Among other efforts, Steve Nagano started an online petition to rename Los Angeles’ Fletcher Bowron Square.

PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN

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SAYONARA, FLETCHER BOWRON SQUARE?

For many, memorial to a former L.A. mayor is an affront.

» PAGE 4

San Francisco Japantown Landmark to Remain a Hotel.

» PAGE 9

USC to Formally Apologize to Nisei Students.
Dear Editor,

I appreciate the Pacific Citizen article (P.C.’s Oct. 8-21, 2021, issue, “Topaz Museum Hits a Rocky Patch”) for bringing attention to the Wakasa murder and (literal) cover-up. My urgent concern is regarding the proper care and conservation of the stone monument itself and the unvarnished truth about James Hatsuaki Wakasa’s murder, the government cover-up and the most miraculous discovery of the stone due to the research Nancy Ukai did in the National Archives. She found the map, and the two archeologists, on their own, went and spotted the stone, just barely showing above the ground.

It could have been covered up with dirt to hide it from vandalism and then excavated properly. It’s too late for a proper excavation, but now — is it being properly conserved? There are photos showing the stone outside in a courtyard, just having been rained on. It is now snowing in Utah, where the harsh winters are notorious in Topaz legend — snow and way-below-freezing winters. Moisture can get into the stone, then freeze, after which the stone cracks where the water entered.

In her own words, Jane (Beech- with) has gone on from being an avid collector to heading a museum. And heading a museum is not what she is trained to do. This important artifact in Japanese American history deserves to be in a location where it will be held in a place of honor and where it can be used as an instrument of education and enlightenment, like the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. I have not spoken to anyone there, but they are about to reinstall the exhibitions, and the stone monument could be given a place of honor. The Topaz Museum could graciously donate the Wakasa Stone, and the Takahashi Foundation would pay for its safe transportation.

The memorial stone is a major discovery, a story that exemplifies the daily threat of death that our families lived under. Generation-al trauma and stress comes from this kind of story that our families tried to protect us from by silently grieving to themselves. Now, the stories can be told.

So, for me, my interest is in the history and the legacy and the memorial stone itself and the preservation of the Topaz site, going forward. History is written by the victors. I want Japanese Americans to write the history of Japanese Americans. Please tell your readers to keep a look out at the Wakanamemorial.org website and Facebook and Instagram pages for the most up-to-date information.

With respect,
Masako Takahashi, Topaz Survivor

———

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

PACIFIC CITIZEN 2021 SPRING CAMPAIGN

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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.

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**IT’S ALWAYS BEEN ‘A MATTER OF TRUST’**

*By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director*

This past week, my child’s school exploded with the news that the school would go virtual for the week after Thanksgiving to accommodate families that planned to travel out of the area for the holiday. In the absence of a Covid vaccine for children under 12, all children at the elementary school must quarantine for one week after traveling outside the D.C., Maryland or Virginia area.

I’ll be honest, this policy has resulted in some stretching of the definitions of travel in the region for our family, even as we made last spring break a trip to a rather chilly Ocean City, Md., and this past Indigenous People’s Day weekend to Cape Charles, Va.

Both locations, while still in the allowable travel zone to avoid quarantine, are but just a few miles different, in one case even a shorter distance, and we could have found ourselves in Delaware or North Carolina, respectively, and needing to quarantine upon return.

Nevertheless, we adhered to the policy, including quarantining at the beginning of the year due to a previously planned vacation to the North Carolina beach, where the children were effectively still quarantined.

Among the reasons for deciding to go all virtual for the week following the Thanksgiving weekend was the concern that some families might travel and decide to simply not follow quarantine policies. That we have come to the point of our school assuming parents will lie to avoid the policy is telling of where we are as a society in 2021.

For the past five-plus years, we have had a now-former president who has not hesitated to make lying, the one institution we count on for the truth. That same president himself made 30,573 false or misleading statements during his four years of presidency, not even including statements made before or after as tracked by the Washington Post’s fact-checker team led by Glenn Kessler.

It is no wonder that President Trump endeavored so hard to discredit the press, whose responsibility it is to keep lies from public officials and corporations in check. Moreover, wealthier Americans accountable for his greatest lie — that the election was stolen as an incitement to treason — fell short of the Senate votes needed for conviction. And this brings us to the reason why society has deteriorated to the point where lies, whether conspiracy theory or consequence has become normalized.

There are no consequences to telling the lie. FOX News’ ratings have blossomed with its nonjournalists feeding the American public a series of lies. The former president has seemingly escaped any punishment for his obvious misstatements and untruths, the euphemistic words the press likes to use since they cannot ultimately divine the president’s intent when he makes these statements, I think we can confidently hold them lies.

It seems there is no longer any effort to actually challenge and mete out consequences for lies, but tacit acceptance that it will happen and how we do proceed around that one fact that does seem to be true for everyone. It is sad when the only truth is that we can expect others to lie, and it has now permeated to the levels of our children’s schools. I think back to the True-False tests I took in elementary school. And further disheartening, the 2021 election was marked by Truth. Opinion on other tests. Instead, our schools are now also the battlegrounds of what can be taught.

School boards are being assailed for promoting the instruction of diverse interpretations of our nation’s history. Without the sanitized versions that many of us learned 20 or more years ago. For some, this might mean not teaching about the Japanese American incarceration during World War II as a mistake made by our government, but as a military necessity, despite all other facts indicating otherwise. Ultimately, it is most important for them that our country not be seen in a negative light.

Our schools are our greatest defense against this counterculture of lies. We need to promote their ability to teach the truth to our children and ensure they provide the tools for our children to discern fact from fiction.

We also need to return to accountability. There needs to be consequences for lying and doing wrong, whether it is the former president and the Big Lie about the election, or it is for parents sending their children to school in violation of quarantine policies.

We can’t continue to adjust society to accommodate the lies, or else the proliferation of lying will eventually tear apart the very fabric of our society.

**Title Credit: Billy Joel’s song “A Matter of Trust.”**

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

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**LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY’S PERSPECTIVE**

**TAKE FROM THE RICH, GIVE TO THE POOR**

*By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.*

As an economics major at UCLA, I learned that Democrats support a Keynesian economic theory, which says that the government should spend its way out of a recession. Therefore, Democrats gear their economic policies to benefit low-income and middle-income families. They argue that reducing income inequality is the best way to foster economic growth. Low-income families are more likely to spend any extra money on necessities instead of saving or investing it. That directly increases demand and spurs economic growth.

One dollar spent on increased food stamp benefits generates $1.73 in economic output (source: Moody’s Economy.com).

On the other hand, Republicans promote supply-side economics. That theory says reducing costs for business, trade and investment is the best way to increase growth. Investors buy more companies or stocks. Banks increase business lending. Owners invest in their operations and hire workers. These workers spend their wages, driving both demand and economic growth.

Republicans advocate that taxes on businesses and the wealthy in society should be reduced, allowing them to hire more workers, in turn increasing demand and growth. These policies should enable wealthy owners to create more jobs for middle- and lower-class citizens, meaning the benefits are felt by everyone, e.g., benefits will “trickle down” to Joe the Plumber.

Which is better? I don’t know, especially since the pandemic has shut down many businesses all over the country. What I do know is that typically, in the wake of a presidential election, the question is not if there will be tax reform, but when and to what degree. Historically, new administrations, regardless of party affiliation, propose tax policy changes for Congress to enact.

President Joe Biden is no exception. The House Ways and Means Committee recently released its proposed “2021 Tax Reform” legislation. Democrats will be trying to push a $3.5 trillion bill through Congress. The Democrats have an agenda to invest in education, green energy, health care and social services for the elderly and poor and expand childcare services.

President Biden has recently announced the donation of 500 million Pfizer vaccine doses to lower-income countries. According to the Washington Post, Pfizer is selling doses to the U.S. at a “not-for-profit” price, though the price was not specified. (Although I found the cost on France24.com, $3.5 billion.)

To pay for a historic and sweeping expansion of the social safety net, Biden and Democrats are planning to slap wealthy Americans with higher taxes. Biden’s tax plan would take from the rich and give to the poor. Federal income taxes would take from the rich and give to the poor. Federal income taxes would increase for high-income households, while middle- and lower-income households would see tax cuts. The other option is to gift large amounts to the rich.

Another way to report a lower taxable income next year would be to delay some of your charitable giving — and the deductions they earn you — until 2022. “Charitable income tax deductions are more valuable in a higher income tax rate environment,” he added.

Although Biden originally called for raising the capital gains rate to 39.6 percent, advisers say many clients are breathing a sigh of relief at the latest proposals — capital gains rates, which apply to the sale of assets like stocks and real estate, to 25 percent from 20 percent.

Although, wealthier individuals are limited in how much they can contribute to 401(k)s, 529 plans, or IRA accounts. Overall, plan to gift exemption amounts to the receiver. The other option is to use an irrevocable trust. With some trusts, you also give up power over the assets — and therefore the estate taxes you would have paid, but you may still be able to set some controls on how the funds are distributed.

In conclusion, if you’re a taxpayer who is wealthy enough to do so, you should consider giving whatever you have left of that exemption before the effective date of the new tax. This requires identifying what assets you would gift, who you would gift them to and whether it makes sense to set up trusts for those recipients until they reach age 25. It would be a good idea to consult your tax attorney or CPA as soon as possible.

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) 349-2995 or judd@elcwilshire.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

OKAERI 2021 CONFERENCE

By Marsha Aizumi

On Nov. 12-14, Okaeri will present its fourth biennial conference for our Nikkei LGBTQ+ community, their families and allies. This conference will be a once-in-a-lifetime event, since we are doing a virtual format, which allows people from all over the United States and Asia to connect without having to pay for travel and accommodations. You can just push a button to log on within the comfort of your home. Okaeri 2021 focuses on the Japanese and Japanese American community, but all are welcome to join.

A past attendee, Rino Kodama, shared this reflection: “I was stunned by the intergenerational, interfait, Nikkei LGBTQIA+ community that has gathered from across the country to attend Okaeri 2018. At the time, I was 20 years old, had just joined Taste the Rainbow, a queer and trans dance team at UCLA and was transitioning to using they/them pronouns. “The idea of even beginning to find the language (in Japanese) to talk to my parents about my queerness seemed terrifying at the time, but I felt comforted knowing there is a community like Okaeri to fall on when I was ready. “Since attending three years ago, I have found webs of chosen families, from mentors to older siblings to new friends that I could continue growing with and find mutual support in. I feel so wonderfully lucky to be a part of this community and am deeply grateful for every speaker, attendee, volunteers and organizers for making Okaeri the unique sanctuary that it is.”

I was talking with another past attendee who said, “When I walked into Okaeri 2018, it was magical.” I believe the magic comes from those who attend and are looking for a space to connect, feel seen and valued. I believe the magic also comes from the people who organize this event and bring a wish to truly give with a heart of love. It is over one year of hard work and heart investment, but in the end, it has been worth every moment to hear the wonderful comments about no longer feeling alone and knowing that they have a place to belong, not only in the LGBTQ+ community, but the Nikkei community as well.

Okaeri 2021 will have a diverse list of 23 workshops, including topics related to:

- Mental Health
- Family Acceptance (One in English and one in Japanese)
- Processing Trauma (a workshop for only LGBTQ+ individuals)
- A Diverse Panel of LGBTQ+ (For Japanese-speaking individuals)
- Queer Artists
- Transgender Legal
- Being “Out” in the Workplace (LGBTQ+ only)
- Intersectionality
- Creating Inclusion in Faith Spaces

And we will also have over 10 affinity groups, which are informal groups where you can talk about various issues with people who have similar identities.

LGBTQ+
- Adoptees
- Buddhists
- Parents/
- Christians
- Families

On Nov. 12, we will open our conference with a speed meetup. We hope that you will get to know new people and throughout the conference you will make deeper connections.

On Nov. 13, our conference begins with a plenary panel of four individuals, including Jen Ruggirello, Mariko Rooks, Janet Urmez-Rocks, and Keisuke Lee-Miyaki, talking about “Owning Our Story, Finding Our Light.”

The panel will be moderated by Mia Barnett.

And on Nov. 14, our special guest will be Gia Gunn from “Ru Paul’s Drag Race,” who will not only be sharing her story, but also is creating a special performance for Okaeri.

You can check out ALL of the workshops and meetups at our conference website: https://pheedloop.com/okaeri/site/home.

It is our hope that all who attend will feel and see LOVE, HOPE and COURAGE, which are the core values of Okaeri. And when you leave, it is our greatest hope that you will feel CELEBRATED, RESPECTED

AND EMBRACED.

Okaeri means “welcome home” in Japanese. Please join us… Okaeri!!!!

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

Love, hope and courage are core values of Okaeri.
PANDEMIC CUISINE — ODD PAIRINGS, OLD FAVORITES ON THE MENU

Americans are more willing than ever before to try new foods and broaden their tastebuds. Natto anyone?

By Associated Press

NEW YORK — Whether it’s kimchi, beets or broccoli, the pandemic has had a strange impact on food cravings that goes beyond the joy of comfort eating.

Nearly a year into isolation, many people are embracing foods long forgotten or rejected for taste, texture or smell. Some have forced themselves to re-evaluate health-focused foods to help boost their immune systems. And with home cooking at a high, there’s a new adventurousness in the kitchen.

For Maeri Ferguson, 31, in Brooklyn, it’s all about pears.

After recovering from Covid-19, she spent months without normal taste and smell. So many foods she loved just didn’t satisfy. Now, Ferguson can again sense sweetness, saltiness and spiciness, but most foods lack nuance in flavor. Not pears.

“My whole life I always passed on pears. Not because I didn’t like them. They just intimidated me,” Ferguson said.

During the pandemic, a friend gave her a handy slicer as a gift and she pushed herself to figure out how to cut a good pear. It was one of the first foods she could truly taste. “I’m a full convert,” Ferguson said.

“I’ll never forget biting into a juicy red pair and finally tasting that sweet flavor and just the faintest tartness. It was a profound experience, and one that made me treasure a food I used to only tolerate.”

While Ferguson may not have pear sales soaring, a big pandemic winner is fermented foods.

Suddenly, interest in making kimchi, miso and sauerkraut has rocketed. Kombucha was already a trend and helped popularize home fermenting.

“Health became the priority No. 1 for many last year,” said Anastasia Sharova, a chef in Stuttgart, Germany, who runs Happybellyfish.com, an online cooking school focused on healthy food. “Second, everyone got extra time at home, so it was finally possible to try out new things in the kitchen that require time. Third, food fermentation is perceived as a hobby on its own and it’s a great community activity, even if your community is on Zoom or just within your own family.”

Anne Alderete is enjoying something she never thought she would: natto. Made of fermented soy beans, natto is popular in Japan but considered too slimy and stinky for some.

“I’ve smelled it many times since I’m half Japanese and lived in Tokyo after college for seven years,” said the 47-year-old Alderete in Los Angeles. “I long wanted to understand the magic I was just not tasting. I was reminded of dirty old socks.”

Now, she devours store-bought natto nearly every week. Among her favorite ways to eat it is spread on a thick slice of toast topped with cheese and melted in the broiler.

“I feel somewhat virtuous when I eat natto because the health benefits are many, but it’s also because it’s brought me closer to my roots,” Alderete said.

The long shelf life of many fermented foods is another draw.

While health concerns and comfort foods have played a role, one expert thinks that changes in the way we eat also come from having more time at home to digest an onslaught of news about nutrition and the food chain.

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SAYONARA, FLETCHER BOWRON SQUARE?

For Steve Nagano, memorial to an L.A. mayor is an affront.

By George Toshio Johnston, P.C. Senior Editor, Digital and Social Media


But who among the preceding individuals feted by having a landmark named in their honor said the following?

- “Japanese can never be Americans in the true sense.”
- “We are worried about the problem of divided loyalty on the part of many American-born Japanese.”
- “They are race apart. The accident of birth should not make Japanese born on American soil of parents, who are alien in legal effect and at heart, citizens of the United States.”
- “I advocate the securing of land by the federal government in locations removed at least several hundred miles from the coast . . . where they may be put to work.”
- “When the war is over, it is hoped that we will not have again a large concentration of the Japanese population in Los Angeles. By that time, some legal methods may be worked out to deprive the native-born Japanese of citizenship.”

Full disclosure: That was a trick question. None among those listed is known to have said anything of the sort. Those words were actually spoken after the United States declared war on Japan, following its attack on Pearl Harbor, by someone whose 1938–53 tenure as mayor of Los Angeles is the second-longest in the city’s history.

Within a short walk of City Hall — and Little Tokyo — is a site that is named for him: Fletcher Bowron Square.

Little Tokyo resident Steve Nagano is leading a campaign to rename it.

Fletcher Bowron Square occupies most of one city block in downtown Los Angeles, bordered by W. Aliso and W. Temple streets to the north and south, respectively, and N. Main and Los Angeles streets to the west and east, respectively.

Although a bit rundown and in need of a renovation, FBS can actually offer a bit of renovation, FBS can actually offer a bit of

More than 20 years into the new millennium, there have been two trends that arose side by side.

One is the cultural shift that resulted in the reassessment of those aforementioned eponymous sites for some people from yesteryear whose views and actions are now viewed askance by today’s standards.

Perhaps they owned other humans as chattel. Maybe they espoused discredited theories like eugenics or advocated White supremacy or fascism. In some cases, they were military and political leaders who committed treasonous acts.

These reassessments have, in some cases, led to the removal of statues of these figures or the renaming of schools, buildings and other sites upon further reflection and from a 21st-century perspective.

The second trend is people getting tripped and trapped in emails and tweets when their own words are deemed racist, sexist, nationalist, ageist, ableist (all of the “ists”) — or just seen as plumb mad dog mean-spirited. These have led to job loss, cancelation, banishment and shunning.

In the case of the second trend, however, the only thing new is the medium. The penultimate POTUS used Twitter as his bully pulpit to bypass media gatekeepers and communicate directly with his followers.

In Mayor Fletcher Bowron’s era, he did the same thing, but the medium was radio; those quotes of his came from transcribed addresses broadcast on radio station KECA.

Sometimes, the two trend lines intersect. For Fletcher Bowron and his square, this is one of those times.

According to Steve Nagano, 72, his interest in renaming Fletcher Bowron Square began about three years ago when a friend showed him a decades-old front-page article from the Los Angeles Times that reported Mayor Bowron didn’t want Japanese people returning to the city after the war ended.

“I didn’t think very much of it,” Nagano, a retired public school teacher, told the Pacific Citizen. “But that was a time when African Americans were talking about, you know, renaming things. So, flippantly I said, ‘Yeah, we got to rename that,’ you know. And then I started looking into him.”

Nagano was appalled enough by what he found about Bowron’s words to start an online petition to rename Fletcher Bowron Square; produce a video he put on YouTube that utilized an actor reading excerpts from Bowron’s transcribed radio addresses; and, send a letter to L.A.’s current mayor, Eric Garcetti, that urged him to “begin the process to rename the square, a name that would be representative of the history of the location and the multicultural makeup of the city of Los Angeles.”

Nagano further articulated his reasons for renaming FBS in a 2020 article he wrote for East West ezine: “Our imprisonment during WWII, stems from the same systems that rationalized stealing the land from and committing genocide (ethnic cleansing) against the indigenous people and instituting a system of enslavement, which to many, continues today. It is from the same system that took property from our Issei, shattered dreams of our Nisei, stripped many of their dignity, aspirations and self-respect, and continues to plague our community today.”

Steve Nagano displays a replica of a 1942 sign instructing persons of Japanese ancestry where to congregate for removal.
On the topic of history, Nagano told the P.C., “I don’t consider myself a historian, but I love history. And I don’t think we should erase it. And I have the faith in the people that they know enough to discern what is correct or proper.”

Meantime, Abraham Z. Hoffman, 83, who is a historian, shares some traits with Nagano. Both are educators, with Hoffman, who still teaches at Los Angeles Valley College, holding the title of adjunct assistant professor of history. He is also the author of a 2010 article titled “The Experience of a Public Official: Los Angeles Mayor Fletcher Bowron and Japanese Removal,” which appeared in *Southern California Quarterly*.

Like Nagano, Hoffman was born in the L.A. neighborhood of Boyle Heights. On the removal of statues of Confederate “heroes,” he and Nagano are in accord. “I think that in some cases, pulling down statues of Confederates is . . . a good idea — but I don’t want them destroyed. I think they should be put in a museum where their very existence is put into a historical context,” he told the *Pacific Citizen*.

On whether Fletcher Bowron’s name should be removed from Fletcher Bowron Square, however, he disagrees with Nagano. By doing that, “you’re erasing all of the good things he did,” asserted Hoffman, who pointed out that “when he was elected in 1938, it was on a reform platform because the previous mayor was corrupt.”

The administration of Bowron’s predecessor, Frank Shaw, is regarded as “being the most corrupt in the city’s history,” according to the 2005 book “Los Angeles Transformed: Fletcher Bowron’s Urban Reform Revival, 1938-1953” by Tom Sitton.

In the book’s introduction, Sitton wrote: “The 1938-1953 mayoral administration of Fletcher Bowron transformed Los Angeles. Not only did the city cope with the tumultuous effects of World War II, it also experienced major changes in its political, social and economic development. The Los Angeles of today is the product of many decisions and actions occurring over many decades. But certain eras — like the Bowron years — marked a particular confluence of these factors that altered patterns and changed the course of the city.”

In spite of his alarming rhetoric aimed at ethnic Japanese, on Nov. 3, 1946, Bowron spoke at a testimonial dinner attended by 1,200 people — 500 of whom were Nisei veterans — to, according to a *Pacific Citizen* article from Nov. 9, 1946, “pay tribute to the wartime record of Americans of Japanese ancestry from Los Angeles.” (See right.)

Bowron was quoted: “I am glad indeed to make the public declaration that I have been convinced beyond all peradventure of doubt, the Nisei have been true.”

An editorial in the same issue stated: “It is an exceptional public official who will admit that he has been wrong. One such exception was New York’s former mayor, Fiorello LaGuardia, who once said: ‘When I make a mistake, it’s a beaut!’ Last week, another mayor admitted he had been wrong. He is Mayor Fletcher Bowron of Los Angeles and the mistake he made concerned his attitude toward Japanese Americans at the outset of the war.”

That Fletcher Bowron said what he said is not a matter for debate. Furthermore, his attitudes toward Japanese Americans were not at all out of the time — they were shared by many, common folk and those in positions of power and influence alike.

“As I noted in the article, he didn’t really understand much about the Japanese Americans. And a lot of what he came to believe was in wartime,” Hoffman said. “There had always been in California, since the early 1900s, a certain amount of prejudice against the Japanese, because they were they were doing too well, they were working very hard, particularly in the agricultural sector. And this aroused a certain amount of resentment.”

In Hoffman’s article, he points out that Bowron depended upon research by an administrative assistant that appear to have served as fodder for Bowron’s radio addresses.

From the article:
- “Early in January 1942, Bowron requested Alfred Cohn, his sometime administrative assistant and, at the time, a police commissioner, to produce an information memo on the Los Angeles Japanese community.”
- “Cohn’s confidential memo of January 10, 1942, consisted of an odd distillation of rumors and half-truths. According to Cohn, the Los Angeles Japanese community was ‘an unassimilable race, forbidden to intermarry with Caucasians, prevented by law from owning real property in the State of California, closely knit to their native land in every conceivable manner.’”

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VENICE-WEST L.A. JACL ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The chapter honors six students for their academic achievements and community activism.

T he Venice-West Los Angeles chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League announced its scholarship winners recently.

Max Kaito of Harbor City, Calif., and Jason Kunisaki of Culver City, Calif., were awarded the Chiyo M. Hattori Memorial Scholarship, designated to outstanding students pursuing an education in medicine.

The chapter also awarded the Jack Nomura Memorial Scholarship to four top area high school seniors, Kaila Imada, Akari Johnston, Malina Miura and Lucca Necci. The scholarship is named in honor of the late Jack Nomura, who was a longtime board member of the JACL’s West L.A. chapter.

Kaito is entering his second year at the Nova Southeastern University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He graduated with honors from UCLA in 2017 after being named 2013 class valedictorian at Gilbert High School in Arizona.

After finishing medical school, Kaito said he would like to focus his practice on mental health issues in the Japanese American community.

Kunisaki is a fifth-year student at the University of Utah School of Medicine pursuing both an MD and PhD degree. He graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in 2017 with a degree in biology — genomics and computational biology.

Kunisaki, who plans to pursue a career as a physician scientist, is co-president of the Salt Lake City JACL and led chapter efforts in administering more than 1,500 Covid and flu vaccines to Asian American seniors earlier this year.

Kaito and Kunisaki were both awarded a $2,500 scholarship.

Imada was part of the first graduating class of the Geffen Academy UCLA, a college preparatory school. The daughter of Susan Iida and Jeff Imada graduated with a 3.8 grade point average, was co-founder of the school’s Christian affinity group and participated as a singer and actress in school productions. She has also immersed herself as a parkour athlete, which involves military-style training in extreme sports and has a surgically repaired ACL to prove it. She is currently attending the University of Washington as a business major.

Johnston graduated from Culver City High School with a 3.7 grade point average and was a member of the varsity basketball team for three years. A Girl Scout, she received her Gold Award after creating a pen-pal program through the Culver City Sister City Committee and her school’s Spanish and Japanese language classes. Students practiced their reading and writing skills by sending letters to fellow students in Uruanpo, Mexico, and Kaizuka, Japan. The daughter of Allison and Ramsey Miura of Culver City is attending the University of California, Irvine, as an undeclared major.

Miura graduated from Culver City High School with a 3.7 grade point average and was a member of the varsity basketball team for three years. A Girl Scout, she received her Gold Award after creating a pen-pal program through the Culver City Sister City Committee and her school’s Spanish and Japanese language classes. Students practiced their reading and writing skills by sending letters to fellow students in Uruanpo, Mexico, and Kaizuka, Japan. The daughter of Allison and Ramsey Miura of Culver City is attending the University of California, Irvine, as an undeclared major.

Necci graduated from Santa Monica High School with a 3.9 grade point average. He was captain and a league champion for his varsity wrestling team and also was a cellist on the school orchestra for three years. And with a brown belt in karate, the son of Grace Akazawa and Michael Necci of Santa Monica has been a paid instructor to youth students of his local martial arts dojo. He is currently attending the University of California, Santa Barbara, as a political science major with plans to pursue a career in law.

For more information, contact the Venice-WLA JACL at venicewla@jcl.org or visit the chapter on Facebook.

Kaila Imada
Max Kaito
Lucca Necci
Akari Johnston
Malina Miura
Jason Kunisaki

• Possibly the most incredible thing about Cohn’s bigoted memo was the degree of seriousness with which Bowron accepted it. The mayor had little or no social contacts with the Los Angeles Japanese or Nisei . . .

For Nagano, the question of whether to rename Fletcher Bowron Square has an easy answer: Yes.

But, as Hoffman pointed out, Bowron, “when he realized he was wrong, he owned up to it” — and he apologized. That cannot be said for most of the men in power who, at the time, espoused many of the same opinions spoken by Bowron on the radio but who also were actually in a position to prosecute the eventual incarceration of thousands of ethnic Japanese people, citizen or not, far from their homes, farms and businesses along the West Coast.

And, should Nagano achieve his goal to rename Fletcher Bowron Square, what might that name be? He has a few ideas, but for now, he’s leaning toward a Tongva word — Poku’ngare xaa — which his source says means: “We are together, we are as one.”

To view Nagano’s video, visit youtube.beis_y-T3noCrLA. To sign his petition, visit tinyurl.com/p99092v3.
TOMITA CONFERRED AWARD BY L.A. CONSUL GENERAL OF JAPAN

The actress and community activist is recognized for her significant contributions to promoting friendship between the U.S. and Japan.

Tamlyn Tomita is pictured with Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles Akira Muto during her commendation ceremony. PHOTO: COURTESY OF CONSUL GENERAL OF JAPAN IN LOS ANGELES

USC SEEKING NISEI STUDENTS WHOSE EDUCATIONS WERE DISRUPTED BY WWII

The University of Southern California will apologize and confer honorary degrees to Japanese American students who were denied re-entry at USC and had their forced incarceration throughout the duration of World War II.

In an announcement by current USC President Carol L. Folt on Oct. 14, the university will recognize the descendants of the Nisei students at next year’s commencement ceremony as well as confer honorary degrees at the Asian Pacific Alumni Assn. gala in April.

USC believes there were 121 Nisei students at the institution when EO 9066 was issued. Following the conclusion of WWII, many students were denied re-entry at USC and had to restart their college educations elsewhere. Even transcripts from the university were not given to the students under then-University President Rufus B. von KleinSmid.

“Ever since my father, Shiro Tomita, co-founded the Asian Task Force in the LAPD in the late 1970s, I have learned what it means to give back and serve our Japanese American, Japanese and other communities here in Los Angeles,” Tomita told the Pacific Citizen. “As Japanese Americans, we are part of a community whose rich cultural heritage stretches back thousands of years and is proudly and joyfully shared with other Americans across our great nation.

“I am so very thankful and humbly honored in receiving this award, but I am ever so more grateful at the opening up of minds and the opening up of hearts Consul General and Mrs. Muto shared with us, my mother and my friends,” Tomita continued. “With all the titles and commendations, nationalities and identities, we were just a small group of newfound friends enjoying a magnificent kaiseki dinner prepared by Chef Mima and trying to make the world a better and brighter place for all.”

Tomita, since making her big-screen debut in the 1986 film “The Karate Kid Part II,” has appeared in more than 130 film and TV productions, in addition to focusing her energies on boosting the presence of Asian Americans in Hollywood productions and authentically representing characters’ cultural backgrounds as much as possible.

In addition, she has served as a board member of the Nisei Week Foundation, supports the San Fernando Valley Japanese American Community Center and served as master of ceremonies at numerous community events.

She is expected to continue to play an important role in the Japanese American community and advancing the Japan-U.S. relationship.

JACL Receives National Endowment for the Humanities Grant

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The National Endowment for the Humanities announced recently it would be awarding $28.4 million in grants for 239 humanities projects across the country, among them, JACL’s “Civil Liberties in Times of Crisis: The Japanese American Incarceration.”

The NEH Landmarks of American History and Culture grants support vital research, education, preservation, digital and public programs. JACL’s program for teachers and educators will take place in summer 2022.

The planned one-week program will be available for two different sessions in late June and early July and will bring educators to Los Angeles’ historic Little Tokyo community to take part in the program, including guest speakers, trips to Santa Anita Racetrack and the Manzanar National Historic Site. The program is returning after a five-year hiatus, and JACL will be opening up applications to interested attendees in January 2022.

“The grants announced today demonstrate the resilience and breadth of our nation’s humanities institutions and practitioners,” said NEH Acting Chairman Adam Wolfson. “From education programs that will enrich teaching in college and high school classrooms to multi-institutional research initiatives, these excellent projects will advance the teaching, preservation and understanding of history and culture.”

Said Carol Kawamoto, chair of the JACL’s National Education Committee: “I think for the participants, this will be a great opportunity to learn firsthand Japanese American history and personal experiences of those who lived it. They will be able to envision the hardships and the reality faced of being incarcerated as they tour Manzanar. This will allow the teachers to connect to our history and help incorporate this knowledge into the classroom with their students.”

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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

Okaeri: A Nikkei LGBTQ+ Community Conference
Nov. 12-14
Los Angeles, CA
Virtual Event
Price: $10-$25 (Scholarships Available)

‘Two Nails, One Love’ Virtual Book Talk With Alden Hayashi
Berkeley, CA
Nov. 3; 7-10 p.m.
Virtual Event
Price: Free
Berkeley JACL presents this virtual book talk with Alden Hayashi as he discusses his new book “Two Nails, One Love,” a candid, touching and relevant story about a Sansei man finding himself in modern society and in their own times.

Japanese American Museum of San Jose Winter Virtual Holiday Shopping Experience
San Jose, CA
Nov. 6-15
Virtual Event
Price: Virtual Auction
Japanese American Museum of San Jose is proud to present its inaugural Virtual Holiday Shopping Experience, a one-of-a-kind event featuring over 200 gifts from Japanese American artists and small businesses. This year, virtual shoppers can support small businesses while enjoying exclusive deals and sales.

Japanese American National Museum
Thru June 5, 2022
Los Angeles, CA
Generations: American Women Through the Generations
American Women Through the Generations
Price: Museum Admission

“Hayao Miyazaki” Inaugural Exhibit
Los Angeles, CA
Thru June 5, 2022
Academy Museum of Motion Pictures
Price: $7-$10
Info: To visit the exhibition, go to https://events.towson.edu/museum-exhibits.htm for more information.

PNW

Grace, Grit and Gamai: Japanese American Women Through the Generations
Portland, OR
Nov. 6; 10 a.m.-noon
Virtual Webinar
Price: Free
Join the Seattle JACL as it hosts a free Mixed-Race Webinar that will delve into concepts including what does it mean to tell your own story? How do you claim and celebrate all parts of who you are? Speakers for the panel event are defining personal narratives through the arts, including photography, visual art and writing. Mixed-race youth, adults and families, as well as the arts community, will benefit from this inspiring discussion about what it means to be a storyteller of your own narrative, be it on a canvas, in a book, onstage or in everyday life.

‘A Life in Pieces: The Diary and Writings of Stanley Hayami’ Virtual Event
Price: Free
Portland, OR
Nov. 9, 2022
JANM 100 N. Central Ave.
Price: Timed advanced tickets are required; JANM members do not need a ticket.
Virtual Event
Join the Seattle JACL as it hosts a free Mixed-Race Webinar that will delve into concepts including what does it mean to tell your own story? How do you claim and celebrate all parts of who you are? Speakers for the panel event are defining personal narratives through the arts, including photography, visual art and writing. Mixed-race youth, adults and families, as well as the arts community, will benefit from this inspiring discussion about what it means to be a storyteller of your own narrative, be it on a canvas, in a book, onstage or in everyday life.

MDC

Sukiyaki Lunch Presented by the Twin Cities JACL
Minneapolis, MN
Nov. 13; Noon-2 p.m.
Normandale Hylands United Methodist Church
Price: $10 for TCJACL Members; $12 Nonmembers; $5 Children Under 10
Joint the Seattle JACL as it hosts a free Mixed-Race Webinar that will delve into concepts including what does it mean to tell your own story? How do you claim and celebrate all parts of who you are? Speakers for the panel event are defining personal narratives through the arts, including photography, visual art and writing. Mixed-race youth, adults and families, as well as the arts community, will benefit from this inspiring discussion about what it means to be a storyteller of your own narrative, be it on a canvas, in a book, onstage or in everyday life.

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Events in the calendar section are listed based on space availability. Please submit highlight ad with photos of your event for maximum exposure.
FOR MORE INFO: cp@pacificcitizen.org (213) 620-1767
Hayashi, David Ron, 64, Stockton, CA, July 4; member of French Camp JACL; he is survived by his wife, Candice; daughters, Carissa (Joe) Borges and Kelsey Hayashi; parents, Kyoshi and Mario Hayashi; siblings, Linda Liang and Michael Hayashi; gc: 1.

Hayash, Dennis, 65, Las Vegas, CA, Aug. 7; he was predeceased by his father, Shinro Hayashi; he is survived by his mother, Marion Fumiko Hayashi; children, Dale, Dan (Cynthia Herrera), Joey and Lynne Hayashi; he is also survived by a niece, nephews and great-nephews.

Kato, Martha, 75, NV and CA, Feb. 16; she is survived by her husband, Richard Moriguchi; children, Kevin, Denise and Kurtis; daughter-in-law, Irma; gc: 3.

Kobayashi, Tammy, 61, South Pasadena, CA, July 31; she was predeceased by her father, Hideo Kobayashi; she is survived by her mother, Eva Kobayashi; sisters, Dian (Shawn) Shimoda-Kobayashi and Wendy (Tom) King; an uncle, aunts, 2 nephews, cousins and other relatives.

Masaki, Emi, 94, Sacramento, CA, May 11; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Topaz WRA Center in UT where she graduated from high school; she was predeceased by her husband, Akio; she is survived by her children, Ross (Grace) Masaki and Beckie (Enrique DeAnda) Masaki; gc: 2.

Masaki, Victor Katsuuo, 79, Manhattan Beach, CA, Feb. 3; during WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Rohwer WRA Center in AR; he was predeceased by his siblings, Richard (Don) and Akiko (George) Yamakawa; he is survived by his son, Craig (Charity); siblings, Irene (Carl Christensen), Christine (Lerry) Chen, James and John (Jeanne); an uncle, Noni Uyematsu; gc: 1.

Nakagawa, Grace Yoko, 94, Honolulu, HI, June 24; she is survived by her children, Kenneth (DeAnda) Masaki and Beckie (Grace) Nakagawa; gc: 2.

Nishikawa, Edith Fumiko, 97, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 3; she is survived by her children, Carole Darr, John (Elaine) Nishikawa and Kelvin (Yoko) Nishikawa; siblings, Bessie Konishi, Judy Yamakishi and Gary (Setsu) Yoshida; gc: 7; ggc: 1.

Ohita, Alice, 83, Los Angeles, CA, Aug. 18; she was predeceased by her husband, Bennett; she is survived by her son, Ross; siblings, Richard, Roy and Harriet; gc: 1.

Shimada, Fumiko, 90, Gardena, CA, Jan. 21; she was predeceased by her husband, Utaka; she is survived by her children, Steve Shimada, Sharyn (Ed) Huggins and Glenn (Lori) Shimada; she is also survived by many nieces and other relatives; gc: 2.

Tanaka, May Misao, 99, Los Alamitos, CA, Aug. 25; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Rohwer WRA Center in AR; she was predeceased by her husband, Jack; brothers, Frank, George and Jimmy Shimazaki; sisters in-law, Jeanne Shimazaki, Jean Shimazaki and Rose Nakamura; brothers in-law, James and Fred Tanaka; she is survived by her children, Darryl (Debbie), Wesley (Erin), Brenton and Jill; siblings, Florence Kubota, Janice Nishioka and Roy (Tina) Shimazaki; sister-in-law, Joyce Tanaka; gc: 1.

Yamada, Frances Sumiko, 82, Montebello, CA, July 7; she is survived by her husband, David; children, Stephanie (Roddy) Mitsuchi, Michael, Natalie (Kris) Tachbana and Kristie (Mark) Lopez; siblings, Jane Dote and Greg (Mary) Hayakawa; she is also survived by many other relatives; gc: 6.

Mary Nobuyo Yoshihfuji passed away peacefully on Sept. 28, 2021, at the age of 98. She was born in Seattle to Rokuyemon and Kinuyo Hamano. When WWII broke out, the Japanese community along the West Coast was ordered by the federal government to relocate to internment camps. Mary’s family in Washington was relocated to Minidoka, Idaho, for the duration of the war. Camp policy allowed Japanese civilians to leave the camp if they had a sponsor and job in the Midwest or East Coast. At the age of 19, anxious to leave camp, and full of adventure, she was able to relocate to Detroit, where she met her future husband, Sakaye, through mutual friends. After the war ended, when the Japanese could return home, they were married in San Francisco, settling in San Mateo until Sakaye’s untimely death in 1986.

She is survived by a daughter, Cindy Ward (Bill); and two sons, Steve (Marilee) and grandson, Michael (Samantha), plus three great-grandsons, Jaden, Damian and Brendon; and Brent (Wendy) and granddaughter, Stephanie (Soyay). She is also survived by her sister, Katharine Kato; niece, Elaine, and nephew, Spencer (Johanna).

She worked at the Geological Survey from 1957–1988, establishing several long-lasting friendships during her employment there. After retiring, Mary enjoyed traveling and spending quality time with family. For the past two years, Mary lived at Cadence Millbrae Living Community.

Due to Covid restrictions, a Celebration of Life will be held in the future for family and dear friends. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Mary’s memory to either of the following organizations: Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCNC), 1840 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115; and Kimochi San Mateo, 453 N. San Mateo Dr., San Mateo, CA 94401.
A new AARP survey of voters ages 25-plus found an overwhelming majority (92 percent) agree that elected officials should support legislation that makes it easier for all workers to save for retirement from their paycheck. I have been very fortunate to work at companies that have had retirement savings plans and matching contributions. As I have discovered, this is not the general practice among employers.

In addition, 91 percent of voters support establishing a program if their employer does not currently offer them a way to save. More than 50 million American workers have no access to a retirement savings plan through their employers, and more than a quarter (26 percent) of nonretired people have no retirement savings.

“America’s retirement savings crisis is causing too many families to fall short. Voters overwhelmingly support legislation that will make it easier to save for retirement,” said Nancy LeaMond, AARP executive vp and chief advocacy and engagement officer. “Congress has an opportunity to help Americans secure their financial future by enacting federal Automatic IRA legislation. The time to act is now.”

Previous AARP research found that Americans are 15 times more likely to save for retirement when they can do so at work and are 20 times more likely if their workplace savings plan is automatic.

Additional Survey Findings:
Regardless of their political leanings, voters say that each of the following would be important features for a retirement savings program at work:
• Portability, so that workers can take their accounts with them when changing jobs (99 percent very/somewhat important)
• Available to all employees who do not have a way to save for retirement at work, including those who work for small businesses (98 percent very/somewhat important)
• Payroll deduction, so that contributions are automatically deducted from each paycheck and deposited into a retirement account set up in each worker’s name (96 percent very/somewhat important)
• Voluntary, so that participants are not required to make any contributions (90 percent very/somewhat important)

Anxiety and regrets about retirement savings are common among voters ages 25-plus.

• More than 6 in 10 (63 percent) are anxious about having enough money to live comfortably throughout their retirement years.
• Only 3 in 10 (29 percent) voters ages 25-44 believe that they will be able to save enough money for retirement.
• Among voters ages 45-plus who are not yet retired, 8 in 10 (81 percent) wish they had more money saved for their retirement years.

Voters recognize the importance of being able to save for retirement while working.

• Virtually all voters surveyed (99.7 percent) say that it is important for people to save money for retirement while they are working.

• Roughly two-thirds (65 percent) of employed voters say that they are currently participating in a retirement savings plan offered by their employer. These voters almost universally (96 percent) say that having a workplace plan is important in helping them save for retirement.

This AARP survey of registered voters ages 25-plus was conducted by SSRS from Sept. 22-Sept. 29, 2021, via the probability-based SSRS Opinion Panel, with 944 respondents completing the survey online and 66 completing the survey by phone. The confidence interval for the total sample is ± 3.9 percent.

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

In a new survey conducted by AARP, voters support establishing a program that would offer them a way to save for their retirement.

PHOTO: AARP

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