THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JACL

June 20-July 3, 2025

PACIFIC CITIZEN



Anti-ICE message in Little Tokyo

PHOTO: ATHENA MARI ASKLIPIADIS

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#3477 / VOL. 180, No. 11 ISSN: 0030-8579

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JACL ACKNOWLEDGES APOLOGY BY WYO. POLITICIAN

State Rep. John Winter calls Heart Mountain Interpretive Center *'Jap Camp.'*

By P.C. Staff

Following an apology from a member of Wyoming's state legislature for using "Jap camp" to describe what was formerly known as the Heart Mountain War Relocation Authority Center, the JACL issued a statement June 13 that acknowledged the apology but also expressed its "deep concern and disappointment" for the use of the phrase that included the three-letter slur for persons of Japanese heritage.

On June 10, prior to a visit by legislators to the site now known as the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, state Rep. John Winter, a Republican for House District 28, was quoted telling his fellow politicians: "If you're gonna go to the Jap camp, that's what I call it, we need to leave here by about 12:30." He was reported to have accompanied his reminder with a chuckle.

After being informed that "Jap" was considered offensive and had fallen into disuse as an abbreviation, Winters issued an apology.

Said the JACL in its statement: "For over 120 years, this slur has been used to demean Japanese Americans. We hope that elected officials, the local community, the public and those who desire to learn visit places like the Japanese American National Museum, utilize resources such as Densho and travel to Tule Lake, Topaz, Rohwer, Poston, Minidoka, Manzanar, Jerome, Gila River, Heart Mountain, Amache or the many other WWII sites of incarceration. This incident serves as a testament to the need to continue educating the public about the power of words, the harm this slur has caused and the wounds that it can reopen today."

During World War II, the Heart Mountain site served as one of 10 concentration camps that the federal government's War Relocation Authority used to incarcerate most of more than 125,000 ethnic Japanese, the majority of whom were U.S. citizens, who had been forcibly removed from the West Coast. Heart Mountain held 10,767 people.

In 1988, however, after a decadelong effort led by the JACL to redress the grievances of Japanese Americans whose rights had been violated during WWII, the federal government apologized for its actions and paid token monetary reparations to still-living individuals who had been incarcerated. The redress drive was documented in a 1991 documentary produced by JACL, titled "Redress: JACL Campaign for Justice," which can be viewed at tinyurl.com/bp8tkrzz.

In its statement, the JACL also said " . . . we trust that Rep. Winter has gained a clearer understanding of why the continued use of that rhetoric is outdated, inappropriate and unacceptable."

The organization's entire statement can be read at tinyurl.com/3czcku4w. ■

SACRAMENTO JACL AWARDS 2025 SCHOLARSHIPS

The Sacramento JACL held its Scholarship Award Luncheon on June 8 at the historic Nisei War Memorial Community Center. Six outstanding students were chosen to receive scholarships, which included the Ralph and Pearl Sugimoto Scholarship, the Kiyoto and Rika Kawakami Memorial Scholarship, the Matsui Memorial Scholarship, the VFW 8985 Scholarship, the Masao and Sumako Itano Memorial Scholarship and the Sacramento JACL Scholarship. This year's recipients are Luka Davis (Temple University), William DeAnda, Eden Engelhardt (California State University, Sacramento), Payton Ichiho (University of Oregon), Madeline Sugimoto (Northwestern University) and Remy Tanamachi (Loyola Marymount University). The luncheon, decorated in luau style, was hosted by Sacramento JACL VP Debbie Eto, with a bento lunch provided by Fuji Restaurant. This year's Sacramento JACL Scholarship Committee members are Chair Roger Fujii, Kathy Delmendo, Eto, Esther Hokama, Michael Luszczak and Hannah Pierce. ■



Pictured *(from left)* are Sacramento JACL chapter scholarship recipients Eden Engelhardt, Remy Tanamachi, Madeline Sugimoto, Luka Davis, William DeAnda and Payton Ichiho

PHOTO: SACRAMENTO JACL CHAPTER

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



PAINFUL CHANGES TO PRESERVE JACL

By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director, and Larry Oda, JACL National President

As we entered 2025, we realized we needed to address a significant and increasingly regular gap in our budget. It appeared we would be ending 2024 with nearly a half-million budget deficit and a similar expectation for 2025.

The projected deficit was due to lower-than-projected fundraising amounts, which were overly optimistic and reduced due to lack of a full-time fund development staff. Some expenses were also understated in the budget due to an error in calculating the cost of fringe benefits.

Ultimately, the board issued the charge to reduce expenses by $350,000 per year to shorten the deficit and place our finances on a more stable footing going forward without what was seemingly becoming a built-in deficit to the annual budget.

Unfortunately, the majority of JACL's expenses are devoted to staff that serve the membership and implement our programs and policies.

The most painful decision to be made was to fully cut two full employees, both of whom have been longtime JACL employees. Tomiko Ismail, the membership database administrator, is well known to so many of our members when they are joining or renewing their memberships, making donations over the phone or simply as the frequent public face of JACL for people coming into the office or the person who would always answer calls to the office. Tomiko was the person who we could always count on being present to the local community in the office.

Similarly, Eva Ting, who managed circulation for the *Pacific Citizen* was likely the first person you would see coming into the *P.C.* office, and if you had any issues with your subscription, she was likely the first person you would reach out to. She was also vital to managing the many advertisements that support the *P.C.* financially.

Between the two of them, we have lost nearly a lifetime in experience, as each had been with JACL for nearly 30 years.

Obviously, this reduction is not nearly enough to meet the required reduction. Once the current Daniel K. Inouye fellow completes his current year fellowship, we won't hire a new fellow to replace him, leaving the Washington, D.C., office with just one fellow at a time. We also reduced hours and pay for select other staff.

Across the board, significant cuts were made to benefits reducing a stipend for health-care expenses but also converting most of the reimbursement to a tax-sheltered health reimbursement account. Retirement contributions are also being reduced significantly. Many of these fringe benefits were intentionally high to compensate for what have been relatively low salaries and wages for JACL staff, which does create concern as to whether employment at JACL will be attractive enough in the future to draw new employees or retain the ones we do have.

In making cuts, we attempted to preserve current salaries and wages as much as possible and make cuts that would not be felt by the staff beyond these initial cuts.

We were fortunate to receive some significant monetary gifts at the end of last year and at the beginning of this year, which provide some breathing room for the current year. These gifts reduced the 2024 deficit and help to shorten the fundraising gap for 2025. Still, among the priorities will be the hiring of a fundraising and membership director, a position that is a job description we have revised and will be reposting imminently.

The cuts we have made only shorten our gap, and without increased fundraising and development, we will continue to operate with a deficit. Our staff is already stretched thin, and we are looking at finding more efficiencies in how we accomplish our work — but those improvements can only go so far.

Know that your JACL staff is committed to our organization in ways that no one unless you are on the inside can truly understand. If you truly value the work of JACL, we need your support now more than ever to enable our organization to remain responsive to the ongoing threats to civil and human rights in this country. Only with your help and the work of our dedicated staff can we continue to work toward becoming Better Americans in a Greater America.

In the meantime, please be sure to express your thanks and support to any JACL staff with whom you might interact..

David Inoue is executive director of the JACL and is based in the organization's Washington, D.C., office. Larry Oda is national president and resides in California.



LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE

'POTENTIALLY INAPPROPRIATE' MEDICATIONS

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

No doubt about it — modern day science and medicine are keeping people alive a lot longer. Medications are, of course, a mainstay of modern medicine. They are often key to how we manage a variety of health conditions. Studies show that over 90 percent of adults over age 65 take at least one prescription medication, while more than 66 percent of the same group take more than three prescriptions a month *(source: www.myclevelandclinic.org)*.

Medicines can be life saving. But sometimes, taking too many drugs can be dangerous — especially for older adults. The use of multiple drugs to treat diseases and other health conditions is known as "polypharmacy." Polypharmacy is a growing concern for older adults, many of whom have two or more chronic conditions such as arthritis, asthma, coronary heart disease, depression, diabetes and hypertension (also known as "multiple chronic conditions (MCC)".

Aging also makes people more susceptible to these negative side effects. As we age, our bodies change. Certain medications can change the way our bodies respond. This can affect how medications absorb into our bodies.

For seniors with MCC, the use of excessive or unnecessary medications increases the risk of adverse drug effects. Quite often, a medication prescribed to treat one condition worsens another or causes a whole new problem.

Polypharmacy also creates a tremendous burden for patients and their families, who need to understand the purpose of the many prescriptions written by multiple providers, get refills, take each medication at the correct time of day and recognize side effects. Ideally, doctors should discuss the risks of the medication with the older person (and with family when closely involved). However, research has repeatedly confirmed that, in many cases, the risks were not explained to the patient and/or their families or that safer alternatives were offered.

Over the years, geriatricians have noticed that some medications, in particular, are more likely to cause problems or create extra risks. Researchers are studying "deprescribing" to reduce these risks and improve outcomes in older adults with MCC.

Therefore, geriatricians and other experts in aging health spend a lot of time reviewing medications and consider whether to deprescribe them *(source: www.betterhealthwhileaging.net)*. The "Beers Criteria" is essentially an extensive list of "potentially inappropriate medications" that should be avoided or used with caution, when it comes to the health care of adults aged 65 and older.

"Potentially inappropriate" means that in most older adults, the likely risks of using the medication (i.e, side effects) outweigh the likely benefits of taking the medication, especially when compared with other available treatment options. It's important to know that just because a medication is "potentially inappropriate," this does not mean that it's always "wrong" to prescribe it to an older person.

There are close to 100 medications or medication classes on the 2023 "Beers Criteria" list, which is updated every few years (most recently in 2023) and is overseen by the American Geriatrics Society. The Beers Criteria is a list of medications that a health-care provider may reference when prescribing medications to a person over age 65. This list can help a provider make a decision about safely prescribing medications. The following list isn't comprehensive, but it gives an example of a drug in each category and the reason why it's harmful:

- Analgesics (meperidine): Neurotoxicity, delirium.
- Antibiotics (ciprofloxacin with warfarin): Increased bleeding.
- Antiseizure medications (carbamazepine): Syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone secretion (SIADH).
- Antihistamines (brompheniramine): Confusion, cognitive impairment, delirium.
- Antihypertensives (alpha-blockers): Hypotension.
- Antiplatelets or anticoagulants (edoxaban): Renal impairment.
- Antipsychotics (any): Stroke, cognitive decline, delirium.
- Anxiolytics (benzodiazepines): Impaired metabolism, cognitive impairment, unsteady gait.
- Cardiac medications (disopyramide): Heart failure.
- Central nervous system agents (dimenhydrinate): Confusion, cognitive impairment, delirium.
- Diabetes medications (chlorpropamide): Hypoglycemia.
- Gastrointestinal medications (H2-blocker for delirium): Worsening delirium.
- Hormones (estrogen): Breast cancer, endometrial cancer.
- Hypnotics (barbiturates): Dependence, overdose.
- Musculoskeletal agents (muscle relaxers): Confusion, dry mouth, constipation.
- NSAIDs [aspirin (more than 325 mg/day)]: Ulcer, gastrointestinal bleeding or perforation.
- Respiratory medications (atropine): Confusion, cognitive impairment, delirium.
- Urinary medications (desmopressin): Low sodium in blood (hyponatremia).
- Vasodilators (ergoloid mesylates): Lack of intended results.

Never stop taking a medication without first talking to your doctor or health-care provider, even if a medication you're taking is listed on the AGS Beers Criteria list. Instead, review all of the medications you are taking with your doctor and pharmacist.

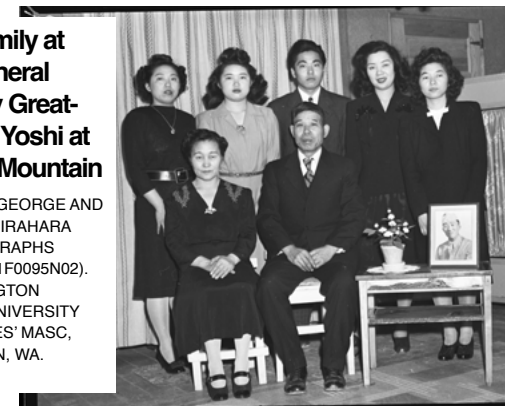
In conclusion, if your medication is on the AGS Beers List, ask your doctor or pharmacist about the potential side effects. Finally, make sure you report any side effects, questions you may have about them or any problems with taking them as prescribed (such as cost).

Judd Matsunaga is the founding attorney of Elder Law Services of California, a law firm that specializes in Medi-Cal Planning, Estate Planning and Probate. He can be contacted at (310) 348-2995 or. The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Pacific Citizen or constitute legal or tax advice and should not be treated as such.



REFLECTIONS

'MY BAACHAN AND JIICHAN WERE NOT IN A JAP CAMP'



My family at the funeral for my Great-Uncle Yoshi at Heart Mountain

PHOTO: GEORGE AND FRANK HIRAHARA PHOTOGRAPHS (SC14B01F0095N02). WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES' MASC, PULLMAN, WA.

By Katie Masano Hill, JACL Norman Y. Mineta Policy Fellow

On June 10, 2025, in the Joint Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources Committee in the Wyoming State Legislature, Rep. John Winter (R-28th District) made the following remark in relation to an upcoming visit to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Interpretive Center, "If you're gonna go to the Jap camp, that's what I call it, we need to leave here by about 12:30."

On June 12, he provided this apology: "The term that I used just slipped out of my mouth as that is what it has always been referred to in my world as a kid. I knew better, and I am sorry. I didn't mean to upset anyone. The Interpretive Center at Heart Mountain has a great program for disseminating information, and I learned a lot that day."

The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation accepts and appreciates the apology and hopes that the visit by Rep. Winter and the other legislators served as a meaningful opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Japanese American incarceration experience.

As a Gosei, fifth-generation descendant of those who were incarcerated at Heart Mountain and Tule Lake, I want to make it clear that my family was not sent to a "Jap Camp." The experiences of more than 125,000 Japanese Americans do not deserve to be referenced with this derogatory slur, especially at the site of shame where many passed and never made it back home.

My uncle, Yoshi Nakatsuka, was one of those individuals. He died at 24 years old, and his funeral was held at Heart Mountain. The mistreatment and abusive camp experiences that led to his death do not deserve to be referred to as time in a "Jap Camp." He deserves better.

I am one year younger than my Uncle Yoshi. I always wonder what his life could have been if it had not been stolen from him.

The use of this slur perpetuates the loss of dignity and humanity that those incarcerated endured. My Baachan, as a child, was forced to give up her Buddhist religion, her privacy and the innocence of girlhood. She came of age behind barbed wire, in communal toilets and classrooms where dignity was stripped away daily. That trauma never left her — not at 18, not at 50, not even when she passed at 90 years old. She deserves better.

As the Norman Y. Mineta Fellow with the National JACL, I have an obligation to speak out on this grave wrong. Secretary Mineta was a Heart Mountain survivor, champion of civil liberties and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. His life was defined by service, courage and patriotism. He deserves better.

We recognize the apology. But words without transformation are empty. The survivors suffered enough. The least we can do now is speak of them with the dignity they were denied.

Please do better. Our ancestors deserve it.

Katie Masano Hill is the JACL Norman Y. Mineta Policy Fellow. She is based in the organization's Washington, D.C., office.

REFLECTIONS

WHEN INCLUSION BECOMES A POLITICAL WEAPON: WHY JACL ARIZONA LEADERS OPPOSE SB 1301

By Bill Staples Jr., Donna Cheung and Kathy Nakagawa

In recent weeks, the Arizona chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League has received increasing attention regarding our position on Arizona Senate Bill 1301, a bill that purports to mandate the teaching of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) history in K-12 classrooms.

We want to begin by acknowledging the leadership of JACL National President Larry Oda and Executive Director David Inoue, both of whom reached out directly to our chapter to better understand the nuances of SB 1301. Their willingness to ask questions, listen with open minds and consider the local context reflects exactly the kind of engaged leadership our community needs.

Unfortunately, the same care was not taken by the five past JACL presidents who recently released an open letter in support of SB 1301. While we respect their long-standing dedication to civil rights and the JACL mission, it is disheartening that none of them sought local input before making their endorsement. Their efforts were well-intentioned but ill-informed. Furthermore, this lack of consultation with the chapter most directly impacted by the bill contradicts the spirit of our JACL motto: *"Security Through Unity."*

Let us be clear: The Arizona chapter fully supports the inclusion of AANHPI history in public education. We believe such history should be taught widely and truthfully — alongside African American history, Indigenous history, Latinx experiences, LGBTQ+ narratives and all other voices that have been marginalized in the American story. But that is precisely why we oppose SB 1301.

Why Arizona Opposes SB 1301

SB 1301 is not the product of grassroots AANHPI advocacy. Instead, the bill's key sponsor — as well as many of its supporters — are MAGA political leaders actively advancing efforts to dismantle diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs and suppress the teaching of LGBTQ+ and other historically marginalized histories. These lawmakers seek to sanitize history and pit marginalized groups against each other, using selective inclusion as a political tool rather than a vehicle for justice.

We are concerned that AANHPI history is being co-opted to serve a broader agenda rooted in white Christian nationalism — an agenda that aims to divide communities of color and win over conservative-leaning Asian voters in a purple state. While the bill may look inclusive at first glance, its deeper context reveals a cynical effort to tokenize AANHPI history while dismantling inclusion possible. This isn't solidarity — it's strategic erasure.

A Better Path Forward

Instead of supporting narrow, isolated recognition of one group's history, we advocate for a comprehensive, inclusive ethnic studies model — like the one passed in Utah with bipartisan support. That effort recognized that students benefit most from a curriculum rooted in empathy, complexity and solidarity — not in cherry-picked histories that uphold myths like the "model minority" stereotype. We also advocate for curriculum decisions to be made by the state school board, not through legislation.

Unity Means Listening

The past presidents' letter rightly celebrates the importance of history but fails to consider the political motivations behind SB 1301 or its unintended consequences for other communities already under attack in Arizona. By failing to listen to the voices on the ground, they inadvertently support legislation that could be used to divide rather than unite.

As we face a growing national threat from forces that aim to silence truth and fracture alliances among marginalized communities, we must remember: *Security through unity* only works when that unity is grounded in trust, mutual respect and shared truth.

We invite our fellow JACL members — locally and nationally — to engage us in conversation, learn more about the unique challenges here in Arizona and help build a movement that upholds all of our stories, not just the ones that are politically convenient.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The five national presidents of the JACL who signed on to the open letter are Kenneth Inouye, David Kawamoto, Gary Mayeda, Floyd S. Mori and Jeffrey Moy.

Bill Staples Jr. is the current president of the JACL Arizona chapter; Donna Cheung is past president of the JACL Arizona chapter and current chair of the Civil Rights Committee; and Kathy Nakagawa is past president of the Arizona chapter and professor emeritus of Asian Pacific American Studies at Arizona State University.

Thank You for Your JACL Membership!

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

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Derek Okubo of Denver stamps the Ireichō book.

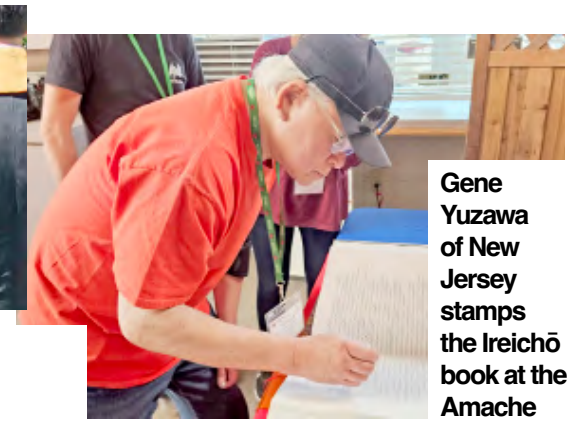
PHOTOS: GIL ASAKAWA



The Amache Museum in Granada, Colo.



The Ireichō book on display at the Amache Pilgrimage memorial service



Gene Yuzawa of New Jersey stamps the Ireichō book at the Amache Museum.

IN TRIBUTE TO AMACHE

The pilgrimage is made more poignant with the Ireichō book on tour.

By Gil Asakawa, P.C. Contributor

The annual pilgrimage to Amache, the Colorado concentration camp, was held May 16-18, with the official ceremony held on May 17 and a visit to the nearby Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site on May 18. But the weekend memorial event began on May 16 with some attendees stamping the Ireichō book of names. They may have been survivors of the wartime camps, or descendants or relatives or even friends of incarcerees. They were there to pay tribute to the more than 125,000 people who were imprisoned during World War II, in 75 sites from Alaska to Hawaii and California to Arkansas.

Amache, located in southeast Colorado, has held pilgrimages since 1975, making this year the 50th gathering of people from throughout the country. The Ireichō book added a poignancy to the weekend because many of those who made reservations online to stamp next to their family members' names did so because those people were incarcerated at Amache.

The stamping began even before the actual pilgrimage because the book was brought to the History Colorado Center, a state museum in downtown Denver, for several days before the Amache pilgrimage. According to Karen Kano, a project specialist with the Japanese American National Museum who is touring with the Ireichō book across the country for camp pilgrimages and other major cities, about 200 people made reservations at both History Colorado and at the town of Granada, Colo., where the stamping was held in a room at the Amache Museum. During its three days there, 650 names were stamped in Denver, and on Friday and Saturday, 575 names were stamped.

On May 17, before the stamping was set up at the Amache Museum in Granada outside of the concentration camp, the Ireichō book was brought to the memorial service at the cemetery in Amache, where both Buddhist and Christian prayers were given.

Rev. Diana Thompson represented the Tri-State Denver Buddhist Temple, and Rev. Brian Lee represented Simpson United Methodist Church in the Denver suburb of Arvada.

Duncan Ryuken Williams, a Buddhist priest, introduced the Ireichō book. He's a professor of American studies and ethnicity and religion at the University of Southern California and director of the USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture. He also is the driving force behind the book of names and its related projects, the Ireizo online database of all the names of incarcerees searchable by name, birth year or camp, as well as Ireihi, a monument with lights that is being planned. Also on hand was the Ireichō project's creative director, Sunyoung Lee, who suggested to Williams that putting names in a book would make a powerful statement.

Williams kicked off the memorial service by acknowledging the Amache attendees, as well as those who had died at Amache. He then invited people up to stamp the open book at the front of the ceremony.

"We are gathered here today at the Amache Cemetery, where right before the camp closed in 1945, Rev. Masahiko Wada, a Baptist pastor, helped to build the *ireito* here in this cemetery," Williams said. "*Ireito* means a tower to console the spirits, and at that time, a wooden board, which doesn't exist at this location anymore, mentioned all of the names of those who passed away here at Amache who were buried here at the cemetery and others who were not buried here but taken in their urns as people left the camps to go back home.

"On this occasion," he continued, "we have an opportunity to recite the names of the 150 individuals who passed away here. I have asked the clergy to help me recite those names, and I've asked six camp survivors to come up and stamp representative names of those who passed away here."

The ceremony brought a renewed awareness of the legacy of pain and the gravity of the pilgrimage to the memorial service.

That emotional depth was present all week, both in Denver and in Granada, the small town next to Amache. At the Granada School, which goes from grade school through high school, are students of the Amache Preservation Society and their longtime teacher — who's retiring and leaving the society to a capable former student who's also now a teacher at the school.

The school hosted a lively community-based potluck luncheon after the memorial service at the cemetery on May 16, followed by an evening program of speakers and a post-luncheon presentation on May 17, which included the National Park Service rangers and staff who conduct educational tours and programs at both Amache and Sand Creek. Amache was officially made a National Historic Site in 2024.

But the "star" of this year's pilgrimage, as it will no doubt be when it travels to other sites for their pilgrimages, was the Ireichō book. Families from as far as New Jersey and as close as Denver or Albuquerque, N.M., made the pilgrimage to stamp the book. Many of the travelers were at Amache for the first time, seeing where their parents or grandparents had spent the war years and exploring the foundations and seeing the reconstructed guard tower and barracks.

The stamping seems like it would be a perfunctory act, but for many, it was a moving, emotional way to connect with an ancestor. The book is a living monument, one that can accommodate new names as people realize someone didn't get included, or corrections made if government records misspelled a name or had an incorrect birthdate. People can go to the Ireizo website and submit corrections and additions.

Williams credits Sunyoung Lee with the idea of the book, instead of permanently etching names on, say, a stone monument.

"What are we in terms of a display strategy? We didn't want to keep this as a database or just like a phone book," Williams said. "How do we make sure it is a real memorial of survival as much as what happened? I think that was a very important part of the idea that this is a project that's not just about a monument to the past, but we're also building a monument in the present moment with the public at large, that their involvement would actually make it actually come alive with the act of stamping. She was the person that came up with the idea of the book."

Lee has experience as a book publisher, so the concept came naturally to her.

"Names on a typical monument, engraved on stone, are not erasable," Lee said. "I'm intimately involved with books. And one of the things that was really profound to me was this idea that the whole point of the incarceration was to try to usurp and erase this entire community. The ultimate goal of this project is also to have (multiple) books that will be available for the public, particularly for the family members of people who were incarcerated."

The stamp is a way for people to interact with their family members.

"That's when we came up with the idea of making the stamps right, so there's a way that people can show that they, themselves, have been there," said Lee. "It's kind of like the stones that people will leave at a gravestone, but here you have a stamp, and then in the process of doing that, they, too, become part of the project. The project is not just about the people, it's about the interaction."

It's also an intimate interaction because people are allowed into the room to stamp their list of names by themselves or with family members who are also there to stamp the names. "You realize that there's a real intimacy," Lee said. "Because, you know, one person is looking at a book at a time, it's almost like you have a moment to really commune with it. It's not a public spectacle. It is your relationship with the book, your relative's name, somebody's family. In this world, we don't have that much opportunity to take the time and the space to reflect on the people we've lost. From the very start, taking the book across the country was part of the project. It wasn't just going to sit at JANM (in Los Angeles) and then be enshrined.

"I would say that there is a way in which the book is constantly changing and evolving, as is our project," Lee concluded.



A guard tower at Amache

The Ireichō Project is scheduled to continue touring and will be at Minidoka, Idaho, July 11-13; Heart Mountain, Wyo., July 24-26; Fort Lincoln, N.D., Sept. 5-7; Crystal City, Texas, Oct. 10-12.; New York City, Oct. 20-21; and on to Poston and Gila City, Ariz., Chicago and elsewhere. To see the schedule, visit https://www.janm.org/exhibits/ireicho/venues.

This article was made possible by the Harry K. Honda Memorial Journalism Fund, which was established by JACL Redress Strategist Grant Ujifusa.

COLD FEAR IN THE SUMMER SUN

ICE raids ignite protests in Downtown Los Angeles; historic Little Tokyo vandalized.



Anti-ICE messages in Little Tokyo

PHOTO: ATHENA MARI ASKLIPIADIS

By Athena Mari Asklipiadis, P.C. Contributor

With surges of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids gripping Los Angeles, protesters began filling downtown streets earlier this month. One area of Downtown Los Angeles largely impacted due to sheer proximity has been historic Little Tokyo. With police perimeters pushing protesters away from the Federal Building and the immigration detention center there, people came face to face with geared up officers who were ready for confrontation.

On June 6 on First and Alameda streets, the peaceful protest began small that evening. Ironically, 80 years ago, Japanese Americans assembled one street over on First Street and Central Avenue at the site of a "Civil Control Station" to board busses that would transport them to incarceration camps in 1942 after President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 during World War II.

What began peacefully changed quickly as the city's police presence intensified. The crowd became agitated with the exaggerated police response and sirens. The number of officers grew to four or more times greater than the number of protesters, and soon, helicopters started circling the downtown area. Patrons from Far Bar on First Street spilled out into the street trying to understand the commotion. Tactical police vehicles with swarms of officers standing on the vehicles' running boards flew down the streets of L.A.

Angry Little Tokyo visitors who left their food and drinks on tables behind them, stood on the sidewalk shouting things like, "You should be ashamed of yourselves" to the officers. And in response, over a loud speaker, an officer provoked by the crowd responded with "Show 'em what's up, show 'em what the f*ck's up." Crowds of patrons gathered in shock, filming and repeating the officers' words in disbelief. If the aim was to diffuse or disperse the crowd, the reaction and words of the Los Angeles Police Department officers only further angered everyone.

Soon, words became action, and some threw plastic bottles toward the officers. Teenagers climbed the side of the Japanese American National Museum and started to graffiti the wall. The crowd began chanting things like *"La migra, la policía, la misma porquería"* (translation: ICE (la migra) and police enforcement are the same garbage).

Josue Perez, who was a patron at Far Bar that evening, shared his feelings while seeing the protests and raids. "It makes me really sad and angry and somewhat scared," he said. "It's personal to me because my parents are immigrants from El Salvador, and I understand why people come to this country. What's sad is to see officers of my same race, 'la misma raza,' beating protesters up. Cops are humans, just like us, but for them to take kids and separate families and for them to see people crying and not care — it's just sad."

When Perez saw young teens climbing the side of JANM to graffiti the building's wall, that angered him, too. He and his girlfriend confronted the taggers, telling them to stop.

"I told them, 'Come on guys, this is senseless, Japanese are immigrants, too,' and they felt dumb, you could see remorse in their eyes, and they apologized," he said. "One of the kids graffitiing was Asian, and that surprised me. I was like 'You should know better.'"

By the next day, the graffiti multiplied, and by June 10, nearly every exterior wall of the museum was covered in anti-ICE and anti-Trump slogans. In fact, numerous businesses in Little Tokyo were riddled with graffiti and damaged. Businesses boarded up in anticipation of potential looting or damage.

The footage of the damage to JANM and other nearby buildings went viral on social media. It evoked various responses from the public. Some were angered that the news was shifting from the narrative of the ICE raid and protests to how Little Tokyo needed to be cleaned up, while others spoke out to defend the businesses there.

On June 12, a cleanup was organized by organizations like Little Tokyo Community Council and Little Tokyo Service Center, who gathered community members to scrub the area's damaged sandstone walls. While the volunteers were applauded for cleaning up the graffiti, seeing highly criticized L.A. Mayor Karen Bass join in to help upset some social media commenters.

"Can we please separate the photo op / hallow word / mayoral agenda / Karen Bass portion of this piece?" one user asked. Another social media user, Evelyn Tenorio, commented on a statement by JANM, saying, "I was at the protests yesterday, and on behalf of my community, I want to apologize. . . . After all



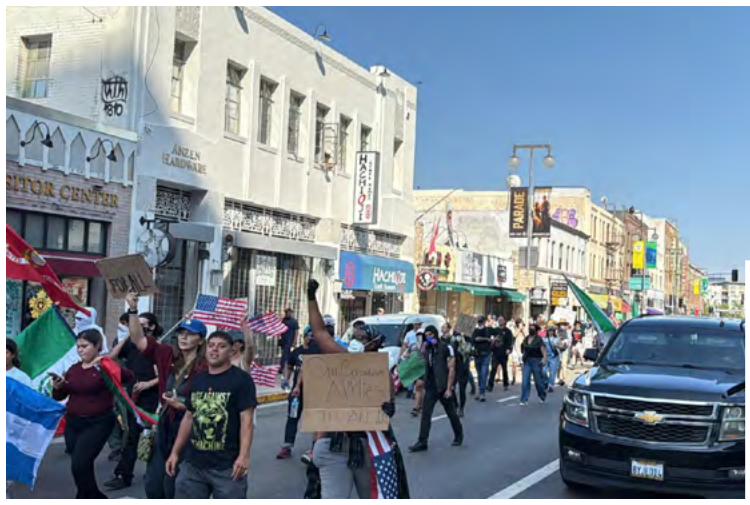
Protests outside of the Federal Building in Downtown Los Angeles

PHOTO: JOSUE PEREZ



LAPD officers in riot gear arrive on-scene on June 6 in Little Tokyo.

PHOTO: ATHENA MARI ASKLIPIADIS



Protesters walk down First Street on June 10.

PHOTO: NAOMI HAYASE



Graffiti at JANM; JANM boarded up

PHOTOS: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON AND ATHENA MARI ASKLIPIADIS



Miguel and his food truck, Yekor's Catering

PHOTO: ATHENA MARI ASKLIPIADIS

the Japanese have historically gone through, that was not OK. I don't support any of the destruction of property even in these times, but seeing the museum being tagged up really angered me. I'm so sorry. That's not at all what the Latino community is about.

"I'm angered by the looting and destruction. There are a small portion of people who are taking advantage of the situation to personally gain from it. You don't need to break a window to make a point. MLK and César Chávez did not do anything like that, and they created significant change on their terms," Tenorio shared. "A small number of people attend these events not because they care about immigration policy but to create chaos by vandalizing and looting in ways that undermine what this is all about. While I do try to understand the anger that a lot of people feel, I still can't find justification for the destruction of places or property. To me, one of the most effective forms of protest is where I put my money. I withdraw support from businesses that oppose my own values. . . . If you organize and disrupt profits, that does create big changes with anyone, regardless of their viewpoint."

One of the Japanese Village Plaza businesses affected by the protests and curfew put in place is streetwear brand clothing store Japangeles, a local favorite. While owners Roy Kuroyanagi and wife Kristy Kim support the protests, they decided to close their store June 9-15 for the safety of their staff and patrons.

As a result, their closure meant a loss of sales that week, but despite that, they remained positive and supportive of the community and protests.

"We were optimistic, and when we saw footage of the people (members of the community) reprimanding those vandalizing Ootoro restaurant, we knew there were people amongst protesters that were a voice of reason to stop them from hitting Little Tokyo even worse," said Kuroyanagi.

Kuroyanagi and Kim also highlighted the sentiment many Japanese Americans share, that "history is repeating itself," referring to the racial profiling and removal of families akin to the forced incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII. Thankfully, their business and most others were not looted or damaged, and they reopened on June 16.

Another business impacted by the recent curfew and lack of patrons in Little Tokyo is taco food truck Yekor's Catering. Miguel, who was grilling asada as we spoke, shared how the curfews forced him to close early. He said it was so slow, and the area, which is usually busy and full of people, was a ghost town recently. He went on to share fear for his community. "I don't know why they take people just because they look Latino," Miguel said.

Miguel also expressed how he was alarmed and knew deportations were increasing when he heard of another food truck worker being detained by ICE two months ago. Local restaurants like Miguel's are the collateral damage of the tension and raids happening throughout the city.

Some street vendors have been targeted by raids, creating fear but also bringing forth support from community members who want to protect them. The complex issue of immigration is something on everyone's mind, but most cannot deny our city and country's dependance on immigration labor.

Tenorio, who is a Mexican American born in Los Angeles, speaks with a lot of passion, sharing that the raids and protests are all too personal. With one parent who is naturalized and one parent who remains undocumented, her thoughts are layered.

"I don't believe in either extreme of fully closed or fully open borders. There needs to be a clear pathway to citizenship for those who come to this country seeking to work hard and contribute to their communities," she said.

"What's enraging about these ICE raids is that they're targeting people who are literally AT WORK," Tenorio continued. "We all benefit from immigrant labor. Whether it's the produce on our shelves, the homes we live in or the gardener that we utilize for our lawns at a lower price than any major landscaping business could offer. This labor stays 'affordable' because immigrants, many of whom are undocumented, are paid less. People often argue that immigrants are 'taking American jobs,' but many of these jobs are left vacant when immigrant labor isn't available. When Americans don't want the jobs, immigrants do them, and they do them well."

Perez, too, also felt strongly about the many industries that rely on undocumented workers. As someone who works in the construction field, he has seen the fear in his coworkers first-hand. Half or more of his co-workers, who are in the process of building a large chain hotel, have been absent, too afraid to leave home.

As a result, this not only impacts families who depend on the income but also pushes the date of the company's build completion further out. Perez shared that they estimate being weeks behind due to workers not showing up to work. One of his coworkers, a green card holder, was detained on June 11.

Due to the fear of retaliation, Perez's coworker is afraid to share his name and too many details of his story, but he did recount the horrible process at the detainment center. He shared with his coworkers that they were packed in like sardines, and there wasn't enough room to lay down to sleep, so they had to organize amongst themselves shifts between who stood and who laid down to rest. He was also not provided calls or a shower during those days he was detained, and it was very unsanitary with no way to properly use the restroom. He was also only given minimal food, consisting of peanut butter sandwiches. All of the men there waited for their fate as their name was called. He felt lucky, as most left behind are likely to remain for some time in those conditions, away from family. They will likely face deportation.

Despite the recent raids mostly affecting undocumented Latinos, immigrants from other countries are also living in fear. "Protest for me!" another immigrant, wishing to remain anonymous, asked friends on social media. Being a noncitizen from Japan has made her apprehensive and too scared to protest.

"Even though I'm a green card holder, being a foreigner, I didn't feel comfortable protesting in a large crowd," she said. "It's very sad to see how some people don't see how inhumane and





Japangeles Co-Founders Roy Kuroyanagi and Kristy Kim

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF ROY KUROYANAGI AND @ JAPANGELES INSTAGRAM

» See COLD FEAR on page 9

NCAPA RESPONDS TO TRUMP'S FIRST 100 DAYS

Report, webinar push back against anti-immigrant, anti-DEI actions, neglect of due process norms.

By George Toshio Johnston, P.C. Senior Editor

Among the many outcomes in the aftermath of President Donald Trump's second first 100 days, one was a May 13 report issued by the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans or NCAPA, "a coalition of 40 of the leading Asian, American Native, Hawaiian, Pacific Islander civil rights organizations," that took Trump 2.0 to task.

The scathing first paragraph of the 74-page communiqué, "Shifting Policies, Lasting Impacts: A 100-Day Review for AANHPPI Communities," reads: "During the first 100 days of the second Trump Administration, amidst the flurry of Executive actions, the experiences and needs of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) continue to be obscured. The sheer scale and scope of President Trump's actions are staggering. However, the impact of his agenda has been devastating for countless community members."

The report focused on eight areas: AANHPI Visibility, Civil Rights, Immigration, Health, Education, Housing and Economic Justice, Destruction of Civil Society and Environment. Its timing — coinciding with May's 2025 Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and just days after the 50th anniversary of the April 30, 1975, fall of Saigon, which led to a huge resettlement of diverse Southeast Asian people across the United States — was noted by NCAPA National Director Greg Orton during the May 14 webinar that accompanied its release.

Participating in the discussion were representatives from some of the organizations that comprise NCAPA, including Empowering Pacific Islander Communities Director of National Policy and Advocacy Sina Uipi; Southeast Asia Resource Action Center National Deputy Director Kham Moua; National Korean American Service and Education Consortium Director of Organizing Youngwoon Han; Sikh Coalition Senior Federal Policy Manager Mannirmal Kaur; Japanese American Citizens League Executive Director David Inoue; and South Asian Public Health Assn. President Samira Khan.

In his introductory remarks, Orton stated rhetorically, "Some might ask, 'Why? Why are we doing this?' The answer is very simple. We're also in a time where perception is more and more becoming reality, and if some would have their way, truth is defined by those who have power — and our job at NCAPA, our job as community advocates and organizers, is to make sure that the truth about our community . . . [is] properly accounted for."

First up was EPIC's Uipi, who said, "What these first 100 days means is just so much education that needs to happen in our communities, especially around 'know your rights' with immigration. . . . It really matters who is sharing information that is not misinformation, is not disinformation."

SERAC's Moua, after explaining that his Washington, D.C.-based organization's primary areas of focus are immigration, education and health, noted that "there's a lot of fear and uncertainty in our communities."

Referring to Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Moua added, "ICE continues to . . . loom in our communities, and this administration is particularly retaliatory, creating a lot of fear about whether or not people can even safely exercise their First Amendment rights."



NAKASEC's Han noted that his immigrant rights advocacy organization, in anticipation of Trump retaking the presidency, updated and relaunched its "Know Your Rights" phone app and to date had more than 28,000 downloads.

"I believe we have translated the app into 24 languages," he said. The app can be used by non-English speakers to, "with the click of a button," read out rights in English in an emergency situation so that law enforcement or ICE agents know that they know and are practicing their rights — and also send an emergency text to a contact.

Sikh Coalition's Kaur noted that its most recent "school climate report" found that 78 percent of Sikh youth had experienced bullying in school. "Even more alarmingly, 10.9 percent of those students reported that the bullying was done by a member of their school staff," she said.

When Kaur lost her internet connection, Orton brought on JACL's Inoue, who discussed the historic use of the Alien Enemies Act and how the Trump administration has attempted to misuse it and myriad executive orders in the present.

"I think everyone has probably heard that phrase in some form or another that 'those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,' and in many ways, I think we are really seeing that past repeating itself in real time with the enactment of many of the president's executive orders that actually seem to intentionally draw from some of the darkest parts of our history," he said.

Inoue also referred to how, under the current administration, the Army scrubbed from its website of anything that smacked of DEI, or diversity, equity and inclusion, adding that "these website erasures have been particularly insidious" *(see March 14, 2025, Pacific Citizen, tinyurl.com/yskcr936)*.

As for the contemporary attempts to invoke the Alien Enemies Act, despite it being reserved for use only in times of war, Inoue said, "Our president knows what he is doing as well when he invokes the Alien Enemies Act, despite the fact that we're not at war, labeling people as enemies without any sort of legal justification. . . . I think what's most important about this is all being done without due process."

SAPHA's Khan said that under Trump 2.0's first 100 days "there has been a lot of long-term impact to our communities, especially when it comes to



Pictured *(clockwise, from upper left)* are Sina Oipi, Kham Moua, Youngwoon Han, Samira Khan, David Inoue and Mannirmal Kaur

COMPOSITE PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON



Greg Orton

AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL

2025 TOUR SCHEDULE

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 15-28
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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Tel: (213)625-2232 * Email: americanholiday@att.net
Ernest or Carol Hida

access, affordability and trust in health systems."

With the first 100 days having passed, Orton asked for some closing thoughts. "We have to keep our communities and our political allies aligned on humane and justice-centric narratives and policy solutions," said Moua.

"I think the fact that we're all here together on this call really emphasizes the importance of coalition. . . . They are hitting us with so many different things that might be very specific to certain communities, which can sometimes distract us from the broader picture," said Inoue. "We can't do it all on our own. It has to be in collaboration and in coalition with one another."

"There's going to be work to be done in the coming years, and it's not all impossible," Kaur said. "There's work we can be doing to lay the groundwork for the future. You know, political tides, they change."

Building upon Kaur and Inoue's remarks, Khan said, "I think it's also important to be partnering with the community, not just serving them" in order to "use their collective power to make change at that local level and then capitalizing on that by then elevating the work that they're doing at a national level so that we can then have collective power across the country."

To read the full report, visit ncapaonline.org/100dayreview. To view the webinar, visit tinyurl.com/39xp5wya.

COLD FEAR » continued from page 7

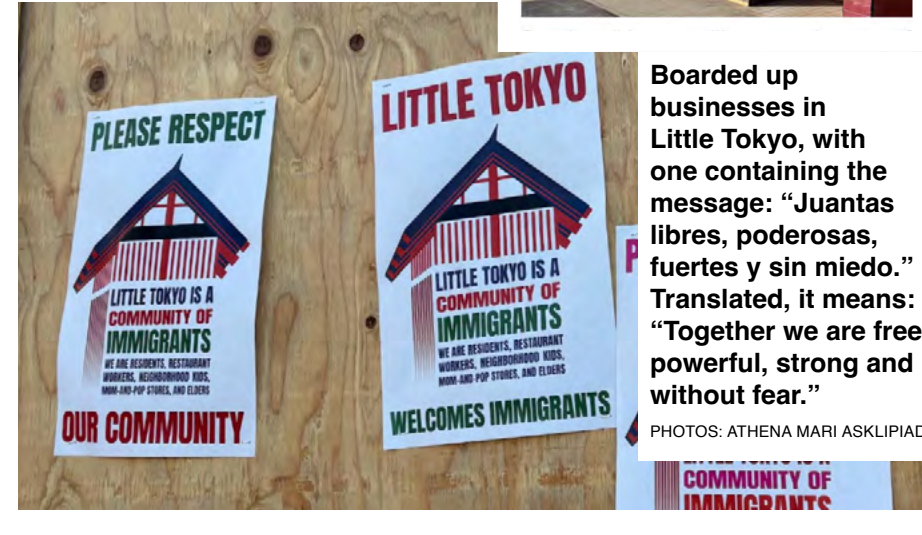
unlawful the treatment of people is by ICE and the current administration. Such hypocrites. They don't see how different this is from the people who were charged and arrested for their involvement in the Jan. 6 Capitol attack. Even they got due process . . . convicted . . . and then later released by executive order."

When asked to share her overall feelings about the past two weeks, Tenorio summed it up best with actionable ways individuals can make a difference: "The community needs you. Support can look like buying from Latino-owned businesses or protecting vulnerable neighborhoods like Little Tokyo. Many businesses are struggling and not just from fear of raids but from fear of looting and declining sales. If nothing else, remember that where you spend your money is a protest. Pull your dollars from businesses that don't align with what you believe in. Invest in the places that do. Protect Little Tokyo. Protect Los Angeles. Protect each other. . . . This isn't just a Latino issue. It's an American one."

EDITOR'S NOTE: In a statement to the *Pacific Citizen*, JANM Board of Trustees Chair William Fujioka said, "I am relieved to report that JANM's staff and volunteers are safe, as are our important collections. Unfortunately, the exterior of our Pavilion was defaced with significant graffiti. We know that the tagging does not represent the majority of those making their voices heard. Little Tokyo is a strong and resilient community. I spent much of [June 10] with a group of local volunteers — many of them protestors themselves — who came out to help clean up the graffiti. It was definitely time to scrub something! I am very grateful for their efforts and for recognizing the role this museum plays in the community. JANM is and always will be a voice for social justice. We continue to stand with our immigrant communities and with those who exercise their constitutional rights to peaceful protest. Peaceful protest can lead to positive change for everyone. Thank you for your membership and for continuing to support our important mission."

Athena Mari Asklipiadis, a hapa Japanese L.A. native, is the founder of Mixed Marrow, a filmmaker and a diversity advocate.





Boarded up businesses in Little Tokyo, with one containing the message: "Juantas libres, poderosas, fuertes y sin miedo." Translated, it means: "Together we are free, powerful, strong and without fear."

PHOTOS: ATHENA MARI ASKLIPIADIS

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A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

NATIONAL

2025 JACL National Convention
Albuquerque, NM
July 17-20
Price: Registration Is Open.
This year's National Convention in the beautiful city of Albuquerque will feature plenaries, special events and the annual Sayonara Gala. Full details, including how to register, are available on the JACL website. Registration is ending soon!
Info: Visit www.jacl.org.

NCWNP

2025 San Jose Obon Festival
San Jose, CA
July 13; Noon-7 p.m.
San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin
640 N. Fifth St.
Price: Free
This year's obon festival is an event for all in the community to celebrate and honor our ancestors while enjoying traditional food, cultural exhibits, crafts, games, performances and Obon Odori dancing.
Info: Visit sjbetsuin.org.

'Ni Do To: A Transplanted Pilgrimage'
San Jose, CA
Thru July 13
Japanese American Museum at San Jose
535 N. Fifth St.
This transformative lobby experience of shared connection journeys through ancestral joy, historical trauma and community resilience with the narrative of Japanese American incarceration through various interactive technologies.
Info: Visit https://www.jamsj.org/ndt.

2025 Mountain View Buddhist Temple Obon Festival and Bazaar
Mountain View, CA
July 19, 4-9 p.m.; July 20, Noon-8 p.m.
Mountain View Buddhist Temple
575 N. Shoreline Blvd.
Price: Free
This year's festival and bazaar will feature delicious food offerings, games, cultural exhibits, performances, crafts and so much more! Don't miss this family-friendly event!
Info: Visit obon.mvbuddhisttemple.org.

2025 Okaeri Norcal Japantown LGBTQ+ Post-Pride Potluck
San Francisco, CA
July 19; 1-3:30 p.m.
The Center
1840 Sutter St.
Price: Free Entry; Registration Required.
This fun potluck, hosted by the Center and Okaeri, will be a great opportunity to meet other Nikkei LGBTQ+ folks and allies from around the Bay Area while enjoying delicious food.
Info: Visit https://www.jcccnc.org/events/2025-okaeri-norcal-post-pride-potluck/.

PSW

'Brushed Between Worlds' Art Exhibit
Albuquerque, NM
June 28-July 25
Japanese American Cultural Center
1501 San Pedro Dr. N.E.
Price: Free
This exhibit will feature the artwork of local artists Junko Nakao and C. Hitoshi Nakagawa and their poetic nod to sumi-e, watercolor and storytelling rooted in nature and memory.
Info: For questions, call (505) 308-8090.

2025 Nishi Obon
Los Angeles, CA
July 12, 3-9 p.m.; July 13, 3-9 p.m.
Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
Price: Free
This annual obon festival will feature delicious food, a produce market, entertainment, bingo, games and Obon Odori dancing from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Info: Visit www.nishihongwanji-la.org.

Sake in the Park
Los Angeles, CA
July 18; 7-10 p.m.
Grand Park in Downtown L.A.
Between First and Temple Streets
Price: Early Bird Until June 15 $150; General Until July 17 $175; At the Door $200
This year's benefit, supporting Little Tokyo Service Center, includes unlimited food and drink from 20-plus breweries and food providers. Come on out and support a great cause and savor in delicious food and drink offerings.
Info: Visit www.LTSC.org/Sake.

Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple 2025 Obon Festival
Culver City, CA
July 19-20; 3-9 p.m.
12371 Braddock Dr.
Price: Free
All are welcome to attend this year's festival that will feature food, games, a silent aucion, opportunity drawing and Bon Odori dancing that will begin at 7 p.m.
Info: Visit VHBT.org.

2025 VJCC Golf Tournament
Whittier, CA
Sept. 22
Candlewood Country Club
14000 Telegraph Road
Price: $200
This year's tournament will be a handicapped four-person team scramble format, with the shotgun start at 9 a.m., followed by an awards and buffet lunch at 2 p.m. Registration deadline is Sept. 12. All proceeds will benefit the VJCC Building Fund.
Info: Email golf@vjcc.com or call (310) 822-8885.

RAP Arts and Crafts Fair
Los Angeles, CA
Sept. 27; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Venice Japanese Community Center
12448 Braddock Dr.
Price: Free
Don't miss your opportunity to get a jump-start on holiday shopping with this craft fair that will feature plenty of unique craft items and much more!
Info: Interested in becoming a vendor, contact lola.hongo@gmail.com, sluyeda83@gmail.com or shar6416@aol.com.

CCDC

Art of the Word: 'Once Upon a Book — Featuring the Illustrations of Grace Lin'
Fresno, CA
Thru June 29
Fresno Art Museum
2233 N. First St.
Price: Museum Admission
This exhibit features Grace Lin's original illustrations from "Once Upon a Book," co-written with Kate Messner. In the book, Alice is tired of winter and decides to escape by reading one of her favorite books. She steps inside the book and becomes a part of the story . . . .
Info: Visit http://www.fresnoartmuseum.org/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/.

PNW

'Sadako and Paper Cranes: Through Our Eyes'
Portland, OR
Thru Sept. 7
Japanese American Museum of Oregon
411 N.W. Flanders St.
In observance of 80 years since the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this exhibit examines the devastation of nuclear war through the eyes of Sadako Sasaki.
Info: For information, visit https://jamo.org/sadako/.

2025 Heart Mountain Pilgrimage
Powell and Cody, WY
July 24-26
Heart Mountain Interpretive Center
1539 Road 19
Price: Pilgrimage Registration Prices Vary
Featured events include the premiere of "Hello Maggie!" the stamping of the Ireicho, the debut of a short film exploring cultural connections to Heart Mountain, multigenerational discussion groups and the ever-popular Sayonara Banquet.
Info: For more information and to register, visit www.heartmountain.org.

MDC

Intergenerational Conversations: 'Ripples of the Past' Program
Chicago, IL
Aug. 30; 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Midwest Buddhist Temple
435 W. Menomonee St.
Price: Free
This program from the JACL Chicago chapter brings Chicago-area Nikkei together to connect and process the trauma of WWII through personal story sharing.
Info: RSVP by Aug. 16. Visit https://jaclchicago.org/programs/intergenerational-conversations/.

Ground Blessing for Snow Country Prison Memorial and Pilgrimage to Bismarck
Bismarck, ND
Sept. 5
Courtyard of the Historic Barrack Building
This pilgrimage to Bismarck will celebrate the completion of the Snow Country Prison Japanese American Internment Memorial. The Bismarck Pilgrimage activities include a Native American ground blessing of the site, an honoring of those interned there during WWII and education programs and cultural performances. More information forthcoming. Save the date!
Info: To learn more, visit https://uttc.edu/about-uttc/visit-our-campus/snow-country-prison-memorial-at-bismarck/.

2025 Crystal City Pilgrimage and Conference
San Antonio, TX
Oct. 9-12
Conference Portion: DoubleTree San Antonio Airport Hotel
611 N.W. Loop 410
Price: $395
Themed "Crystal City Rising — Neighbors Not Enemies," event programming will be centered around the present-day attacks on immigrant communities, Participants will also have the opportunity to stamp the Ireicho book.
Info: Visit www.crystalcitypilgrimage.org/2025-pilgrimage.

EDC

'Yakyu/Baseball: The Transpacific Exchange of the Game'
Cooperstown, NY
Opens in July
Baseball Hall of Fame
25 Main St.
Price: Museum Admission
This exhibit explores the exchange of baseball between Japan and the U.S. from the Meiji era to today and the transpacific circulation of baseball concepts, style of play and people that shaped the shared culture of the game.
Info: Visit https://baseballhall.org.

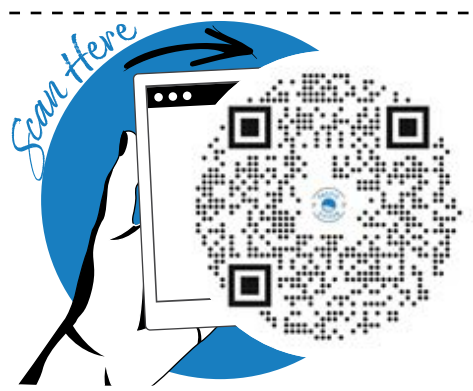
Japanese War Brides: Across a Wide Divide
Delray Beach, FL
Thru Aug. 17
Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens
4000 Morikami Park Road
Price: Museum Admission
This exhibit illuminates previously unknown American immigration stories and offers a space to rethink how we hate, why we love and what it means to be American.
Info: Visit https://morikami.org/upcoming-exhibitions/.

Celebrating Sano Gofu: 50th Anniversary of Sho-Fu-An
Duxbury, MA
Thru August
Art Complex Museum
189 Alden St.
Price: Museum Admission
This exhibit displays the paintings, sketches and architectural plans of Sano Gofu, a famous watercolor artist from Japan.
Info: Visit artcomplex.org. ■

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In MEMORIAM

Seminal Filmmaker Robert Nakamura Dead at 88

Creative force played key roles at VC, UCLA, JANM's Media Center.

By P.C. Staff

Robert Akira Nakamura, known to his legion of friends, colleagues and students as Bob, the filmmaker whose works spanned decades and experimental, documentary and dramatic genres and who helped to found and lead several still-extant community organizations with missions dedicated to visual storytelling, died June 10 at home in Culver City, Calif. He was 88.

Apropos of his life in pictures, Nakamura's struggles with Parkinson's disease in the waning months of his life were starkly and unflinchingly captured in the award-winning documentary "Third Act," released earlier this year *(see April 4, 2025, Pacific Citizen, tinyurl.com/2khbzd6s)*.

Like many of his generation of Japanese Americans who resided along the West Coast when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, which resulted in America's entry into World War II — and the forced removal from the West Coast states and subsequent incarceration of more than 125,000 ethnic Japanese — Nakamura was deeply affected by his nation's betrayals of its ideals of due process, equal treatment under the law and perquisites of citizenship.

Unlike most of his peers, however, Nakamura found an outlet to deal with the defining trauma he experienced as a child: filmmaking. Decades into adulthood, that resulted in his trippy, seminal experimental 1971 documentary "Manzanar," named for the War Relocation Authority Center where he spent part of his childhood after being born in the Venice area of Los Angeles. In 2022, "Manzanar" was added to the Library of Congress' National Film Registry.



Although Bob Nakamura became known for his motion pictures, earlier in his life, he had found employment as a still photographer and photojournalist.

PHOTO: ROBERT A. NAKAMURA (COURTESY OF "THIRD ACT" COPYRIGHT ROBERT A. NAKAMURA)

Nakamura's filmography also includes "Wataridori: Birds of Passage," the drama "Hito Hata: Raise the Banner" (co-directed with Duane Kubo), "Fool's Dance," "Moving Memories," "Looking Like the Enemy" and "Toyo Miyatake: Infinite Shades of Gray," about the photographer who was also incarcerated at Manzanar and had famously smuggled in lenses and other camera parts to build a working camera to document life in camp from an inmate's perspective. ("Manzanar," "Wataridori" and "Hito Hata" can be viewed at *tinyurl.com/4jd58xcz*. "Looking Like the Enemy" can be viewed at *tinyurl.com/5d4yvpa7*.)

When he was still a teenager in the 1950s, Nakamura found work as a freelance photojournalist for the *Los Angeles Examiner* and the International News Service. He went on to graduate from Art Center College of Design in 1966 and build a career as a successful commercial photographer — seemingly achieving the American Dream.

The ferment of the era — the Civil Rights and Anti-War movements — and the unresolved psychic scars from Manzanar, however, pulled Nakamura in another direction. With Kubo, Eddie Wong and Alan Ohashi, he helped co-found the community-based nonprofit Asian American media organization Visual Communications, where Nakamura served as its founding director.

In 1975, Nakamura's pull toward academia began when he earned an MFA from the University of California Los Angeles' School of Theater, Film and Television. The association with UCLA would loom large in his future. As a grad student, he was part of the film school's Ethno-Communications Program. After becoming a film professor in 1987 at the UCLA TFT and an Asian American Studies professor in 1994, he would in 1996 revive the name as a teaching program.

According to UCLA, Nakamura nurtured future Asian American film talent that included such names as Akira Boch, Eurie Chung, John Esaki, Evan Leong, Justin Lin and Ali Wong.

The Japanese American National Museum was yet another community institution where Nakamura made an impact. He was among those in JANM's original advisory committee in 1985 and would later become the founder of its Frank H. Watase Media Arts Center, as well as the JANM Moving Image and Photographic Archive.

With Karen Ishizuka, his producing partner and wife of 46 years, JANM awarded Nakamura its inaugural JANM Legacy Award in 2016 for their "their multiple contributions in filmmaking, advocating for the cultural and historical significance of home movies, documentation of community events and recording of oral histories."

"His legacy will endure in every story we tell," said JANM President and CEO Ann Burroughs.

Nakamura is survived by his wife, Karen L. Ishizuka; daughter, Thai Binh Etsuko Checel; and son, Tadashi Nakamura; brother, Norman Nakamura; daughters-in-law, Heather Wielgos and Cindy Sangalang Nakamura; and several grandchildren.

Plans for a public memorial are forthcoming. ■

PLACE A TRIBUTE

'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. **Tributes** 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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News Briefs

After Past Presidents Endorse Ariz.'s SB 1301, Nat'l JACL Clarifies Stance

The National JACL released a statement June 17 regarding its position on the Arizona Legislature's SB 1301, which was introduced by state Sen. John Kavanagh and would require the teaching of Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander studies in state schools. JACL stated it "would not publicly support SB 1301" after consulting with the Arizona JACL chapter *(see page 4 of this issue)*. The statement was released to "explain our decision not to support this particular effort" after a letter from five past JACL national presidents — Kenneth Inouye, David Kawamoto, Gary Mayeda, Floyd Mori and Jeffrey Moy — endorsing the bill was published on an Asian American news website. The JACL stated that it "fully supports the truthful teaching of AANHPI history; however, we believe this bill falls short of that standard. Upon further review of the bill and the context in which it has been introduced, we believe that SB 1301 will lead to the whitewashing of AANPHI history and the further erasure of marginalized voices." The JACL's statement may be viewed at *tinyurl.com/aey26hek*.

JANM Damns Signs at NPS Sites Asking Public to Report Critical Wording

After President Trump's March 27 Executive Order 14253, also known as "Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History," the Japanese American National Museum condemned a new directive that went into effect late in the week of June 8. According to JANM, the National Park Service placed signs, which included a QR code, at California's Manzanar National Historic Site and Idaho's Minidoka National Historic Site asking the public to report language that may be deemed "critical of American History." The *Colorado Sun* news website reported similar signage having appeared at the Amache National Historic Site. "JANM is deeply disturbed by this new directive, especially at historical sites like Manzanar and Minidoka where Japanese Americans were unjustly incarcerated during World War II," said JANM President and CEO Ann Burroughs. The *Los Angeles Times* quoted National Parks Conservation Association Southern California Director Dennis Arguelles as saying, "These stories may not be flattering to American heritage, but they're an integral part of our history."

Historical Society of N.M. Taps JACLer Nikki Nojima Louis for Award

The New Mexico JACL chapter member will receive the Edgar Lee Hewett award — named for the archaeologist/anthropologist who focused on Native Americans in the state — at the HSNM's Sept. 25-27 annual conference and awards banquet in Las Cruces. Nikki Nojima Louis was cited for "bringing awareness to the important history involving Japanese American incarceration during WWII in New Mexico."

Ireichō Books Road Trips to New York City, San Jose, Calif., Portland, Ore.

The Book of Names travels to NYC on Oct. 20-21, San Jose on Jan. 9-10, 2026, and Portland on March 6-8, 2026. Details at *ireizo.org/tour/*.

— P.C. Staff

JACL

Japanese American Citizen League New Mexico Chapter

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