



PACIFIC CITIZEN

CELEBRATING 92 YEARS

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Makoto Hirano's
'The Great American
Gunshow'

"Boogie" is a coming-of-age film from Focus Features about an Asian American basketball phenom living in New York who dreams of one day playing in the NBA.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF
FOCUS FEATURES

Boogie 布吉

SHOOT YOUR SHOT.

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Eddie Huang and
Taylor Takahashi
Team Up in This Unique
Coming-of-Age Story.

» PAGE 6

HR 40 Passes
Hurdle in the
House.

SENATE OKS BILL TO FIGHT HATE CRIMES AGAINST ASIAN AMERICANS

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Senate on April 22 overwhelmingly passed a bill that would help combat the rise of hate crimes against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, a bipartisan denunciation of such violence during the coronavirus pandemic and a modest step toward legislating in a chamber where most of President Joe Biden's agenda has stalled.

The measure would expedite the review of hate crimes at the Justice Department and provide support for local law enforcement in response to thousands of reported violent incidents in the past year.

Police have seen a noted uptick in such crimes, including the February death of an 84-year-old man who was pushed to the ground near his home in San Francisco, a young family that was injured in a Texas grocery store attack last year and the killing of six Asian women in shootings last month in Atlanta.

The names of the six women killed in Georgia are listed in the bill, which passed the Senate on a 94-1 vote. Biden applauded the measure, tweeting, "Acts of hate against Asian Americans are wrong, un-American and must stop." The House is expected to consider similar legislation in the coming weeks.

Democratic Sen. Mazie

Hirono of Hawaii, the legislation's lead sponsor, said the measure is incredibly important to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders "who have often felt very invisible in our country, always seen as foreign, always seen as the other." She said the message of the legislation is as important as its content and substance.

Hirono, the first Asian American woman elected to the Senate, said the attacks are "a predictable and foreseeable consequence" of racist and inflammatory language that has been used against Asians during the pandemic, including slurs used by former President Donald Trump.

More than 3,000 incidents have been reported to Stop AAPI Hate, a California-based reporting center for such crimes, and its partner advocacy groups since mid-March 2020.

Illinois Sen. Tammy Duckworth, a former Army helicopter pilot who lost her legs during a 2004 attack in Iraq, said there is more work to be done, but the bill's passage tells the community that "we will stand with you, and we will protect you." ■



JACL STATEMENT ON DEREK CHAUVIN TRIAL



By JACL National

On April 20, Derek Chauvin was found guilty on all three charges related to the killing of George Floyd. Mr. Chauvin in being found guilty, and now awaiting sentencing, received the due process he denied George Floyd last year.

However, the verdict should not be seen as justice. Justice is measured in real transformation; something that our country has yet to truly see. Instead, this verdict is about accountability, and accountability is one step on that path toward justice. Change needs to occur on all levels, in our communities, in our police force, in our justice system and in our Congress, if we want to see true justice served.

At the end of the day, George Floyd is still dead, his family has been given a bittersweet victory, but they will never see their partner, father and brother again. In the months since that fateful day, countless more people of color have been killed at the hands of the police.

Iremamber Sykap, Adam Toledo,

Daunte Wright, Christian Hall and Angelo Quinto, just to name a few. Others still have been subjected to continued use of unnecessary and excessive force, as they feared for their lives and the very real possibility that their name may be added to the list above.

Let this small victory invigorate us and remind us of the work we do in making change for the better. The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act is a step in the right direction toward re-envisioning what law enforcement ought to look like in support of the communities with which it has too often been at odds.

The systemic racism that led to George Floyd's death must be rooted out from law enforcement just as we must seek to end its grip on our education, health care and financial systems.

George Floyd should be alive today. As we continue to say his name, and the names of all those lost to excessive use of force at the hands of the police, we will remember them, remember this moment in our history and continue forward to create a more just and equitable world. ■

DEREK CHAUVIN TRIAL AT A GLANCE

- Former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin was convicted on all charges in the death of George Floyd.
- Jurors deliberated for more than 10 hours before reaching their decision on April 20.
- Chauvin faces up to 40 years in prison for second-degree murder,

up to 25 years for third-degree murder and up to 10 years for second-degree manslaughter.

- Floyd died on May 25, 2020, after Chauvin placed his knee on Floyd's neck for nine minutes and 29 seconds while he pleaded, "I can't breathe."
- Chauvin's bail was revoked after the verdict was read, and he will be sentenced by Judge Peter Cahill in approximately two months.

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* 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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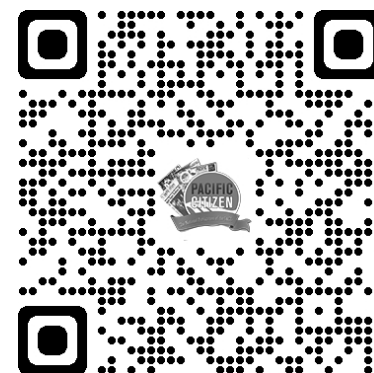
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DERRICK CHAUVIN DID NOT ACT ALONE

By David Inoue,
JACL Executive Director

Within the span of less than 48 hours, Derrick Chauvin was found guilty on all three charges put forth in his murder of George Floyd, and then the Senate passed with near unanimity the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act along with the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act. We should celebrate these both as victories, having held Chauvin accountable for brutally lynching George Floyd over the possibility of a \$20 counterfeit bill and the clear rebuke of the seemingly unfettered growth of hate crimes against Asians over the course of the past year. Even more, the addition of the Jabara-Heyer hate crime bill will benefit not only

Asian victims, but also victims of all hate crimes.

Juxtaposed, these two events also present another challenge to us as a country. While we welcome the relatively quick response to pass the COVID-19 hate crimes bill, the Chauvin trial highlights the inadequacy of our response to police violence, most often targeting Black and Brown people.

I have seen this equated by some to a higher valuation of Asian lives over Black lives, and while there is some truth behind that sentiment, we cannot allow that to divide us. I believe the real difference is actually demonstrated by the Chauvin verdict, the passage of the hate crimes bill and our failure thus far to pass a justice reform bill.

The case against Derrick Chauvin was one of personal accountability. Chauvin was presented as a rogue officer, acting outside the policies of the Minneapolis Police Department. Prosecution set up the dichotomy that Chauvin could be found guilty without indicting the entire police department or the policing system. When we look at hate crimes, it is the heinous act of an individual and one that can be easily identified, condemned and prosecuted by anyone except for one Senator from Missouri.

What everyone wants to make clear is that they are not that person. They would never be the person placing their knee on George Floyd's neck, pushing an elder brutally to the ground or gunning down six Asian women or eight former co-workers, four of whom are Sikh. These are the actions of one person from whom we can fully dissociate any connection or similarity.

Yet, what we must seek to address are the structural problems that enable and actually encourage Derrick Chauvin to act as he did. How has our education system taught hate, and how have our gun laws enabled mass shooters to obtain their weapons so easily? As a national ideology, we

love to preach personal responsibility, but the reality is that we use that as a means to deflect from collective responsibility.

The result is underfunded public support systems such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and public schools. We allow employers to provide wages below what anyone can be expected to survive on, and we blame the worker for not being industrious enough to pull themselves out of poverty.

And while every individual police officer seeks to distance themselves from what Derrick Chauvin did, we have seen too often, time and time again, that there are others who ARE Derrick Chauvin. Because George Floyd is also Daunte Wright, Christian Hall, Angelo Quinto, Breonna Taylor and so many more names.

A part of our story as Japanese Americans is that of redress. The time that our government made a firm admission of guilt and sought to right a wrong. It is possible for us, the United States, to accept collective responsibility for wrongs that we have committed. It is now time for us to do so and seek reform of our justice system.

It is not enough to seek only individual accountability for crimes

that are committed. We need to reform the systems to prevent them from even happening. Derrick Chauvin should not have felt the need to escalate his interaction with George Floyd over a \$20 counterfeit bill. We have told the police that we value that \$20 more than George Floyd's life. We can change that message.

We can change our education systems to teach the diversity of American history, the Japanese American story of incarceration, the Chinese Exclusion Act and the true horrors of slavery, lynching and Jim Crow. Perhaps then more will understand the challenges faced by minorities and erase prejudices and replace them with facts.

Until we recognize we are all complicit in the systems that enable Derrick Chauvin and those who perpetrate hate crimes, we cannot change those systems. It is always easier to blame a single bad apple, but when it is the whole system that is rotten, we must all take responsibility and do it together.

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



LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE

WHAT TO DO WITH GRANDMA???

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

As the U.S. population ages, the number of people needing Long-Term Support and Services (LTSS) will rise. On average, 52 percent of seniors (65+) will develop a severe disability that will require LTSS at some point. The average duration of need, over a lifetime, is about two years (source: AARP Public Policy Institute, Fact Sheet, March 2017).

But, moving your spouse or parent into an assisted living or nursing home is one of the hardest decisions you'll have to make in your life. Even when you know relocating your parents to a senior living community is the right thing to do for their safety and health, guilty feelings may arise.

This is particularly important to the Japanese culture, where guilt and shame are such a dominant emotion. Sometimes, the same action may give rise to feelings of both shame and guilt. Shame, however, reflects how we feel about ourselves and the guilt involves an awareness that our actions have injured someone else.

In other words, shame relates to self, guilt to others.

So many caregivers feel guilty about moving their parent, spouse, relative or close friend to assisted living, a nursing home or memory care. Unfortunately, guilt is a part of caregiving, particularly when you have to make a decision that you know is against the wishes of your loved one. You may have made your parents promises not to put them in a nursing home.

"Many seniors unrealistically believe they can take care of themselves for the rest of their lives," said Stella Henry, R.N., author of "The Eldercare Handbook." But when caring for someone at home becomes dangerous or nearly impossible, it often becomes absolutely necessary to move them to a place where they'll be safe and get the care they need.

"Once in a nursing home, our pain is often escalated by our loved ones begging and pleading to be taken home. Each visit can become a nightmare of pain and suffering for you both. Emotions range from feeling inadequate to feeling overly

responsible," said Dr. Stephan Quentzel, a psychiatrist in New York affiliated with Mount Sinai Beth Israel Hospital (source: *Psychology Today*, May 2, 2017).

Unfortunately, the reality is that even if this is the best decision for their health and for yours, the guilt and sadness can still be overwhelming. It hurts when you have negative thoughts and feelings about a decision you were forced to make. Your heart will need some time to catch up with what you know in your head.

Borrowing a line from O'Reilly (played by Charles Bronson) in "The Magnificent Seven" (1960), this type of guilt "is like a big rock that weighs a ton. It bends and it twists them until finally it buries them under the ground. And there's nobody says they have to do this. They do it because they love you, and because they want to. I have never had this kind of courage."

We don't want that. So, while you're adjusting to the changes, the experts say it's helpful for you to understand what's causing the guilt, which can help you accept the decision to place your loved one and reduce the guilt and emotional stress. Here are three ways to cope found on the website APlaceforMom.com (<https://www.aplaceformom.com/planning-and-advice/articles/parents-senior-living-guilt>):

1. Focus on the Small Victories

Did your parents enjoy a meal or activity in their new home? Do you sleep better knowing they're less

likely to fall in their new surroundings? When guilt creeps in, remind yourself of the benefits of their new home, experts say. "Small victories include excellent palliative care, creating meaningful activities, even keeping our parents together for as long as possible."

2. Accept Some Uncertainty

Being put in the position to make critical arrangements for others is often hugely stressful. When the task concerns relocating your parents to an assisted living community or nursing home — a decision with enormous financial and lifestyle consequences — the anxiety and second-guessing can be even higher. Remember why you made the choices you did, but know that some uncertainty will remain about how things might turn out.

3. Give It Time

As with any change, there will be an adjustment period — for children and for their aging parents. It will likely take time for your parents' relocation to senior living to bear fruit. Strike up a conversation with family members visiting their loved ones and ask them how they dealt with the change. Enjoy meaningful moments with your loved one and restorative time doing what you like to do during this transition period.

For most of us, the guilt we feel is unjustified. We have to remember that even though we feel guilty, it does not mean that we are. Recognizing the enormity of the tasks in front

of us, all we can do is to try our best. We cannot possibly do it all, even though we may try. We feel over-responsible, out of control and helpless at the same time.

The result is experiencing caregiver burnout and resentment. Even if we could do it all, we would still find something to feel guilty about. It just goes with the territory. We all make promises with the best of intentions, but events and situations change, and we cannot keep our word. We feel we have failed. We berate and blame ourselves for all those things we "should have" or "could have" done.

What many family caregivers don't realize is that you will still be part of their caregiving team. Your loved one will still need you as their advocate. Accept this newly defined caregiver role and the benefits it provides. A reputable nursing home will provide your Mom or Dad with the care and engagement that they require. That's a winning situation for both sides, so put aside the guilt and shame.

Judd Matsunaga is the founding attorney of Elder Law Services of California, a law firm that specializes in Medi-Cal Planning, Estate Planning and Probate. He can be contacted at (310) 348-2995 or judd@elderlawcalifornia.com. The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Pacific Citizen or constitute legal or tax advice and should not be treated as such.



A MOTHER'S TAKE

The Twin Cities JACL Book Club



A BEAUTIFUL, COLORFUL WORLD

By Marsha Aizumi

Last month, Aiden and I decided to do a book giveaway for Transgender Day of Visibility. One response really stood out for us, and so I want to thank Suzanne Itami Hug for the work she and her husband are doing at Athoria Games to bring greater respect with their work, a wonderful business practice. Aiden and I have chosen Suzanne as the winner of our complimentary copy of “Two Spirits, One Heart” because of her work at Athoria Games.

Suzanne and her husband own a small game store in Mesa, Ariz. This is what she said in response to the topic of respect: “We consider Respect a founding principle of our business, as the nerd/geek community has often been bullied over the years, and many members also belong to other marginalized groups. Learning to use gender-neutral greetings and making that part of our regular business practice isn’t always perfect, but we know it shows our customers respect.”

She goes on to say: “I honestly didn’t know if anyone would really notice our efforts, but I feel that it creates a more welcoming space and is important. Over the past year, we’ve received feedback many times, and it *is* noticed and greatly appreciated. As we hire staff, I’ve added inclusion education to our training process as critical to good customer service and the goal of building long-term relationships. I know many in the AAPI community are also small business owners, and I hope our community can lead the way. Respect is such a long-standing tradition, and we must learn what that looks like in our beautiful, colorful world moving forward.”

Aiden and I applaud all small businesses like Athoria Games, which is doing its part to bring greater respect to all individuals. Here are a few ideas, if you are not doing these things already:

Should you have single-stall restrooms, rather than make one for males and one for females, make both of them gender neutral by putting up a gender-neutral sign. Before this was fashionable, my father, Aiden’s grandfather, did this at Ogino-Aizumi Insurance Agency. Little did Grandpa Tak know that he was sup-

porting his grandchild in a very trailblazing way back in the 1980s.

Make sure you are using correct pronouns for your customers. If you are not certain what pronouns your customers use, share your pronouns first and then ask what pronouns they would like you to use. For example: Hi, my name is Marsha, and my pronouns are she, her, hers. Are you comfortable sharing your pronouns with me?

Train your staff like Athoria Games does to provide good service by making all your customers feel seen, heard and valued.

The Equality Act has been passed by the House and is now in the Senate. Call your senators and ask them to vote YES on HR1, so that LGBTQ+ individuals have the same rights as everyone else. I want both of my sons, Aiden and Stefan, to be treated equally. Your call, email or handwritten note could make a huge difference. I welcome any questions you may have about the Equality Act or how to counteract the numerous anti-transgender bills that are threatening the lives of our transgender children. You can contact me at maizumi8888@gmail.com.

Besides being an owner of Athoria Games, Suzanne is the secretary for Arizona JACL. JACL has been such a supportive organization to our work and the work of Okaeri: A Nikkei LGBTQ community.

Speaking in Minnesota in 2019 at the Twin Cities JACL Chrysanthemum Banquet and meeting with their book club that read our book was a very special moment for me. San Fernando Valley JACL is our home chapter, and I love all the work that they have done to further inclusion and acceptance, especially for LGBTQ+ individuals and families.

And every time we have an Okaeri conference, some of our greatest supporters come from the JACL community, such as Seattle JACL, Downtown Los Angeles JACL and so many other JACL chapters and members. We were also honored to have JACL Executive Director David Inoue as one of our plenary speakers in 2018, talking about resistance and resilience.

So, one last congratulations to Suzanne Itami Hug and Athoria Games. Aiden and I appreciate all of your efforts to make this a better world for each and every one of us. . . .

‘Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.’

— Margaret Mead

Marsha Aizumi is an advocate in the LGBT community and author of the book “Two Spirits, One Heart: A Mother, Her Transgender Son and Their Journey to Love and Acceptance.”



Suzanne Itami Hug, our book giveaway winner

TWIN CITIES JACL CONDEMNS THE USE OF WWII INCARCERATION HISTORY TO CHALLENGE THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF COVID-19 PUBLIC SAFETY ORDERS

By Twin Cities JACL

The Twin Cities JACL Executive Board took swift action to condemn a Ramsey City Councilmember’s comparison of the civil rights violations that occurred during World War II with the state’s mask mandate. Ramsey is a Twin Cities, Minn., suburb located 22 miles northwest of downtown Minneapolis.

On March 9, Councilmember Chelsea Howell cited Executive Order 9066 as an example in which “the government acted unlawfully and reprehensibly from a moral and constitutional perspective” to support her contention that in a similar manner, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz is using the power of government to abuse the rights of its citizens in issuing Covid-19 public safety orders.

“According to the 14th Amendment, the State cannot deprive us of life or liberty,” she stated in arguing that the mask mandate infringes on individuals’ constitutional rights. “The Executive Council does not have the right to restrict somebody’s ability to breathe, specifically 5.6 million Minnesotans,” she added.

The Ramsey City Council voted 4-3 to adopt the resolution presented by first-term Councilmembers Howell and Ryan Heineman, which forbids the city from using resources to enforce the governor’s executive orders on masking “and any other orders that infringe on people’s constitutionally protected rights, especially related to Covid-19.”

In a letter to Councilmember Howell on March 11, the Twin Cities JACL Executive Board expressed deep concern about the “weaponization of the Japanese American incarceration to challenge . . . Executive Order 20-81, commonly referred to as ‘The Mask Mandate.’”

The letter stated that “we absolutely object to the use of our community’s experiences in your comparison,” and that Councilmember Howell’s comments “conflate the systematic imprisonment of 120,000 innocent men, women and children of Japanese descent, many of whom were U.S. citizens, to a life-saving and common-sense public health measure taken during a time of global emergency due to the still-raging Covid-19 pandemic.”

In addition to the disregard for public safety, the letter pointed out the negative impact of the Councilmember’s statement on minority communities: “Particularly in this time of heightened anti-Asian sentiment and racialized violence, your careless and misinformed comments undermine public health efforts at the disproportionate expense of Communities of Color.”

The next day, Ramsey Mayor Mark Kuzma called Twin Cities President Vinicius Taguchi to condemn Councilmember Howell’s comments and express his support for the Twin Cities JACL’s letter. Mayor Kuzma returned to work after recovering from Covid-19 on



Twin Cities JACL president, Vinicius Taguchi and Twin Cities JACL member and former Minidoka incarcerated Sally Sudo address the Ramsey City Council virtually to express concerns about a Councilmember’s use of Japanese American incarceration history to justify her contention that masking and other Covid-related orders implemented by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz are an infringement on constitutional rights.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF QCTV

March 8, the day before the resolution was presented. He voted against the measure and vowed to overturn it.

On March 23, Taguchi and former Minidoka incarcerated Sally Sudo addressed the Ramsey City Council at its bimonthly meeting. Taguchi observed that “the recent surge in high-profile attacks against Asian Americans is part of a long history of anti-Asian discrimination, which Councilmember Chelsea Howell alluded to and dangerously mischaracterized during the March 9 Ramsey City Council meeting.”

In response, Councilmember Howell persisted in using the Japanese American incarceration to support her challenge to the constitutionality of the face mask mandate.

Thirteen of the 22 community members who spoke at the meeting favored the resolution.

In closing, Mayor Kuzma expressed disappointment in the Council’s unwillingness to reverse the resolution, despite growing concerns from businesses and residents and despite possible legal action by the Minnesota Attorney General for the city’s noncompliance with Executive Orders.

After the meeting, Mayor Kuzma sent an email to Taguchi and Sudo affirming that their message was “important and needed to be said and explained.” “I do believe the majority of our community that was watching on our cable feed agrees and is angered by this reference that Chelsea (Howell) used and is not in favor of the resolution.”

For more information, visit [Facebook.com/twincitiesjacl](https://www.facebook.com/twincitiesjacl) or [@twincitiesjacl](https://www.instagram.com/twincitiesjacl) on Instagram.

'THE GREAT AMERICAN GUNSHOW'

An interview with theater artist Makoto Hirano reveals his thoughts on gun culture and its impact on Asian Americans and Asian immigrants.

By Rob Buscher,
Contributor

In the aftermath of the March 16 Atlanta Spa Shootings in which six of the eight people killed were Asian women, the Asian American community has become deeply engaged in the national debate around gun ownership and gun law reform.

Although this particular event brought light to the ways that Asian women have been specifically targeted as victims of anti-Asian hate, the Atlanta shootings are part of a much larger trend in gun violence that our country is grappling with currently.

According to Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit Gun Violence Archive, there have been a total of 147 mass shootings in 2021 to date. In the past month alone, at least 45 mass shootings occurred. Of particular note is the April 15 shooting at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis where eight people were killed — four of whom were of the Sikh faith.

Asian Americans are not the only targets of attacks like these, but the recent prevalence of anti-Asian hate incidents has made these fears more pronounced among many community members who feel especially vulnerable at this time.

A parallel trend has also been observed during the pandemic, showing an increase in gun ownership by Asian Americans. This comes at a time when gun sales have gone up across the board.

According to data from the National Shooting Sports Foundation, a firearms trade association and lobbying group, approximately 8.4 million first-time gun buyers were reported since the pandemic began.

Japanese American theater artist Makoto Hirano (whom JACLers might remember from the 2018 National Convention where he led a theater workshop) co-leads Team Sunshine Performance Corp., a

Philadelphia-based company of theater and dance creators.

Since 2020, Team Sunshine has been developing a project titled “The Great American Gunshow,” which addresses many of these current issues related to gun ownership and whether Asian Americans feel safe in today’s society.

The son of Shin-Issei immigrants raised in Chicago, Hirano is no stranger to guns, having served in the U.S. Marine Corps prior to getting his BFA in dance at Temple University. Under Hirano’s leadership, this project seeks to inspire meaningful dialogue among audience members from both sides of the gun reform debate.

I had a chance to sit down with Hirano recently for an interview about “The Great American Gunshow” and his long-term ambitions for the project.

ROB BUSCHER FOR THE PACIFIC CITIZEN: What is your relationship to firearms and how did you come to this topic?

MAKOTO HIRANO: My relationship to firearms, specifically the actual physical, tangible thing, goes back to my teenage years when I was living that street hood gangbanger life. There were pistols being passed around at house parties. I shot my first pistol — I guess I was 15, maybe I was 14.

Then I joined the military, and there’s a lot of learning of nomenclature and different types of weapons and how to fire them. So, my relationship to actual physical, tangible firearms, machine guns and grenade launchers — I feel familiarity to a point of pride.

It’s something that only in investigating this piece I started to realize that there’s a sort of pride around this, and the reason for it is because it’s just one of the many things on the shelf of things that I can say I own.

That’s my passport right, that’s my pass to being included, to be seen as



Before beginning his theater career, Makoto Hirano enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps.

PHOTO: BILL HEBERT

American. . . . So, there’s a little bit of, “Can I be let in now?” feeling.

During that time in the Marine Corps, of course I learned more about firearms, and I gained closeness to it and also a healthy respect and fear for them as well because we were all trained to understand and respect these things that kill people.

Now, in my later adult years in my relationship to firearms, I’m not a gun owner, and I know very few gun owners because my bubble is so left-leaning. A majority of those people either have a healthy fear of firearms or are completely against having a firearm in their home. I feel like I’m a little bit of an anomaly because I love guns.

That said, I don’t think that it’s necessary for anyone to own an AR-15, but I don’t think that it should be illegal because there’s nothing wrong with the AR-15, it’s just a thing — just metal and hard plastics and springs.

Part of my motivation around wanting to make this piece is the conversation that I’m experiencing in my arts-related bubble, left of center, who don’t know anything about guns or gun laws, but know they’re against it.

When I hear from the other side — the pro-Second Amendment, pro-gun rights, pro-constitutional carry — those people are not wrong when they’re like, “The people wanting to reform and take our guns away, they don’t know anything about guns and how they work.”

BUSCHER: Would you consider yourself pro- or anti-gun — do you feel closer to one side of this debate?

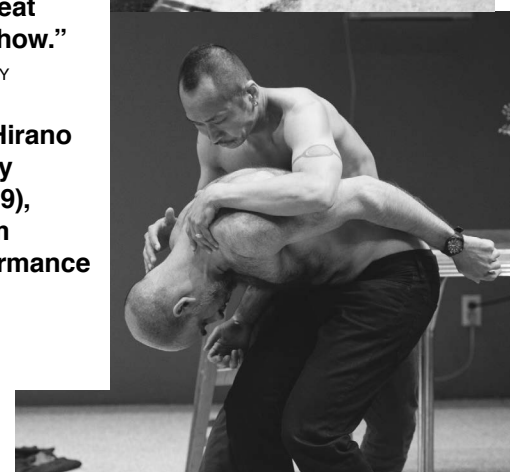
HIRANO: I’m not pro or anti neces-

(Top) Performance theater artist Makoto Hirano, pictured in a promo image for “Boom Bap Tourism,” is developing his newest project “The Great American Gunshow.”

PHOTO: JOSHUA SWEENEY

(Right) Makoto Hirano in “The Sincerity Project #3” (2019), created by Team Sunshine Performance and directed by Alex Torra.

PHOTO: JOANNA AUSTIN



sarily — I’m not any of those things. I haven’t really made up my mind about stuff, and if I’m going to buy a gun and become a gun owner, I’d love to do it on my own time when it feels comfortable. . . . Many of my friends who I’ve talked to, they’re like, “Do I have to?” Especially after the sort of nationwide social unrest and fighting for justice and fighting to not have to live in fear all the time.

One of those paths is to go buy a firearm, go and become a registered firearm owner. That sucks man — that’s the worst way to become a gun owner. That’s the last way I want to become a gun owner.

But with that said, I’m not a pro or anti anything. I concede to all sides, and I don’t disagree to a healthy amount. So then hearing both sides — neither of those sides of the argument care to listen to the other side. On opposite ends, people are just yelling.

I can choose to pick a side. I can choose to work toward better legislation for one side or the other. Instead, I chose to inquire about it through an art piece.

BUSCHER: At its fundamental level, your project addresses questions about gun ownership and how safe Asian Americans feel. In the context of recent events, how has that changed your approach?

HIRANO: In theater making, there’s a lot of process that is hidden from public view, most of it until it’s ready to be shared, and so nobody knows what people are working on until there’s a postcard that goes out or

until there’s a social media blast or something. But now in the past few weeks, I’ve gotten a lot of love for “The Great American Gunshow,” the project itself existing, and people reaching out to me in support of it, in small and big ways, and I’m grateful. But every bit of love and support I get — it feels like it ups the pressure. I guess I’m navigating that territory.

Before the show had a name, it was a catch all for everything that I was thinking about and working on as I’m thinking about being Japanese American. About race and ethnicity and about equality, I’m thinking about that all the time as I’m also thinking about firearms and guns and reform and divide. Especially since Trump. But it’s been going on for a bit this divide on firearms and gun law reform. All this bubbled up, and then it got kind of boiled down until these two things remained: race and ethnicity and safety and guns.

I remember in August or September 2020 there being more than one person on my Facebook feed asking the wider Facebook, “Does anybody know where in X state I can buy bullets?”

I was like, “How many do you have now?” Then the person, the original poster was like, “Not enough.” They didn’t say how many, they said, “Not enough.” What does that even mean? Does it mean you have one bullet, you just need a handful? Probably not.

» See ‘GUNSHOW’ on page 9

Makoto Hirano in 2013’s “JapanAmerica Wonderwave,” created as a response to/ reflection of the 2011 earthquake/tsunami/ nuclear meltdown in Japan, as well as other disasters near and far.

PHOTO: LINDSAY BROWNING



REPARATIONS BILL PASSES HURDLE IN HOUSE, BUT STILL FACES UPHILL BATTLE

HR 40 aims to establish a commission to research slavery and its legacy; the framework of the bill is modeled after the Japanese American redress movement.

By Lynda Lin Grigsby,
Contributor

A bill to study the legacy of slavery and racism in the United States inched closer to becoming law April 14 after a House panel voted to advance it out of committee.

It's the first time the House Judiciary Committee has taken action on HR 40 in more than 30 years. With a vote of 25-17, the committee advanced the bill and paved the way for a full House debate and vote.

If passed, the bill would establish a commission to examine and propose solutions for the lingering effects of slavery and discrimination in the United States.

HR 40 is modeled after the framework of the Japanese American redress campaign, which in 1988 won a government apology and monetary compensation for the community's mass incarceration during World War II.

Japanese Americans are now part of a multiracial coalition of wounded ethnic communities working to bend the arm of justice and support HR 40. Many point to the intersecting histories of racism between Asian and Black Americans.

"I continue to think that it's really important for Japanese Americans to stand in solidarity with other communities that are also seeking recognition, repair and recompense," said Lisa Doi, Chicago JACL president and co-chair of Tsuru for Solidarity.

For JAs, the Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in the 1980s was a bipartisan federal commission directed to review the circumstances and impact of Executive Order 9066.

The CWRIC held hearings in major U.S. cities to hear from more than 750 victims of the WWII JA incarceration. Passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was largely credited to Nisei testimonies about the suffering and loss they experienced during and after the WWII incarceration.

Supporters say HR 40 would provide a similar type of catharsis and restorative justice.

"I think HR 40 is an important way of understanding and healing ourselves and necessary for the American public to really comprehend the intergenerational trauma of slavery and the many forms of Black suppression that have followed to this day," said Nobuko Miyamoto, a former Santa Anita incarcerated,

who in February wrote a letter to her Congressional representative calling for support of HR 40.

Named after the post-Civil War government's broken promise to distribute "40 acres and a mule" to former slaves, HR 40 was first introduced in 1989, one year after JAs won redress. Since then, the bill has been reintroduced every year without gaining traction.

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) is HR 40's sponsor. The bill has 184 co-sponsors, including California lawmakers Judy Chu, Ro Khanna, Ted Lieu, Doris Matsui and Mark Takano. New York representatives Grace Meng and Andy Kim are also co-sponsors.

Following the death of George Floyd in police custody, the bill picked up momentum in this Congressional session because of the country's significant reckoning with racism. It is part of a growing consciousness of social and racial issues, supporters say.

"It's sad to think that it took so much tragedy to give HR 40 even a chance for debate," said John Tateishi, former JACL national executive director and chair of the organization's national committee for redress.

But HR 40's chance of final passage remains low in a divided Congress.

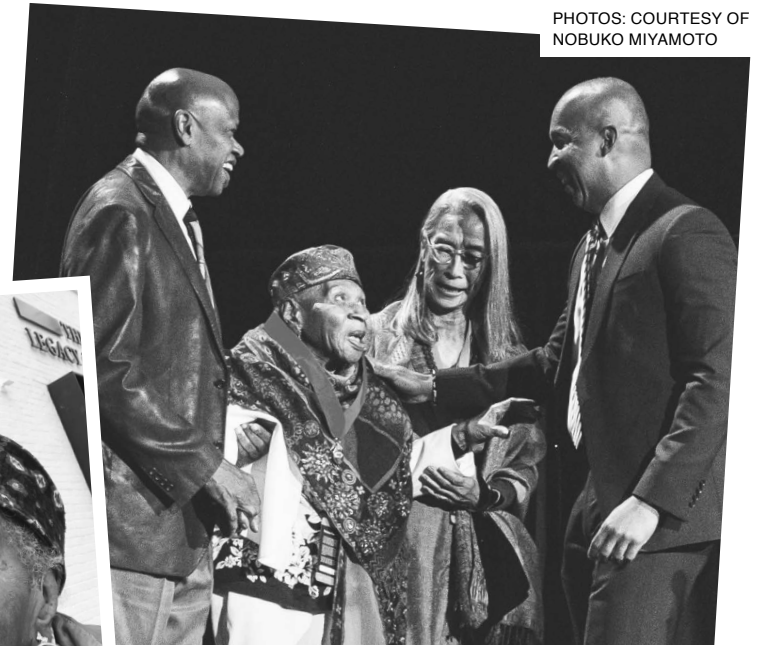
To defeat a filibuster, the House bill, which has no Republicans co-sponsors, will require 60 votes in the evenly divided Senate.

Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee unanimously voted against the measure.

Committee debate on HR 40 was fractious and not easily divided along racial lines among House Judiciary members. Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah) who is Black American, cited



Mamie Kirkland (right) "survived and overcame every form of racism" in her 111 years of life, said Nobuko Miyamoto about her mother-in-law. Her life story was featured in an exhibit at the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Ala.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NOBUKO MIYAMOTO

Before her death in 2019, Mamie Kirkland received recognition as an inspirational elder at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala. Kirkland (second from left) is pictured here from the event with her son, Tarabu Betserai Kirkland (left), Nobuko Miyamoto and Bryan Stevenson, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative.

Barack Obama's tenure as president and the historic election of Kamala Harris to vice president.

"And we say there's no progress?" Owens said. "Those who say there's no progress are those who do not want progress."

Similarly, in the quest for JA redress and reparations, not all JA lawmakers were united under the umbrella of reparations.

In 1981, S. I. Hayakawa told the *Associated Press*, "I am proud to be a Japanese American, but when a small but vocal group demands a cash indemnity of \$25,000 for those who went to relocation camps, my flesh crawls with shame and embarrassment."

JA redress was framed as a constitutional issue, said Tateishi. "As a constitutional fight, I told JA audiences that we were fighting for our place in America."

If passed, HR 40 would not institute reparations. It would only establish a commission to study slavery and

its legacy. If a commission were to recommend reparations, the federal government may or may not act on that recommendation.

Supporters of HR 40 argue that the bill is about creating a systematic response to past and current wrongdoings.

"Slavery didn't end with the Civil War, it simply took different forms in Jim Crow laws to today with the unjust justice system that, at best, mass incarcerates Blacks at disparate rates and, at worst, takes Black lives in modern lynchings that have spawned the Black Lives Matter movement," said David Inoue, JACL executive director. "It is our responsibility as a nation to seek to make right these many wrongs that have been promoted by our government."

Some U.S. cities and organizations are moving forward with their own reparation efforts. The Chicago suburb of Evanston, Ill., is the first U.S. city to make reparations available to its Black residents.

Supporters say HR 40 would provide a national moment of racial healing.

"We must have truth to have reconciliation and even imagine a more just society," said Miyamoto.

Her mother-in-law, Mamie Kirkland, "survived and overcame every form of racism" in her 111 years of life, said Miyamoto. Kirkland's experiences, which included lynchings and riots, documented the country's history with racial terrorism. Her life story was featured in an exhibit at the Legacy Museum and inspired the creation of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala.

In 2019, Kirkland died before being able to bear witness to HR 40's growing momentum, and one of the country's most significant reckoning with racism. But Miyamoto said her mother-in-law would have choice words to describe the progress.

"Mamie would say, 'It's about time!'"



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Director Eddie Huang and actor Taylor Takahashi on the set of “Boogie”

PHOTO: NICOLE RIVELLI/ FOCUS FEATURES

HUANG, TAKAHASHI TEAM UP AS ‘BOOGIE’ KNIGHTS

The basketball drama is now available as a video-on-demand title.

Taylor Takahashi stars as Alfred “Boogie” Chin in writer/director/actor Eddie Huang’s “Boogie,” a Focus Features release.

PHOTO: DAVID GIESBRECHT/FOCUS FEATURES

(From left) Pop Smoke, Eddie Huang and Taylor Takahashi star in Huang’s coming-of-age drama about an Asian American basketball star’s dreams of playing professionally while navigating family expectations, on-court rivals and life in general.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF FOCUS FEATURES

Takahashi with Tylour Paige as Eleanor.

PHOTO: NICOLE RIVELLI/FOCUS FEATURES

By P.C. Staff

As you read this, the fourth quarter has ended and the buzzer has sounded. “Boogie” has dribbled its way in and out of theaters.

In some ways, it could be said that the R-rated/not for kids “Boogie” follows a script not unlike myriad other “coming-of-age” movies in which a young, gifted but disadvantaged protagonist has to overcome obstacles — a dysfunctional family, poverty, lack of education, being a fish out of water — and achieve a personal goal, find allies and mentors on the path, learn to believe in himself or herself and eventually take on an equally gifted or even superior opponent (in this case the late rapper Pop Smoke) — and achieve some sort of victory by page 120.

What makes this particular gritty, low-budget drama different from other such movies are a couple of special, atypical ingredients: Eddie Huang and Taylor Takahashi.

With its indie vibe and Takahashi serving as the Robert De Niro to Huang’s Martin Scorsese, “Boogie” puts a different spin on the genre with its casting — Takahashi playing a skilled b-baller with NBA aspirations: Alfred “Boogie” Chin, the son of Taiwanese immigrants.

(Although the real-life Jeremy Lin story might come to mind, it is definitely not the same, and “Boogie” even takes a swipe at the devout former NBA star.)

Also different: its setting, NYC’s far-from-glamorous borough of Queens, where youth basketball is so intertwined with Black culture that it is tougher than leather for this Asian American

kid, even with his too-legit-to-quit skills, to find his place. Add to that mix an Asian immigrant family with high aspirations but hobbled by dysfunction, not to mention a seldom seen — never seen? — pairing in an American movie: an interracial romance between an Asian boy and a Black girl, Tylour Paige.

For Takahashi, Boogie as the protagonist and where it takes place are what makes it unique.

“I love the movie, and it’s not just because I’m in it,” he told the *Pacific Citizen*. “If I wasn’t a part of it, it would [still] be such an important film to watch. Growing up, as you go through your ways of trying to find your identity in this world and what you want to do, what your dreams are, as well as trying to navigate adolescence and yourself changing and the world kind of changing all around you, I think it’s a really relatable coming-of-age story, one that we’ve never seen before.”

For Huang, “Boogie” is his latest achievement, the motion picture directorial debut for the irrepressible polymath who has gained fame first as a restaurateur (New York’s Baohaus; see the June 15-July 5, 2012, *Pacific Citizen*), then author (“Fresh Off the Boat,” his 2013 memoir that was adapted into the sanitized sitcom of the same name) and now with producer, screenwriter and actor added to a résumé and reputation that already included attorney, hip-hop philosopher and all-around street hustler.

For Takahashi, “Boogie” represents the unexpected, unasked for, plucked-from-obscurity opportunity to do the thing many long for but few get to do: be the lead actor in a movie.

“Boogie,” from Focus Features, was released theatrically on March 5 and made its debut as a video-on-demand title* on March 26. To reach the big screen and soon thereafter, the smaller screen, Huang had to use his hard-won clout and school of hard knocks experience learned from ABC’s “Fresh Off the Boat” sitcom to control and maintain his

vision for “Boogie.” That included putting Takahashi in the role of the titular character.

Takahashi’s proximity to Huang was the key. They met and became friends through an adult Asian American basketball league in the San Gabriel Valley. Later, Huang hired Takahashi to be his assistant and, according to published reports, tapped Takahashi to train a different actor how to play basketball for “Boogie.”

Takahashi, who had for a time earned his living as a personal trainer, already was a skilled basketballer going back to his teens, when he was a real-life phenom who played varsity high school ball in his hometown of Alameda, Calif.

The younger man got the nod for the lead role when Huang realized that it was simply easier to cast Takahashi in the role rather than the original actor he was training to play basketball.

According to Hollywood lore, famed director Stanley Kubrick hired a former Marine Corps drill instructor named R. Lee Ermey to teach an actor how to play a DI for “Full Metal Jacket” — until Kubrick realized he’d be better off just hiring Ermey to play the part — and he may be that movie’s most memorable character.

That Huang, though light-years from Kubrick’s level, came to a similar conclusion shows that great minds think alike and proved that stars aren’t just born — they can be made when preparation meets opportunity.

Given Hollywood’s long and sad track record of lack of enthusiasm in casting Asians, especially men, in leading roles, Huang’s insistence on not compromising on his vision is itself an achievement.

Huang has been a pop culture figure for nearly a decade now — but for Takahashi, his time in the national spotlight can still be measured in weeks. But, it turns out his familial roots in his ancestral Japanese American culture go back generations.

» See ‘BOOGIE’ on page 9

Bao Down to the Huang Brothers, Co-Owners of New York’s Baohaus

The Baohaus restaurant was envisioned by Eddie Huang to be like a “futurist YMCA,” a gathering place for those in the neighborhood to enjoy good food, music and company.



Eddie Huang was first profiled in the *Pacific Citizen*’s June 15-July 5, 2012, issue.

PHOTO: THE PACIFIC CITIZEN

Takahashi (left) and writer/director Eddie Huang as Jackie in a scene from their film

PHOTO: NICOLE RIVELLI/FOCUS FEATURES

Five More JACL Men of Redress



Harry Kajihara
- Oxnard



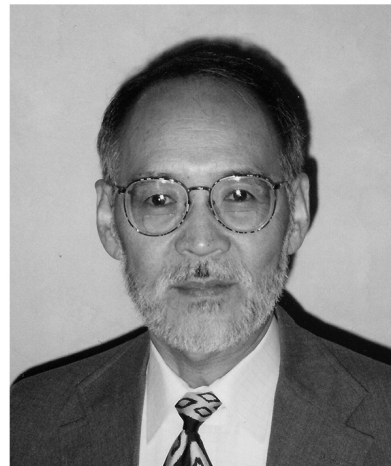
Shig Wakamatsu
- Chicago



Art Morimitsu
- Chicago



Rudy Tokiwa
- Sunnyvale



Tom Kometani
- New Jersey

Harry Kajihara and Shig Wakamatsu raised \$500,000 non-tax-exempt dollars to fund the Legislative Education Committee, JACL's redress lobbying arm in Washington, DC.

Art Morimitsu made sure that 442 and MIS veterans and the alumni association of the 34th Infantry Division, of which the 442 was a part, were fully engaged in the effort to pass the redress bill in Congress.

Rudy Tokiwa helped to make secure the forgotten connection between Kaz Masuda and Ronald Reagan.

Tom Kometani persuaded 14 out of 16 members of the New Jersey congressional delegation to vote "aye" on the redress bill -- numbers much better than what came out of California.

A Commemoration

-- Grant Ujifusa
grantujifusa.com

'GUNSHOW' » continued from page 5

You know if you're a hobby shooter, you go to the range and you want to pop off a bunch of rounds — I get it. But the sense that we're running out, "I need to get some now, just in case," it does activate that in me. Like, "Whoa, they're running out of bullets — that's how many people are arming themselves and stockpiling." I can't ignore that, and it feels like it's just closer and closer to my home.

This is all happening at the same time during the pandemic, but also the Trump administration era with this rhetoric around gun law reform and xenophobic rhetoric. It was a very confusing period of time 2016 and onward. That's all happening when I'm questioning my safety and questioning whether I need to arm myself. In tandem, my Asian American brothers and sisters are experiencing so much violence and so much anger directed toward them.

The impact that I want engaging in this art project is bigger than me wanting to be recognized for my art. It starts to make me wonder, "What if we can create this project as a way to have discourse around this in a more real exchange kind of way?" And then call it art. What if it's just masking our project in theater-dance whatever, but what we're actually doing is something a little deeper than that. That's kind of where I'm going with this project.

BUSCHER: How are you going to proceed from here, and when will you start having conversations like this with prospective participants?
HIRANO: It's a little bit funding



Makoto Hirano performs in "The Sincerity Project #2" (2016), created by Team Sunshine Performance and co-produced with FringeArts and directed by Alex Torra.

PHOTO: JEN CLEARY

related, of course, but we have institutional partners on board. As of March 2021, we're still in the planning admin logistics period of time and research. Combing through all the gun laws through history in the United States, so there's a lot of that and then putting pieces in place and grant writing, so that's where we are currently.

Bloomsburg Theatre in Bloomsburg, Penn., and Asian Arts Initiative in Philly are sort of the core partners starting off with Team Sunshine in this project. Sometime in fall 2021 we're going to start the actual interview process and all summer, we will be planning for that: identifying who, doing the outreach, etcetera. It will take me back and forth between Philly and Bloomberg, Penn., between these two places over a period of time, which would be fall 2021 and spring 2022.

These will be interviews and facilitated group conversations. I'm hoping for a story circle style kind of exchange, where it isn't just me and my team with one human. That's important to get into really deep stuff, but I imagine having a wider circle of people, a lot of groups of people. Meeting with them a few

times and then having them share in some of the art-making process with us.

Summer 2022, we'll have our first public showing; for now, it's just called a work-in-progress, two nights in Bloomberg and two nights in Philadelphia.

BUSCHER: What are your long-term aspirations for this project?

HIRANO: This is kind of the pilot phase, figuring out how we have these exchanges, how we set up these meetings, who we reach out to, etcetera. What I'm imagining for "The Great American Gunshow" in the future is that we can take all of this and work with another partner and so there's a skeleton for the piece. We partner and have an exchange back and forth until the new content is created, and then we perform it for the people of that community and maybe each of those versions of the piece are slightly different.

The perspectives and what they're bringing to it — also the amount of Asian people in any given community might be small, especially the more rural areas vs. urban, so that will change the narrative or what's being said.

If we develop a new partnership in a rural environment, I want to pair that with a nearby urban component to have a toggle back and forth wherever that is, between those two places.

BUSCHER: Any last thoughts on gun culture and its impact on Asian Americans and Asian immigrants?

HIRANO: There is something here that has to do with supporting our history of encouraging individualism in the United States. It is everything to us, as a culture, as America. To me, everything has that residue on it. My hunch is that every path, if you just follow that line of inquiry all the way to the end wherever it is, it can arrive at the same thing, which is like we're all clamoring for, hoping for, fighting for individualism.

When I put that lens on it's everywhere in my life figuratively, and in physical form, and I think that this absolutely has to do with this project. It absolutely has to do with gun culture. Why gun culture is even a term. What an insane term, right? I think you just follow that line of inquiry of, "Why does gun culture exist? How did it become?"

I think if you just keep following that to the end, then it would be like, "Oh, I just want to live free." That's what I feel like it would end up with. I just want to be who I am or explore that and have freedom. What an incredible privilege to be like, "I just want to be free of all the shackles." That's what everybody wants, but we as Americans get to do that, and if you put that process under a microscope, then eventually what happens is this. Give people enough agency and freedom, and the privilege of getting to pursue that, and then you end up here.

It is within a long trajectory, but if you look at the past hundred years of gun culture, you have to zoom out a little more to look at what came before that. So, it's really hundreds of years of supporting this idea that you can be whatever or whoever you want to be — that idea that the American dream is connected to.

How we respond to guns and gun culture was born out of something that was born out of that idea, and that is very unique to the United States. So, that's what I think about this project.

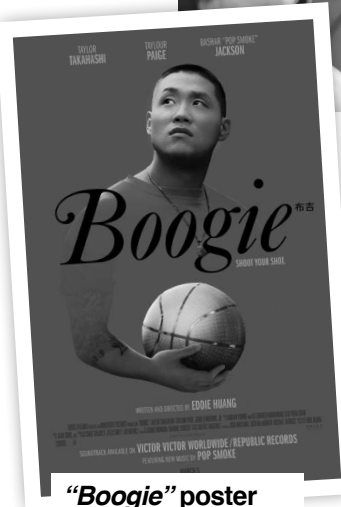
How it may or may not relate to immigrants from other places and their experiences with guns and gun culture in the United States? I don't know. I know I'm not there yet, but I do think that gun culture has everything to do with what's at the heart of what America sells to its people, and it's deep.

For more details on "The Great American Gunshow," visit Team Sunshine's website at <https://www.teamsunshineperformance.com/gunshow.html>.

'BOOGIE' » continued from page 7

Takahashi with Pop Smoke as Monk in "Boogie"

PHOTO: DAVID GIESBRECHT/ FOCUS FEATURES



"Boogie" poster

PHOTO: FOCUS FEATURES

Growing up in Alameda, Takahashi remembers his Sansei parents, Dana and Rick Takahashi, and his Nisei grandparents reading the *Pacific Citizen*. He said both sets of his grandparents were incarcerated by the government during World War II, with his grandmother on his mother's side sent to Utah (the Topaz War Relocation Authority Center), while his grandfather, Joe Yamamoto, served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Growing up, basketball was a big

part of his life, including the Asian American leagues that are part of the community in California.

"I played church ball, kind of like my first organized basketball experience, and then I was involved in both AAU," Takahashi said, "and I played in a couple of Asian leagues as well."

"For me, the Asian leagues weren't about competition. It was more about fostering relationships," he continued. "Through those teams, I have my four best friends. We all played on the same team together. That was a huge part of my basketball experience."

In making "Boogie," Takahashi also got to experience New York-style basketball and compare it to his own experiences on the West Coast. He observed that New York street league basketball is bigger than indoor, organized high school hoops.

"The outdoor, street ball game is where you have your 'championships,'" Takahashi said. "West Coast, I think we shoot a lot more," noting that on the East Coast, being able to talk trash and dribble is more

common.

"They like to pound the ball and not pass," he said. "I experienced that first thing for sure. Where I lived in Brooklyn during the production, we had a basketball court in our building, and I was there probably every other day and would either play with other people or shoot around by myself. I got to kind of download the New York basketball culture, and I can't wait to go back and do it again."

As for why the Alfred Chin character got the Boogie nickname, Takahashi could only speculate. "I don't know fully why Eddie chose 'Boogie' as the kid's name, but from what I know, boogie is kind of like dancing, and it's kind of like dancing with the ball."

For Taylor Takahashi, "Boogie" will always be a milestone in his life, no matter what may happen next. From his perspective, though, the more important thing is what "Boogie" means to his pal, Eddie Huang.

"I was so happy for him to have this moment," he said. "This was a

dream of his, and he got to accomplish the dream. Any friend that gets to accomplish a dream right there in front of you and you get to be a part of it — I didn't even need to be a part of it to understand how important it was for him.

"This is his time, and it's kind of his evolution to get into his favorite form of art, which is filmmaking, and this is just the very, very tip of the iceberg for him. As a friend and a fan of his, I can't wait for what's going to come," Takahashi reflected.

As for what may lie ahead with regard to being an onscreen talent, Takahashi would like to continue along that path: "I understand that there is a jump pad for me to go off, and it's just about remaining patient, remaining open, working with my team and figuring out what the next best move is."

**"Boogie" can be rented or purchased from several streaming services, including Amazon Prime Video, Vudu, Apple TV, YouTube, Google Play Movies and more.*

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

Annual JACL National Convention

July 15-18

Virtual Event

Join JACL at its annual convention, which will be held virtually featuring a National Council meeting as well as breakout sessions and more! Be sure to visit JACL's website for complete convention information and announcements as they become available.

Info: Visit www.jacl.org.

A National Buddhist Memorial for Asian American Ancestors

May 4; 4 p.m. PDT/7 p.m. EDT

Virtual Event

This hourlong memorial service and program will contemplate what we can do in the face of racial fracture in America and how we can begin to repair our communities. This program will stream live from Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles, a site of recent vandalism and arson. Together we will make offerings, heal in ceremony and share Dharma perspectives to repair our nation's racial karma.

Info: To register, visit <https://www.maywegather.org>.

NCWNP

11th Annual Matsuri! Japanese Arts Festival

Sonoma County Matsuri Festival
Santa Rosa, CA

May 15; 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Virtual Event

Price: Free

Enjoy the VIRTUAL showcase of traditional Japanese dance, music and cultural presentations as the Sonoma County Matsuri Festival presents this event for all to join. Featured artists include Shakuichi Grand Master Riley Lee from Australia, Sonoma County Taiko, Ensoha Minyoshu, Bay Area Miyake, TenTen Taiko, the DeLeon Judo Club, and others. The event will be held virtually by Zoom. Registration is free.

Info: To register, visit www.sonomamatsuri.org. For more information, visit www.sonomamatsuri.org.

'The Betrayed' Benefit Screening and Discussion

Watsonville, CA

May 22; 1-3 p.m.

Virtual Event Benefit Screening for Watsonville Buddhist Temple

Price: \$25 Per Person or \$50 Per Household (Includes Play Screening and Discussion)

"Betrayed," a two-act play by Hiroshi Kashiwagi about a young Nisei couple who meet at Tule Lake and fall in love, only to be torn apart by two controversial "loyalty" questions during World War II, will feature Helen Ota and Michael Palma. Following the play, a discussion will be held featuring Satsuki Ina, Soji Kashiwagi and cast members Ota and Palma.

Info: Tickets are available at Eventbrite.com: Search "The Betrayed." For additional information, email Buddhist@wbtemple.org.

PSW

Alzheimer's Conference

Los Angeles, CA

May 1; 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Virtual Conference

Price: Free

Join Keiro as it co-hosts alongside Alzheimer's Los Angeles for this conference event that will be provided in both English and Japanese to educate the community on Alzheimer's disease and its related disorders, as well as discuss research and treatment options, caregiving support and a virtual research fair. Featured speakers include Dr. Joshua Chodosh, Dr. Helena Chang Chui, Sara Lenz Lock and Dr. Debra Cherry.

Info: Visit Keiro.org/alzheimers-conference for more information.

Kodomo No Hi Children's Day Celebration

Gardena, CA

May 8; 2-3 p.m.

Virtual Event

Price: Free

The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute invites all to attend this year's Zoom event celebrating Children's Day. Participants will learn about the history and traditions of this famous holiday through music, arts and crafts activities and more.

Info: To register, visit www.jci-gardena.org.

Discussion on Intergenerational Trauma of Japanese Americans

San Diego, CA

May 12; 6-7:30 p.m.

Virtual Event

Price: Free

Join the San Diego JACL as it presents this discussion that will explore the intergenerational impact and trauma of the Japanese American incarceration during World War II. Featured speakers will be Dr. Debra Kawahara, associate dean of academic affairs California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University in San Diego, and Dr. Donna Nagata, professor of psychology and clinical science chair for the Department of Psychology at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Moderator will be Gabby Masuda Ambata.

Info: To RSVP, email sandiegojacl@gmail.com by May 11 to receive a link to the event.

PNW

Japanese American Museum of Oregon at Naito Center

Portland, OR

May 6

Virtual Grand Opening Celebration

Come celebrate the grand opening of the new Japanese American Museum of Oregon at Naito Center (formerly the Nikkei Legacy Center) in Portland's historic Oldtown Neighborhood. The new space features exhibits like this summer's highlight of Japanese American women's experiences through the decades as well as the actual jail cell of Minoru Yasui.

Info: Register at grandopening.jamo.org.

Book Launch Discussion:

'Facing the Mountain'

Seattle, WA

May 11; 5 p.m.

Virtual Event

Price: Free

'Facing the Mountain' is a new book by Daniel James Brown that chronicles the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans and the experiences of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. The event will also feature a discussion between the author and Densho Executive Director Tom Ikeda.

Info: For more information and to register, visit <https://densho.org/mountain/>.

'Where Beauty Lies' Exhibit

Seattle, WA

Thru Sept 19

Wing Luke Asian Museum

719 S. King St.

Price: Museum Admission Fees

What defines beauty? The museum's latest exhibit examines the complicated history, culture, industry, psychology and politics of beauty from the Asian American perspective. Personal stories, reflections, art and artifacts representing a diversity of identities and experiences all showcase the ideas of what beauty truly means.

Info: Visit wingluke.org. All visitors are required to sign a Coronavirus/Covid-19 waiver of liability. Health and safety protocols are in place. Check the museum for exact hours of operation.

EDC

BCNC Lantern Festival Gala

Boston, MA

May 6; 5:30 p.m.

Virtual Event

Price: \$50

Join the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center at its virtual gala celebration, which will be hosted by Janet Wu, anchor/reporter for Bloomberg News. The evening's entertainment will include Ava Sophia, Aznjub featuring Jeff La, Continuum Dance and Shaw Pong Liu.

Info: For tickets, visit <https://givebutter.com/BCNC2021Gala>.

APAICS Annual Legislative Leadership Summit

Washington, D.C.

May 10-13

Virtual Event

Price: Free

Join APAICS for this four-day virtual conference as subject matter experts, AAPI elected officials, community/corporate leaders and more discuss various issues affecting AAPIs and the nation at large. The event will be broadcast using the CVENT platform. Topics include Allyship: The Key to Unlocking the Power of Diversity, America's Digital Divide and Lack of Access, Civil Rights Movement: What the AAPI Community Faces Today, COVID and Its Economic Impact and much more.

Info: For more information and to register, visit apaics.org. ■

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BOB SHIMABUKURO, FORMER P.C., INT'L EXAMINER STAFFER, DEAD AT 75

Journalist, activist also authored redress book titled 'Born in Seattle.'

By P.C. Staff

Robert Sadamu Shimabukuro, known to readers of the newspapers *Pacific Citizen* and *International Examiner* as Bob Shimabukuro, died March 29 of natural causes. He was 75.

According to his widow, Alice Ito, Shimabukuro was born in Maui, Hawaii. He attended Portland, Ore.'s Reed College, where he earned a philosophy degree.

In addition to his editorial stints, Shimabukuro's written-word output also included the book "Born in Seattle: The Campaign for Japanese American Redress," a project of the Seattle JACL Chapter.

Ito said the chapter specifically chose Shimabukuro to write the book for a few reasons. In addition to his journalism experience, he served as president of the Portland

JACL Chapter during the time of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians hearings in the early 1980s and assisted in preparing former incarcerated to speak publicly about their experiences, which for many proved to be a cathartic experience after decades of repression.

In 1996, the Seattle Chapter recognized Shimabukuro for his activism and community service with its Don Kazama Human Rights award.

Shimabukuro's daughter, Mira Shimabukuro, told the *Pacific Citizen* that her father's community activism extended beyond the Japanese American community, noting that he also started the Asian Pacific AIDS Council (APAC) in Seattle to "both raise awareness and provide culturally relevant community education" about AIDS. "He worked for and ran APAC for many years," she said.

Mira Shimabukuro, who teaches at the University of Washington,

Bothell, and authored the book "Relocating Authority: Japanese Americans Writing to Redress Mass Incarceration (Nikkei in the Americas)," noted that her father's interest in APAC stemmed from losing one of his brothers, Sam Shimabukuro, to AIDS in 1988.

In addition to his writing skills, Bob Shimabukuro also was a carpenter and woodworker, which came in handy when Seattle's Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience had its first commemorative exhibition about Executive Order 9066. Mira Shimabukuro said he was part of the team that built a replica of the type of barrack that housed Japanese Americans in the 10 War Relocation Authority centers during WWII.

She also noted that around the time her father began to step away from his activities with APAC, her brother, Zenwa Shimabukuro, from her father's second marriage to Ito, was born and he focused on being a caregiver for him "when he was a

young guy."

J.K. Yamamoto, who worked at *Pacific Citizen* early in his journalism career, served with Shimabukuro at the paper. For a time while he was there, Karen Seriguchi was editor, Shimabukuro was the assistant editor and Yamamoto was the editorial assistant.

Yamamoto recalled that the 1980s was a period of high turnover at the *Pacific Citizen*. According to the paper's digital archive, Shimabukuro's name first appeared in the newspaper's masthead in the Jan. 18, 1985 issue.

Prior to that, Harry Honda, who had served as the newspaper's editor after the departure of Larry and Guyo Tajiri in October 1952 (at which time the newspaper moved to Los Angeles from Salt Lake City), was compelled to step away from the editorial operation in the early 1980s, and he became the general manager.

Honda was succeeded as editor by Peter Imamura in



Bob Shimabukuro

PHOTO: ALICE ITO

Shimabukuro also authored a redress book.

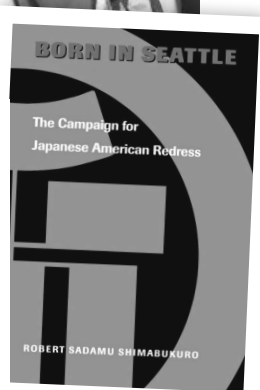




PHOTO:
PACIFIC CITIZEN

October of 1982, who resigned in May 1983 after being accepted in UC Berkeley's Summer Program for Minority Journalists.

Following the departure of Imamura, Seriguchi joined the paper as news editor in December 1983 and later became its editor. Her last issue as editor was May 10, 1985, after which she became the executive director of the then-nascent Asian American Journalists Association. At that point, Shimabukuro became

Pacific Citizen's acting editor and Yamamoto became assistant editor. During his time on the *P.C.* staff, Shimabukuro began writing a column for the paper, titled "One Thing Leads to Another," accompanied by a photo of him smiling and wearing a T-shirt. Although his words were indicative of his wit and worldview, that photo, Alice Ito believes, would later work against him.

"The fact that he was wearing a T-shirt in his headshot was not very well received. In those days, to be professional meant that you had on a collared shirt, if not a tie. Again, he was pushing the edge in those days of what people thought was appropriate," Ito said.

Shimabukuro and Yamamoto would continue to produce the paper, even as the *Pacific Citizen* moved from the JACCC, where it had an office separate from the JACL's Pacific Southwest District office, to 941 E. Third Street in what is now known as L.A.'s Arts District, encountering an unexpected problem that made producing the paper in the summer unbearable: an out of order air conditioning system.

Yamamoto recalled that one of Shimabukuro's highlights at the time was producing the 1985 Holiday Issue, which was devoted entirely to the topic of Interracial Families, which for the Japanese American press was a landmark. Mira Shimabukuro said she remembered that issue well, as she was pictured among the many photos on the cover, since she herself was the result of the mixed-marriage between her father and his first wife.

Yamamoto also noted that under Bob Shimabukuro's leadership, the issue included another first to of sorts, since it included an article written by Sam Shimabukuro on his gay interracial relationship with his partner, Bruce MacDonald. He also, Yamamoto recalled, added a different cartoonist named Shinji in the paper.

Mira Shimabukuro said she felt that



Shimabukuro's column during his stint at the *P.C.* (top)

as *Pacific Citizen* editor failed. He was passed over in favor of Lynn Sakamoto-Chung, who became editor in August 1986; his last issue was the December 1986 Holiday Issue, after which he left Los Angeles for Seattle.

"He was perturbed that he was never made the editor of the newspaper and that was one factor in his decision to leave California," Ito said. "It was a disappointment to him, but I think, again, during that era, he thought perhaps one reason was that he was outspoken in his writings and in the way that he conducted work and that perhaps there was some thought on the part of the board of the *Pacific Citizen* that might have been one of the factors in their decision."

It may, Ito said, have been an example of the Japanese saying about how the nail that sticks up gets hammered down. But it must have worked out, since she and Bob married in Seattle in 1988, and he was able to care for his ailing brother.

For Mira Shimabukuro, her father's memory and legacy provides some solace amid the loss. "Losing him right now is incredibly difficult because he was such a multifaceted person and we were very close. He was an incredibly incisive storyteller that I think people can see in his writing. He was also an incredibly kind and gentle human being. Up here in Seattle, the community is really mourning him," she said. "He was an incredible father."

Bob Shimabukuro was predeceased by his parents, Zenshu and Yasuko Shimabukuro. In addition to his widow, Alice Ito, and children, Mira Shimabukuro (Wayne Au) and Zenwa Shimabukuro, he is survived by a grandson, Mako; siblings, Toki Shimabukuro, Ann Colunga (John Droegmiller), Roy Shimabukuro, Ned Shimabukuro (Dee); and Irene Whitaker (George); and nieces and nephews.

her father was "always trying to push the edge a little bit at *Pacific Citizen*" about what the paper might cover or take on. While that might be considered forward-thinking now, Bob Shimabukuro's thoughts on the editorial direction

of the paper, like that photo of him that accompanied his column, may have worked against him.

Although Shimabukuro proved he was capable at putting the paper out for more than a year, his bid to take on the role

MEMORIAM

Amimoto, Richard 84, Monterey Park, CA, Jan. 2; Army veteran; he is survived by his children, Alan Amimoto and Diane (Bernie) Vlach; siblings, Shun (Pat), Kanji, Barbara, Jerry (Pam) and Eugene (Teri); gc: 5.

Higashi, Kiyo, 86, Los Angeles, CA, Jan. 27; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Tule Lake WRA Center in CA and later moved to the Jerome WRA Center in AR; she was predeceased by her siblings, Tomiko Akahori, Yoshiko Uyetake and Keiso Uyetake; she is survived by her husband, Robert; daughters, Taryn, Kelly and Dorre; siblings, Sue Miyazaki and Kenji Uyetake; gc: 1.

Higashi, Richard Tadao, 79, Culver City, CA, Jan. 2; Army veteran; he was predeceased by his siblings, Frances Iwamizu and Steve Higashi; he is survived by his siblings, Barbara (Richard) Heisler and Larry (Vicki) Higashi; brother-in-law, Harvey Iwamizu, sister-in-law, Michi Higashi; 2 nieces and 2 nephews.

Higashida, Rose Kikuye, 91, Jan. 28; and **Higashida, James Hikari, 92**, Northridge, CA, Feb. 14; they are survived by their children, Kathy Kozai (Gerald), Neil (Donna) Higashida and Terri (Chuck) Amano; they are also survived by nieces, nephews and other loving relatives; gc: 6.

Inada, Mary Hatsumi (née Tanabe), 101, Bakersfield, CA, Jan. 21; she was predeceased by her husband, Yasuo; daughter-in-law, Jeannie; and grandson, Donald; she is survived by her children, Kazuo (Suzie), Ronald (Shirley), Richard and Jeanne Brey (Jack); sisters, Kiku Uchida and Shirley Yuriko McCrory; longtime family friend, Carol Cook; gc: 8; ggc: 19; gggc: 11.

Inouye, Chieko, 100, Signal Hill, CA, Dec. 28, 2020; she was predeceased by her husband, Dr. Milton M. Inouye; brothers, George (Yoshiko), Kiyoshi (Misako), Toru (Marian), Hideo and Dr. William (Sharon) Shigekawa; she is survived by her daughters, Emily (David) Cook, Dr. Carolyn Inouye and Marianne Inouye; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews, grandnieces and other relatives.

Inouye, Dwight Hideo, 71, Provo, UT, Dec. 29, 2020; he was predeceased by his siblings, Charlotte and Dillon; he is survived by his wife, Jeannie Lew; 8 children; 3 siblings; gc: 27.

Kamibayashi, Yuriko, 89, Torrance, CA, Jan. 13; she was predeceased by her husband, Warren; she is survived by her children, Lianne (Ken), Neal (Naomi) and Eric (Lisa); sisters, Yoneko, Rosie and Joan; gc: 4; ggc: 2.

Katsumata, John Masao, 82, Long Beach, CA Oct. 26, 2020; he was predeceased by his older brother and a great-nephew; he is survived by a niece; 2 great-nephews; a great-niece and other relatives, a godson and close friends.

Kawaguchi, Bruce, 71, Los Angeles, CA, Jan. 24; he was predeceased by his father, James Kawaguchi; he is survived by his wife, Judy (Kuwahara); mother, Peggy Kawaguchi; brother, Kirk Kawaguchi and many other relatives.

Matsunaga, Aiko, 91, Chicago, IL, Dec. 17, 2020; she was predeceased by her husband, Robert; and son, Lyle; she is survived by her son, Ross (Yvonne); gc: 2.

Matsunaga, Keiko, 77, Los Angeles, CA, Jan 23, 2021; born during WWII while her parents were incarcerated at the Gila River WRA Center in AZ; she was predeceased by her husband, John T. Matsunaga; she is survived by her sister, Emiko Keimi (Albert); she is also survived by many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews and other relatives.

Matsushita, Yurika (Nagasawa), 89, Culver City, CA, Feb. 26; she is survived by her children, Brian, Ron and Joni (Mostert); siblings, Sumi Yonemoto, Masaru Nagasawa and Sachi Mimura; gc: 2; ggc: 1.

Nakasone, Thomas, 88, Culver City, CA, Jan. 12; Army veteran; he was predeceased by his siblings, Johnnie Nakasone and Sumiko Hoshizaki (Howard Hoshizaki); he is survived by his wife, May (Higuchi); daughters, Lisa Nakasone-Quan (Allanson Quan) and Eva Nakasone (Ted Nishimura); gc: 3.

Nakayama, Marie Togami, 94, Albuquerque, NM, Dec. 8, 2020; she was predeceased by her husband, John Nakayama; she is survived by her children, Karen (Robert), Ken and Nancy (Michael); brother, Paul (Illinois); gc: 2.

Nakayama, Shigekazu, 57, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 14; predeceased by parents, Shigeo and Tadao Nakayama; survived by aunt, Kasumi Sakai and many cousins and friends.

Oda, Sam, 90, Kent, WA, April 13; he was predeceased by his siblings, Chieko Watanabe, Marge Kanno, Carol Kamaya, Koke Oda, John Oda and Jim Oda; he is survived by his wife, Kermie Waki Oda; children, Janet Maeda, Jennifer Hirai and Stanley Oda; and sister Mary Mitamura; gc: 6; ggc: 1.

Oda, Stanley, 82, Los Angeles, CA, March 11; he is survived by his wife, Pauline; children, Joy Oda-Okamoto and David Oda; siblings, Edna and Warren Oda; gc: 2.

Sasaki, Clarence, 80, Branford, CT, Feb. 4; Army veteran; he is survived by his wife, Carolyn; sons, Peter (Jackie) and John (Rachel); Gordon (Joanne); sister-in-law, Beth Lindahl; brother-in-law, Robert Lindahl; a niece and a nephew.

Sasaki, George, 89, Gardena, CA, Nov. 10; Army veteran; he was predeceased by 5 sisters and 3 brothers; he is survived by his sister, Sachi Hori; he is also survived by nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Takeda, Alfred Masaru, 83, Los Angeles, CA, Jan. 16; he is survived by his wife, Jinko Takeda; children, Willie Takeda, Aileen (Scott) Zeidman, Jeff (Christine) Takeda and Wayne (Daniela) Takeda; siblings, Lorraine (Kazuo) Watanabe and Tom (Rumi) Takeda; gc: 10.

Takeda, Yayoi, 89, Vacaville, CA, Oct. 24, 2020; she was predeceased by her first husband, Jacob William Gopp; and second husband, Yuki Takeda; she is survived by her children, Helen (Roger) Smith, David (Colleen) Gopp and Dewey Gopp; brothers, Kikuo, Shigeo and Masao; gc: 8; ggc: 8.

Wakamoto, Harold, 88, Los Angeles, CA, Jan. 11; he was predeceased by his wife, Yaeko; he is survived by his children, Carole, David and Wendy; gc: 2.

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REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

NEW RESEARCH SHOWS PREVALENCE OF GIFT CARD USE AS PAYMENT IN SCAMS

By Ron Mori

Nearly one in three adults say they or someone they know has been asked to purchase a gift card to pay a bill or some other obligation, according to the Gift Card Payment Scams report released by the AARP Fraud Watch Network.

The research is a component of a three-year effort launched in early April to raise awareness around gift card use as payment in scams, a common method employed by criminals to steal money.

"With the number of reported scams on the rise, criminals are increasingly turning to gift cards as an untraceable way to take money as a part of their schemes," said Kathy Stokes, director of fraud prevention

programs at AARP. "Unfortunately, once a person gives a criminal the gift card number and PIN, the money is virtually impossible to recover. Our three-year initiative will let consumers know that it is never legitimate when someone asks you to pay for some obligation with a gift card."

The report found an alarming one-in-10 respondents acknowledge they bought a gift card after being asked by someone to pay a bill, another financial obligation or a fee to win a prize.

Gift cards as a form of payment are common across a wide range of impostor scams, but a quarter of U.S. adults report having paid by gift card to claim a large prize, sweepstakes or lottery. Scammers

also coerced adults to buy gift cards to settle an issue with their Social Security account, pay upfront for a service or product, fix a computer or pay a utility bill.

"There are no two ways about it, asking to be paid by gift card is a scam 100 percent of the time," said Stokes. "Yet, nearly a quarter of U.S. adults don't know or are unsure whether or not payment by gift card equals a scam."

Other survey findings:

- Adults younger than 50 are more likely than adults over 50 to say they or someone they know have been directed to pay for an obligation using gift cards.
- Most respondents who bought gift cards as requested said they purchased them at big-box retailers like Walmart or Target and at pharmacy chain stores like CVS or Walgreens.

An additional reminder: Beware of Internal Revenue Service imposters and scams. It's crunch time for filing your taxes, so don't fall for scams with criminals impersonating agents of the IRS. These con artists telephone people and tell them that they are in serious trouble for nonpayment of back taxes.

The Fraud Watch Network is advising consumers that legitimate

IRS representatives do not:

- Call you to demand immediate payment.
- Call you about taxes owed *without first having contacted you by mail*.
- Require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a prepaid debit card; or ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

For more information about the IRS scam and other tax-related frauds, visit www.aarp.org/Fraud-WatchNetwork. Consumers who think that they are being targeted by a scammer can call the FWN helpline

at (877) 908-3360 and speak with a trained counselor.

The AARP Fraud Watch Network is a free resource for all that equips consumers with up-to-date knowledge to spot and avoid scams, as well as connects those targeted by scams with our fraud helpline specialists, who provide support and guidance on what to do next. The Fraud Watch Network also advocates at the federal, state and local levels to enact policy changes that protect consumers and enforce laws. ■

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



The AARP Fraud Watch Network is a free resource that equips consumers with up-to-date knowledge to spot and avoid scams.

PHOTO: AARP

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