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Berkeley NSU
Observes DOR.

'HELLO MAGGIE!' CAPTURES TWO FESTIVAL PRIZES

'Hello Maggie!' the animated film adapted from the book by Shigeru Yabu and Willie Ito, who were incarcerated as children during World War II, captured the Best Short Film award at the Tigertail Asian Film Festival in St. Petersburg, Fla., on March 14.

The film's musical score, by Italian composer Carlo Chiarotti, was also named Best Original Score at the London Movie Awards in February.

'Hello Maggie!' which was produced by the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and directed by veteran animator Tony Tarantini, will be screened at two Southern California film festivals from March 27-29. It will be shown at the WonderCon festival at the Anaheim Convention Center and the Films of Remembrance festival in the Tateuchi Democracy Forum in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo on March 28 and at the Gardena Valley



Animator Willie Ito at the 2025 Heart Mountain Pilgrimage.

PHOTO: HEART MOUNTAIN WYOMING FOUNDATION

Japanese Cultural Institute on March 29.

Logan Christie, operations director at Heart Mountain, will present the film with Ito and Tarantini at both festivals, as well as meet with potential distributors of the film to a wider audience.

'Hello Maggie!' was funded by a grant from the Japanese American Confinement Sites program of the National Park Service and the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, a Smithsonian Affiliate, preserves the site where some 14,000 Japanese Americans were unjustly incarcerated in Wyoming from 1942-45.

Their stories are told within the foundation's museum, the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center, and its affiliated Mineta-Simpson Institute, located between Cody and Powell. ■

Manzanar Pilgrimage Set for April 25

LOS ANGELES — The Manzanar Committee has announced that the 57th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage will take place on April 25 at the Manzanar National Historic Site.

This year's theme, "Lessons From Manzanar: Vigilance Is the Price of Democracy," will explore the lessons of the World War II incarceration in the context of the current political climate.

"The significance of our annual Manzanar Pilgrimage has never been greater than it is today. As the assault on our democracy, the militarization of our cities and the building of massive concentration camps unfolds, we need to come together like we did during the Redress Movement and fight for our democracy," said Manzanar Co-Chair Bruce Embrey. "My mother, the late Sue Kunitomi Embrey,



PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN PHOTO ARCHIVE

always reminded us that democracy was fragile, so we must make every effort to protect it when we recognize injustice."

The Manzanar Pilgrimage draws

thousands annually, including hundreds of college students from Nikkei Student Unions in California, families of camp survivors and many others interested in history and

social justice.

In the evening, students will gather with community members to discuss the impact of WWII incarceration at the Manzanar at Dusk program, set to take place at Lone Pine High School at 5 p.m.

Buses to the 2026 Manzanar Pilgrimage are now available. Reservations for bus transportation will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Complimentary rides are available for those who were incarcerated at any of the former U.S. concentration camps or other confinement sites during WWII.

For more information on the 2026 Manzanar Pilgrimage, visit www.manzanarcommittee.org. To reserve seats on the Little Tokyo bus, fill out the form at <https://bit.ly/manzanarbus2026>. To reserve seats on the Gardena bus, fill out the form at <https://gvjci.wufoo.com/forms/q1on4szl0f4a129/>.

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Harry Honda dedicated 61 years to promoting the **Pacific Citizen**, providing thoughtful coverage of JACL chapter activities, national news and events and issues of general interest to Japanese American and Asian American readers. The fund was launched with a generous donation from author and activist Grant Ujifusa, whose intent was to support the **Pacific Citizen** in hiring outside contributing writers. This support helps expand and strengthen coverage from across the country for our national readership.



Editor Emeritus Harry Honda as drawn by Pete Hironaka





LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE

NORMAL AGING??? OR ALZHEIMER'S

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

How long has it been since you lost your mind? As we get older, subtle changes in you can be considered “normal aging,” such as occasionally forgetting where you put your car keys, forgetting the name of an acquaintance or struggling to find a word but remembering it later. But dementia — which blocks a person’s ability to remember, think clearly or make daily decisions — is NOT a normal part of aging.

According to the CDC website (www.cdc.gov/alzheimers, Aug. 14, 2024), an estimated 6.9 million Americans aged 65 and older are living with dementia. That’s about 1 in 9 people (10.9 percent) of the U.S. population. People with dementia have problems with one or more

of these things: (1) Memory; (2) Attention; (3) Communication; (4) Reasoning, judgment and problem solving, and (5) Vision problems such as depth perception, processing visual cues or recognizing objects.

According to the CDC website, early detection seems to be the key to getting possible treatment. So, here are 10 warning signs of Alzheimer’s from Dr. Leslie Kernisan, board certified geriatrician and founder of the website “betterhealthwhileaging.net.” If you spot any of these warning signs with yourself or your older loved one, it might be time to get a medical evaluation.

1) POOR SHORT-TERM MEMORY

People often think this is normal with aging, but it’s not. It’s especially worrisome if they keep forgetting what happened recently or if they

keep asking repeated questions because they can’t remember what they were recently told. Now, you should know that it’s extremely common for short-term memory to be affected but for long-term memory to be preserved for much longer.

2) REPEATING THE SAME STORIES

Now, why might a person be repeating the same story when they have early Alzheimer’s? One is that they may not remember that they just told you the same story recently. Another is that even though they’re having trouble with memory or thinking, some people still feel a drive to be socially respectable. So, they want to make the listener happy by making conversation. Or, I think in other cases, people are trying to cover up their memory problems because they realize at some level that if they keep saying something, they might be asked fewer questions.

3) DIFFICULTY WITH IADLs

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living are the life skills that we often learn as teenagers. They include things like managing finances, grocery shopping, cooking, home maintenance. In early Alzheimer’s, we often see people struggle to do things they used to do pretty easily, especially those activities that require a few steps. And the person often

has trouble explaining why they couldn’t do it, or they’ll just deny that they had any trouble with it at all. This phenomenon is generally related to people developing difficulty with executive function and problem solving. And it’s common to have trouble with these skills in early Alzheimer’s.

4) DENYING DIFFICULTIES OR MISTAKES

Not only do many people with early Alzheimer’s have difficulty doing things they used to do, but it’s really common for them to either deny they had trouble or otherwise seem unaware of it. Now, it can sometimes be hard to tell if a person is truly unaware of their problems versus denying them because they’re embarrassed or worried that their independence is going to be taken away. But in general, we know that Alzheimer’s often affects insight, and people often have trouble remembering or perceiving difficulties they are experiencing. So, if this is happening to your parent or someone you care about, it’s very frustrating if they keep denying things, but you need to remember that they aren’t necessarily being stubborn or purposefully trying to deceive you. It’s probably lack of insight due to their brain changes.

5) ACCUSING OTHERS

Number five on my list is accusing others of taking things, stealing things, hiding things or misplacing things. For instance, the older person might start accusing others of having taken their wallet or purse or their glasses. And it sometimes comes up before the person is otherwise showing signs of memory loss that are obvious to the family. Why might this be happening? In many cases, it’s the older person who has misplaced their belongings due to memory problems or confusion. But they either can’t remember that or can’t really accept that so they conclude that someone else has taken the item.

6) DEVELOPING DELUSIONS

Occasionally, one of the earliest symptoms of Alzheimer’s is delusions, also known as false beliefs. Delusions often have a paranoid flavor, meaning they involve suspicion and fear of harm from others. The elder can become quite convinced that this is true.

7) DEVELOPING HALLUCINATIONS

A hallucination is when a person perceives something that others don’t. So, a visual hallucination means seeing something that others don’t, and an auditory hallucination means hearing something that



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others don't. Hallucinations are sometimes an early warning sign of Alzheimer's or another dementia. Visual hallucinations are actually associated with Lewy body disease, which is another common cause of dementia in older adults. In Lewy body disease, it's fairly common for the person to report seeing children or animals.

8) GETTING LOST

Getting lost while driving or walking is another warning sign. Getting lost in familiar surroundings is another concerning symptom that sometimes pops up early. It can be related to memory problems, but it can also be related to difficulties with spatial memory or with recognizing familiar landmarks.

9) TROUBLE WITH SPEECH

Alzheimer's often affects the part of the brain that manages language early on. So, one early warning sign is having trouble naming things or finding the right word. If people can't name an object that's shown to them, or if they use a descriptor instead of the name of the object, such as the thing you sit on, instead of saying chair, that would be concerning. It would also be concerning if they start to use words that aren't quite right, such as saying book to refer to a newspaper.

10) UNCHARACTERISTIC BEHAVIORS

This is when things happen that leave others who know the person saying, "That's so weird. This is so unlike them." Sometimes, it's uncharacteristic spending or risk-taking, or it's actions that reflect impaired judgment. Other times, it's a change in social appropriateness or in how the person engages socially. So, it might be someone starting to blurt out inappropriate things, or it could be that someone who used to be very social becoming withdrawn and much quieter.

In conclusion, if you've noticed one or more of these signs in your aging parent (or in someone you care about), Dr. Kernisan says to help them get an adequate medical evaluation so that you can find out what is causing the memory loss or other symptoms. But that, of course, can be tricky. "I don't want you to panic, but I do want you to pay attention and keep thinking about how you can support your aging parent," said Dr. Kernisan.

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.

San Francisco State Honors 19 Nisei Students

The university recognizes the scholars during a Day of Remembrance ceremony featuring an exhibition of the Wakasa Spirit Stone and a screening of the short film 'DUST.'

By Nancy Ukai,
P.C. Contributor

In early 1942, my Nisei mother, Fumiko Takayanagi, was a 21-year-old art student in Los Angeles. But that dream cratered when on Feb. 11, she boarded a train with an "enemy alien" travel permit that was stamped with her fingerprint. She was returning to Berkeley, Calif., so that the family wouldn't be separated into different concentration camps. Mom was incarcerated at the Tanforan racetrack and the Topaz, Utah, prison camp. She never returned to art school.

Similar scenes played out all across the West Coast following the issuance of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on Feb. 19, 1942.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, several thousand students at the University of California, Berkeley, were forced to withdraw from classes and leave school. At San Francisco State College, 19 students were ripped from their classrooms.

The SF State group was a small sample, but their lives took dramatically different paths.

Norman Noboru Koyama was incarcerated at Marysville and Tule Lake and from there joined the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Tom Satoshi Yoshiyama refused to comply with the loyalty questionnaire at Topaz and was sent to Tule Lake, became a renunciant, was interned at Santa Fe, N.M., and deported to Japan, never to return to the U.S.

Mary Masako Hata (Sadatoki) was sent to the humid and swampy region of the Rohwer, Ark., camp and eventually resettled in Ohio, where she worked to support JACL's redress efforts in the 1980s.

To recognize the unlawful incarceration of Japanese Ameri-

cans during WWII, the university dedicated in 2002 the Garden of Remembrance by artist Ruth Asawa, her final installation, located between Burk Hall and the Fine Arts Building.

Listed on a bronze, scroll-shaped marker adjacent to the garden are the names of the 19 SFSU students and the 10 War Relocation Authority concentration camps.

A cascading waterfall flows nearby, signifying the return of people of Japanese ancestry to the coastline following the conclusion of the war. Ten large boulders, set on a peaceful stretch of lawn by master rock expert Shigeru Namba, represent the location of the 10 WRA camps erected during WWII.

"This was my favorite place on campus to sit and enjoy a peaceful moment," said Jon Funabiki, retired SFSU professor of journalism, of the garden.

On Feb. 19, the Asawa garden was the site of a Day of Remembrance event to honor the 19 Nikkei students, none of whom are still living, and recognize the unlawful incarceration of Japanese Americans living on the West Coast during WWII.

Led by professors Cassie Miura and Wesley Ueunten, Buddhist Church of Oakland Rev. Michael Saito and the Wakasa Memorial Committee, represented by myself and artist Glenn Mitsui, a night ceremony was held that welcomed more than 100 students, camp survivors and descendants.

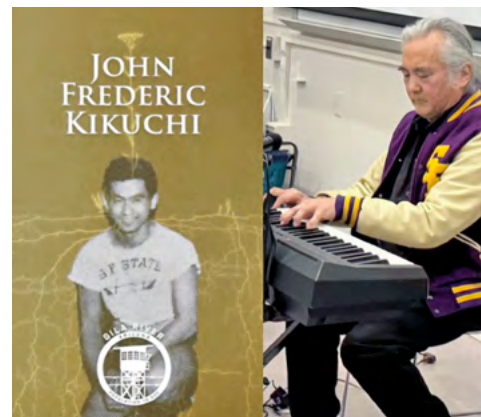
A tall, white paper mache stone

A Buddhist altar and lanterns were set up before the evening DOR ceremony on Feb. 19.



SFSU Nisei students who were forced into concentration camps during WWII were remembered in a lantern ceremony featuring the Wakasa Spirit Stone.

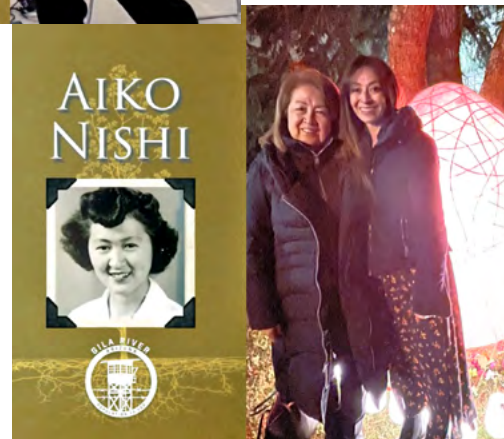
PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NANCY UKAI



John Kikuchi, a student at SFSU in 1942 (left), was incarcerated at Gila River, Ariz. His son, Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo (right), played a musical piece in remembrance.

ARTWORKS: GLENN MITSUI

Two generations honor Aiko Nishi, whose slide (left) was part of a memorial video by Glenn Mitsui. Pictured (at right) are Nishi's daughter, Vivian Nelson (left), and granddaughter, Maryn.



made of washi, called the Wakasa Spirit Stone, was the event's focal point. The names and photos of each WWII student were projected on the sculpture's facade in a video titled "We Were Students," created by Mitsui.

As each name was read aloud by Rev. Saito, a hand lantern was turned on by a university student or relative of the Nisei student. At the end, 20 small lanterns glowed softly in the darkness, one for each student and Asawa, who was in high school in Southern California when she was removed to Rohwer in Arkansas. Attendees offered incense and placed a flower at the foot of the lantern.

Vivian Nelson, the daughter of Aiko Nishi, flew from Orange County, Calif., with her daughter, Maryn, to honor her mother. Nishi's family sold their belongings before camp and returned to a hostile environment in Florin, Calif., where her father attempted to rebuild their lives by picking grapes. Nishi ended up studying bacteriology at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, thanks to the Quaker program to support Nisei students, Nelson said.

Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo, the son of John Kikuchi, who excelled in boxing and football, wore his father's letter jacket and performed a musical piece in an earlier program in which a short film, "DUST," directed by Mitsui, was screened. It featured poems written by Yonsei writer Brandon Shimoda about the eight Issei and Nisei men who were killed in the

camps by military police.

When the Asawa garden first opened in 2002, three of the Nisei SFSU students were able to attend the commemorative ceremony arranged by the university's associate vp at the time, Carole Hayashino.

This year, with ICE raids removing immigrants, citizens and children from homes, schools and sidewalks, the DOR ceremony was a remembrance not only of the past but also for those who are being seized now, Rev. Saito said to the crowd.

Despite the passage of 84 years, connections were made with descendants of the WWII students, thanks to genealogical research.

Hiroiyuki Yoshiyama, whose father had been deported to Japan, was born there and wrote to the event organizers from Yokohama, emailing a photo of his father for use in the video. His mother, who also was a renunciant at Tule Lake, eventually returned to the U.S. and lives in Northern California now, he said. She is 106 years old.

Following are the names of the SFSU students recognized on the bronze marker located adjacent to the garden: Hatsune Arita, Percy Fukushima, Mary M. Hata, George Hirose, Kathryn Kawamorita, John Kikuchi, Kaya Kitagawa, Norman Koyama, Grace Matsuda, Helen Mayeda, Yoshiko Miya, Aiko Nishi, Akiko Nishioka, Helen Nitta, Dora Sato, Tomiko Sutow, Tom Yoshiyama, May Yoshino and Atsuko Yusa. (Shizuko Mabel Yamamoto also is listed in university documents.)

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INSIDE THE OUTSIDE IN THEATRE

Co-founded by Tamlyn Tomita and Daniel Blinkoff, the artistic nonprofit space showcases 'daring, dynamic and authentic untold stories by unheard voices.'

By Athena Mari Askliadis,
P.C. Contributor

When sitting down with actress and co-founder of Outside In Theatre Tamlyn Tomita, an overwhelming feeling of passion fills the air. Tomita exudes incredible enthusiasm and hope for her new nonprofit theater that opened its doors in Los Angeles' Highland Park neighborhood in September 2025.

Co-founded by Tomita's husband and theater veteran Daniel Blinkoff, the vision of Outside In Theatre is "building the world we want to see by producing daring, dynamic and authentic untold stories by unheard voices," as stated on its website.

And by "unheard voices," Tomita and her team hope that the space showcases stories from marginalized communities such as Indigenous, African, Asian and Latin American descent, as well as queer and disabled people.

"We are very, very conscientious about who we are as a team and really concentrate on the fact that this is the only live theater in northeast Los Angeles, and [we're] really focused on the value of storytelling," shared Tomita.

Tomita goes on to credit the idea of building a theater like this to Blinkoff and shares that he, even as a "cis (cisgender), white male," is very cognizant of the idea that "'representation matters' of people whose stories don't get told with actors whose faces don't get seen."

In addition to highlighting diverse voices, Outside In Theatre is also unique in being equipped with tools and spaces that allow for live and digital, scripted and nonscripted works, as well as improvised shows.

The variety of stories and methods the theater encourages allows for both unique performer and audience experiences. Born out of the Covid-era physical distance necessity,



Currently playing at the theater is "Fantastic Tales," directed by Matthew Pitner and featuring Blinkoff.

the streaming and broadcasting capabilities of the theater allow attendees to see plays and performances they would not normally have access to if not in L.A.

And if that weren't inclusive enough, Tomita beams with pride when describing how the space is ADA friendly for both performers and ticketholders. It is one of only a few theaters where a wheelchair-bound person can access the stage area, dressing rooms and have a seat in the crowd, as the venue is all one level.

The multipurpose building, located at 5317 York Blvd., is 102 years old. It was home to a printing shop, auto repair shop, an art studio and a furniture store in its past lives.

When one looks at the exterior facade on Google maps through the years, one will see how the building has transformed from a



simple design with large garage-style doors to a beautiful archway entrance and ceiling-to-floor-built windows where one can view the beautiful interior modern design.

Not only does the theater allow for entertainment, but also the impressive lobby is a welcoming place for guests that includes a bar and a seating area below a stained-glass ceiling installation done by Highland Park neighbor Judson Studios, a 125-year-old local glass designer based less than a mile and a half away.

Once inside, down the hall, one will enter the main 99-seat theater, known as ArtSpace. The space has new riser seating, features projector-screen capabilities and is under a large skylight, which was inherited and previously used for lighting by the auto repair shop.

The skylight (which can be covered) is a popular use of natural light that Tomita says many actors and directors prefer for rehearsal — a unique feature not commonly seen in a theater.

Another distinctive feature is the versatility of the audience seating. The director can choose the seat positioning based on the show. For the first opening show at ArtSpace, for example, "Torera," a play about a female Mexican bullfighter, welcomed an audience sitting in an arena-style seating arrangement.

And as if one theater isn't impressive enough, Outside In Theatre houses another smaller neighboring building, which is located at 5319 York Blvd. Following the stained-glass design motif, the building next door

has similarly designed windows and was actually the first property bought by Tomita and Blinkoff during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This space is home to a smaller black box-style theater and seats 45, or up to 60, if necessary, and is named "Artbox." This theater has been running for two years, and the most popular recurring show surprisingly runs on Tuesdays at 9 a.m. with actress-comedian Maria Bamford, titled "Morning Poop."

The hilariously titled morning comedy show offers up donuts to attendees at a pay-what-you-can rate. Tomita describes the venue as a more intimate space that has incredible acoustics. Artbox is rentable and mostly used for smaller shows, acting classes, auditions and script readings.

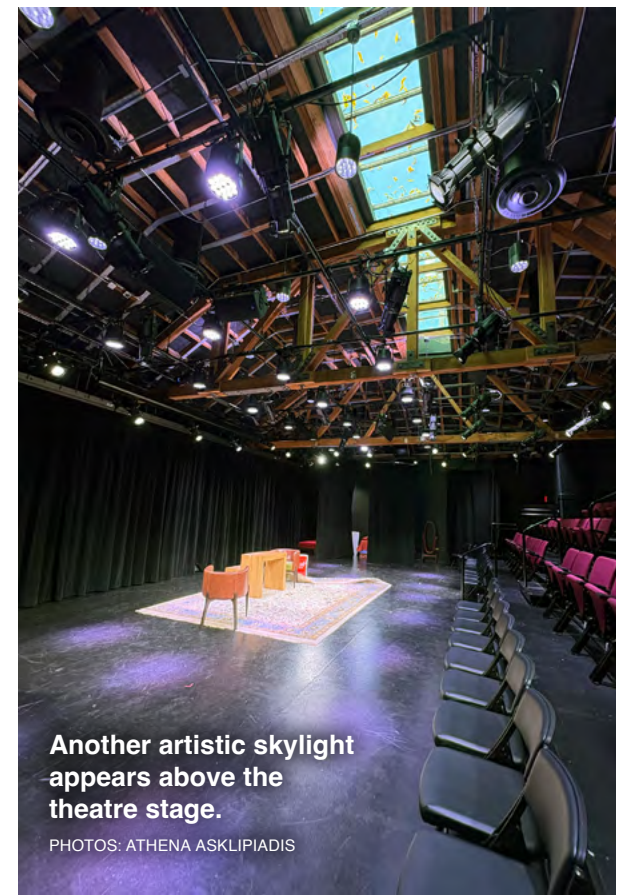
When describing the types of performances that Outside In Theatre showcases, Tomita explains that storytelling is the prime focus, specifically underrepresented stories, but the story has to also be of "good quality and worthy of an audience." She encourages writers to submit scripts on the Outside In Theatre website and that people who have stories should just go for it and write them.

Tomita and her six-person team is also really dedicated to local stories. Although she is the only L.A. native of the group, the leadership at the theater really seeks to highlight Highland Park stories and is currently working on filming oral histories from the point of view of three generations of various families, inviting an abuela, a mother and a daughter to illustrate the rich culture of one of the few Latino working-class communities.



Outside In Theatre co-founder and actress Tamlyn Tomita in the main lobby

Outside In Theatre Co-Founder Daniel Blinkoff acknowledges his wife and co-founder T Tamlyn Tomita.



Another artistic skylight appears above the theatre stage.

PHOTOS: ATHENA ASKLIPIADIS

Outside In's Daniel Blinkoff and Tamlyn Tomita



Aptly titled, "I Am Highland Park," the in-progress project will surely be a historic look at the community. Tomita explains that the neighborhood was once an upper-class white area in the 1930s and '40s and was made up of large historic, craftsman-style homes.

After "white flight" occurred in many parts of L.A., immigrants settled in the area, making it a majority Latino community by the 1960s. Although the area now faces gentrification like many other nearby communities, these large homes are still widely multigenerational homes to Chicano/a and Mexican

American residents today, and Tomita hopes to collect these important histories.

It is impressive that even though Tomita still refers to TV and film acting as her "bread and butter," she has such energy and dedication to her new venture. From flying to and from the set of shows like "Chicago Med" and other projects, her heart is in Highland Park at the Outside In Theatre, where something special is really building momentum.

From three-week scripted plays to unscripted Jane Austin themed improv shows, there is something for everyone. With diverse casting, she shares that anyone can be a Romeo, and it shouldn't be an issue what Romeo looks like — it really becomes more relatable, and she expresses, "Everybody falls in love!"

With a sparkle in her eye, Tomita shares how she loves the camaraderie of being a part of this labor of love — and something she is relishing in doing for the first time. She admits it is a lot of fun, but she and her team have to accept the fact that they do not know everything about running a theater — it leaves room for them to learn and grow.

Tomita goes on to express that it is a beautiful thing that theater can bring together various people and that she gets to witness guests "collectively decide to see a storyteller, then grab a drink together and ask [whispering], 'Did you like it?' and hear, 'I loved it!'"

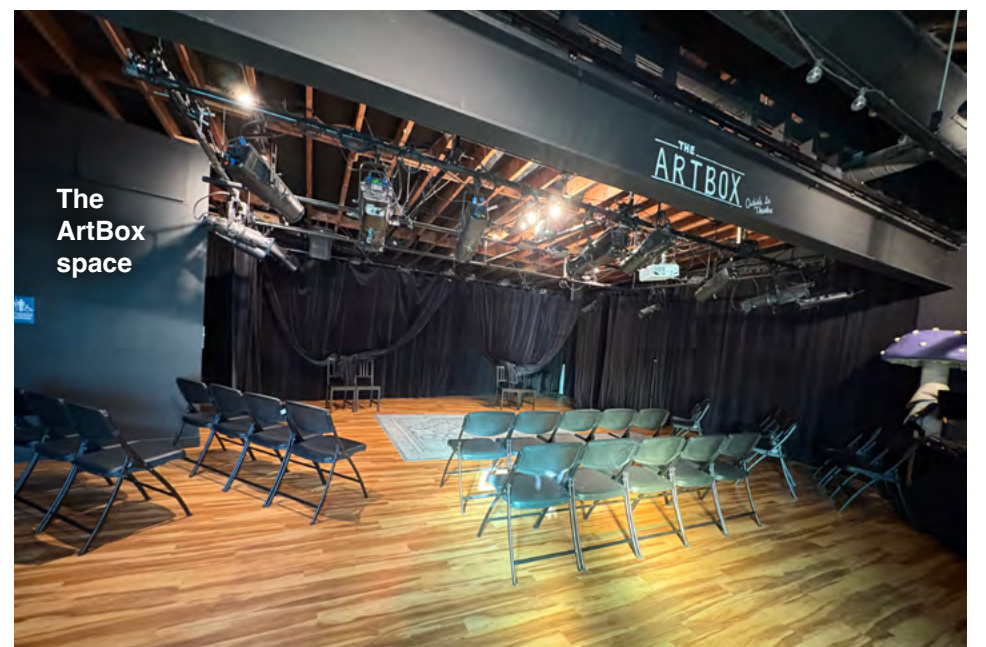
The thrill she gets is contagious, and you cannot help but root for the theater's success. Her authenticity oozes out of her when she speaks, and the beauty of the venue is a testament of her and her team's hard work.

Now playing until April 19 is "Fantastic Tales: Improvised Stories of the Strange & Unusual," a new show from producer/director Matthew Pitner and featuring Blinkoff. It is inspired by the "speculative imagination of H. G. Wells, Mary Shelley and their contemporaries" that "crafts a complete speculative

drama in real time, where ambition collides with consequence and invention reveals both wonder and cost."

Check out tickets for upcoming shows at outsideintheatre.org. In addition, consider supporting this 501(c)3 nonprofit theater by donating at outsideintheatre.org/donate.

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



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'Solidarity Across Borders: Remembering Japanese Incarceration'

UC Berkeley NSU holds a Day of Remembrance program that focuses on the importance of building community.

By Reese Haramoto

Japanese Americans were incarcerated merely because they looked like the enemy," said Yuuto Izumi, co-emcee of the University of California, Berkeley, Nikkei Student Union's 2026 Day of Remembrance event on Feb. 20.

This year's theme, "Solidarity Across Borders: Remembering Japanese Incarceration," explored the resilience of those who were forcibly incarcerated during World War II and the meaningful impact their stories still have on the Japanese American community today.

"DOR is always an important time to reflect on community remembrance and resilience, and I'm glad NSU gets to host one annually," said Halie Matsui, NSU's community service and issues board member.

The program began with a land acknowledgement by co-emcee Clarisse Nikaido, who recognized that UC Berkeley sits on the ancestral and unceded land of the Ohlone people, successors of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County.

Nikaido then gave a brief history of the university's NSU, which was founded in 2002 and serves to foster social and community service engagement for students of Japanese descent and others who are interested in Japanese American culture. The organization's DOR program — which recognizes the wrongful incarceration of more than 120,000 individuals of Japanese ancestry following the issuance of Executive Order 9066 on Feb. 19, 1942 — is one of its biggest events of the year.

Serving as the program's keynote speaker was UC Berkeley Associate Professor Hidetaka Hirota from the History Department Center for Japanese Studies. Hirota specializes in U.S. immigration law and policy and is a social and legal historian.

Hirota began his speech by talking about the challenges of birthright citizenship in the 19th century for racial minorities and the widespread belief that Asian Americans didn't qualify under the 14th Amendment, an ideal expressed by white Americans who wanted Asians excluded from the U.S.

"Naturalization was then a privilege only for white people, and Black people and Asians were not considered either," he said.

In the 20th century with the onset of WWII, according to Hirota, the U.S. government deemed the incarceration of Japanese Americans a necessary measure for "protecting national security." He specifically mentioned the testimony of former California Attorney General and



Berkeley NSU student speakers (from left) Jayden Tanaka, Zora Uyeda-Hale and Kiyomi Niara James. PHOTOS: ENZO CHEN

Gov. Earl Warren, who became a driving force behind the internment of Japanese Americans without any charges or due process.

Hirota went on to dispute Warren's claims, saying, "Warren manufactured a crisis with little foundation, blaming domestic racial minorities for this crisis and then persecuting them on that basis."

Fear and misinformation have resurfaced again today in the form of racial profiling and the wrongful deportation of U.S. citizens, according to Hirota. "You know these things are already happening under the current administration within the similar framework of national security discourse as in the past. But at the same time, I believe history gives us important inspirations and strengthens our sense of justice."

He went on to remind the audience of the impactful feats accomplished by JA civil rights pioneers Mitsuye Endo, Gordon Hirabayashi, Fred Korematsu and Minoru Yasui as sources of inspiration in the pursuit of justice in the U.S. for all communities.

"The fact that we're here gathering to commemorate their fights shows that we are inheriting their spirits, and that fact gives us hope," concluded Hirota.

The program also featured a candle-lighting ceremony acknowledging the 10 War Relocation Authority concentration camps and Department of Justice camps and citizen isolation centers. They were represented by Nancy Arata-Fong (Gila River), Scott Kagawa (Rohwer), Eloy Maki (Crystal City/DOJ), Kaz Mori (Jerome), Grace Morizawa (Heart Mountain), Joyce Nakamura (Poston), Maren Sawamura (Minidoka), Grace Shimizu (Tule Lake), Alicia Tan (Manzanar), Leslie Tsukamoto (Topaz) and Kay Yatabe (Amache/Granada).

Each of the representatives then spoke about their personal connections to the Japanese American WWII incarceration experience.

Morizawa recalled how her grandmother wanted to take one final family photo before departing for Heart Mountain. "My grandmother said, 'We have to get a picture because we don't know we'll all be together.'"

Mori spoke about his family and how they were incarcerated at several camps, including Tule Lake, Jerome and Amache. Mori's brother was a student at UC Berkeley but "had to be yanked out of Cal Berkeley to go into camps." Mori's brother had to convince their father to leave Tule Lake, saying, "Dad, sign the loyalty oath because this is going to be turned into a security camp. It's going to get rough."

UC Berkeley NSU President Alicia Tan represented Manzanar and spoke about Ralph Lazo, a Mexican and Irish American from Los Angeles who was the only known non-Japanese American to self-incarcerate during WWII as a show of solidarity for his Japanese American friends and neighbors.

Having experienced racism himself, Lazo was "really angry about what was happening to his community," said Tan.

Lazo, who passed away in 1992, "uprooted his life to voluntarily show solidarity for the Japanese American community" and later helped raise funds "in support of the class-action lawsuit that led to the Civil Liberties Act of 1988," said Tan. "... His story really shows that solidarity is ongoing. It's a lot more than just one social media post or one donation, it's really a commitment to helping our community members who helped us in our time of need."

In addition, the DOR program included the introduction of UC Berkeley NSU's Nikkei Catalyst Project, which is a "student-led initiative that seeks to mobilize the Nikkei community on campus to learn, take action and connect the complex experiences of the Japanese diaspora to global struggles for justice," and featured enter-

tainment by Cal Raijin Taiko, who performed two selections, "Matsuri" and "Sazanami." The event ended with a group discussion/reflection circle.

During his closing remarks, Izumi thanked the evening's participants and acknowledged the support of Beckie Masaki and the Japanese American Women Alumnae of UC Berkeley for their sponsorship and assistance. He also reminded the audience about the importance of reflecting on the past while simultaneously looking toward the present and future to ensure that the same mistakes will never happen again.

"It is vital that we protect our neighbors and friends and keep fighting for the constitutional rights of all," said Izumi. "Even when the struggle for equity and decent human rights feels futile, when the most powerful people and politicians in the country continue to take a step backwards, we must build community and take action toward a better future." ■



Speakers included (from top) Grace Morizawa, Kaz Mori, Joyce Nakamura and Grace Shimizu.



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French Camp Installs Officers and Awards Scholarships

The JACL chapter holds its 76th annual luncheon in Stockton.

By Henry Isakari

French Camp JACL held its 76th annual New Year's Installation and Scholarship luncheon on March 8 at the China Palace restaurant in Stockton, Calif. The luncheon began with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance by Addie and Ryan McMinn. A moment of silence was then observed in memory of the following chapter members: Kiyoshi and Mari Hayashi,



Scholarship recipients Lilah Nakamura (left) and Marissa Kiyomi Yu

PHOTOS: FRENCH CAMP JACL

Mary Itaya, Tom Miyasaki, John Oda, Larry Ota and Don Shiromizu.

After lunch, the following slate of officers were installed: President Dean Komure, VP Bob Asano, Treasurer Karen Nakamura, Membership Chair Marcy Wong, Recording Secretary Mary Nakamura, Corresponding Secretary Jeannie Matsumoto, National Delegate Alan Nishi and Members-at-Large Julie Kanazawa and Terri Paoletti.

Two local high school seniors — Lilah Nakamura and Marissa Kiyomi

Yu — were recognized with Hidenori and Fumiko Asano Scholarships. Both students maintain grade point averages in excess of 4.0 while balancing rigorous academics with a wide range of extracurricular activities

and community service.

They are also the first members of the Gosei (fifth) generation to receive French Camp JACL scholarships. Nakamura plans to study nursing at Xavier College School of Nursing, while Yu will be attending either Baylor University or the University of Arizona as a marketing major.

The luncheon's guest speaker was Jim Tabuchi from the "Okagesama" project. He is spearheading efforts to preserve the last remaining building from the Stockton Assembly Center and create an immersive education center on the Japanese American World War II experience.

French Camp JACLers Komure and Susan Wong also serve on the "Okagesama" team. To learn more about this exciting project, visit their website and sign up to receive updates at <https://okagesama.org/>.

Upcoming chapter activities include the annual Memorial Day weekend picnic with Stockton and Lodi JACLs and a summer bus trip to the MIS Historic Learning Center at the Presidio in San Francisco.

For more information on French Camp JACL, send an email to frenchcampjocl@yahoo.com.



The 2026 French Camp JACL chapter officers

Historic Flooding Hits Hawaii

Severe storms, the worst in 20 years, impact the Aloha state.

By Associated Press

HONOLULU — Hawaii officials urged people in hard-hit areas to evacuate March 21 due to the state's worst flooding in more than 20 years after heavy rains fell on soil already saturated by downpours from a winter storm a week ago with still more expected over the weekend.

Muddy floodwaters smothered vast stretches of Oahu's North Shore, a community world-renowned for its big-wave surfing. Raging waters lifted homes and cars and prompted evacuation orders for 5,500 people north of Honolulu, though they were later lifted. Authorities cautioned that a 120-year-old dam could fail.

On the island of Maui, authorities upgraded an evacuation advisory to a warning for some parts of Lahaina, which is still reeling from a deadly 2023 wildfire because of retention basins nearing capacity.

Gov. Josh Green said the cost of the storm could top \$1 billion, including damage to airports, schools, roads, homes and a Maui hospital in Kula.

Green said the flooding was the state's most serious since 2004, when homes and a University of Hawaii library were swamped.

Officials blamed some of the devastation on the sheer amount of rain that fell in a short amount of time on saturated land. Parts of Oahu received 8-12 inches (20-30 cm), the National Weather Service said.

More than 200 people were rescued from the rising waters, authorities said, but no deaths were reported.

Winter storm systems known as "Kona lows," which feature southerly or southwesterly winds that bring in moisture-laden air, have been responsible for the deluges in the past two weeks. The intensity and frequency of heavy rains in Hawaii have increased amid human-caused global warming, experts say.

"We're seeing the waters receding in a lot of places, but again with that saturation, just the smallest amount of water can bring those raging back up," said Molly Pierce, a spokesperson for Oahu's Department of Emergency Management.

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A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

NATIONAL

JACL National Convention
Las Vegas, NV
July 29-Aug. 2
Paris Las Vegas Hotel & Casino
3655 S. Las Vega Blvd.

Join JACL at its 56th National Convention themed "Reigniting Our Purpose and Mission!" where the organization will gather to reinvigorate the spirit of advancing our community forward with renewed action and impact. Events include the Chapter Awards Luncheon, National Council and 2026 National Board Elections, Sayonara Gala, workshops, mixers and much more! Early bird registration ends soon!
Info: Visit www.jacl.org/2026-national-convention.

Ireicho Tour to Former Confinement Sites & Other Places
National Stops:
March 26-30: Seattle, WA
April 8-11: Honolulu, HI
May 1-2: Topaz, UT
May 10-11: San Francisco, CA
July 4-5: Tule Lake, CA
Info: Visit <https://www.janm.org/exhibits/ireicho/venues>.

INTL.

'Return to Paueru Gai: 50 Years of Powell Street Festival' Exhibit
Burnaby, B.C.
Opens March 26
Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, Karasawa Gallery
6688 Southoaks Crescent
This exhibit, curated by Emiko Morita, celebrates the art and activism of the Japanese Canadian community's annual festival through photographs, video and installations. It honors early Japanese settlers and the Japanese Canadian community.
Info: Visit <https://centre.nikkeiplace.org>.

NCWNP

'I Am an American' Exhibit
San Francisco, CA
Thru Aug. 31
MIS Historic Learning Center at the Presidio of San Francisco
220 Halleck St.
Price: \$15; Free for Veterans, Children 12 and Under, NJAHS Members.
This new traveling exhibit tells the storied history of the Nisei soldiers who served during WWII and features artifacts, first-

hand accounts and evocative images that reveal how the Nisei soldier's service became a defining testament to courage, sacrifice and belonging.

Info: Visit nvnvets.org/exhibit.

'The Volunteer' Screening
Sacramento, CA
April 18; 1 p.m.
Buddhist Church of Sacramento
2401 Riverside Blvd.
Price: Free

This program features a screening of the documentary "The Volunteer," directed by David Brodie, and tells the story of Vietnam veteran Bruce Nakashima. Following the film will be a Q & A session that will include the film's director.

Info: For questions, contact John Yoshikawa at spyron@aol.com **or call** (916) 320-2111.

Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival
San Francisco, CA
April 11-12 and 18-19
Price: Free

This 58th annual event celebrates spring and the beauty of Japanese culture with the community. Come experience live entertainment, cultural displays, food and much more for the entire family!
Info: Visit sfcherryblossom.org.

'House Meeting(s): Opening the Door for Redress in San Jose'
San Jose, CA
Now Open
Japanese American Museum at San Jose
535 N. Fifth St.
This exhibit looks at the Japanese American redress movement through everyday places and the eyes of everyday people. House meetings were informal gatherings and this space within the home was essential to the movement where trust could be built before conversations moved beyond the home.
Info: Visit www.jamsj.org.

2026 Tule Lake Pilgrimage 'Resistance & Solidarity'
Tulelake, CA
July 3-6
Tule Lake Segregation Center
Price: \$700 All-Inclusive Fee
Save the date for the Tule Lake Pilgrimage and reserve your spot now as space is limited. The four-day event includes charter bus transportation, lodging, meals and all activities including tours and a memorial service.
Info: Registration now open. Limited spots. Visit <https://www.tulelake.org> **for further details.**

PSW

2026 Films of Remembrance
Los Angeles and Gardena, CA
March 28: Los Angeles at the Tateuchi Democracy Forum in Little Tokyo;
March 29: Gardena at the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute
This showcase of films commemorates the forced relocation and incarceration of Japanese Americans in American concentration camps during World War II. This event screening is presented by the Nichi Bei Foundation.
Info: Visit filmsofremembrance.org.

Toward a More Perfect Rebellion: Celebrating the Legacy of Robert A. Nakamura
Los Angeles, CA
April 11; 7:30 p.m.
Billy Wilder Theater at the Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
Price: Free
This event honors alumnus Robert A. Nakamura, who taught film at UCLA for more than 30 years. The event will feature a Q & A with Nakamura's son, director Tadashi Nakamura, and his widow, producer Karen L. Ishizuka, among other participants.
Info: Visit <https://www.cinema.ucla.edu/events/toward-a-more-perfect-rebellion-celebrating-the-legacy-of-robert-a-nakamura-2026-04-11>.

Caregiver Conference West
Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA
April 19; 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Price: Free
"Cultivating a Community of Care" is the theme of this conference that will connect caregivers with resources to strengthen their support network. This is an in-person and live-streamed event. Registration is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
Info: To register, visit <https://give.keiro.org/event/caregiver-conference-west-los-angeles/e745379>.

The 57th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage
Lone Pine, CA
April 25; Noon
"Lessons From Manzanar: Vigilance Is the Price" is the theme of this year's annual Manzanar Pilgrimage. Presented by the Manzanar Committee, this dynamic community gathering will remember the lessons of the World War II incarceration in the context of the current political climate. Reservations for bus transportation will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. The program will also

feature the Manzanar At Dusk Program, following the main event.

Info: Visit www.manzanarcommittee.org; **to reserve bus seats, visit** <https://bit.ly/manzanarbus2026> **and** <https://gvjci.wufoo.com/forms/q1on4szl0f4a129/>.

PNW

'Minidoka on Our Minds' Exhibit
Portland, OR
Thru June 14
Japanese American Museum of Oregon
411 N.W. Flanders St.
Price: Museum Admission
This exhibit celebrates 25 years of preservation at the site where many Nikkei from Oregon and Washington were incarcerated during WWII. Artwork by survivors, descendants and Japanese American youth explore the park's history.
Info: Visit <https://jamo.org/minidoka/>.

'The Yasui Family: An American Story' Exhibit
Portland, OR
Thru Sept. 6
The Oregon Historical Society
1200 S.W. Park Ave.
Through photographs, personal journals, documents and objects, this exhibition explores how the Yasui family reflects the complexity of the American story.
Info: Visit ohs.org.

MDC

No Kings 2026
Chicago, IL
March 28; 1:30 p.m.
Butler Field Grant Park
East Jackson Drive & South Columbus Drive
Join JACL Chicago as it participates in No Kings 2026, a peaceful day of organized support to show that Chicago is united in opposing the illegal, cruel and destructive attacks against our neighbors, our communities and our democracy.
Info: Visit jaclchicago.org.

IFEST-MN
St. Paul, MN
April 10-11
RiverCentre
175 W. Kellogg Blvd.
Price: \$21
The International Festival of Minnesota, now IFEST-MN, is back where foods from many Asian countries will be featured. Metro Transit and buses will provide free transportation.
Info: Visit ifestmn.org.

Minnesota Japanese American Veterans Graveside Decorating
Minneapolis, MN
May 16

Fort Snelling National Cemetery
7601 34th Ave. S.

The Twin Cities JACL invites all to commemorate the service and sacrifice of Minnesota Japanese American Veterans by decorating gravesites at the cemetery. Volunteers are also needed to decorate gravesites of veterans whose family members are not able to attend.
Info: Please RSVP by May 13 to chiratadulas@tcjacl.org.

EDC

National Cherry Blossom Festival
Washington, D.C.
Thru April 12
First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington Tidal Basin
Price: Some Events Require Tickets; Others Are Free
This family-friendly event celebrates the blooming of Washington, D.C.'s famous cherry trees and includes an opening ceremony, parade, festival and much more.
Info: Visit nationalcherryblossomfestival.org.

28th Annual Freedom Walk
Washington, D.C.
March 28; Opening Ceremony 10 a.m.
Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During WWII
35 D St. NW
Price: Free
Join the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, JACL D.C. Chapter and Ekoji Buddhist Temple at this annual event that will feature a keynote speech by Vietnam veteran Tak Furumoto.
Info: Visit jacl-dc.org.

'The Many Lives of the Nakagin Capsule Tower' Exhibit
New York, NY
Thru July 12
Museum of Modern Art
11 W. 53rd St.
Price: Museum Admission
The exhibit brings together original drawings and models with ephemeral photographs and films to explore how this structure became a hive of creativity.
Info: Visit <http://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5830>. ■

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VIOLET UZAWA DORIO



(1921-2026)

Our mother, Violet Uzawa Dorio, passed away on Feb. 24, 2026, at the age of 104.

She lived several lives after being born in Summerland, British Columbia, Canada, to Japanese immigrants. As a young girl, she was a free spirit who could be found roaming the apple orchards and climbing trees. Her father sponsored a teacher and helped establish a Japanese school so the town's children could preserve their

language and culture.

When she was 15, her family, except for her oldest sister, moved to Japan, where they stayed throughout the war. She later talked about the difficulties of adjusting to the society's strictness — how even something as simple as having trouble wearing traditional sandals could arouse suspicion, leading some to think she was a spy. She also remembered a harrowing moment on a beach when she was chased and shot at by an airplane. She made it through uninjured and, in her kind and gentle way, would laugh as she shared the story, as if the danger itself hadn't broken her spirit. This is how she faced life.

As a Canadian citizen, she served with the American Red Cross in U.S.-occupied Japan after WWII, where she met our father, Carl Dorio, an Army Air Corps pilot, writer and political activist. They married and moved to New York City, where they were involved in the civil rights movement.

Like many parents of their time, their achievements went unspoken, and over the years, we had to piece together their efforts from historical records to understand the role they played in their community. Even now, we are still learning how daring and courageous they were in fighting for their neighbors' rights.

They were part of the rising evolution of our society.

With their three sons, they had to leave New York in 1954 and chose to move to Los Angeles, knowing their Brooklyn Dodgers would soon follow.

They moved to a neighborhood of color, where our mother went back to school to become a healthcare professional, and our father attended night school to earn an advanced degree in social work.

Although they no longer participated in politics, the discussion around the dining room table remained political. Sometimes, they joined protests. While supporting our American troops, they opposed President Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War in the 1960s.

Raising us and emphasizing "education" produced two medical doctors and an expert in workers' compensation law.

Coming to California meant that our family shared the same spirit of "bleeding Dodger blue" for the team that moved from New York. In those early days, listening to Dodger radio broadcasts was a big part of our daily routine.

Before the war, our mother, a skilled baseball player in Summerland, Canada, knew the game well. So when we went to Dodger games, we sometimes sat just above the booth where Vin Scully broadcast, hearing his voice directly. As Scully tried to read the lips of players on the field, our mom would successfully "pick off" signs from the dugout manager and the first- or third-base coaches of the opponents!

Our father passed away in 1989, but our mother took on a property manager role, cared for her cats, and maintained her garden. After a fall, she moved to Santa Clarita and celebrated her 100th birthday with us in her new community.

What made our mom wonderful was her loving, kind, caring, supportive and welcoming nature toward everyone. She had boundless energy and made the best apple and lemon meringue pies, cream puffs and chow mein, all of which fueled our souls. She embraced her signature red lipstick, colorful scarves, shiny necklaces and her lifelong routine of weekly hair appointments.

Our mother is the beloved matriarch of the large family she leaves behind, and her goodness is what people will remember most about her.

She was extremely proud that the Dodgers recently won the World Series two years in a row and hoped to see them three-peat. We know our mom and dad will be watching together this year.

A funeral service at the chapel, followed by a graveside ceremony, will take place on March 21, 2026, which is our father's birthday, starting at 11 a.m. at Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary in Whittier, where they will be laid to rest together. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

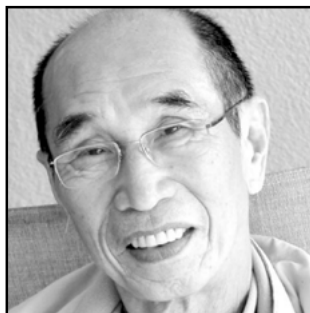
We will miss her dignity, hard work, and her special efforts to make the world a better place.

— Her sons

In MEMORIAM

(Note: Boldfaced names in the PDF version of this are active hyperlinks.)

Adachi, Nora, 88, White Plains, NY, Oct. 27, 2025



Aiko, Tetsu, 87, Tokyo, Japan, Feb. 3.

Aizawa, Brent L., 76, Athol, ID, Feb. 8.

Ando, Shigeko Julia, 96, Salt Lake City, UT, Aug. 26, 2025.



Bourbonais, Kiyo Monica, 97, Ontonagon, MI, Sept. 3, 2025.

Chin, Brian, 64, Pasadena, CA, Feb. 8.

Fukushige, Ruth, 89, Torrance, CA, Feb. 7.

Garcia, Kimiko M., 71, Rehoboth, MA, Sept. 10, 2025.



Hall, Kimiko Ueno, 98, San Francisco, CA, Dec. 12, 2025.

Harman, Kimiko Hashimoto, 83, Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 30, 2025.

Hasegawa, Samuel Masami, 72, San Mateo, CA, Feb. 15.

Isemoto, Kinuyo 'Kay,' 95, Hilo, HI, Jan. 17.

Kimoto, Vernal, 76, Mililani, HI, Feb. 28.

Masuoka, Kayoshi, 98, Chandon, OH, Feb. 11.

Munekata, Yooko, 93, Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 20, 2025

Nishio, Ruby, 98, San Gabriel, CA, Oct. 9, 2025.

Nojima, Nancy Sachi, 68, Los Angeles, CA, Dec. 24, 2025.

Owens, Bangji (Yoshie), 91, Westerville, OH, Nov. 17, 2025.

Shoji, Kiyo, 98, Livingston, CA, Aug. 20, 2025.

News Briefs

Yamaha Has Georgia on Its Mind, Says 'Sayonara' to Southern California

The Japan-based maker of motorcycles, ATVs and snowmobiles has announced it is burning rubber for Kennesaw, Ga., from its Cypress, Calif., headquarters, according to a *Los Angeles Times* report. The move should be completed by the end of 2028 and will include the sale of all of its fixed assets in Cypress, including land, offices and warehouses. Yamaha Motor Co.'s U.S. subsidiary, Yamaha Motor Corp. U.S.A., acquired the land in 1978 and established the office a year later. It's not the first Japanese vehicle maker to leave the Golden State. In 2014, Toyota Motor Sales USA Inc. moved its North American headquarters to Plano, Texas, from Torrance, Calif. That was preceded in 2006, when Nissan North America decamped to Franklin, Tenn., from Gardena, Calif.

Canada's Revived 'Charlie Chan' TV Series Reveals Clues for Casting

Entertainment industry trade publication *Variety* has reported that actors Tzi Ma, Rae Dawn Chong and Aileen Wu have joined the cast of Canada-produced TV series "Charlie Chan." In addition to taking the starring role, Ma will also serve as an executive producer. It's described as a "contemporary reimagining" of the Chinese detective character that was a popular 20th century movie franchise but was also controversial for casting Caucasian actors in yellowface to play the role. Also producing are Quentin Lee and Cindy Au Yeung. Lee is also serving as a showrunner with Josh Sager.

Accolades: Cannes Taps Park Chan-wook as President of '26 Film Fest Jury

Come May 12, the "Oldboy" director will become the first Korean filmmaker to head the Cannes Film Festival jury. In other movie news, at the March 15 Academy Awards, Netflix's "KPop Demon Hunters" won Oscars for best animated feature and for best original song, "Golden." The best cinematography statuette went to Autumn Durald Arkapaw for "Sinners." Finally among accolades, on March 12 at Oakland's Frank Ogawa Plaza, the city held a Celebration Rally for Alysia Liu, who won the women's singles figure skating gold medal at February's Winter Olympics and helped the U.S. win gold with Madison Chock and Ellie Kam in the women's figure skating team event. Also at the Games, snowboarder Chloe Kim, who won gold in Beijing in 2022, won a silver medal in Italy.

— P.C. Staff

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