



PACIFIC CITIZEN

But, Where Are You REALLY From?

Cover illustration of the JACL D.C. chapter's graphic novel

PHOTO: JACL D.C. CHAPTER

» **PAGE 4**

Experimental Sound Artist Featured in Shofuso Residency

» **PAGE 5**

Arkansas Traveler: Part 2

» **PAGE 6**

A new graphic novel teaches the next generation about JA history.



CELEBRATING
95
Years

NISEI WEEK FOUNDATION FETES 7 WOMEN

Men out to lunch as new Nisei Queen, Court assist in recognizing Pioneer Spirit honorees.

By P.C. Staff



Grace Shiba speaks as (from left) Margaret Shimada, Lindsey Sugimoto, Morgan Mayuko Gee and Joann Shin Cordeiro listen.

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

Four days after the 82nd annual Nisei Week coronation, the new queen and court took on one of their first official duties.

On Aug. 14, they helped escort seven other remarkable high-achievers, all of whom also happened to be women, into the Golden State ballroom of Doubletree by Hilton Los Angeles in Little Tokyo. The occasion was the Nisei Week Foundation's Pioneer Spirit Award luncheon.

Proceedings got underway as Queen Morgan Mayuko Gee (Venice Japanese Community Center & Venice-West Los Angeles JACL) and her court — Nisei Week Princess Caitlyn Sasaki (Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council), Nisei Week Miss Tomodachi Amy Kubo (East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center), Nisei Week Princess Anita Komatsu (Gardena Evening Optimist Club), Nisei Week First Princess Seia Watanabe (Japanese Restaurant Association of America) and Nisei Week Princess Carina Sakimura (Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute) — each escorted (with an assist by 2024 Nisei Week Foundation President Joann Shin Cordeiro) to the dais this year's honorees: June Aochi Berk, Patricia Kinaga, Gwen Muranaka, Grace Shiba, Margaret Shimada, Barbara Shirota and Diane Watanabe.

The Pioneer Spirit Award recogniz-

ed dedicated, long-standing Japanese American community volunteers and leaders.

One of the dignitaries in attendance, Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles Kenko Sone, got laughs when he, as the luncheon's sole speaker to possess XY chromosomes, expressed hope that the 2025 crop of Pioneer Spirit Award honorees might include a male.

Twelve months forward, maybe. This year, however, was a show of ladies might, with honorees who would shine in any year.

Berk, who trained in Japanese dance and kabuki with the renowned Fujima Kansuma, has an association with Nisei Week that stretches back to dancing in the celebration's first parade in 1936 at age 4, and as the 1954 Nisei Week queen, worked as the secretary for legendary JACL leader Minoru Yasui when he was the Mountain Plains JACL director. She was also the executive assistant to Irene Hirano, founding president of the Japanese American National Museum, which has since immortalized Berk as one of its future digital avatars (see June 2, 2023, Pacific Citizen). Berk is also a member of the San Fernando Valley JACL chapter and is an advocate for the preservation of historic sites such as the Tuna Canyon Detention Center.

Berk told the Pacific Citizen that "this has to be one of the highest honors, to be recognized by your community and join the other ladies. It was really fun." Recognizing that the JACL just had its National Convention in July, she also noted that she was at the 1950 JACL National Convention in Denver that was attended by "my boss" (Yasui) and his fellow JACL luminaries

Mas Satow and Mike Masaoka.

"Not only that, I worked for the Southwest JACL here in L.A. with Tats Kushida, Saburo Kido and Edison Uno. . . Long live JACL! I always hope that JACL continues on. It's very important."

Attorney Kinaga's credentials include producing short documentaries, serving as a past president of the Japanese American Bar Assn. and working with such organizations as Asians and Pacific Islanders With Disabilities of California, domestic violence shelter Asian Pacific Women's Center, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Go for Broke National Education Center and JANM.

Kinaga told the Pacific Citizen that being honored was special because she felt that both her father, who died several years ago, and her mother, who is 101 and was unable to attend, were nevertheless there with her. She recalled attending the most-re-

HOW TO REACH US

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

STAFF

Executive Editor Allison Haramoto	Business Manager Susan Yokoyama
Senior Editor Digital & Social Media George Johnston	Production Artist Marie Samonte
	Circulation 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 or call (213) 620-1767.

Advertise
To advertise in the Pacific Citizen, call (213) 620-1767 or e-mail: 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.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE. Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1) Publication Title: Pacific Citizen 2) Publication Number: 0030-8579 3) Filing Date: 9/6/24. 4) Issue Frequency: Semi-monthly, except once in January & December 5) Number of Issue Published Annually: 22 6) Annual Subscription Price: \$55 7-9) Mailing Address/Publisher: Japanese American Citizens League dba Pacific Citizen (Los Angeles County) 123 Astronaut E. S. Onizuka Street, Suite 206 Los Angeles, CA 90012-3819 Contact Person Manager: Allison Haramoto Telephone: (213) 620-1767 10) Owner: Japanese American Citizens League dba Pacific Citizen 1765 Sutter Street San Francisco, CA 94115 11) No know Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities 12) Tax Status Has Not Changes During Preceding 12 Months 13) Publication Title: Pacific Citizen 14) Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: 9/6/24. 15) Extent and Nature of Circulation: Membership Benefit and Paid Subscription a. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: 1,975 No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 1,750 b. Paid Circulation 1. Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 Average: 1,650 Single Issue: 1,400 2. Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 Average: 150 Single Issue: 85 c. Total Paid Distribution Average: 1,800 Single Issue: 1,485 f. Total Distribution Average: 1,800 Single Issue: 1,485 g. Copies not Distributed Average: 100 Single Issue: 100 h. Total Average: 1,900 Single Issue: 1,585 i. Percent Paid Average: 100% Single Issue: 100% 16) Publication of State of Ownership: Publication of this statement will be printed in the 09/6/24 issue

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.**

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

2024 SPRING CAMPAIGN

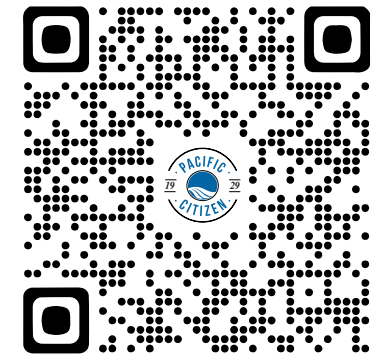
"I'm glad to see the Pacific Citizen growing and evolving with its website and especially LOVE the much easier-to-navigate digital archives. It's a treasure trove for JAs to learn about our community's history and for scholars and journalists looking to connect the past with the present. Thanks for the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

— Gil Asakawa

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.





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

‘WHEN I NEEDED YOU’

By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director

Growing up in the 1980s, as any JACL staff who has had the misfortune of riding in the car when I am driving will tell you, I listen to a pretty steady stream of music from the era. While not as widely popular at the time, groups like Depeche Mode have found a wider audience, though ironically, my own love of their more recent music has declined. The contrast with Depeche Mode’s stadium tour sellouts is the group Erasure, who continue to seek “A Little Respect” while in Depeche Mode’s shadow over the entire ‘80s synthpop genre. But what comes to mind in particular today from my numerous mix tapes is one of Erasure’s songs, “When I Needed You.”

If you are not familiar with the group, Erasure is a duo, with Vince Clarke, former songwriter for Depeche Mode and the straightlaced half who stands nearly still behind his synthesizers and computer playing the background music, and Andy Bell, the vocalist for all songs. To call Bell flamboyant would be an understatement.

Attending my first Erasure concert was pretty shocking for someone growing up in the Midwest and attending a Catholic high school. Bell made his homosexuality almost as much a part of his stage presence as the music.

While many artists lived with the ambiguity of whether they were gay or not, Bell reveled in being out. And yet, he revealed many years later his years of HIV+ status after having kept that hidden for many years. So, even for someone so out, there remained a guardedness.

In the Erasure song “When I Needed You,” the lyrics ask “Where, Where were you? When I needed you most, when I needed a friend?” Thirty years ago, JACL was groundbreaking as one of the first non-LGBTQ+ organizations to support gay marriage. While we have come a long way as a nation in our acceptance of the LGB part of LGBTQ+, many seem to be struggling with the TQ+ parts of the community.

I admit that I am often challenged to use the correct pronouns for individuals. But for some, it goes beyond the challenge of properly recognizing individuals for how they identify. Some have unfortunately chosen to simply refuse to recognize an individual’s identity and their core essence.

As a Christian, it pains me to see that many of those who take this stance do so because they believe it is their faith that leads them to do so. But I think I understand where it might come from. In the first creation story, humans are created with dominion over the Earth, including the power to call things by name. In that same way, these Christians believe they can “name” how others identify to conform to their world

view. It is not only a power play, but one rooted in the Bible in an incredibly demeaning way.

We have seen the anti-trans hatred play itself out in attempts to legislate a person’s gender, which sports they can play, which bathrooms they can use and what medical care they can access. Again, these are attempts to name what people can or cannot do and how they must act.

At the Paris Olympics, it came to the point of accusations that a nontransgender woman boxer was in fact a man. These were accusations with no factual foundation but used to create fear of transgender individuals, when ironically there were no such athletes even present to be feared. Transgenderism has become a new scarlet letter.

It is because of these increasing attacks on transgender athletes, students, parents, children, neighbors and friends that JACL will be holding a Virtual Symposium: “Trans Allyship: Learn, Grow, Act” on Sept. 28 from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. PDT. The program will be to help people such as me, in my own ignorance, to better understand the community and its members.

As JACL, beyond building this understanding, we also want to be

able to act in support as true allies. How can we shape policy nationally and locally? So much of what is happening to target the trans community is taking place at the local school boards, city council meetings and state legislatures where we rely on our chapters and individual members to take action.

I hope that you will join me on Sept. 28 with our partners from Okaeri and PFLAG to study together what we as allies need to know about the trans community and its members to better support and work with them to create an inclusive and welcoming organization that will act in true support.

We can join together in these first steps so that in the future, should someone ask, “Where were you when the trans community needed you most?” We can hopefully answer that we were right there with them.

For more information and to register, please visit <https://www.okaeri.org/trans-symposium>.

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

where she grew up, and telling her aunt, “I think I am who I am because I was raised between the San Jose relatives and the L.A. relatives to be . . . immensely proud of being Japanese American.

“I think my dad’s service in the 442 as one of the original volunteers — our family’s life revolved around the 442 and the JA community — that’s why I’m here, and that’s why being recognized by the community is particularly special.”

Excelling as both a journalist and cartoonist, Muranaka, editor-in-chief of *Rafu Shimpo*, got her start in the profession in the 1990s at *Pacific Citizen*, working with former editor and general manager Harry Honda. “It’s really ironic. I find it sort of a full circle that Harry received this award, I think, the first year I covered the Nisei Week coronation,” she said, harking back to 2001.

Although it’s not the first award she has received for her dedication to journalism — the Society of Professional Journalists presented Muranaka with its Distinguished Journalist Award in 2023 — she did note that it was the first such award she has received from the Japanese American community for being a journalist. “Everyone keeps telling me that I’m a little young to be a pioneer, so I guess it probably speaks to how central what we do as journalists is to keeping the community connected and informed — and somehow united. I think it’s more about the community than it is about me.”



Pictured (back row, from left) are Lindsey Sugimoto, Nisei Week Princess Caitlyn Sasaki, Nisei Week Miss Tomodachi Amy Kubo, Nisei Week Princess Anita Komatsu, Joann Shin Cordeiro, Kenko Sone, Mami Sone, Nisei Week First Princess Seia Watanabe, Nisei Week Queen Morgan Mayuko Gee, Nisei Week Princess Carina Sakimura, Joyce Nakashima and (front row, from left) 2024 Nisei Week Pioneer Spirit Awardees Grace Shiba, June Aochi Berk, Diane Watanabe, Barbara Shirota, Margaret Shimada, Gwen Muranaka and Patricia Kinaga.

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

Speaking from the dais to represent all the honorees, Shiba — who has been active in the past with JACL, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California (currently its executive vp), the Japanese Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the Nanka Kenjinkai Kyogikai, the Nanka Shizuoka Kenjinkai and is the executive director of the University of Southern California Asian Pacific Alumni Assn. — said: “I’m deeply honored to express my gratitude for the 2024 Pioneer Spirit Award on behalf of the remarkable individuals being recognized alongside me.

“Today, we celebrate our achievements and the collective spirit of perseverance, dedication and passion that drives each of us in our respective organization. This award is not

just a recognition of our individual efforts, but a testament to the collaborative spirit that fuels our success. To my fellow honorees, you inspire me with your unwavering commitment to excellence. Each of you has made significant contributions that have shaped organizations, transformed community and profoundly touched lives.”

Shimada’s résumé includes serving as director of service programs with the Little Tokyo Service Center (she retired after 16 years in March), serving on the board of the Asian American Drug Abuse Program, Keiro, Koreatown Youth and Community Services, the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, Center for Pacific Asian Families, Pediatric Therapy Network, Asian

Pacific AIDS Intervention Team, Asian American Symphony Guild, Nichi Bei Fujinkai, Peninsula Committee of the L.A. Philharmonic and UCLA Stein Eye Institute.

Attorney Watanabe, who earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, and her J.D. from the University of San Diego School of Law, where she helped found the Asian Law Student Assn., went on to a 45-yearlong legal career.

Along the way, she used her legal expertise to obtain and maintain nonprofit status for numerous Japanese American community organizations — pro bono — that provided youth services, veterans support and charitable outreach throughout Southern California. She also

has served as the president of the Orange Coast Optimist Club and has for more than 20 years served as president of the Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council.

Shirota, a recipient of a 2024 Woman of the Year Award in March (see [July 5, 2024, Pacific Citizen](https://www.pacificcitizen.com)) from the Japanese Women’s Society of Southern California and the Downtown Los Angeles JACL, has been active with the West Covina Buddhist Temple (board of directors) and the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center, serving as its first woman president.

In memory of her late husband, George Yanase, she has sponsored scholarships at Southwestern Law School. She also has established the ESGVJCC scholarship for graduate students in memory of her late husband, Jon Shirota, and continues to contribute to her graduate school alma mater, the University of La Verne.

Shirota admitted to being “overwhelmed,” adding: “It’s a good feeling.”

The luncheon’s opening welcome was from 2024 Pioneer Spirit Award Chairperson Joyce Nakashima. Serving as mistress of ceremonies was Lindsey Sugimoto. The congratulatory toast was by Shin Cordeiro.

Table centerpieces were from Scotty’s Flowers. Honorees’ leis were from the So Cal Flower Market and the printing of the programs was thanks to Fukui Mortuary. ■

Jason Finkelman, playing a berimbau, performs an acoustic duet with shamisen player Geoff Gersh at Shofuso.



EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC MEDITATIONS

Sound artist Jason Finkelman performs in miniresidency at Shofuso in Philadelphia.

By Rob Buscher,
P.C. Contributor

During the first week of August, Japanese American sound artist Jason Finkelman returned to his native city of Philadelphia for a miniresidency at Shofuso Japanese House and Garden.

The artistic residency at Shofuso provided Finkelman time to further explore his distinct ambient, avant-garde world sound by recording natural and ambient sounds of the property to utilize in his laptop electronics performance setup. Combining underwater reverberations of koi fish using a hydrophone (underwater microphone) with daily sounds of Shofuso garden maintenance, Finkelman then performed alongside the recorded audio using live percussion instrumentation for members of the Japan America Society.

Raised in a Jewish household in the Wynnefield Heights neighborhood of West Philadelphia, Finkelman explored the adjacent West Fairmount Park areas extensively throughout his youth. Learning about the 1876 Centennial International Exhibition from his father — an architect who is also an amateur historian of the Centennial Expo — this led Finkelman to regularly visit areas that housed the world's fair.

At the site of the Centennial Exposition's Horticultural Hall, Finkelman would also take

inspiration from the nearby Japanese House and Garden, brought to this location in 1958 after earlier showing at New York's Museum of Modern Art from 1954-55.

As a biracial fourth-generation Japanese American whose family suffered forced removal from California and mass incarceration during World War II, Shofuso became a place of reflection for Finkelman's emerging identity as an artist.

On his mother's side, Jason's Miyahara family was incarcerated at Rohwer relocation center before resettling in Bridgeton, N.J., where they worked for Seabrook Farms.

"During my formative years as a creative musician in Philadelphia, I began investigating my Japanese American heritage," Finkelman recalled. "I started to understand the circumstances that led my family to the Philadelphia area after the war with grandparents who joined 2,500 other Japanese Americans in 1946 for employment at Seabrook Farms in South Jersey. Inside and outside the grounds of Shofuso, I could imagine alternative realities, play instruments handcrafted by Adimu Kuumba and contemplate the horrors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki."

Leaving Philadelphia in 1992 to earn a jazz studies degree at SUNY New Paltz, Finkelman would perform with noted figures in improvisation and global music, including Pauline



Experimental music sound artist Jason Finkelman utilizes unique methods to convey musical meditations.

PHOTOS: ROB BUSCHER

Oliveros and Steve Gorn.

His career as a composer for dance centers around collaborative work with award-winning choreographer Cynthia Oliver, whom he met at another important Philadelphia institution, the Painted Bride Art Center, where Finkelman was employed before leaving his hometown.

After establishing the Straylight Dialogues series at New York City's famed Knitting Factory in the late 1990s, Finkelman and Oliver relocated to Illinois, where they were both employed by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2000.

At UIUC, Finkelman is director of Global Arts Performance Initiatives at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and leads Improvisers Exchange, a multifaceted programming line presenting concerts, workshops and residencies with improvising artists that includes a student performance ensemble in the School of Music.

One highlight of Finkelman's residency was the special performance he gave during the Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia's Members Night, which was hosted at Shofuso on the evening of Aug. 8.

Accompanied by New York City-based guitarist and shamisen player Geoff Gersh, Finkelman performed a stirring assortment of original composition and improvisation after opening with an acoustic duet featuring Finkelman on berimbau, a musical bow originating in West Africa commonly used in Brazilian Capoeira, and Gersh on shamisen.

Finkelman then shared clean audio samples of the ambient sounds recorded at Shofuso and demonstrated how he could integrate them into a performance setting with his laptop electronics. The two musicians then proceeded to perform several improvised pieces using the samples as a starting point for each musical meditation.

The following evening,

the residency ended with a culminating performance at the closing reception of the special exhibition "Community of Images: Japanese Moving Image Artists in the U.S., 1960s-1970s," which was curated by digital film archive Collaborative Cataloguing Japan and co-presented by Japan America Society.

In this setting, Finkelman presented an eclectic trio of improvising musicians including Gersh from the previous night's performance and featuring theremin player and keyboardist Joy Yang of Urbana.

"The opportunity to perform with Joy Yang, an original member of my current ensemble Kuroshio, and longtime collaborator Geoff Gersh bridges musical universes of over two decades. I was very excited to blend the artistry of Straylight and Kuroshio together for this occasion," said Finkelman.

The trio performed a 75-minute set of improvised music, split into approximately six distinct pieces. Many made use of the audio samples that Finkelman recorded earlier in the week during his residency at Shofuso.

The group also performed one prewritten piece titled "Bereavement," previously performed by Finkelman and Yang as part of their Kuroshio Quartet. The piece paid tribute to victims and survivors of the atomic bomb and was performed on Aug. 9, the 79th anniversary of the Nagasaki bombing.

It was a fitting end to the "Community of Images" exhibition, which featured artists and movements that have inspired some of Finkelman's creative work. In turn, the trio's performance conveyed their own feelings of inspiration to the Philadelphia audience as Finkelman ended the set with a protest chant from one of the video art pieces featured in the exhibit that was produced during the Vietnam War era. "What do we want? Peace! When do we want it? Now!"

To learn more about Jason Finkelman and his music, visit <https://jasonfinkelman.bandcamp.com/album/kuroshio>.



Finkelman also recorded sound from a stream while at Shofuso.

Jason Finkelman captured underwater reverberations of koi fish using a hydrophone (underwater microphone).



Filmmaker Ken Ochiai captures the interior of the stockade jail.

PHOTOS: ROB BUSCHER

Pilgrims tour the interior of the stockade jail.

Arkansas Traveler: From Jerome and Rohwer to the Tule Lake Pilgrimage

Part 2 of this two-part series explores the importance continuing to build solidarity with other historically marginalized peoples.

By Rob Buscher, P.C. Contributor

Following my trip to attend the Jerome/Rohwer pilgrimages, I next set forth on my journey to Tule Lake. First, I spent a few nights visiting with my Nisei Obaachan, who lives in Belmont, Calif. Coinciding with the week of July 4, our conversations frequently delved into the reality that this country has failed to live up to the values it espouses on the subjects of liberty, equality and the pursuit of happiness. Sharing some of what I had experienced in Arkansas and the affinity I felt toward Black Americans in the former Jim Crow South, Obaachan, who herself had been involved with the Redress Movement, expressed her genuine hope that Black Americans could one day receive reparations.

She also shared a childhood memory growing up in Utah when her Issei father would often comment on the deplorable situation facing children in the Native American boarding school they would sometimes drive past. It seems the interconnectedness of these various historically marginalized groups resonated even with Issei like my great-grandfather, who must have come to see themselves as part of a longer continuum of racial oppression in the United States.

Early on the morning of July 5, I took a taxi to San Jose Betsuin, where I departed on the seven-hour bus ride to the Tule Lake Pilgrimage. We stopped at the North Berkeley BART station to pick up additional pilgrims before embarking on the journey to Klamath Falls, Ore., where we would be staying for the duration of the pilgrimage.

Upon arrival at the Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls, pilgrims checked into their accommodations in the college dormitory. Given the 105-degree weather predicted for the entirety of our pilgrimage stay, the air-condition-less dormitory evoked a degree of discomfort, yet a mere fraction of what incarcerated experienced.

The opening ceremony commenced in the college auditorium with a stirring performance from Tule Lake Taiko — an amalgamation of all the taiko players in attendance. Tule Lake Pilgrimage Committee Chair Barbara Takei then thanked the many individuals who contributed to the pilgrimage’s success.

One thing she said that particularly resonated with me was the quote, “Kill the savage to save the man,” typically used to reference the Indian Boarding School Movement. In this context, she used it to suggest that our Japanese culture was forcibly assimilated out of our community by the wartime incarceration and that we should view this pilgrimage as an intentional act of reclamation.

That next morning, we drove 36 miles back across the California border to visit the Tule Lake National Monument. Like Manzanar, Minidoka and now Amache, Tule Lake is administered by the National Park Service. However, as a National Monument, it has far fewer resources than the National Historic Site designation granted to these other camps. Additionally, because of the complex history of Tule Lake Segregation Center and the uniquely terrible treatment that incarcerated endured there, the site carries an emotional weight unlike any of the other former confinement sites I have visited.

From the beginning, the conditions of the camp were below average, even for the WRA, with frequent disagreements between the camp administrators and incarcerated. When the so-called Loyalty Questionnaire was administered, Tule Lake had the highest number of No-No respondents, which is why it was selected as the segregation center.

On our bus ride over, one incarceration survivor shared memories of her family’s journey from Heart Mountain to Tule Lake by train. On their way from Wyoming, the train stopped briefly in their hometown in Washington state. Local friends and residents of the town gave the incarcerated bushels of apples to take with them. She recalled crying so much that they couldn’t eat, as they told other passengers about the town and pointed out their former school, church and residences.

We disembarked onto the grounds of Tule Lake, so named for the dry lake bed that once filled the area. Kicking around the dusty ground, it is common to find shells from aquatic life that once inhabited the lake, which incarcerated often repurposed into jewelry and other craft items.

Aside from the small memorial plaque detailing a brief history of Tule Lake, the only building standing from the wartime is the stockade jail. Recently refurbished and open to the public for

the first time at this year’s pilgrimage, I had the opportunity to tour the jail building. Standing by myself inside one of the jail cells, I was struck by how small the space already felt and imagined how claustrophobic it would feel with three other cellmates and the door closed.

I also marveled at the pencil graffiti written by incarcerated at various stages of the incarceration. Some simply wrote their name and date; others kept a line tally of how many days they were imprisoned; one even wrote poetry in kanji characters. Two brief passages written in English sent chills down my spine. The first read, “Show me the way to go home,” and the other, “Don’t kill me!”

While exploring the jail, I thought of my late Nisei friend Ed Kobayashi, whose father, C. Y. Kobayashi, was among the protest leaders imprisoned in the stockade. For many decades, Ed did not speak about his family’s experience at Tule Lake, but after Konrad Aderer’s 2017 film “Resistance at Tule Lake,” he spoke regularly about his father’s ordeal.

C. Y. was somewhat of an amateur poet who composed several tanka verses while imprisoned in the stockade, which my mother helped Ed to self-publish in a small book shortly before his death. While our own cousins did not face the indignity of being jailed in the stockade, knowing the Kobayashi family’s relationship to the space gave this experience great emotional weight.

After this emotionally charged experience, I rejoined the approximately 400 pilgrims under a large tent constructed in front of the stockade jail where Rev. Duncan Ryuken Williams led a memorial service.

At the start of his remarks, Williams implored us to hold the memories of both the oldest and youngest who perished at Tule Lake. Seventy-eight-year-old strawberry farmer Masao Nakano was the oldest, and the youngest was an unnamed infant who died an hour after birth.

Holding these two at the center along with others who perished at Tule Lake, Williams, in his Soto Zen Buddhist tradition, offered the following wisdom on the purpose of such memorials: “We console their spirits with remembrance, they console us with resilience.”

Following his remarks, Williams led a brief chant of the nembutsu, then an artist collective of Tule Lake descendants calling themselves the “Sansei Granddaughters” carried a shimenawa rope in procession to the front of the tent. Adorned with WRA name tags styled after those that incarcerated were made to wear on evacuation day, the shimenawa contained each of the names of those who perished at



The Tule Lake historic marker

» See ARKANSAS on page 8

JAPANESE AMERICAN GENERATIONS:

(SEI) A group of people born and living during the same time

EXPLAINED

1

ICHI

ISSEI

- Born in Japan
- First to immigrate to the U.S.



2

NI

NISEI

- Children of Issei
- American Born



3

SAN

SANSEI

- Children of Nisei
- American Born



4

SHI

YONSEI

- Children of Sansei
- American Born



5

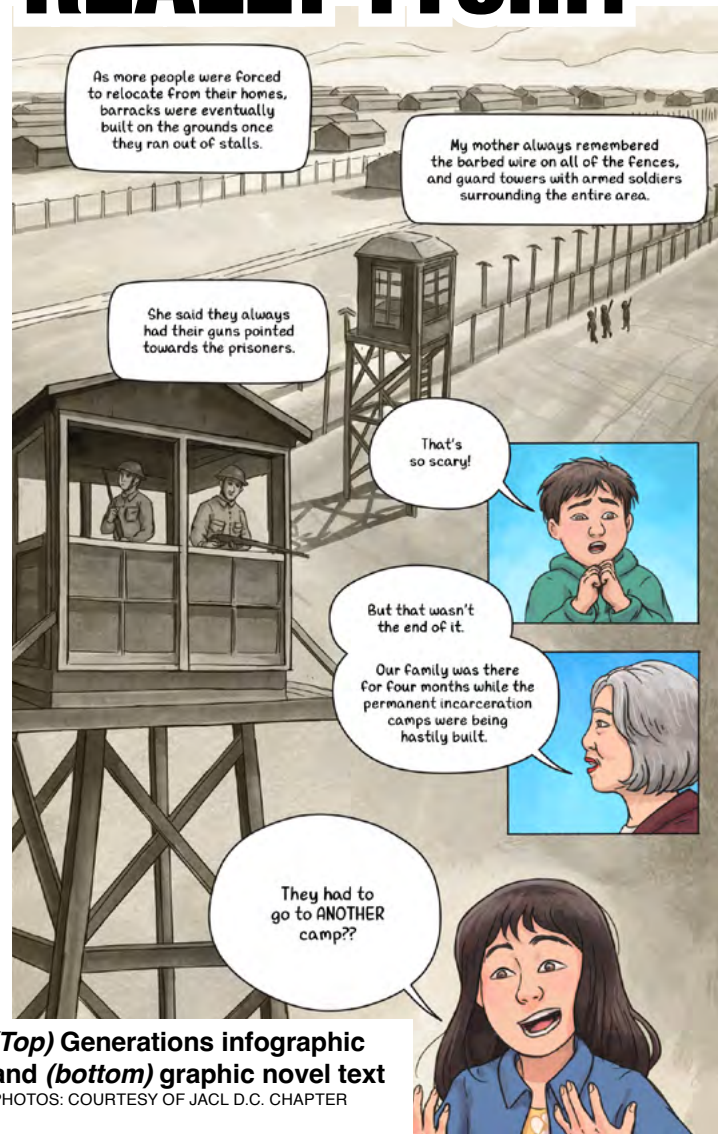
GO

GOSEI

- Children of Yonsei
- American Born



'But, Where Are You REALLY From?'



(Top) Generations infographic and (bottom) graphic novel text

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF JAACL D.C. CHAPTER

A new graphic novel teaches the next generation about Japanese American history.

By Gil Asakawa,
P.C. Contributor

A new graphic novel aimed at fifth-graders tells the story of Japanese Americans in a novel way — a graphic novel way — that educates both young and old readers on multiple levels. The book “But, Where Are You REALLY From?” answers its titular question, variations of which most JAs have heard all their lives, with a narrative framework that students can immediately identify with and understand.

The question is the result of a class assignment from a fifth-grade art teacher who assigns his students a collage for homework, with the query, “How has my family heritage influenced who I am today and who I will become in the future?” He urges the diverse students to share their family culture, from national flags from their ancestors’ home countries to icons that evoke their cultural heritage.

Emi Kobayashi, the main character of the book, realizes that though her father’s side of the family came from Japan, she doesn’t know their history. She also realizes that she doesn’t know much about Japanese culture besides the fact that she likes sushi.

After school, Emi and her younger brother, Theo, are picked up by their Grandma May, and Emi asks the question that drives the narrative: “Grandma May . . . Where is our family REALLY from?”

With that question, the book is off and running through the JA experience of immigration and arrival, early work as laborers, facing racism, wartime incarceration and military heroism, all the way to the anti-Asian hate of the present day.

The first stop on this trip of self-discovery for Emi and Theo is a surprise drive into Washington, D.C., to the Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II, which is too often overlooked by tourists — even JA tourists — walking around the Capitol, National Monument and National Mall.

As the kids’ tour guide, May reveals the family’s immigration history and how they ended up in Maryland. She explains the hardship of the Issei generation and then the trauma of World War II and incarceration and the heroes who fought Executive Order 9066 and later, the men who fought in battle for the U.S.

Later in the book, there’s a page profiling Mitsuye Endo, the woman who fought incarceration who is often overlooked in history, even though she actually won her case, as well as pages about the resisters,

JAs in the military (including Nisei women who served) and the Congressional Gold medals, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 and more.

The graphic novel, which is stylistically like a cross between a Japanese manga and an American comic book, presents a complex, multifaceted story that addresses a handful of important social studies topics in an entertaining, easy-to-absorb format.

It’s a JA journey, but it’s also a story set against a diverse backdrop of multicultural students and an African American art teacher, getting his class to think beneath the surface about their identities and how they fit into the modern world.

The three Japanese American women behind this remarkable project are educators themselves, so they understand the power of storytelling and the impression that power can leave on young minds.

Two of the women are (or were) art teachers, which explains the central role the visual arts of the collage plays in the plot.

Linda Sato Adams was an art teacher and supervisor for fine arts for Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland, north of Washington, D.C. Janice Nakano Faden was an elementary-level curriculum director for Montgomery County Public Schools who is an expert in making sure what is taught to students is presented in an age-appropriate way that makes sense and will be absorbed; both women are leaders in the JAACL D.C. chapter. Stephanie Mieko Rowe, Adams’ niece, grew up in North Carolina but attended college in Maryland, then taught art and now is attending Florida State University to earn her graduate degree.

All three wrote the story for “But, Where Are You REALLY From?” and contributed to the rich tapestry of extra content throughout the book, from the helpful vocabulary terms

(both Japanese words like “Nisei” and “origami” to helpful English words such as “alien,” “incarceration camps” and “hate crimes”) at the beginning of each chapter, as well as the pages of infographics and historical profiles (Norm Mineta, Spark Matsunaga and three JAs who the authors interviewed and included their experiences in the book: Mary Murakami, Terry Shima and Alice Takemoto) that add depth and context to Emi’s path to her collage, “The Good Stuff Is Inside,” and her powerful Artist’s Statement about what she has learned.

For Adams, Faden and Rowe, the initial idea was simple: Let’s teach young people about the Japanese American experience in a way they could easily consume — as a graphic novel!

They found a perfect partner in Vicky Yuh to illustrate the book and bring their vision to fruition. The artwork throughout is clear and easy to understand and absorb, and while the storyboards are chock-full of bright, modern colors, the re-created historical images are painted in a sepia tone that evoke the history they portray.

Every aspect of the book is intentional, according to its creators. The idea was one Adams and Faden kicked around with the JAACL D.C. chapter, and through Adams’ ties to the school district’s arts program, she obtained approval for the project.

Although they had originally planned to aim the book at high school students, the district guided them to fifth-graders, who have fewer choices of courses to study, as opposed to high-schoolers, who have a plethora of topics and activities from which to choose.

The project took root when Adams and Faden discussed applying for a JAACL Legacy Fund Grant through the D.C. chapter. The duo kicked around the idea, and chapter members suggested a graphic novel to appeal to young people.

“What was inspiring for Janice was that with the graphic novel, we can really reach a lot of different students, and we had known at that time that Montgomery County had just approved an Asian American



Members of the JAACL D.C. chapter and Tamlyn Tomita (bottom left)

PHOTO: KRIS IKEJIRI

Studies course in the high school,” Adams recalled. “So, felt like it was a good time to at least approach Montgomery County to see if it could be something that they would be interested in.”

Adams contacted a friend at the district. “We were thinking that this would probably be something for their high schools. And she’s like, ‘Oh, Linda, I really want to talk to you because they were going to be implementing a brand-new curriculum starting in 2024, and they really wanted this for fifth grade.’”

It was an easy decision to adjust to a younger readership because if it’s part of the fifth grade curriculum, “all fifth-graders would get it. So, instead of impacting, you know, maybe 25 students in, you know, two to four schools a year, we’re talking about right now close to 11,000 students.”

The approach has already paid off. Faden says they’ve delivered 136 books to every elementary school in Montgomery County. The authors hope to be able to fund future print runs to distribute the book to school districts, libraries and museums across the country. They’re also hoping to have the book be available for purchase at the Smithsonian American History Museum’s gift shop. Additional plans include translating the book into Chinese,



(From left) Kazuma Parkinson, Linda Sato Adams, Janice Nakano Faden, Kim Hirose Tobe and John Tobe at July’s JACL National Convention

PHOTO: KRIS IKEJIRI

French and Spanish for schools aimed at Montgomery County students who speak those languages, as well as a future Japanese edition for a Japanese language school.

The book made its debut at July’s JACL National Convention in Philadelphia, where Adams and Faden drove up with a car filled with the graphic novel. Since then, they’ve made their way into Maryland schools.

“When I have been out and about since the book has been available, I have seen bulletin boards filled with papers written by fifth-graders who have presented the results of their interviews with their parents and grandparents telling where they have come from in all countries around the world and how that has impacted

their customs, their food, their celebrations and their understandings,” said Faden. “So, that has been great. Just the other day, a friend had left a book out on her table when she had gone with the family to a beach week. This is a grandma, and the grandson says, ‘I know that book.’” The grandson was in fourth grade at the time, so the book is reaching outside its targeted audience.”

The pair have also been asked to meet with state officials. “We’re also going to be working with the State Department of Education because they want us to present what we have done, and they want us to show it to help other jurisdictions use outside resources since some of the school districts are limited in their funds to broaden and deepen their

curriculum,” said Faden.

“The book continues to live on with many, many, many legs,” she added.

The road ahead looks long but brightly lit and smoothly paved, with potential to help educate people across the country about the JA community’s long journey to today.

Rowe, from her campus in Florida, agrees. “I mean, there are so many different ideas that went into this book and so many, you know, repercussions in a positive way that some of us didn’t even expect,” she said.

Because she taught art to elementary students, Rowe feels that she understands the mind-set of that age and how art in particular can reach their consciousness.

“I took a lot from my experience of working with fifth- and sixth-graders. I mean, that was one of my favorite grades to teach because they’re just so much fun, and they’re really becoming more critical thinkers at that point,” she said. “I feel, especially like with art, that it’s a great time where you can kind of get them in and get them to like what art can offer for different lines

of inquiry.”

Rowe added: “I would just say that this was really a labor of love. None of us came in here for a profit, obviously. So, to get this kind of reception just for the first printing of the book has just been amazing, honestly.”

They should brace themselves for more of the same.

To purchase “But, Where Are You REALLY From?” contact the JACL D.C. chapter at <https://jacl-dc.org/>.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF JACL D.C. CHAPTER



Answer Keiro's Memory Survey!

Keiro announced its intent to develop board and care homes to meet the needs of older adults affected by memory loss. We invite you to participate in our survey.

Please answer the survey if you are...

- Part of the Japanese American and Japanese community AND
- Residing or have a close loved one in LA, Orange, or Ventura Counties

Online surveys must be completed and mailed surveys must be postmarked by September 30, 2024.

Scan the QR code or visit keiro.org/survey. For questions, email survey@keiro.org.

How to Participate:

- 1 To get immediate access to the online survey, please visit website at keiro.org/survey.
- 2 To request a paper survey, please contact Keiro at 213.873.5700 or survey@keiro.org before September 1, 2024.



ARKANSAS » continued from page 5

Tule Lake. The memorial service then concluded with organizational representatives and other pilgrims giving incense offerings at the butsudan altar at the front of the tent.

After the memorial, we had a brief lunch break at the nearby fairgrounds before embarking on a driving tour of the residential blocks that are publicly accessible. Most of the Tule Lake camp is inaccessible to pilgrims because an airfield was built for crop dusting planes in the postwar era.

Located in the middle of the former Tule Lake site, the airstrip prevents survivors and descendants from accessing much of the area where residential barracks used to exist. Other sections are inaccessible because they house temporary residences for migrant laborers employed by the state agricultural department.

Our bus monitor shared that when the airstrip was being built, workers dug the dirt out of the former site where the cemetery was once located to use as fill when evening out the airfield. At the time, some remains were still in the ground. Despite pleas from incarceration survivors and descendants, the landowner refuses to let archeologists survey the area.

Next, we drove to the site of the old post office building where 30-year-old Nisei James Okamoto was shot to death by a camp guard. Okamoto worked as a truck driver, transporting materials from the farm to other sections of camp. After some sort of misunderstanding at the camp gate, the soldier commanded Okamoto to get out of the truck. When he did, the soldier tried to hit him with his rifle butt. Okamoto tried to shield himself from the blow, and the soldier fired in retaliation, hitting him in the chest. Other drivers were told to “get the hell out of here!” and hid behind the old post office building.

The final stop on our site tour was Camp Tule Lake, originally built as a Civilian Conservation Corps camp during the New Deal program. It was converted into an isolation center where incarcerated from other camps were brought in as strikebreakers in the aftermath of the 1943 Tule Lake farm strike resulting from a farm truck accident leading to the death of one inmate and injuring of five others.

Incarcerated from Poston and Topaz who were kept here, isolated from the general camp population, were unaware of the strike. Tuleans began organized protests in the camp, to which Project Director Raymond Best responded by calling in the military, who then stormed the camp with tanks and jeeps with machine gun mounts and tear gassed the protesters. Shortly after, the stockade was built, where protest leaders and other “troublemakers” were separated from their friends and families by a bullpen-style barbed-wire fence and jail building.

While I have studied Tule Lake fairly extensively, hearing these disheartening stories in context at the site where they had taken place gave greater understanding to the uniquely traumatic experiences of Tule Lake survivors and descendants.

The bus ride back to Oregon was largely quiet as pilgrims processed the many difficult stories that were shared with us that day. I was able to share my thoughts with fellow pilgrims during the Tsuru for Solidarity Healing Circles facilitators meeting that followed, which helped codify the many significant



The Tule Lake Stockade Jail during World War II (top) and today

PHOTOS: ROB BUSCHER

experiences we shared at the site.

The last full day of the pilgrimage began with a screening of Sharon Yamato’s new documentary short “One Fighting Irish Man,” about ACLU lawyer Wayne Collins, who fought tirelessly to ensure that Tule Lake prisoners who renounced their U.S. citizenship could have it reinstated in the postwar era. For the post-film discussion, Yamato was joined by Wayne Collins Jr., son of the film’s main subject, and George Takei.

Following a rousing Q & A discussion, author/filmmaker Frank Abe led a second panel discussion on literature of the incarceration, focusing specifically on Japanese language writing done by Issei and Kibei at Tule Lake.

Abe was joined by author Nancy Kyoko Oda, whose father was the highest-ranking judo practitioner at Tule Lake. He was arrested and sent to the stockade, where he kept a journal of life from the prison within a prison.

Oda and his fellow prisoners endured immense suffering in the stockade jail’s deplorable conditions. Stockade prisoners were fed only one tablespoon to one teaspoon of rice each day. The men began eating snow to fill their bellies, with one defiantly claiming, “We are filled by the Japanese spirit.”

Oda himself gave powerful testimony in an excerpt from one passage that read, “I thought the U.S. was a country of laws like Japan. Every day they treat the Japanese like this,

they do dishonor to the country.” Oda’s diary was nearly confiscated when he was released back into the general prison population, which he had hid in his hat. Written in Japanese, he told the soldier it contained quotes from a religious scripture and surprisingly was allowed to keep it.

The final panelist was Andrew Leong, professor of English at the University of California,

Berkeley, who has been leading efforts to translate the Japanese language literary magazine *Tessaku*, which was published at Tule Lake.

Abe said during the panel discussion, “Japanese language sources such as these are perhaps the final frontier of incarceration research.” Given the general lack of Japanese language ability in Sansei-plus generations, there is a significant research gap that stands to be filled by greater efforts to translate and interpret the writings of Japanese speakers in camp.

After a long bus ride back to San Jose the next day, I flew back to Philadelphia. The next day, July 9, was the first event of the JACL National Convention that we hosted in Philadelphia, a group trip to the ballpark to watch the Phillies take on the Los Angeles Dodgers.

As I sat there watching the baseball game with my nearly 4-year-old son, Mateo, in a crowd of JACL convention attendees, I took stock of the multitude of experiences from my recent travels.

I don’t know when or how I will introduce the wartime incarceration to Mateo, but I wonder how he will interpret these stories in his own life and times. What I do know is that we must continue preserving these sites so that future generations like my son’s will get their own opportunities to make meaning of these tragic events that are so central to our community’s collective history. And in doing so, continue to build solidarity with other historically marginalized peoples.

To read Part 1 of this series, see the *Pacific Citizen’s* Aug. 23-Sept. 5, 2024, issue.



The Tule Lake Segregation Center memorial



Special Issues Coming Soon

JACL Scholarship Special
(moved to October 4th issue)
Celebrate your 2024 graduates with a happy CONGRATULATIONS message!

November -VETERANS Special
Acknowledge the Armed Forces or the Veterans in your life by placing their name and photo in our newspaper and forever saved in our archives! Prices start at \$33 per 2"x1"

DECEMBER
Holiday Special Issue
Send holiday greetings across the nation!
Great fundraiser opportunity for Chapters!!

Contact Susan at
(213) 620-1767 ext.03
email: BusMgr@PacificCitizen.org



REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

RECOGNIZING Grandparents' Day

By JR Fujita

National Grandparents' Day is celebrated the first Sunday after Labor Day and is a time when we can honor and appreciate the wisdom of our grandparents. This year, it will take place on Sept. 8. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter declared the first National Grandparents' Day, and each year since, the president has kept this tradition going. Grandparents' Day is also recognized with an official flower, the forget-me-not, and its official song is "A Song for Grandma and Grandpa" by Johnny Prill.

Most grandparents have no preference for what they do on this special day apart from spending time with their grandchildren. Activities may include favorite hobbies, teaching a new skill, going outdoors together, playing games, watching sports or having a meal

together. Although grandparents and grandchildren may be separated by distance, there are still plenty of opportunities for them to connect virtually and send care packages with note cards.

AARP offers a variety of ideas for Grandparents' Day activities, as well as an array of discounts to enjoy at aarp.org/home-family/friends-family/. You'll also find stories of grandchildren and grandparents sharing their unique bond. There is also a diverse variety of AARP-hosted activities surrounding Sept. 8, which can be found at aarp.org/nearyou. These include board games, outdoor activities and more!

I was very fortunate to know my late great-grandmother and all four of my late grandparents. I still miss the large family gatherings with first, second and third cousins, great-aunts and great-uncles and, of course, the Japanese food that brought us

together. Although there were a lot of relatives gathering, we would take shifts to eat around the table — there would always be plenty of food and leftovers to take home and enjoy.

Whether you have grandparents or grandchildren to spend time with, I hope you'll take the opportunity to connect with other generations and create new stories and memories. Connecting with each other provides us opportunities to enrich our lives and discover the joys that come from these experiences, so that we remain connected and bonded together. ■

JR Fujita is a community outreach and engagement manager for AARP and is based in Sacramento, Calif.



VC JACL to Host Cemetery Rededication Ceremony

By VC JACL Chapter

A rededication ceremony with Christian and Buddhist officiants will be held at the Historic Japanese Cemetery in Oxnard from 10-11 a.m. on Sept. 21.

The cemetery is one of the only known segregated Asian American cemeteries in California. Initially owned by the Hueneme Masons, the Masons allowed the early Japanese community in Ventura County to bury their dead in the segregated Japanese cemetery starting in 1908.

"This is an opportunity for us to gather the descendants of those who are buried in the cemetery, the Japanese American community and our supporters," said Lily Anne Welty Tamai, the chapter's co-president and assistant professor at California State University, Channel Islands, who has researched the cemetery's

history. "Our chapter has served as one of the unofficial caretakers of this historic site for many years. We can learn a lot about the early Japanese American community by examining the history and relationships of those buried in the cemetery."

Tamai is also leading efforts to establish the cemetery as a historic site, and she will share a short presentation on the history of the cemetery at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center after the Rededication Ceremony from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Lunch will be included.

This project is funded through grants from the Japanese American Community Foundation and Keiro.

The Cemetery Ceremony will be held at the Historic Japanese Cemetery. To register for the presentation after the rededication, visit www.vcjacl.org.



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

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!

- 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.jaclu.com NCUA

PROMO CODE: PCV15A24

The Women and Men of The Legislative Education Committee JACL's Redress Lobbying Group



Grayce Uyehara



Cherry Kinoshita



Mae Takahashi



Molly Fujioka



Peggy Liggett



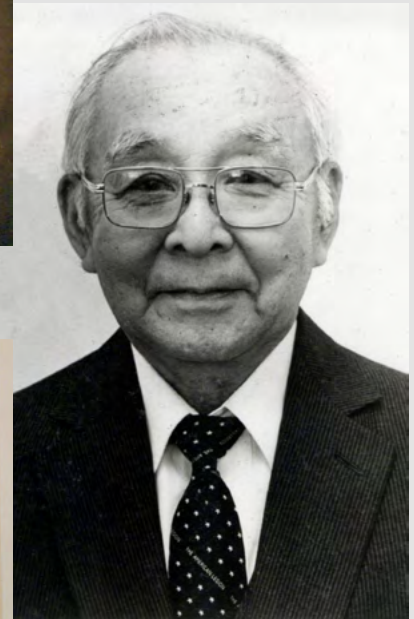
Denny Yasuhara



Harry Kajihara



Shig Wakamatsu



Art Morimitsu

In Memoriam

Sponsored by: Grant Ujifusa, <https://grantujifusa.com/>

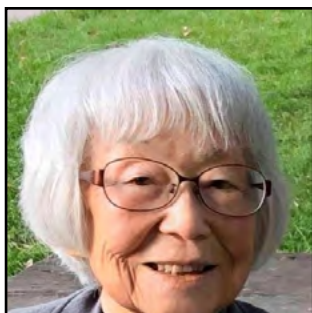
In MEMORIAM

Abe, Joanne Hidemi, 75, Honolulu, HI, April 23.



Debiasi, Donna Lee Miyashiro, 64, Honolulu, HI, June 26.

Funai, Kenneth, 82, Honolulu, HI, July 1.



Hirata, Lili, 92, Spokane, WA, July 27.

Kawamata, Gilbert Katsumi, 89, Haleiwa, HI, June 17.



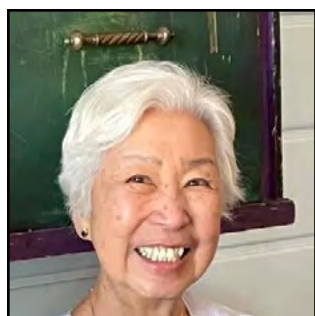
Kirihara, Tosh, 101, Spokane, WA, May 3.



Kubota, Nami Miyahara, 96, Sacramento, CA, June 24.



Murakawa, Sachiko, 96, Kaneohe, HI, July 8.



Okigawa, Yasuko, née Nakamura, 91, Northbrook, IL, Aug. 10.



Sekiya, Linda, 83, Mesa, AZ, May 24.

Suzuki, Alvin, 80, Honolulu, HI, March 11.

Suzuki, Ellen, 97, Los Angeles, CA, April 24.

Suzuki, Esther Kekai Yoneko, 31, Meridian, ID, March 1.

Suzuki, Grace, née Ujifusa, 90, Golden, CO, July 20.

Takishita, Harold Hideo, 84, Kaneohe, HI, June 23.

Tanaka, Violet, 97, Canyon Country, CA, July 9.

Tokunaga, Asao, 81, North Hollywood, CA, July 19.

Uehira, Lois, 92, Aiea, HI, Feb. 16.

Uyemura, Raymond Makoto, 58, Placentia, CA, July 30.

Wada, Margaret Motoye, 95, Lomita, CA, April 21; activities included Double I's Women's Club, the Gardena Nisei VFW Women's Club, Koyasan Buddhist Church and volunteering for the Japanese American National Museum, which presented her with the Miki Tanimura Outstanding Volunteer Award for extraordinary service; she was predeceased by her husband, William Wada; she is survived by her children, Donna Rae Wada and Craig Wada; sister-in-law, Chieko Miyata; nieces, grandnieces, grandnephews and friends.



Yamamoto, Beverly, 73, Palestine, TX, March 27.

Yamamoto, Hideko, 103, Montebello, CA, April 12.



Yamasaki, Mary Sakaye, 103, Los Angeles, CA, June 4.



Yoshida, John, 83, Lower Alsace Township, PA, Feb. 23.

News Briefs

USA Gets Silver to Japan's Gold Medal in Wheelchair Rugby at Paralympics

American Chuck Aoki (*see Pacific Citizen, July 2-22, 2021*) said, "I wanted this so bad for our team" after Japan won its first gold medal in wheelchair rugby on Sept. 2 at the Paris 2024 Summer Paralympic Games when it defeated Team USA 48-41.

Ex-N.Y. Governor's Aide Charged With Being Chinese Government Agent

Linda Sun, N.Y. Gov. Kathy Hochul's former deputy chief of staff, pleaded not guilty after being charged with acting as an illegal agent of the Chinese government.

— P.C. Staff

Greater Pasadena's Harry Kawahara Dies

By P.C. Staff



Harry Kawahara

PHOTO: COURTESY OF KAWAHARA FAMILY

Educator, activist and counselor Harry Kawahara, who co-founded and served as the first president of the Greater Pasadena JACL chapter in the 1960s, pioneered getting Asian American studies classes into high school and college curricula in the early 1970s and served as the founding president of Pasadena City College's Coalition of Asian Pacific Employees in the 1980s, died May 10. The Altadena, Calif., resident was 92.

A Nisei born in San Leandro, Calif., Sept. 14, 1931, Kawahara was the sixth of seven children born to Issei immigrants Momotaro and Takeno Kawahara. As a 10-year-old, Kawahara and his family were among America's more than 125,000 ethnic Japanese whose lives and livelihoods were upended after President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Feb. 19, 1942, Executive Order 9066.

Kawahara and his family would be detained at the Topaz War Relocation Authority Center in Utah.

After returning to California, Kawahara was elected student body president of San Leandro High School in 1949. At the University of California, Berkeley, he met lifelong friends Bob Suzuki and Norman Mineta.

After graduating from UC Berkeley with a degree in political science in 1955, Kawahara attended Pasadena's Fuller Theological Seminary, graduating in 1960. In 1962, he and Jane K. Yamaguchi married. He also earned a teaching credential from California State University, Los Angeles.

Recalling Kawahara's many accomplishments, Susie Ling, associate professor of history and Asian American Studies at Pasadena City College, said, "He did so many things on campus. . . . He was on lots and lots of committees. He was always ready to help out."

Among Kawahara's accomplishments:

- Becoming the first Asian American faculty member at Monrovia High School
- Helping Pasadena establish Fred Korematsu Day in 2011
- Pushing to have Asian American Studies taught at the high school and community college levels
- Testifying at the Los Angeles

Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians hearing in 1981

- Recruiting and preparing testimonials of surviving incarcerated for the CWRIC hearing

- Serving as JACL's Pacific Southwest District Council vice governor and board member.

In a Densho oral history, Kawahara recalled the genesis of the Greater Pasadena chapter.

"There was an existing Pasadena chapter of JACL . . . We thought about joining them and beginning to take on some leadership roles with the other group. We said, 'Well, it might be easier just to form our own group.'"

In an interview with *Pacific Citizen*, Ling marveled at how Kawahara and his fellow Nisei defied the "Quiet American" stereotype by also speaking out against the Vietnam War and helping to establish Asian American Studies. "I'm very impressed with them now that I'm older," she said.

Kawahara's own words underscore Ling's observation. He told Densho: "We were out there marching against the war in Vietnam, marching with our fellow minorities regarding civil rights, human rights."

In 2013 at the JACL's Pacific Southwest District Awards Luncheon, Kawahara was among the event's honorees (*see Pacific Citizen, Oct. 4-17, 2013*).

Kawahara is survived by his wife, Jane; and sons, Tim Kawahara and Reed Kawahara; daughter-in-law, Trish; and grandchildren, Emiko and Walter.

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 or call (213) 620-1767 Ext. 4

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.kubotanikkimortuary.com

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



Our commitment to the Japanese American community has been and will remain, strong.

Being a trusted financial partner to the Japanese American community didn't happen overnight. Now, joining with U.S. Bank, we continue to invest in the future of our community.

Together, we have more than three centuries of business experience to help you realize your goals. With even greater resources, we are well positioned to provide services for generational success.

As our relationships continue to grow, so do your possibilities. We are taking the next step with dedication to you, and the Japanese American community.

Visit usbank.com/more to learn more.

