Brandon Ito and his family were supported by A3M as he underwent treatment for leukemia when he was 13; today, he gives back to others through his My Wish List Foundation, which he started in 2013.

**PAGE 6**

**A LIVING LEGACY**

After serving the AAPI community for 30 years, Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches closes its doors.

**PAGE 5**

Amache Becomes a Part of the NPS.

**PAGE 2**

Historic Wintersburg Update
**JACL Condemns Passage of Anti-LGBTQIA+ Laws**

**By JACL National**

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed the controversial “Don’t Say Gay” bill into law for his state on March 28. In addition, in Utah, a bill that would bar transgender youth from participating in girls’ sports was vetoed on March 29 by Gov. Spencer Cox, only to be overturned by the state legislature.

These bills come following a string of similar anti-LGBTQIA+ laws that have been introduced across the country and, in several instances, already becoming law.

As staunch supporters of the LGBTQIA+ community, JACL condemns the actions of Gov. DeSantis and many others who have sought to attack the LGBTQIA+ community through these legislative efforts. The LGBTQIA+ community, and especially LGBTQIA+ youth, have long faced discrimination and violence, which has caused higher rates of health risks and suicide.

JACL has been an ally of the LGBTQIA+ community for many years, passing our first national resolution in support of same-sex marriage in 1994. We have seen so much change in our society in amazing ways to support the LGBTQIA+ community over the past 30 years. To see these new laws taking the nation a step backward is not only disheartening but also extremely dangerous.

We join the hundreds of other organizations and community groups nationwide standing with the LGBTQIA+ community in Florida and across the country who are fighting these bills.

We hope that politicians listen to all of their constituents, especially those who are directly impacted by these laws, instead of the disinformation and vitriol supporting such discriminatory legislation.

The JACL demands inclusion and acceptance for members of the LGBTQIA+ community in order to help nurture our youth and future generations.

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**HISTORIC WINTERSBURG FIRE INVESTIGATION UPDATE**

The City of Huntington Beach releases its preliminary findings into the Feb. 25 fire that destroyed two structures at the National Treasure site.

**HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIF. —** An outdoor rally was held on March 19 in support of Historic Wintersburg Preservation and its regional partners, Heritage Museum of Orange County and Preserve Orange County, after preservationists and members of several Asian American community organizations called for a complete investigation into a fire and demolition that took place at Historic Wintersburg on Feb. 25.

According to the Historic Wintersburg Preservation Group, “a fire of unknown origin destroyed the 112-year-old manse (parsonage) of the 1910 Wintersburg Japanese Mission in Huntington Beach, CA.”

The fire, which was reported on Feb. 25, resulted in the loss of the manse and the Japanese Mission.”

According to the Historic Wintersburg Preservation Group, “a fire of unknown origin destroyed the 112-year-old manse (parsonage) of the 1910 Wintersburg Japanese Mission in Huntington Beach, CA.”

The scene at Historic Wintersburg after Huntington Beach firefighters put out the fire on Feb. 25. The 1910 Wintersburg Japanese Mission is standing at right, the south end charred, and the 1910 Manse is at left in front of the firefighters.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PATRICIA SINGER AND HISTORIC WINTERSBURG PRESERVATION GROUP

**CORRECTION**

The article “Free Chol Sol Lee Reframes an Infamous Injustice” (P.C., March 18-31, 2022) included an incorrect spelling of Derrick Lim’s last name.

**JACL MEMBERS**

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**PACIFIC CITIZEN 2022 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.*

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INFORMATION: 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 313 | Los Angeles, CA 90012 | TEL: (213) 620-1767 | WWW.PACIFICCITIZEN.ORG
I had fallen asleep on the evening of March 27 to be woken up by our senior dog around midnight. As I carried her outside to do her business, I realized I had missed the Academy Awards that evening. What movie had won Best Picture, and who had won Best Actor/Actress? Despite the ready availability of information on the internet, it was nearly impossible to find this information because all anyone was talking about was “the slap.” Reactions to Will Smith’s slapping of Chris Rock took some time to gel, but the reaction has been unyielding.

Smith’s projects with studios are now on hold, and he has resigned his membership in the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. Whether one agrees with Smith’s reaction as an act of protection for his wife or decries it for reacting in violence, it is without doubt that he is being held accountable.

The other image of accountability these past two weeks has been that of self-righteous Sen. Josh Hawley badgering U.S. Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson about her sentencing of convicted individuals in child pornography cases. Although her sentences were well within the mainstream of what other judges had sentenced similar individuals, Sen. Hawley wanted to make it seem like she had absolved defendants of all responsibility and repercussions for their criminal actions. He argued that she had failed the justice system, and the victims, allowing dangerous criminals to be released with nothing more than a slap on the wrist. If nothing else, he was making sure she was accountable for her decisions.

Where this touches on the absurd is the same Sen. Hawley to the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol. That same Sen. Hawley raised his fist to the insurrectionists signaling for them to fight. Sen. Hawley is among many who defend the “honor” of the insurrectionists. Some refer to them as vacationers here to see the Capitol. If there is one thing Hawley is not, it is apologetic for his support of an act of sedition, and he has certainly not been held accountable. In fact, he will likely be easily re-elected and is still considered a future presidential candidate.

A key component of Sen. Hawley’s attacks on Judge Jackson were for her application of mercy, recognizing the humanity of the defendant before her for sentencing. Will there be mercy for Will Smith? I would guess so. He is demonstrating his contriteness in voluntarily resigning from the Academy. For many of the Jan. 6 insurrectionists, they have issued their apologies for what they did in hopes of a more lenient sentence. It is instinctive to desire retribution when wrong has happened. “The Merchant of Venice” has the famous call for a “pound of flesh” from Antonio in payment of his debt to Shylock. The ensuing pleading of their cases includes a call for mercy from Portia, disguised as a judge. When Shylock refuses, the tables are turned, and he becomes the defendant, in danger of losing all that he has.

Clearly, the lesson was to be that Shylock had to be held accountable for his behavior, and yet where is the accountability for Antonio and the other Christians who seemingly escape without having to repay their debt and claim Shylock’s property as if the debt and debtors are not inextricably intertwined?

A Nov. 2021 article in the Denver Post that I read on the way home from work was a response to the release of the book, “Justice, Truth, and Mercy: A Guide to American Constitutional Law by Lawrence Tribe.” It showed the hypocrisy of the main protagonist in Shakespeare’s “The Merchant of Venice.” Justice does not need to be punitive. In fact, restorative justice can be mutually beneficial for both the perpetrator and the victim in some cases. We need to remember that there are many facets to taking responsibility. Justice must also be meted out equally and fairly.

Judge Jackson seems to understand these principles coexist and each play a role in what justice does look like, and that is what will make her an excellent Supreme Court Justice.
The Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee and the Manzanar Committee awarded recently two outstanding recipients of the Second Annual Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant: Terumi Tanisha Garcia of California State University, Pomona, and Charlene Tonai Din of the University of California, Los Angeles.

Garcia and Din will each receive $500 in grant funds from the VJAMM Committee and help the Manzanar Committee plan and produce the 53rd Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage, scheduled as a virtual event due to pandemic precautions, on April 30.

Maeda, who passed away in September 2020 at the age of 94, inspired the VJAMM Committee, on which he served as a charter member. He proved to be a willing and articulate public speaker and invaluable fundraiser. As a boy, he and his family were forcibly incarcerated at Manzanar during World War II following EO 9066.

“Instead of being worried about where we were going, I was obsessed with the fact that I had parted with my constant companion, my pet dog, Boy,” Maeda once said. “For a 15-year-old, that was unforgettably traumatic.”

Despite that trauma of being forcibly uprooted from Santa Monica, Calif., and his family’s losing their home and nursery business, Maeda distinguished himself at Manzanar. He participated in music and drama productions, lifted weights, worked as a kitchen helper and a hospital orderly and became president of his senior class of 1944 at Manzanar High School.

After World War II ended, Maeda began to volunteer with the Manzanar Reunion Committee, the Santa Monica Nikkei Hall and, in 2010, with the VJAMM Committee.

Applicants for this year’s grant program were asked to get to know Maeda by finding his many interviews and articles online and describing his life and legacy in an essay, short story or poem. Applicants were also asked to address three or more areas of reflection: who Maeda was and how he became a role model for the Japanese American community; how Maeda’s legacy has influenced the applicant; how the applicant will apply the lessons learned from Maeda to his/her life today; how collaboration and service to others have affected his/her life; how and why working with the Manzanar Committee on the 2022 Manzanar Pilgrimage will help him/her better understand Maeda’s life and legacy.

Garcia, a fourth-year student in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Cal Poly Pomona, finds “the stories and lives of incarcerees such as Arnold Maeda inspirational” in her own personal quest for knowledge of her family’s history.

Her great-grandfather, Moritaro “Grant” Ishigaki, was imprisoned at the American concentration camp at Heart Mountain, Wyo. After World War II, he returned to California and eventually settled in South El Monte with his wife and two sons, where he became a gardener.

But Ishigaki longed for the desert to which he had grown accustomed during his incarceration, and his wife bought him a trailer home in Victorville, Calif., so that he could be closer to the hot sands and dry winds.

Committee on the 2022 Manzanar Pilgrimage will help him/her better understand Maeda’s life and legacy. Garcia, a fourth-year student in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Cal Poly Pomona, finds “the stories and lives of incarcerees such as Arnold Maeda inspirational” in her own personal quest for knowledge of her family’s history.

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UCLA’s Charlene Tonai Din

“Growing Up Asian in America” by Charlene Tonai Din

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» See GRANT on page 9

JACs Call to Action

- JOIN US AS WE CALL ON MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO SUPPORT THE JACS PROGRAM! -

The Japanese American Confinement Education Act (S. 988), sponsored by Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), would provide:

- An additional $42 million in funding for programs about the WWII Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) experience including $10 million for NEW education programs.
- FY2023 Appropriations of at least $3.1 million

By contacting your Members of Congress, YOU help ensure that:

- The legacy and experience of the Japanese American community during WWII remains a conscience part of our country’s history for the next generation.

- HOW TO SPREAD THE WORD-

Step 1: Respond to our action alert! Fill out your information on the landing page we’ve created OR place a call to connect and ask your senators to cosponsor S.988!

- Landing page link: https://jacs.salsalabs.org/jace2022mar
*Make sure to that you check off the “Subscribe” checkbox when filling out your letter to receive updates

- Congressional Switchboard Phone Number: (202) 224-3121

Step 2: Invite others to take part by promoting the above information on social media!

Step 3: Share this information directly with your family and friends.
President Joe Biden formally designates the Amache National Historic Site as part of the NPS.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Joe Biden signed the Amache National Historic Site on March 18, designating the Amache site in Granada, Colo., as part of the National Park System. This designation, the first in the National Park System during this administration, will permanently protect the site for future generations and help tell the history of Japanese American incarceration during World War II.

“As a nation, we must face the wrongs of our past in order to build a more just and equitable future,” said Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland. “I applaud President Biden and the bipartisan action in Congress that has ensured this important and painful chapter in our nation’s story is preserved and honored for the generations to come. After visiting Amache and meeting with survivors and descendants, I was moved by their resilience and the way in which Colorado communities came together during and after the injustice to support Japanese Americans. May we all be inspired to do the same today for all our fellow citizens.”

Amache, also known as the Granada Relocation Center, was one of 10 incarceration sites established by the War Relocation Authority during WWII to detain Japanese Americans forcibly removed from the West Coast of the United States under the terms of Executive Order 9066. From 1942-45, more than 10,000 United States citizens were incarcerated at Amache, which housed 7,310 incarcerees at its peak, two-thirds of whom were U.S. citizens.

“It is our solemn responsibility as caretakers of America’s national treasures to tell the whole story of our nation’s heritage for the benefit of present and future generations,” said National Park Service Director Chuck Sams. “The National Park Service will continue working closely with key stakeholders dedicated to the preservation of Amache, and those directly impacted by the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, to preserve and interpret this significant historic site to the public.”

In July 2021, the bill first passed in the U.S. House of Representatives, followed by the Senate in February. Amache joins two other War Relocation Authority incarceration sites in the National Parks Service system: Manzanar in California and Minidoka in Idaho.

Present at the White House for the historic signing by President Biden were Sen. John Hickenlooper (D-Colo.); Rep. Judy Chu (CA-27); Rep. Mark Takano (CA-41); Council on Environmental Quality Chair Brenda Mallory; Sams; Erika Moritsugu, deputy assistant to the president and Asian American and Pacific Islander senior liaison; and Theresa Pierno, president and CEO of the National Parks Conservation Assn.

“It is an honor to join President Biden at the White House today to welcome Amache National Historic Site into our park system,” said Pierno in an official statement. “Our national park sites include wide open wild spaces, as well as places that represent some of our country’s most important history. Not all stories they tell are easy to hear, like those of Amache, but perhaps those are the stories we as a nation need to hear most. By preserving Amache, we can ensure that as a country we confront our mistakes, honor the stories of those who were unjustly imprisoned and protect the site for future generations.”

Said NPCA Colorado Senior Program Manager Tracy Coppola in an official statement: “We are forever grateful to President Biden, Sec. Haaland, Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper and Congressmen Neguse and Buck for leading and supporting this critical opportunity for America to respect, honor and heal at Amache.

“Amache is America’s newest National Park Site on March 18, designating the Amache National Historic Site in Colorado, preserving the memory of those who were incarcerated there and important part of our country’s story. This designation is a significant step in ensuring that the story of Amache and the broader history of Japanese American incarceration is told in a comprehensive and equitable manner.”

To learn more about Amache and the National Park Service, please visit npshistory.nps.gov.
A3M: A LIVING LEGACY

After serving the AAPI community for 30 years, Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches closes its doors, but the countless lives saved through its efforts will never be forgotten.

By Athena Mari Askipadias, Contributor

Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches, also known as “A3M,” closed its doors permanently on Dec. 31, 2021, after 30 years serving the community. For the past three decades, blood cancer and blood disease patients found the hope of finding stem cell and marrow transplant matches through the hard work of A3M’s devoted staff and volunteers. API families could depend on A3M to reach out to their communities with language and culturally appropriate materials. What began as a humble grass-roots movement, founded by Sharon Sugiyama, transformed into a legacy of thousands of lives saved.

In 1991, Sugiyama and her family were working hard at trying to find a marrow match for her beloved nephew, Nick Suzuki, who was battling leukemia. Along the way, she became very aware of the similar need many others also faced in the Asian American community. She wondered what she could do, not just to help Nick but also to help the thousands of others also searching for a match.

Learning that marrow matching was dependent on similar inherited genetics — specifically a matching marker on your DNA — Sugiyama knew that a patient’s best odds after searching were within their own family. But after her nephew’s passing, Watanabe wondered if Sugiyama wanted to continue her quest in registering API donors.

Thankfully, Sugiyama transformed her grief into a passion for helping others with her nephews memory always present.

Her passion, along with the help and direction of Watanabe, Sugiyama’s sister, Kathy Ninomiya, and Yukio Shimomura, created the strong foundation on which A3M officially began. From there, the team hired diverse recruiters who were from different API communities.

Everybody who was involved in the organization, at one time or another, filled a niche that needed to be filled, and we were lucky that we had so many people that were willing to stand up,” Ninomiya shared.

Added Watanabe: “When we started, we were all volunteers. . . . We set up a Korean task force, Chinese task force, Filipino, Japanese, South Asian, and everyone was volunteering, they were doing it, giving their time.”

In the first year alone, the national number of API donors rose more than four times in number thanks largely to A3M and the efforts of Bay Area’s Asian American Donor Program (AADP), which began around the same time. Eventually, in its later years, A3M would expand outside of the Asian community, spreading its reach across cultures and advocating for patients who were from Latino, Black and Middle Eastern communities as well.

One patient who benefited from A3M’s early campaigning was mixed-Japanese patient Joan Loof, who found her match to cure her chronic myeloid leukemia in the early 1990s. Loof was later instrumental in advocating for and supporting the founding of Japan’s first national marrow registry.

Eventually, in its later years, A3M would officially begin. From there, the team hired diverse recruiters who were from different API communities.

She fondly remembers the sense of community that A3M offered her.

“I wasn’t alone, and others were on the same journey with whom I could share concerns and information” she shared. Loof proudly shares that she is now living a healthy life 29 years since her transplant in 1993.

Sharon Sugiyama went on to lead the organization for 20 years as its director, all while A3M’s relationship with LTSC continued.

When reflecting on that connection over the years, current LTSC Executive Director Erich Nakano shared: “It has been inspiring to see generations of A3M team members signing people up for the Marrow Registry and working with patients and their families through the most difficult times.”

Nakano went on to say that “Little Tokyo Service Center has been proud to host A3M as a program for all of these years. It was emotional for me to oversee the closure of A3M last year.”

In total, A3M managed to register more than 330,000 new donors to the National Marrow Donor Program, currently known as Be The Match. Of those registered, more than 9,000 matches were found — 9,000 miracles.

One more of those miracles was Brandon Ito, who was just 13 years old when he was diagnosed with leukemia in 1999. An avid Yonsei basketball player, Ito and his family were shocked to learn how serious his condition was since he led such a healthy, active life.

But through the stress a serious diagnosis like cancer can bring, Ito remembers how much comfort A3M brought his family. They did not feel quite alone or hopeless knowing there were advocates working hard looking for matches.

“A3M will always have a soft spot in my heart,” Ito said. “I can never repay them for the HOPE and support they provided for me and my family when I was going through treatment.”

“I’m beyond saddened that A3M had to close their doors,” he continued. “For almost 75 percent of my life, A3M has allowed me to fulfill one of my lifelong goals of giving
back to the cancer community.”

And not only did A3M comfort and support Ito and his family, but so, too, did the entire Japanese American community.

“It’s truly amazing how the JA community rallies to support a specific cause/individual,” Ito recalled. “I remember the out-of-the-blue phone calls and hospital visits from individuals who I never met but had been assisting in bone marrow and blood drives like they’ve known me my whole life. My family never felt alone with the JA community support.”

Today, perhaps inspired by his cancer journey and the good work of A3M, Ito continues to give back to other patients through his organization, My Wish List Foundation, which he founded in 2013.

“My Wish List Foundation,” said Ito, “exists to enhance the lives of pediatric cancer patients and their loved ones during their treatment process.”

Another patient who echoes a similar sentiment about A3M is former patient and transplant survivor Krissy Kobata.

“I was extremely lucky to have such amazing support from A3M,” said Kobata. “They became a part of my family and support network in helping to find my transplant donor. Without A3M’s outreach to the communities in such an integrated way, I would not be here today.”

Diagnosed in 2008, Kobata battled myelodysplastic syndrome for more than 10 years, and A3M was responsible for finding her matching donor at a local SoCal registry event.

Throughout the course of those 10 years, A3M held countless drives for Kobata at local Obon festivals, Nisei Week events in Little Tokyo, community temples and churches. “Ayumi Nagata was one of my first recruiters, and it really felt like she became a part of my family,” Kobata reflected. “I developed a close relationship with her and felt such support and reassurance that I would be OK because of all her work she did on my behalf.”

Recruiters like Nagata offered emotional support to families and also worked on behalf of A3M to maintain relationships with other local organizations, colleges and individuals. Over the years, A3M had longtime partnerships with organizations such as the Aratani Foundation, Fujisheige Farms, Dale M. Inouye Foundation, Orange Coast Optimist Club, Sansei Legacy, Santa Monica Nikkei Hall Fun, Shirakiku Foundation and Union Bank, in addition to countless others from the Japanese American community who kept A3M funded. Without the connections made in the API and largely by the JA community specifically, A3M’s mission could not have been accomplished the way it had.

Those connections and that personal touch was something for which A3M will be fondly remembered. Even through its last years in operation, and even during the coronavirus pandemic, A3M’s staff found ways to continue to recruit donors successfully, connect with patients virtually and pivot to contactless registry events.

In the end, A3M’s closure had nothing to do with lack of financial support or not meeting registration goals — it was a decision of the national registry, Be The Match, to not renew its recruitment contract with A3M and numerous other subcontracted centers.

Instead, Be The Match decided to centralize operations by constructing its own API program, which is under the direction of A3M’s most recent director, Susan Choi.

Although A3M’s chapter is closed, it is the hope of patients and supporters alike that Be The Match will continue to carry the torch toward further diversifying the donor registry, especially in the API community.

To date, there are now approximately 1 million donors of Asian descent registered to the national donor registry — a huge jump from the meager 5,000 donors in the early 1990s.

There is no question that current and future patients can thank A3M and the API community for making that number happen — thousands of lives will surely be saved for many years to come because of the decades of hard work and passion instilled into each and every donor drive.

Thank you A3M, and thank you to the Japanese American community for your dedication to patients. Let’s continue to champion the cause and grow the registry.
**WINTERSBURG » continued from page 2**

“A second potential cause is due to the Wintersburg property being electrified at the time of the fire,” the statement continued. “After inquiring with Southern California Edison, electricity may have been illegally and dangerously acquired by tapping into a nearby power source, bypassing the electric meter.”

In an update posted on its website on March 24, the Historic Wintersburg Preservation Group stated that the fire investigation is still ongoing and that official reports from the HBFD and HBPD are to be completed and released in the coming weeks.

The March 19 rally brought community members together to raise awareness of the ongoing Historic Wintersburg fire investigation, as well as condemn the dramatic rise in anti-Asian hate crimes in Orange County and vandalism at Buddhist temples across the Orange County area.

The City of Huntington Beach statement concluded that it “has been informed by the owners of the Wintersburg property, Republic Services, of its intentions to enhance its security of the site.”

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**VJAMM PLANS VIRTUAL COMMEMORATION TO REFLECT ON EO 9066**

The program will feature guest speakers, in addition to its 10th annual fundraiser at Hama Sushi.

VENICE, CALIF. — To commemorate the 80th anniversary of Executive Order 9066, the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee will hold a virtual commemoration on Zoom set for April 21 at 11 a.m.—Noon.

The event’s featured speakers will include Bobby Ideishi, who survived the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center skyscrapers while on a business trip to New York City, and Mary Uyematsu Kao, who will tell the story of how EO 9066 affected her grandfather’s Star Nursery, which included 120 acres in Manhattan Beach, Calif.

Pre-World War II, Francis Miyosaku Uyematsu became known as the “Camellia King” for his importation and cultivation of not only camellias from Japan, but also cherry trees, both of which he sold throughout Southern California.

However, he gradually had to sell off pieces of his property to maintain his business while imprisoned in what would become the War Relocation Authority camp at Manzanar. Uyematsu donated 1,000 cherry trees to the Manzanar camp for a park there.

After the war, Uyematsu sold the last 40 acres of his Manhattan Beach property to the Redondo Union High School District for $60,000. On this land, the RUHSD built Mira Costa High School. Many years later, students and faculty discovered the history of their high school construction, and in 2017, they proposed the Mira Costa History Project to the school board, which was conceived to remember and honor Uyematsu.

In October 2021, retired Mira Costa high school instructor Chuck Currier, Mira Costa graduate Dennis Keen and various city and school district officials dedicated a plaque to Uyematsu in front of an audience that included three generations of the Uyematsu family, including Mary Uyematsu Kao.

In addition, the events other confirmed speakers will include Manzanar Committee Co-Chair Bruce Embrey; Charlene Tonic Din and Terumi Tanisha Garcia, recipients of the VJAMM and Manzanar Committee’s co-sponsored Second Annual Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant; Mike Bonin, Los Angeles City Councilmember, District 11; Sheila Kuehl, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, District 3; California State Sen. Ben Allen, District 26; Becky Dennison, executive director of Venice Community Housing; Marisol Perez, program manager of VCH’s Westside Youth Academy (formerly Venice YouthBuild); Dan Kwong, playwright and co-author of the play “Masao and the Bronze Nightingale”; and Brian Maeda, founding member of the VJAMM Committee and director of the film “We Said NO! NO! A Story of Civil Disobedience.”

The VJAMM’s genesis traces back to the period following 9/11, when the VJAMM Committee, which realized its ambition of installing a permanent memorial in Venice, Calif., to remember the forced removal and incarceration of persons of Japanese ancestry during WWII.

The monument, which stands at the northwest corner of Venice and Lincoln boulevards, was officially dedicated on April 27, 2017. (For more information on the memorial, visit venicejamm.org.)

Following the virtual program, Hama Sushi Restaurant in Venice will host its 10th annual VJAMM fundraiser from 4–9 p.m., where proprietor Esther Chaing will donate 10 percent of the evening’s dinner sales to the VJAMM Committee to support educational outreach, continuing maintenance of the VJAMM and funding of the annual Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant.

Over the past nine years, Chaing’s donations have totaled more than $25,000 for the VJAMM’s construction and installation. Her contribution is surpassed only by the $50,000 grant awarded to the VJAMM Committee by the National Park Service Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program in 2012.

Hama Sushi is located at 213 Windward Ave. “on the circle” in Venice, Calif. For reservations to dine in or order take out/pick up, please contact Hama Sushi at (310) 396-8783 or visit www.hamasushi.com.

To join the virtual VJAMM Commemoration on Zoom, please visit shorturl.at/cjmG5 or https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83532308517?pwd=S2toRG95TzhEUjlNNm9ZTkNUTc4QT09.

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LIVING TRUSTS | WILLS | POWERS OF ATTORNEY
Enforcement agent arrests and escorts a father away while two children wave goodbye from a train window. Malala Yousafzai, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, gazes from the lower-left corner at the signs depicted in the center of Din’s poster. “No Ban, No Wall, Sanctuary for All” reads one sign, while the other is a copy of “Instructions to All Persons of Japanese Ancestry, and a small sign reads, “No DAPL.”

As a member of AYPAL, an Oakland-based Asian youth leadership and activist organization, Din and other artists completed a large-scale painting for the annual May Arts Festival “highlighting the various ways our families came to the U.S. and emphasizing the importance of knowing history in order to know oneself,” according to Din.

Din continues her activism as Cultural Awareness and Community Service Chair for the Nikkei Student Union at UCLA. Garcia assists in teaching the Japanese American Landscape Architecture and Ethnic Studies class at Cal Poly Pomona. For one of her JusticeScapes assignments, Garcia identified historical examples of racial politics, laws and capitalism in the U.S., as well as post-Colonial examples of racist policies in the U.S.

She illustrated how “Race/Caste has led to Spaces of Incarceration” in a powerful collage listing the Japanese American Memorial Monument Act of 1983, Trail of Tears, Deportation of Nez Perce in 1862, Alien Enemies Act 1917, Redlining National Housing Act 1934 and Executive Order 9066 . . . 1942. The collage depicts Presidents Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt, as well as maps of the U.S. showing Trails of Tears and American detention centers and concentration camps, plus photos of War Relocation Authority barracks and hands behind jail bars. In the center is a silhouetted profile of former President Donald Trump.

Garcia composed a free-verse poem titled “Mr. President,” juxtaposing “being polite” as a survival tactic with the words of Andrew Jackson from the Indian Removal Act.

Students have the opportunity to learn about what happened at Amache and the Americans who were interned there. We have a responsibility to carry their legacy forward, and now Amache has the recognition and resources it deserves.”

— Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.)

“Designating Camp Amache as a National Historic Site will honor those who were imprisoned and educate future generations about this dark chapter. Our Colorado communities were the driving force behind this bill.”

— Sen. John Hickenlooper (D-Colo.)

“Colorado welcomes President Biden’s important action to establish Amache site as a National Park unit, highlighting injustices of the internment of Japanese Americans. Colorado is home to 12 world-class National Park units, and adding the Amache site is an important step to preserve and protect our national history and cultural experiences, even when we are called to face dark times in our nation’s past.”

— Colorado Gov. Jared Polis

“I have waited many, many years to see the day where we can be certain that Amache, as a place of reflection, remembrance, honor and healing, is protected for our current and future generations. President Biden’s signature on the Amache National Historic Site Act today brings me hope that we are finally closer to this certainty. My parents did not live to see this day. The time is not only right; it is long overdue.”

— Bob Fuchigami, Amache survivor

“As a young boy at Amache, I never thought I’d see an America that cared about my story. I am now a 91-year-old veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. Thank you, President Biden, Senators Bennett and Hickenlooper, and Congressmen Neguse and Buck, for your leadership and for the great decisions made regarding Amache as a National Park Historic Site. Now signed by the president, long-lasting U.S. history is made.”

— Ken Kitajima, Amache survivor

“Many young men at Amache served in the U.S. Army, though their country incarcerated them for their Japanese ancestry. I was 16 and incarcerated along with my mother and siblings at Amache, where I was also a Boy Scout. In 1943, our camp troop went to the Granada Railroad Station at 4 in the morning to see the young enlisted men off. Our scout commissioner told us to play as loud as we could.

Years later, I served as a medic in the U.S. Army Korean War. In the 1980s, I worked to preserve Amache, organizing reunions and working on various preservation efforts. Thank you to President Biden for signing the Amache National Historic Act so that these efforts are not forgotten.”

— Min Tonai, Amache survivor

“As a former Amachean and as a volunteer for the Amache Field School, I have learned the importance of having Amache as a National Park unit, as it would illustrate the hardships and the perseverance of the incarcerated people. It would also point to the injustice of their being placed there, simply because of their ethnicity, not because of what they had done. Most importantly, it would signify the reasons that further groups, such as Muslims, should not be treated as were the Japanese Americans there have been hints of this in current times.”

— Charlene Tanigoshi Tinker, Amache survivor

“Congressmen Neguse and Buck and Senators Bennett and Hickenlooper demonstrated what cooperation looks like on the Hill. With the bill now signed by President Biden, this is finally the expression and realization of the people’s will.”

— Mike Honda, former member of Congress and Amache survivor

For more information about the Arnold Mao Maanzan Pilgrimage Grant, please visit venicejamm.org, Facebook @VeniceJAMM or maanzanarcommittee.org.
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

2022 JACL/DOA Leadership Summit
Washington, D.C.; May 21-24
Event Details: Covid vaccination is required; all government protocols will be followed, including masks for all activities. Participation is open to all current JACL members.

This four-day annual program introduces community leaders from across the U.S. to the national policy-making arena. The conference is structured to provide a broad overview of the decision-making process at the federal level, including meetings and briefings by public officials, key policymakers who serve in Congress, the White House, federal agencies, advocacy organizations and the media.

Info: To learn more and to register, visit https://jact.wufoo.com/forms/kjmgm4alx/em/.

NCWNP

‘Enduring Democracy: The Monterey Petition’
Monterey, CA
April 9; 2 p.m.
JACL Hall
424 Adams St.
Price: Free; Registration Required

Presented by the JACL of the Monterey Peninsula Heritage Project, this film viewing and panel discussion examines how Monterey was one of the only communities that publicly welcomed its Japanese neighbors back from the incarceration following WWII. A panel discussion with historians David Yamada, Sandy Lydon, Geoffrey Dunn and Tim Thomas follows on the history and significance of the Japanese on the Monterey Bay region.

Info: RSVP to timsardine@yahoo.com or call (831) 521-3304.

Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival
San Francisco, CA
April 9-17
San Francisco Japantown
Price: Free

This cultural celebration coincides with the annual blooming of the cherry blossoms and the city is excited to welcome everyone back in person to celebrate this beautiful event! Hundreds of artists from the Bay Area will be there to showcase their craft and passions, in addition to delicious festival food at the Food Bazaar and live indoor and outdoor stage performances in the Japanese Garden.

Info: Visit www.sfcherryblossom.org for more information.

PSW

‘Look to the Sky: America’s Concentration Camps’ Part 2
Los Angeles, CA
April 10; 1 p.m.
Virtual Event
Price: Free

This documentary project by John Torai depicts the contemporary physical conditions of the 10 WWII WRA camps. Torai has visited most of the sites and recorded the changes that have taken place. Part 2 will show photos of camps Manzanar, Tule Lake, etc.

Info: For a Zoom link, email Layne Sakamoto at greathietl@gmail.com.

Self-Defense Workshop
Gardena, CA
April 18; 10 a.m.-noon
Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute
Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall
196 W. 162nd St.
Price: Free; Donations Appreciated

This class, open to older men and women, will focus on self-defense and situational awareness that will include practical self-defense techniques to minimize any attack and injury as well as facilitate escape. It will be taught by 6th degree black belt instructor Art Ishi.

Info: To register, visit https://www.jci-gardena.org/gvjc-upcoming-events.html.

PNW

Seattle Cherry Blossom and Japanese Cultural Festival
Seattle, WA
April 8-10
Seward Park
Price: Free

This three-day celebration is back in person this year to celebrate the beautiful cherry tree and its symbol of beauty, peace, friendship and understanding between the people of Japan and the U.S. This weekend event will feature educational programs, arts, entertainment, arts and crafts, food and much more.

Info: For more information, visit www.cherryblossomfestival.org.

MDC

‘Then They Came for Me: Incarceration of Japanese Americans During WWII and the Demise of Civil Liberties’ Milwaukee, WI
May 29
Price: Contact Museum for Admission

This multimedia exhibition illustrates the impact fear-based rehue on those who experienced it firsthand and the lasting reverberations on the generations that followed the WWII forced incarceration. Imagery from photographers Dorothea Lange and Ansel Adams, alongside works by Toyko Miyake and artist from the Chicago-based Japanese American Service Committee are on display. See: www.jewishmuseum milwaukee.org for more information.

EDC

Reclaiming Our Past, Building Our Future: City of Denver’s Chinatown Apology Denver, CO
April 16; 12:30-2 p.m. MDT
CU Denver Terrace Room in the Lawrence Street Center
1380 Lawrence St.
Price: Free

All are welcome to the City of Denver’s apology event, a resolution apologizing to the Chinese immigrants and their descendants and acknowledging its role in nearly a century of violence and discrimination — including the dismantling and destruction of Denver’s historic Chinatown.


This Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibit will be on display at the Minnesota History Center from April 23-July 3. The special event program on May 21 will be presented in partnership with the Minnesota Historical Society, as well as guest speaker Dale Minami.


IDC

National Cherry Blossom Festival
Washington, D.C.
Thru April 17
Tidal Basin
Price: Free

The National Cherry Blossom Festival is back! From the parade down Constitution Avenue to various cultural exhibits, food offers, musical performances and so much more, there’s something for everyone in the family to enjoy.


‘Citizen Wong’
New York, NY
April 11-May 1
Pan Asian Repertory Theater
Mezzanine Theatre at ART/New York Theatres
502 W. 53rd St.
Price: Ticket Prices Vary

The Pan Asian Repertory Theatre brings this story of a Gilded Age pioneer who wields pen and pencil to fight the U.S. law to ban any race from this country.


ADVERTISE HERE

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

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

**ISAO FUJIMOTO**

Dr. Isao Fujimoto, Ph.D., professor and community organizer, died peacefully at his home in Davis, Calif., on Feb. 25. He was 88 years old.

Isao joined the University of California, Davis, in 1967 as a founding member of the Community Development program. Throughout his career, he served as primary instructor for more than 50 courses and later founded the Asian American Studies Department before retiring in 1994.

His retirement, however, was in name only. He continued teaching both locally and abroad — spending summers in Kyoto, Japan, where he taught his beloved UC Study Abroad course. He also held leadership positions in several grassroots organizations like the Rural Development Leadership Network and the Central Valley Partnership for Citizenship for nearly two decades thereafter.

Despite a distinguished academic career and countless accolades, Isao was perhaps best known for his insatiable curiosity and unparalleled commitment to education, social justice and the empowerment of marginalized communities. Understanding that knowledge equals power, he developed an unconventional approach to teaching and scholarship that centered justice and collaboration, challenging the hierarchy and culture of traditional academia. In fact, his home in West Davis served as the incubator and original headquarters for cherished Davis landmarks like the Davis Food Co-Op and the Farmer’s Market, both of which were founded by Isao’s students.

From an early age, the importance of community was impressed upon Isao. He was born on Sept. 28, 1933, in Wapato, Wash., on the Yakama Indian Reservation to Ayako and Taichi Fujimoto, farmers from southeastern Japan. Isao was the first of 13 children. The family lived in an ethnic enclave on the reservation, where they worked as tenant farmers. Along with 125 other Japanese immigrant families, they circumvented the racist and restrictive Alien Land Law that otherwise prohibited those of Asian descent from owning or leasing land by instead renting from the Yakama, whose land was not subject to such legislation.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Isao’s father was immediately arrested and imprisoned at Fort Missoula, Mo. As with many Japanese Americans at the time, a period of unimaginable injustice and adversity began. Despite 8-year-old Isao’s best efforts, including writing letters to President Roosevelt at his mother’s urging, his father would not be reunited with the family for almost two years.

In 1942, along with his mother and younger siblings, Isao was incarcerated in Heart Mountain, Wyo., where his father would later be transferred. After being reunited, the family was sent to Tule Lake, the infamous maximum-security internment camp, where they remained until the end of World War II. It was at Tule Lake that Isao was given a stamp collection book by his father, a gift that would change his life. As he pore over images of foreign people and places, his mind was liberated, his imagination flew “over the barbed wire” and a lifelong quest to learn and appreciate global diversity began.

Upon their release from Tule Lake, the family resettled in California, first in Pleasanton, and then in Morgan Hill, where they worked as sharecroppers and later, as independent strawberry farmers. Although they were forced to rebuild their lives during a time of postwar hostility and threats of deportation, the perseverance of his family’s grief, Isao reconsidered his original plan of becoming a physician, working briefly as a probation officer and then as a high school chemistry teacher at San Jose High School. It was at San Jose High School that his talent as an educator became impossible to ignore, and he subsequently earned a master’s in Education from Stanford in 1960. With a career in medicine in the rear view, Isao began to carve a path that was uniquely his own, attending institutes for higher education at the historically Black Howard University in Washington, D.C., and Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y.

At Cornell, Isao decided to pursue a Ph.D. in rural sociology. He was conducting field research in the Philippines when three of his siblings were tragically killed by a drunk driver back home in California. In the wake of his family’s grief, Isao put his dissertation on hold. Soon, UC Davis came calling and, in the years that followed, Isao dove headfirst into his new role, eager and excited to lead in movements for change. But he refused to give up on the work he began almost 50 years before and in 2010, at the age of 76, he finished and successfully defended his dissertation at Cornell, proudly leading his graduating class in the ceremony’s procession.

Isao was the proud father of three children, to whom he gave the gifts of curiosity and a healthy appetite for learning. He was generous in his love and wisdom and ensured that his children had every opportunity to explore and engage with those around them. As he did with his siblings, Isao took his children on adventures across the country and around the world. He was always teaching; he couldn’t help it.

More difficult than summarizing Isao’s rich life is attempting to convey all that will be missed in his absence. In addition to his obvious accomplishments, there is no doubt Isao will also be remembered for his ceaselessly limitless energy and enthusiasm, his infectious laugh and the unbelievable love and loyalty he offered to family, friends and strangers alike.

Isao was preceded in death by his parents, Taichi and Ayako Fujimoto; his sisters, Toyoko, Keiko and Shoko; and his brother, Donald. He is survived by his wife of 34 years, Christine Fry, and their daughter, Esumi; sons, Calvin and Christopher; and his mother, Linda Wilson; grandchildren, Bela Buson, Kodo and Ruby Umiko; his brother, Kazuya (Dorothy), and sisters Yoshiko (Tad), Motoko (Masao), Coleen (Ted), Janet (Jack), Annie, Shigeko and Tomiko (Pat), in addition to many nieces, nephews and of course, students, colleagues and friends.

If you feel moved to donate in Isao’s memory, contributions may be made to the UC Davis Isao Fujimoto Education and Student Support Fund (https://give.ucdavis.edu/CLAS/ASIFGFT). A public memorial service will be held in Davis on April 21. Kindly RSVP to esumifujimoto@gmail.com for additional details. Masks and social distancing will be required.

**TRIBUTE**

**PEGGY SHIMKO**

Peggy Shimko, beloved wife and mother, passed away in her home on Feb. 12 at the age of 61.

Peggy was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, to parents James and Ruth Takeuchi. She received a Bachelor of Science in economics from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania; a Master of Science in instructional design for online learning from Capella University; and a certificate in nonprofit management from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She married Jim Shimko in 1992.

Peggy worked as a computer programmer before becoming a full-time homemaker and artist. She passed on a passion for technology to her children by playing video games with them, and some of her favorites were “King’s Quest VI” and “Nancy Drew.”

A multitalented artist, Peggy crocheted, sewed, danced, played piano, harp and taiko drums, and did numerous visual arts. She was most known for her intricate, geometric paper sculptures that blended her interest in math, Buddhist beliefs and environmental themes. She also handcrafted gifts for family and friends every holiday season, giving scarves, aprons, papercrafts and adorable amigurumi cats. As a Japanese American, Peggy was keen to learn about, preserve and pass on Japanese art forms, and she was one of the founding members of the Cincinnati-Dayton Taiko Group when it formed in 1989.

Peggy was a practicing Buddhist and approached everyone she met with generosity and care. If you were a guest in her house, she meticulously planned what meals to serve and always remembered people’s favorite foods and dietary restrictions. If you called her with a problem, she’d listen attentively and then cut to the heart of the matter with her insightful — and often refreshingly blunt — advice. And if you ever mentioned a friend, she always remembered their name and inquired after them, even if she had never met them. Her compassionate spirit lives on in those she cared for.

Peggy was preceded in death by her parents, James and Ruth. She is survived by her husband, Jim; her daughter, Miyoko, and her son-in-law, Stephen; her son, Hiroshi; her brothers, Stephen (Rick) and Ken; and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

A private memorial will be held in April.

**TRIBUTE**

**Higa, Shigeru, 104, Kaneohe, HI, Jan. 6.**

**Kobayashi, Takashi, 101, Hilo, HI, Nov. 21, 2021; he was prede-ceased by his wife, Shigeko, and son-in-law, Glen Plantz; he is sur-vived by his children, Clyde (Hel-lo), Roy (Claudia) and Marylleen Plantz; sister, Nobuko Goto; sister-in-law, Emiko Kobayashi; gc: 7; ggc: 10.**

**Fujii, Calvin, 78, Los Gatos, CA, Feb. 26; a veteran (National Guard); he was predeceased by his siblings, Stella and Arnold; he is survived by his wife, Pamela; chil-dren, Cheryl (Brett), Caela, Chara Fujii and Christopher (Mirna); brothers, Stephen Fujii (Syvia) and Roger Fujii (Amy); gc: 3.**

**PLACE A TRIBUTE**

“In Memoriam” is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tributes honor your loved ones with a brief obituary and appear in a timely manner at the rate of $200/column inch.

**CONTACT:**
Editorial@pacificcitizen.org or call (213) 620-7767 ext. 104
AARP APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF FRAUD AND SCAM REDUCTION ACT

By Scott Tanaka

This past month was Fraud Prevention Month. On March 11, AARP applauded Congress for passing the bipartisan Fraud and Scam Reduction Act. The legislation, endorsed by AARP, is designed to address the pervasive increase and growing problem of scams and financial exploitation that threatens all Americans, older Americans in particular.

“AARP is at the forefront of championing laws and regulations that prevent financial exploitation against seniors and empowers consumers to protect themselves,” said AARP member and Engagement Officer Nancy Lea-Mond. “Scammers use a wide range of increasingly sophisticated tactics and opportunities to steal money or sensitive personal information, so our nation’s laws need to keep up. The Fraud and Scam Reduction Act includes important protections that can benefit all Americans.”

The Fraud and Scam Reduction Act will establish a Senior Scams Prevention Advisory Group to prevent scams that target seniors. The Advisory Group will create educational materials and information on model programs to guide retailers, financial services and wire-transfer companies on prevention.

Additionally, it would create an office within the Bureau of Consumer Protection to advise the Federal Trade Commission about preventing fraud targeting seniors and assist with monitoring for mail, television, internet, telemarketing and robocalls targeting older Americans. The bill was passed as part of the bipartisan 2022 omnibus appropriations bill, which now goes to the president to be signed into law.

Before coming to AARP and attending graduate school, I used to work for a small accounting and income tax preparation company. One of the calls we would frequently get from our clients was regarding the Internal Revenue Service calling them for unpaid taxes.

A person impersonating an IRS agent had called them and said that if they didn’t pay their unpaid taxes immediately, they would be arrested. We would reassure our clients that the IRS almost never makes calls directly, and that they communicate mostly through mail. This is true even for unpaid taxes.

From October 2013-March 2021, the Treasury Department’s inspector general for tax administration logged more than 2.5 million reports of these types of scam calls, with some 16,000 victims collectively losing more than $82.6 million.

Here are some helpful Do’s and Don’ts when it comes to this scam.

**DO’S**

- Do hang up immediately if a caller claims to be from the IRS, unless you have reason to believe you really do owe taxes, such as prior written communication from the agency.
- Do forward any unsolicited emails in which someone claims to be from the IRS or the Treasury Department to phishing@irs.gov. Do not click on any links or open attachments.
- Do ask for identification if you’re visited by someone claiming to be from the IRS. Actual employees carry two official credentials: a “pocket commission” and an HSPD-12 card, a standard ID for federal workers. An IRS employee will provide, on request, a dedicated agency phone number for you to verify the information on the card.

**DON'TS**

- Don’t provide or confirm personal or financial information over the phone to someone who claims to be a government official.
- Don’t respond to a purported IRS email or text message asking for your information. The IRS doesn’t do that.
- Don’t agree to pay a tax bill with a gift card, prepaid debit card or wire transfer. Scammers prefer these methods because they’re difficult to trace and can be used almost anywhere.

Since 2013, AARP has provided the AARP Fraud Watch Network as a free resource for people of all ages. You can visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network website by going to https://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork. There you can find information on scams like the IRS Imposter Scam and resources to help you to know what to do.

You can sign up for “Watchdog Alert” emails that deliver information about scams, or call a free helpline at (877) 908-3360 to report scams or get help from trained volunteers in the event someone falls victim to scammers’ tactics.

AARP has also been partnering with financial institutions and the retail industry to help stop fraud through its BankSafe Initiative. BankSafe is an innovative training platform that helps financial professionals identify and stop suspected exploitation. Since its inception, BankSafe-trained staff have already stopped more than $100 million from being stolen from older adults. To learn more about AARP’s BankSafe Initiative, visit https://www.aarp.org/pps/banksafe/

Scott Tanaka is a member of the JACL Washington, D.C., chapter and is a policy, research and international affairs adviser at AARP.