



PACIFIC CITIZEN

CELEBRATING 91 YEARS

FINDING FRANK FUJINO

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ » **PAGE 6**

The Bewildering
Search for the Truth
About a 442 Vet

» **PAGE 4**
Korean War Vet
Min Tonai's
Memorable Memoir

» **PAGE 5**
JA Incarceration
Experience a Topic at
Josai University

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

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★ SPECIAL VETERANS DAY ISSUE ★

BIDEN DEFEATS TRUMP FOR WHITE HOUSE

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

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 listen to 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, 77, staked his candidacy less on any distinctive political ideology than on galvanizing a broad coal-



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

tion 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 that “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.

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 repatriated to the U.S. from Wuhan, China, and Japan. State and local public health departments are now testing and 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 P.C.’s mission is to ‘educate on the past Japanese American experience and preserve, promote and help the current and future AAPI communities.’

* Your donations will help build and preserve a cohesive library of the Pacific Citizen to educate future generations.*

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

— Gil Asakawa

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RECOGNIZING SACRIFICE

By David Inoue,
JACL Executive Director

In the wake of a contentious election, and even four years, perhaps the holiday we most needed was Veterans Day. On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, we pause to acknowledge the sacrifices of the men and women who have served in our armed forces.

Originally, this was the time to commemorate the end of World War I, but it was later changed to recognize all of our veterans. Surely, we can all agree that it is worthwhile to recognize the sacrifices of those who have served while protecting our homeland.

The sacrifices have changed over the years. In earlier wars, it was typically the sacrifice of life. Today,

because of the advancements of modern medicine, it is more often permanent injury, too often to the point of disability.

Mental health can also be impacted just as severely, something unrecognized for much too long. We now recognize the debilitating effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), addiction and depression.

We also know the impact is not limited to the veteran. This begins while he or she is still enlisted, from the economic stresses of a family where one parent might be away while the other must work to ensure the family does not fall into poverty to the simple stress of fearing for the future when in combat.

Increasingly, our military draws from communities without significant economic resources to fall back upon, which reduces the safety net that might have existed with broader

enrollment drawing from a wider socioeconomic stratification for the full-service corps.

Although veterans, and active service members, live below the poverty line at lower rates than the general population, it is sad that there are any. Furthermore, the fact that the very reason there are not more in poverty is because they are just above the poverty line is even worse.

For 2020, the federal poverty level is \$12,760 for a single person, not too hard to exceed on any 40-hour-per-week job. A starting soldier in the Army earns just over \$20,000, which is actually below the poverty level for a family of three.

If his or her workweek were only 40 hours, this is less than \$10/hour. However, most soldiers often work much more than a 40-hour week. For our veterans, perhaps they are compensated by that generous mil-

itary pension we often hear about? In order to receive a pension, one must serve a minimum of 20 years. Only one in five makes it that long.

I hope that it is both shocking and repulsive to everyone that we compensate our soldiers so poorly. And yet, it is not just our soldiers, it is many more good-working people whom we undercompensate.

To say that an individual must make under \$12,760, or a family of three under \$21,720 to be considered living in poverty is ridiculous. A full-time job at the federal minimum wage rate of \$7.25 would pay only \$15,080 annually at 40 hours/week, just over the federal poverty level for an individual. I don't think that is a coincidence.

So much of our lives are built upon the low wages of others to support our own conveniences. That \$1 hamburger at McDonald's is possible because of the low wages paid to the people taking our orders and preparing the

food. How much we pay someone tells how much we value him or her as a person, and as a laborer.

Attend any sporting event, and there will be some point where a small group of service members in attendance will be highlighted on the Jumbotron, and everyone will rise together to applaud them.

In reality, each person who bought a ticket to that event is probably paying more per hour to attend the event than those soldiers are being paid per hour. We often talk about the "price of freedom" in conjunction with our armed forces and how we must support our troops. I can tell you that it is less than \$10 an hour.

No one should be asked to sacrifice so much financially whether it is for something as trivial as a Big Mac or as consequential as our national security.

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



NIKKEI VOICE

'WE ARE NOT FREE' TELLS THE JA INCARCERATION STORY THROUGH A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

By Gil Asakawa

During the coronavirus pandemic, we've all gotten used to staying home every evening — no parties, dinners at restaurants, movie nights, concerts. Just a lot of plopping down on the couch to see what's available on demand, Netflix, Amazon Prime or other streaming sources that bring entertainment to your living room. A lot of people have been reading, too. Book clubs seem to have been embraced by a whole new crop of eager readers.

I was honored this spring to be asked to create an educator's guide for teachers to use to help students learn about the Japanese American incarceration experience. The book "We Are Not Free" by Traci Chee (<http://www.tracichee.com/>) is an excellent novel, written for "Young Adult" audiences, but it's a terrific read for grownups of all ages, too.

It's a powerful, emotionally gripping novel based on memories of Chee's family members and their friends.

The story begins with a group of 14 Japanese American friends in San Francisco's Japantown in the early months of 1942, as they watch the panic and confusion over

Executive Order 9066 and the coming evacuation of the community to who-knows-where.

Chee tells the story through the perspectives of these friends and siblings who are taken from their familiar surroundings, first to a temporary detention center where entire families had to share horse stalls at the Tanforan Race Track south of San Francisco, and then on to two separate camps, Topaz in Utah, and later, Tule Lake in northern California.

She tackles the community's issues of loyalty and loss, as well as the understandable seething rage in some of the teens, which each chapter tells from the point of view of one of the characters.

Chee captures historical details with sharp, unblinking accuracy, and her deep research vividly brings to life the day-to-day life of the characters. The author's writing is taut, clean, evocative and often poetic, and though it's a YA book, adults will enjoy reading it.

In fact, "We Are Not Free" is a must-read book for anyone who's interested in Japanese American history and how its impacts still manifest today.

The real people she interviewed for the book, including her grandfather, jump off the page and draw in readers

with their stories.

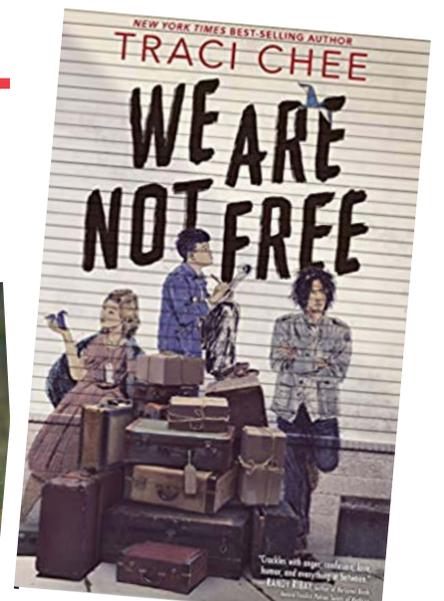
"The first time I learned about incarceration, I was 12," Chee recalled. "It was at a ceremony that the San Francisco Unified School District was putting on in 1997 for incarcerated who would have graduated in San Francisco if they hadn't been forcibly evicted from their home. My grandpa was one of them. And the (*San Francisco Chronicle*) did this write up on it. And in that article, he was quoted as saying, 'We were the bleeding hearts in 1942.'"

Chee said one passage in her book where the JAs were evicted from Japantown was inspired by photographs of her grandfather.

"There's a scene in that chapter where [Shig, one of the older boys] is sitting on the steps across from the civil control station in J-Town watching all these people line up with their luggage, and that's all they have. They're waiting to be shipped off. And that scene is inspired by photographs of my grandfather that my mom and my grandpa saw when they were at the Smithsonian Museum, around 1997, and my grandpa goes, 'Oh, that's me.'"

She later framed a copy of the photograph and gave it to her mother as a gift.

Chee's family roots for the stories



Author Traci Chee's new YA book is for readers of all ages and is based upon her own family's experiences during World War II.

in the book helped her write about the past with the vividness of the present.

"It came out of, you know, those experiences of seeing my grandpa's photo from 1942 during the eviction, and seeing how young he was, and then like reading his letters to my grandma, where he talks about yearbooks, and the dirt on their friends, and who she's going out with. And he told stories in those letters about how he learned to drive in camp, and the commissary trucks that would deliver food to the mess halls, and he crashed one of them into one of the barracks.

"I felt like these are just such teenage things," Chee continued. "It's just part of the American teenage experience. And that things didn't feel like they had changed that much from the 1940s to when I was a teenager, and then I imagine it's not that different now. These concerns and the way that they interacted with

their friends felt like that could be universal, and that could be a way into history to make it feel alive and immediate and urgent.

"Because also, the problems of 1942 aren't gone in 2020, either. Racism and social problems, detention centers are still a problem. We have not solved these. And so, kids today also are going to be having to deal with those things just like they were having to deal with the things in the 1940s," Chee concluded.

Gil Asakawa is former chair of the Pacific Citizen Editorial Board and author of "Being Japanese American" (Second Edition, Stone Bridge Press, 2015). He blogs at www.nikkeiview.com.

KOREAN WAR VET MIN TONAI'S MEMORABLE MEMOIR

The L.A. native uses the quarantine to record experiences for posterity.

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

Excluding outright, xenophobic and blatant race prejudice, perhaps one of the reasons Americans of Japanese descent had their rights abrogated during World War II was the fundamental ignorance of an aspect of Japanese culture overlooked by mainstream society: loyalty, in this case to one's nation, as dictated by the tenets of the so-called samurai code, aka *bushidō*.

That ignorance was infamously elucidated by the Western Defense Command's Gen. John Dewitt and his quote, "A Jap's a Jap. It makes no difference whether the Jap is a citizen or not."

Equally infamous was the *Los Angeles Times* column of W. H. Anderson, likening an American of Japanese heritage to a venomous snake, as in a "viper is nonetheless a viper wherever the egg is hatched" and that a Japanese American with "accidental citizenship" could never be an American "in his thoughts, in his ideas and in his ideals."

For Min Tonai, who was born in San Pedro, Calif., and spent his early years on Terminal Island, that sort of vile thinking is completely repudiated by a boyhood memory.

Tonai remembers how his mother, Toyone Tonai, sent him to Compton Gakuin on Saturdays because, from her perspective as a former school-teacher herself, she felt it was better than the Japanese language school on Terminal Island.

One Saturday, in the months before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, Tonai remembers how Principal Endo read to the students a letter from the man who became Japan's prime minister in October 1941 — and would, after Japan's defeat in WWII, be executed after being tried for war crimes: Hideki Tojo.

"I couldn't believe it," Tonai recalled. "He said, 'You Nisei are Americans. Be loyal to your country.' I was shocked." It was, Tonai, said, straight out of *bushidō*, the part about serving one's lord, master or nation loyally.

That concept of Japanese American loyalty to country would prove itself over and over again, whether it was WWII and the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team and Military Intelligence Service and decades later in the Vietnam War or, in the case of Tonai, the United Nation's "police action," better known as the Korean War, which ran from 1950-53.

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 what I said 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 during the forced isolation caused by the SARS-CoV-19 pandemic. It's something he wants to pass on to his three adult children: Susan Reiko Tonai-Drews, John Ryo Tonai and Teresa Ayako Tonai.

Some of those recollections include how his father, Gengoro Tonai, met and later married Toyone Otsubo — 13 years his junior — in Japan and why they emigrated from Japan. (It involved an overbearing mother-in-law, naturally.)

An interesting sidenote was that because of Japan's class system, his father felt he needed to marry a woman who also came from a samurai family. Perhaps unusually for a Japanese American, Tonai is of samurai lineage from both parents.

Gengoro Tonai would eventually develop a successful business running several produce stands across Los Angeles County. But it was halted with America's entry into WWII.

Min Tonai recalled how on Dec. 7, his father refused to believe that Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor, insisting initially that it had to have been the Germans instead, which made no sense to his son.

"At 8:30 that evening, the doorbell rings, and there's two guys in black suits. They said they wanted to talk



Min Tonai

with Gengoro — my father," Tonai said. "I said, 'Just a moment please.'

"I knock on his bedroom door, and I said, 'There's two *hakujin* that want to talk to you.'

"My father comes out of his room wearing his three-piece suit, put on his overcoat, put on his hat and went out the door with them.

"They told me, 'We just want to talk with him at the Los Angeles County Jail for one hour. But we never saw him until 1944.'

From when he was picked up to when he finally was able to rejoin his family, Gengoro Tonai would be shuttled to Terminal Island Penitentiary, Ft. 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 realizes 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 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, studied. At the end of the training, we took a test and the sergeant who was in charge took me aside and congratulated me. I was No. 1 in the company."

» See MEMOIR on page 9

Thank You for Your Service

The SELANOCO (South East Los Angeles North Orange County) Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League honors all the Nisei veterans who served our country so proudly during World War II.

We pay special tribute to our SELANOCO WWII VETS:
Jun Fukushima, Babe Karasawa,
Mike Kawamoto and Yosh Nakamura
for their lifetime of service to the JAACL.

Puyallup Valley JAACL
thanks its chapter
members for their
military service.

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 Japan'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

to about 300 Josai students, faculty and affiliates from around the world.

"When I visit Japan, I don't completely fit in," Higuchi said in response to a question from a Japanese student who had spent much of his life in Australia before returning to Japan. "I understand your concept of feeling like an outsider."

Mihara, who grew up in San Francisco, was childhood friends with Higuchi's mother, Setsuko Saito Higuchi, in the city and in Heart Mountain. It was Higuchi's discovery when her mother was dying in 2005 that she had donated a large amount of money to Heart Mountain, which then led to her eventually becoming the chair of the Heart Mountain board and deciding to write her book.



Dr. Kenji Sugibayashi, president of Josai International University in Chiba, Japan



Josai International University students smile for a group shot before the session.



Shirley Ann Higuchi with her father, Dr. William Higuchi, as he says a surprise "hello" to his former students, Dr. Kenji Sugibayashi and others who were in the audience.



Sam Mihara, whose family was incarcerated at Heart Mountain, speaks to the students at Josai International University.

PHOTOS: HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION

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 Uni-

versity'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 size in military history. Created in response to the War Department's call for volunteers to serve during World War II, more than 12,000 Nisei Japanese American men fought with a "Go for Broke" spirit in some of the greatest battles held in Europe during the war. In all, the unit was awarded 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 brandishing 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 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.

Miyamoto passed away on June 5, 1987, at the age of 67.

In the history sec-

tion 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.



Mitchie Miyamoto of the 442nd RCT was also an accomplished cartoonist, considered by many in his unit to be "second only to Walt Disney."

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MAS HASHIMOTO



FINDING FRANK FUJINO

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

By George Toshio 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 infamous 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” better known as the Korean War.

The next day’s front-page coverage was because the *Examiner* sponsored the event. In 1939, after Hearst learned of a local I



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

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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-reactionary *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.”



Singing cowboy Roy Rogers and his horse, Trigger, were among the entertainers at the Los Angeles edition of I Am an American Day on May 20, 1951.

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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.

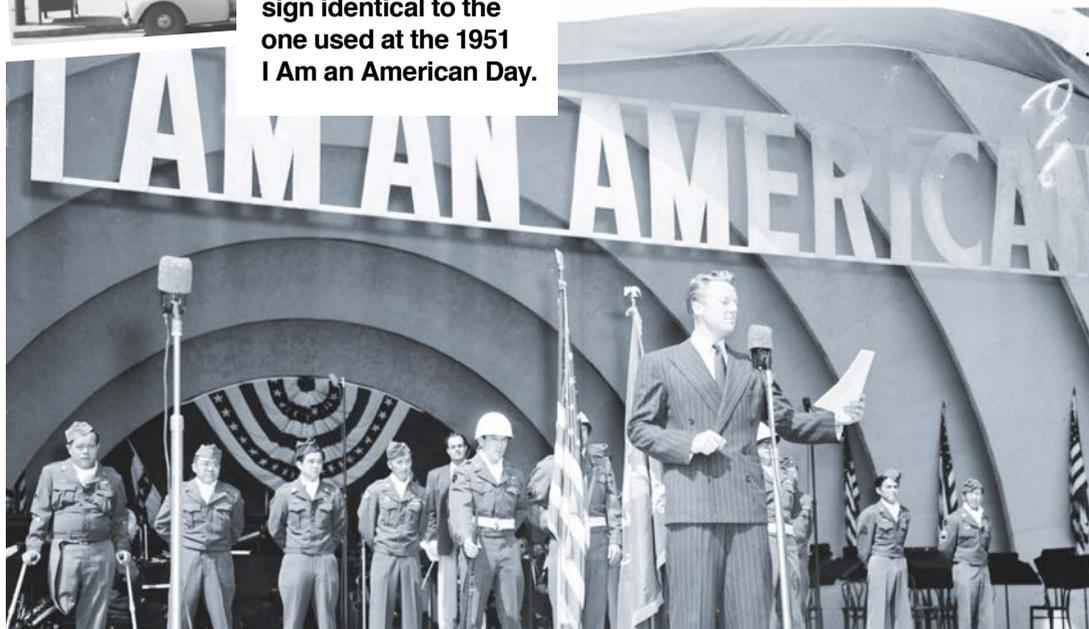
And just who was Frank Fujino?

★★★

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



Dorothea Lange’s 1942 photo shows a sign identical to the one used at the 1951 I Am an American Day.



Actor and “Go for Broke!” star Van Johnson addresses the Hollywood Bowl audience on May 20, 1951, at I Am an American Day. Behind him are several 442nd Regimental Combat Team veterans, including Frank Fujino (far left) on crutches.

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(Above) The *P.C.*’s May 26, 1951, story about I Am an American Day

I knew Fujino was a second-generation Japanese American. I learned that from his daughter's real estate agent when I went to an open house and saw in the garage an outdated California license plate with a 1983 registration sticker nailed onto a work cabinet, held in place by a license plate frame that read "100/442 RCT" across the top and "Go for Broke" across the bottom.

Having made a short documentary about the 100th/442nd, I knew the significance of the license plate holder — and as it would turn out, it was one of the things that helped my family and me buy this house instead of a couple of house flippers. (See page 28, Dec. 13, 2013, *Pacific Citizen Holiday Special Issue*.)

Curious to learn more about Fujino, I did some cursory internet research on him at the time, but the only significant item I found was a photograph in the Japanese American National Museum's website.

It pictured a group of middle-aged Nisei military veterans circa 1970. Many were wearing garrison caps showing their affiliations with the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, etc. They had raised money and donated wheelchairs to the Keiro retirement home.

Among them, in the background, stood Frank Fujino, third from the right. At least I now had a face for the name, and I left it at that.

Fast-forward to last fall. I tried another internet search to glean what might have been added over the intervening years about Fujino, using some different search terms. What Google came back with stunned me.

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 bookshelf. 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.)

THE SAGA OF FRANK FUJINO: NISEI SURVIVED DEATH MARCH ON BATAAN, LOST A LEG IN RESCUE OF LOST BATTALION

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.

BY JOHN KITASAKO

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Frank Fujino has seen plenty of action all right — all the way from Bataan to the Vosges Mountains. This former La Canada, Calif., youth is one of the few who survived the Bataan Death March in 1942. And to our knowledge he is the only Nisei who fought as an infantryman in both the Pacific and European theaters, and he is the only Nisei not in the regular army who's been in service nine years.

Frank, who is currently convalescing at the Forest Glen section of Walter Reed Hospital, has plenty to show for his years of fighting for democracy. He won a Silver Star, which was belatedly awarded to him at Walter Reed early in 1946 by his former regimental commander in the Philippines. He has earned four combat unit citations, two in the Pacific and two in Europe. He has seven stars, four in the Pacific and three in Europe.

Some day when Frank hangs up his khaki for good, he can put away his many medals and ribbons as reminders of the years of war. They are colorful and pretty. But he has other reminders which are not pretty and which he can never put away. He has an artificial right leg. He lost his leg in the rescue of the Lost Battalion in the Vosges. In his left leg he has plates of silver to strengthen his fibia shattered in the Philippines. In his mouth he wears silver braces to hold together jaws that were busted by Japanese gunfire in the Philippines.

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 out 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'Connors of La Canada, a suburb of Pasadena, adopted Frank. But he dropped the O'Connor when he joined the 442nd because he had to take so much ribbing about having an Irish monicker.

He went to school at UCLA and Stanford. As a ROTC man, he applied for a commis-

sion as a second lieutenant in 1938, but was turned down because he was Nisei. So he enlisted as a buck private and when the war broke out he was in Luzon, in the Philippines, serving with the coast artillery.

When this unit was blasted by the Japanese. The remnants joined up with a company of Filipino scouts. Early in 1942 he was captured by the Japanese. He thought surely it was curtains for him. He says he was grilled mercilessly by the Japanese who were suspicious of his dark hair and features. He insisted he was not Japanese but Korean-Hawaiian extraction. Fortunately for him, because he had been shot in the jaw, his face was bloody and grimy, making his features less distinguishable. Altogether he was questioned six times.

The Japanese finally decided not to bother with him and so he was thrown into line for the march to the stockades, which later became known as the infamous Bataan Death March. He was in the second of four batches of prisoners forced to march that road to hell. For 10 torturous days, Frank and other prisoners trudged along the dusty hot roads. They were given no water or food, and were constantly beaten with rifle butts by the arrogant Japanese guards. He saw those who fell by the wayside shot or bayoneted. Frank didn't figure he would ever come out alive, and to this day he says it seems like a miracle that he managed to survive.

Along the route of the Bataan march, he shuddered when he saw a Japanese-Caucasian youth hanging by the neck from a tree. He was an Eurasian who had served with general headquarters, says Frank. That was the fate that would probably have been Frank's had the Japanese discovered his identity.

The prison ship on which Frank was heading for Kobe was torpedoed off the Philippines. He jumped into the water and headed for the shore. The Japanese guards fired on the prisoners, and many who were too weak to swim or couldn't swim fast enough were killed.

Frank swam mostly underwater until he was out range. Fortunately for him, his experience as an underwater swimmer during the days he hunted abalone off the coast of southern California saved his life.

When he reached shore, he was rescued by Filipinos who, he said, declared their willingness to take him through the Japanese lines to a U. S. unit deep inland. The Filipinos put him in a huge bamboo basket which they used to carry fruits and vegetables to market. Crouched in this basket suspended on a pole between two strong Filipinos.



Frank Fujino's license plate with a sticker for 1983, the year he died.



In 1970, several Nisei vets donated wheelchairs to the Keiro retirement home. Fujino is third from right.

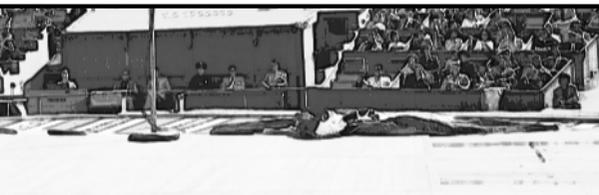
PHOTO: JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM. PHOTO BY TOYO MIYATAKE STUDIO, GIFT OF THE ALAN MIYATAKE FAMILY.



PAGE 395 »

⁴² *Yaban Gogai*, Nov 45, pp. 5, 8.
⁴³ "Sgt. Fujita, Only Nisei Taken Prisoner by Japanese in Pacific Fighting, Reported Liberated," *Pacific Citizen*, 22 Sep 45; Frank Fujita, *Foo! A Japanese-American Prisoner of the Rising Sun* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1993). Another Nisei, Frank Fujino, was said to have been captured on Bataan but escaped and later joined the 442d RCT. "Nisei Survived Death March on Bataan, Lost a Leg in Rescue of Lost Battalion," *Pacific Citizen*, 29 Mar 47, p. 1.
⁴⁴ Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000), pp. 541-51; *Yaban Gogai*, Sep-Oct 45, p. 3; Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, pp. 292-97; Fabion Bowers,

(Above) A footnote from James C. McNaughton's "Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service During World War II."



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

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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 forced down 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 escapades 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, he says, Lt. Gen. Doolittle, who was present, questioned Frank about his encounters with prejudice.

Gen. Doolittle told him that he himself had nothing to 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 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 JAACL and support its program to the hilt. The JAACL, 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. ■

The Saga of Frank Fujino: Nisei Survived Death March On Bataan, Lost a Leg In Rescue of Lost Battalion

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When he finally arrived at Delmonico, he was taken aboard the

(Continued on Page 4)

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

RANK AND ASN	GRADE	ENTRY INTO SERV	BASIC TNG	ORGN ORIG ASGD	TRANSFERS	MIL SPECAL
Fujino, Frank T. 39160647	Pvt	Ind 6-26-41 at Los Angeles Calif	Infantry	Inf RTC Cp Roberts Calif	Sec 1608 SU Cp Grant Ill Cook	To 40th Div Inf San Luis Ammunition ca Obispo Calif To CO IV Auto Mech, g Army Presidio of SF Calif FireFighter To 1900 CASC PSF Calif To 159th Inf PSF Calif To QM Sec 1608 SU Cp Grant Ill

A composite record of where Fujino was stationed while he was on active duty in the Army.

013	Fujino, Chiyoko Jans	2122	F	2/2/40							
014	Fujino, Shuji Chester	2122	F	11/2/39							
015	Fujino, Nideo	1233	M	2/20/40							
016	Fujino, Masato Kenneth	2122	M	2/20/40							
017	Fujino, Nokie	1233	M	1/1/41							
018	Fujino, Tatsunosuke	26112	M	9/10/39							
019	Fujino, Tojiro	30-8-41	M	8/15/39							
020	Fujino, Tomo	30-8-41	M	10/1/39							
021	Fujino, Tsuruyo	1233	F	1/1/41							
022	Fujino, Yasuo	1233	M	11/2/40							

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

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

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It was written by John Kitasako and had a Washington dateline. If one word were 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 Tojiro 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 Mitsuyo, 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 spent time recuperating at the Walter Reed General Hospital.

That preceding is verifiable and true. But some of the other elements in the 1947 article? Let's just say there are some questions.

His entire family killed in a car accident at age 8? Adopted by the O'Connor family of La Cañada, Calif.? Attended both Stanford and UCLA? Was stationed in the Philippines when the Japanese invaded on Dec. 8, 1941? Survived the Bataan Death March? Escaped from a torpedoed POW ship bound for Kobe? Made his way to the inland "American base at Delmonico"? (There was no such base; there was, however, a Del Monte Airfield.) Fled on the last plane to leave, only to be forced by a Japanese Zero to land on an island and rescued by an "Allied submarine and brought to Australia"? Applied to two different officers training schools, only to be rejected because of his ethnicity? Awarded the Silver Star?

It is, in a word, fantastic.

For example, Fujino's parents, Tomo and Tojiro Fujino, are named in the War Relocation Authority's Final Accountability Roster, which means they (and his siblings) were incarcerated at Arknasas' 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 adopted by the Thomas O'Connor family of La Cañada and becoming Frank Fujino O'Connor, 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 whom 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.

(NOTE: 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.)

MEMOIR » continued from page 4

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 on leave 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 Guardsman 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 sick or wounded but could recover in seven to 10 days” — and it was well behind the front lines of combat. After six months in country, his time in Korea was done.

After his service was completed, Tonai returned stateside, rekindled his romance with Mary and got married, enrolled at UCLA and majored in accounting.

But once he completed his degree and began interviewing for jobs with national accounting firms like Arthur Andersen and Peat Marwick. But he found out they only wanted to speak with graduates whose grades were B+ or higher in their major.

“I had one B+ in all my accounting courses,” Tonai said, so that was not a problem. “I was more than qualified. But the companies would say, ‘Don’t call us, we’ll call you.’ That was a kiss off. I knew that.”

But, one company Tonai interviewed with was straightforward with him. Even though this company liked his grades, extracurricular activities and personality, the rep told him, “We can’t hire Orientals.”

“Then what shall I do?” Tonai asked him. “‘Well, just keep on interviewing,’ the rep answered. I said, ‘All the major companies are just like you. They don’t want to hire Orientals. What shall I do?’”

“He put his head down. He said, ‘I’m sorry. I don’t know.’ He really was embarrassed to tell me this.”

Through his UCLA professor, he wound up getting a bookkeeping job, which he didn’t much like but did for about a year before he quit. But Tonai was able to land a job as a cost accountant at a subsidiary of an aerospace firm.

Even though the pay wasn’t what he would have liked, it gave him an opportunity to be able to say he had a background in cost accounting as well as general accounting.

“It was not hard. It was easy,” Tonai said. But it was a foot in the door and his postwar career in accounting, which would lead to titles like chief financial officer and vp of finance. Things were finally starting to look up, career-wise, for him.

Over time, in addition to his career, Tonai became involved with various community organizations: Japanese American National Museum (board member), Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (president), Japanese American Korean War Veterans (president and treasurer), the UCLA Foundation, UCLA’s Business Economic Council, the Amache Historical Society, Terminal Islanders — but not the JACL.

“I found out when my father got jailed, one of his employees, who was an active JACL member, had turned him in to the FBI,” Tonai said. “I could never join it (JACL) because I felt that would be disloyal to my father.” Nevertheless, he did say he is a nonmember subscriber to the *Pacific Citizen*.

At 91, Tonai can count his blessings: decent health, a still-sharp mind, having raised three children to adulthood. But he is also the last of his siblings, including a younger brother who predeceased him.

Once the pandemic clears up, the Japanese American Korean War Veterans will have a final dinner for its few remaining members and disband, then donate its remaining funds to the JACCC’s Japanese American National War Memorial Court to go toward maintaining it.

Like all things, Minoru Tonai knows his time will pass. But that memoir he is working on will remain as a testament to a life of service, honor and integrity that is as American as anyone could hope to be. ■

JACLER AND CNC VET DIES AT 98

Kathryn Yukie Komura was the last living charter member of the French Camp JACL chapter.

Kathryn Yukie Komure, the last living charter member of the French Camp JACL chapter, died of a heart attack on Oct. 6. She was 98.

Born in Lathrop, Calif., on Sept. 13, 1922, she was the second child of Tomitaro and Koyumi Tanaka. Until World War II, she spent most of her life in French Camp on her parents’ farm.

During WWII, the Tanaka family was forced to move by the federal government and incarcerated at the Gila River War Relocation Authority Center in Arizona.

Later, Komure was authorized to leave the WRA Center to attend St. Joseph’s School of Nursing in Lewistown, Mont., one of the few nursing schools in the country at that time that accepted Japanese Americans. She served in the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps (*see sidebar below*) from 1945-46, working with paraplegic and amputee military patients.



After the end of the war and the completion of her service, Komure returned to French Camp and worked at San Joaquin County Hospital for 25 years, taking time to obtain her B.S. degree in nursing from University of California San Francisco in 1970.

Following her retirement, Komure had a successful career as a real estate

agent and broker for several more years. She was an active member of Stockton Calvary Church and a charter member (72 years) of the French Camp JACL.

She loved her pets, gardening and being with friends and family. Komure was predeceased by her husband, George, to whom she was married for 52 years, and siblings James Tanaka and Misako Sumida.

Komure is survived by her children, Jeanne Sabankaya (Semih), Donna Komure-Toyama (Titus) and Dean Komure (Liane), her eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, sisters-in-law Fusae Tanaka and Jane Matsuoka, as well as many nieces and nephews.

A small, private service to celebrate her life is scheduled for 11 a.m. on Nov. 14 at Calvary Church. The service will be live-streamed and recorded. To submit a video sharing your memories of Komure, please email it to info@cpcstockton.org. ■

Cadet Nurse Corps: Military Veterans or Not?

During WWII, the United States faced several shortages: metals, rubber, fuel, etc. One of the more serious shortages was human: nurses. To answer that emergency, in 1943, Congress created the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps, which was enacted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Interestingly, the Senate added wording to the legislation explicitly prohibiting discrimination by race, color or creed.

For eligible high school and college graduates in good health and aged 17-35 (at that time, all women), the CNC provided a free, accelerated training program (30 months vs. 36 months) with pay, room and board — and a uniform.

According to Thelma M. Robinson’s book “Nisei Cadet Nurse of World War II: Patriotism in Spite of Prejudice,” approximately 124,000 women answered the call during the five years — 1943-48 — the program existed.

It was a win-win, in which women who might not otherwise be able to afford nursing school received the necessary training — and the United States was able to make up the shortfall in qualified nurses, with women from all walks of life serving their country.

Also helping with that war effort were more than 350 Japanese American women who left America’s WRA-administered camps for CNC training, according to Robinson.

Despite the federal government’s backing — and uniforms worn by the CNC nurses — cadet nurses are not recognized as military veterans.

Nevertheless, there have been efforts to have Congress recognize the CNC’s participants as honorary veterans, making them eligible for benefits such as burials at VA-administered cemeteries.

Thus far, those efforts have failed. ■

For all
San Joaquin
County veterans
who served with
honor and pride



Stockton JACL thanks you for your service

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

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

NATIONAL

JACL Giving Tuesday Series Virtual events Dec. 1, 15, 29

Price: Free

Giving Tuesday is an international movement that inspires hundreds of millions to give! Any JACL member, anywhere, can participate in one or all of the upcoming events:

Advocate! Join JACL to ask your Congressional officials to support the Japanese American Confinement Education Act. This bipartisan legislation will fund \$48M for the JACS program and education.

Pledge to Grow Our Membership: JACLers will have the opportunity to solicit their friends and family for membership. If you would like to join, watch out for JACL emails or call (773) 816-1318.

End-of-Year Membership Call: More information coming soon!

Info: Contact pozaki@jacl.org for questions and more information.

CCJACL Financial Seminar Virtual Events

Nov. 18, 6 p.m. or Nov. 22, 3 p.m.

Price: Free

CCJACL's resident economist and board member Sami Husain will present the varied views on the U.S. economy and her thoughts on where it's headed post election. Husain has worked for Moody's and the Federal Reserve Bank and is currently employed at Wells Fargo Bank. She received her master's degree from UC Berkeley. While she welcomes your questions, either provided in advance or asked during the webinar, please note that she cannot give specific financial advice.

Info: Send questions to syhusain@gmail.com or mail to CCJACL Board President Yoko Olsgaard at 4253 35th Ave., Oakland, CA 94619. To receive meeting credentials, please RSVP to syhusain@gmail.com and specify which date you'd like to attend. Please provide your name, email address and JACL chapter.

'Campu' Podcasts From Densho Online Series

Price: Free

Densho has just released the first three episodes of a new podcast by Hana and Noah Maruyama. The series draws heavily on Densho's oral history archive to tell the story of the World War II incarceration from the perspective of those who experienced it.

Info: Visit <https://densho.org/campu/>.

**'Broken Promises' Virtual Exhibit
Burnaby, Canada
Ongoing**

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 Landscapes of Injustice research collective, 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 continues to this day.

Info: For more information about the exhibit, visit <https://centre.nikkei-place.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 fundraising event, 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 wine and sake. 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.

Nihonmachi Little Friends' 45th Anniversary Event

San Francisco, CA

Nov. 20; 7-7:30 p.m.

Virtual Event

Price: Free

Join Nihonmachi Little Friends as it celebrates its 45th anniversary with a virtual program. The evening will highlight 1830 Sutter's Listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as well as NLF's preschool and afterschool programs in action during the pandemic. There will also be a performance by Nihonmachi "Big Friends," led by Dr. Anthony Brown. Guests are also encouraged to order a special Sushi Bento Box from We Be Sushi, who has partnered with NLF the last few years and will donate 25 percent of the proceeds to NLF.

Info: Email nlfchildcare@gmail.com

or call (415) 922-8898 for more information. To order a bento, visit www.nlfchildcare.org and click on the invitation link.

PSW

GFBNEC's 'An Evening of Aloha'

Los Angeles, CA

Nov. 14, 4-5 p.m. PST

Virtual event

Join the Go For Broke National Education Center as it streams live for the first time 'An Evening of Aloha' celebration gala honoring our brave Nisei veterans.

Info: Visit goforbroke.org.

JACL PSWD's 'Developing a New Generation of Leaders' Virtual Fundraiser

Los Angeles, CA

Nov. 21; 1-2 p.m. PST

Virtual Event

Price: Free

In lieu of its annual luncheon, the PSWD is sponsoring a virtual fundraising event "A New Generation of Leaders" featuring six future leaders who will speak about their JACL experiences from their respective perspectives, including their experience as a JACL scholarship recipient, Kakehashi participant and much more. The event will feature participants Kurt Ikeda, Kristy Ishii, Justin Kawaguchi, Emily Nagamoto, Yuki Torrey and Matthew Weisbly, as well as presenters Marissa Kitazawa and Douglas Urata.

Info: To participate, visit www.jaclpsw.org/virtual-fundraiser.html.

JANM Virtual Kokoro2020

Los Angeles, CA

Nov. 14-30

Online

This 12th annual craft fair, presented by JANM volunteers, will be entirely virtual this year, with proceeds benefitting JANM's education programs. In lieu of this year's in-person shopping extravaganza, viewers will instead be able to watch videos featuring this year's craft vendors on JANM's YouTube channel. Shoppers will be able to purchase available items during the online event period. Organizers just ask that shoppers write Kokoro2020 on their orders so JANM will receive a share of the proceeds. There are more than 40 vendors participating, so get a start on holiday shopping by supporting this annual fundraising effort.

Info: Visit janm.org/kokoro for more information and updates. The YouTube channel can be viewed at [YouTube.com/janmdotorg](https://www.youtube.com/janmdotorg).

JANM Online Museum Collection

Los Angeles, CA

Japanese American National Museum Online

JANM's Museum Collections Online features selected highlights from the museum's permanent collection of more than 60,000 unique artifacts, documents and photographs. Among the collections that can be viewed online are the "Stanley Hayami Diary," "Hisako

Hibi Collection," "George Hoshida Collection" and "Hideo Date Collection," "Estelle Ishigo Collection," among others. Although the museum is temporarily closed, viewers can still experience its inside treasures.

Info: www.janm.org.

PNW

Wing Luke Museum Online Digital Content

Seattle, WA

Wing Luke Museum

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.

IDC

'Abstract and Form' Exhibit

Yuma, CO

Thru Nov. 29

The Orphanage

300 S. Main St.

This exhibit features the abstract multimedia paintings of Kathleen Umemoto and the prints, collages, drawings and paintings of Richard Farley. Umemoto, who is also an accomplished pottery and clay artist, works with natural materials such as coffee or tea and common castaway objects to imprint, stain and texture her pieces of art. Farley, a career urban designer and architect, uses various media such as acrylic, watercolor, and ink wash on his pieces.

Info: The exhibit is open Tues.-Sat. from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sun. 1-4 p.m. Visit orphanageyuma.com for more information.

MDC

'Vibrant Line': Works on Paper by Tanaka, Shinoda and Tawara

Idaville, IN

Thru Nov. 29

Indianapolis Museum of Art

4000 N. Michigan Road

Price: See Museum's Website

Three very different modern Japanese artists stay inside the lines to express what's possible with ink on paper — from photorealistic etchings of old rural Japan to calligraphy influenced by abstract expressionism, see the artworks of master etcher Ryohei Tanaka, painter Tawara Yusaku and calligrapher Toko Shinoda in this exhibit that incorporates abstract interpretations of natural phenomena.

Info: Visit <https://www.mutualart.com/Organization/Indianapolis-Museum-of-Art-Newfields/3CB126D19FEF393C>.

**'Quilts Uncovering: Women's Stories' Indianapolis, IN
Thru Jan. 31, 2021
Eiteljorg Museum**

500 W. Washington St.

Price: See Museum's Website

This exhibit features 30 fascinating quilts by women artists from the early 1800s to the present day in the Western states and reveals captivating experiences and stories of women in the West and Native America. The quilts document people, places and events, and serve as visual records that help us study and understand Western art, history and cultures. One quilt on display contains blocks made by students who were incarcerated at Poston War Relocation Center during WWII.

Info: Visit www.eiteljorg.org.

EDC

Easy Japanese Home Cooking for Nonchefs

Boston, MA

Nov. 14; 5-6 p.m.

Price: \$15 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.

Info: Visit <https://www.japansociety-boston.org/event-3997192>.

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's collection. The exhibit highlights the history and artistry of the prestigious 465-year-old garment maker with 14 kimonos 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.

Info: Visit <https://japansocietyboston.wildapricot.org>.

ADVERTISE HERE

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

FOR MORE INFO:
pc@pacificcitizen.org
(213) 620-1767

In MEMORIAM

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, Cerritos, CA, April 5;

Iwata, Daniel, 66, Fountain Valley, CA, March 27; he is survived by his wife, Jacquie Chester; daughter, Alexandra Chester-Iwata; mother, Sakuye Iwata; sister, Sharon Muro; he is also survived by other relatives.

Kitahata, 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 Kitahata; she is survived by her children, Gary, Cory and Jeanine; gc: 2.

Miyabara, Edwin Makoto, 74, Lahaia, 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 'Chikako,' 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.



Oji, May Mitsuye (Zaiman), 97, Fresno, CA, Oct. 23; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Heart Mountain WRA Center in Wyo.; she was predeceased by her husband, Chester; she is survived by her children, Patricia (Haas), Sarah (Iddins), Julie, Douglas and Arnold; gc: 5.

Ozawa, Yoshihiro, 93, Los Angeles, CA, March 11; he is survived by his daughter, Motoko Endo; sister, Yaeko Ozawa; gc: 2; ggc: 2.

Shigetomi, Fumi T., 98, Pasadena, CA, May 4.

Shima, Judy Hideko, 92, Pasadena, CA, March 23; she was predeceased by her husband, Jerry Seikichi Shima and son, Bryan Shima; she is survived by her children, Sheila (David) Eaton, Geri (Russ) Kornmann and Patrick (Toni) Shima; sister-in-law, Yako Mito; gc: 4; ggc: 4.

Shinagawa, Jene Patricia, 66, Tor-

rance, CA March 6; she is survived by her husband, Jeffrey Scott Shinagawa; sister, Kathy Contreras; she is also survived by a niece and many cousins, extended family members and friends.

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, Wailuku, 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 Shelley; brother, Masahiro Sumida; sister-in-law, Hortensia Sumida; 1 niece.

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

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

Takemoto, Katsuko 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, Kawaihae, HI, April 10; he is survived by his wife, Amy; children, Joy Ota, Susan (William) Brennan and James Tamura; gc: 5; ggc: 4.

Tanabe, Lily Yuriko, 100, Los Angeles, CA, April 14; during WWII, her family and she were incarcer-

ated at the Poston WRA Center in AZ; she was predeceased by her brother, Tom, KIA, 442nd RCT; she is survived by her daughter, Kathi 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, nieces 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, Shinji, Eiji, Jyunji John Tosa and Maki (Clark) Michel; gc: 2.

Toyama, Frank Kenichi, 89, Torrance, CA, March 1; he is survived by his wife, Yoshiko; 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.

Toyota, Kohachi, 88, Nampa, ID, April 9; an Army veteran, he is survived by his children, Chris Toyota and Karen Daynes; gc: 3.

Yamaguchi, Paula, 91, Sunland, CA, March 14; she was predeceased by her husband, Suenobu "Bob" Yamaguchi; she is survived by Glenn (Kay) Yamaguchi, Julia (Brian) Miller and Susan (David) Toney; gc: 5; ggc: 2.

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' Itsuo, 84, Los Angeles, CA, April 5; he was predeceased by his siblings, Hideo Yoshida, Shoichi Yoshida, Lillian Nakamaru, 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' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$20/column inch.

CONTACT:
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REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

AARP OFFERS TIPS CONSUMERS CAN TAKE TO PROTECT AGAINST IDENTITY FRAUD

By Ron Mori

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.

"Criminals 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.



It's important to take necessary steps to prevent yourself from becoming a victim of identity fraud and theft.

PHOTO: AARP

- 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.

Additionally, watch the on-demand "Identity Fraud in Three Acts" webinar with experts Kathy Stokes, director of fraud prevention programs at AARP, and Buzzard. To learn more about AARP's fraud prevention programs, visit aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.

The AARP Fraud Watch Network launched in 2013 as a free resource for people of all ages. Consumers

can sign up for "Watchdog Alert" by email or text that delivers information about scams or call a free helpline at (877) 908-3360 to report scams or get help from trained volunteers in the event someone falls victim to scammers' tactics.

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.

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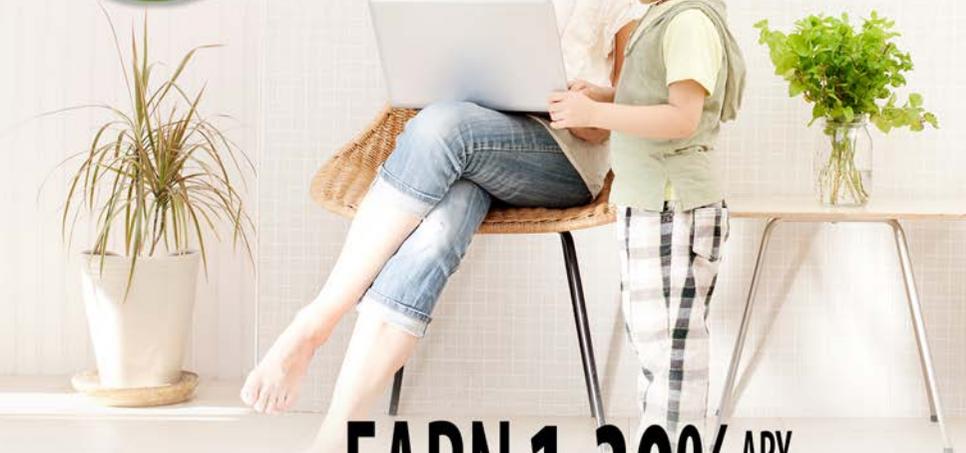
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