JANM Observes the 81st Anniversary
With an In-Person Event in Little Tokyo.

Scouts and survivors and representatives of the 10 WRA camps stand with banners to honor the memory of the thousands of Japanese Americans who were incarcerated during WWII in the aftermath of Executive Order 9066, which was signed on Feb. 19, 1942.

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

2023 DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

JANM Observes the 81st Anniversary
With an In-Person Event in Little Tokyo.
WASHINGTON, D.C. — When President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, 81 years ago today (Feb. 19), it ushered in one of the most shameful periods in American history. The wrongful incarceration of 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent tore families apart.

Men, women and children were forced to abandon their homes, their jobs, their communities, their businesses and their way of life. They were sent to inhumane concentration camps simply because of their heritage. And in a tragic miscarriage of justice, the Supreme Court upheld these immoral and unconstitutional policies.

Despite losing liberty, security and the fundamental freedoms that rightfully belonged to them, 33,000 Japanese Americans volunteered or were drafted for service in the U.S. military during World War II. While their own families were behind barbed wires, Japanese Americans fought in defense of the nation’s freedom with valor and courage. The incarceration of Japanese Americans reminds us what happens when racism, fear and xenophobia go unchecked. As we battle for the soul of our nation, we continue to combat the corrosive effects of hate on our democracy and the intergenerational trauma resulting from it.

We reaffirm the Federal Government’s formal apology to Japanese Americans for the suffering inflicted by these policies. And we commit to Nidoto Nai Yoni — “Let It Not Happen Again.”

Patsy Mink to Be Featured on U.S. Quarter

The first woman of color to serve in Congress will be featured as part of the U.S. Mint’s 2024 American Women Quarters Program.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Mint is pleased to announce the following 2024 honorees for the Mint’s American Women Quarters Program:

- Patsy Takemoto Mink was the first woman of color to serve in Congress. As a member of Congress, she fought for gender and racial equality, affordable childcare and bilingual education, most notably with the passage of Title IX, which was later renamed the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act.
- Dr. Mary Edwards Walker was a Civil War era surgeon, women’s rights advocate and an abolitionist. Walker often crossed battle lines to care for wounded soldiers. Captured by the Confederate troops as a suspected spy, she was held as a prisoner of war for four months. She was awarded the Medal of Honor. Walker is the only woman to be awarded the Medal of Honor.
- Pauli Murray was a poet, writer, activist, lawyer and Episcopal priest, as well as a staunch advocate for civil rights, fighting against racial and sex discrimination. In 1966, she co-founded the National Organization for Women with Betty Friedan and other activists. Murray is regarded as one of the most important social justice advocates of the 20th century.
- Zitkala-Sa (meaning “Red Bird”), also known as Gertrude Simmons Bonnin, was a writer, composer, educator and political activist for Native Americans’ right to U.S. citizenship and other civil rights they had long been denied. She left her South Dakota home on the Yankton reservation at age 8 to attend a boarding school run by white missionaries, where her native culture and traditions were prohibited.
- Celia Cruz (Celia Caridad Cruz Alonso) was a Cuban American singer, cultural icon and one of the most popular Latin artists of the 20th century. Known as the “Queen of Salsa,” Cruz’s numerous honors and awards include five Grammy awards, a National Medal of Arts and a posthumous Lifetime Achievement Grammy.

“All of the women being honored have lived remarkable and multifaceted lives and have made a significant impact on our nation in their own unique way,” said Mint Director Christine Erwin. The Mint continues to connect America through coins, which are like small works of art in your pocket.”

The designs for the 2024 American Women Quarters Will be released in mid-2023. Mink, a third-generation Japanese American, was born and raised on Maui and served in the U.S. House of Representatives for 24 years; she won her historic seat in Congress in 1964.

See MINK on page 5
**THE IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBRANCE**

*By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director*

This year, we recognized another Day of Remembrance, the 81st anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s signing of Executive Order 9066, paving the way for 120,000 individuals of Japanese ancestry to be imprisoned at American concentration camps. The need to remember could not be more pronounced than it is today.

We remember what happened on Feb. 19, 1942, but also remember all that happened leading up to the signing of EO 9066 happened within the context of anti-Asian immigration laws, beginning with the Naturalization Act of 1870, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1907 and Immigration Act of 1924.

Concurrently, numerous states were enacting laws preventing immigrants, particularly Asian immigrants, from owning property; widely known as Alien Land Laws. Of course, in the wake of all “ethnic” laws, was founded in 1929, very specifically as the Japanese American Citizens League.

Since the end of World War II and the unconstitutional mass incarceration of Japanese Americans, we have made significant progress with numerous changes to immigration law, first allowing Issei to obtain citizenship extending to only five years after when the last remaining state Alien Land Law was repealed in Florida. None of this would have been possible without the broader civil rights movement of the 1960s and the same partnerships forged in those early years, which helped bring about the victory of redress in the ‘80s.

We have also faced many challenges. At the same time that we were forging a successful redress campaign, our community struggled to fight anti-Japanese sentiment due to a growing trade war between our two nations. Facing anti-Asian xenophobia brought back racist imagery, alarm at a Japanese takeover of America, acts of violence against companies with Toyota bashing with American autoworkers destroying cars with sledgehammers and last but not least, the murder of Vincent Chin, a Chinese American mistaken for being Japanese.

It is important that we remember all of this, as today there is an ongoing effort to return to these racist policies of the past and misremember our history as if these atrocities never happened.

The efforts to rewrite history are seen most vividly in the state of Florida, where Gov. Ron DeSantis and his ideologically driven school board are seeking to keep out education about African American history, banning the AP African American History class from being taught in the Florida schools. Such actions and concerted efforts are underway to encourage individuals in local school districts and library service areas to submit lists of books about multicultural experiences to be removed from their shelves.

As I noted earlier, the last remaining state Alien Land Law was repealed not more than five years ago in Florida. However, the state of Texas has recently introduced legislation to ban land ownership by noncitizens from China, Iran, Russia and North Korea. Gov. DeSantis has expressed support for such legislation in Florida, as well as Gov. Glenn Youngkin in Virginia. In theory, such laws would never stand due to discrimination on the basis of national origin, but under the fake guise of national security, Japanese Americans are once again facing the Constitution’s protections can be.

On Day of Remembrance, we re-member because history can and does repeat itself despite subsequent repudiations and promises not to repeat. It is our opportunity to tell the story of Japanese American incarceration and how our community experienced it, just as we share in books in school and public libraries or as a part of K-12 school curriculums. By sharing the sometimes ugliness of our country’s past and showing it for the ugliness that it was, we can shine light on any attempts to revive such policies as equally vile and rooted in racism.

We must all be vigilant to any attempts to return us to the backwards policies of the past and continue to educate our respective communities about the harms such policies inflict upon the target communities and the wounds that remain not just for the community, but also our nation and our ideals.

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

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**NIKKEI VOICE**

**ON ‘AUTHENTICITY’ IN JAPANESE FOOD**

*By Gil Asakawa*

Maybe not surprisingly, I’ve been a stickler for “authenticity” in food — especially Japanese food. The signing of EO 9066 happened in the context of anti-Asian immigration laws, beginning with the Naturalization Act of 1870, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1907 and Immigration Act of 1924.

Concurrently, numerous states were enacting laws preventing immigrants, particularly Asian immigrants, from owning property; widely known as Alien Land Laws. Of course, in the wake of all “ethnic” laws, was founded in 1929, very specifically as the Japanese American Citizens League.

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

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**COMMENTS**

**Food is truly the gateway to culture . . . and community.**

Gil Asakawa is the author of “Tabemasho! Let’s Eat! The Tasty History of Japanese Food in America.”

And being in Austin, he fell in love with Tex-Mex ingredients.

We know well of the efforts in Texas and Florida, but what about your community? Your neighborhood? We must all be vigilant to any attempts to return us to the backwards policies of the past and continue to educate our respective communities about the dangers such policies inflict upon the target communities and the wounds that remain not just for the community, but also our nation and our ideals.

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**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Food is truly the “gateway to culture . . . and community.”

PHOTOS: GIL ASAKAWA
DEDICATION HELD FOR PUBLIC ART
JAPANESE AMERICAN MEMORIAL

The new sculpture, designed by Patricia Wakida, includes the names of 606 Japanese American residents who were forced into incarceration camps from the Hayward, Calif., region.

By Robbin Kawabata

Dozens of Bay Area community members paid tribute to the 606 Japanese American residents of the Hayward area who were removed in 1942 at a ceremony on Feb. 4 dedicating a new public sculpture installed at the Hayward Heritage Plaza.

The sculpture, designed by artist and historian Patricia Wakida, was commissioned by the City of Hayward nearly three years ago and includes the names of persons of Japanese ancestry from the Hayward region who were forced into incarceration camps as a result of Executive Order 9066.

More than 60 Hayward city officials and guests attended the dedication ceremony at the Hayward Public Library following the sculpture dedication ceremony.

Speakers at the ceremony included Hayward Mayor Mark Salinas, Memorial Art Committee project leader Robbin Kawabata, Ferral, Wakida, Lois Oda from the Eden Township JACL chapter and Master of Ceremonies Victor Fuji. Musicians Peter and Wendy Horikoshi and Kyle Kashima performed the original song “Tanforan” at a reception held after the ceremony at the Hayward Public Library.

Funding for the sculpture was primarily from the City of Hayward, with additional funding from the JACL Legacy Fund Grant.

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LIVING TRUSTS | WILLS | POWERS OF ATTORNEY
EXTRAORDINARY HEROES AND THE POWER OF SPORTS

The FDR Presidential Library and Museum presents a conversation with Bradford Pearson, author of ‘The Eagles of Heart Mountain.’

By P.C. Staff


Held in the Henry A. Wallace Center at the FDR Presidential Library and Home and streamed live, the event also featured Director William H. Harris and was made possible through the generous support of Patti Hirahara. Following the issuance of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s signing of Executive Order 9066 and the forced incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans and people of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast during WWII, nearly 14,000 of them were sent to Heart Mountain, relegated to living in barracks built behind barbed-wire fences on the outskirts of Cody, Wyo.

In fall 1943, Heart Mountain High School formed its first football team, the Eagles, and in his book, Pearson describes how against tremendous odds, the team— made up mainly of young men who had never played football before— managed to have an undefeated season, crushing opponents from nearby Wyoming high schools all while facing the difficult challenges of living an incarcerated existence.

Before Pearson was welcomed to the stage, Harris took a moment to introduce Ken Oldenburg of the National Park Service, who American was new initiative by NPS Hyde Park.

“Today, the home of Franklin Roosevelt National Historic Site launches a 10-video series that will celebrate the lives of 10 incarcerated, one from each of the 10 ‘WRA’ camps, 10 Camps, 10 Stories,” said Oldenburg, who then presented an introductory video to the series.

“In a presidency filled with accomplishments, EO 9066 would prove a stain on Roosevelt’s administration,” the video shared. “While we can debate at length the legality or ethical issues of this Executive Order, in this series, we will share some of the inspirational human stories from inside the camps, stories of struggle, sacrifice, spirit and success.

The Roosevelt Vanderbilt National Historic Site is humbled to present ‘10 Camps, 10 Stories: Beyond the Barbed Wire.’”

A new story will launch each month and will air through the NPS’ social media outlets and YouTube page. The series will conclude on Dec. 10, the 75th anniversary of Human Rights Day, an event heavily supported by former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Harris then welcomed Pearson, an author/journalist originally from Hyde Park, N.Y., who discovered the story of the Eagles following a trip to the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center in Cody, Wyo., while on another assignment.

“This whole team of Japanese American high schoolers for me was so interesting in that we think of football as probably the most American sport . . . so we think about the implications of this group of teenagers who were being told they weren’t ‘American’ enough . . . it spins the story around from an ‘Americaness’ standpoint, which they’re being imprisoned for their perceived lack of being American,” said Pearson, describing what drew him to want to discover more about this team and its ability to not only inspire and uplift those on the Eagles but also the 14,000 individuals incarcerated at Heart Mountain during WWII.

Young men on the team also had to eventually deal with the question of joining the Army and being questioned about their “loyalty” to the U.S., all while playing their games against high schools from surrounding areas who would be bussed to Heart Mountain because the Eagles were not permitted to leave their forced confinement.

In addition, the Eagles were often outweighed by their competition by 20, 30, 40 pounds on average, but their speed more than made up for any inequities involving their body size, according to Pearson. To this day, the team still holds the greatest winning percentage of any football team in the history of the state of Wyoming.

“Nobody wanted to lose to the Eagles . . . because the Heart Mountain team was so good—they would basically just beat anyone who would come in, and these teams didn’t want to get embarrassed by this group of Japanese Americans who they were told were disloyal and violent and were going to be Americans,” said Pearson.

The author then immediately emphasized that “no Japanese American was ever convicted of sabotage or espionage against the U.S. government during WWII, which is the exact thing that the federal government used as evidence to send them to the camps. . . . The reason Japanese Americans were sent to camps — none of that ever came to fruition or came to bear in the U.S. during the war.”

MINK » continued from page 2

In 2021, U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono wrote a letter to Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, urging the U.S. Mint to include Mink. “Patsy Mink was a champion for social justice, equality and civil rights — she was a trailblazer in every sense of the word,” said Hirono in a press release. “As the first woman of color to serve in Congress and a lead author of Title IX, Congresswoman Mink worked to ensure that all women in our country have every opportunity men have.”

Authorized by Public Law 116-330, the American Women Quarters Program features coins with reverse (tails) designs emblematic of the accomplishments and contributions of American women. Five quarters in each of these years. The ethnically, racially and geographically diverse group of individuals honored through this program reflects a wide range of accomplishments and fields, including suffrage, civil rights, abolition, government, humanities, science, space and the arts.

(For more on Patsy Mink, see the Pacific Citizen’s Nov. 18-Dec. 15, 2022, edition.)
By P.C. Staff

As noted in her opening remarks, Japanese American National Museum Chief Development Officer Kelli-Ann Nakayama reminded the overflowing crowd that the Feb. 18 gathering to mark the Feb. 19, 1942, issuance of Executive Order 9066 was the first time since February 2020 that the JANM site in Little Tokyo served again as the venue for an in-person Day of Remembrance event (see Pacific Citizen, Feb. 21, 2020). That last DOR occurred right before the March 2020 lockdown that came about because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Nakayama also noted that the 2023 DOR, the theme for which was “Uniting Our Voices: Making Democracy Work for All,” was missing a pair of stalwart community members: Norman Y. Mineta, who died in May 2022, and Jim Matsuoka — to whom this DOR was dedicated — who died in October 2022.

“This is our first Day of Remembrance without our friend, extraordinary leader and JANM board of trustees chairman, the late Hon. Norman Y. Mineta. All of us here valued Secretary Mineta for his steadfast support and wealth of contributions to the advancement of equality, justice and liberty for all. He was a beacon of inspiration and support for JANM,” Nakayama said.

She then memorialized Matsuoka.

“He fought for equality, fairness and justice for all people,” Nakayama said, adding that he “always spoke out about injustice against the community” and “educated the general public.”

Nakayama then introduced the next speaker, DOR Committee Co-Chair and Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress member Richard Katsuda.

“It’s so great to be back at the Japanese American National Museum, where we can sit side-by-side and feel the warmth of the Japanese American community. We have to remember what happened to our community during World War II. We remember all of those former incarcerees who are no longer with us,” he told the audience.

Katsuda then introduced DOR Committee members Nancy Takayama, president of the San Fernando JACL chapter, and Glen Kitayama to read the camp roll call.

Boy Scouts from Troops 292, 361, 379 and 738, as well as Girl Scouts from Troop 1521 carried banners representing the 10 War Relocation Authority camps and escorted surviving former incarcerees (or descendants of survivors) representing those held in the camps to an area in the front of the stage. The number of residents that each camp held was included as each person’s name and the camp they represented was read aloud.

They were:

IN-PERSON DAY OF REMEMBRANCE RETURNS TO LITTLE TOKYO

The late Jim Matsuoka is feted as JANM hosts again after Covid-19-imposed interruption.
“The Tuna Canyon Detention Station has chosen to remember, to educate and to enable. Once the site for unjust crimes that could have been erased from history, it is now a North Star for thousands of individuals who choose not to remain lost any longer.”

Next in the program, Katsuda introduced a dialogue between Manjusha P. Kulkarni and Traci Ishigo. Kulkarni serves as executive director of AAPI Equity Alliance, formerly Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council (APPCON).

In March 2020, she co-founded Stop AAPI Hate, an aggregator of hate incidents against Asian Americans across the continental United States and the then-territory of Hawaii.

Kitayama then asked those able to stand for a moment of remembrance for those ethnic Japanese who were incarcerated in those camps, as well as those who lived outside the exclusion zones but were nevertheless affected by the xenophobia of the time.

“We also pay tribute to the thousands of Japanese Latin Americans and German and Italian Americans who were incarcerated by the U.S. government,” he added.

Following the procession ceremony, Takayama introduced Nishita Ishigo, the offspring of South Asian immigrants, recalled an incident in high school while living in Montgomery, Ala., with echoes of the experiences of mainland Japanese Americans during WWII.

“Ishigo, meantime, serves as director of Programs and Healing Justice at Vigilant Love, described by Katsuda as a “solidarity-based grassroots organization that works to protect the safety and justice of communities impacted by structural Islamophobia and white supremacist violence.”

For the first time post 9/11, Ishigo, one of ten former incarcerees to speak, shared her story of resiliency and efficacy.

Following that, Tokumaru reiterates how the experiences of mainland Japanese Americans during World War II can be an important tool for Asian American students to understand the complexity of their history.

Ishigo later in the conversation said, “I suspected that there must have been some community that we can really . . . build relationships with many communities and get to really know the real stories of what is impacting various communities.”

The conversation was followed by a musical interlude featuring Hiroshima kototsu June Kuramoto live playing “Thousand Cranes” to a recorded track as a tribute to Matsuoka, which was followed by a video in memoriam tribute, conducted by Jan Tokumaru, to community members of note who died recently.

Following that, Tokumaru reiterated this particular DOR was dedicated to the late Matsuoka. A video of Matsuoka speaking at the 2019 pilgrimage to Manzanar, where he had been incarcerated, and at one of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Interment of Civilian hearings, gave several speakers the opportunity to gather on stage and take turns to talk about Matsuoka’s life, achievements and memorable quotations and quips.

Another Hiroshima member, band founder Dori Sakamura, followed with another musical interlude, performing “Amazing Grace” on the flute.

The closing statement was given by L.A. DOR committee co-chair Matthew Weisbly, the JACL’s Education and Communications director. Reflecting on how 2023 marks 81 years since Executive Order 9066 and the 35th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, he remarked that redress was “an achievement that could not have been accomplished were not for the support of so many communities who stood with us — a united voice saying that this was a wrong that must be righted.”

“Yet, 80 years after Executive Order 9066 and 35 years after the signing of the Civil Liberties Act, we find so many of these issues that still need to be addressed across our country, many of which we’ve already discussed here today,” Weisbly added, referring to societal problems such as gun violence, anti-Asian violence, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

Striking a hopeful note as a “descendant of Chinese immigrants who suffered under the Chinese Exclusion Act, a former incarceree incarcerated at Gila River, Ariz., and Tule Lake, Calif., and European Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust,” Weisbly nevertheless said that “there is not only hope for our future, but action that we can take today.”

To view the recording of the 2023 Day of Remembrance event at JANN, visit tinyurl.com/457cr2mb.

*To view the recording of the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute’s Day of Remembrance event, which focused on Japanese Latin Americans, visit tinyurl.com/3ntyjhfld.*
JACL CHAPTERS ESCHEW VIRTUAL REALITY

San Fernando Valley, SELANOCO, Ventura County return to in-person installations.

(Editor’s Note: JACL was no exception to protections put into place to slow the spread of Covid-19 beginning in 2020, with chapters suspending in-person annual installation events. But by early 2023, California Gov. Gavin Newsom made his Feb. 28 declaration to end the Covid-19 state of emergency. In-person JACL chapter installations in the state were back. Following are reports from three Southern California JACL chapters that recently held installations.)

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY JACL

“I think 2020 was the last time we had our installation, and it’s really nice to be together again.”

With those words of welcome by Chapter President Nancy Takayama, the San Fernando Valley JACL celebrated its 81st installation, the Year of the Rabbit and a return to in-person board installations in Pacoima, Calif., on Jan. 12.

Chapter members marked the occasion at the San Fernando Valley Japanese American Community Center’s Sakaguchi Hall with food, fun activities and a keynote speech by former Girl Scout Emily Woo and an installation of officers conducted by Pacific Southwest District Gov. Ryan Yoshikawa.

After introducing special guests in attendance, such as Ventura County JACL’s Anne Chilcott, SFVJACC President Charles Muranaka and Nikkei Senior Gardens’ Daniel Okazaki, chapter member Jean-Paul deGuzman provided the opening meditation (which would at the end of the gathering give the expression of gratitude).

Yoshikawa commenced with the swearing-in ceremony. Taking the oath to serve as the chapter’s board of directors for 2023 were Chapter President Nancy Takayama, Barbara Okita, May Wood, Lana Kobayashi, deGuzman, Nancy Gohata, Kiyo Fukumoto, Tomo Hattori, Michiko Tokunaga Kus, Mitzi Kushida, Marcia Mahony, Kyoko Nancy Oda, Marion Shigekuni, Phil Shigekuni, Geri Shiraki, Patty Takayama, Mabel Takimoto, Linda Tanaka, Jami Tanihana, Jaclyn Tomita and Karen Yoshino.

In her keynote speech, Woo, now a second-year student at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, Calif., described herself as a fifth-generation Chinese American and spoke of her family’s many years of involvement at the SFVJACC, including activities like basketball, taiko and for her, Girl Scout Troop 140.

It was Woo’s project for her Gold Award — Girl Scout’s highest achievement — that was the subject of her speech. Woo interviewed SFVJACC’s elders for posterity and used those interviews as the springboard for a book she had published titled “The San Fernando Valley Japanese American Community Center: The Journey to a New Beginning.”

Noting that a Gold Award project must be measurable and sustainable, provide proof that has made a positive difference in the community and show that the positive difference is long-lasting, Woo said she was inspired by Barbara Oda, who shared with Woo something that had been on her mind for many years.

“She told me that every Japanese American community center had a book about its history — every Japanese American community center except for ours,” Woo said.

“With the stories, the people, the photos scattered all over the place, it was a foreseeably long and time-consuming project. And after all this time, it had never come together.”

Realizing there was a limited window of opportunity to get that history from still-living elders, Woo decided that she would, with her father serving as the cameraman, record their oral histories.

Woo also decided that she would embark on journey to “write and publish a book about the history of the SFVJACC, available as a printed book and an e-book to make it more accessible, as well as a supplemental video of interviews.”

Such an endeavor would be a huge task for an adult. For a then-16-year-old girl, it would prove to be overwhelming. “I thought about giving up. I’m a teenager, teenagers don’t write books, professors write books,” Woo recalled. “Can a high schooler really write a book?”

Not only did Woo write her book, she received local recognition on the Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles Facebook page. About a month after that, she and her project were highlighted on the National Girl Scouts Facebook page. “I hope that one day in the future, another young person will have the passion and the perseverance to create a second edition of this book,” she said.

Just before Chapter President Takayama addressed the audience, the recent deaths of Pat Kubota, 98, and Tom Doi, 101, were noted. Both had been active with the SFVJACC and the San Fernando Valley JACL.

Takayama spoke about the importance of community and the National JACL Convention in Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo in July.

—— P.C. Staff

SELANOCO JACL

The full heritage of the South-East Los Angeles and North Orange County (SELANOCO) JACL chapter was celebrated at its 57th annual installation, held on Jan. 28 in Fullerton, Calif., at the Old Spaghetti Factory.

Jamie Morishima, who served as co-president with Nicole Inouye for 2022, continued her role as she welcomed Joseph Gu as the chapter’s new co-president.

Recalling the two years she served as both 2021 president and 2022 co-president with Morishima, outgoing Co-President Inouye said, “I’m grateful. I’m standing on the shoulders of the giants of the community. Gratitude is the word that best describes my term as president.”

As for Morishima, she said, “Everyone here has played such a big role in our success.” Reflecting on the anti-Asian sentiments and actions that arose with the pandemic, she allowed how serving was “disheartening at times,” adding that she was nevertheless “grateful for the community we serve.”

Gu, an alumni of the University of California Irvine’s Tomo No Kai student group, has been involved with the SELANOCO chapter for four years. Morishima and Gu agreed they look forward to a “busy 2023.”

The oath of office was administered by Dominique Mashburn, JACL National vp for 1000 Club, Membership and Services. A total of 20 members will serve as chapter officers and board members for the upcoming year.

The chapter’s Clarence Nishizuru Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Erin Hitomi. Active with the Statewide Poverty Action Network, Hitomi is currently pursuing her master’s in public health. She has also participated in food reclamation and redemption programs and was a member of her temple’s Junior YBA (Young Buddhists of America) and basketball teams.

Mary Anne Foo, executive director of the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA), was the featured guest speaker. She recalled growing up in Yuba City, Calif., in the 1980s when it was “really bad” for Japanese Americans, in particular, and Asian Americans, in general, due in large part to trade tensions between the U.S. and Japan. She recalled it was a time during which Vincent Chin was bludgeoned to death in 1982 by an unemployed Detroit autoworker who blamed Chin — a Chinese American — for losing his job.

“My mom and dad were
For a while, I wanted to be white. ‘ignore it’ whenever I experienced tion in civil rights and diversity work.

School. The suspect reportedly Min Ly, who was stabbed to death detailed the 1996 murder of Thien

dying to hit her with their cars. She trying to be able to share it, as that is my

be a storyteller of the stories that I

job and profession, and my blessing

heart and big ears to listen to all your

notes. And I come with just the full

for three projects, two of which are among the most-ic Japan-based tokusatsu intellectual properties, the

other being an IP related to “Avatar: The Last Airbender.”

Following Tomita’s speech was the formal installation of the Ventura County JACL’s 2023 board, with the oath conducted by Yoshikawa. Returning as co-presidents were Megan Gately and Welty-Tamai; serving as vps are Janice McCormick and Jessica Wan (also the chapter’s webmaster); secretary Anne Chilcott; and longtime treasurer Ken Nakano. Members-at-large are Joanne Nakan, Mark Chilcott, Janice Tanaka (grants coordinator), Samantha Wylis and Sarah Taketa (scholarship chair), and serving as a historic Japa

nese American cemetery coordinator is Betty Katsuma.

Yoshikawa also presented a certifi-

cate to the chapter for being a 2022 recipient of a JACL Legacy Fund grant. There was also a raffle; some were made by Kiyo Fukumoto. Those who did not win did not, however, go home empty-handed, as there were bags of vegetables from local farms for all attendees.

In attendance at ABCUSD’s Day of Remembrance event at Cerritos High School on Feb. 21 were (seated, from left) Richard Murakami and Bill Shishima and (standing, from left) Frank Yokoyama, Kyoko Oda, Ernie Nishii Kay Oda and Jenny Chomori.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF KYOKO ODA

CERRITOS, CALIF. — Living history lessons were observed and presented at ABCUSD middle and

public schools’ Day of Remembrance events for two full days via Zoom and onsite performances beginning on Feb. 21.

The ABC Unified School District, formed in 1965, covers the Southern California cities of Artesia, Cerritos, Hawaiian Gardens and portions of Lakewood, Long Beach and Norwalk and serves more than 18,000 students.

ABCUSD staff went full force in supporting the district-wide event to educate students on the 81st anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This year marks the fifth year that this innovative program has been part of the curriculum.

 Said Ernie Nishi, a trustee clerk at ABCUSD, “It is the only program of its kind in terms of depth, reach and commitment by the community and the district.”

Nishi supported the Day of Remembrance programming in memory of his artist mother, Ernie Jane Masako Nishi, who passed away in 2017 of ALS. After going to the Tule Lake pilgrimage in 2009, she embedded her memories in artful compositions using clay, wood, fabric, barbed wire and wood.

During the in-person event, many students lined up to ask questions that the 90-plus-year-old elder participants, many of whom were docents from the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo, answered without hesitation.

“I didn’t get a repeat question from the five sessions,” said Joyce Okazaki.

Cerritos City Council Member Frank Yokoyama attended the Cerritos High School assembly with his son, who is a 10th grader. Yokoyama’s grandfather was incarcerated at the Tule Lake Concentration Camp, then Topaz, Utah.

Also in attendance were Lauren Yokozono from L.A. County Supervisor’s Janice Hahn’s office, as well as Artesia City Council Member Monica Manalo and Hawaiian Gardens City Council Member Dandy De Paula.

Also in attendance were ABCUSD Interim Superintendent Tuon Nguyen and trustees Brad Beach, president, and Olga Riios, who commenced the program at their district board meeting that took place following the Cerritos High School assembly event.

Specialist Aurey Rios coordinated practice sessions, locations, moderators and technical support in breakout rooms.

“We look forward to the ABCUSD Day of Remembrance every year,” said Sansei Kyoko Oda. “The Nisei speakers always express their appreciation to their parents. It’s remarkable that they all do Zoom.”

Professional experts Jenny Chomori, Janet Fuji and Jason Fuji from the Manzanar Committee have been instrumental in program quality and content. During other years, Min Tani from Amache, Kanji Sahara from Rohwer/Jerome and Marvin Inouye from Crystal City, Texas, were on the event panel discussion.

Former incarcerees who were pri

ary resource sources are Bob Moriguchi from Amache, Colo.; Hal Keimi, Bacon Sakatani and Mike Hatchi

monji from Heart Mountain, Wyo.; Iku Kiriyama and Joyce Okazaki from Manzanar, Calif.; Kay Oda from Poston, Ariz.; and Kyoko Oda from Tule Lake Segregation Center. Richard Murakami’s family was shipped to Tule Lake, Topaz and finally Heart Mountain, Wyo.

March 10-23, 2023

PHOTO: COURTESY OF KYOKO ODA

OUTGOING SELANOCO JACL CO-PRESIDENT NICOLE INOUE (LEFT), WITH NEW CHAPTER CO-PRESIDENT JOSEPH GU AND INCUMBENT CO-PRESIDENT JAMIE MORISHIMA ON JAN. 28 IN FULLERTON, CALIF.

“WE HAVE A LOT TO LEARN FROM JACL,” SAID FOO. “THEY WERE THE FIRST ETHNIC ORGANIZATION TO SUPPORT LGBTQ IN 1984, THEY ACCEPTED SAME-SEX MARRIAGES IN 1992, 24 YEARS BEFORE THE NAACP.” DURING 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 1992, 24 YEARS BEFORE THE NAACP.” DURING 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 1992, 24 YEARS BEFORE THE NAACP.” DURING 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 1992, 24 YEARS BEFORE THE NAACP.” DURING 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL WAS ACTIVE IN MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN 9/11, SHE SAID JACL W
A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

NATIONAL

Irei — A National Monument for the WWII Japanese American Incarceration
Los Angeles, CA
JANM 100 N. Central Ave.
The irei/chot contains the first comprehensive listing of more than 125,000 persons of Japanese ancestry who were forcibly incarcerated during World War II. Visitors can now view the book and leave a special hankoo (staple/seal) for each person in the monument as a way to honor those incarcerated. The project’s online archive is now searchable alphabetically or by camp.

Info: Visit irei.chot.com for more information.

The Past Is Not Past: Japanese American WWII Incarceration and the Yonsei Generation
March 23; 5-7:30 p.m.
Webinar Event
Price: Free
In the first major public event for the Yonsei Project, Dr. Donna Nagata will share her preliminary findings and interpretations of her recent survey of 500 Yonsei descendants of WWII incarceration, whose responses show that the past is anything but over. She will be joined in conversation by Dr. Satsuki Ina, Brandon Shimoda and Daryn Wakasa.

Info: To register to receive a link for the event, visit https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUocuemIqomYSE6Oxkmn4-bZ2Z.

NCWNP

‘Color Trip: Yoshida Hodaka’s Modern Prints’
San Francisco, CA
On View Now
Asian Art Museum
Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Arts & Culture 200 Larkin St.
The museum presents 50 of Japanese artist Yoshida Hodaka’s works in his first solo exhibition in the U.S. Hodaka (1926-95) embraced traditional woodblock print technique while forging his own unique style of fantastic landscapes.


Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival
San Francisco, CA
April 8-9 and 15-16; 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

San Francisco JapanTown
Price: Free
The 56th festival is one of California’s most prominent celebrations of Asian traditions and the largest Cherry Blossom Festival on the West Coast. All are welcome to join in the festivities in person again!

Info: Visit sfcherryblossom.org.

PSW

Keio Caregiver Conference
Santa Ana, CA
March 18; 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Wintersburg Presbyterian Church 2000 N. Fairview St.
This year’s in-person conference theme is “Discovering Your Inner Caregiver,” which will cover three key traits for successful caregiving: communication, company and creativity. Registration is required and will feature presentations, valuable resources and a bento lunch.

Info: Visit www.keio.org/caregiver-conference or email programs@keio.org.

JANM Book Club: ‘Secret Harvests’
Los Angeles, CA
March 18; 2-3:30 p.m.
JANM Tateuchi Democracy Forum 100 N. Central Ave.
Price: Event Included in Admission (General $16; Members Free)
Join author David Mas Masumoto and artist Patricia Wakida for the launch of their new book “Secret Harvests: A Hidden Story of Separation, Silence, Shame and the Resilience of a Family Farm.” They will be joined in reading, reflection and discussion by Sean Mura.


Ventura County JACL Book Club Discussion
Ventura, CA
March 23; 7 p.m.
Virtual Zoom Event
Price: Free
Join the Ventura County JACL Book Club as it discusses “An American Son: The Story of George Aranita” with author Naomi Hirahara. This is a virtual event, so please contact the chapter to receive Zoom meeting information.

Info: Contact Betty Katsura at (805) 216-2769 or email bettykatsura@gmail.com.


Book Event
Gardena, CA
March 25; 2-4 p.m.
GVCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall 1964 W. 162nd St.
Price: Free; Registration Required
This discussion focuses on the role of the Japanese American incarneration in 1942, weaving together the narratives of Mexican and Japanese immigrants into a single transpacific history.

Info: Visit jci-gardena.org.

‘Faith, Hope and Courage’
Torrance, CA
March 25; 2-4 p.m.
Faith UMC 196 W. 182nd St.
Price: Free
This event will feature personal sharing of Japanese faith journeys from LGBTQIA+ individuals and also help promote Okaeri LA’s fifth biennial conference, which is set for Nov. 10-12. Featured speakers will include Aiden Aizumi, Colleen Tani and Rev. Kelly Schmitz.

Info: To RSVP, call Faith UMC at (310) 217-7000 or email murakami4@aol.com.

‘A Rebel’s Outcry’ Short Film Screening and Book Talk
Los Angeles, CA
April 2; 2-4 p.m.
Venice Japanese Community Center 12448 Braddock Dr.
Price: Free

Info: To register, visit bit.ly/AROatVJCC.

PNW

‘Parabolic Bared Wire’ Exhibit
Powell, WY
Now Open
Heart Mountain Interpretive Center 13599 Road 19
This new exhibit features the remarkable stories of Heart Mountain internees Clareence Matsumura and Holocaust survivor Sally Gannor. The exhibit details their remarkable friendship throughout their lives.

Info: Visit www.heartmountain.org for exhibit information and further details.

‘A Long Road to Travel: The Service of Japanese American Soldiers During World War II’
Portland, OR
Opens Feb. 18
Japanese American Museum of History and Culture at Naito Center 411 N.W. Flanders St.
This exhibit focuses on the often-arduous journey taken by Nisei soldiers to serve their country. It also expands on the “What If Heroes Were Not Welcome Home” exhibit and explores important stories and encourages thoughtful reflection, asking visitors to consider what they would have done in the same situation.

Info: Visit https://jamo.org/exhibits/a-long-road.

‘Resisters: A Legacy of Movement From the Japanese American Incarceration’
Seattle, WA
Thru Sept. 18
Price: Check Museum for Admission Prices
This exhibit leads visitors through a historical narrative of Japanese American incarceration in the 1940s and illustrates generational trauma and cultural after shocks of their unjust experience.


MDC

Yayoi Kusama: To Infinity and Back Again
Chicago, IL
March 21; 6-7 p.m. (CST)
Virtual Event
Price: Free
Join the Japan America Society Chicago in this presentation about the life and art work of this legendary artist. This lecture, presented by Mary Ellen Murphy, will offer details of Kusama’s career and also feature Kusama’s work in various formats, including her current fashion project with Louis Vuitton.

Info: Visit www.jaschicago.org or zoom meeting information.

JDC

Japanese Cup
Westminster, CA
April 15
Front Range Community College 3645 W. 112th Ave.
Japan Cup brings together students of Japanese for a competition on a wide variety of subject matter. This event is sponsored by the Japan America Society of Colorado.

Info: Visit jascolorado.org.

EDC

25th Annual National Cherry Blossom Freedom Walk
Washington, D.C.
April 1; 9 a.m.
National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II (Located at Louisiana, New Jersey and D St., NW)
Price: Free
All are invited to participate in this annual walk commemorating and continuing our fight for civil rights. Event speakers will include Wade Henderson and Shirley Ann Higuchi. Event sponsors are the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, Japanese American Veterans Assn., JACL Washington, D.C., chapter and Ekoji Buddhist Temple.


‘Hokusai: Inspiration and Influence’
Exhibit
Boston, MA
March 26-July 16
Museum of Fine Arts 465 Huntington Ave.
Taking a new approach to the work of Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849), this major exhibit explores the impact on other artists — both during his lifetime and beyond.


National Portrait Gallery: ‘One Life: Maya Lin’
Washington, D.C.
National Portrait Gallery
8th and G Streets N.W.
This is the first biographical exhibition of the architect/sculptor/environmentalist.


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**TRIBUTE**

**MASAKI TAKANO**

Masaki Takano, 90, passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, on Feb. 12, 2023. Born in Alameda, Calif., in 1932, he spent most of his life in the Bay Area, outside of two years in Hawaii in the ’60s. During WWII, he and his family were incarcerated at the Amache Relocation Center. He is survived by his three children, Jamie, Jenna, Allyson, and Kelsey, and Connor. He also leaves behind two sisters, Teruko Isono and Ikuko Takeshita, and his loving extended family of nieces, nephews and their children.

Masaki worked at Hawaiian Air, and became vice president of a travel industry.

Masaki loved fishing, golf, going to basketball watch parties at the church and spending time with friends and family. He was a former president of the Alameda Buddhist Temple, and an active member of his entire life. In 2018, he was Co-Grand Marshall for Alameda’s Fourth of July Parade.

A memorial service will be held on Friday, April 21, at 3 p.m. at the Alameda Buddhist Temple (2325 Pacific Ave). Face masks required. Please carpool as parking will be very limited.

**TRIBUTE**

**YOSHIE OKUMA**

Yoshie (Nakamura) Okuma, age 99, was born on June 14, 1923, in El Centro, Calif., and passed away peacefully on Jan. 31, 2023, in San Diego.

Yoshie grew up in El Centro with her eight siblings until being evacuated in 1942 to Santa Anita and then the Poston Internment Camp.

Yoshie married Keesuke Okuma, and together they relocated to San Diego after the war.

She is lovingly remembered by her children, Michael Okuma and Keiko Negoro, three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. A celebration of life will be held at the Buddhist Temple of San Diego on Saturday, March 18 at 11 a.m.

**TRIBUTE**

**SUELLEN UMEKO YONEDA**

Feb. 10, 1926-Dec. 29, 2022

Suelen was known to her family and friends by various loving names such as “Sue,” “Mom,” “Mrs. Yoneda,” “Mrs. Y.” and especially her favorite, “Babun.”

Suelen was a kindergarten teacher at Hookena, Kona, Hawaii for many years. While there, she met and married T. Ted Yoneda, who also was a teacher at Hookena.

Every New Year’s Eve, her grandchildren and daughters would converge at the Yoneda house to learn “the art” of Japanese cuisine, Babun-style. And on New Year’s Day, friends and relatives would “pā‘ina” at the Yoneda house, watching Bowl games and enjoying all the great food prepared the night before.

In 2016, at the “young age” of 90 and still working as a yard duty supervisor at Kennedy Elementary School, the Stockton Record profiled Sue on the front page of their newspaper. Her story was also featured on “Good Day Sacramento,” and on other various TV news channels.

Suelen began her battle with cancer almost 20 years ago but battled Stage 4 cancer for five years. Throughout Kaiser’s Oncology Department, she was known for her sunny disposition and as “the walking miracle.”

Suelen was survived by her husband, T. Ted Yoneda of Stockton; her daughters, Maryam (David) Davis of Stockton, Jayne-Lei (David) Goad of Acampo and Elaine (Mark) McCarty of Ripon; and her son, Theodore (Cheryl) Yoneda of Fairmont, W.V.; grandchildren, Courtney (Grayland) Walter, Taylor Davis, Madison (Bill) Doyle, grandchildren, Ezra and Isaac Yoneda; great-grandchildren, Liam Aguilar, Apollo and Kiyomi Walker and Holden and Aerais Buchanan; brothers, Susumu and Kenneth (Loretta) Hayashi of Hilo, Hawaii; sister, Ruth Hayashi; and sister-in-law, Leslie Hayashi of Honolulu; nieces, Melanie Russell, Cassie Petre, Elena Owens, Tessi Iha, Darlene Brodkin, Kristi Hayashi, Kendra Jitchaku; and nephews, Eric Hayashi, Eric and Russell Ogi.

Suelen was preceded in death by her parents, Tsurukichi and Hisayo (Kitayama) Hayashi; brothers, Adrian Hayashi, Mark Hayashi, Etsuo Hayashi, Yoshi Hayashi, Stanley Hayashi, Larry Hayashi; sister, Kathleen Rowland; and nephew, Greig Ogi.

She was also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; ggc: 5; ggc: 4.
AARP HAWAI’I SPONSORING STAGE AND SCREEN PERFORMANCE ABOUT NISEI IN WWII

By Craig Gima

For more than 35 years, Los Angeles TV anchor David Ono has been telling award-winning news stories on television. The saga of the World War II Nisei soldiers of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team and Military Intelligence Service are the stories closest to his heart.

Ono traveled to battlefields in France, Germany, Italy and Okinawa, as well as Hawaii’s, to tell their story, and the videos he and producing partner Jeff MacIntyre filmed are now a stage show, “Defining Courage.”

The journey from small-screen news series documentary to big-screen and stage production with live narration, music and chorus started with a speech, Ono recalls. For years, Ono had emceed the fundraising banquet for the Go For Broke National Education Center, but he was stumped when asked to give the keynote address. “What if I add video and take people to the battlefields where they (Nisei soldiers) fought?” Ono wondered. The result was a drop-the-microphone success.

Asked again to present “Defining Courage” at the Asian American Journalists Assn. national conference in Los Angeles last year, Ono added original music, a chorus and new video and stories shot just weeks before. He left the audience wiping away tears and got a standing ovation.

(Author’s note: I was in the audience and saw the production.)

With music and on a big screen onstage, seeing the battlefields of the dense forests of Bruyeres and the cliffs of the Gothic line in Italy that 100th Battalion soldiers climbed at night and where, as Ono narrates, some “fell silently to their deaths, not screaming so they wouldn’t give away the position of their buddies,” has a powerful impact.

The next performance, on March 18, is in Hawaii’s, where the 100th Battalion, 442nd RCT and MIS originated. That’s not accidental, Ono said. He has wanted the first performance outside of Los Angeles to be in Hawaii’s. The Daniel K. Inouye Institute, Japanese American National Museum, Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii, National Park Service, Pacific Historical Parks, the AARP Hawaii’s State office and other donors are making it possible.

AARP Hawaii’s is a co-sponsor of the showing as part of our efforts to support veterans, military caregivers and diversity. We also recently sponsored the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal to Filipino American and Chinese American WWII veterans and their families. Donations from sponsors will help offset the cost of producing, preshow publicity and tickets for veterans.

“It (‘Defining Courage’) is the story of the greatest generation and the incredible sacrifice in the shadow of great discrimination and hate, and they were still able to rise to the occasion,” Ono said. “It’s not a history lesson. I don’t want people to think they are going to go in there and learn about something 80 years ago and go home.”

Ono wants people to remember that these were ordinary people who were able to find courage to accomplish extraordinary feats.

“At those moments when I feel I need a dose of courage, I think about those guys. As bad as you think your situation is, it is nothing compared to what they did. They still found a way to rise to the occasion.”

Ono is talking to organizations and possible sponsors to bring the show to other places after Hawaii’s – possibly to the U.S. Japan Council conference, the JACL national conference, Chicago and Washington, D.C.

It’s also hoped proceeds from the March 18 show at the Hawaii’s Theatre will defray the cost of another showing for high school and college students later this year in Hawaii’s and the development of educational curriculum around the show.

“We’re hoping that this is just the beginning,” Ono said.

To learn more about sponsorship opportunities and/or buy tickets to the Hawaii’s “Defining Courage” performance, visit www.DefiningCourageShow.com. To find out about AARP’s veterans initiative and resources for military caregivers, visit www.aarp.org/veterans.

Craig Gima is the communications director for AARP Hawaii’s.

“Defining Courage” was shown recently in Washington, D.C.

PHOTO: DARRELL MINO