Frank Fujino faces the audience gathered at the Hollywood Bowl on May 20, 1951, on I Am an American Day. PHOTO: COPYRIGHT © 2020 USC DIGITAL LIBRARY. LOS ANGELES EXAMINER PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION. USED WITH PERMISSION. MAY NOT BE REPRINTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF USC DIGITAL LIBRARY.

The Bewildering Search for the Truth About a 442 Vet

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Korean War Vet Min Tonai’s Memorable Memoir

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JA Incarceration Experience a Topic at Josai University

★ SPECIAL VETERANS DAY ISSUE ★
President-Elect Joe Biden and Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris have vowed to “unite America” when they officially assume office in January.

The news of uncertainty as election officials sorted through a surge of mail-in votes that delayed processing.

Trump refused to concede, threatening further legal action on ballot counting. But Biden used his acceptance speech as an olive branch to those who did not vote for him, telling Trump voters that he understood their disappointment but adding, “Let’s give each other a chance.”

“It’s time to put away the harsh rhetoric, to lower the temperature, to see each other again, to make progress, we must stop treating our opponents as our enemy,” he said. “We are not enemies. We are Americans.”

Biden struck his candidacy less on any distinctive political ideology than on galvanizing a broad coalition of voters around the notion that Trump posed an existential threat to American democracy. The strategy, as well as an appeal to Americans fatigued by Trump’s disruptions and wanting a return to a more traditional presidency, proved effective and resulted in pivotal victories in Michigan and Wisconsin, as well as Pennsylvania, onetime Democratic bastions that had flipped to Trump in 2016.

Biden’s victory was a repudiation of Trump’s divisive leadership and the president-elect now inherits a deeply polarized nation grappling with foundational questions of racial justice and economic fairness while in the grips of a virus that has killed more than 236,000 Americans and reshaped the norms of everyday life.

Kamala Harris made history as the first Black woman to become vice president, an achievement that comes as the U.S. faces a reckoning on racial justice. The California senator, who is also the first person of South Asian descent elected to the vice presidency, will become the highest-ranking woman to ever serve in government, four years after Trump defeated Hillary Clinton.

Harris introduced Biden at their evening victory celebration as “a president for all Americans” who would look to bridge a nation riven with partisanship and she nodded to the historic nature of her ascension to the vice presidency.

“Dream with ambition, lead with conviction and see yourselves in a way that others may not simply because they’ve never seen it before,” Harris told Americans. “You chose hope and unity, decency, science and, yes, truth . . . you ushered in a new day for America.”

Americans showed deep interest in the presidential race. A record 103 million voted early this year, opting to avoid waiting in long lines at polling locations during a pandemic. With counting continuing in some states, Biden had already received more than 75 million votes, more than any presidential candidate before him.

Trump’s tenure pushed Biden to make one more run as he declared “the very soul of the nation is at stake.”

At least 159.8 million Americans voted in the 2020 presidential election. (NBC News projections)

The projected vote total marks the highest voter turnout rate (66.8 percent) among eligible voters since 1900.

Kamala Harris also becomes the first female and woman of color as vice president.

WASHINGTON — Democrat Joe Biden defeated President Donald Trump to become the 46th president of the United States on Nov. 7 and offered himself to the nation as a leader who “seeks not to divide, but to unify” a country gripped by a historic pandemic and a confluence of economic and social turmoil.

“I sought this office to restore the soul of America,” Biden said in a primetime victory speech not far from his Delaware home, “and to make America respected around the world again and to unite us here at home.”

Biden crossed the winning threshold of 270 Electoral College votes with a win in Pennsylvania. His victory came after more than three days of uncertainty as election officials

**CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK COVID-19: U.S. AT A GLANCE**

- **Total Cases:** 9,463,782*
- **Total Deaths:** 233,129 (as of Nov. 5)
- **Jurisdictions Reporting Cases:** 55 (50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands)

Data includes both confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported to the CDC or tested at the CDC since Jan. 21, with the exception of testing results for persons publicly reporting their cases. In the event of a discrepancy between CDC cases and cases reported by state and local public health officials, data reported by states should be considered the most up-to-date.

Source: CDC

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The sacrifices have changed over the years. In earlier wars, it was while protecting our homeland. The sacrifices have changed over the years. In earlier wars, it was

Years later, Tonai said he wondered whether he remembered Tojo’s admonition correctly or if, perhaps, the principal misspoke. “He must have said, ‘Be loyal to Japan,’” Tonai recalled. But he had a childhood friend — Jiro Takahashi — who grew up to be a businessman in Little Tokyo. One day many years later while in Little Tokyo, Tonai dropped in to say hello to his pal. “I asked him about that,” and Takahashi corroborated his recollection.

Tonai’s anecdote not only illustrated something about the Japanese culture that was transmitted to him as a lad, it also provided some individual solace to Tojo’s heirs, too. “Once I met his (Tojo’s) grandson at the consul general’s, and so I took the opportunity to talk about that, and he was surprised and really happy that I said that.”

“Well, he went home to Japan and told his mother, the daughter of Tojo, and she was really thrilled that I remembered that, and that was why I was about her father;” Tonai recalled.

That and other stories will, hopefully, be included in the memoir Tonai, now a widower who turns 92 in February, has been writing and finally Camp Haugen in Aomori Prefecture.

Looking back, though, Tonai realized it was the medical terms, and we’d be taught to Terminal Island Penitentiary, Fort Missoula, Mont., Livingston, La., and finally, Santa Fe, N.M. “All federal prisons;” Tonai noted. Tonai also remembered how he saw his future wife, Mary Endo, for the first time in 1949 at the first Nisei Week. It would take another year until he saw her again and begin to court her. She wasn’t too receptive, but Tonai managed to learn that she lived in the Silver Lake area. He used a phone book to find all the people in that area named Endo and struck paydirt with the first number. Mary eventually warmed up to him, but another detour happened:

the Korean War. Any thoughts of marriage would have to wait. “I told her, ‘I may end up at war, I don’t know what the future will hold for me’”; Tonai recalled. “She said, ‘I’ll wait.’” It would take several years.

After getting drafted into the Army and going through the required basic training, Tonai was shipped to Japan: Camp Zama, then Camp McNair and finally Camp Haugen in Aomori Prefecture.

For Tonai, getting stationed in Japan was fortuitous, as he was able to connect with many of his relatives, who were happy to see him, but also grateful for the gifts he’d bring them from the different Army posts.

Then came the news: Tonai and his fellow soldiers were finally going to be sent to Korea, during the winter, no less. To make matters worse, the Army didn’t send them there with the necessary gear for the bitter cold of Korea. When they finally were given parkas and insulated books, Tonai realized it was all castoffs — but it was so cold, nobody cared.

Looking back, though, Tonai realized how lucky he was to survive the conflict relatively unscathed, serving as a medic — and that happened because he fortuitously reconnected in Korea with a doctor named Orson B. Spencer from Utah, who he had met during basic training at Camp Cooke (now Vandenberg Air Force Base) in California, when a decision was made to give medic training to the draftees, who had been assigned to the California National Guard. “Normally to be a medic, you’d go to medical training school in Fort Sam Houston, and then you’d get assigned to your company, wherever you were going to go,” Tonai explained. “They said, ‘We’re going to try something new. We’re going to try to train you in Camp Cooke.’”

It was actually a cost-saving measure, Tonai said. But, as it turned out, the National Guard members, who taught Tonai and his cohort weren’t really well-trained themselves, just reading from the manuals. “They would be mispronouncing the medical terms, and we’d be shouting at them how to pronounce it. Pretty bad,” he said.

Still, Tonai knew he had to do well. “If I don’t pay attention or know what’s going on, then when I get to Korea and somebody dies because I don’t know what to do because I didn’t listen, then that will be on my conscience for the rest of my life, whereas the idiot that didn’t know what he was doing, who was training us — it wouldn’t be on his conscience.”

“I thought I was back in school,” he continued. “I took copious notes and studied, studied. At the end of the training, I took a test and the sergeant who was in charge took me aside and congratulated me. I was No. 1 in the company.”
SHARING HISTORY ABROAD
The Japanese American incarceration experience reaches Josai International University in Japan.

By Ray Locker, Contributor

Being a Japanese American often means feeling like an outsider, whether it’s in the United States or even in Japan, author Shirley Ann Higuchi told an Oct. 31 audience at Josai’s Josai International University. Growing up in Ann Arbor, Mich., where there were few Japanese Americans, Higuchi said she often felt like an outsider, and even when she began to work with the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, she felt as if she was an outsider among her fellow Japanese Americans.

Higuchi, author of the new book “Setsuko’s Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration,” joined former Heart Mountain incarceree Sam Mihara for the presentation.

Mihara said his family suffered from their incarceration at Heart Mountain. “My point is that it was not humane for the government to put us in such a place without adequate treatment,” Mihara said.

His family’s history at Heart Mountain is one of the reasons Mihara has visited and protested at immigrant detention sites along the U.S.-Mexico border.

UNPEELING FAMILY SECRETS
Higuchi said one of the main themes of her book is to lift the secrecy that has surrounded much of the incarceration from younger generations of Japanese Americans.

“The Japanese Americans were very quiet about it,” she told the audience. “They were ashamed and didn’t speak out much.”

That silence meant the younger generations didn’t understand their history, she said, which is something she, Mihara and the HMWF are trying to change.

Beyond Propaganda
As the U.S. government continues to separate immigrant families at the border and house asylum seekers in for-profit prisons, both speakers said it is important for citizens and students to go beyond government claims to find the truth.

Mihara said the U.S. government during World War II tried to sugarcoat what was happening to the 120,000 Japanese Americans who were in incarceration sites around the country.

“The problem is if you only show smiling faces,” he said, “it’s propaganda. It’s not right.”

Higuchi said her mother always made Heart Mountain seem like a fun place because that was where she met her husband; the two were classmates. While she researched her book, Higuchi learned that much of life at Heart Mountain was anything but fun.

Family History
Higuchi and Mihara were invited to speak by Josai International University’s president, Dr. Kenji Sugibayashi, who was a graduate student of Higuchi’s father, Dr. William Higuchi, in the pharmaceutical sciences department at the University of Utah.

“Perhaps I am the one enjoying this the most,” Sugibayashi said. “I would like to understand more about Japanese Americans in the United States.”

Another sponsor was Dr. Tsuneji Nagai of Japan’s Academy of Pharmaceutical Science and Technology, who studied under William Higuchi at the University of Michigan in 1966.

Shirley Higuchi cited Nagai as an example of why it is so important for Japanese students to study abroad, so they can learn other cultures.

Nagai, Sugibayashi and some of William Higuchi’s other Japanese graduate students gathered at Josai for the event. William Higuchi’s contributions to the Japanese pharmaceutical industry led to him receiving the Japanese government’s Order of the Rising Sun with gold rays and neck ribbon in 2012.

THE STORY OF THE 442ND PATCH
The symbol of the decorated Army unit was designed by Mitchie M. Miyamoto.

By Mas Hashimoto, Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team is the US Army’s most-decorated unit for its services in both World War II and World War I, receiving more than 18,000 commendations in less than two years for their bravery, honor and courage in helping to turn the tide to an American victory in WWII. The history of the 442nd’s shoulder sleeve insignia has its roots in California.

Mitchie “Mitch” Miyamoto was a proud graduate of Watsonville High School, Class of 1938. In October 1941, he was drafted into the US Army, and he took his basic training in Kansas at Ft. Riley. After the Pearl Harbor attack on Dec. 7, 1941, Miyamoto was transferred to Camp Hale, Colo.

In the spring of 1943, he was sent to assist in the formation of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team at Camp Shelby, Miss. The original 442nd patch, approved on July 31, 1943, was designed by War Department artists, and it depicted a yellow arm band dishing a blood-dripping sword. The racial overtones of the design were obvious and obnoxious.

Everyone in the unit hated it. Sgt. Miyamoto, 3rd Battalion, then designed a patch of a silver hand holding the torch of liberty against a sky of blue, surrounded by a border of silver and red. Its design depicted a positive symbol of freedom and liberty for all, regardless of race or color — goals the men could fight and die for.

Some criticized the shape of the patch. They thought it was coffin shaped. Still, others believed the shape was appropriate. Many were to die while proudly wearing their famous shoulder patch, which ultimately was approved on Dec. 16, 1943. German troops quickly learned to fear the men who wore the red, white and blue patch.

The Rescue of the Texas Lost Battalion of the 36th Division gained the 442nd patch enduring fame. Miyamoto received the Bronze Star from Maj. Gen. E. M. Almond for his meritorious service rendered while in combat. He was frequently exposed to enemy fire while making trips to the forward areas to attest the accuracy of the maps in use. His knowledge of maps and his ability to accurately locate difficult spots on the terrain quickly won him the gratitude of the men and commanding officer he served.

After the war, Miyamoto married Martha and raised a daughter, Teri, and two sons, Roger and Martin. In 1955, he returned to Watsonville and was employed by Charles Ford Department Store for more than 32 years. He was the recipient of many national awards and honors for his outstanding window displays and advertising skills.

M iy a m o t o passed away on June 5, 1987, at the age of 67.

In the history section of the Smithsonian Institution on the mall in Washington, D.C., opposite the original “Star Spangled Banner,” is an exhibit telling of the exploits of the 442nd. The 442nd patch is displayed with the notation that it was designed by Mitchie Miyamoto, a member of the unit. All members of the 442nd are grateful to Mitch Miyamoto.
FINDING FRANK FUJINO

An uncanny coincidence leads to a puzzling story of a 442 veteran.

By George Yoshio Johnston, Senior Editor, Digital and Social Media

On Sunday, May 20, 1951, 17,500 people gathered at the Hollywood Bowl in sunny Southern California for “I Am an American Day,” a two-hour extravaganza of patriotism and welcome for newly naturalized U.S. citizens that featured some of the most-popular entertainers and celebrities of the day.

On stage that Sunday were some notable stars still remembered today: singing cowboy Roy Rogers and his trusty mount, Trigger; comedic duo Gracie Allen and George Burns; and actors Lana Turner, Donald O’Connor, Gene Nelson and future star of “The Munsters,” Yvonne De Carlo.

Also present were acting (and future) California Gov. Goodwin Knight and American Legion National Commander Erle Cocke Jr., who retired as a brigadier general. The master of ceremonies was the “toastmaster general of the United States,” George Jessel.

The Los Angeles Examiner, owned by infamously newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, would give the event front-page coverage, just below a banner headline that read “FRESH RED DIVISIONS HIT ALLIES,” a reference to the in-progress “police action” in Korea.

As the banner headline that read “FRESH RED DIVISIONS HIT ALLIES,” a reference to the in-progress “police action” in Korea.

The next day’s front-page coverage was because the Examiner sponsored the event. In 1939, after Hearst learned of a local I Am an American Day event in one of his newspapers, he used the power of his newspaper empire to advocate that it be celebrated across the land.

On May 3, 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt inked a joint congressional resolution to proclaim that it would be marked annually on the third Sunday of every May as a day for the “recognition, observance and commemoration of American citizenship.”

The ironies of Hearst and Roosevelt helping to set aside a day to commemorate American citizenship are manifold. The Hearst newspapers were notorious during this era not just for sensational “yellow journalism,” but also for “yellow peril journalism” in general and, before and during World War II — along with the then-reactoratory Los Angeles Times — anti-Japanese and anti-Japanese American rhetoric.

Roosevelt, meantime, despite having just proclaimed a day that celebrated American citizenship in 1940, issued Executive Order 9066 on Feb. 19, 1942, which paved the way to putting ethnic Japanese — the majority of whom were American citizens — into several government-operated concentration camps.

More irony: The name of the event may today be best-remembered tangentially as appearing in a Dorothea Lange photo, taken in Oakland, Calif., in March 1942 of the Wanto Co. grocery storefront and its sign — a cri de coeur, really — that read “I AM AN AMERICAN,” placed, presumably, by the Japanese American owner.

The sign uses a typeface and style — all uppercase letters — identical to the even larger sign used more than nine years later at the Hollywood Bowl.

Unbeknownst to all gathered, the May 20, 1951, gala would be the final national recognition of I Am an American Day.

Whether there was a connection between the death of Hearst on Aug. 14, 1951, and the demise of the event is unclear, but in February 1952, President Harry S. Truman signed a bill that not only moved it to Sept. 17 to commemorate the signing of the Constitution on that same day in 1787, it was also renamed “Citizenship Day.”

In 2004, it officially became known as “Constitution Day,” even though Sept. 17 is now still commonly referred to as both “Citizenship Day” and “Constitution Day.”

The year 1951 was also when the MGM movie studio released “Go for Broke!” the first and to this day still only motion picture by a major Hollywood studio that attempted to tell the story of the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team, the segregated Army regiment that, with the exception of most of its officers, were Japanese Americans who fought in WWII with astonishing valor and distinction in the European Theater.

In a confluence of patriotic and movie-marketing synergy, “Go for Broke!” star Van Johnson, backed by several uniformed Japanese American veterans of the 442nd, appeared on the Hollywood Bowl stage at the I Am an American Day event to promote the movie.

This was noted in a Pacific Citizen newspaper article from the May 26, 1951, issue. In part, it read: “Those of you who were in California at the start of the war remember that our neighbors of Japanese ancestry suddenly disappeared,” said Johnson. “Every Nisei — that’s an American born of Japanese ancestry — was interned with their parents.

“Well, these guys could have sat out the war — doing nothing. But instead, they volunteered. These are the men I worked with in ‘Go for Broke!’”

The Pacific Citizen newspaper’s coverage of this final I Am an American Day concluded: “The MGM star quoted the words of the late President Roosevelt at the time the 442nd Regimental Combat Team was organized: ‘Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart. Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry.’”

Unknown is whether any of the Japanese American veterans found Roosevelt’s words ironic. What is known is that the Nisei veteran lined up behind Johnson, to his far right, was Frank Toichi Fujino.

And just who was Frank Fujino?

That was a question I had wondered about since 2013, when I bought the Culver City, Calif., house he used to own.

Overview of the Hollywood Bowl at I Am an American Day, May 20, 1951

PHOTO: COPYRIGHT © 2020 USC DIGITAL LIBRARY. LOS ANGELES EXAMINER PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION. USED WITH PERMISSION. MAY NOT BE REPRINTED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF USC DIGITAL LIBRARY.
Among the images from the 1951 I Am an American Day at the Hollywood Bowl is one taken from the rear of the stage. In it is a man whose back is to the camera. He faces the audience. He is on crutches. His right leg is gone.

It was Frank Fujino, the former owner of the house I'm now making payments on. Suddenly, several things made sense. The wheelchair ramp to the backdoor that we removed. The grab bar outside the kitchen door. The issues of DAV Magazine that still arrive in the mail to his late widow, Yuriko Fujino.

More internet searches yielded additional tidbits. One, in particular, would stun me yet again, namely a footnote on page 395 of James C. McNaughton's 2006 book "Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service During World War II."

In part, it read: Another Nisei, Frank Fujino, was said to have been captured on Bataan but escaped and later joined the 442nd RCT. "Nisei Survived Death March on Bataan, Lost a Leg in Rescue of Lost Battalion," Pacific Citizen, 29 Mar 47, p. 1.

I immediately grabbed the bound edition for 1947 from the Pacific Citizen's office's shelf. Sure enough, there was the story — and what a story! (Note: The text of the original article that appeared in the March 29, 1947, P.C., begins on this page.)

Yes, for Frank the war will never be over, and the same is true with the other fellows at this Forest Glen hospital, who are fighting their greatest battle. It is a battle which he must fight alone — a grueling battle against boredom, frustration, and loneliness. But Frank is making it alright; he still has plenty of scrap left in him.

Frank’s full and legal name is Frank Fujino O’Connor. When he was eight, his parents, three sisters, and brother were killed in an automobile accident in Pasadena. The only reason Frank is alive today is that he had a cold on that fatal day and had to stay home. The Thomas O’Conners of La Canada, a suburb of Pasadena, adopted Frank. But he was sent to La Canada after he joined the 442nd because he had to take so much time off from school. He faces the audience. He is on crutches. His right leg is gone.

Frank Fujino faces the audience gathered at the Hollywood Bowl on May 20, 1951, on the final I Am an American Day.

Frank Fujino's license plate with a sticker for 1983, the year he died.
Frank began his risky attempt to reach the American outpost at Delmonico.

When they reached the Japanese lines, they were stopped by sentries. When told the Filipinos were carrying vegetables, a Japanese sentry jabbed a bayonet into the basket several times. Each time, said Frank, he could see where the sentry was prying for an opening, thus thrusting the bayonet in and thus Frank was able to squirm away from the bayonet.

When he finally arrived at Delmonico, he was taken aboard the last plane to be flown out from field. The plane carried nurses and the wounded. Because of the loss of blood, Franks said he passed out after the plane took off. When he came to, he found himself in a hospital in Australia. Army nurses later told him that the plane had been delayed by a Japanese Zero near some South Pacific Island and the occupants had been picked up by an Allied submarine and brought to Australia.

After a period of convalescence in Australia and California, he was assigned to Fort Sheridan, Illinois, for temporary duty. Then he was sent to the officers training school at Fort Benning, Georgia, but was washed out, he says, when it was learned that O’Connor was a Nisei. Another brief stay at Fort Sheridan, he was sent to Sheppard Field, Texas, to train as a bomber pilot, but again, he was washed out — this time one day before graduation because he was a Nisei.

Frank’s escapes in the Philippines and his battle against discrimination after his return to the States were dramatized for various radio shows originating from Walter Reed hospital in 1945-46. After one of these broadcasts, says Lt. Gen. Doolittle, who was present, questioned Frank about his encounters with prejudice. Gen. Doolittle told him that he himself had nothing to do with Frank’s not qualifying as a bomber pilot. “The fact that I led first raid on Tokyo,” said Gen. Doolittle, “had nothing to do with my feelings toward the Nisei. I was only a major at that time, and I certainly had no say about air force policies.”

Seeing he could get nowhere in OCS or in air force schools, Frank volunteered for the 442nd. He fought in Italy and in southern France, and lost his right leg in the fall of 1944 in the rescue of the lost Battalion. He was sent to Walter Reed hospital in May of 1945 and has been here ever since.

Altogether, 24 operations have been performed on his right leg. That leg has been plagued by infections because the suturing was not done properly when his leg was amputated. All that remains of it now is a short stump. Frank sees a strong need for Nisei to unite in the battle against discrimination. He deplores the indifference of so many Nisei who are sitting back while a few leaders are beating their brains out to secure civil rights for all Nisei and Issei.

The Nisei who together during the war on the battlefronts must continue to work shoulder to shoulder. He would like to see the Nisei get behind the JACL and support its program to the hilt. The JACL, he feels, is equipped to do the job, but it needs the full encouragement of all Nisei.

Frank’s face was eager and serious as he told us these things across a table in the Forest Glen commissary. This Nisei amputee has suffered the worst there was in the war on two battlefronts, and he got a nasty taste of discrimination on the home front. One can easily understand his desire to see some tangible gains made for Nisei and Issei as a result of the sacrifices made in the war.

In a way, the introduction to the P.C. article said it all.

Ed. Note — The story of Frank Fujino, who survived the Death March on Bataan and escaped from a Japanese prison ship and later lost a leg during the 442nd Combat Team’s rescue of the Lost Battalion, is a true story which reads like a dime thriller. The experiences of this California Nisei GI make one of the most dramatic sagas to come out of World War II.

It was written by John Kitasako and had a Washington dateline. If one word to encapsulate the story, it would be “fantastic.”

Here are some facts about Frank Fujino.

He was born in Fullerton, Calif., on Sept. 13, 1918, to Japan-born Issei parents, Tomo and Tojo Fujino, and he died on Aug. 16, 1983 at Brotman Hospital (now Southern California Hospital at Culver City).

According to the 1930 Census, taken when Frank Fujino was 11, he had an older sister, Kaoru, 13; two younger sisters, Tomigo, 9, and Mitsuuyo, 7; and a younger brother, Yeiji, 6.

Fujino’s date of enlistment in the Army was June 25, 1941, and he was honorably discharged on April 17, 1947, with the rank of private first class.

He served in K Co. of the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team. His military serial number was 39160647. He was wounded in November 1944 and eventually lost his right leg; he was taken aboard the last plane to be flown out from field. The plane carried nurses and the wounded. Because of the loss of blood, Franks said he passed out after the plane took off. When he came to, he found himself in a hospital in Australia. Army nurses later told him that the plane had been delayed by a Japanese Zero near some South Pacific Island and the occupants had been picked up by an Allied submarine and brought to Australia.

(Above) The article on Frank Fujino from the P.C., March 29, 1947

(Left) Final Accountability Roster shows Tojio and Tomo Fujino had been at Rohwer and Jerome and had not been killed when Frank Fujino was 8.

It is, in a word, fantastic.

For example, Fujino’s parents, Tomo and Tojo Fujino, are named in the War Relocation Authority’s Final Accountability Roster, which means they (and his siblings) were incarcerated at Arkanasas’ Jerome and Rohwer camps and were not killed in an automobile accident when he was 8.

If there is the possibility that Fujino was indeed put up for adoption by his parents for any reason, resulting with him being adopt-

ed by the Thomas O’Connor family of La Cañada and becoming Frank Fujino O’Con-

nor, adoption records are inaccessible except by family members.

As for being stationed in the Philippines when the Japanese invaded on Dec. 8, 1941, Fujino was indeed active duty, having entered the military on June 25, 1941. But as this composite image of where he had been transferred prior to joining the 100th/442nd shows, he was not in the Philippines.

Also, the timeline of entering the military in late June 1941 and being sent to the Philippines by the Dec. 8, 1941, Japanese invasion is, though possible, not probable.

That would mean the exploits noted in the 1947 P.C. article, including surviving the Bataan Death March, could not have happened.

According to historian and researcher Seiki Oshiro, who has spent the last several years compiling a registry of Nisei who served in the Military Intelligence Service during WWII and is also knowledgeable about the service of all Nisei veterans during that war, there were only four Nisei in the Philippines prior to Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor and its invasion of the Philippines.

They were Richard Sakakida, Arthur Komori, Clarence Yamagata and Yoshikazu Yamada. In an email, Oshiro added, “There is no evidence for Fujino to be the fifth.”

I sought out as many old-timers as possible who might still remember Fujino, who would be 102 now. No one, it seemed, remembered him. Three fellow 442 vets I sought out had no memory of him. Two — Lawson Sakai and Don Seki — died in 2020, both at 96.

(NO: Funding to research this article came from a George and Sakaye Aratani Community Advancement Research Endowment (CARE) Award, which is sponsored by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center.

Part II of “Finding Frank Fujino” will appear in the Pacific Citizen’s upcoming 2020 Holiday Special Issue.)
Tonai was ordered to report to the dispensary the next morning. He would soon thereafter receive “training” in a two-man procedure, consultation, where someone comes in complaining of something and would get a recommendation for treatment, whether it was something as simple as prescribing aspirin or getting treatment for a sprained ankle.

After a couple days, his partner basically abandoned him, saying, “OK Tonai, you take over.”

“I was thinking, ‘Wow, I don’t know any of that stuff,’” Tonai remembered. “I’m not even trained! I’m in trouble.” Fortunately, Tonai was friendly with a National Guard sergeant who was a pharmacist and a UCLA grad.

“So, I went to him and said, ‘What am I going to do? I don’t know what’s going on.’ He said, ‘Go buy a ‘Merck Manual’ — most things will be in there.’”

As soon as he could, Tonai went off to Santa Maria, found a bookstore and bought a copy.

“I put the ‘Merck Manual’ in a different room, so every time something came up that I didn’t know, I would say, ‘Just a moment please,’ walked to the room and looked it up in the ‘Merck Manual.’” Tonai laughed.

Soon, a real doctor — Dr. Spencer, who had been drafted, arrived — and the two had a good relationship, with the doctor teaching Tonai what he needed to know. Spencer eventually arranged for Tonai, who’d get reassigned to manual labor duties so a National Guardsmen could take his spot, to be formally assigned to the dispensary.

Fast-forwarding to when Tonai arrived in Korea, he caught a lucky break, reconnecting with Dr. Spencer.

“When I got to the line . . . he pulled me out and said, ‘I want you to be in charge of the ward tent.’”

Tonai said the ward tent was like a mini hospital for “anyone who got in trouble.”

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National Museum & Culture Centre

Nikkei National Museum & Culture Centre
Virtual event
Price: Free

The new traveling exhibit “Broken Promises,” co-curated by the Nikkei National Museum with the Royal British Columbia Museum and the British Columbia Museum, explores the dispossession of Japanese Canadians in the 1940s. It illuminates the loss of home and the struggle for justice of one racially marginalized community. You’ll learn about life for Japanese Canadians in Canada before World War II, the administration of their lives during and after the war ended and how the legacies of dispossession continue to this day.

Info: For more information about the exhibits, visit https://centre.nikkeiplace.org/exhibits/broken-promises/

NCWNP
Kimochi Silver Bells Arts & Crafts Faire
San Francisco, CA
Thru Nov. 12
Virtual Shopping Event
Price: Free

One of Kimochi’s longest-running events, Silver Bells will feature 12 days of shopping with proceeds directly supporting Kimochi programs and services for seniors in the Bay Area. The event will feature hand-crafted items from 60-plus artisans and include ceramics, jewelry, scarves, bags, T-shirts, greeting cards, food and specialty wines. This is an excellent opportunity to purchase holiday gifts in a safe environment: your own home!

Info: Log on to www.kimochisilverbells.org to begin shopping.

PNW
Wing Luke Museum Online Digital Content
Seattle, WA

Although the museum’s doors are temporarily closed, there is still a plethora of curated stories, digital content and neighborhood resources available to access and view. Viewers can check out Education, YouthCAN, Collections and Community Art all online!

Info: www.digitalwingluke.org.

EDC
Easy Japanese Home Cooking for Nonchefs
Boston, MA
Nov. 14; 5-6 p.m
Price: Free

For General Admission: $10
Japan Society Members

The Japan Society of Boston is offering a class on cooking sukiyaki via Zoom. Participants will be sent a list of ingredients a few days before the class and will make the dish with Japan Society intern Emily Knick, who will be sharing her favorite recipe. Registration is required.


Kimono Couture: The Beauty of Chiso
Worcester, MA
Opens Nov. 28
Virtual Exhibition
Price: Free

The Worcester Art Museum is partnering with Chiso, the distinguished Kyoto-based kimono house, to present the first exhibition of historic and contemporary kimonos from Chiso collection. The exhibit highlights the history and artistry of the prestigious 465-year-old garment maker with kimonos ranging from the mid-1600s to 2000s. In addition, a selection of related works — paintings, kimono fragments and woodblock-printed books — will also be featured.

Info: Visit https://www.worcesterart.org/exhibitions/kimono-couture/.

Japan Society of Boston Free Online Resources
Boston, MA
Virtual classes and information
Price: Free

The Japan Society of Boston is offering free online resources featuring Japanese language learning tools, cooking, origami, arts and lectures.

Horie, Umeko, 87, Gardena, CA, Feb. 3; she is survived by her husband, Henry; daughter, Karie (David Addison) Horie; sisters, Emiko Komatsu and Masayo (Nobuyuki) Togashi; sister-in-law, Sakiyo Horie; gc: 1.

Ito, Kazuyuki, 94, San Francisco, CA, April 20.

Iwamaye, Hideko Matsumoto, 95, Perris, CA, April 5; she is survived by her son, Parry Nakayama, Miki, 91, Myrtle Tajiri; gc: 1.

Ralph Murakami, Hazel Nitta and Cindy Richardson; siblings, his wife, Jessie; he is survived by his children, Gary, Cory and Jeanine; gc: 2.

Kita hata, Kay Kikuye, 94, Fullerton, CA, June 30; during WWII, she was incarcerated first at the Tule Lake WRA Center in CA and then at the Heart Mountain WRA Center in WY; she was predeceased by her husband, Roy Shigeru Kita hata; she is survived by her children, Gary, Cory and Jeanine; gc: 1.

Miyabara, Edwin Makoto, 74, Lahaina, HI, April 24; he is survived by his siblings, Kenneth (JoAnn) Miyabara, Jean (Tetsuo) Matsubara, Earl (Dianne) Miyabara and Michael (Wendy) Miyabara; he is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

Mizutani, Seiichiro 'Sage,' 68, El Monte, CA, April 30; he is survived by his daughter, Jennifer; sister, Kiyoko (Yosh) Makita; a nephew, a niece, 4 grand-nieces and extended family.

Murakami, Patrick, 83, Kahului, HI, April 1; he was predeceased by his wife, Jessie; he is survived by Michael, Scott, Susan (Jun) Castro and Cindy Richardson; siblings, Ralph Murakami, Hazel Nitta and Myrtle Tajiri; gc: 1.

Nakayama, Miki, 91, Torrance, May 8; she is survived by her son, Parry Nakayama; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Noguchi, Hiroshi, 84, Torrance, CA, March 19; he is survived by his two sons; gc: 4.

Nozawa, Umeko ‘Chi kako,’ 89, Gardena, CA, April 23; she was predeceased by her husband, Dick; she is survived by her children, Diane (Paul) Handley, Irene Freitas and Dennis (Emmy) Nozawa; son-in-law, Keith Freitas; sister, Miya (George) Tanaka; gc: 4; ggc: 1.

Sueda, Karen Mieko, 58, Fullerton, CA, April 22; she was predeceased by her father, Mas; she is survived by her mother, Sally Sueda; brothers, Karl (Laura), and Alan (Mimi); aunt, Nancy Tanaka; uncles, Fred (Inez) Tanaka and Ozzie (Terrie) Sueda; she is also survived by nieces, nephews and many cousins.

Sugimoto, Susan Naomi, 65, Wahiawa, HI, March 1; she was predeceased by her brothers, Ricky Sugimoto and Larry Sugimoto.

Sumida, Takeshi ‘Tom,’ 70, Northridge, CA, May 8; he is survived by his wife, Regina; sons, David and Shely; brother, Masahiro Sumida; sister-in-law, Hortensia Sumida; gc: 1.

Takazaki, Glenn, 70, Torrance, CA, April 2; survived by wife, Kathy; children Jennifer, Amy Dawnell and Dean; sister, Catherine; gc: 6.

Takeda, Kiyoshi, 93, Pasadena, CA, March 10; he is survived by his wife, Miyuki; children, Bryan (Jeri Lynn) Takeda and Janice Takeda; sister, Suzuko Oura; gc: 4.

Takemoto, Katsum o L., 81, Monterey Park, CA, March 6.

Takeuchi, Ted Tetsuo, 92, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 14; he is survived by his wife, Sumiye; son, Gary; gc: 3.

Tamura, Ben Takayuki, 93, Kawahae, HI, Apr. 10; he is survived by his wife, Amy; children, Joy Ota, Susan (William) Brennan and James Tamura; gc: 4.

Tanabe, Lily Yuri ko, 100, Los Angeles, CA, April 14; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Poston WRA Center in AZ; she was predeceased by her brother, Tom, KIA, 442nd RCT; she is survived by her daughter, Kathy Tanabe Richland; gc: 3.

Tokihiro, Cheryl Mae, 62, Hilo, HI, March 29; she is survived by her husband, Clyde Tokihiro; mother, Doreen Lucas; siblings, Karen Lei Lucas and Noland Craig Lucas; she is also survived by many uncles, aunts, nephews and cousins.

Tominaga, Chiyoko, 99, Los Angeles, CA, April 11; she is survived by her children, James Tominaga and Sharon ( Lester) Sakoda; gc: 2.

Tomita, Susan Kiyoko, 74, Seattle, WA, May 10; she was predeceased by her sister, Anne Ahuna, and husband, Clifford Barda; she is survived by her partner, Gregory Piercy; son, Jason (Mizuho Goto) Rabbitt-Tomita; step-daughters, Tamera Brockway, Jennifer Barda and Justine Barda; brothers, Neal (Cheryl Lippman) Tomita and Alan (Joyce) Tomita; gc: 2.

Tosa, Tadao, 78, Glendale, CA, Feb. 27; he is survived by his wife, Miyoko; children, Kathy, Stanley (Anne), Vincent (Denise) and Diana (Robert); gc: 7.

Toyofuku, Mildred Hisako, 79, Gardena, CA, April 10; she is survived by her children, Craig (Patricia) Toyofuku, Audrey (James) Mito and Diane (Alan) Takeda; siblings, Yasuko Masuda, Helene Mori, Sadie Nakamura, Minoru Tamura and Mits Tamura; gc: 6.

Yamaguchi, Paula, 91, Sunland, CA, March 14; she was predeceased by her husband, Sunebu "Bob" Yamaguchi; she is survived by Glenn (Kay) Yamaguchi, Julia (Brian) Miller and Susan (David) Toney; gc: 5.

Yamamoto, Ron 'Chub,' 70, Hilo, HI, May 9; he is survived by his wife, Pearl; daughters, Kristy (Ken) Kurizaki and Lisa (Samuel Kang) Yamamoto; brother, Lester (Laura) Yamamoto; gc: 4.

Yoshida, Charles 'Chuck,' Isuo, 84, Los Angeles, CA, April 5; he was predeceased by his siblings, Hideo Yoshida, Shoichi Yoshida, Lillian Nakamura, Robert Yoshida and Rolland Yoshida; he is survived by his wife, Jean Yoshida; daughters, Kathy Yoshida, Gayle (John) and Arlene Yoshida; siblings, Mae Morita, Harold Yoshida and Ranceford Yoshida; gc: 2.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

In Memoriam


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AARP OFFERS TIPS CONSUMERS CAN TAKE TO PROTECT AGAINST IDENTITY FRAUD

By Ron Mori

A AARP has released a new report exploring the impact of identity fraud on U.S. adults aged 55-plus and how technology might play a role in consumers’ ability to protect them from financial harm.

The report, “Identity Fraud in Three Acts,” developed by Javelin Strategy & Research and sponsored by AARP, shows that 26 percent of Americans aged 55-plus have been victims of identity fraud.

However, more are taking additional precautions to prevent losses of personal information: 29 percent have placed credit freezes on their credit bureau information following an identity theft incident, and more than half have enrolled in identity protection or credit monitoring services.

“Older Americans are leading more digitally infused lives, with two-thirds using online banking weekly, so it’s encouraging to see that many are taking proactive steps to protect their identity following a data breach,” said Kathy Stokes, director of AARP Fraud Prevention Programs. “Passwords still represent a security threat, however; using repeated passwords across multiple online accounts makes it easy for criminals to crack one of them so that all of your accounts — including financial accounts — become accessible.”

According to the report, consumers 55-plus want to bank using stronger security authentication. Roughly 90 percent stated a desire to use more fingerprint scanning, and 80 percent viewed facial recognition capabilities as trustworthy forms of technology for financial transactions and private business matters.

The report also shows that identity fraud victims age 65-plus do not necessarily change how they shop, bank or pay following a fraudulent event, with 70 percent exhibiting reluctance to change familiar habits.

“Acriminals are regularly targeting Americans aged 55-plus through a combination of sophisticated scams via computer malware and also through more traditional low-tech channels via telephone and U.S. mail,” shared the report’s author, John Buzzard, lead analyst for fraud and security at Javelin Strategy & Research. “The combination of high-tech and low-tech strategies unfortunately gives the upper hand to the criminal — not the consumer.”

The report offers several tips on protecting against identity fraud, including:

- Hang up on strangers, and independently verify everything.
- Adopt security practices that go beyond a single password. Start using a password manager tool or app to create and safely store complex passwords.
- Write down important numbers of companies you do business with rather than rely on a web search for a customer service number, as criminals post fake numbers online.
- Secure your devices — mobile phone, laptops and tablets — with a complex password, preferably with screen locks that use a fingerprint or facial recognition.
- Secure personal payments with digital wallets.
- Secure your financial accounts — online through more traditional low-tech channels via telephone and U.S. mail, and security at Javelin Strategy & Research.
- Multiple Office Locations
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  - Enicno • Fountain Valley • Westlake Village
  - Valencia • Palm Springs • San Diego • San Jose

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PHOTO: AARP

The Fraud Watch Network website provides information about fraud and scams, prevention tips from experts, an interactive scam-tracking map and access to AARP’s hit podcast series “The Perfect Scam.”

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