



PACIFIC CITIZEN

92 YEARS



Ito spent nearly 50 years in the animation industry.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF WILLIE ITO

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Register Now for
JAACL National
Convention.

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L.A. Radio Station
Suspends Host,
Producer.

» PAGE 6

CARTOONIST WILLIE ITO

One man's relentless drive to
bring a bird named Maggie
from page to screen.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR 51ST JACL NATIONAL CONVENTION

‘Communities Forged Under Fire!’ will be held virtually July 15-18.

By JACL National

Join JACL at its 51st National Convention on July 15-18. The virtual event, themed “Communities Forged Under Fire!” represents the long legacy of not only the Japanese American community’s struggles throughout history but also the shared struggles of many marginalized communities from immigration and colonization to the fight for civil rights and beyond.

Among this year’s convention highlights:

- Enjoy the most affordable convention ever (free to \$35)
- Full access to four days of programming
- Expanded workshop and mixer opportunities
- Attend from anywhere!

In addition to the National Council



This year's virtual JACL National Convention will feature a slate of programming and events, including special guests Maia and Alex Shibutani (pictured at top left).

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF JACL NATIONAL

cil Session, this year’s Sayonara Awards will feature special guests including Olympic figure skaters Maia and Alex Shibutani. There also will be a special FREE youth rate, workshops on stopping AAPI Hate, Redress & Reparations, addressing anti-Blackness in the Japanese American community, intersectional LGBTQ issues and much more.

Visit www.jacl.org to register. JACL members receive a convention discount at \$25. For more information, go to www.jacl.org/member or email mbr@jacl.org. Prices increase by \$10 on June 18.



2021 JACL NATIONAL CONVENTION
SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE
JULY 15-18, 2021



THURSDAY 2:00-9:00PM ET	FRIDAY 12:00-10:00PM ET	SATURDAY 12:00-10:00PM ET	SUNDAY 12:00-7:00PM ET
ORIENTATION	NATIONAL COUNCIL	WORKSHOPS	NATIONAL COUNCIL
WELCOME EVENT	FILM SCREENING	PLENARY	NY/SC FAIR
	NY/SC MIXER	SAYONARA GALA	
		YPC SPACE	

PAUL GOODMAN UNDERGOES BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT

Following is an update on Paul Goodman, who was first featured in the *Pacific Citizen's* Feb. 19-March 4, 2021, issue. Goodman, a 29-year-old filmmaker from Orange County, Calif., was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia four years ago. An update on his condition was posted on May 21 by his mother, Bonnie Goodman.

“Some of you may remember a few months ago, there was a big push here to find a perfect match for my son, Paul Daisuke Goodman, who relapsed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia late last year. Although a perfect match was never found, he was able to move forward with his bone marrow transplant on March 12 with his sister, Laurie, as his 5/10 half-match donor,” Bonnie Goodman wrote.

“I’m happy to share with you that Paul is Day +70 and doing well. As



Paul Goodman underwent a bone marrow transplant on March 12.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE GOODMAN FAMILY

expected with transplant, it’s been a tough road, but he’s getting a little bit stronger every day.

“Thanks to everyone who attended a live drive, requested a mail-in swab kit and/or shared Paul’s story to their friends and family,” she continued. “The Asian community continues to be very underrepresented in the BeTheMatch registry, so please continue to encourage your friends to join.”

» See GOODMAN on page 8

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I have participated in several social media discussions where the majority of the participants were Black. The topic was the Asian and Black relationships. It was clearly and emphatically stated that there was an animosity in the Black communities against Asians. There were clear and angry statements about this Asian Hate Bill.

The anger focused on the fact that this bill passed quickly, but

violence against Blacks has not been adequately addressed. This added to the hostilities against Asians by the Black participants. They said things like we Asians deserved the Black on Asian violent attacks, and that we should expect these attacks.

You (JACL) should look at the attacks on Asians — the majority have been Blacks attacking Asians. This is a serious problem that you are not addressing. Being Politically Correct and ignoring this issue is hurting your membership.

Please take this seriously.

Sincerely,

Glenn Asakawa,
San Diego, Calif.

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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





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JOIN US IN COMMUNITY AT THE 2021 JACL VIRTUAL CONVENTION

By David Inoue,
JACL Executive Director

June is the month for weddings. June is also LGBT Pride month, when we celebrate the achievements and contributions of LGBT individuals to our country, but also stand in solidarity with an LGBT community just as JACL did 27 years ago when it became one of the first national civil rights organizations to endorse gay marriage.

Double those years to 54, and that is how long ago the *Loving v. Virginia* case was decided, with the

Supreme Court unanimously striking down anti-miscegenation laws. At that trial, JACL was represented by Bill Marutani, the only outside party permitted to speak at the hearing in favor of the Richard and Mildred Loving.

JACL has had a strong history of partnering with other communities in the face of discrimination. We ourselves have faced similar fire and understand the importance of solidarity. It is in this spirit that we have selected the theme of “Communities Forged Under Fire” for this year’s convention.

It is unfortunate that a part of our

history is the duress under which we often find ourselves, whether it was the xenophobia of the late 1800s that drove laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act or naturalization laws that targeted Asians, or the same xenophobia that exists today against our same Asian communities due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The very reason we celebrate LGBT Pride month in June is that we are remembering the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City, in which members of the gay community resisted their arrest for being who they are. The transgender community is under fire today with attacks on children participating in sports or even using the restrooms at school.

This past year, we have experienced the renewed sting of anti-Asian hate ranging from the petty catcalls of derogatory slurs to the deadly violence of the Atlanta and Indianapolis shootings.

This happens against the backdrop of a long history of police brutality against African Americans. While slavery ended over 150 years ago, Jim Crow laws over 50 years ago, Black men, women

and children still remain “under fire” by education, finance and justice systems that systematically disadvantage them because of the color of their skin.

The Covid pandemic has further highlighted many of the inequities that exist in society, placing our communities further under fire. Hate crimes are not specific to one group. Unfortunately, those who act out in hate against one group often do the same to others.

It is why when passage of the COVID Hate Crimes Act was achieved, it brought passage of the broader and more inclusive Jabara Heyer NO HATE Act.

It was a win for our collective community, one of solidarity for us to say that not only was the recent increase in hate against Asians unacceptable, but so, too, was any hate crime.

We may have diverse and different communities with which we engage on a daily basis, but it is that diversity that enriches our country. This year’s convention will be an opportunity to recognize the shared experiences of our separate yet overlapping communities of how each has been forged through the

experiences of hundreds of years of history, or the recent experiences of this past year.

I started this column mentioning the topic of marriage, and I can’t resist bringing in a reference to “The Princess Bride.” In that movie, the priest proclaims, “Mawage (marriage) is wot bwings us togedder,” and though marriage rights are so fundamental to what JACL has believed in protecting, it is that solidarity in supporting the institution of marriage, and the communities that it can create, that we will come together in July.

Please join us at the 2021 Virtual JACL National Convention as we recognize this rich though sometimes difficult history — a part of our American history that has made us who we are as a nation.

Although we may belong to different community groups, many of them overlap and interact. But most of all, we work together in solidarity and for a greater American experience for all.

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



YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

‘WHAT ARE YOU?’

By Noah Kurima

“What are you?” It is such a straightforward question. But for many Japanese Americans in my generation, the answer is not simple. After 16 years in this world, an online course has opened my eyes to the history of my family and helped me finally understand the answer to this question.

Plans for my junior year of high school went off the rails as the pandemic continued. With school activities suspended and stuck at home with my baby sister, I found and applied to a class I could attend from my bedroom. Miraculously, I was accepted into the Reischauer Scholars Program, sponsored by the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education.

During RSP, we learned about Japanese history and culture, as well as the past and the current U.S.-Japan relationship. Weekly Zoom calls began in February, and we are currently polishing up our final argumentative essay.

As a college-level course,

I spend five to eight hours a week (sometimes more!) to absorb the material, complete assignments and contribute to ongoing online discussions.

Although a lot of hours on top of regular schoolwork, I highly recommend RSP, even after the pandemic is over! I have been able to meet and become friends with 28 brilliant classmates from across the U.S. and across demographics. I imagine I will keep in touch with them over the following decades as our lives and careers intertwine.

We have learned from some of Stanford’s and the nation’s most prestigious scholars. Our own professor, Naomi Funahashi, brings passion to each class — and patience when our classmate, Ben, only wants to talk about boba! Under her leadership, we have developed a close-knit and fun community.

Our lessons on Japan began with the sun goddess Amaterasu emerging from her cave and wrapped up with a unit on the triple disasters of 2011 and the future of Japan. In between, we heard stories from an actual Buddhist monk, dissected a

1932 Yasujiro Ozu silent film and heard from George Takei on his family’s experiences during World War II. He was gracious enough to send signed copies of his new book to each member of the class!

One unexpected outcome from the course was increased dialogue with my parents over dinner about our family history. Sometimes, we enlisted the help of my grandparents and other relatives to fill in blind spots. A few of the stories absolutely blew my mind.

My maternal great-grandparents immigrated from Korea to Japan in the 1930s. After WWII, the former Japanese colony was divided. The North had charismatic leaders and effective propaganda in Japan, and my great-grandparents affiliated themselves with North Korea — as most *zainichi* (Koreans in Japan) did at the time. However, those returning to North Korea were never heard from again, and the *zainichi* began to realize they were being deceived.

In the 1960s, my great-grandfather was visiting relatives in South Korea when he was kidnapped by the Korean CIA. He was released and returned to Japan but never stepped foot on Korean soil again. He never spoke about those 72 hours to anyone, and nobody knows what he endured.

Like most of you, I am connected to WWII incarceration — my grandparents were both taken to Jerome, Ark. My great-uncle,

Herb Kurima, was a well-known pitcher in Nikkei baseball and had a physically and mentally disabled brother.

Toyoki ate only Japanese food, spoke only Japanese and needed constant attention from their mother. The U.S. government would not allow Toyoki to accompany the family and denied requests from his brother to take him inland. Toyoki was institutionalized while my family was sent to Fresno. Toyoki passed away within weeks.

I now understand so much more about Japanese society and its issues. But I am most thankful to the RSP for triggering those evening talks with my parents.

I not only learned about the unimaginable adversities my great-grandparents had to face on both sides of the world — but also their resilience. I now have faith I possess the fortitude to persevere and overcome the challenges in my own life. It’s in my blood!

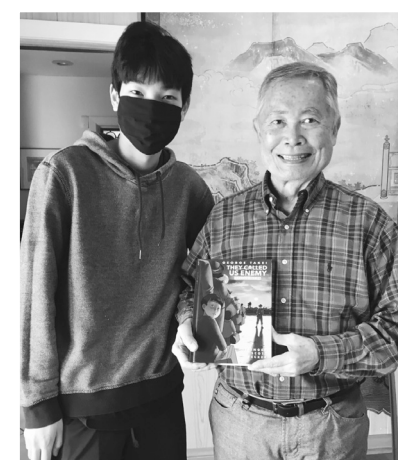
And now I know what I am. I am Japanese American, fourth generation through my grandmother, fifth through my grandfather, second through my mom (a weighted average of 3.25!). And though she was born and raised in Japan, I am also Korean — a proud *zainichi* from both the South and the North.

Programs such as RSP can inspire a more comprehen-

sive understanding of one’s unique identity. Whether enrolling in this type of program or not, I encourage young people, especially JAs, to sit down with parents, grandparents and other relatives.

Pepper them with questions and fill in your blind spots so that you can confidently and accurately answer that seemingly simple question, “What are you?”

Noah Kurima is currently a junior at Sage Creek High School in Carlsbad, Calif. He is a founding member of the Junior Board of the JACL San Diego chapter. He hopes to study international relations and international policy in college.



Noah Kurima with George Takei, who gave him a signed copy of his book “They Called Us Enemy”

PHOTO: BRAD TAKEI

BERKELEY JACL HONORS FUTURE LEADERS AND ACCOMPLISHED PIONEERS

The chapter pays tribute to its Scholarship, Pioneer and Youth Leadership Awards winners.

By Berkeley JACL Chapter

The Berkeley JACL chapter celebrated leaders of the future and honored accomplished Japanese American pioneers during its May 23 awards event via Zoom.

Scholarships were awarded to five high school seniors to recognize their academic achievements, community involvement, school activities, work history, JACL involvement, written essay, letter of recommendation and group interview.

This year's honorees are:

- **Christy Ko** (Oakland Tech High School) will attend the University of Southern California as a computer science major. She was also named the recipient of the Bea Kono Memorial Scholarship.
- **Kyle Kuwahara** (Berkeley High School) will attend the University of California, Berkeley, as a computer science major. He is the recipient of the Terry Yamashita Memorial Scholarship.
- **Scott Kuwahara** (Berkeley High



This year's Berkeley JACL chapter honorees are (top row, from left) Mark Fujikawa, Leroy Morishita, Annika Masaki, Ellie Matsuno, Bryce Nakahara, Allison Nakao and (bottom row, from left) Beth Uno, Christy Ko, Kyle Kuwahara, Scott Kuwahara, Lucille Taylor and Amanda Tsuetaki.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BERKELEY JACL

School) will attend the University of California, Santa Cruz, as a game development major. He was awarded the Carolyn Miyakawa Adams Scholarship.

- **Lucille Taylor** (El Cerrito High School) will attend the University of Hawaii (Manoa) as an undeclared major. She is the recipient of the George/Yoshimi Nakamura Memorial Scholarship.
- **Amanda Tsuetaki** (Carrboro High School in North Carolina) will attend Northwestern University as

an Asian American Studies major. She is the recipient of the Dan/Kathleen Date Memorial Scholarship.

Additionally, the chapter awarded scholarships to four college undergraduates who are attending accredited institutions of higher learning located in Alameda or Contra Costa Counties. This year's recipients are:

- **Annika Masaki** (UC Berkeley) majoring in public health
- **Ellie Matsuno** (UC Berkeley) majoring in civil engineering

- **Bryce Nakahara** (UC Berkeley) majoring in biology and business
- **Allison Nakao** (Diablo Valley College) majoring in library technologies

During the event, the chapter recognized its memorial scholarship donors: the Beatrice Kono family (George Kono), the Terry Yamashita family (Reiko Nabetta), the Dan/Kathleen Date family (Gail Yamamoto) and the George/Yoshimi Nakamura family (Ken, Mari, Cubby Nakamura). Carolyn Miyakawa Adams

was also honored for her years of support to the scholarship program.

The 2021 members of the scholarship committee are Chair Ron Tanaka, Mark Fujikawa, Vera Kawamura, Karen Kiyo Lowhurst, Ryan Matsuda, Neal Ouye, Al Satake and Sharron Sue.

Recognized for their active commitment to the Berkeley JACL were Mark Fujikawa and Leroy Morishita, who were presented the chapter's Pioneer Award. This award honored Fujikawa (optometrist) and Morishita (retired President of Cal State University East Bay) for their dedicated service to the chapter. The purpose of the award is to honor those with the vision, compassion and energy to lay a foundation for building a strong Japanese American community and nurturing future leaders.

In addition, Beth Uno was presented the chapter's Youth Leadership Award to recognize her role in organizing and implementing key youth activities and developing programs to fulfill the growing need for youth leaders with the desire, vision and skills to make a positive difference consistent with the chapter's mission.

Congratulations to all of this year's honorees. ■

NCWNP District Holds 2021 Gala Recognition Awards and Celebration

All proceeds from the virtual event will be donated to the Greg Marutani Memorial Fund.

By Nikki Hikari

The Northern California Western Nevada Pacific District held its biennial district gala virtually this year due to Covid-19 constraints. Thanks to the 2021 Gala Committee, consisting of NCWNP District Governor Carol Kawase, Janice Luszczak, Thaya Mune-Craig, Debbi Hatanaka Endow and Nikki Hikari, it was very successful.

Those who attended enjoyed 90 minutes of lively talks, beautiful koto music and slide shows of past galas, current Chapter Daruma Award honorees, Youth Daruma Award honorees, the District Award of Excellence honoree, four Sapphire pin awardees and a closing photo montage from all of its active chapters.

Led by Kawase and emcee Jana Katsuyama, news reporter for Bay Area KTVU Channel 2, the awards show ran smoothly thanks to Zoom tech specialist Elise Fujimoto.

The gala began with the Raising of the Colors by Boy Scouts from Troop 58 of San Francisco Konkō Church, who also led the Pledge of Allegiance. It was so nice to have the boys on live!

NCWNP galas raise funds to be donated to a specific recipient and project. This year's beneficiary is



This year's NCWNP honorees included (top row, from left) Yukino Torrey, Arleen Mataga, Jim Duff and Valerie Yasukochi, Hugh Metcalf, Dan Okada and (bottom row, from left) Christine Umeda, Donna Komure-Toyama, Marielle Tsukamoto, Dick Sasaki and (far right) Thaya Mune-Craig and Jim Craig. Also pictured is NCWNP Governor Carol Kawase (second from right).

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NCWNP DISTRICT

the Greg Marutani Memorial Fund. Donations will go directly to the JACL Teacher Education Fund in memory of Marutani for teacher training and classroom materials to promote educational learning about civil rights and the Japanese American incarceration experience.

The keynote speakers were Sharon Ishii-Jordan of the Omaha chapter and Carol Kawamoto from San Diego JACL. Both spoke eloquently about the JACL Teacher Education Program's history and purpose, as well as elaborated on their own experiences working on the committee with Marutani, including field trips taking teachers to visit the Manzanar

National Historic Site.

The gala was graced throughout by the unique sounds of music from koto master Yukiko Matsuyama, who selected pieces from her many albums. Matsuyama then gave a live performance of her original song "Sands of Manzanar."

The District Award of Excellence is bestowed upon an individual or group who displays excellence in attitude and aptitude in leading programs to benefit the community. The 2021 award was given to NCTOR, the Northern California Time of Remembrance Committee, for its community contributions since 1983.

Christine Umeda spoke on behalf

of the 2020 NCTOR Committee, which consisted of Donna Komure-Toyama, Arlene Mataga, Nancy Mune-Whiteside, Andy Noguchi, Dan Okada, Sharon Takeda, Marielle Tsukamoto and Katherine Uemura.

Daruma Awards are conferred upon outstanding chapter volunteers, the unsung heroes and heroines who make the impossible possible through perseverance and commitment to supporting the mission of the JACL and affecting many, many minds and lives.

This year's Gala Daruma Honorees are Kathy Aoki of Contra Costa chapter, May Saiki of Stockton chapter, Dick "Digger" Sasaki of Eden

Township chapter, Marie Sugiyama of Sonoma County chapter, Jean Yamashita of Watsonville-Santa Cruz chapter and High Metcalf of Lodi chapter. The District Youth had three Daruma Award nominees; one awardee and two outstanding runners up. Congratulations to Yuki Torrey of Silicon Valley chapter, currently a student at the University of California, Los Angeles, and to runners up Bakuatsu Taiko of the University of California, Davis, and the Japanese American Student Society, also of UC Davis. All are ardent supporters of their local JACL chapters.

The National JACL Sapphire Pin is only awarded to those who have served 10 consecutive years of service to JACL, five of those years to include service at the District and/or National level. This year there are four such dedicated individuals who have each contributed more than 20 years of service to JACL. Congratulations to Jim Duff and Valerie Yasukochi of Berkeley chapter and Thaya Mune-Craig and Jim Craig of Placer chapter.

A special thank you to the gala's emcee, Jana Katsuyama (daughter of Ron and Jane of the Dayton chapter), and all who participated, contributed and donated to the first-ever virtual gala. Congratulations to all of the 2021 awardees, and thank you for your continued service to JACL! ■

RADIO STATION KFI SUSPENDS TALK SHOW HOST, PRODUCER

Tim Conway Jr.'s skit targets Japanese American with inappropriate accent.

By P.C. Staff



interview someone of Japanese ancestry, complete with a mockery of a Japanese accent not unlike a Yellowface Mickey Rooney in the 1961 movie "Breakfast at Tiffany's," with some added verbal flourishes. (The audio of the bit is available on YouTube at tinyurl.com/2pcbuc55. Related to that, the May 3 podcast feed of the

Tim Conway Jr. show was absent.)

That someone was Yuko Sakamoto, the wife of sportscaster Vic "The Brick" Jacobs. The topic was the upcoming Tokyo Summer Olympic Games, which were postponed for a year because of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. With Japan still planning to hold the Games this summer, despite domestic and international misgivings, Conway purportedly was going to interview Jacobs' wife on that topic in the bit.

Although Jacobs is someone in the public eye and is therefore fair game for teasing, Sakamoto — who speaks in a standard American dialect — is neither a public figure nor a sportscaster.

Nevertheless, Conway, with assistance from his executive producer, Sheron Bellio as Sakamoto, decided it was OK to make Sakamoto the butt of the joke, give her a dubious Japanese accent and consistently call her "Yoko" instead of Yuko.

Kawamoto, a member of the Venice-West L.A. chapter of the JAACL, was not amused by the race-baiting attempt at humor.

Just as in 2018 with the Kansas license plates, he decided to take action. After bringing up the KFI incident with his JAACL chapter, it was suggested that Kawamoto contact Media Action Network for Asian Americans, which he did. Kawamoto also told the P.C. that he wrote a complaint letter to the Federal Communications Commission regarding the incident.

Kawamoto's actions led to KFI 640 suspending Conway and Bellio for a week without pay, with both issuing on-air apologies and the station airing a two-hour special report on anti-Asian racism and violence. (The KFI special report, "Stopping the Hate," can be heard at tinyurl.com/a7t2xu2t.)

"I almost feel bad about it because I am a fan. But it had to be done," Kawamoto told the P.C. "That's the only thing that's going to send a message," he added. He also said that KFI Program Director Robin Bertolucci asked him to appear on the air. "I told her, 'No, I'm not going on the air and provide free entertainment for the show.' I told her how offensive and inappropriate it is and the anti-Asian hate that's been going on. I said this is not open to debate, and she acknowledged that."

Sakamoto, meantime, in an interview with the P.C., said she had received phone calls from both Conway and Bellio in which they apologized for the parody. Not only was she dealing with being sucker-punched by the duo, but she also was processing the death of her mother. Nevertheless, she was sanguine about the KFI "fiasco," as she called it.

"I was very surprised for a number of reasons.

I was not made aware of what happened . . . until all my friends started calling me and saying, 'You're on the air. What is this? Why didn't you tell us? What were you doing?' I had no clue as to what they were referring to. From that point, it just started growing," Sakamoto said.

Regarding Conway and Bellio's decision to give her a stereotypical Japanese accent, Sakamoto said that with two Japanese names, it was their miscalculation to portray her with an accent and that they probably would not have done the same thing with another non-Asian ethnicity.

Characterizing her conversation with Conway as productive, Sakamoto said it was a teachable moment for Conway, and she urged him to learn from this and visit the Japanese American National Museum and learn about the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. "I was able to ask him all the questions I had in my heart," she said.

Alan Oda, who blogs about L.A. radio at ayodaradio.blogspot.com, called Conway a "very talented gentleman" and told the P.C., "There's a reason why he's been at KFI as long as he has been. . . . I was, as many people, shocked to hear about what was broadcast on his show on May 3. He seems to be contrite, as well as his producer, Sheron Bellio." Oda added that he thought the suspension was justified.

Asked whether the outcome — the suspensions, the two-hour special and the negative press — would have been the same had he not listened to KFI that day, Kawamoto said, "I think a lot of people would have let it go." ■

Ito Draws on Memories for 'CITY OF GHOSTS'

The Netflix cartoon combines kids, apparitions and a new view of L.A.

By P.C. Staff

One of the delights of 2021 for fans of both animation and residents of Los Angeles was the six-part streaming series "City of Ghosts."

Created by an animation industry veteran and a Los Angeles-raised local, Elizabeth Ito, "City of Ghosts" checks many boxes: love letter to overlooked L.A. neighborhoods, the supernatural, precocious-yet-innocent kid detectives of the Ghost Club and photorealistic backdrops populated by stylized, nonphotorealistic characters.

Netflix dropped "City of Ghosts" in early March, with both critics and viewers responding positively to the gentle and inclusive vision of Ito, who also co-wrote and directed episodes. Her team included another Japanese American, Ako Castuera (they met while working on "Adventure Time"), as well as other Asian American animation talent.

Two constants throughout: ghosts and kids. Fortunately, they aren't the frightening types of ghosts, but the type that want to teach and share their stories. And the kids? They sound like real kids and not trained actors because that's what they were; that, too, was by design.

"I really wanted them to sound like real kids," Ito said. "For that reason, I kind of requested kids that were younger than normally people ask for. In some cases, I think some of them couldn't read yet."

This presented challenges, since they meant someone would need to recite the lines and have the child actors repeat them, a practice opposite her experiences on other shows dealing with trained actors who don't like being told how to recite a line of dialogue.

Ito also said there was just a narrow window in which to record the



"City of Ghosts" creator Elizabeth Ito



kids while their voices had a particular quality that could change quickly.

Even the dialogue from the adults, Castuera pointed out, came from the interviews that were conducted with people from the different communities. "They were all hired because they were themselves," Ito added.

"City of Ghosts" came about when Netflix became interested in a short Ito had made titled "Welcome to My Life" with Cartoon Network. But it was tied up at CN, so when Netflix asked her whether she had any other ideas, she drew inspiration from growing up in Los Angeles.

"I did sort of have this vague idea about doing a show about all the stuff in L.A. that I would wonder about, like this random building where I would wonder, 'Why is this old

building in this new development?' or little homes that don't look like the homes around it and how could we explore that," Ito said.

Ito combined that with a memory from when she was 6 years old and saw a ghost and how that related to VR (virtual reality), where "you feel like a ghost."

Castuera, whose mother is Japanese American from Hawaii and whose father is an immigrant from Mexico, also grew up in Los Angeles County and could relate to Ito's vision.

"I don't have the generational roots that Elizabeth does, but it put me in touch with different perspectives, people who were immigrants themselves or have roots that go back thousands of generations," Castuera said, referring to the "Tovaangar" episode.

Those threads and sensibility came together for the show, as evidenced by episode titles like "Koreatown,"

"Venice" and "Leimert Park," as well as neighborhoods like Boyle Heights and locations like the Bob Baker Marionette Theater, all giveaways that "City of Ghosts" takes a different tack at depicting L.A.

In "City of Ghosts," the City of Angels and its denizens are characters, and in a city that is so big, so sprawling and so diverse, there might be no end to the stories that could be told.

"I've appreciated everybody's reaction to the show," Ito said. "No matter whether there are more [episodes] or not, I'm really proud of what me and the whole crew made, so I'm really happy for everybody who worked on it, to see how much people love it, how much people love hearing their voices and how excited it makes people. So, I'm glad to have made something so meaningful for all of these communities that I'm now friends with." ■

At 8 years old, Willie and his family were incarcerated at Topaz. Here, Ito points at a family photo displayed at the Topaz Museum.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF WILLIE ITO



"I'm still at it," says Willie Ito, 86, about the new projects he is working on in his so-called "retirement."

PHOTO: LYNDA LIN GRIGSBY



Ito has an incredible collection of Disney memorabilia.

A CARTOONIST, A BIRD AND A PASSION PROJECT

At first glance, this sounds like a story about a retiree keeping busy, but it's so much more. This story spans the world, includes wars, as well as one man's relentless drive to bring a bird named Maggie from page to screen.

By Lynda Lin Grigsby, Contributor

The moment of awe is about to begin.

On the other side of the door, Willie Ito stands, cane in hand, ready. It's a moment that faithfully repeats when a new visitor steps over the threshold of his home. It might start with a little gasp or a slow exhalation and then end in a stroll through the living room with dilated pupils to take in the enormity of the memorabilia — mostly Disney — on walls and in display cases.

In Ito's house, the mouse is king. Incarnations of the famous rodent in different poses live on the shelves like altars for newcomers to worship.

"Take a look around," he says, with eyes twinkling above his mask. Of course, with a pandemic still in existence, it's been a while since someone new has entered his Monterey Park, Calif., home. Dressed in an olive floral-print shirt, Ito, 86, exudes a Tommy Bahama aura of relaxed island vibes — the retired corporate man with nothing but time now. Except after closer inspection, his shirt is covered in a Mickey Mouse motif. His blue hat is embroidered with the Disney name. If the mouse is king, Ito is the ambassador.

The ambassador needs no introduction in the animation world. He spent nearly 50 years in the industry as a

cartoonist — many with Disney — starting in 1954 when a count of Asian American faces in the industry couldn't even make a full set of tally marks. In animation circles, everyone knows Ito for the characters he created and the doors he opened for other Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the industry.

Last year, Eric Bauza, a Filipino-Canadian voice actor, was named the voice of Bugs Bunny, the wise-cracking, iconic animated character that Ito also sketched during his time at Warner Bros. Ito was the first Asian American to draw Bugs Bunny.

Now, a self-proclaimed Filipino kid is voicing the rabbit. The through line isn't lost on Bauza, 41, who wondered out loud in a December episode of the "They Call Us Bruce" podcast what Ito thinks of the trail he blazed.

"Willie is a living legend," Bauza tweeted on May 27. "Without his hard work, I wouldn't be where I am now."

This story is not about the bunny or the mouse or the countless characters Ito sketched to life during the golden era of American animation. This story is about the second act of his career — his so-called retirement that has become a period of creative renaissance. It's about a magpie bird and how Ito is working to bring one of his most personal projects from book to screen.

"The meeting is about to begin," said Ito, pointing to a chair on a

sunny day in late May. On his computer screen are a series of faces from all over the world gathered for their twice-weekly virtual production meeting. The screen flashes, and suddenly, we are transported to the behind-the-scenes world of animation magic.

At center is a drawing of a young Japanese American boy, a bird and the title of Ito's latest passion project, "Hello Maggie!"

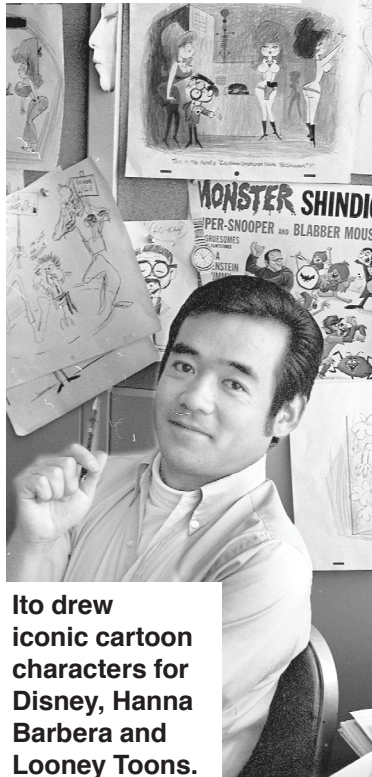
A STORY ONLY SURVIVORS COULD TELL

Everyone in Ito's inner circle who I spoke with said the same thing: He's busier now in retirement than he ever was working for Disney, Warner Bros, Sanrio or Hanna Barbera.

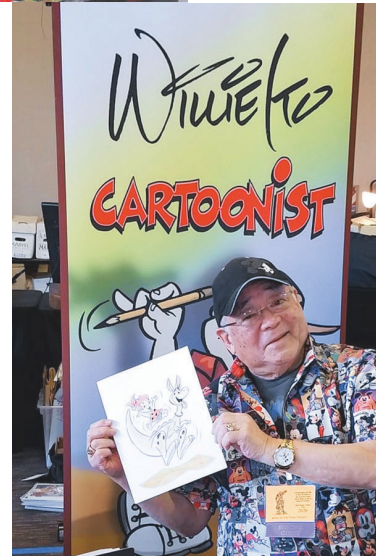
It's the gift of time after the pandemic stripped away in-person appearances at comic book conventions and speaking engagements that so often crowd a legend's personal calendar.

Retirement and pandemic-induced solitude gave Ito the opportunity to reflect on his experiences, said his 62-year-old son, Vincent Ito. "I think now he has been able to really focus on telling his story."

In 1999, Ito's buddy, Shigeru Yabu, approached him with an idea for a children's book based on his own experiences as a boy incarcerated at Heart Mountain during World War II. In his family barrack, Yabu raised a magpie chick named Maggie that eventually learned to wolf whistle when women walked by and say, "Ohayo" ("good morning" in

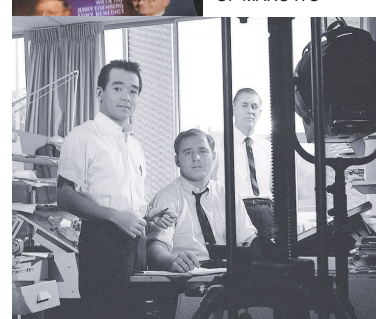
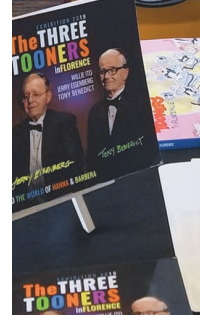


Ito drew iconic cartoon characters for Disney, Hanna Barbera and Looney Toons.



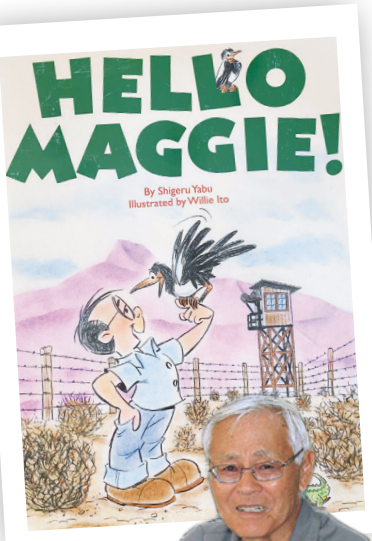
Before the pandemic, Ito often traveled for in-person appearances at conventions.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MARC ITO



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF WILLIE ITO

"The artwork was his life," Marc Ito says about his cartoonist dad, pictured here in his early studio days with fellow artists Jerry Eisenberg and Dick Bickenbach.



Shigeru Yabu (left) wrote the story "Hello Maggie" and Ito illustrated. Both promoted and sold the books.



Yabu family illustration at Heart Mountain



Marika background



One of the perks of Ito's extraordinary career in animation is collecting awards, including the Inkpot Award from Comic-Con.

Japanese). Maggie symbolized one boy's pain, joy and loss from the incarceration experience. Yabu had the story. He needed an illustrator.

"I wanted somebody that was from the internment camps," said Yabu, 88. "It didn't matter what camp. I just wanted somebody that understood what a guard tower, barbed-wire fence and mess hall looked like."

Ito tells the story of Yabu's proposal in a style that sounds like an excerpt from an old Hollywood script.

*Shig: "Willie, I want you to illustrate a story of mine."
Willie: "I hung up my pencil, Shig. I just want to take it easy."
Shig: "Just read the manuscript, then you will know what I am talking about."*

Ito was 8 years old when he and his family were incarcerated at Topaz. "Hello Maggie!" stirred memories in the cartoonist that he had put away for a long time, like the feeling of disembarking a bus in the middle of a Utah desert and watching a fine layer of dust cover his grandfather's gray fedora hat and black overcoat.

"So, I went and illustrated it because of my vivid memory of those days," said Ito.

"Hello Maggie!" was published in 2007 mostly with funds from Ito

and Yabu. The book's drawings of wild sagebrush and blue star flags hanging in barrack windows are details from a survivor's point of view. Yabu and Ito carried copies of the book to community events like business cards.

"We were in the Cherry Blossom Festival, you know, waving our stupid hands at people," said Yabu, a Nisei Ventura County JACL member. Then they would set up space to sell the books. "Anyway, basically, we struggled."

"Hustling," a modern-day term co-opted here, describes the men's relentless drive to get the "Hello Maggie!" book in as many homes as possible.

Slowly, the books sold out. To get a copy now, one has to buy a used one off Amazon for \$70.98 or wait for Ito to finish the revised edition with four additional pages about the heroics of the Japanese American units in the military during WWII.

"I just need to get off of my butt and start drawing," Ito joked.

After all, he has another project that is competing for his attention.

MAGGIE THE CARTOON

Bringing "Hello Maggie!" from page to screen sounds like a series of events that came together with the help of a global pandemic and the connective power of an animation legend.

Many describe the same scenario on how they joined the production team. It starts with a question: "Do you know Willie Ito? He has this idea for a cartoon."

Ito is always hustling.

Two years ago, Ito was on a whirlwind trip to Florence, Italy, to pick up an award from Nemo Academy, an animation studio. Between receiving the award and viewing Michelangelo's David, Ito noticed a copy of "Hello Maggie!" on Nemo Academy founder Luca Chiarotti's bookshelf.

It started out as a joke, Ito said. *Ha. Ha. Wouldn't it be nice if you and your students make a cartoon version of "Hello Maggie!"? Can you imagine that? What would a project like that take?*

When the laughter subsided, the "Hello Maggie!" cartoon short film project was greenlighted in February before coronavirus shut down the U.S. Preproduction started last May.

What the pandemic takes away, it gives back in time.

The "Hello Maggie!" short film project needed a director, so Chiarotti called on Tony Tarantini, a professor of animation, arts and design from Sheridan College in Toronto, Canada.

Do you know Willie Ito? He has an idea.

"What am I going to do, you know, in the spring [of 2020] now anyway, so why not take on this project?" said

Tarantini in the virtual production meeting. "But it turned out to be more than a spring thing."

It's been a year's thing, to be exact. Preproduction for "Hello Maggie!" is humming along in a style Ito jokingly calls "the only real way to animate" — 2-D animation of a young Shig delighting over a stack of hand-drawn pancakes and digitally painted scenery of Heart Mountain, so breathtakingly beautiful and stark.

Bringing "Hello Maggie!" from page to screen is an international affair. Two separate production teams made up of students from Sheridan College and Nemo Academy oversee visuals with Tarantini as director and Ito as creative executive producer and co-director. Sandro Cleuzo is the animation supervisor.

Ito and Tarantini envision an animated short, 14 minutes, with fastidious dedication to historical accuracy. "Hello Maggie!" is a heart-warming story about a little boy and his pet bird, but it is also about historic events — a mass incarceration that continues to see intergenerational trauma trickle down.

"The reason why I want to be somewhat historically correct is that I want to give the audience, a sense that this really happened. It's not just cartoon characters," said Tarantini.

The production team had several virtual meetings just to go over the details of the Heart Mountain guard tower, so it looks accurate. They brought on other former incarcerated, including Yabu, to vouch for the depiction of the camp.

In a virtual production meeting, Yabu mostly listened until a scene of the Heart Mountain camp popped up onscreen. In the distance, someone had included telephone poles. Yabu could be quiet no longer.

"Could I make one correction?" he said. "In camp, we didn't have any telephone poles or wires. No one had any telephones. How hard would it be to erase?"

The telephone poles in the scene vanished.

"I love to be able to think that maybe the people that were at Heart Mountain will look at that and will get a feel, 'Wow! You know that really feels like that was the place,'" said Tarantini.

FUNDING MAGGIE

In so many ways, bringing "Hello Maggie!" to life is a passion project for the production team. The student artists are receiving stipends from their colleges for their work, but other members are volunteering their time and talent. To continue the project, the team needs more funding.

The debate over how to get the money to finish the project plays out in the production meeting. Tarantini says they need a person to join the team to spearhead the fundraising effort and crowdsource funding. At home, Ito shakes his head. He wants

to look for big funders. Later, Ito leans in and says, "One of the guys really helping to push this whole thing is David."

Here's the thing about being a legend. An Emmy Award-winning news anchor from one of the largest news markets in the country can casually be referenced on a first-name basis. The David here is David Ono, co-anchor of ABC7 Eyewitness News in Los Angeles, who Ito says has been championing his "Hello Maggie!" projects.

This year's Heart Mountain pilgrimage on July 24-25 will be a series of virtual events with limited in-person meetings for board members and VIPs. Ito was set to attend ("David wants me to go with them.") with a goal to fundraise for "Hello Maggie!" the cartoon, but now he's not sure. It's not a problem of will, it's a problem of logistic and aging bodies. Getting to the pilgrimage site in Wyoming means he must take two different planes and carry large portfolios of artwork on an ankle that had surgery for arthritis before the pandemic.

"I may have to pass," said Ito about the Heart Mountain pilgrimage.

"And at the moment, I've got George who might be interested in doing the voiceover or narration for the film, you know."

Is there any question that the George in reference here is George Takei of "Star Trek" fame?

WILLIE THE PERSON

Willie Katsutoshi Ito Jr. was born in San Francisco, Calif., in 1934. Most of his official documents cite him as Willie or Will, but never William. He has four children with his wife, Rosemary, who died in 2017 after 61 years of marriage.

He has always been driven, said his son Marc Ito, 63. "The artwork was his life."

Growing up, the Ito kids knew their dad drew cartoons for a living. He worked late nights at the big studios and in his own studio affectionately called his "man cave" in the backyard. On Saturday mornings, the kids would watch cartoons and see Ito's name in the credits, but to them, he was a regular dad, who would take the boys to drag races at the Pomona Fairgrounds.

Growing up with a dad like Ito was like living in Disneyland, said his 51-year-old daughter, Sabrina Kiilsgaard.

"We always had the fun birthday parties because my dad would bring all the old classic Disney movies home and put them on the projector screen and, you know, draw for my friends," she said.

There is a picture of Ito from the late 1970s standing proudly amid his formidable collection of Disney memorabilia in his man

» See PROJECT on page 12

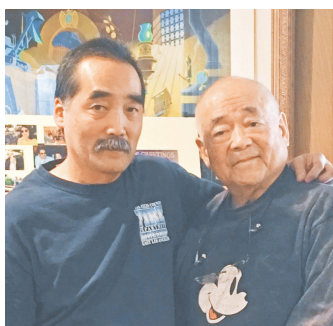


Portrait of a cartoonist as a young man, who even in the 1950s, liked to wear floral print shirts.



Rosemary Ito, pictured here in the 1950s, was a wife and mother. She died in 2017 at 82.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF VINCENT ITO



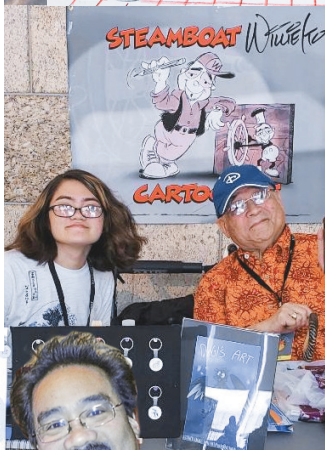
Growing up, the Ito kids knew their dad drew cartoons for a living, said Marc Ito, pictured here with Willie Ito. The realization that their dad was an animation legend came later.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MARC ITO



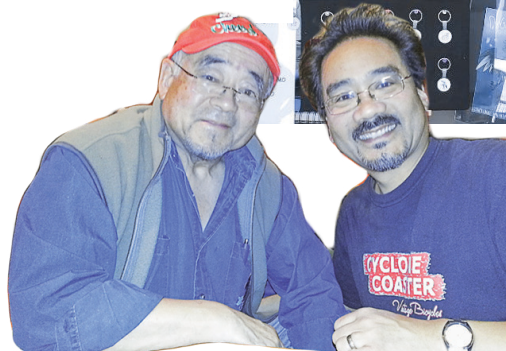
One of the first projects Ito worked on at Disney was the famous kissing scene from "Lady and the Tramp."

PHOTO: COURTESY OF WILLIE ITO



Cartooning runs in the family. Kayla, 18, draws like her grandfather, says Sabrina Kiilsgaard.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SABRINA KIILSGAARD



Cartoonist dad with his artist son, Vincent Ito

PHOTO: COURTESY OF VINCENT ITO



The Ito Family circa 2011 (from left) Sabrina, Matthew, Rosemary, Willie, Vincent and Marc

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SABRINA KIILSGAARD

TESTIMONY GIVEN IN SUPPORT OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN CONFINEMENT EDUCATION ACT

The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands holds a hearing to reauthorize the JACS program.



The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands held a hearing, presided by Chair Raul M. Grijalva, on May 27 to discuss the reauthorization of the Japanese American Confinement Education Act. Among those testifying were Rep. Doris Matsui (D-Calif.) and former JACL Executive Director/National President Floyd Mori.

"I believe this legislation will help lay the foundation for a stronger and more inclusive future," said Matsui.

"... The essence of the American experience isn't that we are perfect. Our history is littered with failures. But the true American essence is that we continue to right our wrongs. Today, far too many people still experience discrimination, far too many experience injustice, but we are continuing bending the moral arc of this country by sharing our stories, lifting our voices and fighting so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past. Our country will reach higher heights when we have the wisdom to listen to those who

came before us. The Japanese American experience is a vital piece of this puzzle. It's a story that we cannot afford to lose in time. I ask for your support of this important bill."

Added Mori: We need to broaden the scope of opportunities for people to learn more about this part of American history. . . . It has been said many times that if we do not learn from history, history will repeat itself. This is a part of history that should not be repeated, and learning more about this shameful period will prevent many injustices to occur in the future. I urge you to support this concept and vote for the passage of 1931 that has bipartisan support."

The Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) Grant Program was established in order to help preserve the American concentration camps in which Japanese Americans were

held as prisoners during World War II.

Public Law 109-441 (the original JACS grant bill), which was established by Congress in 2006, provided \$38 million in funding over a number of years. Its purpose is to teach the history of Japanese Americans to ensure that such a travesty of justice as the incarceration is never allowed to happen again. This original legislation was introduced by then-Rep. Bill Thomas, Rep. Doris Matsui and Rep. Mike Honda.

Since the first year of funded projects in Fiscal Year 2009, 247 projects have been funded in 22 states and the District of Columbia with more than \$32.8 million.

However, funding for the bill is now running out, and the JACL, the Japanese American National Museum, the All Camps Consortium and other groups are working to ensure that the JACS grant program will continue into the future.

Support is being sought for HR

1931, which will remove the sunset provision of Public Law 109-441 and provide an additional \$38 million in funding. The bill will also add a new element that will provide an additional \$10 million to be allocated for educational purposes.

This grant would require the recipient museum to develop and nationally disseminate accurate, relevant and accessible resources to improve awareness and understanding of Japanese American confinement during WWII. This program is modeled after the Holocaust Education Act passed by Congress and signed into law in 2020.

JACL chapters and members, along with other organizations and individuals, are being asked to contact their members of Congress to seek their support for HR 1931. JACL will be compiling the letters to submit as a group to the subcommittee for admittance into the hearing record.

—By Floyd Mori with additional reporting by P.C. Staff and JACL National

Florin JACL Announces 2021 Scholarship Winners

The chapter recognizes the achievements of four outstanding high school students.

By Florin JACL Chapter

The Florin JACL chapter is pleased to announce its 2021 scholarship winners, all of whom are outstanding seniors attending Sacramento-area high schools. The recipients were recognized during a Zoom social program on May 16, which was held in lieu of the chapter's annual in-person Ice Cream Social and Scholarship Presentation.

The 2021 Bring Your Own Ice Cream social, which was led by the chapter's Josh Kaizuka, recognized the achievements of Devon Akiyama, Cara Ishisaka, Ryan Seo and Anna Kubokawa Vogtmann. In addition, the chapter also welcomed special guests Brandon Miyazaki, Kim Noguchi, Kaitlyn Toyama and Beth Uno, four past scholarship winners who reflected upon their achievements and current aspirations.

This year's winners were each judged on achievements in academic and scholastic honors, extracurricular activities including leadership positions, community service, work history, Japanese cultural activities and JACL involvements as shown on their written application, letter of recommendation and personal interview.

The 2021 scholarship awardees are:

• **DEVIN AKIYAMA**, the son of George and Merri Akiyama, attends West Campus High School in Sacramento. In addition



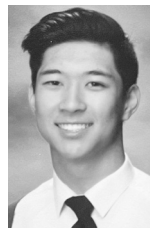
to scholastic achievement awards, he was "key" to the establishment and management of Key Clubs (Kiwani) in high schools throughout the greater Sacramento area. He also was founder and president of the campus Model United Nations Club and a member of the California Scholarship Federation SF, National Honor Society and MESA (Math, Engineering, Science and Achievement) clubs. At Florin Buddhist Church, he received two Tamazo Tanigawa Awards, the Sangha Award for Boys Scouts, attended the Nihon Gakko summer program and was an active member of the Junior YBA. He also attended Jan Ken Po Gakko for Grades 1-6, from which he developed an interest in the JA incarceration experience. As a Boy Scout, he received his Eagle Scout award by honoring with gratitude his grandfather, Ichiro Akiyama, and 100 years of the Florin Buddhist Church. His project to repair and repaint the aging outdoor kitchen was accomplished during Covid-19 restrictions. Akiyama plans to attend the University of California, Berkeley, and major in business with a minor in history. He hopes to take a management role in the field of business and continue his service to the Asian Pacific Islander community.

• **CARA ISHISAKA** is the daughter of Denis and Lesly Ishisaka and younger sister of former Florin JACL scholarship winners Mika and Brian Ishisaka. She



graduates with four years of Japanese language from the Humanities and International Studies Program at C. K. McClatchy High School in Sacramento. In 2019, Ishisaka reinstated, co-founded and became vp of the Asian Pacific Islander Student Alliance to recognize and celebrate Asian Pacific cultural identities and issues. She also was team captain for CKM's JV basketball team and is a member of the California Scholarship Federation. As a Girl Scout, she recently received her Gold Award, setting up an electronic book catalog and beautifying the Sacramento Betsuin library. In addition, she is a fourth year first-grade Dharma School TA at the Buddhist church of Sacramento and co-president of the Jr. YBA, she attended the Jan Ken Po Gakko Japanese cultural program for six years and returned as a TA for four more years and has been active in the Barons Basketball Organization, Sacramento Asian Sports Foundation and is Teens Create Dreams 2021 co-president. Ishisaka will be attending the University of Washington in the fall, studying psychology, with further goals of becoming a pediatrician.

• **RYAN SEO**, the son of Derek and Audrey Seo, is a graduate from Inderkum High School in Natomas. As the grandson of Akio and Ruth Seo, he often attended and helped at the Florin JACL Nikkei Dogs



Scholarship Fundraiser & Bingo Night and at Time of Remembrance events at the California Museum. He also participated in the Jan Ken Po Gakko cultural summer school for six years and has been active at the Buddhist Church of Sacramento in Boys Scouts, church basketball, sixth-grade Dharma School TA and helping in numerous ways with church events and facilities improvement. In addition, Seo has been affiliated with the Lodi JACL Templars baseball team helps with field work and umpiring games at the North Natomas Little League. Seo has decided to attend Sacramento City College and later transfer to a four-year university as an economics/finance major.

• **ANNA KUBOKAWA VOGTMANN**, the daughter of Russell and Keri Kubokawa Vogtmann, graduates from Vista Del Lago High School in Folsom. A 12-year Girl Scout, she received her Gold Award for her research and development of a music memory program for Oakmont of Folsom, a memory care facility, where she developed a brochure highlighting music and memory and distributed 350 of them to several other memory care facilities to encourage the use of musical activities. Vogtmann stays busy with Girls Scouts, works as a server at a local retirement home, is the captain and leading runner of her school's



track and field team and has committed to the University of California, Irvine, on a track and field scholarship. Vogtmann plans to major in international studies with ambitions to someday work internationally, focusing on children and elderly needs.

Members of the Florin JACL Scholarship Committee are Chair Ruth Seo, Aileen Nishio, Jennifer Nishizaki-Ngo, Irene Uno and Karen Yamamoto.

Congratulations and best wishes to our Florin JACL scholarship recipients for 2021! ■

GOODMAN » continued from page 2

Drive-thru registration events to find a matching donor for Paul Goodman, which took place throughout California, Hawaii, Texas and Washington, were facilitated by recruiters from the nonprofit organization Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches (A3M), along with friends and family members.

What started as a quiet and private battle soon exploded into a massive community undertaking.

"I can't say enough how grateful we are to our friends, family and the Japanese community and entire Asian community as well as the Hafu (Hapa) community," Bonnie Goodman told the *Pacific Citizen*.

For more information, contact Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches at <http://www.a3mhope.org/>.



REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

BIPARTISAN MAJORITY OPPOSES SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE CUTS TO REDUCE DEFICIT

By Ron Mori

An AARP survey finds that 85 percent of Americans age 50+ oppose cutting Social Security and Medicare to reduce the federal budget deficit. The poll shows overwhelming opposition from both Republicans (88 percent) and Democrats (87 percent) on cutting Social Security benefits to pay down the deficit. Similarly high proportions of Republicans (86 percent) and Democrats (87 percent) strongly oppose cuts to Medicare.

“Older Americans overwhelmingly oppose cutting Social Security and Medicare to reduce the deficit. Proposals like the TRUST Act would give a handful of lawmakers

the power to propose cuts behind closed doors with fast-track legislative consideration with minimum transparency and oversight from voters,” said Nancy LeaMond, AARP executive vp and chief advocacy and engagement officer. “On behalf of AARP’s nearly 38 million members, we call for full and open debate that ensures public input on protecting the future of our earned benefits. All members of Congress should be held accountable for any action on Social Security and Medicare.”

Under the Time to Rescue United States’ Trusts Act — or TRUST Act, for short — all it would take for legislation cutting these programs to be fast-tracked in Congress would be for seven members of one of

these rescue committees to support a proposed bill. Under the act, lawmakers would be unable to make any changes to a TRUST Act bill once it went to the U.S. House of Representatives or the Senate.

Social Security and Medicare were particularly important during the coronavirus pandemic, with Social Security being a stable source of income for more than 34 million older households and Medicare providing critical health care coverage to more than 62 million enrollees, according to AARP research.

The TRUST Act was first introduced in 2019 but has not become law. AARP is urging Americans to make their voices heard in support of Social Security and Medicare. To date, nearly a quarter million people have sent messages to federal lawmakers demanding they oppose the TRUST Act — legislation that would create a 12-member committee that could fast-track cuts targeting Social Security and Medicare.

The history of these types of efforts show that they are flawed from their inception, create further polarization and violate the trust of the American people since they do not provide open and accountable deliberation.

Elected officials should instead focus on meeting the health and retirement income needs of all

Americans. AARP continues to urge Americans to make their voices heard in support of both Medicare and Social Security, and so far, nearly 250,000 individuals have sent messages to their federal lawmakers demanding that they oppose the latest TRUST Act.

Additional survey findings:

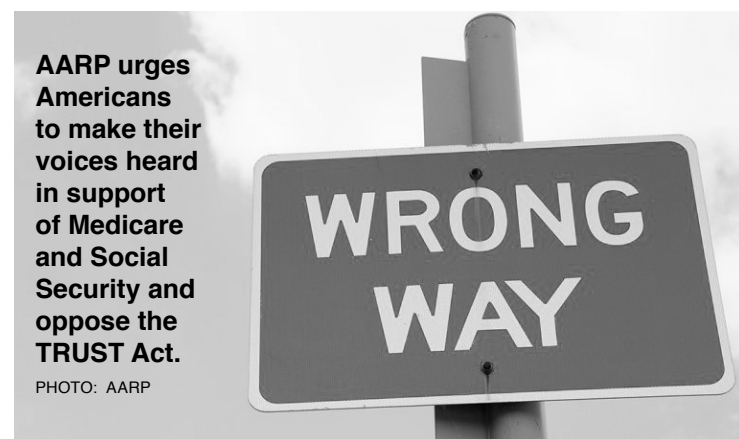
- People age 65 and older (89 percent) are slightly more likely than those age 50-64 (81 percent) to strongly oppose reducing Medicare benefits to reduce the deficit
- People age 65 and older (87 percent) are slightly more likely than those age 50-64 (83 percent) to strongly oppose reducing Social Security benefits to reduce the deficit.

This nationwide poll of 1,016 adults ages 50 and older utilized

NORC’s AmeriSpeak® Omnibus, a monthly multiclient survey. Interviews were conducted in English online (90 percent) and by phone (10 percent) from April 22-26, 2021, and included three AARP questions on federal budget deficits.

Data are weighted to the latest Current Population Survey benchmarks developed by the U.S. Census Bureau and are balanced by gender, age, education, race/ethnicity, region and AARP membership. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.33 percent with a design effect of 1.99.

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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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.

'If Only We Dare' — From the Harada Story to Ending Asian Hate Riverside, CA

June 10; 6-7:30 p.m.

Virtual Event

Price: Free

Hear an inspiring group of leaders and learn practical actions anyone can undertake to help end racial hatred and violence. This Zoom event will feature Kimberly Harada, JACL's David Inoue, IMPACT Bay Area's Linda Leu, Loyola Marymount University's Curtiss Takada Rooks, Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA) and UC Davis' Dr. Carolee Tran along with introductions by Al Zelinka, city manager for the City of Riverside, and moderator Dr. Robyn G. Peterson, director of the Museum of Riverside.

Info: To register, visit <https://tinyurl.com/EndAAPIHate>.

Amache Virtual Pilgrimage

Amache, CO

June 11-13

This year's Amache Pilgrimage will be streamed through the JAMPilgrimages YouTube channel. Please tell your friends and family, as more information about this event will be posted soon. There is also a new Facebook group that will have the most up-to-date information: All Things Amache facebook.com/groups/809799359625587/. **Info: Visit Amache.org for more details.**

18th Annual Minidoka

Pilgrimage

June 26

Virtual Event

Price: Free

"See Our Strength" will be a virtual event on June 26, paying tribute to the nearly 13,000 people of Japanese ancestry living in Washington, Oregon and Alaska who were forcibly removed from their homes in 1942 and sent to this desolate concentration camp in Idaho during WWII. This year's event will honor and celebrate the resilience of the Issei and Nisei generations and bring awareness to the activism and unique experiences of Nikkei

in the U.S.

Info: To join the event and for more information, visit www.minidokapilgrimage.org.

Tule Lake Pilgrimage

July 31

Virtual Event

Price: Free

In keeping with this year's theme, "Incarceration — Injustice — Protest — Resistance: Then and Now," the event will explore Tule Lake's unique status as the only one of the 10 WRA concentration camps that was converted into a maximum-security Segregation Center. More than 12,000 Japanese American activists were punished with segregation, with thousands stripped of U.S. citizenship to enable their deportation, all because they spoke out against the injustice of their incarceration. The pilgrimage will also include a memorial tribute to Tule Lake's beloved poet laureate Hiroshi Kashiwagi. More details and information about the event will follow.

Info: Visit www.tulelake.org.

NCWNP

'Not Yo Butterfly' Book Launch

Berkeley, CA

June 26; 3 p.m. PDT

Virtual Event

Price: Free

Eastwind Books of Berkeley, J-SEI and UCB's Asian American Asian Diaspora Department present a book launch celebration of Nobuko Miyamoto's "Not Yo Butterfly," a mold-breaking memoir of Asian American identity, political activism, community and purpose. This intimate life story of Miyamoto — artist, activist and mother — shows how she has embraced her identity to create a blueprint for empathy through community art. **Info: To RSVP, visit notyobutterfly.eventbrite.com. To purchase a book, visit www.asiabookcenter.com.**

Taiko Drumming Workshop

San Jose, CA

July 17; 3-5 p.m.

Historic Hoover Theatre

1635 Park Ave.

Price: \$80 Per Drum Station (Up to Three People)

Playful People Productions is offering a fun and energizing in-person workshop taught by the South Bay Beat Institute for children over 12 and adults. This two-hour experience will be taught by Rome Hamner and Kristy Oshiro and will include a professional performance by SSBI artists. The workshop is limited to

12 drum stations. The workshop includes masks as needed, hand sanitizer, water and clean, socially distanced drum stations for the workshop.

Info: Visit <https://playfulpeople.org> or call (408) 878-5362.

PSW

Tuna Canyon Marketplace Virtual Shopping Experience Thru June 22

Help support the Tuna Canyon Detention Station through this virtual shopping experience that features numerous vendors and hundreds of handcrafted items including jewelry, greeting cards, household goods, pet items, stickers, food, face masks, unique gift items, artwork, anime and various accessories, with 10 percent of proceeds benefiting the Tuna Canyon. Help support this historical location and shop from amazing local artisans as well.

Info: Visit www.tunacanyonmarketplace.com; for questions, email tunacanyonmarketplace@gmail.com.

Welcome Back to JANM!

Los Angeles, CA

Japanese American National Museum

100 N. Central Ave.

11 a.m.-5 p.m. PDT Friday, Saturday and Sunday only; closed Mon.-Thurs.

Price: Timed, advanced tickets are required. No walk-in visitors. Admission is accepted up to 30 minutes after ticket time. No ticket refunds. Please contact JANM to rebook a new time.

JANM has reopened! Reserve admission tickets to visit the museum once again. Current exhibits include "Under a Mushroom Cloud," which commemorates the 75th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; "Common Ground: The Heart of Community," which chronicles 130 years of Japanese American history.

Info: Visit www.janm.org.

USC Pacific Asia Museum

Reopening

Pasadena, CA

46 N. Los Robles Ave.

Price: Pay What You Wish Thru June 6; Free Admission to Frontline Workers Thru Memorial Day Weekend

After a year of closure, the USC Pacific Asia Museum is excited to announce its reopening! Reservations can be made on USC PAM's website. All visitors must purchase or reserve advanced timed entry tickets online. On-

site ticket purchases will not be available. Incredible programming will be offered in celebration of AAPI Heritage Month as well as continued Zoom workshops and online programming.

Info: Visit <https://pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu>.

PNW

Oregon Japanese American WWII Veterans' Stamp Dedication Oregon

June 14; 5:30 p.m.

Virtual Event

Price: Free

Join the Oregon Nisei Veterans, Mary Yamaguchi Fund, The Oregon Historical Society, Portland JACL and the Japanese American Museum of Oregon at this virtual dedication event that will unveil the U.S. Postal Service stamp honoring Nisei veterans of World War II. The program will include former Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski as honorary chair. Tributes will also include four generations of Japanese Americans and feature vignettes of Oregon Nisei military service portrayed by Oregon Asian Americans.

Info: Visit vimeo.com/543729988.

'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

Glenn Kaino: 'In the Light of a Shadow'

Thru Sept. 4

MASS MoCA

87 Marshall St.

"In the Light of a Shadow" is inspired by the connection between two protests — the tragic events known as "Bloody Sunday" from Selma, Ala., and Derry, Northern Ireland. The installation provides an immersion experience of moving shadows and evocative

soundscape and spans the entire football-field size of the Building 5 gallery. Kaino is known for previous exhibits at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, the Andy Warhol Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego, among others.

Info: Visit <https://www.wbur.org/artery/2021/04/02/mass-moca-glenn-kaino-in-light-of-shadow>.

'The View From MemChurch' by Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro Huntington Theatre Company Audio Theatre

This short audio play by NE JACL member Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro is featured in the Huntington Theatre Company's "Dream Boston" series. Alfaro's play is set in Harvard Yard as two friends from the class of 1960 reunite on Commencement Day on May 25, 2023. The cast includes Emily Kuroda, Alberto Isaac and Calley Chase.

Info: To listen to the play, visit <https://www.huntingtontheatre.org> and click on the "Dream Boston" icon.

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In MEMORIAM

Honkawa, Yukinori, 98, Los Angeles, CA, Jan. 11; survived by son, Tom (Suzanne Iwamura) Honkawa; brother, Yoshiharu (May) Honkawa; also survived by many nieces, nephews and relatives.

Kizuka, Fujiko, 97, Los Angeles, CA Jan. 3; she was predeceased

by her husband, Dick Kizuka; and son, Terry Kizuka; she is survived by her son, Gary Kizuka; she is also survived by other relatives.

Kobayashi, Kendal, 20, Corvallis, OR, April 5.

Kobayashi, Ruth Chizuko, 92,

Torrance, CA, Feb. 10; she was predeceased by her husband, George Hiroshi Kobayashi; she is survived by her children, Dani, J. D. and Kipp; daughter-in-law, Marta; gc: 2.

Kobayashi, Yumi, 69, Hillsborough, CA, April 5.

Kubota, Miyeko, 98, Fresno, CA, Jan. 6; during WWII, she was incarcerated at the Heart Mountain WRA Center in WY; she was predeceased by her husband, James Kubota; and sisters, Shizue Horiuchi and Delmar Gotanda; she is survived by her children, Russell, Debbie, Marshall and Barton; gc: 8; ggc: 6.

Kubota, Lawrence Yukio, 80, Garden Grove, CA, Feb. 21; he is survived by his sister, Dianne Hamano and her family; he is also survived by many relatives.

Kuge, Melba, 82, Torrance, CA Jan. 17; and **Kuge, Vernon Kingo, 86**, Torrance, CA, Feb. 23; they are survived by their children, Kenneth Gregory Kuge and Carole Lynn (Derek Masato) Kawamura; gc: 3.

Kurihara, Kei, 86, Los Angeles, CA, Dec. 22, 2020; an Air Force veteran; he was predeceased by his wife, Hatsue; he is survived by his sons, Clifford Kurihara and Dale Kurihara; siblings, Frank Kurihara and Shirley Harada; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

Kurihara, Patrick, 71, Orosi, CA, Nov. 9, 2020; he is survived by his wife, Pattie Kurihara; sons, Jason, Tom and Michael; sister, Ellen Laines (Donald); and 2 nephews.

Kuwata, Patsy, 86, Torrance, CA, Jan. 6; she was predeceased by her husband, Frank Kuwata; son, Dean Kuwata; and sister, June Shishido; she is survived by her son, Kevin Kuwata; siblings, James Akiyama, Carol Akiyama and Amy Sagawa; she is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

Miyamura, Masaru, 85, Patterson, CA, Nov. 21, 2020; he is survived by his wife, Aurora; children, Rudy, Michael, Martha (Jerry), Nancy (Lorin) and Laura (Steven); sister,

Hideko Murakami; sisters-in-law, Sally and Saeko; gc: 9 ggc: 10.

Morita, Fusako, 94, Gardena, CA, Dec. 25, 2020; she is survived by her children, Ann Shima (Mike) and Barry Morita (Diane); gc: 4.

Morita, Hatsumi, 93, Los Angeles, CA, Dec. 19, 2020; she was predeceased by her husband, Katsuto Tom Morita, daughter, Margaret Haruye Abo, and son, Ken Kenji Morita; she is survived by her children, Don Shigeru (Linda) Morita and Barbara Michiko (Ken) Masuyama; she is also survived by many gc and ggc and nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Nishiyama, Mary T., 92, Denver, CO, Dec. 4, 2020; she was predeceased by her husband, Massey Nishiyama; and siblings, Ken and Fumi; she is survived by her daughter, Julie Cleary (Andy); siblings, Dr. Harry Hatasaka (Sadako), Lorena Kawamura, Sam (Pat) Hatasaka, Stanley Hatasaka and Sharon Hatasaka; gc: 2; ggc: 1.

Nishiyama, Soichiro 'Swiss,' 90, Pasadena, CA, Jan. 17; he was predeceased by his wife, Elizabeth "Bette" Nishiyama; he is survived by his children, Kirk Nishiyama (JoAnne) and Michele Nishiyama Esbenshade (Andrew); gc: 4.

Nomura, Florence, 99, Sierra Madre, CA, Jan. 11; she was predeceased by her husband, Sho; and son, Robert; she is survived by her children, Ann, Nancy, Lynn and Tim; gc: 5; ggc: 3.

Oyama, Mieko, 94, Montebello, CA, Jan. 4; she is survived by her husband, William; children, Joy (Paul) Middo and Ken (Vanessa) Oyama; brother, James (Yuri) Segawa; gc: 5.

Suzuki, Terry, 71, Dallas, GA, Dec. 6, 2020.

Yamamoto, Lawrence Toshimichi, 91, San Francisco, CA, March 18; during WWII, he was incarcerated at the Gila River WRA Center in AZ; he was predeceased by his son, Kenichi Yamamoto; Leo Yamamoto; he is survived by his wife, Judith; daughters, Omi and Ruth; siblings, Chitose (Chibi) Yasumoto

and and Stanley Yamamoto; gc: 1.

Yamamoto, Sueko, 91, Las Vegas, NV, March 14; she was predeceased by her husband, Milton Yukio Yamamoto; and son, Milton Yukio Yamamoto Jr.; she is survived by her children, Lani Donnelly, Mona Kato and Randy Yamamoto; gc: 8; ggc: 6.

Yamane, Felipa, 92, San Diego, CA, March 19; she is survived by her husband, Bernabe J. Yamane; children, Joseph Yamane, Jesus Yamane, Renato Yamane, Antonio Yamane and Grace Yamane.

Yamashita, Hisaye Judy, 82, Visalia, CA, Feb. 27; during WWII, she was incarcerated at the Poston WRA Center in AZ; she was predeceased by her sisters, Suzuko Sue Matsuda, Setsuko Betty Hasebe, Shizue Susie Yamashita and Katsuko Nancy Yamashita; she is survived by her siblings, Aiko Hasebe, Seiji Yamashita and June Yasuda.

Yamazaki, James, 104, White Salmon, WA, March 5; Army veteran, WWII, battalion surgeon for the 590th Artillery Battalion in the 106th Infantry Division who was captured at Battle of the Bulge, marched and bombed while transported in trains, hundreds of miles, to POW camps; he was predeceased by his wife, Aki (Hirashiki) Yamazaki; son, Noel; grandson, Masami; he is survived by his children, Paul (Sara), Katharine and Caroline (Brad) Roberts; gc: 5; ggc: 7. ■

TRIBUTE

RONALD KATSUYAMA



Ronald Katsuyama, 76, a lifelong member of JACL and former National Board member passed away March 2. With a "gambaru" spirit, he fought bravely for several months at Stanford Hospital against a sudden, aggressive lymphoma and was with his wife, Jane, and family at the end.

Ron valued the many friendships he made during his decades with the JACL. As president of the JACL chapter in Dayton, Ohio, he enjoyed planning gatherings and events to

bring the Japanese American community together. He also served as the Midwest governor (2007) and as JACL National Board VP of Public Affairs (2010).

During WWII, Ron, his parents (Harry and Alyce) and brother, Allen, were incarcerated at the U.S. government's WRA center in Minidoka, Idaho. Ron grew up in San Francisco, where he discovered a lifelong love for camping and basketball as a member of the Japanese American Boy Scouts Troop 12 and Japantown basketball league. He graduated from Washington High School and UC Berkeley before earning a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. Ron was honored as a professor emeritus of psychology at the University of Dayton in 2017 when he retired after 44 years of research in child psychology and social justice issues.

In Ohio, Ron was always working to build bridges and uplift the voices of AAPI communities.

He co-founded the Dayton Asian American Council and Ohio Asian American Health Coalition. He also served on the Ohio Governor's Asian Pacific Islander Advisory Committee for Govs. Strickland, Kasich and DeWine. In the arts, he served as a board member of the Victoria Theater Association and the Human Race Theatre, where he worked to bring George Takei to Dayton to perform the musical "Pacific Overtures." Ron also served as a Japanese American National Museum governor.

Ron found joy in running, completing the Columbus, New York and San Francisco marathons, always training to run the next one a little faster.

He is survived by his wife, Jane, children Sean (Hyunju) and Jana (Tito), grandchild Tatsuo, niece Kathy Brodowy (Bret) and many relatives. A celebration of Ron's life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that remembrances be made to the National JACL designated for the "Ron Katsuyama Memorial Fund" <https://jacl.org/donate>.



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Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$20/ column inch.

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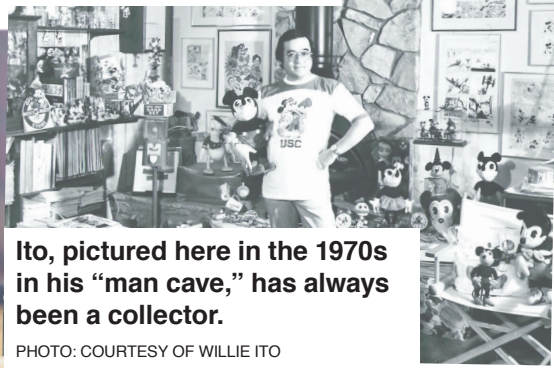
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Gerald Fukui
President

PROJECT » continued from page 7

The Dopey bank, which Ito was forced to leave behind during World War II, is his most-prized possession.

PHOTOS: LYNDA LIN GRIGSBY



Ito, pictured here in the 1970s in his "man cave," has always been a collector.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF WILLIE ITO

Ito received the Annie Awards' Winsor McCay Award April 16 for his contributions to the animation industry. The golden award is heavier than it looks.



cave. The stuff was more expansive then, covering walls, tables and the floor.

He's been a collector all his life. The very first piece he acquired was a coin bank shaped like Dopey, one of the dwarves from the 1937 Disney animated "Snow White" movie that famously inspired young Ito to become a cartoonist. He got the bank when

he was 5 years old. It's yellow and unimpressive compared to other pieces in his collection, but it is Ito's most-prized possession.

At 8, he was forced to leave the Dopey bank behind when his family was forcibly removed from their San Francisco home and incarcerated at Topaz. Japanese Americans were instructed to only bring what they could carry, so a coin bank could not

be justified as an essential item, no matter the sentimental value.

During the war, a family friend took care of their house, said Ito. When his family returned to San Francisco, Ito ran to his room. There was his bank, right where he left it on top of his dresser. Considering that at one time in his life everything was taken away, it makes sense that Ito now likes to surround himself with things he loves.

Today, the bank sits among other collectibles and tchotchkes near him when he attends virtual production meetings. His oldest collectible sits next to his newest, a golden lifetime achievement trophy from the Annie Awards, the Oscars of the animation industry, which he received on April 16.

Adults need an excuse to become a kid again, and in cartoons, Ito gets to keep the perspective of an 8-year-old. He and Yabu were children during WWII, collateral of wartime hysteria.

Kids process big, scary life events differently than adults. Maybe they break them down to focus on joy over trauma. In that way, it's easy to see why Maggie, the cute black bird with the expressive face, has become iconic to Yabu and Ito and the Japanese American community.

It's also easy to see why Ito continues hustling well into his retirement. Looking at him today with his ubiquitous Mickey Mouse attire, it's easy to see the little boy who, inspired by animation magic, doodled from behind barbed wire in the margins of Sears catalogues to copy the lines and curves of the Disney characters he loved.

He's still that little kid, except this time, he is trying to create his own characters and tell his own story.

To sign up for "Hello Maggie!" fundraising news, send an email with your name and mailing address to hellomaggielfilm@yahoo.com.

AARP

Fully Vaccinated?

What the CDC Says You Should and Shouldn't Do Now



How do I know if I am fully vaccinated?

A person is fully vaccinated two weeks after you have received the second dose of the two-shot Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna

COVID-19 vaccine or a single dose of the one-shot Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.



New recommendations for fully vaccinated



It is acceptable for fully vaccinated individuals to visit your children, grandchildren or friends within a single household who are at low risk for a severe case of coronavirus without wearing a mask or needing to social distance.

Fully vaccinated individuals may also visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without masking or social distancing. Quarantining or getting tested after contact with someone who has COVID-19 is not necessary, as long as no symptoms are exhibited.

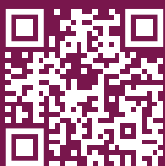
What should I do after being fully vaccinated?



Do continue precautions that have been in place during most of the pandemic. When fully vaccinated people are visiting unvaccinated people from more than one household and/or are around people who are at high risk of getting severely ill from COVID-19, they should:

- Wear a well-fitted mask
- Stay at least 6 feet from people they do not live with
- Get tested if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms
- Follow guidance issued by individual employers

Learn more about COVID-19 vaccination at aarp.org/vaccineinfo



Scan here to download free COVID-19 vaccine handbook