



# PACIFIC CITIZEN

Megumi Field makes history in Paris in artistic swimming.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF USA ARTISTIC SWIMMING

» **PAGE 3**

JACL's Larry Oda Looks to the Future.

» **PAGE 5**

'Ultraman: Rising' Soars on the Small Screen.

» **PAGE 6**

## AN OLYMPIC DREAM REALIZED

Artistic Swimming's Megumi Field on a lifetime's sacrifice to her sport.

CELEBRATING  
**95**  
Years

# Our History, Our People, Our Community

By Sheldon Arakaki,  
JACL Pacific Northwest  
District Governor and P.C.  
Editorial Board Member



I read the *Pacific Citizen* because it tells the never-ending story of Japanese Americans through the lens of the JACL, its members' activities and actions and the community at large, which supports the organization. There are lessons to be relearned and perhaps ideas about a path forward for JACL's second century.

One of the newer chapters to this story is the just-concluded 2024 convention in Philadelphia, the largest in-person multigenerational gathering of the JACL membership this year. Members, friends and supporters posted messages, photos and short videos in a variety of social media platforms about JACL's largest programming event, but the *Pacific Citizen* staff was there providing comprehensive coverage and capturing the energy of National Council and the excitement of the APIAVote Presidential Town Hall.

The *Pacific Citizen* was also there to write stories about the people — members we honored for their service at national and district and

for community role models who inspire. The convention stories published include the names of those in front of and behind the scenes, the delegates, committee chairs, board members and volunteers.

All of this eventually becomes a part of the *Pacific Citizen* archives, a rich source of JACL history — especially of its members and their actions set against the backdrop of our nation's history.

What was JACL and its members doing and thinking in January 1942, the month after Pearl Harbor and the month before EO 9066 in an atmosphere of anxiety, fear and the desire to prove loyalty.

Read Vol. 14, No. 161. National Secretary Mike Masaoka wrote in an essay, "Let this be our vow for 1942: To Serve America." The Bainbridge Island subcommittee of the Seattle JACL decided to sponsor a defense bond drive not knowing that in a few weeks, they would be the first Japanese American community "evacuated" in spite of this act of patriotism. The winter season saw the first biennial Inter-Mountain District Convention held in Pocatello, where 300 delegates passed one resolution that was probably influenced by Pearl Harbor. Chapter charters were presented to Idaho Falls, Pocatello and Rexburg, Idaho (aka Yellow-

stone JACL). Chapters launched even greater efforts to increase membership while changes to membership handling were implemented and calls for donations to National JACL were made. This last story could also be 2024.

Next year is the 60th anniversary of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which transformed Asian America. What did JACL say and do to advocate for this legislation? What did JACLers think about the seven-category preference system, family reunification and immigration-based labor and skill?

Apparently, JACL had representatives at the bill signing. Read about JACL's civic engagement and policy positions in Vols. 60 and 61. The *Pacific Citizen* covers the journey, at the top of the fold, from when President Lyndon B. Johnson called on Congress to eliminate the national origins quota system in January to the introduction of legislation in February to the eventual passage by both legislative chambers in August and September.

This and other stories of JACL are about its members engaging with each other in healthy debate, finding common ground, building community and working with partner organizations to create a better America. The *Pacific Citizen* is there reporting that story for us to learn from today and 30 years from now.

Support the *Pacific Citizen's* Spring Campaign and keep the coverage going. ■

### HOW TO REACH US

Email: [pc@pacificcitizen.org](mailto:pc@pacificcitizen.org)  
 Online: [www.pacificcitizen.org](http://www.pacificcitizen.org)  
 Tel: (213) 620-1767  
 Mail: 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 206  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

### STAFF

<b>Executive Editor</b> Allison Haramoto	<b>Business Manager</b> Susan Yokoyama
<b>Senior Editor</b> George Johnston	<b>Production Artist</b> Marie Samonte
<b>Digital &amp; Social Media</b>	<b>Circulation</b> Eva Ting

The *Pacific Citizen* newspaper (ISSN: 0030-8579) is published semi-monthly (except once in December and January) by the Japanese American Citizens League, *Pacific Citizen*, 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 206, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Periodical postage paid at L.A., CA

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to National JACL, 1765 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115.

**JACL President:** Larry Oda  
**Executive Director:** David Inoue

**P.C. EDITORIAL BOARD**  
 John Saito Jr., chairperson; Ron Kuramoto, MDC; Rob Buscher, EDC; Marcia Chung, CCDC; Nancy Ukai, NCWNPDC; Sheldon Arakaki, PNWDC; Lisa Olsen, IDC; Mitchell Matsumura, PSWDC; Remy Kageyama, Youth Rep.

### Subscribe

Get a one-year subscription of the *Pacific Citizen* newspaper at: [www.pacificcitizen.org](http://www.pacificcitizen.org) or call (213) 620-1767.

### Advertise

To advertise in the *Pacific Citizen*, call (213) 620-1767 or e-mail: [busrmgr@pacificcitizen.org](mailto:busrmgr@pacificcitizen.org).

### LEGAL

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the express permission of the *Pacific Citizen*. Editorials, letters, news and the opinions expressed by columnists other than the national JACL president or national director do not necessarily reflect JACL policy. Events and products advertised in the P.C. do not carry the implicit endorsement of the JACL or this publication. We reserve the right to edit articles. © 2024

**Periodicals paid at Los Angeles, Calif. and mailing office.**

## LETTER to the EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Voting matters. Voting is always necessary, however, various elections in 2024 may be the most critical in history. Voting is the foundation of our democracy, and democracy may be on the line.

Let's not repeat the primary of 2016 when some voters abstained from voting because their candidate

was not on the ballot. Uncertainty about the candidates or impact of a ballot resolution is not a reason to refrain from voting. Become informed about the candidates and the issues that affect your family, community and country.

A recent poll released by NBC News on April 20, 2024, indicated that interest in voting is lower than in the past 20 years. Sixty-four percent of Americans state they have a high interest in the November election compared with 77 percent in 2020.

Although, a recent Harvard poll

indicates that nationwide, more than half of young Americans, ages 18-24, stated they will definitely vote in 2024 elections.

Voting impacts every area of our lives, including: education; climate change and environmental protection; representation in all levels of decision-making, including the Supreme Court; housing and homelessness; health care; reproductive choice; immigration; civil rights and social/racial equity; LGBTQIA+ equity; the disabled; the elderly; the criminal justice system; gun control; tax equality; the

economy; and international affairs.

Voting is not just for the next four years, it's for our children and those who come after us. It's for intergenerational social justice. Voting is our civil right, our voice for the future and a safe and sustainable planet.

For information on voting rights and election information see, APIAVote at <https://apiavote.org>.

Sincerely,

Gail Yamamoto Seymour and  
NCWNPDC Civil Rights Committee

## 2024 SPRING CAMPAIGN

**JACL MEMBER?**  Y  N    \$50    \$100    \$150    \$200    OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address 1 : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number : \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail : \_\_\_\_\_

**The P.C.'s mission is to 'educate on the past Japanese American experience and preserve, promote and help the current and future AAPI communities.'**

*\* Your donations will help build and preserve a cohesive library of the Pacific Citizen to educate future generations.\**

'I'm glad to see the *Pacific Citizen* growing and evolving with its website and especially LOVE the much easier-to-navigate digital archives. It's a treasure trove for JAs to learn about our community's history and for scholars and journalists looking to connect the past with the present. Thanks for the improvements, P.C.!'

— Gil Asakawa

**INFORMATION:** 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 206 | Los Angeles, CA 90012 | TEL: (213) 620-1767 | WWW.PACIFICCITIZEN.ORG

### JACL MEMBERS

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**  
 If you've moved, please send new information to: **National JACL**  
 1765 Sutter St.  
 San Francisco, CA 94115  
 (415) 921-5225 ext. 26  
 ALLOW 6 WEEKS FOR ADDRESS CHANGES.  
 TO AVOID INTERRUPTIONS IN DELIVERY, PLEASE NOTIFY YOUR POSTMASTER TO INCLUDE PERIODICALS IN YOUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS (USPS Form 3575)

**JACL Members Not Receiving Your Pacific Citizen?**  
 Please contact Tomiko Ismail, JACL Membership/Database Administrator, at (415) 921-5225, ext. 26, or email [tismail@jacl.org](mailto:tismail@jacl.org).

# Oda Takes Stock: 2022-2024 & 2024-2026

As JACL prexy enters his fourth term, can a restabilized JACL finally move forward?

By P.C. Staff

**I**d like to thank all of you for entrusting me with the future of the JACL again these next couple of years. I look forward to serving again as national president.”

Those words by newly installed JACL National President Larry Oda, shortly after Hawaii's Rep. Jill Tokuda administered the oath of office for the new 2024-26 JACL officers present at the July 13 Sayonara Gala at the JACL National Convention in Philadelphia, were part of his first official statement as he entered his fourth stint leading the organization.

Oda is no stranger, however, to making remarks after becoming JACL national president, having been elected to back-to-back two-year terms in 2006 and 2008. With this most recent election, he has been elected to yet another consecutive biennium — making him the only person in JACL's history to have served in the role more than two terms. Two years from now, Oda will have served as JACL national president for four two-year terms.

Does that make him some sort of glutton for punishment? No, says Oda. Rather, he feels a deep responsibility regarding JACL's future. “The organization needs to continue, and it needs to have some leadership,” Oda told the *Pacific Citizen*. “I would probably say that there are better leaders, but I'm the best they could do at this point.”

During the convention's July 11 Candidates Forum, Oda said, “I came back to the organization two years ago because our chapter was concerned, I think our district was concerned, that there were no candidates at all. So, you know, that showed me that . . . something happened, you know. We fell down.”

Oda's remark was in reference to the situation by mid-2022, when there were no candidates running for election for any of the open positions, including the office of JACL national president. As the only person to run for the position, he won.

In August 2022, when the *Pacific Citizen* asked Oda (see Aug. 26, 2023, *Pacific Citizen*, [pacificcitizen.org/larry-oda-back-in-the-saddle-again/](https://pacificcitizen.org/larry-oda-back-in-the-saddle-again/)) whether he thought the JACL was facing a crisis, he answered: “We may be hiding our head in the sand, but, yeah, I think it is a crisis. I mean, for the whole slate to be empty?”

In 2024, when prompted to revisit his thoughts from two years earlier, Oda said, “When I made those comments, maybe I had my head in the sand, too, because I thought that all the infrastructure was intact and that I could step in, everything — the finances, financial reporting — would be as it was before. But it seems that as we got into it, I think I was told that we were three audits behind. And, you know, I assumed, ‘Well, well, no big deal.’ It's just a matter of getting it done.”

As it turned out, several unanticipated problems faced Oda, namely a gap in institutional knowledge, procedures and best practices that occurred in the wake of the 2015 retirement of former business manager Clyde Izumi, who was succeeded by Matthew Walters, who himself left JACL to work and

**Larry Oda addresses the JACL National Council during the JACL National Convention. Oda was re-elected as JACL national president. This will be his fourth term in the role, unprecedented in JACL's history.**

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON



live in Japan in 2018. “That's why a lot of our finances kind of fell apart,” Oda opined, referring to the interim period when there was no full-time JACL business manager, followed by the tenure of Walters' successor, who has since left the employ of the JACL.

Then there were other time-consuming and unforeseen financial obstacles that occurred during Oda's 2022-24 tenure: For the former, one example: addressing the years-in-the-making disarray of the JACL's Legacy Fund (see Nov. 17, 2023, *Pacific Citizen*, [pacificcitizen.org/national-board-puts-legacy-fund-under-microscope/](https://pacificcitizen.org/national-board-puts-legacy-fund-under-microscope/)), which as of the 2024 National Convention appears to finally have been addressed to the satisfaction of most in JACL.

For the latter, there was the financial hit the organization took when workers at the site of the 2023 JACL National Convention — the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Los Angeles Downtown — went on strike, with the JACL taking the principled but costly stand to not cross picket lines.

Yet another time-consuming issue for Oda was the pressure exerted upon National JACL to take a formal stance on Israel's prosecution of its war on the terrorist group Hamas after its Oct. 7, 2023, surprise attack on Israel that resulted in some 1,200 people killed and about 250 kidnapped.

Its retaliation exacted a deadly — depending on the source, between 35,000 and 40,000 killed — death toll for Palestinians residing in the Gaza Strip. The issue for JACL was resolved — for the time being — at the National Convention when the National Council approved Resolution 1, which addressed the “humanitarian crisis in Palestine” and called on the White House and Congress to “pressure Israel to implement a ceasefire.” (R1 may be read at [tinyurl.com/mvaxv78v](https://tinyurl.com/mvaxv78v).)

In mid-2024, at the Lagrange Point between his first biennium of this decade as president having ended and his second one having just begun, what does Oda think about where JACL is now versus 2022?

“We're basically caught up now. When you're thinking about painting a house and the house is on fire, you've got to forget about the painting and put out the fire,” Oda said. He had praise for Tom Fernandez, JACL's chief financial officer, and Jonathan Okamoto,

JACL treasurer/secretary, who have focused on getting JACL's fiscal house back in order.

“Between Thomas and Jonathan, there's an idea of how we fix it,” Oda said. “There's a strategy to get us back to zero, but it's not an immediate fix.” In other words, while the patient that is JACL may be stabilized, the League has many leagues to travel before recovery can be considered complete.

One of Oda's pet projects that got moved to the backburner because of the need to impose some order on the chaos that had grown within the organization was his visioning project. It was an attempt to look far into the future regarding what the JACL might be like decades

from now and how it might get there. The initial response was, for Oda, underwhelming.

“It wasn't very well received in the beginning,” Oda said, referring to a visioning session that took place at the Nov. 5, 2022, National Board meeting (see Nov. 18, 2022, *Pacific Citizen*, [pacificcitizen.org/oda-revives-presidents-advisory-council/](https://pacificcitizen.org/oda-revives-presidents-advisory-council/)). “When I rolled out the visioning project at one of the board meetings, I got a tremendous amount of pushback . . . I was shocked.”

Months later, however, the visioning project was rolled out publicly at the 2023 JACL convention (see Aug. 11, 2023, *Pacific Citizen*, [pacificcitizen.org/one-small-step-for-jacl-and-a-giant-leap-for-its-future/](https://pacificcitizen.org/one-small-step-for-jacl-and-a-giant-leap-for-its-future/)), and it will presumably continue to move forward.

On the topic of how to address JACL's declining membership — now less than 8,000 — Oda recalled that before and during his first stint as national president circa 2006, membership was around 15,000. He tied that figure to revenue for the organization, noting how that contrasted to the corporate sponsorships that JACL relies on today, with membership revenue considered unrestricted. “They're giving us money to do a project. . . . We're at the mercy of sponsors. We don't get to choose what we want to do. We have to do what the sponsor wants. So, I want to meet with Dominique (Mashburn, vp, membership) and maybe Ashley (Bucher, JACL membership manager) to prod them a little bit, to come up with different ideas.”

» See ODA on page 8



Saturday, September 21, 2024  
Japanese American National Museum  
Little Tokyo

Join us for live entertainment, access to JANM exhibitions, food, and more!

### Registration

Register for free by scanning the QR code or visiting [keiro.org/knh](https://keiro.org/knh). Registration is first-come, first-served and closes when full or by **Friday, August 30**.



Questions? Contact [events@keiro.org](mailto:events@keiro.org) or 213.873.5700.



Keiro.

# A Lifelong Friendship Is Immortalized

The opening of the Mineta-Simpson Institute highlights the 2024 Heart Mountain Pilgrimage.

By Ray Locker,  
Contributor

More than 400 former incarcerated, family members and guests attended the Heart Mountain Pilgrimage July 25-27 to witness the grand opening of the Mineta-Simpson Institute.

Alan Simpson, a former three-term senator from Wyoming, told the crowd that his old friend, Norman Mineta, would have loved to see the institute and the exhibit dedicated to their lives in public service.

Named after Mineta, a former congressman and Cabinet member for presidents of two parties, and Simpson, the institute aims to promote the values of civility and bipartisan cooperation that the two men demonstrated while in public service.

Mineta and Simpson first met as Boy Scouts behind the barbed wire at the Heart Mountain concentration camp for Japanese Americans in 1943. They maintained a deep friendship until Mineta's death in 2022.

Joining Simpson and Deni Mineta, Norman Mineta's widow, onstage during the July 27 ceremony were former U.S. Rep. Mike Honda, a California Democrat who later held Mineta's House seat, and Erika

Moritsugu, the White House liaison for Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander affairs.

Moritsugu read a proclamation opening the institute from President Joe Biden and presented signed copies to Simpson, Deni Mineta and the Heart Mountain board.

Former Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, whom Mineta served as secretary of Commerce and Transportation, respectively, also sent video greetings to the pilgrimage.

"In recent years, the nobility of public service has been called into question," Bush said. "Young people who want to make a positive difference in our society wonder if it's worthwhile. In my view, the examples of Norm Mineta and Alan Simpson will not only inspire a new generation to enter the area, but it will educate them on how to do it effectively and compassionately."

"It's a fitting tribute to two men whose lifelong friendship embodied the very highest American ideals of service, patriotism and bipartisan-ship," Clinton said of the institute.

## Opening Panel

Shelly Lowe, chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, joined Anthea Hartig, director of the



Alan Simpson talks about his friendship with Norman Mineta and the importance of the Mineta-Simpson Institute.

PHOTOS: HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION

Smithsonian's National Museum of American History; Ann Burroughs, president and CEO of the Japanese American National Museum; and Dr. Debra Kawahara, president-elect of the American Psychological Assn., on the first presentation inside the institute. All four panelists stressed the importance of telling the accurate history of the Japanese American incarceration.

The Heart Mountain Interpretive Center became an affiliate of the Smithsonian earlier this year.

Many of the 45 former Heart Mountain incarcerated attending the pilgrimage filled the first two rows inside the institute for the panel, which was moderated by Heart Mountain Executive Director Aura Sunada Newlin.

## Graphic Novel Released

The Mineta-Simpson Institute's opening was accompanied by the release of a new graphic novel by Mineta and Simpson about their careers. "From Behind Barbed Wire to Washington: The Remarkable Friendship of Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson" was written with the help of artist Marie Okuma Johnston and writers Ray Locker and Shirley Ann Higuchi, chair of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation.

Johnston, who's based in Seattle, said she was grateful for the chance to work on the project.

"What an honor to illustrate the legacies and memories of both the Mineta and Simpson families,"



Alan Simpson enters the hallway of the new Heart Mountain exhibit dedicated to the careers of Norman Mineta and his own.

Johnston said. "No words can truly express how much the joy from the families meant to me."

Simpson and his older brother, Pete, a Heart Mountain board member, said they learned things from the graphic novel, including the fate of workers from Cody, Wyo., who were captured on Wake Island in the Pacific shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. David Mineta, Norman Mineta's son, also said he learned details about his father's life that he did not know before the book's publication.

## APA Citation

Kawahara presented the HMWF with a presidential citation from the American Psychological Assn. on behalf of President Cynthia De Las Fuentes for its work to promote improved mental health and understand the effects of long-term mental health trauma.

Kawahara said the HMWF's Mineta-Simpson Institute has excelled as a "leader in developing empathy, courage and cooperation in the next generation of American leaders."

Japanese Americans are still uncovering the effects of the incarceration of 125,000 members of their community during World War II because of racism and war hysteria after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Imperial Japanese government on Dec. 7, 1941.

About 14,000 Japanese Americans were imprisoned at Heart Mountain during some point in the war. While many rebounded to successful careers in science, law and medicine to become known as a "model minority," many others carried the shame and stigma of their unjust

incarceration. Those feelings have often carried over to successive generations of the community.

The HMWF conducts multigenerational discussion groups and healing circles during its annual pilgrimages and at other forums throughout the year. It also hosts workshops for educators to learn more about the incarceration to share that information with their students.

"I appreciate Dr. Kawahara and Dr. Jared Skillings making the trek out here to Wyoming to celebrate our achievement," said Higuchi, who is APA's associate chief of professional practice for justice, legal and state advocacy. "As a longtime APA employee, I've discovered how psychology can help resolve trauma and the current effects of societal divisions that the Mineta-Simpson Institute was created to help heal."

## Muller Receives Award

Eric Muller, a University of North Carolina law school professor and author, received the HMWF's LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness Award for his scholarship and leadership in creating the permanent exhibit in the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center.

Muller has written four books about the Japanese American incarceration, including "Free to Die for Their Country: The Story of the Japanese American Draft Resisters in World War II." His latest book, "Lawyer, Jailer, Ally, Foe: Complicity and Conscience in America's World War II Concentration Camps", focuses on the often-conflicted roles of camp attorneys during the war.

» See **FRIENDSHIP** on page 8



Opening Mineta-Simpson Institute panelists (from left) Ann Burroughs, president and CEO of JANM; Shelly Lowe, chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities; Anthea Hartig, director of the National Museum of American History; Dr. Debra Kawahara, president-elect of the APA; Aura Sunada Newlin, executive director of the HMWF; Shirley Ann Higuchi, HMWF chair; and Dr. Jared Skillings, APA chief of professional practice, with the APA presidential citation



## Thank You for Your JACL Membership!

We're grateful to have some of the most engaged and committed members around! Because of your loyal support, we have more premium membership upgrades and generous additional gifts than ever. We're also appreciative for those who renew year after year (some for 50 years or more!) and for our increase in new members. Your dedication is essential to our ongoing mission for social justice, education, and community! Thank you! - JACL Membership Department



Not a member? Join us today!

Visit [jacl.org/member](http://jacl.org/member)

or contact us at [mbrejacl.org](mailto:mbrejacl.org)

# ‘ULTRAMAN: RISING’

Netflix’s new animated film helps JA actors rise up.

By Gil Asakawa,  
P.C. Contributor

The “Ultraman: Rising” film that Netflix debuted in June is the 44th official project featuring the giant Japanese superhero that has been battling kaiju, or giant monsters, since the original Ultraman TV series debuted in 1966. He’s been portrayed in live-action series and movies as an actor in a stiff rubber suit and drawn in anime and realistically using computer graphics.

“Ultraman: Rising” uses a contemporary cornucopia of digital effects that serves up a visual feast for the eyes and imagination, which breaks rules of anatomy and animation, while keeping viewers engaged with its cinematic sweep.

Ultraman’s figure is stretched crazily out of perspective, while some characters are depicted in a more traditional manga/anime style. But the action scenes are crazy kinetic with camera angles and zooms that feel photographic, not hand- (or computer-) drawn. After a while, viewers will forget they’re watching an animated feature.

The film also brings a different dynamic to the narrative, with its emphasis on family relationships, father-son dynamics and even the parent-child emotional bond. The story arc is family friendly.

“Ultraman: Rising” is also a Japanese American co-production that brings together powerhouse creative spirits across the Pacific, with Netflix Animation here and Tsuburaya Productions, the company that owns the entire franchise in Japan, and amazing animation by George Lucas’ Industrial Light & Magic.

Also, “Ultraman: Rising” is a first in the long list of shows, movies and manga properties that have been adapted for Western audiences to feature a Japanese American cast voicing the main characters.

They include Christopher Sean as Ultraman and his alter-ego Ken Sato, the brash, Japan-born but American-raised baseball superstar who pulls a reverse Shohei Ohtani, who quits the L.A. Dodgers to return to Japan and play for the Yomiuri Giants and turn into Ultraman when a kaiju attacks.

Gedde Watanabe is the voice of Dr. Sato,



“Ultraman: Rising” has been adapted for Western audiences.

Ken’s dad and elder Ultraman, who needs his son to take over the family business of protecting Japan from kaijus. Tamlyn Tomita plays the parts of Emiko Sato, Ken’s mom and also Mina, the ball-shaped AI robot that floats around and helps Ken. Keone Young voices Dr. Onda, the head of the Anti-Kaiju Defense Force, who seeks to destroy all kaiju. And Julia Harriman has the role of Ami Wakita, a newspaper reporter who befriends Ken Sato when he’s at his most egotistical, being the ugly American when he arrives in Tokyo.

In a recent group interview, these five actors shared their experiences working on “Ultraman: Rising.” Of the group, the senior members (and the ones with the longest list of credits) are Young, Watanabe and Tomita. Sean requested the opportunity to read their lines together in the studio because he’d done voice work for “Star Wars Resistance,” and he wanted that real-life camaraderie. Young wasn’t in the studio, but Sean said, “It’s a totally different chemistry when you’re working with the other actors. So, they were kind enough to allow us to work together. And I got to experience the Tamlyn Tomita, and Julia and Gedde, and



The narrative of “Ultraman: Rising” emphasizes family relationships, father-son dynamics and the parent-child emotional bond.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NETFLIX

they were just an incredible journey. It was a remarkable gift to be able to work with these titans of the industry and legends.”

Watanabe, who is best-known in the 1980s for his role as “Long Duk Dong” in “16 Candles” and has had a long successful résumé since, agrees that he cherished the in-studio interaction. “Chris, thank God that happened, to be honest,” he recalled. “[It was great] while we were working in the film to have human contact involved.”

Harriman, the youngest cast member who’s a talented singer-songwriter who made her mark on stage in “Hamilton,” agreed that the experience was incredible, including working with Harriman, the second youngest.

“I just feel so lucky to have gotten to do it with these people,” she said. “And like Christopher was saying, we got to act together in the same room, and I learned so much from him — it was so great.” Harriman’s character builds a bond with Ken Sato without realizing he’s also Ultraman, and she’s a tantalizing story line that could be followed if Netflix greenlights a sequel . . .

Tomita is familiar to many viewers for her dozens of roles in films and TV, but she has only done voices on a handful of projects (last year she read the part of Lady Itoh in Netflix’s animated “Blue Eye Samurai”).

Voice work requires a different approach from traditional acting, she noted. “The only person that you have to work with in the room is the director, who is the writer as well. And it takes a whole lot more imagination.”

She also appreciates the film for its family focus. “You have to imagine the love of your life leads the double life as Ultraman and understand what it means to have a son who’s

aspiring to become like his dad, like a lot of children do. They want to become just like their parents.”

The cast members also discussed the challenges of not just being Asian American in Hollywood, but also being mixed-race.

“Yeah, I mean, I remember my very first audition when I was young, and it was for a commercial, and they were pairing up kids and parents,” said Harriman, whose mother is Japanese and father is white. “And they kept getting down the line and kept asking me to wait because they didn’t know which parents to put me with. I didn’t really match anyone. And that was kind of the first time that I realized, ‘Oh, hmm, maybe I don’t look like everybody else. Or maybe something’s different.’”

Sean, whose mother’s side of the family is Japanese, chimed in: “Yeah, same story. It’s not a woe-is-me story. It’s just, I was never Asian enough to play an Asian and never wanted to play white, but I’m not 50-50. I’m 100 percent of both cultures.”

Even without considering his biracial heritage, Sean remembered trying out for a casting call where there were hundreds of actors lined up — all actors of color, vying for one role. At least with “Ultraman: Rising,” Sean’s found the sweet spot for his talents in playing the brash Major League Baseball star who returns to Japan and finds his cultural place . . . and familial roots.

And while Watanabe’s most notorious role may have sparked AANHPI outrage over the decades since Long Duk Dong hit the big screen, he pointed out that before his portrayal, there was an even worse example: the white actor Mickey Rooney in yellowface, buck teeth, squinty eyes, thick glasses and thick accent playing Audrey Hepburn’s pervert photographer neighbor in the 1961 film “Breakfast at Tiffany’s.” And, he said, laughing, “I actually had a friend of mine, it was while back ago — we took that scene (the opening scene of the movie, where Mickey Rooney makes his first appearance), and we redid it. We blue screened it. I have no idea whatever happened to it. But yeah, it was very interesting. I was like I was actually looking at Audrey Hepburn, and it’s funny.” (And still disgusting, no doubt.)



“Ultraman: Rising” uses the voice talents of JA actors (from left) Christopher Sean, Tamlyn Tomita, Gedde Watanabe, Julia Harriman and Keone Young.

PHOTOS: GIL ASAKAWA

» See ULTRAMAN on page 8



Megumi Field with her duet partner, Jaime Czarkowski, at the 2023 Pan American Games

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF USA ARTISTIC SWIMMING



Megumi Field has dedicated her life to her sport of artistic swimming.

## ‘SACRIFICE FOR WHAT YOU WANT OR WHAT YOU WANT BECOMES THE SACRIFICE’

Megumi Field’s dream of reaching the Olympics comes true as she goes for the gold in artistic swimming.

By Lynda Lin Grigsby,  
P.C. Contributor

**M**egumi Field can see success. It’s part of her training routine as a U.S. Olympian competing in artistic swimming (formerly synchronized swimming). As you read this, Megumi Field, 18, is likely back home in the U.S. following her Paris stay in the Olympic Village. But she has a shiny new piece of hardware, the result of a lifetime’s dedication to her sport: an Olympic silver medal, the first earned by Team USA since 2004. The team competitions are over, but she will also compete in duet artistic swimming (at press time, this event had yet to be completed).



Counting down the days before the Paris Olympic Games

Team USA’s Megumi Field

Before bed, on the bus ride to the pool, and in interludes when she is not in the water with her teammates, she visualizes how her toes should point or what count she should emerge from the water in synchronicity with her teammates.

Her dedication to the sport is part of the athlete’s nature, said Anna Field, her younger sister. “I guess it’s just how she’s just wired.”

It’s also one of the reasons why the U.S. artistic swimming team is in Paris. The last time the U.S. artistic swimming team qualified for the Olympics was in 2008. That year, Megumi Field, a Shin Nisei, was a 2-year-old floating in the pool at her family’s Delaware condo.

“She was a good floater,” said Naomi Field, her mother with a laugh. But back in the recesses of her mind, Naomi Field thought about the elegance and poise of the synchronized swimmers she loved to watch on TV in her native Japan.

*Why not enroll Megumi in an artistic swimming class?* Naomi Field thought. *It could be fun!*

The closest artistic swimming class for kids was in Pennsylvania — a one-hour drive away.

“Yeah, I know it was crazy,” said Naomi Field about the commute.

At 5 years old, Megumi Field started artistic swimming. What started as a fun pastime turned into a lifelong passion. She won competitions until she arrived at *the* competition of a lifetime in Paris.

Today’s artistic swimming isn’t the sport you grew up with. The modern version demands athleticism and acrobatic skills. Megumi Field is one of the six in the water providing a solid foundation for the designated team flyer to soar through the air.

On land, the team practices CrossFit to build strength. In the water, the lifts are predicated on team unity. If one person’s counting is even slightly off, the lifts could fail.

When I talked to the athlete by video, she just got back from a competition in Budapest (where the U.S. took first place in technical team. No big deal). Megumi Field is glowing from the competitive confidence boost.

During our conversation, she talked about the spirit of competition, the importance of holding on to culture and a video we found on the internet that could predict her second career path.

**LYNDA LIN GRIGSBY for the PACIFIC CITIZEN:** What do you think are the chances of the U.S. team medaling in artistic swimming?

**MEGUMI FIELD:** Pretty good! Sometimes you know, we like to think about that. We’ve been to a fair share of competitions, so whenever we focus on the result, we tend to not do as well. We like to just go out there and show the best we can, and oftentimes, that ends up with a little piece of hardware.

**The P.C.:** You’ve only been swimming with your duet partner, Jaime Czarkowski, for a little over two months. How does it feel?

**FIELD:** We’ve been swimming together as a team for about three years. As a duet, this is the first time (swimming with Jaime), and it’s really different from our competitors. Our



**Performing with duet partner Jaime Czarkowski**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF USA ARTISTIC SWIMMING

**The P.C.:** You are attending Stanford University in the fall. What's Megumi in college going to be like?

**FIELD:** I'm so excited to go to college just because it is my first time in a classroom since eighth grade! I'm just so excited to be around people my age, who are on such completely different life paths. I think Megumi in college will be a very happy gal.

**The P.C.:** What are your plans right after competition?

**FIELD:** I'm staying in France for an extra five days. I've been before, but always for competition. I want to eat a croissant and enjoy it fully.

**The P.C.:** What advice do you have for Asian American kids who want to compete in artistic swimming like you?

To the future generation of Asian American kids: Just go out there and have fun because artistic swimming is amazing. ■

competitors from the top four countries are twins, so they've been swimming together since gestation.

I love swimming with [Jaime]. I think we really match personality-wise. And we've been roommates for a while, so we really enjoy each other's company. I feel like we're both very, very hard workers. Even way before we started swimming duet, whenever there was a competition that needed swimmers to pair up, the coaches would always put us together to fight for the extra bit of competitiveness. It's really nice to be able to swim with her. I think we keep each other striving for more.

**The P.C.:** There is an old video your mom posted of you and your sisters in kimonos singing and playing the koto. Could this be your backup career?

**FIELD:** (Laughs) In Philadelphia, there was something called a Sakura Festival. We were always invited to perform. I think that video is from us practicing for one of those festivals.

I actually was in a Japanese school when I lived in Delaware. I always talk to my mom in Japanese. Every summer from zero to 9 [years old], I went to Japan for three months. Japanese school was still in session, so I would go to school in Japan for two months.

Japanese culture emphasizes discipline. I think that has really helped me in staying disciplined and knowing what I want and what I need to do to get what I want.

**The P.C.:** When did you know that you had exceptional talent in artistic swimming?

**FIELD:** At my first meet in Delaware, I didn't do well, but I wanted to go to the Olympics. My mom said, 'You're not going to get to the Olympics by just going to practice and not doing extra.' That's when the discipline and the extra practice and things started. I joined my first 12 and under national team. That's when I started thinking, maybe I can.

In Delaware, with my club, I made it to the finals of solos in

the Junior Olympics. It was the first time in the history of the club that someone made it to the finals. My mom was super happy that I got fifth in the entire country.

I think that's when I really started to be like, 'OK, maybe I have something.' Then, I came to California. My first year here, at Junior Olympics, I ended up getting first in every event I did. Then I was like, 'Oh, OK, I can actually do this.' (She was 10 years old.)

**The P.C.:** Halfway through eighth grade, you started online schooling and missed rites of passage like prom and homecoming. Do you regret that?

**FIELD:** I missed it all. But my coach used to say, 'Sacrifice for what you want or what you want becomes the sacrifice.' I didn't go to all these milestones, but what I wanted was the Olympics. There might have been a sacrifice, but I'd rather sacrifice that than the Olympics.

**The P.C.:** Attending the Opening Ceremony is likely better than a dance in a sweaty gym.

**Field:** Exactly.

**The P.C.:** What are your precompetition rituals?

**FIELD:** Visualize. Right before we have a little circle. We all have like partners that we always sit across from. I always look at Jaime. We're in a little circle with the music playing, and teammates are visualizing and 'land drilling,' which is going through the movement and the routine with your hands.

That creates like a little connection moment in our little circle where it doesn't matter what's going on outside. We're just looking at our partner and focusing in. Then after that, we get into a circle, and we breathe together like holding hands. We have a little cheer, and then you go out there and compete.

**IT TAKES TWO**

Following their silver medal-winning team performance in Paris, the U.S. artistic swimming duet team of Megumi Field and Jaime Czarkowski is set to take the pool after their team performances.

*Aug. 9 — Duet technical routine*

*Aug. 10 — Duet free routine*



**Megumi Field at the 2017 Junior Olympic Championships in Riverside, Calif.**



**Megumi Field (left) with her sisters, Kanako (center) and Anna with mom Naomi Field**



**When she was younger, Megumi Field attended school in Japan every summer. She is pictured here in 2012.**

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NAOMI FIELD

## ODA » continued from page 3

Larry Oda catches up with former JACL National President/Executive Director Floyd Mori and his wife, Irene, at the recent JACL National Convention in Philadelphia.

PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA



Asked what he sees with regard to the future of *Pacific Citizen* with regard to JACL, Oda said, “I have always been a supporter of the concept of *Pacific Citizen*, a newspaper that reports on JA events,” Oda said. “A lot of people look at it as a drain on our budget,” adding that it also has an intangible value that defies a hard monetary return. “You can’t really put a number on public relations and publicity.”

On another topic, *Pacific Citizen* asked Oda to elaborate on his thoughts on how he plans to lay down the groundwork in the next two years for JACL’s 2029 centennial and how that ties into his visioning project, along with the eventual release of Lane Nishikawa’s “League of Dreams” documentary about JACL.

“I think that you bring up a good point. We should be positioning ourselves to take

advantage of this, thinking about what kind of celebration we’re going to have, what kind of events we can produce to highlight JACL and highlight the 100 years, and have a rollout of a vision for the next 100 years. It’s more about making noise, about who we are, and what we are, what we’ve done.”

As for the still-gestating documentary, Oda said, “Maybe ‘League of Dreams’ is the first of a number of activities that JACL is going to do to highlight our existence and show how important we are. ... We have a lot of credibility in Congress because of what we did back in 1988. And it’s still remembered, even though the guys that were there then are no longer there for the most part, but it’s still remembered. JACL is an organization that got something done. So, we need to capitalize on that, and, and keep our keep our name out in front of everybody.” ■

## FRIENDSHIP » continued from page 4

### Tamlyn Tomita Stars in Play

Actor Tamlyn Tomita, a Heart Mountain descendant, led the presentation of “Question 27, Question 28,” a play that uses quotes from Japanese American and Caucasian women connected to the incarceration.

Heart Mountain descendants Vanessa Yuille, a Los Angeles filmmaker, and Mika Dyo, a Los Angeles actor, and Maggie Simpson-Crabaugh, the daughter of Pete Simpson, rounded out the cast, which drew a standing ovation.

First presented in 2004, the play by Chay Yew presents the history of the

Japanese American incarceration through the perspectives of the women who were imprisoned in a series of incarceration sites that included one at Heart Mountain.

The play includes the memories of former Heart Mountain internees, such as Amy Uno Ishii, who was later an advocate for redress for the Japanese American incarceration, and other notable women. They include artist and author Mine Okubo, who was incarcerated at the camp in Topaz, Utah, and Yuri Kochiyama, a prisoner at the Jerome, Ark., camp and longtime civil rights activist. ■

## ULTRAMAN » continued from page 5

As for the “16 Candles” character, Young pointed out that’s what actors do: Play roles that aren’t who they are. They play characters.

“Gedde, I’ve always defended you,” he insisted. “It’s our craft, and we should be allowed to make mistakes, particularly us because we’re in such a small minority, we have such small power. I’ve done parts that are worse than that. The first goal of every actor, whether he can talk and aspire to all these great ideals, we got to survive, we got

to live. Never be ashamed of that.”

Sean added, “It was a different time, and there are different people in charge now.”

What’s next? This month, Ultraman, the biggest superhero in Japan, and the Avengers, the most celebrated superhero team in the Marvel Universe, team up for a limited four-issue comic series, “Ultraman X Avengers.”

So, who will win out the film rights for that? Disney or Netflix? It could be the battle of the ages. ■

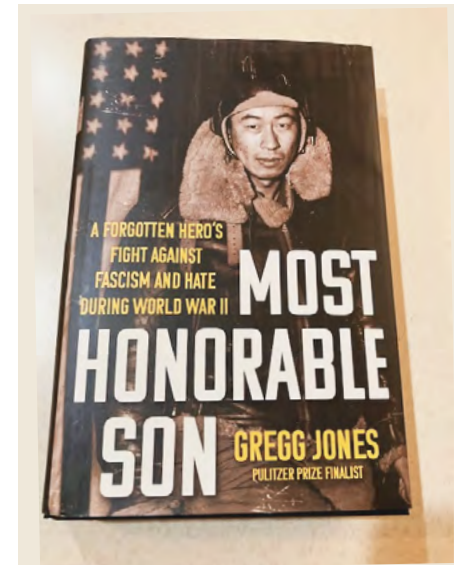
## ‘Most Honorable Son’

Author Gregg Jones gives a lecture on WWII hero Ben Kuroki at the Lincoln County Historical Museum.

By Stephen W. Kay,  
P.C. Contributor

Author Gregg Jones gave a lecture at the Lincoln County Historical Museum in North Platte, Neb., on July 24 about the amazing life of World War II hero Ben Kuroki. Jones’ new book, “Most Honorable Son: A Forgotten Hero’s Fight Against Fascism and Hate During World War II,” was released on July 23. Jones is currently on a book tour, making stops in Nebraska (Lincoln, North Platte and Scottsbluff) and the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center in Powell, Wyo.

Jones became interested in Kuroki’s military service as his uncle also served in the United States Army Air Force 93rd bomber group during WWII. The book, which features a number of historic photos, spans Kuroki’s life story, from growing up in Nebraska, experiences in the Army Air Force (Europe and Pacific theaters), exposure to the incarceration tragedy, speaking tours, graduation from the University of Nebraska and a journalism career, as well as the honors and recognition he received later in life. Kuroki is the only known American of Japanese descent to have taken part in



air combat operations in the Pacific Theater during WWII.

It was fitting for this lecture to take place at the Lincoln County Historical Museum. Kuroki was raised on a farm near Hershey, Neb. (located in Lincoln County — approximately 13 miles west of North Platte), and he graduated from Hershey High School in 1939.

Ironically, Kuroki was present at a JACL meeting held by Mike Masaoka



The voices of Asian American and Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities are often unheard in the United States, perpetuating stereotypes, health disparities, and racial inequality.

Amplify AAPI is the first and only public opinion panel representing these communities.

- **Inclusivity:** We conduct interviews in multiple languages, including English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, and Vietnamese.
- **Scientific Excellence:** Our experts produce reliable, rigorous research.
- **Speed:** Survey turnaround in as little as five weeks.

The diverse needs and stories of AANHPI communities deserve accurate representation. Here’s how you can help raise awareness for Amplify AAPI:

- 1) If selected to join our panel, kindly participate.
- 2) If you know organizations seeking AANHPI market research, contact us at [AmplifyAAPI-BD@norc.org](mailto:AmplifyAAPI-BD@norc.org).
- 3) For organizations looking to support our efforts, visit our [funders page](#) or contact [FundAmplifyAAPI@norc.org](mailto:FundAmplifyAAPI@norc.org).
- 4) If you know of promotional opportunities (presentations, newsletters) contact us at [AmplifyAAPI-BD@norc.org](mailto:AmplifyAAPI-BD@norc.org).

Learn more about Amplify AAPI on our [website](#).





**Author Gregg Jones at the Lincoln County Historical Museum**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF STEVE KAY

➤ In the basement of the Episcopal Church in North Platte on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941. Masaoka was arrested at that time. North Platte Chief of Police O. L. Discoe wrote a letter to FBI Special Agent Raffiety on Dec. 8, 1941, providing Raffiety a list of all Japanese families in Lincoln County. Kuroki's name appears on this list. Discoe's letter is currently on display as part of the "Japanese of Lincoln County" exhibit that is featured at the Lincoln County Historical Museum.

*"Most Honorable Son: A Forgotten Hero's Fight Against Fascism and Hate During World War II" is available for purchase at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).*



REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

## AARP'S NEW VETERANS HOME MODIFICATION BENEFITS GUIDE

By JR Fujita

**A**s we age, many of us hope to remain in our own homes for as long as possible. We appreciate our independence and living in familiar surroundings. But remaining in our home as we age often requires home modifications to maintain our health and safety. For veterans, this task may be more difficult to navigate — but resources are available to assist.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and other organizations offer valuable resources to veterans who have mobility challenges and require home adaptations to suit their individual needs.

In response to the VA grant programs offering more than \$150

million in funding each year, AARP has recently released a new Veterans Home Modification Benefits Guide to help connect veterans and military families with financial assistance programs to help them modify their homes.

The guide helps families navigate eligibility requirements and better understand how to access these well-deserved benefits.

The VA offers a variety of home modification and adaptive measures tailored to the needs of qualified individuals. Eligibility is based on service-connected disabilities such as loss of use of limb(s), visual impairments, severe burns, respiratory issues or other chronic illnesses.

Veterans may qualify for special circumstances such as recipients

of the Purple Heart or Medal of Honor and former prisoners of war. Those below a certain income level determined by the VA may also have additional options. The grants provide money for home construction or modification for eligible veterans.

Some modification projects may include improving access to lavatory and sanitary facilities such as for bathing and hand washing, installing grab bars in the bathroom and entry/exit points, improving entryways to the home via paths and/or driveways with ramps or other assistance devices or updating plumbing or electrical systems to support medical equipment in

your home.

Although both of my grandfathers who served in the U.S. Army have passed, I am excited that this guide is available today to help others live more comfortably and safely in their own homes.

If you are a veteran or have a veteran in your life, I hope you will read the guide. To access a digital copy, please visit [www.aarp.org/veterans](http://www.aarp.org/veterans).

*JR Fujita is a community outreach and engagement manager and is the lead staff for the California Veterans and Military Families initiative for AARP. He is based in Sacramento, Calif.*



Resources are available for home health and safety modifications.

PHOTO: AARP

Judd Matsunaga's  
**ELDER LAW SERVICES OF CALIFORNIA**  
A Professional Law Corporation

- Medi-Cal Planning
- Asset Protection for Long-Term Care
- Living Trusts & Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Trust Administration
- Probate

**JUDD MATSUNAGA**  
Attorney at Law

Home & Hospital  
Appointments Available!

---

Multiple Office Locations

Torrance • Los Angeles • Pasadena  
Encino • Fountain Valley • Westlake Village

800-403-6078

[www.elderlawcalifornia.com](http://www.elderlawcalifornia.com)

3% Cash Back on Balance Transfers for New Accounts!

Don't have a National JACL Credit Union Premier VISA Credit Card? We've got some incentives you won't want to miss. Check them out at [jaclu.com/visa!](http://jaclu.com/visa)

- 9.9% APR Non-Variable Rate
- No Annual Fees
- 25 Day Courtesy Pay
- More reward points per purchase

National JACL Credit Union 800-544-8828 [www.jaclcu.com](http://www.jaclcu.com) PROMO CODE: PCV15A24



# In MEMORIAM

**Aoki, Gene, 78**, Torrance, CA, June 1.

**Arakaki, Maria, 100**, Aiea, HI, March 21.

**Arita, Harold Yoshiaki, 95**, Kaneohe, HI, Feb. 19.

**Kobayashi, Thomas Eugene, 78**, Henderson, NV, March 12.



**Takeda, Kenneth, 94**, Lodi, CA, April 9.

**Tatsukawa, Sadae, 83**, Los Gatos, CA, Nov. 23, 2023; she was predeceased by her brothers, Takashi Aochi and Keiji Aochi; she is survived by her husband, James; son, John (Lorraine); brother, Frank (Mits) Aochi; sisters-in-law; gc: 4.

**Nakamura, Tad, 83**, Fresno, CA, March 17.

**Tomita, Dolores Margaret, 79**, San Jose, CA, Dec. 3, 2023; she was predeceased by her siblings, Pat and George; she is survived by her husband, Ken; children, Mike and Dawn.



**Okuda, Mary Kazuko, 90**, Henderson, NV, May 28.



**Tonai, Thomas Takao, 86**, Las Vegas, NV, April 30.

**Wakamatsu, Sachiko, 80**, Aloha, OR, Feb. 13.

**Yamamoto, Akiko Kosaka, 89**, Honolulu, HI, Feb. 10.



**Miyashiro, David, 79**, San Francisco, CA, May 20.



**Miyashiro, Sue, 95**, Temple City, CA, June 19.

**Morishima, Edward Masanori, 78**, Fresno, CA, April 17.

**Mukai, Tsuyako, 96**, Honolulu, HI, March 16.

**Nakagawa, Earle Hidetsugu, 77**, Ewa Beac, HI, March 13.



**Nakagawa, George, 79**, Manoa, HI, March 8.

TRIBUTE

FUSAE TANAKA



**Aug. 10, 1922-June 22, 2024**

Fusae Tanaka passed away in San Jose at the age of 101 years and 10 months. Fusae was born in Orwood, Calif., near Brentwood. A longtime resident of Stockton, Calif., where she attended the First Presbyterian Church since her baptism on Oct. 22, 1961. She also served as a registered nurse at the St. Joseph's Hospital since receiving her degree at Wisconsin State.

At the age of 20, Fusae and her family were relocated to the Rohwer, Ark., Internment Camp in May of 1942 until their release in August of 1943.

She was preceded in death by her husband, James Hiroyuki Tanaka, who passed away in July 1988 after practicing dentistry in Stockton over 40 years. She is survived by her two sons, James Russell Tanaka of San Jose and Gary Tanaka of Pebble Beach, Calif.

久保田日系葬儀社  
KUBOTA NIKKEI MORTUARY  
Reliable, personalized care  
日本語でも親切にお世話させていただきます。  
T (213)749-1449  
F (213)749-0265  
911 VENICE BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90015  
www.kubotanikkeimortuary.com

福井 FUKUI MORTUARY  
Five Generations of Experience  
FD #808  
707 East Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Gerald Fukui  
President  
Ph. 213/626-0441  
Fax 213/617-2781

## Patti Yasutake of 'Beef,' 'Star Trek' Dies

By P.C. Staff



Patti Yasutake

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE YASUTAKE FAMILY

The family of Patti Yasutake has confirmed that the thespian died Aug. 5 after a battle with cancer. She was 70.

Over her decades-long career, Yasutake appeared on stage and the big and small screens, with the award-winning Netflix series "Beef" her most-recent high-profile acting role. She also appeared in commercials and several episodes of the syndicated TV series "Star Trek: The Next Generation" as Nurse Alyssa Ogawa, reprising the role in movie iterations of the franchise.

Yasutake also co-starred in Ron Howard's 1986 culture-clash comedy "Gung Ho," playing the wife of a Japanese automotive executive (played by Gedde Watanabe) charged with reviving a shuttered American automobile plant. Yasutake reprised the role for the property's short-lived TV incarnation.

In the indie film world, Yasutake also co-starred with Mako, Nobu McCarthy and Sab Shimono in 1988's "The Wash," for which she was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award in the supporting actress category. (That movie can be viewed on YouTube at [tinyurl.com/mryr34t](https://tinyurl.com/mryr34t).)

The native Los Angeleno graduated with honors from UCLA with a degree in theater arts, after which she started her professional career with East West Players, on staff and onstage. Playwright Velina Hasu Houston recalled that Yasutake was "the original Himiko in my play 'Tea' in New York City in 1987." Yasutake also served as an assistant director for the play and as director for a second cast at the Odyssey Theatre Ensemble.

"Patti was a powerful and talented actress," Houston said. "The world of arts and entertainment has lost a skilled artist. I am thankful for the

rich contributions she made to the arts and also for having known her."

Regarding her late-career role as Fumi Nakai in "Beef," Yasutake, in an interview with Netflix's *Tudum* magazine, was quoted: "I was just elated, this many decades into my career, that a role like this would come along." Regarding the dearth of mainstream acting opportunities she faced after graduating from UCLA, she also told the magazine, "There [were] really no opportunities to have a career as an Asian American actress; I didn't do martial arts, I didn't speak a second language. Especially back then, that's all they saw you as."

Yasutake was predeceased by her parents, Michael and Jean Yasutake; and her sister, Irene Hirano, founding president and CEO of the Japanese American National Museum and founder and past president of the U.S.-Japan Council. She is survived by her siblings, Linda Hayashi and Steven Yasutake, and other relatives, friends and colleagues.

A memorial for Yasutake will be held at a yet-to-be determined date and time at East West Players. In lieu of flowers, the family instead requests that a contribution be made to the theater company.

## News Brief

### 'Shōgun' Headed to Primetime Emmy Showdown With 25 Nominations

Sept. 15 will be a big night for TV's "Shōgun": When the lineup for the 76th Annual Primetime Emmys were announced, the show — originally released on cable network FX and streaming service Hulu as a limited series but changed to a drama series when two more seasons were greenlighted following positive critical acclaim and commercial success — received the most nominations of any entry with 25.

"Shōgun's" potential haul among the major categories: Outstanding Drama Series, Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series for Anna Sawai and Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series for Hiroyuki Sanada. Actors Tadanobu Asano, who played Kashigi Yabushige, and Takehiro Hira, as Ishido Kazunari, received noms in the category Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series.

Among other Primetime Emmy nominations worthy of notice, Maya Erskine is up for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series for Prime Video's "Mr. and Mrs. Smith"; Greta Lee received a nom in the category Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series for "The Morning Show" (Apple TV+); and Bowen Yang received an Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series nom for NBC's "Saturday Night Live." The Primetime Emmy Awards will be broadcast on ABC.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tribute Ads honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$25/column inch.

CONTACT:

[editorial@pacificcitizen.org](mailto:editorial@pacificcitizen.org) or call (213) 620-1767 Ext. 4



## Every dream deserves an opportunity.

Pursue your aspirations with U.S. Bank as your financial partner. Get support for your journey toward owning a home, running a small business or building wealth. Our bankers work with your individual needs to create a financial plan that helps you turn your dreams into reality. Build your future confidently, knowing U.S. Bank is committed to your success.

Our dedicated bilingual customer service team is here to help you meet your financial goals.



Call 877-479-5237 to speak with our Japanese Customer Service Unit and learn more. Or scan the QR code and visit [usbank.com/everydream](https://usbank.com/everydream) to meet with a personal banker.

