents. You are celebrating the beauty of the Japanese culture as an example of what you have in common."

Santos emphasized that the torii is a "gateway of opportunity that our forebears passed through, giving all of us a foundation and a future, which we now store for our children and our grandchildren."

The torii was originally given to the City of Seattle by the Japanese American community in 1934 as part of the International Potlatch celebration. It was then donated as a gesture of intercultural friendship and placed in Seward Park.

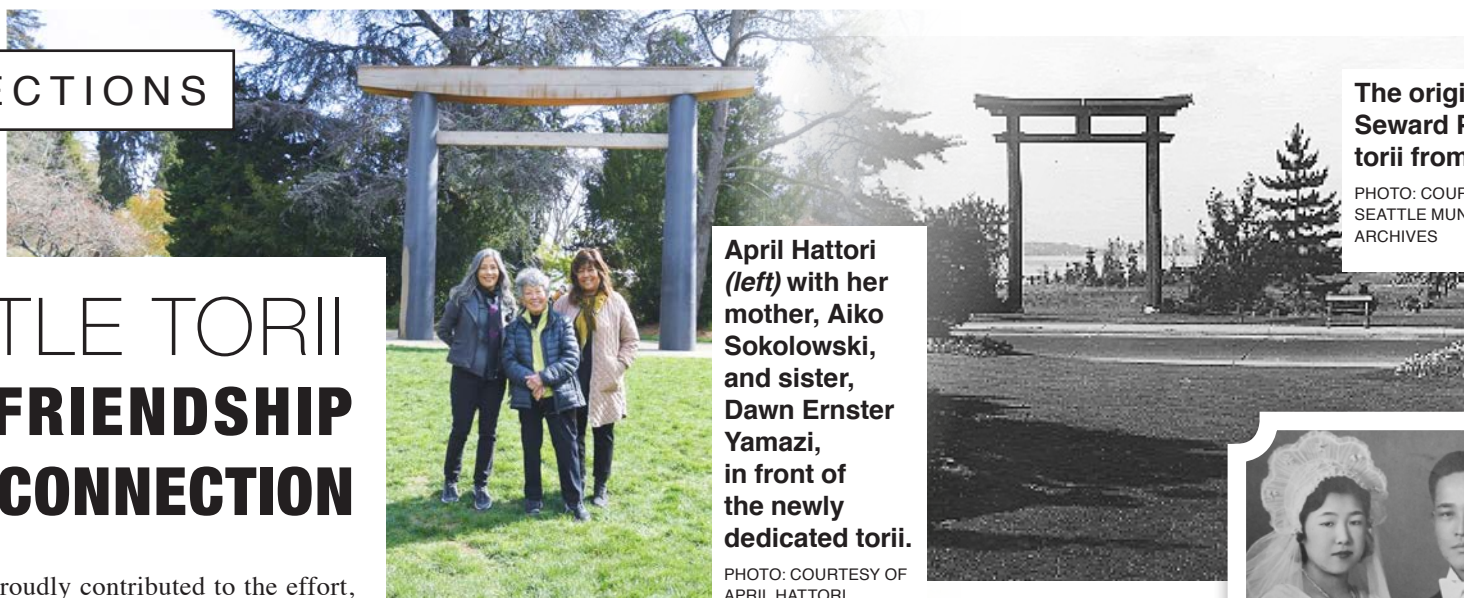
At that time, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce hired Kichio Allen Arai, whose son attended the April event, to design a torii. The design, for which Arai was paid \$2, was

modeled in part after the famous torii in Miyajima, Japan. Master carpenter Kichisaburo Ishimitsu built the torii.

The new torii was designed by Murase Associates with Japanese architectural firm Takumi Company and input from the public. It is located in Seward Park's north meadow, welcoming all who enter the park (5902 Lake Washington Blvd. South). The project includes a history stone and donor stone, which includes the names of my grandparents.

The columns (hashira) of the torii are made of natural basalt columns from central Washington. One giant western red cedar tree harvested on Vancouver Island provided the timber for the lintel (kasagi) and crosspiece (nuki).

As hawks flew overhead on a sunny April day, punctuated by cherry blossoms in full bloom, celebrating



April Hattori (left) with her mother, Aiko Sokolowski, and sister, Dawn Ernster Yamazi, in front of the newly dedicated torii.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF APRIL HATTORI

The original Seward Park torii from 1935

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SEATTLE MUNICIPAL ARCHIVES



A wedding photo of April Hattori's grandparents, Kazue and Ryokichi Yamazi

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE HATTORI YAMAZI FAMILY

the torii was a profound moment for the Seattle community and my family. The original torii stood when my grandparents began their lives together in Seattle, and the new one is an enduring connection to them now and for generations to come.

*April Hattori is a new member of the Las Vegas chapter of the JACL.*

# UTAH STATE CAPITOL DISPLAYS 'TOPAZ STORIES' EXHIBIT

The exhibit features 31 stories reflecting the diverse voices of three generations of men, women and children who were forcibly incarcerated in the Utah desert during World War II.

By Floyd Mori

A special public reception was held at the Capitol Rotunda on April 22 to mark the opening of the "Topaz Stories" exhibit — featuring 31 stories from the World War II Japanese American incarceration at the Topaz Relocation Center — which is now on display through the end of 2022 at the Utah State Capitol in Salt Lake City.

Serving as the event's emcee was Max Chang, who welcomed guests — including Topaz residents, survivors and their descendants, some of whom traveled from California to be in attendance — and introduced speakers and special invitees.

Among the dignitaries present who gave remarks were Utah State Sen. Jani Iwamoto, Topaz Museum Board Member Sherrie Hayashi and Utah Senate President Stuart Adams. Also in attendance were Brad Westwood of the Utah Department of Culture and Community Engagement, Salt Lake City Council Member Darin Mano, who was the architect for the Topaz Museum, and filmmakers Dianne Fukami and Debra Nakatomi, who produced a documentary about the Hon. Norman Y. Mineta. Fukami and Nakatomi interviewed several of the event's participants about their Topaz experience.

Representing Gov. Spencer Cox was Mike Mower, senior adviser of community outreach and intergovernmental relations, who presented a signed proclamation by the governor declaring the day the official opening of the exhibit.

More than 11,000 people, the majority of whom were from the San Francisco Bay Area, were sent to Topaz, which opened near Delta, Utah, approximately six months following the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on Feb. 19, 1942. According to the Utah Division of State History, Topaz housed 8,000 people at its peak before closing on Oct. 31, 1945.

The 31 stories on display at the Capitol exhibit are from a present collection of more than 60 narratives given by Topaz survivors and their descendants. The collection began in 2016 with personal family stories of the unjust wartime incarceration experience and has grown through the years to include memories, photographs and memoirs mailed or emailed to the Topaz Stories Project.

Jane Beckwith, board president of the Topaz Museum, is a local resident and teacher from Delta who has been instrumental in commemorating the incarceration experience at Topaz.

She oversees the new Topaz Museum, which was built in the town of Delta with exhibits and artifacts from Topaz.

Assisting Beckwith are the dedicated volunteers who make up the Topaz Stories Project Team from the Friends of Topaz, including Ann Tamaki Dion, Kim Kodachi Hill, Jonathan Hirabayashi, Ron Sasaki, Barbara Seito, Ken Tanabe and Ken Yamashita.

People who were incarcerated at Topaz are encouraged to visit the website and contact the committee if they are interested in sharing their personal stories of life in the Topaz Camp or their experiences of WWII.

Some in attendance at the opening event also made a trip to Topaz and Delta the next day to visit the Topaz Museum and the site of the Topaz Camp.

Local chapters and leaders of the JACL put up monument markers at the site of the Topaz Camp years ago. However, the markers became targets for vandals shooting in the area and were heavily damaged as a result. Local JACL leaders in Utah later reinstalled new markers with a design that would not be conducive for target practice.

Overall, the lessons learned of the Topaz Stories Project continue to be relevant today, 80 years following the issuance of EO 9066. Japanese Americans want to share the history of the WWII incarceration sites so that the general public can become educated about their stories, not wanting anyone else to have to experience what their community suffered during WWII.

On the Topaz stories website, Topaz Stories Editor Ruth Sasaki wrote, "It has always been our vision to put these stories online and to share them with the world. Never has it been more important to fight against the demonization and dehumanization of those who look different. Stories have the power to reveal humanity, build empathy; and so, with this website, we hope to keep the stories alive."

Utah residents and others who have the opportunity are encouraged to view the "Topaz Stories" exhibit and the Topaz Museum along with the site of the Topaz Camp. The museum is located at 55 W. Main St. in Delta.

— Additional reporting by P.C. Staff

Some of those in attendance at the April 22 exhibit opening also visited the Topaz Museum in Delta, Utah, the following day.



## Topaz Stories



January 18-December 31, 2022, Utah State Capitol, 3rd Floor Mezzanine.

The "Topaz Stories" exhibit will be on display until Dec. 31.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE TOPAZ MUSEUM



An inside view of the Topaz Museum displays

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FLOYD MORI

With the cherry blossoms in full bloom at the Utah State Capitol, the "Topaz Stories" exhibit held an official opening reception on April 22.

The "Topaz Stories" exhibit tells some of the stories of those who were incarcerated at Topaz. The entire collection of stories can be accessed online at [www.topazstories.com](http://www.topazstories.com).

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— Norman Y. Mineta, Honorary Chair, Centennial Education Fund

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# TO LIVE AND DIE in Crenshaw

Thirty years after the Los Angeles Riots, the once-bustling Japanese American neighborhood lives in the past and present.

By Lynda Lin Grigsby,  
Contributor

Scott Nagatani is haunted by the ghosts of his neighborhood's past. When he walks the streets of Crenshaw, a neighborhood in South Los Angeles, he hears echoes of laughter from people long gone and sees shadows of structures that no longer stand. This happens when you've been here for as long as Nagatani, 66.

What once existed in Crenshaw was a bustling Japanese American neighborhood affectionately called "Seinan" that slowly faded over time, suffered collateral damage in the 1992 uprising and rose from the ashes against all odds.

"I'm committed to living and dying in Crenshaw," said Nagatani, a Sansei musician, who lives in the light blue house his parents bought the year he was born. He has lived in other cities but moved back to his childhood home after his parents died in 2012.

These days, Nagatani jokes he tries not to break anything in the three-bedroom house his dad worked hard to maintain. Most of the furniture is the same, and he takes walks on the tree-lined street he ran as a kid.

During his time in Los Angeles, Nagatani has witnessed two racial uprisings — from a distance with the 1965 Watts Rebellion and

Shig Matsukuma (left) is all smiles standing next to his son, Mark, in this undated photo from the family's liquor store.



Esther and Shig Matsukuma with their children (bottom, from left), Jerry, Norma, Mark, and Sandy.

PHOTOS: THE MATSUKUMA FAMILY

up-close with the 1992 Los Angeles uprising, right at his parents' doorstep in Crenshaw.

Thirty years ago, Crenshaw businesses were set ablaze and vandalized — from April 29-May 4 — after four Los Angeles Police Department officers were acquitted of excessive use of force charges in the videotaped beating of Rodney King. The reference to the anniversary makes Nagatani suck in his breath and pause.

It seems like just yesterday when everything was on fire. Crenshaw bore witness to many traumatic and historical events, but it was also a place of cultural joy for Japanese

Americans; a center of multicultural identity with a heart that continues to beat today. To love the neighborhood, you must know its origins and its evolution because if you don't know, now you know.

*'I used to think the world was all Japanese American.'*

Today, the Crenshaw District is known as a predominantly Black neighborhood that gave us rap artists like Nipsey Hussle. But after World War II, Crenshaw was home to a large Japanese American population that knew how to throw a party.

Residents say the Crenshaw Square Carnival rivaled Little Tokyo's Nisei Week. Locals ate sushi at the Holiday Bowl while bowling balls popped pins in all directions. On the way home, residents picked up Japanese groceries at Enbun Market and buttercream cakes at Grace Pastries, then drove to homes landscaped with Japanese maple trees and stone lanterns.

In its heyday, Seinan, or the Crenshaw District, was an insular community with Japanese American mom-and-pop businesses lining Jefferson Boulevard from Vermont Avenue to Crenshaw Boulevard. There were Japanese American places of worship and sports leagues.

"I used to think the world was all Japanese American," said Nagatani.

The Nisei moved to Crenshaw after WWII because they had no choice — it was one of

the few places in the Los Angeles area that allowed Japanese Americans to buy homes and re-establish roots after the mass incarceration took everything away. Rev. Masao Kodani said many Japanese Americans and Black Americans stepped into the middle class in Crenshaw.

The roots that grew in Crenshaw were multicultural. When Kodani arrived at Senshin Buddhist Temple in 1968, the neighborhood was populated with Japanese Americans and African Americans, who socialized, schooled and dined together.

"No one thought anything about eating soul food dishes, Japanese dishes or a combination of the two," said Kodani, 82.

Crenshaw's multiethnic vibe was what Scott Kurashige called in his 2008 book "The Shifting Grounds of Race" a "pivotal site of Black/Japanese intersection and an island of integrationist hope."

"This wasn't anything that was forced," said Nick Nagatani, 73, the older brother of Scott Nagatani. "It was so good. It actually felt organic."

In the Crenshaw District, Shigeo Matsukuma went from working as a gardener to owning two neighborhood liquor stores — Midway Liquor on the corner of Western and Pico Boulevards and L & J Liquor on the corner of Venice Boulevard and 12th Avenue. It was a family business, so his sons worked at the stores — Jerry Matsukuma started working there at 20 years old.

"It was fun," said Jerry Matsukuma, now 70. "Cause, you know, we knew all the neighbors and how crazy things were."

He describes the liquor store days as a tragedy-comedy with equal parts danger, comedy and heart. There were late-night break-ins and daytime robberies, but mostly, the liquor store felt like a stage. One day, a lady came in wearing a coat. She was drunk. She fell and a white rabbit jumped out of her coat.

» See CRENSHAW on page 8



Scott Nagatani lives in the Crenshaw home his Nisei parents bought when he was born.

# GLOBAL SOUNDS AND SOLIDARITY

Philadelphia's Shofuso Cherry Blossom Festival builds Black-Asian solidarity in celebration of shared cultures across communities.

By Rob Buscher,  
Contributor

In the past nine months while working for Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia, I have had the opportunity to ponder at great length the ways in which public programming that is meant to celebrate Japanese culture while also strengthening U.S.-Japan relations can both cater to the specific interests of a localized audience and also retain the spirit of Japanese culture.

This is no easy task in of itself, and the challenge is further compounded by the necessity to find ways for that programming to resonate with both multigenerational Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals living abroad.

As a result, this year's Shofuso Cherry Blossom Festival of Philadelphia looked a great deal different from previous years, as the event highlighted the overlap among Japanese and African American musical cultures.

While still adhering to the traditional ohanami practice, encouraging families and friends to picnic under the sakura blossoms, the new event format consisted of a three-day concert series more akin to a music festival than previous years where performance showcases were limited to cultural demonstrations.

This is largely owing to the investment from Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, who funded the Re:imagining Recovery Project that I was hired to oversee. The project's main goals are to re-establish Shofuso Japanese house and garden as a Japanese American community site, while also better engaging the predominantly Black neighborhood residents of Parkside



The "Unity Ceremony," featuring Ambassador Mikio Mori of the Consul General of Japan in New York and local elected officials, stressed the importance of friendship within the context of U.S.-Japan relations and Black-Asian solidarity.

PHOTO: HOOPLA EVENTS

JACLeR Rob Buscher (left), who has been working with Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia, speaks at the festival alongside Parkside Neighborhood Consultant Michael Burch.

PHOTO: GIULIA CIOFINI

West Philadelphia, where Shofuso is located.

From the outset of this project, we have been pursuing a two-pronged strategy for building these relationships: to explore our shared experiences as historically oppressed communities and highlight the existing overlap within our cultures.

Through educational programs such as the Black History Month Bunka-sai (Cultural Fair) that was hosted at a local high school in February, we effectively explored mutual experiences such as the segregated troop regiments of World War II, an event that also featured a screening of Jon Osaki's short documentary "Reparations," which explores the struggle for Black reparations through the context of Japanese American redress.

While this earlier program was effective at conveying the shared history within an educational context, for a large-scale public event like the Shofuso Cherry Blossom Festival,

we figured it would be better to lead with a celebration of our shared culture instead.

In the hundreds of conversations that I have had with individuals and organizations in the African American community about this project, the topic of music came up every time. Anyone who has spent time in Japan will recognize the impact that Black music culture has had on Japanese popular music.

From the jazz era to funk, city pop, reggae and hip-hop, African American artists have inspired generations of Japanese musicians to take up these genres and leave their mark on global music culture.

As Japanese Americans, we, too, derive much of our popular music expression from musical genres originated within the Black community. From swing jazz dances in the concentration camps to hip-hop culture-infused street fashion boutique Japangeles, the influence of African American culture is palpable across generations of Nikkei cultural expression.

Undoubtedly, there are ethnomusicologists whose scholarly work on this subject could convey these points with far greater nuance, but from my limited knowledge of music theory, a few facts stick out.



Shofuso's artist-in-residence DJ Oluwafemi (above) is a Nigerian-born artist and musician who has been based in Philly for more than 20 years.

PHOTOS: GIULIA CIOFINI

Jason Chu (below left) and Alan Z, who recently released their album "FACE VALUE," perform during Hip-Hop Night.



Adhering to traditional ohanami practice, festivalgoers at the Shofuso Cherry Blossom Festival enjoy picnics and music under the beautiful sakura blossoms.

PHOTO: GIULIA CIOFINI/COURTESY OF JASGP



**Japanese Hawaiian taiko virtuoso Kenny Endo (right) performed as part of his 45th anniversary tour.**

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF JASGP



**A variety of percussion groups took to the stage during the festival's afternoon lineup. Pictured is the Swarthmore Taiko Ensemble.**

**The West Powelton Drummers, also known as the "Sixers Stixers" because they frequently perform at Philadelphia 76ers basketball games, were one of the many drumline groups to perform on the festival stage.**

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF JASGP



Blues is based on the pentatonic scale — the same five tones that are used in Japanese traditional music. Syncopation and call-and-response lyrics are often used in both gospel and Japanese folk music.

Taiko drumming and African percussion styles are both based in complex polyrhythms. In the way that we might recognize sonic Black-ness within musical genres that are derived from African American communities, given these similarities, there must also be some correlation to the aural properties of Japanese music. Ultimately, these were the elements that this concert series sought to explore.

The festival began in the evening on April 8 with a hip-hop show featuring Shin-Nisei rapper G Yamazawa as the event's headliner. He had previously performed at the 2018 JACL National Convention in Philadelphia, so he was a natural choice for the lineup.

Funnily enough, the idea for a hip-hop night actually started in a conversation with Jason Chu, a Chinese American artist-activist. Chu recently released a concept album titled "FACE VALUE" with rapper and R&B singer Alan Z that explores the history of Chinese exclusion contextualized within the uptick of anti-Asian violence amid the pandemic.

Billed as "The Chinatown Tour" — they also performed alongside MC Tingbudong aka Jamel Mims, an African American man who studied hip-hop in China on a Fulbright Scholarship. Mims raps and sings in Mandarin Chinese as well as English, so the two acts combined were already addressing the themes of solidarity building and intersectionality that our concert series was built around.

As the primary sponsor of their tour, Organization of Chinese Americans was also involved by helping to promote the concert and hosting a situational awareness workshop and bystander intervention training as part of its visit to Philadelphia.

To contextualize their tour within the work we are doing in West Philly, it was also important to have local artists involved. DJ Oluwafemi (who is currently Shofuso's artist-in-residence) is a Nigerian-born artist and musician who has been based in Philly for the past two decades.

Oluwafemi started out the evening with a set to warm up the crowd and served as house deejay for each of the hip-hop artists. The other local artist who joined the April 8 lineup was Red Mcfly, a biracial Black-Japanese American whose given name is Kenjiro Lucas.

Bookending the Chinatown Tour perfor-

mances with our two Nikkei artists, we were able to frame the broader conversation of Black-Asian solidarity within our Japanese American community's relationship to hip-hop.

Day 2 of the concert series was billed as the event's taiko and funk night, anchored by none other than Japanese Hawaiian taiko virtuoso Kenny Endo. For anyone who is familiar with Endo and his music, one can see how his group would feel at home among the lineup of West Philly funk bands.

Case in point, as Endo was loading-in, he ran into the drummer from the next act, Badd Kitt, whom he had played with several decades earlier in Hawaii. Speaking to the incredible versatility of Endo's troupe, as part of their performance, we coordinated a special collaboration with Opera Philadelphia.

JACL Philadelphia has had an interesting relationship with Opera Philadelphia over the years, stemming from a rocky start when we successfully advocated against its use of yellowface makeup in the 2016 production of Puccini's "Turandot."

Through that experience, we were able to develop a productive collaboration that has led to the inclusion of a Japanese Canadian-directed production featured during its fall 2022 Opera Festival.

Amid our ongoing cultural advisory conversations, David Levy, senior vp of artistic operations, had the inspired idea to pair a chorus of opera singers alongside Endo's troupe. The result was a magical rendition of "Ame," a song that Endo originally dedicated to the victims of 9/11, performed with a dozen opera singers under the sakura at peak bloom.

Neither Badd Kitt nor Omar's Hat, the two West Philly funk bands who joined the bill after Endo, have Japanese American members, which initially led to some questions from our own team about whether they should be included in the lineup.

In talking with Brieze Thompson, the keytar extraordinaire frontwoman for Badd Kitt, she reminded me that most of the musical equipment that gives funk its unique sound is made in Japan.

In essence, without the synthesizers, keyboards and effects pedals designed and pro-

duced in Japan, funk would not sound the way it does. Needless to say, she sold me on that idea, and the local crowds from West Philly came out in droves to see both bands.

DJ Oluwafemi also returned the next evening for a special deejay set combining motion graphics projection timed to the beat of the music he was performing. Drums, patterns and the rhythmic evolution of repetition are woven into Oluwafemi's African-inspired musical style and visual explorations.

Combined with the abstract renditions of sakura blossoms that he developed for this year's festival design, Oluwafemi visualized the coalescence of African and Japanese culture merging into a third distinct, blended culture. It was beautiful to behold, and I look forward to seeing what else Oluwafemi comes up with during his residency at Shofuso, which extends through summer 2022.

The final day of the Sakura Concert Series was the longest, with performances running from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Starting with a welcoming performance from KyoDaiko, Philadelphia's longest-running taiko troupe, we then transitioned into a brief speaker program titled the "Unity Ceremony."

» See **SOLIDARITY** on page 9



**Samba beats with drumline performers Acarajé**

## CRENSHAW » continued from page 5

“I kind of miss that kind of crap,” he said, laughing.

The store gave out a lot of credit. Customers would come in with empty pockets but ask for some orange juice or a bag of chips, so the Matsukumas gave store credit with a signature and a promise for reimbursement.

This is what you do, said Jerry Matsukuma, to help people who came into the neighborhood store day after day. When violence arrived on their street, he did not expect these neighborhood people to save the store.

*‘It felt like the world was ending.’*

On April 29, 1992, a jury acquitted four LAPD officers on charges of using excessive force against King, a Black motorist, whose brutal beating during his arrest was recorded and broadcasted repeatedly on TV news programs.

Hours after the acquittal, the unrest began. Rage over the injustice and years of racial and economic inequality spilled onto the streets. South Los Angeles stores were looted, destroyed and set afire. Thousands were injured, and 63 people died. The unrest lasted five days and spread into the Crenshaw District, about 12 miles away from the start of unrest — the intersection of Florence and Normandie.

“It was tragic to see race relations crumble and get left in the ashes,” said Nick Nagatani.

During the uprising, Scott Nagatani, who lived in Echo Park, came to Crenshaw to check on his parents. He can still see images of businesses in the iconic Crenshaw Square burning. The words caught in his throat as he shuffled through the memories.

“It was hard,” said Scott Nagatani. “It felt like the world was ending.”

Jerry Matsukuma was home in South Pasadena when a friend called and told him to turn on the television. He watched coverage of the unrest, looked out the window at the thick plumes of dark smoke on the horizon and said to himself, “Oh, man, it’s burning.”

During the five days of violence, Jerry Matsukuma and other employees of L & J Liquor continued to go to work. It was a surreal experience, he said, because they were never



The now-defunct Holiday Bowl is long gone, but the bones are still there.



Jerry Matsukuma still invests in the Crenshaw neighborhood with his family real estate business. He is pictured here (right) in an undated photo with his wife, Maria, and their children, Cameron, Carly and Kai.

sure if there would be a store there.

During the unrest, L & J Liquor stood tall while other businesses around it were broken or burnt down.

“People were protecting us,” said Jerry Matsukuma. “Neighbors were out there.”

The liquor store was next door to a laundromat, so residents washed their clothes and kept a watchful eye over the store. Because most grocery stores were looted, residents flocked to L & J Liquor to buy canned goods, food and drinks.

The 1992 uprising has many narrative threads, but a lesser-known one comes from Crenshaw, the “island of integrationist hope,” where Black American residents stood in protective vigilance at Japanese American businesses like L & J Liquor, the Holiday Bowl and Senshin Buddhist Temple.

This happens when roots grow together, and neighbors show up for other neighbors.

Thirty years later, Jerry Matsukuma is still trying to find meaning in what happened. Why was his store left standing? Over the years, residents have told him they were outside his store those nights — waiting and protecting.

All Jerry Matsukuma could say each

time is, “Thanks.”

The Matsukumas sold L & J Liquor in 2000 and started a family-run property management company, All Capital Property Management, based in the Crenshaw District. He may not live there anymore, but he still invests in the neighborhood and reflects fondly on the liquor store days.

“I miss the people.”

*‘I’m really lucky to be here.’*

The Crenshaw of today looks different. Ask any longtime resident, and they will tell stories of the neighborhood’s fall and rise from the ashes. The postwar multicultural haven changed when Japanese Americans started moving away.

The Sansei generation, freer to buy homes in other cities, moved to nearby Gardena, Torrance and other cities. Seinan’s residential tree-lined streets were lined with “for sale” signs, and the roots that grew together started growing apart.

Recent demographic data shows that Crenshaw residents are predominantly Black and Latinx. About 6 percent of the city’s population identifies as Asian Americans and

Pacific Islanders. But in the long history of Los Angeles, everything old is becoming new again. A trickle of Japanese American residents are retracing family footsteps back to the place where they once called home.

The Nisei had to be there. Now, there is a choice, and Sansei and Yonsei are choosing to come back.

Cameron Matsukuma, 37, dreams of buying a Spanish-style house in her dad’s old neighborhood, where she works in the family’s property management business. She rents in Crenshaw now, but she wants to set down roots.

“It feels like home,” said Cameron Matsukuma, a Yonsei.

Neighbors often like to quiz Scott Nagatani about the neighborhood’s history. Most of the time, he knows the answer. He can see the images of the past in his mind. He calls it his seniority on the streets, which gives him a tremendous sense of pride.

Places like the Holiday Bowl are gone, but their bones are still there — Google architecture in a building that now houses a Starbucks and Walgreens. Some residents bemoan the changes as signs of gentrification, but Scott Nagatani sees progress. At home in Crenshaw, he finds comfort in the ghosts and the promise of rebirth. It is a place where the past and present live side by side.

And the city’s present is best described by Crenshaw’s beloved Buddhist priest.

“We are not now what we once were,” said Kodani, “but we are products of that remarkable togetherness that still enriches today and into the future.” ■



Today, the Crenshaw District is known as a predominantly Black neighborhood that gave us rap artists like Nipsey Hussle. But after World War II, Crenshaw was home to a large Japanese American population.



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## SOLIDARITY » continued from page 7

As the program season at Shofuso continues through the fall, we hope to expand on the connections made between various percussionists through a series of free taiko workshops being offered by Mac Evans of Casual Fifth Taiko.

Philadelphia Jazz Project contributed one of the highlights of the festival as it presented a tribute to John Coltrane performed by the Dylan Band Ensemble. The centerpiece of the performance was a special rendition of Coltrane's underrecognized classic "Peace On Earth," which was written for and debuted during Coltrane's concert tour of Japan in 1966.

Philadelphia Jazz Project Director Homer Jackson described the performance thusly: "This song and his visit to the Nagasaki Peace Park commemorating the atomic bombing of the city on Aug. 9, 1945, illuminated Coltrane's desire to seek and inspire a greater peace and understanding among all human beings. In this special concert, the Dylan Band Ensemble transformed the original composition into a suite of various movements, sonic textures and moods offering musical features for solos, duets, trios and full ensemble performance segments culminating in a triumphant celebration of life and the newness of spring."

Given the fact that Coltrane lived in Philadelphia just a few blocks from where the concert series was held in Fairmount Park, this is yet another testament to the existing connections among our communities.

Following the incredibly impactful perfor-

mance curated by Philadelphia Jazz Project, the festival ended with the one group who embodied the vision of our concert series in a most literal sense.

Hailing from Brooklyn, N.Y., the eight-piece reggae band Brown Rice Family is comprised of Japanese, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian and South African musicians united in its quest toward global solidarity.

The members' diverse national backgrounds set the stage for the group's unique coexistence through musical creativity and dance. In their own words, the band describes its sound as follows: "Guided by a strong belief in the

natural flow of things, BRF provides the masses with a distinctively organic World Roots Music, which encompasses reggae, hip-hop, dancehall, Afrobeat, jazz stylings, rock, Brazilian, Latin and funk. BRF's colorful sound waves will carry rhythm surfers on a musical journey that straddles ancient and contemporary global sounds." Although the group had originally planned a 30-minute set, Brown Rice Family had so much fun with the audience that it played for a full hour — inviting participants onstage and even jumping offstage to dance with the crowd.

The reception of this festival was overwhelmingly positive with an estimated 17,000 attendees between all three days. Hosting an

event on a scale like this during the pandemic has not been without its challenges, but thankfully, the large outdoor environment in Fairmount Park allowed audience members to safely distance themselves.

As we continue to navigate this next stage of the pandemic, it gave me great hope to see how an incredibly diverse group of people who reflect the full diversity of our city came together in celebration of shared culture.

There will be much work needed to continue the work of Black-Asian solidarity, but I believe this event has laid a foundation from which our communities can grow together in meaningful ways as we continue the program season at Shofuso.



### SAKURA CONCERT SERIES

SHOFUSO CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL OF PHILADELPHIA



Brooklyn, N.Y.-based reggae band Brown Rice Family, comprised of Japanese, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian and South African musicians, perform as the festival's closing act.

PHOTO: ROB BUSCHER



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A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

# CALENDAR

**DUE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS IN THE U.S. BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PLEASE CHECK REGARDING THE STATUS OF EVENTS LISTED IN THIS ISSUE'S CALENDAR SECTION.**

## NATIONAL

### 2022 JACL/OCA Leadership Summit

Washington, D.C.; May 21-24

**Event Details:** Covid vaccination is required; all government safety protocols will be followed, including masks for all activities. Participation is open to all current JACL members.

This four-day annual program introduces community leaders from across the U.S. to the national policy-making arena. **Info:** To learn more and to register, visit <https://jacl.wufoo.com/forms/kjqmxagOulgxnt/>.

### 52nd JACL National Convention: 'Strengthening Our Community Through Action!'

Las Vegas, NV

Aug. 3-7

**Price:** Visit [jacl.org](http://jacl.org) for Event and Pricing Information

Let's unite and reunite, in-person and virtually, to take action for our community! This year's convention builds upon last year's theme of "Communities Forged Under Fire" and welcomes partner organization OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates. Enjoy full access to four days of programming, workshop and mixer opportunities, Sayonara Banquet and Awards luncheons, in addition to National Council meetings and an in-person election of officers. Programming will be in-person and virtual.

**Info:** Visit [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org) for more information. Early bird pricing for JACL members that register before May 15. Registration closes July 27. Virtual rates are also available.

## NCWNP

### Japanese Heritage Day With the San Francisco Giants

San Francisco, CA

May 21; 1:05 p.m.

Oracle Park

24 Willie Mays Plaza

**Price:** Special Event Ticket Pricing Available

Join the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California at its Japanese Heritage Day with the San Francisco Giants as the team takes on the San Diego Padres. Group rates are available by purchasing tickets through the Center. There are also VIP tickets available that are also celebrating the 30-year anniversary of Kristi Yamaguchi's Gold Medal Olympics triumph that include the T-shirt as well as a Kristi Yamaguchi signed bobblehead, exclusive Q & A opportunity and much more.

**Info:** For event information and to purchase tickets, visit [www.jccnc.org](http://www.jccnc.org).

### Bystander Intervention Training Northern California

May 25; 5-6:30 p.m. PDT

Virtual Event

**Price:** Free

As part of the Asian Law Alliance's 45th anniversary celebration and in correspondence to Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, this workshop will teach participants how to safely intervene in the event that a hate crime or bias incident is witnessed. During the training, participants will also learn about the history and principles of nonviolence and will practice specific de-escalation techniques as a bystander in a variety of scenarios. Training will be provided courtesy of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

**Info:** To register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bystander-intervention-training-courtesy-of-cair-tickets-326032872097?aff=erelpanelorg>.

## PSW

### GLA JACL Heart Mountain Short Films

Los Angeles, CA

May 22; 1 p.m.

Virtual Event

**Price:** Free

This program showcases six short films from novice filmmakers created at Heart Mountain's Digital Storytelling Workshops. The films highlight the importance of keeping stories alive. A panel discussion will follow the short films. Participants include Julianne Abe, Paiton Gleeson, Shirley Higuchi, Wendell Kishaba, Darrell Kunitomi and Grace Morizawa.

**Info:** For a Zoom link to this program, please email [greaterlajacl@gmail.com](mailto:greaterlajacl@gmail.com).

### The Art of Inclusive Communication San Diego, CA

May 25, 6-8 p.m.; June 1, 6-8 p.m.

Virtual Event

**Price:** Free

San Diego JACL in collaboration with the National Conflict Resolution Center is offering this two-part virtual training that combines small group discussion, facilitated dialogue and self-reflective activities as participants explore their own personal and cultural identities and how communication is key to preventing communication breakdowns.

**Info:** To register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-art-of-inclusive-communication-japanese-american-citizens-league-registration-296433298977?aff=sandiego-jacl@gmail.com> for more information.

### Hisashiburi: A Long Time Since the Last Time

Los Angeles, CA

June 5; 3-5:30 p.m.

Terasaki Budokan

249 S. Los Angeles St.

**Price:** Ticket Prices Vary; See Website.

Join Kizuna as it looks forward to an exciting summer of new growth and youth engagement. Light afternoon fare of food, drinks and dessert will be provided. All attendees must be fully vaccinated with proof of vaccination.

**Info:** Email [info@gokizuna.org](mailto:info@gokizuna.org) for full details or visit <https://gokizuna.org/>. 2022 Alzheimer's Conference

### Los Angeles, CA

June 11; 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. PDT

Zoom Webinar

**Price:** Free

Presented by Keiro and Alzheimer's Los Angeles, this event will bring together a panel of expert speakers to educate the community on Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with topics including how to become a "Dementia Friend" and practical tips for caregivers. This conference will be available with Japanese interpretation.

**Info:** Registration closes on June 12; visit [www.keiro.org](http://www.keiro.org) for additional details and registration information.

### The Art of the Ramen Bowl

Los Angeles, CA

Thru July 5; Exhibit Hours 11 a.m.-6 p.m. (Complimentary Gallery

Tours 11 a.m.-4 p.m.)

Japan House Los Angeles

6801 Hollywood Blvd.

Gallery Level 2

**Price:** Free

What goes into a bowl of ramen? This exhibition answers that question by exploring ramen's key ingredients as well as the artistry of the bowl it is presented in, particularly bowls highlighting the great skill of the ceramic artists of Mino, who have been producing some of Japan's best ceramics for more than a century. **Info:** Visit [www.japanhousela.com](http://www.japanhousela.com).

## PNW

### Na Omi Shintani: 'Dream Refuge for Children Imprisoned'

Portland, OR

Thru September

Japanese American Museum of Oregon

411 N.W. Flanders St. (entrance on 4th Avenue)

**Price:** Ticket Admission

"Dream Refuge for Children" is an installation by San Francisco artist Na Omi Shintani that explores the trauma of children that have been incarcerated. **Info:** Visit [www.jamo.org](http://www.jamo.org).

### 2022 Tule Lake Pilgrimage

July 1-4

Virtual Event

The Tule Lake Pilgrimage

Committee presents this year's pilgrimage which will include hybrid and virtual options. More announcements coming soon on event programming throughout this holiday weekend.

**Info:** Visit [www.tulelake.org](http://www.tulelake.org).

## MDC

### 'Then They Came for Me: Incarceration of Japanese Americans During WWII and the Demise of Civil Liberties'

Milwaukee, WI

Thru May 29

Jewish Museum Milwaukee

### 1360 N. Prospect Ave.

**Price:** Contact Museum for Admission Pricing

This exhibit examines the terrifying period in U.S. history when the government scapegoated and imprisoned thousands of people of Japanese ancestry during WWII. This multimedia exhibition illustrates the impact this fear-based rebuke has on those who experienced it firsthand and the lasting repercussions on the generations that followed.

**Info:** Visit [www.jewishmuseummilwaukee.com](http://www.jewishmuseummilwaukee.com).

### 'Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II' Exhibit and Guest Speaker Dale Minami

Saint Paul, MN

May 21

Minnesota History Center

345 Kellogg Blvd. W

This Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibit will be on display at the Minnesota History Center from April 23-July 3. The special event program on May 21 will feature a special program with exhibit viewing and reception, planned in partnership with the Minnesota Historical Society, as well as guest speaker Dale Minami. More details to be announced. **Info:** Visit [www.tcjacl.org](http://www.tcjacl.org).

## IDC

### Annual Amache Pilgrimage 2022

Granada, CO

May 21; 11 a.m.

Amache

County Road 23 5/10 just past W.

Amache Road

**Price:** Bus Transportation Available \$30

.An in-person pilgrimage is being planned This year's event will celebrate the recent announcement of Amache's National Historic Site designation. Bus transportation will be available, made possible by the generous support from Nikkeijin Kai. For attendees arriving by private car, hotels are available in Lamar.

### Amache Community Open House

Granada, CO

June 30, 7-8:30 p.m.; July 1, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

The University of Denver Amache project will be leading four weeks of field research at Amache and the Amache Museum in Granada, Colo., June 14-July 8 and invite the public to visit any time during the field season, in particular at this special community open house. June 30 will include a talk about Amache history at the Granada Community Center and July 1 will feature visits with the archaeologists, guided tours of family barracks, reconstructed structures and other areas of interest, exhibits at the Amache museum and a dinner for all open house participants.

**Info:** If you plan to attend, please RSVP by June 10 to Melanie Assis, DU Anthropology departmental assistant at (303) 871-2677 or email [melanie.assis@du.edu](mailto:melanie.assis@du.edu).

### Cherry Blossom Festival 2022

Denver, CO

June 25 & 26

Sakura Square in Downtown Denver

**Price:** Free

This year's Cherry Blossom Festival will take place in person! The event will welcome cultural activities, arts and crafts, delicious food options,

entertainment and the annual JARCC All Things Japanese sale.

**Info:** Visit [www.cherryblossomdenver.org](http://www.cherryblossomdenver.org) for event details.

### 2022 Heart Mountain Pilgrimage

Powell and Cody, WY

July 28-30

**Price:** Registration Open Thru June 15

This year's pilgrimage honors Japanese Americans who fought to be seen and heard. Programs will explore overlooked Nikkei contributions to pop culture, single out voices striving for representation today and dig into what it means to be Japanese American in the 21st century, in addition to reflecting on and remembering the experiences of those who were incarcerated at Heart Mountain during WWII.

**Info:** To register, visit <https://shopheartmountain.org/products/2022-pilgrimage-registration> or contact Deni Hirsch at (307) 754-8000 or email [denih@heartmountain.org](mailto:denih@heartmountain.org).

## EDC

### 'Strengthening Mental Wellness Through Cross-Cultural U.S.-Japan Insights'

May 26; 7 p.m. (ET)

Virtual Event

This special program, presented by the U.S.-Japan Council, is being held in conjunction with Mental Health Awareness Month and will explore key issues related to mental health in both the U.S. and Japan. Speakers will offer distinct perspectives, allowing a conversation around the cross-cultural aspects of mental wellness.

**Info:** To register, visit [https://usjapancouncil.org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlce-vpjwpHNC0vnyaVSy1i0\\_TIX7wsSly](https://usjapancouncil.org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlce-vpjwpHNC0vnyaVSy1i0_TIX7wsSly). This event will also be recorded and made available on YouTube.

### Asia North 2022: 'Remembrance, Resilience, Power + Pride'

Baltimore, MD

Thru May 28

Motor House and Stillpointe Theatre

120 W. North Ave.

This exhibition provides a healing and empowering space for regional Asian and AAPI artists to express remembrance, resilience, power and pride within the context of the ongoing triple pandemic of Covid-19, social, environmental and racial injustice and economic insecurity. In resistance to these injustices, this exhibit celebrates pride in cultural heritage.

**Info:** Gallery hours are Tuesday-Friday, Noon-2 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. Visit [www.towson.edu](http://www.towson.edu). ■

## ADVERTISE HERE

Events in the calendar section are listed based on space availability. Place a 'Spotlight' ad with photos of your event for maximum exposure.

**FOR MORE INFO:**

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(213) 620-1767

# In MEMORIAM

**Chen, Chiyeko, 93**, Los Angeles, CA, Nov. 20, 2021; she was predeceased by her husband, Joseph, and her brother, Yosh Inadomi; she is survived by her children, Caroline (Michael) Paine and Michael (Leslie) Chen; siblings, Taz Inadomi, Minoru Inadomi, Grace Naruse and Lilly Sasaki; gc: 4.

**Fujihara, Chizuko, 92**, Torrance, CA, Dec. 5, 2021; she was predeceased by her husband, James; she is survived by her children, Darryl (Cassandra) Fujihara and Carole (Bruce) Chew; gc: 4.

**Fukui, Thomas, 91**, Monterey Park, CA; he is survived by his wife, Hannah; sons, Gregory and Darryl.

**Hamanaka, Lucy Midori, 96**, Monterey Park, CA, Dec. 6, 2021; she was predeceased by her husband, Kozo; she is survived by her children, Glenn (Teresa Itokazu), Gail (Patrick) Hamanaka-Reinig and Keith; brother, Souzaburo (Kimiko) Hirata; sister-in-law, Velma Hamanaka; gc: 3; ggc: 3.



**Kajikawa, Tadashi, 106**, Torrance, CA, Dec. 12, 2021; he was predeceased by his wife, Misato (Mae), son, Kay, and grandson, Chris; he is survived by his daughters, Carole Kajikawa and JoAnn Yamashiro (Tateshi); gc: 2; ggc: 2.

**Kitchin, Toshiko, 82**, Las Vegas, NV, Dec. 10, 2021; she is survived by her husband, Norman; children, Robert (Karen), Tina Dickinson (Mike) and Richard; gc: 4; ggc: 8.



**Komoto, Richard, 70**, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 19; he is survived by his wife, Carolyn; children, Derek Komoto and Tanya (Hans) Nagamine; brothers, David Komoto and Hiram (Jacquelyn) Komoto; gc: 2.

**Kuwahara, Michiye, 89**, San Mateo, CA, Dec. 4, 2021.



**McCaleb, Geneva Nakashima, 75**, Bakersfield, CA, Dec. 19, 2021; she was predeceased by her husband, George; she is survived by her children, Mark McCaleb, Mande Grant, Matthew McCaleb, Michael McCaleb, Grant McCaleb and Abby Spina; gc: 17; ggc: 2.

**Miyahira, Ethel M., 96**, Kaneohe, HI, Dec. 25, 2021.



**Miyamoto, Stanley Kameo, 97**, Waipahu, HI, Jan. 22; he is survived by his children, Thomas (Elaine) Miyamoto and Barbara (Mark) Gurney; gc: 2; ggc: 3.

**Miyasaki, Jennie, 79**, Waipahu, HI, Jan. 23; she is survived by her sister, Shirley (George) Kitamura; 2 nephews.

**Miyashiro, Emily, 71**, Hilo, HI, Jan. 30; she is survived by her mother, Takako Ota; sister, Pearl (Ed) Hilden; sister-in-law, Joy Ota; she is also survived by an uncle, an aunt, many cousins and 1 niece.



**Miyazato, Emi, 48**, O'Fallon, IL, Jan. 30; she was predeceased by her parents, Seiyu Miyazato and Maria Amelia Tantalean Zarate; she is survived by her husband, Jeffrey "J. J." Sillery; children, Keisuke Dylan Miyazato, Kaito Christian Miyazato and Diver Miyazato; siblings, Maaru Miyazato and Eriko Nishizawa.

**Miyazawa, Sharon Ann Konishi, 77**, Waipahu, HI, Dec. 7, 2021; she is survived by her husband, Francis; children, Jeff Miyazawa; and Kimberly Frank.



**Mosher, Toshie Munechika, 82**, San Marino, CA, Jan. 27; a hibakusha (atomic bomb survivor); graduate, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies; member, Pacific Asia Museum board of trustees; member, Nichi Bei Fujin Kai board of officers; she is survived by her husband, Frank; son, Ken.

**Murakami, Fuji, 86**, Englewood, CO, Jan. 11; she is survived by a brother and sister-in-law; 2 nieces; she is also survived by many cousins.

**Murakami, Javier, 41**, San Pedro, CA, Oct. 23, 2021; he is survived by his mother, Maria; children, Augie and Emily; siblings, Joshua, Daniel and Glenda; he is also survived by many family members and friends.

**Murakami, Kenji, 79**, Houston, TX, Oct. 21, 2021; he is survived by his wife, Tokiyo; children, Jimmy Boyd and Angie Boyd; siblings, Izawa Sachiko and Narito Murakami; gc: 3.



**Nakamura, Masashi, 95**, Las Vegas, NV; March 6; he was born on February 4, 1927 in Los Angeles, CA to Wakamatsu and Oharu Nakamura. He spent five years in Japan as a child and returned to Los Angeles, CA, at the age of 10. During WWII, he was interned at Manzanar and Tule Lake and was a Korean War veteran. He is survived by Joyce, his wife of 68 years; sons, Jon and Mark (Maryann), and grandsons, Jordan (Andrea) and Daniel (Amanda); one GGD, Lillian.

## TRIBUTE

### KENNETH ISAMI WATANABE

Kenneth Isami Watanabe, 84, of Sterling, Va., passed away on April 13 surrounded by family. A graduate of Garfield High School, he was born and raised in Los Angeles, where he worked and raised a family. He was predeceased by his parents, George and Amy Watanabe; his wife, Helena; and a grandson, Luke. Ken is survived by his sons, Chris (Lauryn) and Jeff (Jennifer); and four grandchildren: Amanda, Nathan, Lena and Lainey. A private memorial service is planned to occur at a later date.



**Shishido, Mae, 93**, Huntington Beach, CA, Jan. 13; she is survived by her son, Wayne Shishido; gc: 1.

**Terada, Yukiye, 93**, Gardena, CA, Dec. 30, 2021; she was predeceased by her husband, Rev. Koju Terada; she is survived by her children, Keiju (Ruth) Terada, Dr. Seiju (Dr. Christine) Terada and Noriko (Brent) Sasaki; gc: 4; step-gc: 2.



**Wadsworth, Misuko, 94**, Connelville, PA, Dec. 29, 2021; she was predeceased by her husband, Floyd; she is survived by her sons, Kenny (Kyung-Sun) Wadsworth, John (Jill Condon) Wadsworth and George (Marisha Deyoe-Wadsworth) Wadsworth; gc: 5.

**Nakashima, Signe, 98**, Ridgecrest, CA, Feb. 10; she was predeceased by her first husband, Glenn O. Gallaher; siblings, Eric, Phillip and Edna Ellis; she is survived by her husband, Tosh; children, Butch Gallaher and Barbara Miller; son-in-law, Rick Miller; gc: 4; ggc: 8.



**Nakashima, Toshio, 93**, Redondo Beach, CA, Jan. 20; he was predeceased by his 1st wife, Grace Nakashima, and his 2nd wife, Carol Sato Nakashima; he is survived by his children, Jodeene (Alan) Aikawa, Teresa (Chuck) Nakashima Rennie, Karen (Jan) Sato and Ken (Sherri) Sato; gc: 5.

**Sato, Sachio, 88**, Rosemead, CA, Feb. 28; he was predeceased by his wife, Alice Midori Sato; son, Douglas Kiyoshi Sato; he is survived by his son, Darryl Yoshio Sato; daughter-in-law, Janice Sato; siblings, Wilbur Sato, Norman Sato and Jane (Herbert) Kimata; sisters-in-law, Marion Nishimura and Doris Iwamura; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 2.

## PLACE A TRIBUTE

'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$20/column inch.

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Gerald Fukui  
President

## MINETA » continued from page 2

As Bush's transportation secretary, Mineta led the department during the crisis of Sept. 11, 2001, as hijacked commercial airliners barreled toward U.S. landmarks. After a second plane crashed into the World Trade Center, Mineta ordered the Federal Aviation Administration to ground all civilian aircraft — more than 4,500 in flight at the time. It was the first such order given in the history of U.S. aviation.

It was Mineta who was subsequently charged with restoring confidence in air travel in the aftermath of the terror attacks. He oversaw the hasty creation of the Transportation Security Administration, which took over responsibility for aviation security from the airlines.

Within a year, the TSA had hired tens of thousands of airport screeners, put air marshals on commercial flights and installed high-tech equipment to screen air travelers and their luggage for bombs.

The effort was derided at the time for wasteful spending and causing long lines at airports. But Mineta, widely liked and respected in Washington for his deep knowledge of transportation issues, managed to escape the brunt of that criticism.

In 2006, he resigned at age 74 after five-and-a-half years in his post, making him the longest-serving transportation secretary since the agency was created in 1967.

Born on Nov. 12, 1931, Norman Yoshio Mineta was 10 and wearing his Cub Scouts uniform when he and his parents were sent to the Heart Mountain internment camp in



Alan Simpson and Norman Mineta, who developed a lifelong friendship that began while Mineta was forcibly incarcerated in Heart Mountain, Wyo., during WWII, meet with former NBC anchorman Tom Brokaw (right) for an interview for a story that appeared on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" in 2019.

PHOTO: RAY LOCKER/COURTESY OF PACIFIC CITIZEN

Wyoming after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

He went on to graduate from the University of California, Berkeley, with a bachelor's degree in business administration and served as an Army intelligence officer in Korea and Japan. After three years with the military, he returned to San Jose to run his father's Mineta Insurance Agency.

Mineta's foray into politics came in 1967, when San Jose's mayor tapped him to fill a vacant seat on the city council. He won re-election and served four more years on the council before winning the city's top seat in 1971, making him the first Asian-American mayor of a major city, which now has an airport that bears his name.

Mineta was elected to Congress in 1974 and served 10 terms representing Silicon Valley. During his tenure, he pushed for more funding for the FAA and co-authored a landmark law

that gave state and local governments control over highway and mass transit decisions.

The co-founder of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus also scored a personal victory when he helped win passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which required the U.S. government to apologize to the 120,000 Japanese Americans forced to live in wartime internment camps. Former internees also received reparations of \$20,000 each.

In 1993, Mineta became chairman of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee — another first — but he quickly lost the job after Republicans won control of the House in 1994. Mineta resigned from Congress in 1995 to join Lockheed Martin Corp. as senior vp of its transportation division.

But Washington came calling again five years later when Clinton appointed him to replace William Daley as commerce secretary.



Norman Mineta's remarkable life and legacy was chronicled in a documentary film "An American Story: Norman Mineta and His Legacy" that aired on PBS in 2019 and was produced and directed by Di-anne Fukami and co-producer Debra Nakatomi.

PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN

Mineta then became the first cabinet secretary to make the switch directly from a Democratic to Republican administration. He was the only Democrat in Bush's cabinet.

As transportation secretary, Mineta successfully promoted private investment in roads and bridges such as the Chicago Skyway and Indiana Toll Road and helped secure passage of a \$286 billion highway spending plan after almost two years of wrangling with Congress.

After overseeing the rapid launch of the TSA, Mineta had his department downsized by almost two-thirds when the TSA and Coast Guard were moved to the Department of Homeland Security in 2003.

After retiring from public service, he joined the public relations firm Hill & Knowlton as vice chairman and settled with his wife, Danelia, in Maryland near the Chesapeake Bay.

*The P.C. will have additional coverage of Mineta's life and legacy in its next issue.*



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