Caregiving Special Issue

Intimate real-life stories of ordinary people making extraordinary decisions on how best to take care of their loved ones — and how you can, too.

Register Now for the 2018 JACL National Convention in July.

The 49th Manzanar Pilgrimage Reminds All to ‘Stay Involved.’
Caregiving – SOMETHING WE ALL NEED TO TALK ABOUT

Welcome to the Pacific Citizen’s special Caregiving issue, the first of many to come that will delve into this very real and important topic affecting all of us at some point in our lives.

While holding our editorial meetings about upcoming Special Issues we would be doing in 2018, Caregiving was a topic that needed to be addressed, as either we are involved first-hand in caregiving, know of a loved one providing care or need care ourselves— it’s time to talk about it.

According to the National Alliance for Caregiving in collaboration with AARP, more than 45 million people, 25 percent of the U.S. population, is providing care for a chronically ill, disabled or aged family member or friend during any given year and spend an average of 20 hours per week providing care for their loved one.

What we have discovered is that many caregivers feel alone, overwhelmed and don’t know quite what options are available to them in terms of help and guidance. We also found there are so many resources available that do want to help. In regards to this issue, the P.C. has just broken the surface on the available possibilities that exist there, which is why this issue is only the first of many to come regarding caregiving.

This first issue primarily covers resources available in the Greater Los Angeles area, but we realize that our readers span the entire nation. Future Caregiving issues will delve into various regions in the U.S. so that you know you’re never alone—there is help everywhere waiting to hear your concerns, questions, you name it.

Caregiving is a journey that is not meant to be taken alone. Reach out and don’t be afraid to ask for help. There is a nationwide network available to assist you every step of the way!

— Pacific Citizen Staff

JACL NATIONAL CONVENTION SET FOR PHILADELPHIA IN JULY

In this the 30th anniversary since the passage of redress, JACL will look back on the success of redress as a model for achieving further progress in civil and human rights.

The 2018 JACL National Convention will be held July 18-22 at the Sheraton Downtown in Philadelphia. The convention will formally open the evening of July 18 with a welcome reception for attendees and conclude with the annual Sayonara Banquet on July 21.

Philadelphia as a city has much to offer beyond the convention. There are, of course, the iconic historic sites including the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, site of the signing of both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

The hotel is located within blocks of some of the most famous art museums in the country, including the Barnes Foundation, which will be the site of one of the convention events on July 20.

To register for convention and for information about hotel reservations, visit the JACL National Convention webpage (https://jacl.org/2018-convention/).

Twin Cities JACL Co-Sponsors a Photographic Exhibition on the Wartime Incarceration of JAs

PHOTO CHERLY HIROTA-DALAS

Panelists (from left) KaYing Yang, Paul Leli, Sally Sudo, Nagessa Dube and Omar Jamal share their stories of how they came to live in Minnesota and how their experiences have influenced their lives and work.

The Pacific Citizen’s mission is to “educate on the past Japanese American experience and to preserve, promote and help the current and future AAPI communities.”

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When Family Caregiving Isn’t Enough for Your Parent

By Gil Asakawa

My brother, Glenn, and I moved my mom from her house in Lafayette, Colo., last month to live in a memory care facility nearby. She’s had dementia for years and it’s gotten noticeably worse for the past couple of years. I’m still sorting through how I felt to take her out of her house, and how it feels now.

Junko Asakawa was born and raised in Nenmuro, a small fishing town in the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido. She grew up in the postwar years and was even crowned “Miss Nenmuro” when she was a teenager.

My mom always cooked Japanese food, even when she made American-style dinners. I have vivid memories of eating steak, hamburgers, or spaghetti — while she had salmon, miso soup and white rice.

When we moved from Japan to northern Virginia, she began baking and decorating cakes, and I was proud to help her by making templates for her of cartoon characters like Snoopy or Charlie Brown when customers requested them. And she began making mochi manju, the Japanese sweet bean paste-filled sticky rice pastries, to sell in a D.C. Japanese grocery.

After we moved to Denver, she continued selling manju and making cakes. I found two albums of faded photographs of her cakes, catalogs that I’ll treasure.

Junko Asakawa and her son, Glenn, in her new room.

She thought she was going to Walmart, five minutes away. Because Glenn and his wife, Michelle, lived across the street, they became my mom’s primary caregivers, maintaining the house and yard and making sure she was all right. They’d take her grocery shopping (in the end, they just bought the groceries she needed) or to the hair salon.

But all we knew that my mom’s dementia would make it harder and harder to care for her. By this January, Glenn and Michelle were going across the street every morning, noon and night, to feed her because she’d stopped cooking for herself.

It’s hard to face reality. Even though you might want to think you can keep caring for a loved one in his or her own home, or in your house, there will come a time when the burden of caregiving can feel like a crushing weight.

For Asians especially, there’s so much cultural value placed on respect for elders, and caring for elders, that Asians tend to have among the highest numbers of multigenerational households.

We finally realized it was time to let professionals care for mom full-time, 24/7. Glenn did an excellent job of contacting nearby senior centers and memory care facilities.

LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY’S PERSPECTIVE

The Sandwich Generation: When Motherhood and Caregiving Collide

By Staci Yamashita-Iida, Esq.

Last March, Craig Ishii, executive director of the nonprofit organization Kizuna, forwarded me an email titled “Applications Open for the 2017 TOMODACHI Emerging Leaders Program.” The body of the email displayed one single sentence: “I think you should consider this.” Little did I know that this message would be the catalyst for one of the most valuable professional and personal experiences I’ve ever had.

After being selected for the program, I traveled to Washington, D.C., in November of last year to attend the 2017 U.S.-Japan Council Annual Conference. The organization, which seeks to promote and strengthen U.S.-Japan relations, holds the yearly gathering in an effort to bring together hundreds of business professionals and community leaders to discuss prominent issues that affect both countries.

As an Elder Law attorney, I was particularly drawn to one of the conference sessions that focused on the way Japan’s aging population shapes its health care system and, as a byproduct, results in a plummeting number of women in the workforce.

The panelist expert on this topic was Scott Sato, chief operating officer of Panaso Group Inc., a Japanese company dealing with employment and staffing solutions. Mr. Sato has granted me permission to share some of his findings in this article.

In Japan, the traditional role of a woman was a shufu, or housewife. Modernly, however, women are pursuing higher levels of education and focusing on their careers. Consequently, women are getting married and having children later and later in life.

This creates a unique problem. That stage, women are also expected to care for their aging parents. Japan is widely regarded as one of the oldest societies in the world — not just historically, but in terms of population as well. There are approximately 33 million seniors living in Japan, and that number continues to steadily increase.

This intersection of childcare and eldercare has compelled hundreds of thousands of Japanese women to engage in the socioeconomic phenomenon called “double care.” Double care refers to the dual responsibility of raising one’s children and being a caretaker for one’s elderly parents at the same time.

Sadly, the duties of double care have had a drastic impact on the number of women in the workforce. For many, the demands and time constraints of double care force women to switch to part-time (and lower-paying) employment. Many quit their jobs altogether. The progress achieved by women in the workplace has taken three steps backward.

The root of the issue seems to be Japan’s aging demographic. It is estimated that approximately 21 percent of the population will be over the age of 65 by the year 2025. By the same year, one out of 15 individuals will suffer from dementia. That leaves about 5.4 jobs open in Tokyo to every one person who needs nursing care.

How, then, does Japan plan on combating the issue? First, the government is working on bringing in “technical interns” to assist with day-to-day activities such as house cleaning and basic care. These foreigners would come to Japan on a special type of training visa and learn the cultural customs and practices of the Japanese people. For example, the “interns” would learn to remove their shoes before entering a home. That way, Japanese women would feel more comfortable hiring additional help, and the stress of keeping the home clean will be relieved.

Second, in addition to promoting child daycare, Japan is working on implementing adult daycare options as well. Large companies would have adult daycare facilities on their premises. That way, daughters can “visit” their parents during breaks and have lunch together. This would allow children to maintain their occupations while still ensuring that their parents are taken care of.

Hopefully, the steps Japan is taking to actively decrease the problems of double care will prove to be successful. In the meantime, similar actions must be taken here in the United States.

While double care is the term used to describe the actions of the women in Japan, here in the U.S., the women who assume dual motherhood and caregiver responsibilities are referred to as the “Sandwich Generation.”

Like Japan, the U.S. is faced with an aging population. About 10,000 people turn 65 each and every day. Also like Japan, women are a force to be reckoned with in the workplace. Female executives are more and more common nowadays, which leads to many giving birth in their late 30s and early 40s.

In addition to the physical burdens of experiencing the Sandwich Generation, women in the U.S. shoulder a financial obligation as well. Many members of the so-called “millennial” generation struggle to achieve financial inde-
In his artist’s statement, Matsunaga, a fiscal year 2017 recipient of an Artist Initiative grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, explained that “this body of work explores the themes of memory and forgetting, particularly in regards to the loss in our understanding of this history that will inevitably occur when the last of those who went through this experience pass away and their lived memories vanish.”

Matsunaga was able to find and photograph the exact location of the barrack where his father was incarcerated as a youth at Gila River, Ariz.

In conjunction with the exhibit, three free public programs were also held. A discussion panel took place on Feb. 10 titled, “Experiences of Wartime Displacement, Dispossession and Confinement: The Japanese American Incarceration and Beyond.”

Panelists were Paul Lelii, a St. Paul attorney who talked about representing Cambodians who were facing deportation; KaYing Yang, a third-grade years incarcerated at Minidoka, Idaho, during World War II. The other four panelists were Saymoukda Duangphouxay Vongsay, a Saymoukda Duangphouxay Vongsay, a Palliative care through our innovative Iyashi Care program

Members of the Twin Cities JACL board and Education Committee at the opening reception. Pictured (from left) are Hans Maruyama, Sally Sudo, Yuichiro Onishi, Krista Hanson, Ben Hartmann, Janet Carlson, Elizabeth Fugi-kawa, John Matsunaga, Amy Dickerson, Teressa Swartz, Gloria Kumagai, Phil Nomura, Carolyn Nayematsu, Les Suzukamo and Cheryl Hirata-Dulas.

Lastly, the film “And Then They Came for Us,” directed by Abby Ginzberg and Ken Schneider, was shown on Feb. 19 in commemoration of the 76th anniversary of Executive Order 9066. University of Minnesota Professor Yuichiro Onishi and Jayahi Hsein, executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, led the post-screening discussion. They shared their concerns about the parallels between the Japanese American incarceration and the experiences of Muslim Americans today, and they encouraged people to speak out for justice and oppose discrimination, xenophobia and racism.

For more information about the Matsunaga art exhibit, visit johnmatsunaga.com.
Wisdom of a Caregiver: Never a Burden

Susan Shinagawa reflects on her experiences caring for her mother, Emiko, during her final months.

By George Yoshihito Johnston, Senior Editor, Digital & Social Media

I t anyone can speak to the real-world experiences of being a caregiver for one’s elderly parents, Susan Shinagawa of Spring Valley, Calif., certainly has the bona fides. Not only did she help care for her own parents — John and Emiko Shinagawa of Milpitas, Calif. — she also helped her sister-in-law, Cathy, look after her mother and father, Bob and Shirley Norberg. (Bob died of metastatic prostate cancer in 2013; Shirley, who lives in Boise, Idaho, with Cathy, has Alzheimer’s disease.)

Emi and John Shinagawa had four children: Susan, the second oldest and only daughter, and three sons, Arthur, Jimmy, and Robert. Emi, who died Feb. 25 at 88, hung on to life more than anyone might have guessed. Not only was she diabetic, she had suffered eight known heart attacks, and when she went into hospice care (which typically is for a six-month period, tops), it had to be renewed twice.

“You wouldn’t know it by looking at her today,” Susan said. “I mean, she was probably one of the strongest women I’ve ever known,” Susan said of her mother.

Caring for her mom over the last months of her life was a challenge for Susan on many levels: geographic (Susan and her husband, Rob Norberg, live near San Diego, but San Jose—adjacent Milpitas is an eight-and-a-half hour drive away), physical (Susan is herself on permanent disability as a twice—amputee cancer survivor who has to watch her own health — but was still able to help her mother without having to worry about career obligations) and emotional (“It would kill me if she died when I wasn’t there,” Susan said.)

Nevertheless, Susan was a willing participant when it came to caring for her elders. “I wanted to take care of my mom. Because both of my parents had taken care of their parents, I knew that when my parents needed me, I would take care of them. It was never a question for me,” said Susan, 60.

According to Susan, her mother, Emiko Shinagawa, lived alone and was very independent — but then she had a heart attack on June 25, 2015. It wasn’t, however, her first heart attack; doctors determined she had at least one other prior heart attack that had gone unreported, and her arteries were 99 percent occluded.

The Pacific Citizen interviewed Susan Shinagawa about her recent experiences as a caregiver for an elderly parent. While she is not her first experience coordinating care, Emiko Shinagawa allowed her to have the time to care for her mother, she still had knowledge and wisdom she wanted to pass along to anyone anticipating having to care for an elderly parent, with some of her advice falling under the heading of “Do As I Say, Not As I Do.”

The strongest women are the strongest caregivers.

“Susan Shinagawa: It all depends on the person being cared for. My mom was 85 when she had her first recorded heart attack and had diabetes for over 30 years at that point. She had been diagnosed with angina in 2008 and took nitroglycerin tablets if she had chest pains.

But for some reason, she wasn’t seeing a cardiologist, which I find really strange. Like I said, she was very independent. She was one of those Nisei who, if something was wrong with you, you wouldn’t find out about it until months later. But she considered herself to be relatively healthy, which she was for her age.

It wasn’t until she had her heart attack and it was clear that I was going to stay with her for a while that she decided it was a good idea that I have power of attorney, and she showed me where all the staff (important documents) was.

We actually put in a ramp for my older brother (Editor’s Note: He returned from the Philippines to help care for Emiko but mysteriously developed endocarditis, a heart infection, as well as kidney failure, and was hospitalized for 10 weeks) and ended up needing it, which was good because my mom eventually needed it also. I don’t know if she would have wanted it done herself. We had already installed grab bars in her shower and bathroom. We removed runners in her hallway on the hardwood floors so she wouldn’t trip on them.

I think it’s really important for the person who’s going to be the caregiver for an elderly parent, if possible, to have as much control as possible. … When you lose control of everything else in your life, you feel like you have to hang on to something. I know that having control of her life was going to be important for her. So, that’s why I say it really depends on the person.

P.C.: Regarding the power of attorney and other documents, you have to make an appointment while people — the caregiver and the recipient of the care — are still healthy.

SHINAGAWA: I think it’s important to have that conversation before somebody gets sick, something as simple as, “What do you want to have happen if you have a heart attack, and you can’t make a decision for yourself?” She had let me know her desires about that (extraordinary lifesaving measures) decades ago.

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Los Angeles’ NIKKEI SENIOR-CARE OPTIONS, Post-Keiro Sale

To say that 2016’s $41 million sale to Pacifica Co. LLC of Los Angeles County’s four Keiro retirement home senior care facilities — which included a name change to Kei-Ai Los Angeles and the transformation of Keiro into a quasihapantropic organization that still, according to its website, “continues to focus on enhancing the quality of senior life in our community” — would be a bit like calling the Grand Canyon a ditch. While Kei-Ai is contractually obligated to retain its Japanese cultural emphasis and amenities at the remaining facilities for its next 33 months or so, the sale did raise the issue of uncertainty for those people who had designed on someday possibly spending their “golden years” at one of the former Keiro sites.

What, then, are the options for Los Angeles’ Japanese senior care facilities, Los Angeles County’s older-skewing Japanese Americans who may want to stay in a retirement home attuned to the ancestral Japanese culture and lifestyle? See the chart at right for a rundown of what’s available.

Heart of Seniority

Kei-Ai Los Angeles

Formerly known as Keiro Intermediate Care Facility, the facility focuses on the long-term or short-term stays of residents in need of inpatient rehabilitation or recovery.

Telephone: (213) 577-8611
Address: 2221 Lincoln Park Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90031

Kei-Ai South Bay Healthcare

Center, formerly the South Bay Keiro Nursing Home, like its L.A. cousin, it focuses on inpatient rehabilitation for patients recovering from serious illness or surgery.

Telephone: (310) 767-5811
Address: 325 S. Boyle Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90033

Sakura Intermediate Care Facility & Sakura Gardens at Los Angeles, formerly Keiro Intermediate Care Facility and Keiro Retirement Home, respectively. The former is for residents needing daily assistance and possibly in the early stages of cognitive-related issues, the latter for more able-bodied, sound—minded individuals who may or may not need assistance.

Telephone: (323) 580-7529
Address: 980 Vermont Ave., Culver City, CA 90230

Website: www.sakuraseniorliving.com

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Nikkei Senior Care

An assisted living retirement community that opened its doors in 2009, Nikkei Senior Gardens is located in the north San Fernando Valley neighborhood of Arleta and boasts 86 assisted living or memory care apartments. A 24-hour care staff is on—site, and residents are served three meals daily and have the option of Japanese or Western cuisine.

Website: www.nikkeiseniorgardens.com

Telephone: (818) 899-1990
Address: 2221 Arleta Ave., Arleta, CA 91331

Iyashi Care

Despite having sold its four bricks-and-mortar facilities, Keiro still offers for a five-year period what it had before its sale, namely elder care sympathetic to the cultural needs of Japanese American and Japanese-speaking patients. Whether the Kei-Ai facilities will continue to offer these cultural specific services, however, after that term ends in 2021 is unknown.

Kei-Ai Los Angeles

Formerly the Keiro Nursing Home, the facility focuses on the long-term or short-term stays of residents in need of inpatient rehabilitation or recovery.

Website: kei-la.com

Telephone: (818) 899-1990
Address: 2221 Arleta Ave., Arleta, CA 91331

Sakura Gardens

Telephone: (310) 720-5959
Address: 15116 S. Vermont Ave., Gardena, CA 90247

Sakura Intermediate Care Facility & Sakura Gardens at Los Angeles, formerly Keiro Intermediate Care Facility and Keiro Retirement Home, respectively. The former is for residents needing daily assistance and possibly in the early stages of cognitive-related issues, the latter for more able-bodied, sound—minded individuals who may or may not need assistance.

Telephone: (323) 580-7529
Address: 980 Vermont Ave., Culver City, CA 90230

Website: www.sakuraseniorliving.com

See WISDOM on page 7
An intimate look at how two families have poured love and commitment into their different caregiving situations.

"Caregiving: When It's Not Your Parents"

On Oct. 23, 2017, April Adkins died of complications from her cancer. She was 67. April was a beloved member of the community, and her loss was felt by many. Her family was left to grieve and find a way to cope with the sudden end of their mother's life.

April Adkins was a loving and kind woman who touched the lives of many. She was a dedicated caregiver to her parents, and her selflessness was admired by all who knew her. Despite the challenges of caregiving, April found joy in helping others and brought light to those around her.

As a community, we must continue to support one another in times of need. The loss of a loved one is never easy, but we can find strength in the support of others. Let us remember April Adkins and honor her memory by continuing to care for those in need.
to becoming bedridden and living with pain, and how he cared for her in what would be her final days, doing anything he could to help and comfort her.

He prefers, rather, to keep alive his memories of Robyn when she was vital and in good health — and that is why Gregg has created a foundation to keep her memory alive and help others.

“We started the Gregg and Robyn Oshita Foundation. The reason it has both our names [is because] I wanted my name, my life, my future tied to Robyn to keep her memory alive. After Robyn passed, my kids (Michael and Kimberly) and I talked, and we said we wanted to honor mom and keep her memory alive.

“We started the foundation, essentially, to help other families, individuals, who are battling AML or MDs, so they don’t have to go through the pain and heartache of what we did,” he said. The foundation’s activities include sponsoring blood and platelet drives, induced by the memory of how Robyn needed transfusions twice a week.

“We had to worry every day whether or not we were going to find platelets,” Gregg said. “I can’t tell you how stressful it is because at one point, her platelets dropped to 5,000.” Fast-forwarding to now, Gregg said, “We had our inaugural event in Chicago, and it was a blood drive in Robyn’s honor — 27 people donated blood in about four hours.” He noted that they also signed up eight people to be bone marrow transplant donors through the organization Be the Match.

“Our goal is to save one life this year,” he said. “If we can save one life, that will be a great start to our foundation.”

If there is, as the saying goes, a silver lining to every dark cloud, what was the silver lining for the Oshitas and the Inagakis? Wouldn’t they rather have what happened not to have happened, what with Marilyn Inagaki living in a disabled state, while Robyn Oshita living on in memory? Of course. But it didn’t turn out that way. “Shō ga nai,” April said.

For the Inagaki family, Marilyn’s situation brought the other siblings together in a way that might not have happened otherwise. For the Oshita family, remembering Robyn by finding a way to help others was a way of turning a negative into a positive. The result: the Gregg and Robyn Oshita Foundation, the website for which is thegofoundation.org, with its next platelet/blood drive set for the week of June 2–9 in Cincinnati, in partnership with the Hoxworth Blood Center, with Gregg requesting that donors use either the PR number of PR-1465 or Robyn’s name. Call (513) 451-6010 for details or visit hoxworth.org.

For April, Marilyn’s circumstances made them realize that despite the hardships it caused, there were others they met through support groups whose situations were far worse. “I think our culture was very helpful in getting our family through it,” April mused. “There was no question we were going to do what we needed to do to take care of her.”

“Aapis Inagaki is a pseudonym.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SUSAN SHINAGAWA

Emi and Susan Shinagawa in 2004 in Ninena River, Fairbanks, Alaska

Emi and her dog, Mitzy, in a photo taken in February 2017.

It was really frustrating for them.

P.C.: Somebody who ends up being in the shoes of being a caregiver; what about your own mental and physical needs? Do you feel guilty about taking a break, even if it’s for a day?

SHINAGAWA: It’s interesting. Until my mom passed away, it never bothered me that I was taking care of her all of the time. I have three brothers — the one who came back from the Philippines lived with her, and the other two live within five minutes — and it didn’t occur to me that I might not do any of them to say to me, “Hey, Susan, would you like the afternoon off? Would you like to take the weekend off? Would you like to see your husband?”

None of them ever said, “Would you like me to go grocery shopping for you?”

It wasn’t until my mom died that I think about that. For people that are not the caregiver but close to the caregiver, they need to offer that. It is important for people who are caregivers for an extended period of time that they get a break.

P.C.: Is it incumbent on the caregiver, if no one is offering to ask for help? How much of it should be on the caregiver to not feel guilty about asking someone and say, ‘I need your help!’

SHINAGAWA: I think if I had been one of my brothers, it would have been more natural for me to do that. I think that for someone my age who is female, and I consider myself to be a very independent woman, I’m still in the mode of, I don’t need help.

P.C.: So, would it be safe to say that one of the tips you might have is don’t feel guilty asking for help, even if you’re one of those people who never asks for help?

SHINAGAWA: This is where that “Do as I say, not as I do” thing comes in. In fact, even if you don’t think you need a break, it’s important that people give you a break. Part of it was I’m the only daughter, and mom and I were always closer, and because of my medical history, I know how to take care of people better.

Because of my disability, I have to go home every 11-12 weeks for a medical appointment (Editor’s Note: Shinagawa has a surgically implanted continuous infusion intrathecal drug pump that must be refilled), and I’d usually fly home, have my appointments and fly back. My three brothers would share the time, and I’d have to make up a schedule and write up all the instructions. They’d only do it every three months, so they wouldn’t remember, and things would also change.

(Editors Note: Shinagawa related how before one of her trips back to Spring Valley, her mother wanted to accompany her by car, even though she was getting weaker, which made things more difficult, and her mother became very ill on top of that, and they ended up returning to Milpitas earlier than planned.)

It wasn’t until after we got back that she told me that she was afraid not to be with me because I knew how to take care of her. It’s not that she didn’t want to be with my brothers, but she felt like I was able to give her better care.

P.C.: Having had these experiences, caring for your parents and your husband’s parents, has it caused you to rethink your own future? What sorts of things will you be doing as a result of your experiences?

SHINAGAWA: I have thought about it a lot, and part of it is because my husband is hakujin and his family view on taking care of people is different than my experience was. The things that I’ve thought about, because I don’t have any children of my own — there’s not going to be anyone to take care of me when I need them. So, I know that I’ll need to go into some kind of assisted living, but I don’t have the finances to pay for that. I’ve thought about it. I don’t know what to do about it.

P.C.: Thank you for taking the time to talk about this. Did you have any parting thoughts?

SHINAGAWA: For me, it has been more of a gift for me than something that I had to do. It allowed me the time to spend with people in a more intimate way than I would have never otherwise been able to. Everything that needed to be said was said long before anybody passed away. To me, it was just so much more of a gift to be able to spend the time and be able to help. I’m not saying that people who don’t feel that way should feel bad about that. I think that’s just me, and a lot of it has to do with because I always thought that I would take care of my parents. It was never to me a burden that I thought I had to do. I wanted to do it.
The 49th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage reminds attendees to ‘stay involved’ in order to ensure that justice is granted for all Americans.

By Charles James, Contributor

The theme for this year’s 49th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage was “Silent No More, Liberty and Justice for All!” in honor of the 30th anniversary of the passing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

On April 28, a crowd estimated at 1,000 people gathered at the Manzanar National Historic Site, where more than 10,000 people of Japanese descent, most of whom were American citizens, were unjustly incarcerated during World War II under the pretext of being a security risk.

The CLA of 1988 offered an apology from the U.S. government along with reparations, as well as recognition of the “grave injustice” done to those incarcerated in the American concentration camps during the war. It represented the success of activism in the Japanese American community that began in the late-1960s, which emphasized no longer being silent about the injustices inflicted upon them during WWII.

There was no lack of appreciation or enthusiasm as the crowd was welcomed with a drum performance by UCLA Kyodo Taiko under clear, sunny blue sky complemented with a light breeze.

Emcee Pat Sakamoto, a former internee at Manzanar, kicked off the day’s program. Sakamoto said that her mother never talked about her experience in camp. Her mother was pregnant with her when she and her husband arrived in Manzanar. And while her mother said “Yes” to the infamous Loyalty Oath required of all camp internees 17 years of age and older, her father said “No,” which resulted in him being sent to the Tule Lake Camp. “I never met my father,” she noted sadly.

Guest speaker Karen Unemoto, director of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center, remembered fondly that when she was a child, all her friends in Southern California would take trips to Disneyland, while “we (her family) would come to the desert, to here, to Manzanar.”

Her father, Frank Unemoto, was in high school when he was sent to Manzanar. “His experience was pretty positive,” she said. He later wrote a book titled, “Manzanar to...”

Mr. Whitney: Life and Times of a Lost Elder,” in which he wrote about his experiences at the camp.

Sadly, Unemoto went on to say, her grandparents were sent to Tule Lake Camp. Her grandmother died of cancer there that was attributed to drinking “bootleg rice wine.”

This year’s student speaker was Lauren Matsumoto, a fourth-generation Japanese American, who represented the University of California, San Diego Nikkei Student Union. Matsumoto is involved in the Manzanar at Dusk Program, which lets college students and others share their thoughts, feelings and insights about their community, along with their shared history. Matsumoto said that “learning history is the first step in never letting it happen again.”

A sad part of Matsumoto’s family history is that her grandparents, who were interred at Tule Lake and Gila River, were “deeply scarred” by the experience, Matsumoto said, and as a result, it greatly affected her father and, ultimately, herself as well.

The next speaker was Yusra Khafagi, leadership development coordinator with the Council on American-Islamic Relations, who expressed her appreciation of the Pilgrimage message that all citizens should speak out against injustices and learn the lessons represented by Manzanar of what happens when groups of Americans are singled out for their race, ancestry or beliefs.

This year’s keynote speaker was Ann Burroughs, president and CEO of the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. Burroughs said that in 1986, two years before the U.S. government signed the CLA, she was detained and sent to prison in South Africa without a trial and interrogated every day as the government attempted to prove that she had committed treason. Burroughs said she was singled out because she actively protested apartheid, which sought to retain the political and economic power of a white minority over nonwhites, who were in the majority of the country’s citizens.

That personal experience of government-sanctioned racism gave Burroughs a unique understanding into the Japanese American internment experience and Japanese Americans’ efforts to have the U.S. government officially acknowledge the “grave injustice” perpetrated on the internees of the concentration camps. They wanted an apology and reparations.

Burroughs said her personal experience in South Africa led her to a lifetime of activism and dedication in her life to promote social justice and human rights for all.

Noting that this year’s pilgrimage theme was “Silent No More, Liberty and Justice for All,” Burroughs stated that the forced removal was motivated by “racial prejudice, wartime hysteria and a failure of political leadership” and not the false excuse of “security concerns” that was used to justify the establishment of the camps.

Burroughs said that, in addition to the formal apology given by the U.S. government, the CLA also provided funds for monetary restitution to “eligible” Japanese who had been incarcerated in the camps. It was the “redress” movement and the CLA that finally “lifted the veil of silence” about wartime incarceration.

She went on to say that “it was that silence gave way to righteous indignation, which turned into a ‘fighting spirit’ among the Japanese American community at the time… Passage of the CLA was an enormous victory for civil
It could no longer ‘ignore its past.’”

Burroughs noted that “the entire country — with the exception of the Quakers — was silent 75 years ago when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066.” It was that order, she went on to say, that resulted in the forced removal of West Coast Japanese and led to the creation of the 10 War Relocation Authority camps.

“The importance of remembering and learning from that experience cannot be stressed enough,” said Burroughs. She then quoted Bishop Desmond Tutu that “if we allow bygones to be bygones, there will be no bygones because history will be repeated.”

Burroughs ended her comments with the observation that “the Japanese American experience is about democracy, about taking a stand for what is right.”

Many speakers at the pilgrimage expressed concern that the WWII era is fading from the nation’s collective memory. One of them, Bruce Embrey, representing the Manzanar Committee, told the crowd that the pilgrimages are held “to honor those who survived life behind barbed wire” and that they were vital to the success for redress.

“Starting in 1969 as a people’s movement,” Embrey said, “the pilgrimages became a way to confront the shock, humiliation and shame that kept many internees silent about the experience.”

Embrey continued, “It was the efforts of Japanese American and African-American politicians, and Japanese American veterans from the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion that ensured the passage of the Civil Liberties Act, which sadly came too late for many.” He noted that 40,000 former internees had already died by 1988.

He also warned the gathering that all the efforts that went into the CLA “will not be worth it if we do not stand up when other minorities are having their civil and constitutional rights threatened.”

The Sue Kunitomi Embrey Legacy Award this year was awarded to longtime community activist Wilbur Sato, who was recognized as someone who tirelessly went to work on behalf of the Japanese American community, committed to defending democracy and civil rights.

Sato, who turned 89 on April 26, was raised on Terminal Island, a former fishing village, which is now a part of the Port of Long Beach and the Port of Los Angeles. He was in the seventh grade when Pearl Harbor was attacked on Dec. 7, 1941. The Sato family was forced to leave the island and would be incarcerated at Manzanar.

He gave the crowd a list of what life was like for a “poor Japanese.”

“We had no doctor or modern medical care,” Sato said. “Anyone born in Japan could not become a U.S. citizen. If you were a U.S. citizen and married someone born in Japan, you would lose your citizenship. Restaurants refused to serve Japanese, and hotels would most likely refuse to rent us rooms, which meant bringing your own food with you on long trips . . . and sleeping in the car.

“Blatant racism was accepted throughout society,” Sato continued, “and racist, derogatory terms and stereotypes were used routinely by the media, newspapers and Hollywood.

“The camps were just the latest manifestation of that racism,” Sato concluded. He noted that after the war, prejudice and racism remained a part of the American experience for Japanese Americans.

He became a lawyer after graduating from the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1951 and joined the Japanese American Citizens League to fight against the injustices against Japanese Americans. He also became a longtime member of the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (now known as Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress) and became active on the Manzanar Committee and its yearly pilgrimages.

In accepting the award, Sato urged those in the audience to “stay involved with the issues important to them and not be easily discouraged because when it comes to such fights, ‘democracy is winning.’”

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AARP recognizes family caregivers and all that you do for your loved ones. Being ready to care for a loved one takes time, planning, and support. With AARP’s variety of Caregiving resources, including the documentary Caregiving: The Circle of Love and the Prepare to Care planning guide, you don’t have to go through this alone.

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A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

NCWNP
Sacramento Asian Pacific Film Festival: Films of Solidarity, Resistance, Justice, and Unity
June 27-28; Noon-10 p.m.
California Museum 1020 St.
Price: Ticket prices vary. This two-day event will feature more than two-dozen screenings across four showtimes, including talkbacks with filmmakers and a panel discussion. Best ticket prices are before May 23 with levels for General Admission, Student and Senior Discounts and Advance Purchases. The program includes selections from the Asians on Film Festival as well as "Delano Manongs," "Resilience," "Storytelling at Tule Lake," "Guts of Mirikitani," and "Yuri Kochiyama: A Passion for Justice," among others.
Info: Visit www.ucsb.edu/arts/2018-festival-program or www.sapff.org, or email info@sapff.org.

PSW
Hapa-Me — 15 Years of the Hapa Project Exhibit
Los Angeles, CA
Thu Oct 28
In this exhibition, 15 artists will feature portraits of their Hapa-Me portraits and narratives of the same individuals.
Info: Visit www.janm.org/hapa-me.

PNW
Gaman Festival Portland Community College May 11 (6-9 p.m., film showing) and May 12 (10 a.m.-4 p.m., art booths) Portland Community College 700 N. Killingsworth St.
Gaman Fest is an intergenerationally inspired event showcasing an art exhibition as activism, sponsored by O.N.E. and JACL.
Info: For volunteer information, contact Sachi Kaneko at sacrio@pdxjcc.org.

MDC
Courage and Compassion: Our Shared Story of the Japanese American WWII Experience
St. Paul, MN
June 30-Sept. 3
Historic Fort Snelling Visitors Center
2nd Tower Ave.
Price: Free and open to the public.
The Twin Cities chapter of the JACL and Historic Snelling present this traveling exhibition developed by the Go for Broken National Education Center, which chronicles the Japanese American WWII experience. In addition, the TC JACL education committee has produced a local component that consists of stories involving JA community building and civic engagement throughout Minnesota.
Info: Contact tcjaul.org.

JCCCW
Japanese Cooking Class
Seattle, WA
Aug. 4; 2 p.m., 7:30 p.m.
Price: Free for JACL members; $10 nonmembers
Interested in learning to make different kinds of sushi? Rachel Matsumoto will teach a class on sushi making and a noodle dish.
Info: For additional details and address information, call Gloria Kumagai at (763) 377-5602 or email kumagai@jcccw.org.

EDC
70 Years of Honoring Service and Sacrifice Memorial Service
Pineville, VA
June 27; 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Mountain America Expo Center 9575 S, State St.
Price: Free and open to the public.
This year’s event, sponsored by the Sons of the Union, features the presentation of Gold Star, Silver Star, Bronze Star and Legion of Merit medals presented to the families of fallen Service members. A Memorial Service and a National Moment of Silence conclude the event.

EDC
Shopping on Amazon.com?
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THANKS AND HAPPY SHOPPING!
Aoyagi, Harold Setsuo, 82, Torrance, CA, Feb. 11; he is survived by his children, Dawn (Brad) Sawyer, Glenn (Nancy), Scott (Janet) and Julie (Darin) Honda; brothers, Wallace (Connie) and Elvin (Cheryl); he is also survived by nieces, nephews, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, other relatives and friends.

Azuma, Hildegarde, 95, Carson, CA, Feb. 4; she was predeceased by her daughter, Mina; siblings, Kuni and son, Harald; she is survived other relatives and friends.

Blackmun, Masako, 90, Portland, OR, Feb. 21; she is survived by her husband, John; daughter, Maya Blackmun (Scott Fitzpatrick); she is also survived by siblings and extended family; gc: 2.

Doyle, Chiyemi, 72, San Francisco, CA, March 6; during WWII, her family was incarcerated at the Tule Lake WRA Center, where she was born.

Fuji, Jim, 93, Sacramento, CA, Jan. 19; during WWII, he served in the 442nd RG; he is survived by his wife, Toyoko; children, Jeanne Yamashita (George) and James Fuji (Doreen); sisters, Hisako Abe (Joe) and Mary Nii (Ted); he is also survived by many nieces and nephews; gc: 4.

Goya, Yoshikazu, 94, Torrance, CA, Feb. 13; he is survived by his wife, Yoshiko; children, Haruo, Karen (Tadashi), Karen (Tadashi), and Hiroshi; he is also survived by many nieces and nephews; gc: 4.

Hata, Rev. Akira, 97, Panorama City, CA, March 27; he is survived by his wife, Kazuko; children, Patti (John) Bryan and Richard (Charisse) Pinkerton; siblings, James (Mom) Pinkerton, Ronald Pinkerton and Connie (Larry) Bowers; brother-in-law, Jerry Williams; gc: 4; ggc: 6.

Imamoto, Sam, 82, Los Angeles, CA, Jan. 1; he is survived by his wife, Phyllis; children, Stacy (Rick) Row and Gregg (Barbara) Imamoto; gc: 5.

Kamimae, Midori, 83, Renton, WA, Feb. 15; she was predeceased by her husband, Kimio (Kim); she is survived by her children, Karen, Scott, Cindy (Glyde Ishii) and Tracy; gc: 7.

Maeda, Yoshiyo, 83, Azusa, CA, Feb. 4; she is survived by her sons, Michael (Shannon) and Keith; siblings, Kyoko Kusano, Norma Domaio and Tsutomu Miyagishima; gc: 5.

Maruno, Shiori, 96, Torrance, March 5; she is survived by her brother-in-law, Henry Karatsu; three nieces; two grandchildren and many other relatives.

Sakamoto, Susie, 91, San Jose, CA, March 13; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Tule Lake WRA Center and she graduated from its Tri-State High School; she was predeceased by her husband, James, she is survived by her children, Mark (Darrel) and Terri (Ken); siblings, Henry, Harry and Yvonne; gc: 4; ggc: 2.

Takekoto, Lilly, 90, Seattle, WA, Feb. 22; during WWII, the family was interned first at Puyallup Fairgrounds and then the Minidoka Relocation Camp outside of Hunt, Idaho; she is survived by her husband, Victor; children, Vicki, Stan (Irene) and Jon (Lena); gc: 6; step-gc: 1; step-ggc: 1.

Terao, Victoria, 80, Seattle, WA, March 24; she was predeceased by her husband, Hidetomi; she is survived by her children, Cindy Nomura (David), Taylor (Sakie) and Mark (Candace); sisters, Patricia Lee and Cecelia Setoda (Roy); gc: 3.

Uyeda, Finis, 84, San Jose, CA, Feb. 28; she was predeceased by her brothers, Tetsuse (Shizuko), Tetsuya (Sachiko) and Mitsu (Daisy); she is survived by her husband, Lester; children, Karen, Gary (Mary) and Scott (Roberta); siblings, Tatsumi (Kazu), Kenji (Shirley) and Shigeru (June); gc: 5.

Wake, Loyd Keigo, Rev. 95, San Francisco, CA, Dec. 27, 2017; he is survived by his wife, Marion Natsue Wake; children, Cathy Quides, Wesley Wake, Sandra Wake and Steven Wake; sisters, Florence Nagano, Lilian Koda and Betty Machida; gc: 8; ggc: 3.

Yamada, Eugene Kiyoto 'Tote,' 90, San Diego, CA, March 25; he is survived by his brother, Joseph Y. Yamada.

Yamamoto, Betty, 93, Los Angeles, CA, March 23; she was predeceased by her husband, Harry; she is survived by her son, Dennis (Joyce); sister, Eiko (Isamu) Yanagisako; a nephew, nieces and other relatives; gc: 2; ggc: 3.
REIMAGINE EVERYTHING
CAREGIVING WHILE WORKING

By Ron Mori

More than 40 million Americans are taking care of a loved one 50 or older. Approximately six in 10 of them are doing it while also trying to earn a living. I am no exception yet, but I know that that day will come in the not-too-distant future. When the time comes, I will have to make lifestyle changes and navigate in uncharted waters.

Fortunately, I work with people at AARP who have been or currently are caregivers. Here are some helpful tips to consider.

**Human Resources**

- Ask your HR representative about your company policies and programs to support caregivers. Many companies have a plan in place to help employees find community services, counseling, respite care, legal and financial assistance and caregiver support groups. Others offer caregiving leave or flexible work arrangements.
- Employee assistance or your loved one’s insurance carrier might cover visits with a therapist specializing in caretaking or family issues. Sometimes one small thing can be a big help.
- Be prepared: Even within the same company, different managers may be more accommodating than others to your situation. Always check your local Caregiving Network

**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

Under the Family and Medical Leave Act, eligible workers are entitled to unpaid leave for up to 12 weeks per year without losing job security or health benefits in order to care for a spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition.

Companies that employ fewer than 50 people are exempt from FMLA. To qualify, you must have worked for the company for at least 1,250 hours in the last 12 months. Check with your HR department to see if you qualify. The company is required by law to tell you your rights under FMLA and, if you qualify, offer you leave. Employers may not threaten you or make your work life difficult because you requested a leave.

- You may take the 12 weeks of leave all at once or in pieces — for example, three days twice a month when a parent is receiving chemotherapy. When your leave is up, you must return to work to protect your job.
- Under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), employees taking time off to care for a disabled parent or spouse are entitled to the same treatment as coworkers who take time off to care for disabled children.
- The ADA also gives you protection if you lose your job or are harassed.
- Some states have laws similar, but not identical to FMLA. They may provide different benefits.

If no law applies, your employer is not required to give you time off or make any accommodations.

**Look Close to Home**

Investigate and participate in your local caregiving community. An adult care program is good for socialization and structure, and it has activities designed to maintain or strengthen skills. You also may be able to find people with whom you can have a mutual backup agreement or share a part-time caregiver.

**Talk to Your Manager**

If you work for a small company with no HR department, make an appointment with your boss. Be upfront about your caregiving responsibilities from the start. Most bosses value good employees and will work to keep them.

- Don’t go in with the idea that there is a single answer. Also, present solutions that won’t cost the company money or time.
- Flextime and telecommuting are accepted practices in many offices.
- Employers may be more likely to agree if you support a period that could be continued if successful.
- Be ready to compromise. A flexible schedule might not be possible, but your company may be willing to change your schedule, let you work from home one day a week or pay for respite care when you travel for work.

- If your supervisor lets you work from home, make sure you are always accessible by phone and email. Respond quickly.
- Attend meetings from home by conference call or Skype. If Skyping, find a quiet room and dress as you would at the office.
- Check in regularly to make sure the arrangement is working for all sides.

**Stay Organized**

- Manage your time efficiently. Set priorities.
- Tackle the most important items first. When you are stretched between two obligations, it is easy to forget something.
- Keep focused by using two or more lists — one for caregiving and one for work.
- Pot obligations for both caregiving and work on a single calendar.
- Delegate at work and at home.

Finally, show appreciation to your co-workers.

Ron Mori is a member of the Washington, D.C., JACL chapter and manager of community, states and national affairs — multicultural leadership for AARP.