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PACIFIC CITIZEN



The Nakaji family, circa 1932. Pictured are *(front row, from left)* Hiromichi, Ritsuko, Hideyo and Sadahyaku (father) and *(standing, from left)* Chizuru, Chiyeno (mother) and Tooru.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF PAUL BOYEA

CELEBRATING 96 Years

SAVING TERMINAL ISLAND

» PAGE 6

Efforts to preserve the legacy of a prewar JA community continues.

» PAGE 5

Fred T. Korematsu Day Event Held in San Jose

» PAGE 8

Part II: Nikkei Remember 522nd in Germany

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JACL, 77 ORGANIZATIONS LINK TO HONOR FRED KOREMATSU

The bills were introduced to fete the civil rights icon on his 106th birthday.



By P.C. Staff

The Japanese American Citizens League on Jan 30 joined 77 other organizations to show support for the introduction of federal legislation that would designate Jan. 30 as a date to honor Fred Korematsu for taking a principled stand against the unjust mass incarceration of Americans of Japanese heritage during World War II and also seek to posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to the civil rights icon.

Reps. Doris Matsui (D–Calif.) and Mark Takano (D–Calif.) introduced HR 77, which seeks to designate Jan. 30 — Korematsu's date of 1919 birth — as "Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution." Sen. Mazie Hirono (D–Hawaii), meantime, introduced companion legislation S 47.

Hirono also introduced S 338, which seeks to posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Korematsu. Its House counterpart, also introduced by Takano, is HR 821, aka the Fred Korematsu Congressional Gold Medal Act.

The Congressional Gold Medal is America's oldest and highest civilian award, bestowed for distinguished achievements and contributions.

"Fred Korematsu stood up for the over 125,000 Japanese Americans, including my parents, who were incarcerated under an unlawful executive order," said Takano. "I am proud to partner with my colleagues both across the aisle and in the Senate to ensure that Fred Korematsu's legacy is remembered for generations to come. It is only right I introduce this package on what would be Mr. Korematsu's 106th birthday."

"More than 80 years ago, Fred Korematsu stood up for the rights of more than 125,000 Japanese Americans illegally incarcerated during WWII, devoting his life to fighting for justice and equality," said Hirono. "I am proud to lead this effort to recognize Mr. Korematsu for his courageous contributions and award him with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor and one he rightfully deserves. May Mr. Korematsu's legacy remind us that eternal vigilance is required of all of us, and we must continue to defend the civil liberties of all people and speak out against injustice."

In its statement, JACL said, "Recognizing Korematsu's legacy permanently on this date and issuing the Congressional Gold Medal would be a fitting acknowledgment of his contributions to our nation's understanding of what it means to be an American and the rights we must all cherish and preserve for all."

Among the 77 organizations joining the national JACL in support of the legislation were several JACL chapters. *(A list of supporters may be seen at tinyurl.com/4cer3ru3.)*

"Fred Korematsu confronted a fearful current of hate and discrimination to stand up for our most foundational rights as Americans," said Matsui. "Fred's battle against the wrongful incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII taught us that we must always stand up, speak out and unite against injustice. That we must take the time to listen and learn the lessons of the past, so we never repeat those mistakes. The history of the Japanese American community is a story that cannot afford to be lost in time. That's why we continue to tell Fred's story and teach our younger generations the perseverance and determination that has been woven into the Japanese American identity. I'm proud to join Congressman Takano to introduce these bills that honor Fred's legacy of justice and equity for all."

Following President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signing of Executive Order 9066 during WWII, which led to the forced removal of ethnic Japanese — most of whom were U.S. citizens — from the West Coast to government-operated concentration camps and detention centers, four individuals filed legal challenges to different aspects of the executive order that reached the Supreme Court.

Of the four — Mitsuye Endo, Gordon Hirabayashi, Korematsu and Minoru Yasui — only Endo's challenge proved victorious at the time *(see related story at tinyurl.com/y2puuzsa)*.

Decades later, using the obscure legal challenge writ of error coram nobis, the three losing SCOTUS cases were revived, with Hirabayashi's and Korematsu's rulings being overturned; Yasui died before his case could be heard by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal. His original conviction was, however, overturned by Oregon's federal court. All three were each later awarded Presidential Medals of Freedom.

On Sept. 23, 2010, California designated Jan. 30 as Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution (*see Oct. 1-14, 2010, Pacific Citizen*). Since then, several other states — Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, Michigan, New Jersey and Virginia — also have designated Jan. 30 as Fred Korematsu Day.

To read the entirety of JACL's statement, visit tinyurl.com/4p9wrxuh.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

YOU STILL HAVE POWER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director

We are just over three weeks into the second Trump administration, and many seem overwhelmed by the flood of executive actions and orders that have come forth from the White House. Nearly 100 executive actions are posted on the White House website as of the end of the third full week, and tens of thousands of federal workers have been pushed out under the threat of being fired eventually without the voluntary resignation benefits offered via cryptic emails.

It certainly seems that the government is falling apart from within, and Congress is standing idly by, whether it is Republicans expressing their fealty to their party leader or impotent Democrats who are too fearful that they will lose more support by taking a possibly unpopular position. The only thing that has saved us from descending into total chaos are numerous court challenges that have overwhelmingly been found against the administration's actions. The other side of this is that for a president who has long demonstrated his disdain for the rule of law, we are reliant upon him and his administration actually following the court's rulings.

And yet, our government remains open, and functional, at least until the looming deadline for Congress to pass appropriations for the current year on March 14. Failure to pass the spending package would actually shut down the government in a way the president cannot because it truly is Congress that funds the government's operations, not the president.

Probably, you are not feeling any better about the situation than when I started this column. You are still faced with an administration that is acting outside traditional norms and even outside the boundaries of legality. Congress may actually accomplish weakening the federal government more effectively than the president if it fails to pass its spending bills, and outside that, they seem to be doing little to stop what the president has attempted.

But what is also true is that much of this will take time.

The courts will be involved, and as the president well knows, the courts can be used to draw things out until the clock runs out at the next election, whether it is midterms for Congress or the next presidential election. Ultimately, despite the radical skewing of the courts, I do believe many of the things that the president is doing will be too far even for these justices to stomach. While the attacks on birthright citizenship have garnered significant headlines, there is a close to zero chance that the court will overturn that right or even erode it in the way the president seeks.

As this process draws out and we take a moment to breathe, individuals can make a difference.

Regardless of whether you have a Democratic or Republican representative or senator, call their office to let them know you are angry about what is happening. Ask them if the purging of government employees will mean your tax return will be delayed. Will you get your Social Security check on time next month? Or does Elon Musk now know how much your Social Security check is? During the Superbowl, there were multiple public service announcements about cancer, so you can ask if the freezes on federal grants are cutting off funds to medical research. Have they seen how much the cost of eggs has gone up in the past two weeks?

Right now, Congress needs to hear that the administration's actions are not just creating fear in their political enemies, but in all Americans around these fundamental issues and concerns.

This is an administration built on and with expertise in creating fear in what they might consider their enemies: Immigrants, minorities and LGBTQ+ people. Congress needs to hear that the fear is going deeper than the so-called identity issues, that these are the concerns of all Americans. We need Democrats to take a more forceful opposition and for Republicans to realize that they need to conduct some rudimentary oversight that Congress is expected of in the Constitution. The Senate is supposed to advise and consent, not just consent to administrative appointments.

It's only been three weeks since this administration came in, but as every member of Congress knows, it's less than two years until the next election. Make sure that they know that you know this as well, and that even if they might not agree with you on many things, they should agree that they need to be doing better at their own job as a member of Congress and looking out for the concerns of their constituents.

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



REFLECTIONS

Exec Director's *'US,' 'THEM'* Rhetoric Is Divisive

By Doug Urata

As one of the Japanese American conservatives included in the *Pacific Citizen* article "The Being Red While JA Blues" *(see Oct. 18-31, 2024, Pacific Citizen),* I feel the responsibility to express my disappointment in the message from JACL Executive Director David Inoue in the Nov. 15-Dec. 19, 2024, issue.

Inoue posits that everyone who voted for Harris-Walz are "us," and anyone who voted for Trump-Vance are "them." I am astounded that someone who runs a national civil rights organization would offer such a polarizing position. He stated that "we need to make the effort to genuinely get to know those who are voting in incredibly divergent ways from us."

"Incredibly divergent from us"? I believe that is false. From what I see, the Republican Party is now the "big tent" party that welcomes any and all who are interested in the principles that the party represents.

The difference is that Democrats see Republicans as people to malign and avoid, including at family events. Even the Holiday Campaign fundraising letter opened with the threat that President Trump might invoke the Enemy Aliens Act and tied it to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, which was a violation of the civil rights of Americans, not aliens. Would there be wholesale rounding up of people here illegally, based solely on their country of birth? It seems that this may be the only way to offset the problems caused by illegal access to our country by unvetted individuals, especially known criminals, regardless of their country of origin.

I have been a member of the JACL since the '70s and was even a "Jr. JACLer" before that. I was in the second "Leadership" group to travel to Washington, D.C., in 1986 and met all the "Big Four": Inouye, Matsunaga, Mineta and Matsui. I met with my congressman to get his support for the redress bill. I've been a board member for more than 40 years of what started out as the JACL health insurance plan, and we established the Japanese American Community Fund that has distributed dozens of grants to projects and organizations benefitting our community — and that includes JACL.

I've emceed many JACL events, both district and national. As a former trainer for Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP) for many years, I conducted leadership training sessions and facilitated strategic planning sessions for dozens of local community organizations. A former national JACL president calls me "sensei" for leading the weeklong LEAP training that influenced him to change his career path to include leadership roles in public affairs and advocacy, where he has been highly successful.

How dare you, David Inoue, attempt to exclude me as part of "us"?

The JACL was inclusive of all people in the past, with the understanding that we were united in the cause of civil rights and making "Better Americans in a Greater America."

I was at the 2000 convention in Monterey where Nisei veterans walked out after we approved the apology to Nisei Resisters of Conscience of World War II. It's my opinion that it was the start of the turning of the JACL toward the left and where we left the conservative members of JACL behind. I remain a member of my chapter in Riverside because I want to see the local chapters succeed.

I fear that if we continue in this direction, we will be facilitating the demise of our organization. The country has spoken and has awakened from the "woke" nightmare that has plagued our nation. It's up to the JACL and its leadership to decide which path to take.

Doug Urata is a member of the Riverside JACL.

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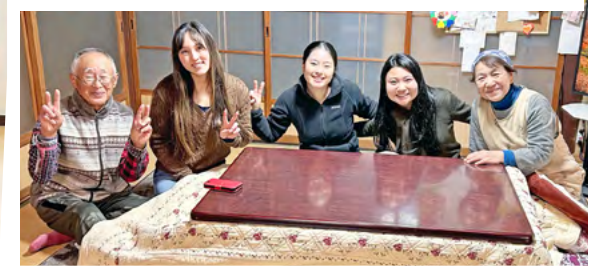
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Group 3 participants with homestay families in Akiōta Town, Hiroshima

Kakehashi participants *(center, from left)* Brooke Sasaki, Miyo Sun and Maya Suzuki with their homestay family





Miyo Sun *(left)* and Ally Santa Maria at the front of Meiji Shrine

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MIYO SUN

An Exploration of Culture and Identity

The Kakehashi Project experience continues to educate and engage Americans with Japan.



Miyo Sun

By Miyo Sun

In December 2024, I had the honor of representing the U.S. and Sacramento JACL as a Japanese American in the 2024 Kakehashi Project. Along with 70-plus other Japanese Americans, our mission was to promote trust and friendship between the U.S. and Japan, as well as increase our understanding of foreign policy and cross-cultural exchange. Through the program, I explored Hiroshima and Tokyo on my first trip to Japan.

For my homestay experience, I stayed in the rural countryside of Akiōta Town in Hiroshima Prefecture with my fellow participants Maya Suzuki and Brooke Sasaki. Akiōta Town was beautiful — my homestay was between two mountains and right near the rivers. We even got to see *hatsuyuki* — the first snow of winter!

We had many cultural experiences with the homestay Ojiichan and Obaachan, such as making mochi, ringing the temple bell at sunset at Senshouji temple, trying on kimonos, visiting Sandankyo waterfall and learning local words/phrases.

We also ate yamame fish caught in the Akiōta Town rivers. A key thing we learned about Akiōta Town was its emphasis on sustainability and preserving nature, such as growing their own crops and getting water from the mountain.

In addition, Akiōta Town faces a declining population as younger adults move to the city for work, and the city relies on ski resorts to attract tourists. Lastly, we experienced preservation of tradition through *kagura*, a ceremonial dance to ward off evil spirits and demons.

In the city area of Hiroshima, we visited college students at the Prefectural University of Hiroshima. We had many conversations about the differences between Japanese college life and American college life. The students were all studying American culture, so it was interesting to hear their opinions of America and where they want to visit.

We also visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Park. I had the honor of hanging origami cranes my group folded at the Peace Memorial Park. This was a fulfilling moment for me as I donated many origami cranes to cancer patients in the U.S. and was now able to donate cranes to honor the victims of the atomic bomb.

After Hiroshima, we made our way to Tokyo and visited Meiji Shrine. We learned about the history of Meiji Shrine, offered prayers and purchased *omamori*. Then, we went to the Japanese Overseas Migration Museum, where we learned about the different jobs that Issei took on after coming to the U.S., such as salmon fishing and working on sugar plantations. We had the honor of speaking with Mr. Nagashima, special adviser to the prime minister of Japan.

(You can read more about this visit with Mr. Nagashima at. https://www.mofa.go.jp/na/na1/us/pageite_000001_00706.html).

From this trip, I made lifelong friends and memories. I feel closer than ever before to my Japanese American identity. I am also extremely grateful to have met many other Japanese-Chinese Americans on this trip who had similar experiences to me. Thank you to the Japanese American Citizens League, Japan International Cooperation Center and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this incredible opportunity.

Miyo Sun is a member of the Sacramento JACL chapter.



(From left) Maya Suzuki, Miyo Sun and Brooke Sasaki wearing traditional kimonos in their homestay family's garden in Akiōta Town



Miyo Sun hangs origami cranes at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park



Kakehashi participants tour the Japanese Overseas Migration Museum



Group 3 experiencing Kagura in Akiōta Town, Hiroshima



Group 3 meets Japanese college students and tours the Prefectural University of Hiroshima

FRED T. KOREMATSU DAY OF CIVIL LIBERTIES AND THE CONSTITUTION

Participating panelists acknowledge the work of the civil rights pioneer as the reason why the fight for justice continues today, now more than ever.

By Emily Murase,
P.C. Contributor

In 2010, the State of California established Jan. 30 as Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution to honor the contributions of the civil rights hero and educate the broader public on the wartime incarceration, its resisters and the redress movement.

The 2025 commemoration was held in San Jose, Calif., Jan. 25 at the Wesley United Methodist Church in Japantown, organized by a diverse collaboration of organizations including the Asian Law Alliance, the Council on American-Islamic Relations San Francisco Bay Area, the Fred Korematsu Institute, the Japanese American Museum of San Jose and Santa Clara University.

As part of the well-attended commemoration, Asian Law Alliance Executive Director Richard Konda in his welcoming remarks placed the event in the context of today's troubling attacks on civil rights and the Constitution.

Emmy award-winning TV reporter Jana Katsuyama served as the event's emcee. She opened with an overview of Fred Korematsu's heroism, for which he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Bill Clinton in 1988.

In 1942, Korematsu, at age 23, refused to comply with Executive Order 9066, which forced 120,000 Japanese Americans from their homes on the West Coast into remote desert American concentration camps during World War II. Arrested and jailed for his actions, Korematsu took his case to the Supreme Court, which, in 1944, ruled against him, citing the "military necessity" of the incarceration.

Then, armed with evidence newly discovered in 1981 by legal researcher Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga and legal scholar Peter Irons, a pro-bono legal team of young, mostly Asian American attorneys pursued justice for Korematsu and fellow incarceration resisters Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui.

In a historic judgment, federal judge Marilyn Hall Patel vacated Korematsu's conviction in 1983, citing fundamental government misconduct and racial prejudice. Throughout his life, Korematsu continued to speak out against racially motivated policies and supported civil rights advocacy.

Karen Korematsu, daughter of Fred Korematsu and founding director of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute, delivered keynote remarks. She explained the Institute's legislative and educational effort to have Jan. 30 be recognized throughout the country as Korematsu Day.

Since the first adoption in California in 2010, Hawaii, Virginia, Florida, New York City, Arizona, New Jersey, and Michigan have all established Jan. 30 as an annual day of recognition to honor Korematsu's fight for justice and the importance of upholding civil liberties and the Constitution. In October 2023, Karen Korematsu testified in the Massachusetts state house in support of designating Fred Korematsu Day.

Karen Korematsu also highlighted the case of Mitsuye Endo, a lesser-known Japanese American plaintiff who also challenged Executive Order 9066 before the Supreme Court. A 22-year-old secretary employed by a state agency in Sacramento, Endo and other Japanese American state workers were summarily fired in 1942. She pursued her case despite being incarcerated at Tule Lake and, later, Topaz concentration camp with her family.

While ultimately the 1944 Supreme Court ruled in Endo's favor, establishing the principle that the government had no grounds to incarcerate loyal citizens, the Roosevelt administration announced closure of the incarceration camps on Dec. 17, 1944, one day before the release of the Supreme Court ruling.

Karen Korematsu attended President Joe Biden's Jan. 2 Presidential Citizens Award ceremony that recognized Endo posthumously at the White House.

Continuing her remarks at the Wesley UMC event, Karen Korematsu emphasized the inhumanity of the incarceration, the need to share Japanese American stories and the importance of lending a hand to the many communities that need support today.

She concluded, "What father would say is to stand up for what is right, and don't be afraid to speak up. What I say is 'This affects all of us.'"

Panelists participating in the event were Tom Izu, an advocate for the study of local history and civil liberties and president of the board of directors of the Japanese American Museum of San Jose; Yoshiko Kanazawa, a former incarceree and docent at JAMsj; Yuki Nishimura, a JAMsj board member; and Musa Tariq, a policy coordinator at the Council of American-Islamic Relations-San Francisco Bay Area.



Fred Korematsu Day speakers *(front row, from left)* Karen Korematsu and Yoshiko Kanazawa and *(standing, from left)* Richard Konda, Yuki Nishimura, Musa Tariq, Tom Izu and Jana Katsuyama

Kanazawa, who was incarcerated at the Tulare Detention Camp and Gila River Incarceration Camp for three-and-a-half years, remembered, "I'm from another generation from the other panelists today. I was one of the 120,000 people who were incarcerated in 1942. I was just 6 years old, a first-grader. Our own government labeled us 'enemy aliens.'"

Kanazawa recounted a heart-breaking story from her family's incarceration. "At the outset of the forced removal, our family was separated. I had just recovered from the measles. My siblings were very sick with the illness. My father, in poor English, asked for a few weeks to allow for their recovery." The government denied the request, ordering Kanazawa's father to leave the stricken children behind.

However, through a fortunate turn of events, the government decided to send a doctor to the home, and, per the doctor's orders, Kanazawa's two brothers and two sisters were taken to L.A. County Hospital, in their bathrobes, until they recovered. "Once recovered, they were reunited with me and my parents," she recalled. Kanazawa also shared, "My parents were unsure if the family would ever be reunited."

A frequent speaker on the wartime incarceration, Kanazawa admitted that she was too young to understand the mass injustice. "I was just a child," she said. "My main concern was not rights or the Constitution. I was worried about rattlesnakes." And yet, she continues to have recurring nightmares involving a sense of being trapped in the hallways of her school at Gila River.

Kanazawa continued, "After the war, I was happy to return to Pasadena (Calif.). I wasn't behind in school work. The vice principal went to each classroom, explaining that I was not an enemy. The other girls invited me to join the Girl Scouts. The Girl Scout pledge assured me that I, too, was an American."

Kanazawa reflected on her later years. "I have lived a fortunate life. I became a school teacher. My husband found a job at IBM. We raised our boys. Then, the Civil Rights Act of 1988 was passed by Congress and signed by President Ronald Reagan. We received a letter of apology by President George H. W. Bush and a $20,000 check in reparations. The letter of apology meant so much more to me than the check."

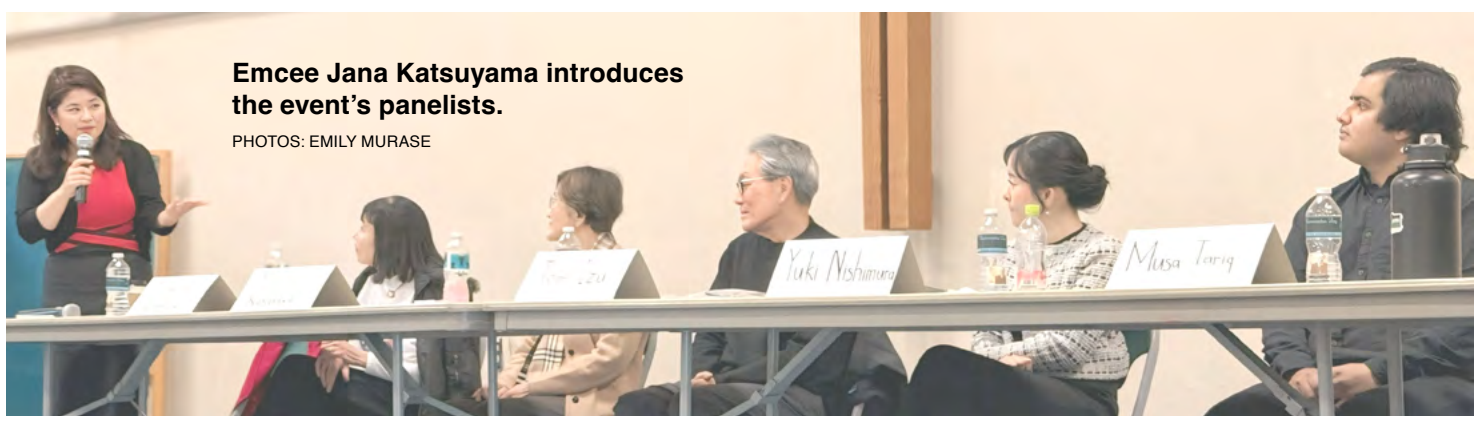
She concluded, "I have more courage now because of what people like Fred Korematsu did. The Japanese American Museum of San Jose has given me the opportunity to speak to young people. People like Tom Izu have made the situation better for people. I will no longer shy away from talking about my experience."

Izu, who is also the founding chair of the San Jose-based Nihonmachi Outreach Committee and a leader in the San Jose Nikkei Resisters group, spoke about the importance of Fred Korematsu's work.

"Fred is a source of inspiration," he said. "His life work demonstrates how ordinary people can keep history alive. He didn't believe our history ended in 1945. He didn't believe our history ended with the 1988 redress legislation. He was a champion of civil rights until his death in 2005."

Izu connected the redress movement to current events. "Sadly, the story of redress is being forgotten.

The redress movement is significant because it came decades after silence, suppression, erasure, came out of the movement for Ethnic Studies."



Emcee Jana Katsuyama introduces the event's panelists.

PHOTOS: EMILY MURASE

» See KOREMATSU on page 9

THE FIGHT TO PRESERVE A PRECIOUS LEGACY

Terminal Island was the end of the line for a community of prewar JAs.

By Gil Asakawa, P.C. Contributor



Tuna Street, circa 1929

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF PAUL BOYEA AND TERRY HARA

Tuna Street, circa 1942, after the forced removal of Japanese Americans to concentration camps and prior to mass demolition

In the late 1800s, early Japanese immigrants, mostly from Wakayama, settled in Terminal Island, cradled by the Port of Long Beach to the east and San Pedro to the west, where they established a thriving fishing village, becoming known as master tuna fishers and establishing canning businesses. The tuna fishing industry was so important that to this day, the City of Los Angeles features an albacore tuna on its official seal as a tribute to the fish caught by Terminal Islanders.

By the time World War II began, it was a tight-knit community of Japanese Americans that had a different spirit and culture from JAs in other parts of the Los Angeles area, including Little Tokyo and Orange County across the water. The more than 3,000 residents of the community affectionately called the area *Furusato,* or "hometown."

But when Pearl Harbor was bombed on Dec. 7, 1941, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 two months later on Feb. 19, the JAs on Terminal Island were the first to be forcibly removed and relocated. In fact, even before the signing of EO 9066, they were ordered by the U.S. Navy to evacuate their homes with only 48 hours' notice.

The island was close to U.S. military installations including the Naval Station of Long Beach, and after Dec. 7, the FBI immediately arrested community leaders — mostly men, including Buddhist priests. Most of the community — women and children at first were separated from the men for up to months — were primarily imprisoned in American concentration camps at Manzanar, Poston and Gila River.

The fishing village itself was mostly razed, and the island turned into a military and industrial hub. After the war, the JAs never returned to live on Terminal Island and settled in nearby Gardena, Long Beach, Torrance or Little Tokyo in downtown Los Angeles.

Over the decades since, most JA histories have focused on the better-known concentrated Japantowns in San Francisco, San Jose and Los Angeles or on the 10 camps where the communities were incarcerated. Terminal Island isn't well-known even among JAs, except for a 2024 hardcover book by Naomi Hirahara and Geraldine Knatz, Ph.D., titled "Terminal Island: Lost Communities on America's Edge" that shines some much-deserved light on that fishing village's history.

There is a memorial to the Japanese Americans' lost history at "Fish Harbor" on Terminal Island, across from the San Pedro Arts and Cultural District at 1124 S. Seaside Ave. It was placed in 2002 by the Terminal Islanders Club, a group of former residents and their descendants.

The Terminal Islanders Association was formed in 1971 to preserve the unique cultural legacy of the fishing village. One of its presidents was Minoru Tonai, who was also a leading figure in the Amache Historical Society; he was incarcerated at Amache when he was a teenager. Tonai died in 2023.

Two current leaders of the organization, Preservation Committee Chair Paul Boyea and Terminal Islanders Association President Terry Hara, are working with the organization and the Port of Los Angeles on ways to further preserve the legacy and heritage of the original fishing village, even though very few prewar buildings still stand.

Both men's families were part of the Terminal Island community, though they grew up after the war in Long Beach.

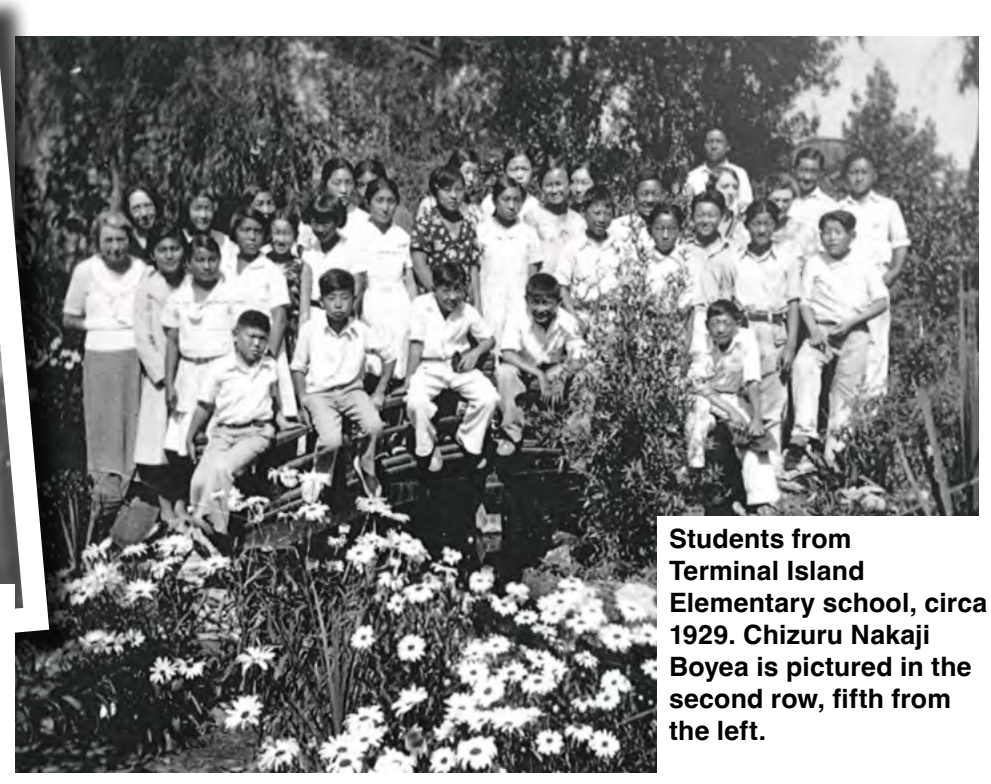
Hara is notable separate from his family's roots because he was made the first deputy chief of the Los Angeles Police Department in 1980, the first Asian American to attain that rank. He retired in 2015. Boyea is retired from the textile and fashion industry.

The monument is a popular

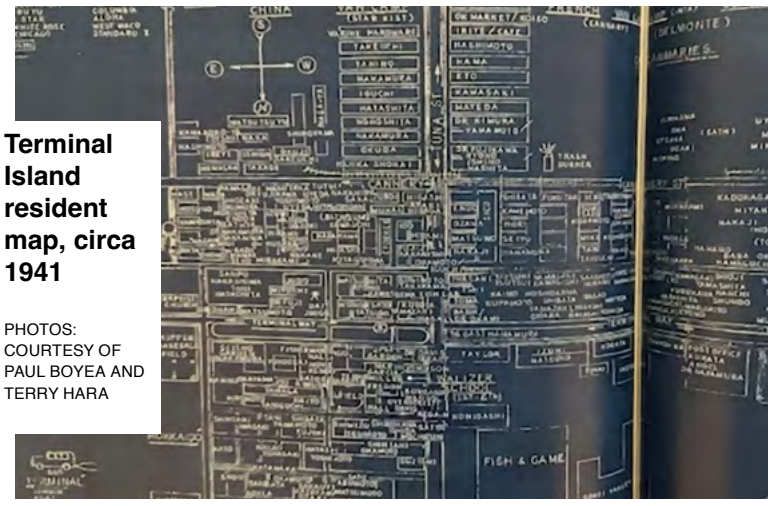


The Nakaji family, circa 1932. Pictured are *(first row, from left)* Hiromichi, Ritsuko, Hideyo and Sadahyaku (father) and *(second row, from left)* Chizuru, Chiyeno (mother) and Tooru.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF PAUL BOYEA



Students from Terminal Island Elementary school, circa 1929. Chizuru Nakaji Boyea is pictured in the second row, fifth from the left.



Terminal Island resident map, circa 1941

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF PAUL BOYEA AND TERRY HARA

destination for curious visitors, and Hara and Boyea say they find themselves speaking to people there who may have heard about it or were on a school field trip.

"Paul and I give presentations," Hara said. "There were students there just recently, and every time we go there, whether it's just business or to discuss some things, we find that there are visitors that come to the monument and learning about kind of why it's there and the background. We're there to help them understand and then tell the story for our new audience, which is fantastic."

There is also an exhibit about the Japanese Fishing Village in the Maritime Museum in the ferry boat terminal on the San Pedro side of the island.

Still, if the incarceration is relatively little-known, the Terminal Island experience is almost forgotten except for the few that show up at the memorial or are involved in the Islanders Club. It's up to Hara and Boyea, as well as others who share their passion to keep the memories alive.

"My grandfather was a superintendent at one of the canneries," Hara said. "And all the males on Terminal Island after Dec. 7 were all sent to different locations and just the wives and the children were left to basically take care of getting everything together because the order was to evacuate or to leave within 48 hours. The Terminal Islanders were the first group that got evacuated."

And after the war, even though farmers and business people might have lost everything, the Japantowns remained intact (Little Tokyo was settled by African Americans during WWII and called "Bronzeville") but the village had been demolished, so, Hara added, "there was no place to return to."

The homes and businesses had been demolished for national security reasons, Boyea and Hara understand, but Hara noted, "It was the military and the government's paranoia."

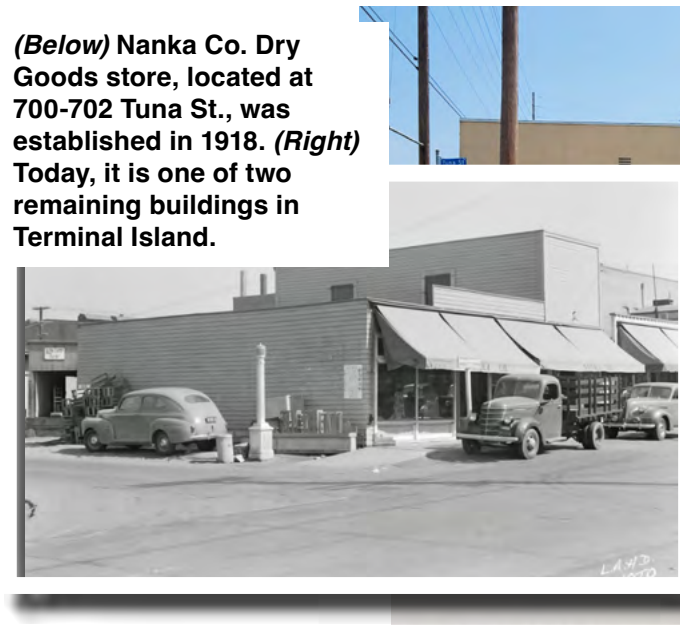
What's left today, besides the memorial dedicated in 2002, are two buildings from the prewar era that are in danger of being leveled for new buildings today. The Islanders are trying to find a way to preserve and protect them from that paranoia of the past.

"We have to have hope," Hara said. "If we don't have hope, if we allow what the Port of Los Angeles is considering, you know, once things are removed or demolished, then the memory also goes with it. And we'd like to keep around things that were around culturally, speaking of what existed, and have people think about why it existed. And for the younger generation that we meet — so many people are not aware of the Terminal Island story, right?

"Our hope is to preserve the buildings, the last piece of what was part of the Japanese village on Tuna Street to repurpose and help contribute cultural value," Hara continued. "Our hope is to reutilize it to have a positive contribution for the young generation as evidence of what existed back then."

Boyea offered that the Club isn't alone in this effort. "One thing I wanted to mention is that we're very serious about this endeavor," he said. "They know that we've formed a coalition, and we have, you know, a lot of strong advisers on the coalition, whether it's the LA Conservancy, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation, Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council, which is more of a local group, the council member for the district on the L.A. County Board of Supervisors. So, there's a lot of different people that we got involved, and we're treating this like a business, putting together a business plan. So yeah, it's not haphazard. They know how serious we are about this.

"And that's the way we've been going about our presentations with them on the few presentations that we've had," Boyea continued. "So, this is something that's going to be very interesting as we go forward. Like Terry said, we have to have hope." ■



***(Below)* Nanka Co. Dry Goods store, located at 700-702 Tuna St., was established in 1918. *(Right)* Today, it is one of two remaining buildings in Terminal Island.**





A. Nakamura grocery store, established in 1925 and located at 712-716 Tuna St., is the other remaining building in Terminal Island.



Hashimoto Co. chandlery store, located at 757 Tuna St.



Ryono Café and Dr. Fujikawa's office, located at 701 Tuna St.

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Storykeepers Preserve History

Part II: 'Never again is now,' German mayor tells Nikkei WWII 522nd descendants while visiting historic wartime sites.

By Nancy Ukai, P.C. Contributor



Tour members, on Oct. 26, 2024, who participated in the trip to view Nisei WWII historic sites in Germany.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NORA DE BIEVRE, NISEI LEGACY TOURS

Florian Völler, a young Bavarian, is searching for elderly survivors who have memories from 80 years ago, when Nisei soldiers of the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion liberated Germany towns, death marches and subcamps of the Dachau death camp from the Nazi regime.

It's a lesser-known chapter of Nisei military valor that dedicated German historians, mayors and citizens are determined to never forget.

A group of Japanese American descendants of the 522nd FAB joined a Nisei Legacy Tour led by Nora de Bievre in October 2024 to travel to historic WWII sites in Germany. The group met German preservationists like Florian and officials who thanked the group for traveling so far to remember their ancestors.

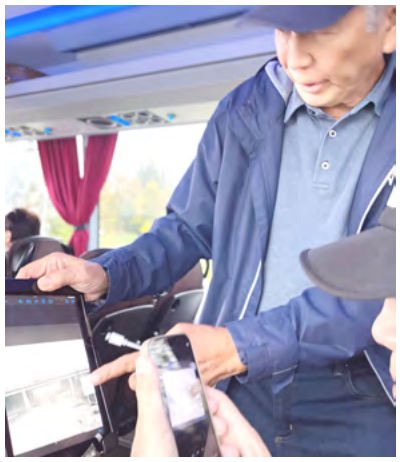
In Bad Tölz, Mayor Michael Lindmair greeted the group, ending his remarks with the phrase, *"Nie wieder ist jetzt,"* which translates into English as "Never again is now." He warned of the dangers of history repeating itself and said that the town began to use this phrase when immigrants were demonized by far-right groups.

The 522nd was the artillery unit of the 442nd/100th Regimental Combat Team and was separated from the 442nd/100th in March 1945 after the Vosges and Champaign campaigns. It earned the distinction of being the "only Japanese American unit to fight on German soil and encounter firsthand the unspeakable Nazi inhumanity at the Dachau concentration camp and its subcamps," according to "Fire for Effect," published by the 522nd Historical Album Committee in 1998.

Commemorative events in Europe marking the 80th anniversary of the liberation can be found at the Europe Remembers website *(https://www.europeremembers.com/)*.

The following photos capture stories from the Germany trip. Part I of this story, which details 45 pilgrims' return to the Vosges mountains in Northeast France to take part in the 80th anniversary celebrations of the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team's liberation of Bruyeres, Belmont and Biffontaine and the rescue of the Lost Battalion during WWII, was featured in the *P.C.'s* 2024 Holiday Special Issue *(see Pacific Citizen, Dec. 20, 2024, issue)*.

For more information on Nisei Legacy Tours, visit https://nisei-legacy-tours.com/.





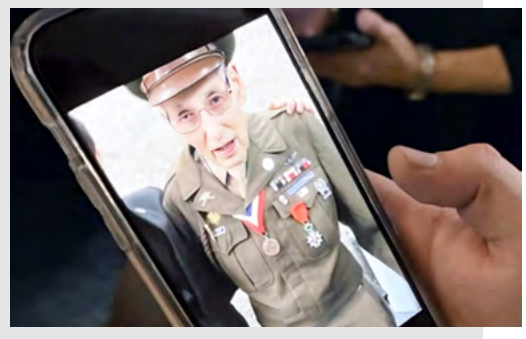
Many Nisei veterans didn't talk about their war experiences until they reunited with their WWII brothers. "Three or four of my dad's friends would come over to the house, and they'd sit in the cold, drafty living room and the 'remember when' talk would start," said Ron Oshima about his father, Fred Oshima, who was a member of the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion. On the trip, Ron Oshima *(pictured)* shared a photo of the Dachau overpass as the group drove over it on its way to the Dachau concentration camp. He also shared a photo by Sus Ito of Nisei soldier George Oiye *(right)* with liberated death camp prisoners.

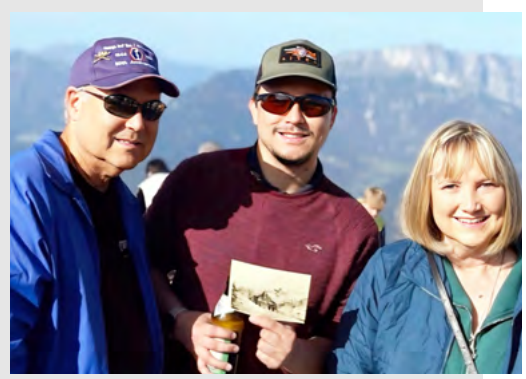


As the group traveled by bus to a death march memorial in Germany, June Hibino read her father's haunting testimony. He was a member of the 522nd FAB (Charlie Battery), which helped liberate a subcamp of the Dachau extermination camp. Yukio "Yuk" Hibino remembered, "We saw the ovens that they used for cremating all the bodies." He saw prisoners on the road begging for food but unable to digest it and dying when they consumed what they could find. "Die-hard Germans, even living in that area, deny everything that took place, but we saw them, we saw them." Pictured are his daughters, Shirley Hibino *(left)* and June Hibino at Dachau.

PHOTO: NANCY UKAI

Virgil Nishimura, born in 1918, aspired to be a pilot. He joined the War Training Service in early 1942 after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Months later, he was stripped of his pilot's licenses. "He was not told why, but he figured it out on his own," said his daughter, Cheri. Determined to serve, Virgil legally changed his surname, converting Nishimura ("west village") to "Westdale" and enlisted in the Army Air Corps. In 1943, he was transferred to the 100th/442nd RCT and fought in France. By March 1944, he was transferred to the 522nd FAB and entered Germany, arriving at Dachau on April 29, 1945, with the Nisei team that liberated a subcamp. His grandson, Marcus Budzeak, later shared a circa 2014 photo of Virgil in his 90s *(top photo)*. Virgil's children, Fred Nishimura Westdale and Cheri Budzeak, honored his legacy by visiting Hitler's Eagle Nest retreat with Marcus, who held a photograph taken by his grandfather, Virgil, of the Nazi structure after Allies captured the site in April 1945. PHOTO: NANCY UKAI







Mayor Michael Lindmair of Bad Tölz thanked the Nisei descendants for visiting Germany's memorial war sites. "The fact that we can live in freedom today has to do with the commitment of Allied troops and the proud 522nd. Our ancestors and yours crossed paths almost 80 years ago, and they stood up for freedom in Germany," he said. Tölz concluded his remarks in English with a call for vigilance: "Never again is now." He explained the phrase — *Nie wieder ist jetzt* — has come into use in recent years following a rise in racist rhetoric against immigrants. Pictured are Nancy Ukai with Lindmair. ■

PHOTO: MAXIMILLIAN FUGEN

KOREMATSU » continued from page 5

He provided a history of the grassroots redress movement as he experienced it himself. "Right out of college, I joined the Nihonmachi Outreach Committee. NOC later joined the National Coalition for Redress and Reparations, which focused on intergenerational work.

"In the 1980s, there was no consensus on a redress approach," Izu recalled. "Many community members sought to keep a low profile. There was a sense of circling the wagons. People believed that winning redress was impossible and could be dangerous to the community. In contrast, the National Coalition for Redress and Reparations recognized this as a fight for equality."

Izu continued, "The next generation of Japanese Americans joined a social movement for redress. We knew that the redress movement needed a united community. We needed to work with the Issei and the Nisei. We worked shoulder-to-shoulder with a group of Nisei who didn't fit a typical model of leadership.

"Sue Tokushige was a young mother when she was imprisoned at Poston, without proper baby formula and many worries. Mits Kochiyama refused the relocation orders and, as a result, served time at a federal penitentiary. War veteran Rudy Tokiwa was bitter about how the sacrifices of his military comrades were ignored by the government. These Nisei were just like Fred, secure in knowing what is right. They wanted to be part of our shared history so their stories and feelings would make sense. Through working in the redress movement, they were trying to address the trauma arising from the camps.

"At the time, we were considered radical and possibly dangerous. We started the Day of Remembrance, focusing on multiracial unity. Mits was shocked to see Black and Latino supporters in the audience. Susan Hayase played a key role in our organizing effort."

Izu called for a "Redress Movement 2.0." "Today, we face the Trump administration's threats. We reflect on Fred Korematsu's work to fortify ourselves for the work ahead. Japanese American history is not over. The San Jose Nikkei Resisters is proposing Redress Movement 2.0, place-based, in-person and intergenerational work."

He continued, "We cannot let the erasure happen. We need to fight for continuing reparations. The redress victory in 1988 did not win us 'nonrepetition,' not to repeat the past. The struggle is not over. For example, we are calling for the repeal of the Alien Enemies Act. We have hosted a rapid response training program with a group of people who want to make sure that the most vulnerable members of our community are protected."

Izu urged the audience to fortify for challenges on the horizon. "We can gain strength from our history," he said. "United across generations, inclusive of all who want to join us, we are a form of living resilience."

An immigrant from Japan, panelist Nishimura, who also works for Human Rights Watch, shared her lived experience, reflecting, "I remember my reaction to the first Trump administration. As an immigrant, I was very scared."

She recounted her journey in learning about Japanese American history. "In 2019, through the Northern California Cherry Blossom Queen Program, I learned that there is so much more to Japanese American history. I decided to do my graduate thesis on the Japanese American redress movement with a focus on Japanese Latin Americans."

Nishimura continued, "There were 2,264 Japanese Latin American kidnapped by the U.S. government. One of the survivors, 9 years old at the time, was stripped down and sprayed with a chemical. She boarded a train not knowing if she would survive. She arrived at Crystal City as part of a hostage swap scheme that ultimately failed.

"After the war, some were deported to Japan, including to an atomic bomb-ravaged Hiroshima. Peru refused to accept the deportees. Others decided to stay in U.S., including Art Kochiyama, a beloved attorney in San Jose."

She spoke about the injustice of excluding Japanese Latin Americans from the redress and reparations ordered by the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. "While the 1988 legislation was a huge victory for Japanese Americans, eligibility was limited to U.S. citizens and U.S. permanent residents. There was an intentional decision to exclude Japanese Latin Americans," Nishimura said.

With a graduate degree in human rights, Nishimura explained that shifting the language away from "human rights" toward "civil rights" was a strategy that ultimately justified the exclusion of Japanese Latin Americans from redress and reparations.

"Human rights are only mentioned twice in entirely of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988," she said. "In an example of American exceptionalism, there is a clause that the Act does not apply to those originating from 'outside of borders,' namely the Japanese Latin Americans."

She highlighted the work of Art Shibayama, a Peruvian American veteran who continued to fight for justice. He filed five lawsuits and pursued two pieces of legislation in the U.S. courts and legislative system — to no avail. "Ultimately, Art went through the Inter-American Human Rights Commission," Nishimura said. "Sadly, he passed away before the 2020 ruling in his favor" *(see Pacific Citizen, Aug. 14, 2020, issue)*.

Nishimura explained the relevance of the redress and reparations movement today, saying, "When we talk about citizens and legal permanent residents, we are creating limits. Focusing on human rights is more inclusive." Unlike the first Trump administration when she was scared, Nishimura vowed that she is not going to shy away from the attacks on immigrants. "I learned what Fred Korematsu and human rights leaders have done. That is the path forward," she concluded.

Closing out the panel discussion was Tariq, representing CAIR-SFBA. Founded in 1994, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is the largest Muslim organization dedicated to civil rights and advocacy and has offices across the country. CAIR brings a Muslim voice to political, social and educational causes.



A display featuring significant events and achievements in Fred Korematsu's life

Tariq spoke about his immigrant background, recalling, "I was born in Pakistan. My family made sacrifices to enable me to speak out freely."

He reflected on the impact of Fred Korematsu's work. "I would not be sitting here without the leadership of people like Fred Korematsu."

Tariq also spoke about the humanitarian crisis impacting Palestinians and warned about the extreme policies of the Trump administration, including plans for mass removal of migrants.

"Fear is ignorance," he said. "We fear families are being torn apart. Facism doesn't survive without fear. Fear is short-term. Love and solidarity are invincible. We need to reject the racist, fascist agenda of the Trump administration."

In these challenging times, Tariq called for kindness. "The actions each and everyone does has a domino effect," he said. "Our actions, however insignificant they may seem, really matter. The small, kind things we do, such as smiling at someone, asking how someone is doing, opening the door for someone, make a difference." In his concluding remarks, Tariq thanked the event's very diverse audience for attending the program.

The panel was followed by a moderated discussion that expanded on the many themes the speakers raised in their remarks. Information tables by the co-sponsoring organizations and a poster board of Fred Korematsu's life and work were also on display.

For updates on the progress of establishing Jan. 30 as Fred T. Korematsu of Civil Liberties and the Constitution Day, visit the website of the Korematsu Institute at https://korematsuinstitute.org/.

AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL

2025 TOUR SCHEDULE

CLASSICAL JAPAN HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . **WAITLIST** . . . Mar 16-27
Tokyo, Mt Fuji, Yamanashi, Shizuoka, Hiroshima, Kyoto.
TREASURES OF IRELAND TOUR (Carol Hida). . . . . Apr 7-15
Dublin, Limerick, Killarney, Blarney.
KOREA HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Apr 10-23
Seoul, Bullet Train, Gyeongju, Busan, Jeju Island, Jeonju, Daejon, Nami Island, Seoul, DMZ, K-Drama sites.
JAPAN SPRING COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . May 11-23
Tokyo, Ashikaga Flower Park, Yamagata, Sakata/Shonai, Akita, Morioka, Sanriku Railway coastal train ride, Hanamaki Onsen, Matsushima, Nikko/Kinugawa Onsen, Tokyo.
MUSIC CITIES HOLIDAY TOUR (Carol Hida). . . . . May 12-19
New Orleans, Memphis, Nashville.
GRANDPARENTS-GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Jun 15-25
Tokyo, Hakone, Hiroshima, Kyoto. Craftmaking hands-on experiences.
HOKKAIDO SUMMER HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Jul 13-25
Hakodate, Lake Toya, Noboribetsu, Otaru, Sapporo, Wakkanai, Rishiri Island, Asahikawa, Furano, Tokyo.
DANUBE RIVER CRUISE (Carol Hida) . . **WAITLIST**. . . . . Aug 27-Sep 9
Pre-cruise in Budapest, Bratislava, Vienna, Weissenkirchen, Linz, Passau, Vilshofen, Post-cruise in Prague. **Bonus Discount - Limited Time Offer**.
JAPAN AUTUMN COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Oct 16-27
Tokyo, Sado Island, Kanazawa, Amanohashidate,Tottori, Matsue, Tamatsukuri Onsen, Hiroshima.
KENYA WILDLIFE SAFARI HOLIDAY TOUR (Carol Hida) . . **WAITLIST**. . Oct 15-29
Nairobi, Amboseli-Nakuru Lake-Masai Mara National Parks, Mt. Kenya Safari Club, Sweetwaters Tented Camp, Jane Goodall Chimpanze Sanctuary. FINAL TOUR
OKINAWA HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Nov 13-23
Naha, Onnason, Islands of Ishigaki, Iriomote & Taketomi.

For more information and reservations, please contact:

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Ernest or Carol Hida

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

NATIONAL

2025 JACL National Convention
Albuquerque, NM
July 16-19
Price: Registration Information Forthcoming
Save the date for this year's JACL National Convention in the beautiful city of Albuquerque! This year's event will feature plenaries, special events and the annual Sayonara Gala. Full details, including how to register, will be released shortly. Stay tuned!
Info: Visit www.jacl.org.

NCWNP

San Jose's 45th Annual Day of Remembrance
San Jose, CA
Feb. 16; 5:30-7:30 p.m.
San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin Annex
640 N. Fifth St.
Price: Free But Donations Welcome
This event, presented by the Nihonmachi Outreach Committee presents "Women Activists Leading Change" and will feature guest speakers Alice Yang and Diana Tsuchida. A candlelight procession through San Jose Japantown follows. Seating is limited.
Info: Visit sjnoc.org.

Salinas Valley JACL DOR 2025
Salinas, CA
Feb. 22; 12:30-2:15 p.m.
El Gabilan Library Community Room
1400 N. Main St.
Price: Free
This program, hosted by Salinas Valley JACL and sponsored by San Benito, Gilroy, Watsonville/Santa Cruz and Monterey JACL chapters, will remember the 83rd anniversary of the signing of EO 9066 and its aftermath, as well as honor those who endured this injustice.
Info: For more information, email Shari Higashi at sahigashi@comcast.net.

Carrying the Light for Justice: 'Neighbors Not Enemies'
San Francisco, CA
Feb. 16; 1-3 p.m.
AMC Kabuki 8 Theatres
1881 Post St.
Price: A Suggested $10 Donation Appreciated
This event will feature keynote speaker Mike Ishii, executive director of Tsuru for Solidary, and will honor Dr. Satsuki Ina as this year's Clifford I. Uyeda awardee. The event follows with a candlelight procession through Japantown.
Info: Email Njahs@Njahs.org.

PSW

Los Angeles 2025 DOR
Feb. 15; 2-4 p.m.
Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
815 E. First St.
Price: Free
This year's theme, "A Legacy of Courage: Nikkei Women Persevering Through Incarceration and Beyond," celebrates Nikkei women and their determination to rebuild and thrive after WWII.
Info: Visit www.janm.org.

SFVJACC Day of Remembrance
San Fernando, CA
Feb. 16; 1-4 p.m.
SFVJACC Sakaguchi Hall
12953 Branford St.
Price: Free
This event will explore EO 9066 and its impact, as well as feature exhibits and "Cafe Style" conversations with honored guests. A screening of "The Manzanar Fishing Club" with guest director/producer Cory Shiozaki follows.
Info: Email events@sfvjacc.com.

CCDC

Amache: National Historic Site
Livingston, CA
Feb. 16; 1 p.m.
Livingston United Methodist Church
11695 Olive Ave.
Price: Free
This DOR program will feature speaker Dr. Bonnie Clark, co-director of the University of Denver Amache Research, as she speaks about the progress of the National Park status of Amache.
Info: Text Patti Kishi at (209) 769-7543.

PNW

'Omoiyari: A Songfilm by Kishi Bashi'
Portland, OR
Feb . 22; 2 p.m.
The Clinton Street Theater
2522 S.E. Clinton St.
Price: $10
Presented by the Portland JACL, this screening will be followed by a special panel discussion
Info: Visit https://cstpdx.com/event/omoiyari-a-songfilm-by-kishi-bashi/.

IDC

A Day of Remembrance — Boise
Boise, ID
Feb. 17; 2-4 p.m.
Idaho State Museum
610 Julia Davis Dr.
Price: Free
This year's DOR commemoration will feature presenters Gov. Brad Little, professional photographer Shane Sato and Go For Broke NEC's Mitch Maki. Attendees are encouraged to tour the "Courage & Compassion" exhibit following the program presentation.

MDC

2025 Chicago Day of Remembrance
Chicago, IL
Feb. 23; 2-4 p.m.
Chicago History Museum
1601 N. Clark St.
Price: Free; Registration Required
The program will feature a panel discussion on the tanka poetry of Issei poets Tomiko and Ryokuyo Matsumoto.
Info: To register, visit tinyurl.com/chidor25.

EDC

The Ireicho: Day of Remembrance — National Archives Foundation
Washington, D.C.
Feb. 18; 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Price: Free
The William G. McGowan Theater at the National Archives & Virtual
Price: Free
The event will kick-off of the national tour of "The Ireicho" book. Speakers include Dr. Anthea Hartig, Dr. Duncan Ryuken Williams, Shirley Ann Higuchi and Ann Burroughs.
Info: https://archivesfoundation.org/events/ireicho-day-of-remembrance/. ■

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News Briefs

Ex-Ohtani Interpreter Mizuhara Sentenced for Stealing Nearly $17 Million
SANTA ANA, Calif. — Ippei Mizuhara has received a sentence of 57 months in federal prison. The former interpreter for Los Angeles Dodger baseball star Shohei Ohtani pleaded guilty last June to one count of bank fraud and one count of subscribing to a false tax return. United States District Judge John W. Holcomb ordered the disgraced former friend, adviser and de facto manager for Ohtani to surrender to federal authorities by March 24. Until then, he is free on $25,000 bond. Mizuhara illegally transferred nearly $17 million from Ohtani's bank account to cover his gambling debts with an illegal bookmaking operation. Holcomb also ordered Mizuhara to pay $16,975,010 in restitution to Ohtani and $1,149,400 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service. Acting U.S. Attorney Joseph T. McNally was quoted by the *Associated Press* as saying, "Mr. Mizuhara lied, he cheated and he stole. His behavior was shameless." As a Japanese national, Mizuhara will likely face deportation upon completion of his sentence, according to his attorney.

Meet the Beetles at LAX? CBP Says 'You Can't Do That' to Stashed Bugs
The long and winding road from Japan — make that flight from Japan — came to an end for 37 live beetles that were intercepted at Los Angeles International Airport last month in a shipment arriving from Japan via air cargo. U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials revealed this week they had discovered the insects — valued at $1,480 — hidden inside packages of Japanese snacks, potato chips and chocolate. Despite the appeal of exotic insects to hobbyists, CBP Director of Field Operations in Los Angeles Cheryl M. Davies warned, "Beetles can become a serious pest by eating plants, leaves and roots and by laying eggs on tree bark, which damages our forests." CBP said the beetles were turned over to USDA officials, who may donate the contraband bugs to zoos with permits — or preserve them for local insect collections. The identity of the party that shipped what appear to be, from photos on the CPB.gov website, beetles known in Japan as *kabuto mushi* is as yet unknown.

DoJ: 8 of 9 Charged With Smuggling Illegal Goods From China Are Arrested
Federal law enforcement arrested eight individuals in a 15-count indictment that included charges of smuggling, breaking customs seals and conspiracy, the Department of Justice announced Jan. 27. The scheme included logistic companies' executives, warehouse owners and truck drivers who were alleged to have engaged in smuggling more than $130 million worth of counterfeit and other illegal goods from China into the United States via the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Investigators seized such contraband as counterfeit shoes, perfume, luxury handbags, apparel and watches, as well as illegal and dangerous chemicals. The ninth and lead defendant, Weijun Zheng of Diamond Bar, Calif., is at large and believed to be in the People's Republic of China.

JACL Executive Director David Inoue Among New JANM Board of Governors
The Japanese American National Museum announced Jan. 30 additions to its boards of governors and trustees. JACL Executive Director David Inoue was among those joining JANM's board of governors; the others are MUFG Bank Ltd.'s Shinichi Fujinami; Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii President and Executive Director Nate Gyotoku; CEO and Chair of Tony Hawaii Automotive Group Stan Masamitsu; California Humanities CEO and President Rick Noguchi; the Smithsonian Institution's Lisa Sasaki; U.S. Bank Senior VP George Tanaka; USC Professor Duncan Ryuken Williams; and U.S.-Japan Council President and CEO Audrey Yamamoto. Joining JANM's board of trustees is Orange County businesswoman and philanthropist Jane Fujishige Yada.
— P.C. Staff

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Photographer Mario Reyes Dead at 69

Recently retired *Rafu Shimpo* staffer spent decades documenting Los Angeles' Japanese American community.

(Editor's note: A longer version of the following article originally appeared in the Rafu Shimpo *and is reprinted with permission.)*

Mario Gershom Reyes, whose photographs painted a collective portrait of generations of Angelenos, died Jan. 23 at his home in Boyle Heights after a brief battle with cancer.

In his 40 years of service at the *Rafu Shimpo,* Reyes faithfully documented anything and everything happening in and around the Nikkei community. He photographed the ordinary happenings of everyday life – kids' basketball, community picnics, 100th birthdays – as well as history-changing events and world leaders – the 1992 L.A. riots, President Barack Obama, the emperor of Japan and the Covid pandemic.

Rafu columnist Sharon Yamato described Reyes as "a gentle giant whose camera spoke louder than he ever did. His face didn't show it, but you felt his love for our community deep inside."

Born in Mexico City, his family relocated to Los Angeles before he entered grade school. After settling in East L.A., he attended Riggin Elementary and graduated from Roosevelt High School. It was then that his love of photography intersected with his first experiences within the Japanese American community.

Taking pictures at the Nisei Week Grand Parade in 1971, 15-year-old Mario snapped a shot of dancer Janice Aiso and instantly fell in love with the grace and beauty of the art and tradition.

Almost 40 years later, he was again on First Street photographing Janice, but by then she was known as classical Japanese dancer and instructor Sumako Azuma II, leading the parade as the official choreographer.

Just as he had done for Sumako, Reyes was there to chronicle the ongoing history of Little Tokyo and the Japanese American community.

Nisei Week shared a special place in Reyes' heart, along with one group in particular: those Japanese Americans imprisoned by the U.S.or no reason other than their race. Year after year, his photos brought the people, sights and evolution of the annual Manzanar Pilgrimage to readers unable to attend in person.

Much of his work was in conjunction with the writing of the late journalist Martha Nakagawa *(Aug. 11-24, 2023 Pacific Citizen, tinyurl.com/yc3mk9y9),* his closest and dearest partner. The pair tackled some of the toughest historical issues of the war, and the effects that lingered years later, on groups that included those Japanese Americans who refused to serve in the U.S. military after being drafted while imprisoned.

Tall and well-mannered, Reyes could be unassuming but always made sure that those he loved knew it without question.

Former *Rafu* graphic designer Ayame Kousaka found a generous mentor and photo instructor in Reyes. For his 69th birthday on Jan. 19, she visited his home with a cake and card.

"Thank you for taking the time to teach me so many lessons behind the camera and in life," she wrote. Bedridden and unable to read it himself, he managed a gentle smile upon hearing her words.

L.A. Dodgers team photographer Jon SooHoo remembered Reyes as calm and professional amongst the throngs of media that can often become unruly.

"In my world of photographers coming to Dodger Stadium to photograph games and events, I could always count on Mario to be laid back and chill while he was on assignment for the *Rafu*," he wrote.

For his contributions to the Nikkei community and Greater Los Angeles, Reyes received honors from Nisei Week, the Pacific Southwest District of the Japanese American Citizens League *(Nov. 22-Dec. 5, 2019, Pacific Citizen tinyurl.com/yzy5vmmx),* and during his retirement party last May, citations from the city of Los Angeles and the California Legislature.

As much as anyone in the Little Tokyo community for the last several decades, Reyes' love, and dedication made him a fixture within the Japanese American community.



Mario Gershom Reyes displays the certificates he received in recognition of his photojournalism at his retirement party.

PHOTO: J. K. YAMAMOTO

A retrospective of his photos that opened last month at the Japanese American National Museum drew hundreds on its inaugural night. "Obras de Luz" represents the history of a community through his lens. Dozens of community leaders attended the opening, hoping to see Reyes, but unfortunately, he was unable to attend.

Bill Watanabe, founder and former executive director of the Little Tokyo Service Center, said Reyes' passing is a loss for an entire community.

"Mario's lifelong work as a photographer helped the Nikkei community to see and remember its history, culture and community spirit, and that is how Mario will be remembered as well," Watanabe said. "For generations to come, people will see Mario's work and not only remember what he chronicled but will remember Mario himself. He left a big part of himself to each of us."



JANM Board of Trustees Chair William Fujioka holds aloft a photo of Mario Reyes at the Dec. 6 exhibition of selected works shot by the *Rafu Shimpo* photojournalist.

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

A celebration of life will be held on Feb. 15 at 11 a.m. at SGI-USA El Monte Buddhist Center, 3401 Rio Hondo Ave., Suite 168, El Monte. Reyes requested no flowers or koden.

— Mikey Hirano Culross, Rafu Shimpo staff writer

Karl Nobuyuki Dies

Sansei held national executive director title from 1977-80.

By George Toshio Johnston, Senior Editor

Karl Katsu Nobuyuki, a Sansei who served as JACL national executive director in the late 1970s, died Oct. 5, 2024, in Concord, Calif. He was 79.

The youngest of four children, with twin brothers Kenneth and Kevin and sister Karen preceding him in birth order, Karl Nobuyuki was the last surviving sibling. He was born May 20, 1945, at the Gila River War Relocation Authority Center.

After camp, from kindergarten through eighth grade, Nobuyuki attended Maryknoll School near Little Tokyo. Classmates Kyoko Nancy Oda and J. D. Hokoyama shared with *Pacific Citizen* their recollections of Nobuyuki. "We rode the same bus every day, and we picked him and his brothers up and got to school," said Oda, who also recalled that he "loved speech and debate" and had won many awards in that area. She also noted that Nobuyuki had earned a *yodan* in kendo.

Hokoyama, JACL's associate national director (and later, acting national director) during Nobuyuki's tenure as national executive director, recalled how Nobuyuki, despite his small stature, played center on the football team of Bishop Mora Salesian High School.

"He would get beat up in every game. Most teams put in the biggest guy they have in the center position," Hokoyama said, "but he was tough. He was really tough."

To longtime JACL members, Nobuyuki's name is probably best known because of his tenure as the organization's national executive director from May 1977 until the summer of 1980. Ron Ikejiri, who served as JACL's Washington representative from 1978-84, noted that this was a period of "transition of leadership from the Nisei to the Sansei, and the Nisei were not ready to pass the torch to the Sansei."

After graduating from the University of Southern California in 1971 with a bachelor's degree in speech communication and rhetoric and prior to joining JACL, Nobuyuki was involved with Asian American Drug Abuse Program in its early years, having co-founded a self-help drug abuse program, Go for Broke Inc., in East Los Angeles. Later, he was the youth director for the city of Gardena's Municipal Activities Center.



Karl Nobuyuki

PHOTO: FACEBOOK

Nobuyuki was predeceased by his second wife, Sandra. He is survived by his sons, Craig and Bryan; and his first wife, Hiromi. He is also survived by many other relatives. A celebration of life is planned for Feb. 22.

(Note: A longer version of this article is at tinyurl.com/4tn289py.

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'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.

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TECH DIALOGUES

TECH DIALOGUES: What About Digital Wallets?

By Ryan Kawamoto

Whenever you pull out your wallet to make purchases, you might notice that traditional wallets are gradually being replaced by their digital counterparts in this era dominated by smartphones and online transactions. Also known as e-wallets, these innovative payment solutions are transforming the way we make payments, manage finances and conduct everyday transactions. With their convenience, security and versatility, digital wallets have emerged as a game changer in personal finance.

What Are Digital Wallets?

Digital wallets are software-based platforms or applications that securely store payment information on a mobile device or computer. They enable people to make in-person and online purchases, send and receive money, pay bills, keep different cards and much more. Digital wallets utilize near-field communication (NFC) technology and QR codes to facilitate seamless and contactless transactions with another person or business establishment.

Why Use a Digital Wallet?

There are several reasons to use a mobile digital wallet. Some of the most notable key features and benefits include:

- Convenience: You can make payments with your phone without carrying a physical wallet, cash or checkbook. Plus, you can store as many cards as you wish, making completing transactions anytime and anywhere effortless.
- Enhanced security: Digital wallets employ robust security measures to protect your sensitive financial information. Instead of sharing card details with merchants, a unique virtual account number or token is used for each transaction, ensuring that the actual card information remains secure. Additionally, biometric authentication methods add an extra layer of security to access the digital wallet.
- Transaction receipts: They provide detailed transaction receipts and notifications.
- Contactless: They are a contactless method of payment.

Which Digital Wallet to Choose?

The most popular digital wallets are Apple Pay, Google Pay, Samsung Pay and Paypal. If you select among the aforementioned digital wallets, your only concern should be their compatibility with your smartphone. For instance, iPhone users should be more inclined to go with Apple Pay rather than Google Pay, as it is built-in in the device's operating system. When selecting a different type of digital wallet, you should always consider the following:

- Features: Consider what's important to you, such as rewards, discounts and fraud protection.
- Security: Ensure your mobile digital wallet uses robust security measures to protect your data.
- Ease of use: They should be accessible and easy to set up and use.

How Do You Use Digital Wallets?

Apple, Android and Samsung smartphones have a preinstalled and secure Wallet app to hold your credit cards, banking information, insurance cards, events tickets, boarding passes, loyalty reward cards, etc. The first step to using your digital wallet is to add a card or banking information to your Wallet app. Once you've added a payment method on iPhones, double-press the power button to quickly access your cards from the lock screen. On Androids, tap on the small wallet icon in the bottom right corner of your lock screen. Then, simply hold your phone near the card reader and authenticate the payment with your fingerprint, PIN or facial recognition.

You can use your mobile digital wallet in most places that accept contactless payments.

What Are the Risks of Digital Wallets?

The truth is that it is the most secure payment method:

- All transactions are encrypted, and your bank account or card information is hidden from vendors.
- Making any payment requires you to authenticate biometrically or with your PIN or password.
- Many mobile digital wallets offer fraud protection.

The biggest risk of using a digital wallet is your phone battery dying: no battery, no wallet, no cash.

What If I Lose My Phone?

Losing your smartphone does not affect your digital wallet. Not only can you remotely erase a lost phone from any computer, but also making any payment using your wallet requires a secret pass, and each usage keeps a detailed transaction receipt, including the map address for each transaction.

What to Do Next?

Want to learn more? Senior Planet offers free Zoom lectures every month at www.seniorplanet.org or call our toll-free national hotline at (888) 713-3495, open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-8 p.m. ET and Saturday from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. ET.

Ryan Kawamoto is a regional program manager for Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) from AARP, a national nonprofit behind the award-winning Senior Planet program that brings together older adults to find ways to learn, work, create, exercise and thrive in today's digital age. A longer version of this article was originally published on www.seniorplanet.org by Senior Planet's resident "Techspert" Jonathan Ushindi Zaluke.

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