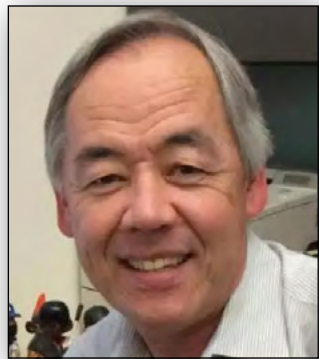


VETERAN L.A. TIMES EDITORIAL STAFFER HENRY FUHRMANN DIES AT 65

The journalist pushed for disuse of ‘internment camp’ in reference to WWII JA incarceration.

By P.C. Staff



Henry Fuhrmann

Henry Fuhrmann, who left the *Los Angeles Times* in 2015 after 25 years in various capacities from copy editor to having his name in the masthead of the op-ed page with the title of assistant managing editor, died Sept. 14. The respected and well-liked journalist was 65.

A post written by family members on his Facebook page noted that Fuhrmann “died peacefully” with his wife, Lindi Dreibelbis, his daughters and son and other family members at his bedside.

In a statement, Asian American Journalists Assn. Board President Michelle Ye Hee Lee said, “AAJA is devastated over the loss of our dear friend Henry, an AAJA legend and guiding light and a thoughtful journalist dedicated to fair and precise coverage of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and treating our communities with dignity through our words. I can’t imagine AAJA without Henry Fuhrmann, and we will miss him dearly.”

In a statement released by the Los Angeles chapter of AAJA: “As the years evolved, there has been one constant in our AAJA-L.A. chapter: Henry Fuhrmann. In every role, and leading with empathy, he shaped, soothed, persuaded, promoted and recruited with smarts, humor and humility. We are thankful we have flourished as we boosted generations of journalists as well as innovation funds, sparked by his work.

“In this moment, we join our AAJA family spanning the miles for a massive group hug, saluting the rare spirit that is Henry. We send gratitude to Henry’s family, especially to his daughters, Elena and Angela, for sharing his time and talent with us through vigorous decades.”

After learning of the serious nature of his illness, the AAJA’s national board awarded Fuhrmann its Lifetime Achievement Award, hoping he would learn of this honor before his death. As it turned out, the honor came too late, and AAJA will present his survivors the award at its 2023 national convention in Washington, D.C.

According to various sources, Fuhrmann was admitted to the hospital on Sept. 2 after having been diagnosed with advanced esophageal cancer. Just weeks earlier in Los Angeles, he attended the AAJA national convention. In the organization’s Los Angeles chapter, he most recently held the title of vp of

career development. He also served two terms as president of AAJA-L.A. and was on the national board of ACES: The Society for Editing, formerly known as the American Copy Editors Society.

Fuhrmann was the eldest of four siblings born to Ronald and Yukiko Fuhrmann, née Miyamoto. The Fuhrmann patriarch met his future wife while stationed in Japan following the U.S. occupation of Japan after WWII. After Henry was born in Japan, the Fuhrmanns moved to Port Hueneme, Calif., where the family added three more children, Irene, David and Glen.

It was after his stint at the *L.A. Times* that Fuhrmann earned the moniker “hyphen killer” when, in 2019, the *Associated Press* changed its policy regarding so-called hyphenated Americans.

In an essay, he contended that the hyphen, a punctuation mark typically used to “avoid ambiguity” or “form a single idea from two or more words,” had the unfortunate effect of, when applied to ethnic groups in America, e.g., African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Italian-Americans, etc., actually relegated such groups to an otherness that separated them from being fully recognized as Americans.

His essay is credited for prompting the “Associated Press Stylebook” to finally change its guidance to avoid using a hyphen with regard to American ethnic groups or heritage.

Fuhrmann also is credited for championing the *L.A. Times* to change its guidance on the word “internment” to describe camps operated by the U.S. government during WWII for Japanese Americans, since the word by its definition applies to foreign nationals, not U.S. citizens. Most ethnic Japanese in WWII who were incarcerated at so-called internment camps were U.S. citizens.

After leaving the *L.A. Times* in 2015, he worked for five years at the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School of Journalism where, according to his LinkedIn page, he was a writing coach and

adjunct instructor.

In a recorded oral history conducted by AAJA, Fuhrmann looked back at his academic trajectory and career path and said, “I’m the accidental journalist,” referring to a series of chance encounters that led him to become a journalism professional in his early 30s.

In the video, Fuhrmann recalled how after high school he initially attended Caltech to become an engineer. His roommate’s best friend was the editor-in-chief of the school’s newspaper and happened to ask Fuhrmann if he might be interested in helping the paper’s production.

After agreeing, he learned to “set type and paste up the pages” and write articles — and he fell in love with newspapering. By his sophomore year, he was the paper’s editor-in-chief and was spending more time working on the paper than paying attention to “differential equations.”

Through another bit of random chance when he felt compelled to drop out, a Caltech professor recommended him for a part-time job in the media office of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, where he stayed for eight years. He then transferred to the University of California, Los Angeles, still thinking he would pursue engineering. But after a year, Fuhrmann transferred once more to California State University, Los Angeles, which offered a journalism degree. He also went on to earn a master’s degree in journalism from Columbia University.

Yet another chance encounter occurred at a job fair when a recruiter insisted that he take his copy editing test. Fuhrmann did well enough to land himself a place in METPRO (Minority Editorial Training Program) at New York Newsday — now defunct but then-owned by the same parent company as the *L.A. Times*. Two years later, he was sent to the *L.A. Times* as a copy editor.

Fuhrmann was predeceased by his mother, Yuki, in July 2010, and his father, Ronald, in January.

He is survived by his widow, Lindi Dreibelbis; daughters, Elena Fuhrmann and Angela Fuhrmann Knowles; stepchildren, Kelly Arthur and Grant Arthur; and siblings, Irene, David (Kim) and Glen (Maria).

According to Dreibelbis, a celebration of life is scheduled for Feb. 19, 2023, at 1:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Little Tokyo. (Note: To view Fuhrmann’s oral history, visit tinyurl.com/2waex54v.)

MEMORIAM

TRIBUTE

DONALD MATSUBARA



Donald Yoshiyuki Matsubara was born Oct. 12, 1927, the third of four boys to the late Ichizo and Sumie Matsubara.

He is survived by his loving wife of more than 57 years, Katie Fumi (Yamamoto); children, Kenneth Matsubara and Leslie Kimi (Carter) Harbaugh; and granddaughter, Kaitlan. He is also survived by his in-laws, June (Ray) Matsubara, Tomiko (Harold) Yamamoto and James (Tulie) Takeuchi, as well as many nieces and

nephews.

He was preceded in death by his brothers, George, Jean and wife Kiyo, Ray; in-laws, Tak and Hiroko Taniguchi, John and Masako Yamamoto, Harold Yamamoto, Ichiro and Tatsuyo Yamamoto, and Tulie Takeuchi.

TRIBUTE

MIYOSHI IKEDA



Miyoshi Ikeda died on Aug. 3 in Chula Vista, Calif., at 92. He was born in Hilo, Hawaii, on March 16, 1930. He was the youngest of five children of Tatsuo and Nobu Ikeda. He majored in theater arts at UH in Honolulu. Miyoshi was an Army Ranger and paratrooper who served in Korea. The love of his life, Emiko Oda, was an Army nurse at Fort Benning, Ga. Later, he was a public school teacher and administrator, and a college professor. He enjoyed

opera and theater. Miyoshi and Emiko were married for 62 years until her death in 2019. His Sept. 19 service with military honors took place at Miramar National Cemetery, officiated by the Buddhist Temple of San Diego. Miyoshi loved to “talk story” and had a great sense of humor. He is deeply missed. Survivors are his children, Edna and Michael, and grandson, Kenzo, and many nieces and nephews.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

‘In Memoriam’ is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis.

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CONTACT:

Editorial@pacificcitizen.org or call (213) 620-1767 ext. 104

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