



PACIFIC CITIZEN

Chuji Eto's
1936 yearbook
was donated
back to Tohrei
Gakuen
Fujisawa Junior
High School
in Japan on
March 10.

PHOTO:
PATTI HIRAHARA

CELEBRATING
97
Years

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**The Discovery of
a 1936 Yearbook
Brings Together
Two Countries
and Honors a
Family's Legacy.**

A PRIZED POSSESSION

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Japan House Hosts
Glen Fukushima.

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MNHS Holds 57th Annual
Manzanar Pilgrimage.

JACL OPPOSES DOJ'S INDICTMENT OF SPLC

Justice Dept. accuses Southern Poverty Law Center with crimes related to its defunct informant program.

By P.C. Staff

In a show of solidarity with another civil rights organization, the Japanese American Citizens League released a statement denouncing the Department of Justice's April 21 indictment (see tinyurl.com/3k6b7j66) of Southern Poverty Law Center.

In its April 30 statement, JACL said it "... categorically denounces the Department of Justice's indictment of the Southern Poverty Law Center," blaming the Trump administration for the legal action that JACL said "... represents an attack on civil rights work as a whole."

Expanding on that theme, JACL continued: "The attack on the SPLC is part of a broader scheme to rewrite American history and redefine civil rights and liberties in the United States. A key part of this tactic is erasing, misinterpreting and falsifying the history and experiences of marginalized communities."

The DoJ accused SPLC with "11 counts of wire fraud, false statements to a federally insured bank and conspiracy to commit concealment money laundering."

According to Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche, from 2014-23, SPLC had "... secretly funneled more than \$3 million in donated funds" to individuals affiliated with such "violent extremist groups" including Ku Klux Klan, American Nazi Party and Sadistic Souls Motorcycle Club, which is affiliated



with Aryan Nations.

Subsequent to the indictments, however, SPLC noted that though it had in its past paid informants who had infiltrated groups named in the indictment and reported the information gleaned to the FBI and other law enforcement organizations, it had since discontinued the practice of working with paid informants who had "... risked their lives to infiltrate and inform on" such extremist groups.

On April 28, SPLC filed two motions (tinyurl.com/4d5d7v3v and tinyurl.com/4d5d7v3v) in federal court arguing that DoJ officials made false statements related to its discontinued informant program.

"We strongly deny the allegations in the indictment and their falsity is already being exposed in our court filings. The government is blatantly mischaracterizing our efforts to successfully fight hatred and violent extremism, something we have done for decades," said SPLC interim President and CEO Bryan Fair.

JACL also stated: "This indictment will not silence the civil rights movement and all we have fought to gain. The SPLC will have its day in court. While we wait for that day to come, the JACL stands in solidarity with the SPLC, and we urge our community to join us to do the same."

The entirety of JACL's statement can be read at <https://tinyurl.com/5bavcymt>.

Matsuzawa Signs as Undrafted Free Agent With LV Raiders

By University of Hawaii at Manoa Athletics



PHOTO: FACEBOOK

PITTSBURGH — Record-breaking Hawaii kicker Kansei Matsuzawa, affectionately known as "The Tokyo Toe," signed an undrafted free agent contract with the La Vegas Raiders on April 25.

A native of the Tokyo area and a former high school soccer player, Matsuzawa did not begin kicking until age 20 after attending an NFL game during a trip to the U.S.

Driven to pursue the sport, he taught himself the mechanics of kicking by watching YouTube videos.

At Hawaii, Matsuzawa com-

pletely rewrote the program's record books. In his stellar 2025 senior season, he made 27 of 29 field goals, setting a new single-season school record. He leaves Hawaii as the most accurate kicker in program history, boasting a career field goal percentage of .867 (39-of-45).

His on-field dominance earned him unprecedented recognition. Matsuzawa became the first Consensus All-American in Hawaii program history. ■

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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

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The Pacific Citizen newspaper (ISSN: 0030-8579) is published semi-monthly (except once in December and January) by the Japanese American Citizens League, Pacific Citizen, 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 206, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Periodical postage paid at L.A., CA.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to National JACL, 1765 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115.

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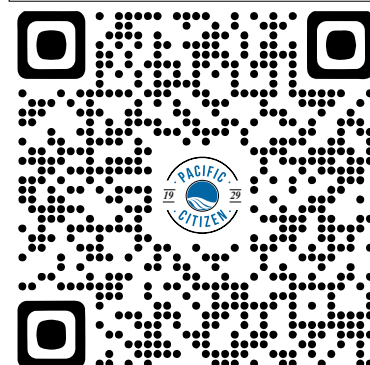
Periodicals paid at Los Angeles, Calif. and mailing office.

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NY/SC HOSTS SPRING RETREAT

JACL youth meet to increase engagement and cultivate leadership and mentorship opportunities.

By NY/SC

This year, the NY/SC was excited to hold its Spring Retreat in Salt Lake City!

During its April 10-12 retreat, members of the NY/SC participated in conversations with JACL Interim Executive Director Saki Mori about the future of JACL youth and youth programming. Beginning this fall, the NY/SC aims to roll out new NY/SC committees, run collaboratively through the NY/SC's regional district youth boards, that will focus on policy, advocacy, culture and community building. The primary goal is to increase youth engagement by giving youth outside of the NY/SC more leadership and mentorship opportunities.

The NY/SC also had the opportunity to work on planning youth events for July's 2026 National Convention in Las Vegas that will include a Youth Orientation and Young Adult Mixer. In addition, MDC Youth Representative Eli Nishimura will be collaborating on a workshop developed

in response to a youth engagement survey conducted by Ada Shido. And the NY/SC will also be hosting a 50/50 Raffle to fundraise for future youth programming, so stay tuned (and ready your wallets!) for the chance to win big.

After lunch at a local Utah establishment, the NY/SC had the opportunity to tour and learn about what remains of Salt Lake City's Japantown.

NY/SC members were grateful to be introduced to information previously not known about the shared history between Japantown and JACL, and participants were inspired to learn about the local efforts of the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple and the Japanese Church of Christ to revitalize the area and spread awareness.

Later, the NY/SC hosted its inaugural in-person Civic Dinner (a revitalization of an NY/SC program started during the Covid-19 pandemic to bring the community together despite physical distance) at the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple.

There, members were honored to



PHOTOS:
COURTESY OF THE NY/SC

be joined by former JACL Executive Director and State Assemblyman Floyd Mori, along with IDC District Gov. Kelly Asao, who spoke to attendees about the planned ICE detention center in Salt Lake City.

Participants then discussed the role that Japanese Americans must play in immigration and detention justice, given its own community's history, as well as how to get involved in youth advocacy more broadly, with discussions facilitated by NY/SC youth reps.

Following these discussions, NY/SC Youth Chair Remy Kageyama led the group through a power-mapping exercise, intended to help attendees come up with actionable steps they could take toward an issue that is of significant importance to them.



NY/SC members (from left) Austin Joyce, Cameron Sueoka, Boone Nakasone, Eli Nishimura, Katie Marumoto and Remy Kageyama enjoy a meal together.



JACL Interim Executive Director Saki Mori (center) with (from left) NY/SC's Simon Kutz, Lauren Iwamiya, Alex Tokita and Eli Nishimura

NY/SC members enjoy time together in Salt Lake City. Pictured (clockwise from bottom) are National Youth Rep. Claire Inouye, National Youth Chair Remy Kageyama, EDC Youth Rep. Simon Kutz, IDC Youth Rep. Alex Tokita, MDC Youth Rep. Eli Nishimura and At-Large Youth Rep. Lauren Iwamiya.



As a result, the NY/SC has begun writing transition documents for its successors and looks forward to seeing what direction the next generation of leaders takes the NY/SC and the JACL.

For more information about the NY/SC, visit <https://jacl.org/nysc>.

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The Japanese American Experience is JACL's acclaimed curriculum guide with a summary of the history of Japanese Americans, a chronology of important dates, a resource list, learning activities, and more, now available in an online format! We're also excited to bring our new video series alongside the website launch! Check them out today!



Japan House Hosts Glen Fukushima

The noted éminence grise of U.S.-Japan relations holds court in a shifting global landscape.

By George Toshio Johnston,
P.C. Senior Editor

Underscoring an unstable present, Glen Fukushima's timely March 2 lecture titled "U.S.-Japan Relations in a Shifting Global Landscape" was bookended by events of the distant and recent past, as well as a future that had seemingly begun to alter even before the "living legend," as he was described by Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles Kosei Murota, ended his address at Japan House Los Angeles.

Occurring just two days after the United States, along with Israel, launched a globally destabilizing attack on Iran, Fukushima (see Dec. 20, 2024, *Pacific Citizen*, [tinyurl.com/y4edz6n](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/y4edz6n)), nevertheless shared his decades-long observations, perspective and historical knowledge of the dynamics and status of the longstanding, vital and mutually beneficial military, economic, technological and social relationship between the global superpower and regional "middle power," the latter a label put forth by Japanese law professor Yoshihide Soeya.

"I'm interested to know from Consul Murota to what extent Japan considers itself to be 'middle power' because I actually think that perhaps Japan doesn't think of itself as a middle power," Fukushima said, later noting that "Japan has one of the largest militaries in the world."

In his first visit to Japan House Los Angeles, Fukushima was preceded by an introduction and remarks from Japan House President and CEO Yuko Kaifu, who was followed by Murota and Christopher Patay, chairman of the board of directors of Japan-America Society of Southern California, which co-sponsored the lecture.

"He brings rare, practical perspective granted in decades of experience working at the intersection of policy, business and the U.S.-Japan relationship," Patay said of Fukushima, a visiting fellow, Stanford University; senior fellow, Center for American Progress; former deputy assistant U.S. trade representative for Japan and China; former president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan; and current vice chair of the Securities Investor Protection Corp.

Fukushima began by heaping praise on Kaifu. "She's done a fantastic job over the last 27 years promoting U.S.-Japan relations and also [being] very active with the community, the business community, as well as Japanese American community," he said. "I recognize all of her contributions and thank her for inviting me today."

Regarding the past, Fukushima alluded to a remark made by Murota, how in 1989 *Business Week* magazine had published a poll asking Americans which was the bigger threat, Japan as an economic rival or the Soviet Union as a military rival, with 68 percent of respondents believing that Japan was the bigger concern.

"It's quite difficult to believe now," Fukushima said before revealing the subject of his upcoming book on the evolution of U.S.-Japan relations, with a focus on the current relationship between America's Silicon Valley and Japan in the area of technology.

Noting that there has been so much of a focus on the past, Fukushima said that in his book, he wants to "focus on the future" because "there's been a clear evolution and a clear change in the two countries being rivals to being partners."

That relationship was, of course, in the news just days later with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit to the White House. Whether the following will be included in Fukushima's book remains to be seen, but in an awkward incident, with Takaichi at his side on March 19, President Donald Trump was asked why the U.S. had not informed allies such as Japan, which depends on oil coming through the Strait of Hormuz, in advance of the attack on Iran.

"We didn't tell anybody about it because we wanted surprise. Who knows better about surprise than Japan? Why didn't you tell me about Pearl Harbor, OK?" Trump asked jokingly, getting some laughs in the room but that otherwise falling flat, with Takaichi sitting stoically by.

That Trump is again in the White House in 2026 was something that Fukushima addressed. "I'm often asked in Japan because I've lived in Japan, 'How could this have happened?'" he said. "One of the things I try to explain is — and I believe this — I say, 'It's not that Donald Trump was so strong and popular in the United States, it's that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris were so weak.'"

"One of the reasons I felt that the election of 2024 ended up the way it did — if, for instance, President Biden had announced, as many people had hoped and expected, that he would step aside after one term, then there would have been a primary among the Democrats. At least 10 people I know who would run, and it's quite likely that we would have different outcomes in the general election of 2024."

On the topic of stepping aside, Fukushima turned his focus on recent political events in Japan that saw former Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba announce last September that he would resign following a defeat months earlier in July's parliamentary election.

That would later, of course, open the door to Japan electing Takaichi, a protégé of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who was assassinated on July 8, 2022, in Nara while speaking at a political event.

"When I visited Japan in September of last year, I would say 95 percent of the people I spoke with, and these are people who are really in the know, they told me that they felt that Mr. Shinjiro Koizumi, the son of the former prime minister (Junichiro Koizumi) and agricultural minister at the time, that he was the most likely person to become the president of the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) and therefore prime minister of Japan."

However, that did not happen. "It surprised a lot of people," said Fukushima. "Ms. Takaichi ended up becoming the president of the LDP and then elected prime minister of Japan, the first woman to be prime minister." (Editor's note: Takaichi later tapped Koizumi for minister of defense.)

Takaichi's popularity in Japan soared —



Glen Fukushima speaks at Japan House in a lecture entitled "U.S.-Japan Relations in a Shifting Global Landscape." PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

and soured in China — after she stated last November that Japan might intervene militarily if Taiwan faced an attack from the PRC. More surprising to the Takaichi doubters: In early February, the LDP won a two-thirds supermajority in the lower house of parliament, giving her even greater sway over Japan's direction in the coming months and years.

Although he does not know her well, Fukushima recalled meeting her years ago and how she had spent nine months as a congressional fellow "in the office of Patricia Schroeder, ironically, a pretty liberal member of the House of Representatives from Colorado."

As an aside, Fukushima opined that much credit for the strong relationship Takaichi (as well as Ishiba and in Trump's first term, Abe) subsequently developed with Trump must

go to interpreter Sunao Takao, who he called "outstanding."

The "shifting global landscape" would, of course, change one of the events that Fukushima alluded to, namely Trump's planned visit to China, which in the aftermath of the Iran war was rescheduled to May 14-15. But other planned events — the G7 summit set for France in June, the November APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) meeting in Shenzhen, China, in September and the December G20 summit in Florida — are all still intact.

On a smaller scale, one thing new in Fukushima's life is becoming an executive producer of motion pictures. Known for his institutional philanthropy with regard to entities like Deep Spring College, the Stanford-administered Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies, Harvard University's Master's Program in Regional Studies — East Asia and the creation of the Glen S. & Sakie T. Fukushima JASC Alumni Fellowship Fund, it seems that helping filmmakers is now something for him. But it wasn't something he sought. When the Trump administration killed funding for a documentary titled "Diamond Diplomacy," Fukushima stepped in to fill the breach.

With decades of promoting U.S.-Japan relations, it was an action that conveniently fulfilled an aspect of Fukushima's life's work, since the film's subject is 150 years of baseball relations between the U.S. and Japan. In a world where U.S.-Japan relations exist in a shifting global landscape, baseball appears to be the most-enduring connection between the two nations. ■

AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL

2026 TOUR SCHEDULE

- PANA CONVENTION** (Ernest Hida) June
Sao Paulo-Brazil.
- MT RUSHMORE-YELLOWSTONE HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida) Jun 20-28
Rapid City, Mt Rushmore, Crazy Horse Memorial, Billings, Little Big Horn National Monument, Cody, Yellowstone National Park, Jackson, Grand Tetons National Park, Salt Lake City.
- GRANDPARENTS-GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Jun 21-Jul 1
Tokyo, Hakone, Atami, Hiroshima, Kyoto. Craftmaking hands-on experiences.
- ALASKA HOLIDAY CRUISE** (Carol Hida) **WAITLIST** Jul 18-25
Vancouver, Sail Inside Passage, Juneau, Skagway, Cruise Glacier Bay, Ketchikan — "Salmon Capital", Vancouver. Koningsdam - Holland America Cruise.
- JAPAN AUTUMN COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) **WAITLIST** . . . Oct 5-19
Hokkaido-Tohoku. Kushiro, Lake Akan, Sounkyo, Asahikawa, Sapporo, Otaru, Noboribetsu, Lake Toya, Hakodate, Aomori, Lake Towada, Morioka. Hiraizumi, Naruto Onsen, Matsushima, Mito, Tokyo.
- AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Oct 26-Nov 11
Sydney, Cairns, Melbourne, Queenstown, Rotorua, Auckland. **WAITLIST**
- CHRISTMAS MARKET CANADA HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida) Dec 1-7
Vancouver City Tour, Grouse Mountain Skyride, Shipyards Christmas Market, Ferry to Victoria Island, Butchart Gardens, High Tea at Fairmont Empress Hotel, Victoria Christmas Market & Fair, Van Dusen Festival of Lights.

2027 TOUR SCHEDULE (partial preview)

- FANTASTIC FLORIDA & KEYS TOUR** Mar 11-18
- JAPAN SPRING COUNTRYSIDE TOUR** Apr 4-15
- NATIONAL PARKS & CANYONS HOLIDAY TOUR** Apr 25-30
- TULIP FESTIVAL & GREAT LAKES HOLIDAY TOUR** May 6-14
- KOREA HOLIDAY TOUR** May 6-19
- GRANDPARENTS-GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR** Jun 20-30
- HOKKAIDO SUMMER HOLIDAY TOUR** Jul 11-23
- DANUBE RIVER CRUISE** Aug 22-Sep 4
- JAPAN AUTUMN COUNTRYSIDE TOUR** Oct
- Kyushu-Shikoku
- OKINAWA HOLIDAY TOUR** Nov

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A PRIZED POSSESSION

The discovery of a 1936 yearbook brings together two countries and honors a family's legacy.



Three-hundred-and-fifty Tohrei Gakuen freshmen and sophomore junior high school students were present for the 1936 yearbook donation presentation and 90-minute program. Pictured with the students (from left) are Daisuke Igarashi, Norio Uyematsu, Patti Hirahara and Manabu Hayashi.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF T. ISOGAI



Chuji Eto's 1936 yearbook was donated back to Tohrei Gakuen Fujisawa Junior High School in Japan on March 10.

PHOTO: PATTI HIRAHARA



Patti Hirahara and Norio Uyematsu stand next to the 90-year-old congratulatory clock from the Tohrei Gakuen Class of 1936. Chuji Eto's name is etched in the bottom of the front of the clock.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TOHREI GAKUEN FUJISAWA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

By Patti Hirahara,
P.C. Contributor

During the course of our lives, we are faced with the difficult task of cleaning out our descendants' homes and not knowing what to keep and what to throw away.

I was faced with this dilemma after my late husband's uncle, Chuji Eto, passed away, and his executor gave me a box and a fabric bag containing Eto and Matayoshi family memorabilia and asked if I could find a good home for these items.

What intrigued me was a 1936 yearbook for Tohrei Gakuen Fujisawa Junior High School in Japan, which was in incredible condition for being 90 years old and without any handwriting on the inside. Although the edges were slightly frayed and a paper shadow appeared inside the cover, a paper cover sleeve probably preserved its overall condition.

I then reached out to Daisuke Igarashi, who was the former San Francisco bureau chief of the *Asahi Shimbun*. He had returned to his head office in Japan in March 2025, so I asked if he could be an intermediary between the Tohrei Gakuen Fujisawa Junior High School, located in Fujisawa-City in Kanagawa Prefecture, and me, to see if the school was interested in acquiring its 1936 yearbook back.

It was perfect timing, as my friend, Norio Uyematsu, and I had plans the next month to visit Japan and would be close enough to Fujisawa City to donate the yearbook back to the school in-person during our time in Tokyo.

The response was quick once the school heard about the discovery of the 1936 yearbook.

Tohrei Gakuen is a private all-boys junior high school, and in learning that I would donate this yearbook back to the school, they were overjoyed, since this would become the oldest yearbook the school would possess in its 121-year history.



The cover of the Tohrei Gakuen Fujisawa Junior High School Yearbook Donation Program on March 10



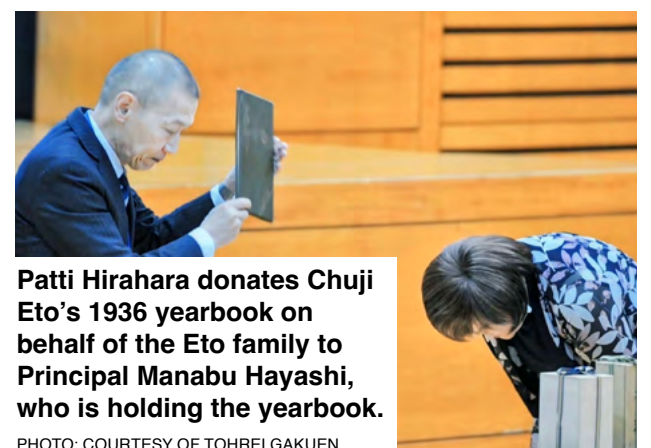
Principal Manabu Hayashi (left) holds the 1936 yearbook presented to Tohrei Gakuen by Patti Hirahara, who is also pictured with Norio Uyematsu (center) and Daisuke Igarashi.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF T. ISOGAI



Patti Hirahara explains her family's story at Heart Mountain and the more than 2,000 photos her grandfather and father took while forcibly incarcerated there from 1943-45. She donated a photo to the Tohrei Gakuen as a remembrance of student Chuji Eto and his incarceration at Heart Mountain.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF SHIGEHICO SHIRAMIZU



Patti Hirahara donates Chuji Eto's 1936 yearbook on behalf of the Eto family to Principal Manabu Hayashi, who is holding the yearbook.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TOHREI GAKUEN FUJISAWA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



A photo of the descendants of the Eto, Takeda and Matayoshi families. Patti Hirahara married Terry K. Takeda in 1995. Takeda was the nephew of Chuji Eto, whose 1936 Tohrei Gakuen Fujisawa Junior High School yearbook was gifted back to the school 90 years later.

Earlier books were lost, destroyed or damaged over the years.

It was also amazing to find out that the school's principal in 1936, Gizen Hayashi, was the grandfather of its current principal, Manabu Hayashi.

This discovery meant a great deal to Hayashi, as well as myself, in knowing that my husband's uncle's legacy would be remembered, as well as that of Hayashi's own grandfather, who contributed so much to the school during its early years, including writing the school song, which is still sung to this day.

Additional historical ties were also discovered in Chuji Eto's Class of 1936 yearbook — the class donated a grandfather clock that still stands in the entrance of the school after all these years. The face of the clock was changed due to its age, but the remaining parts remain original.

No one realized the historical significance of this 90-year-old clock until school Vice Principal Yoshiyuki Kozai noticed a faded emblem on the clock glass and realized there was an inscription detailing its donation by the 1936 class — it even contained my husband's uncle's name, Chuji Eto, in the message.

With only a short time to prepare before Norio and I would arrive in Japan, Tohrei Gakuen set the yearbook ceremony date for March 10 and announced that 350 of its freshmen and sophomore students would also be in attendance.

In addition to witnessing the return presentation of the yearbook, Tohrei Gakuen students would also hear from 95-year-old Nisei and Japanese American Korean War veteran Norio Uyematsu, who was incarcerated as an 11-year-old child at the Heart Mountain Concentration Camp in Wyoming during World War II. (Heart Mountain is also where Igarashi gave his impressions of the Japanese American incarceration camps, which he researched and wrote about when he was on assignment during his stint in America.)

I was also able to explain my feelings as a Yonsei (fourth generation) who was born 10 years after WWII. I also suffered discrimination as a Japanese American growing up but found my husband's family, Norio Uyematsu and my own family had one thing in common — they were all incarcerated at Heart Mountain.

The irony of this story is about the life of student Chuji Eto himself. He was the youngest of three children who was born in Hollywood, Calif., in 1917. His oldest sister, Hisako, was my late-husband Terry K. Takeda's mother.

When Chuji was young, his mother sent him and his two sisters, Hisako and Chiyeko, to live with relatives in Japan. Once he graduated in 1936, he boarded the Chichibu Maru ship in Yokohama to come back to San Pedro, Calif., according to a passenger manifest I found documenting his voyage on April 10 of that year.

He returned to his father's rooming house in Hollywood until fate stepped in and forced him into the Heart Mountain Concentration Camp as a bachelor at the age of 25, where he also took on the English name of Johnny. When he was able, he found work in Chicago and left Heart Mountain on April 13, 1944.

"Johnny" returned to Hollywood and passed away in 1952 in a car accident just shy of his 35th birthday.

The 90-minute event at Tohrei Gakuen was filled with traditional Japanese pomp and circumstance, and I wanted to make sure that when I presented the 90-year-old yearbook back to the school, I showed my full respect to Principal Hayashi by bowing at 90 degrees and conducting myself not only as a Japanese American but also one that was taught in traditional Japanese manners and customs.

The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session where students inquired about Japanese Americans, diversity, ideas with an international perspective and how life was like for JAs who were forcibly incarcerated during WWII.

As part of the presentation, I was also able to show them actual pictures from Heart Mountain through my family's extensive collection of more than 2,000 photos that were processed and developed in a secret underground darkroom by my grandfather, George Hirahara, and my teenage father, Frank C. Hirahara, who was a high school student at that time.

The students were amazed in seeing people who look just like them being forced to live behind barbed wire 83 years ago. I also told them that I donated the largest private photo collection of Heart Mountain to my father's alma mater of Washington State University.

Representatives from the local newspaper *Town News*, the *Asahi Shimbun* Kanagawa Section and the *Kanagawa Shimbun* covered the event. Shared Kozai, who is vice principal of both Tohrei Fujisawa Junior and Senior High Schools, immediately following the event: "Thank you very much for visiting our school and giving us such a meaningful and inspiring talk to our students. It was truly a great honor for us to welcome you."

"Your story about your family's experience in the incarceration camps and your life as a fourth-generation Japanese American deeply moved both the students and the staff," he continued. "The message you shared about respecting one another and stepping outside our own world to understand others left a strong impression on our students."

"The return of the 1936 yearbook was also a very special moment for Tohrei Gakuen. It reminded us of the long history of our school and the connections that continue across generations and across countries. Personally, it also gave me a renewed

sense of pride in being part of this school community.

"I believe this event helped our students realize that they are part of a long history and that each person has their own story to create in life. It was truly a valuable opportunity for them. We were also very grateful for Norio Uyematsu's meaningful talk and for sharing his family's history with us," he concluded.

Principal Hayashi also shared his sentiments: "It was very moving for me and our school community to see the 1936 yearbook return to our school 90 years later from America. We deeply appreciate your kindness and the connection between our families."

The most moving conclusion to the event was having the students sing the school song written by Gizen Hayashi. It was a moment I will never forget but also bittersweet, as my husband, Terry K. Takeda, passed away six years ago and was not by my side to witness how the Eto family was honored.

Chuji Eto's life was short-lived, but one could only imagine how he would have felt to see how his prized possession brought two countries together and now will forevermore be shared by generations to come.



The Eto children in an undated photo taken in San Pedro, Calif. Pictured (from left) are Chiyeko Eto, Hisako Eto (Terry K. Takeda's mother) and Chuji Eto.



Chuji Eto was born in Hollywood, Calif., in 1917, and graduated from Tohrei Gakuen in 1936. Upon graduation, he boarded a boat in Yokohama, Japan, and returned to San Pedro, Calif. He was the only American-born student in his class.



Daisuke Igarashi, staff writer for the Asahi Shimbun in Japan, discusses the Japanese American incarceration sites in the U.S. and what he learned as the newspaper's San Francisco bureau chief before he returned to Japan last year.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF PATTI HIRAHARA



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'Lessons From Manzanar: Vigilance Is the Price of Democracy'

The 2026 pilgrimage focuses on the importance of speaking out and its essential role in preserving freedom.

By Matthew Weisbly,
JACL Education Programs
Manager

Under overcast skies and surrounded by the snowcapped Sierra Nevadas, around 1,000 people gathered for the 57th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage on April 25 at the Manzanar National historic Site near Lone Pine, Calif.

This year's gathering, which centered on the theme "Lessons From Manzanar: Vigilance Is the Price of Democracy, 1942-Today," felt especially poignant given continued attempts by the current administration to change policies and laws, stripping the civil and human rights of millions of Americans.

As Manzanar Committee Co-Chair Bruce Embrey said in the announcement for this year's pilgrimage, "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. My

mother, the late Sue Kunitomi Embrey, always reminded us that democracy was fragile, so we must make every effort to protect it when we recognize injustice."

The pilgrimage event kicked off in the late morning with musical performances by Ken Koshio of Phoenix, Ariz., and the University of California Los Angeles' Kyodo Taiko. Event emcees, the father-daughter duo of Tony Osumi and Maiya Kuida-Osumi (a former JACL intern), welcomed attendees to Manzanar and reminisced about their first pilgrimages — Tony's in the 1970s and, years later, Maiya's as a baby playing in the dirt.

This year's program was dedicated to Kathy Jefferson Bancroft, a member of the local Paiute-Shoshone tribe whose work and friendship with the committee over the years has been invaluable not only to the pilgrimage but also to the expanding programs and events at Manzanar.

It was also dedicated to Professor Arthur "Art" Hansen, who spent nearly his entire academic career researching and publishing the history of Japanese American incarceration, including working with the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles and Densho in Seattle.

The first welcome was given by Jeremiah Joseph, Cultural Resources Protection representative for the Paiute-Shoshone Tribe. He discussed the ongoing relationship between the Japanese American community and the Paiute-Shoshone tribe, as well as their shared history at Manzanar.

He also spoke about the continued patterns of incarceration and abduction that have long marked the nation's history and persist today, citing the actions of ICE and other immigration agencies.

Manzanar Committee Co-Chair Bruce Embrey encouraged attendees to "come together like we did during the Redress Movement and fight for our democracy."

On a hopeful note, Joseph concluded his address by expressing his belief that activities like baseball can bring people together and shared his hope that players like the Los Angeles Dodgers' Shohei Ohtani might one day visit Manzanar's baseball field.

Next was Jeremy Schrier, superintendent of the MNHS, who emphasized the importance of the site and its path to historic designation. He thanked the Manzanar Committee for sustaining the pilgrimage year after year and noted that those who come to Manzanar are "adding to the legacy of those who came before." In closing, he shared that 93,000 people had visited the site in the past year, underscoring its continued significance.

In the final welcome, Embrey thanked attendees for their vigilance, describing it as an essential part of preserving democracy. Embrey, the son of Sue Kunitomi Embrey, one of the co-founders of the Manzanar Committee and a key figure in launching the pilgrimage nearly 60 years ago, reflected on the event's legacy.

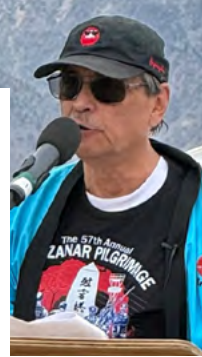
He began by noting that "for 57 years, we have said our history is a cautionary tale," adding that "sadly, it appears some in our country



Keynote speaker Dale Minami, co-founder of the law firm Minami Tamaki LLP



Paiute-Shoshone Tribe's Jeremiah Joseph discussed the shared history of his tribe and that of the Japanese American community.



MNHS Superintendent Jeremy Schrier shared that 93,000 people visited the site in 2025.



Tony Osumi co-emceed the event with his daughter.



CAIR-LA's Hussam Ayloush has attended Manzanar with his family for nearly 20 years.



have failed to learn the lessons of Manzanar."

Embrey then focused on the use of national security as a justification for targeting marginalized communities in the United States, as well as the deployment of American-made weapons abroad, all parallels, he suggested, to the forces behind the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans over 80 years ago.

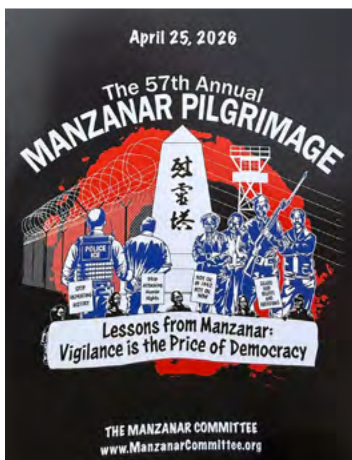
His message was clear: "We cannot stand by and allow this administration to spread lies and persecute immigrants, Muslims, the LGBTQIA+ community and any other community.

"Manzanar could become a symbol for democracy and healing," Embrey continued, connecting to this year's theme. He added that "those that seek to control the future must first control the past," referencing what he described as efforts to erase history in national parks and gov-

ernment materials. Embrey asserted that "Manzanar and the National Parks are archives of resistance and survival."

In his final remarks, Embrey outlined several calls to action, including repealing racist laws such as the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, reaffirming support for Indigenous tribes reclaiming ancestral lands, advocating for the abolition of ICE, pushing for immigration reform and supporting HR 40 and reparations for African Americans.

This year's keynote speaker, Dale Minami, is co-founder of the law firm Minami Tamaki LLP and was a member of the legal team in the coram nobis case for *Korematsu v. United States* and several landmark cases for the AANHPI community. He recounted his family's experience with incarceration, including that of his older brother, who was just a 1-year-old baby when



The 2026 Manzanar program book



The 2026 camp roll call at the 57th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage on April 25. PHOTOS: MATTHEW WEISBLY

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Pictured (from left) are Ken Koshio, Dale Minami and Matthew Weisbly

➤ the war began in 1941.

He spoke more broadly about the incarceration, calling it a “lie of national security,” and described how Japanese Americans had “all their rights taken away,” enduring “humiliation and loss of dignity” that led to long-term psychological and emotional harm, including intergenerational trauma.

Tying his remarks to the pilgrimage’s theme, Minami said, “Manzanar is a touchstone for all of us. Not just a symbol of the fragility of our democracy. But a symbol of the ugliness of politicians and racist leaders. As well as a symbol of hope and endurance.”

Minami concluded by reflecting on the present, noting what he described as “echoes of incarceration and forced removal” today. He pointed to

threats of denaturalization, the weaponization of agencies such as ICE and deaths of American citizens at the hands of the government.

He closed by calling for renewed allyship, as seen during the Redress Movement, urging people to “continue to

show up and take action in ways that cannot be ignored” and reminding attendees of the enduring importance of the adage “never again.”

Following another musical interlude from UCLA’s Kyodo Taiko, Hussam Ayloush, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations — Los Angeles (CAIR-LA), addressed the crowd. He thanked the committee and community for their decades of partnership and shared that he has attended the pilgrimage for nearly 20 years, bringing his children and now grandchildren to experience it as a way of “showing what real American history is.”

“Manzanar is not only a sad memory but a warning of what can happen,” Ayloush said, as he discussed

ongoing civil rights challenges and the scapegoating faced by Muslim and Arab Americans, as well as other marginalized communities. “Injustice begins with suspicion and stereotypes and saying that our neighbors are the enemy.”

He concluded by emphasizing that the systems that enabled Manzanar still exist and warned that when media and government fail and when good people remain silent, fear and hate prevail.

Ayloush ended on a hopeful note, stating that “patriotism is demanding our country live up to its own ideals” and urging people to remember that “when history called us, we stood on the side of justice.”

Paul Boyea, a board member of the Terminal Islanders Assn., spoke next. He shared the story of his mother, who was born on Terminal Island and raised with a strong sense of social justice from her father, who advocated for Japanese fishermen’s rights in the early 20th century.

He described the struggles of Terminal Islanders, the first Japanese American community forcibly removed during the war, and highlighted his mother’s efforts to expand access to education — including securing a donation of 20,000 books for the Manzanar library.

At one point, she left Manzanar to

continue her studies, later returning to help students apply to colleges on the East Coast. He closed with a call to action: “We will remember. We will speak out. And we will remain vigilant. Because vigilance is the price of democracy.”

The final speech was delivered by Jennifer Yamashita of UCLA’s Nikkei Student Union and one of the organizers of the Manzanar at Dusk program. She reflected on her upbringing in the Los Angeles area, home to one of the largest Japanese American communities in the country.

Like many others, she learned the importance of giving back but also about hardships and injustice. Yamashita shared that she came to

understand that “belonging in community also means defending it.”

She then invited attendees to stay for the evening’s MAD program, emphasizing that though many never expected to face such challenges again, collective action can help protect and support all communities.

The pilgrimage was followed by the Manzanar at Dusk program, hosted by students from Nikkei Student Unions across Southern California. The program provides an opportunity for attendees to build connections and reflect on the day through both large and small group discussions.

(Note: Complete remarks for all speakers will be available on the Manzanar Committee website at www.ManzanarCommittee.org and on YouTube.)

The Ireito, or “Soul Consoling Tower,” honors those who passed while at Manzanar during WWII.



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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!

Info: Visit www.jacl.org/2026-national-convention.

Ireicho Tour to Former Confinement Sites & Other Places
National Stops:

May 10-11: San Francisco, CA
July 4-5: Tule Lake, CA

Info: Visit <https://www.janm.org/exhibits/ireicho/venues>.

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 of their bravery and sacrifice.

Info: Visit nvnvets.org/exhibit.

Dessert Mochi Virtual Workshop
Virtual Event
May 23; 1-3 p.m.
Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California
1840 Sutter St.
Price: \$40 Members; \$50 General Public

In this virtual cooking event, join expert mochi maker Yukiko Zinke as she teaches you how to make daifuku mochi filled with sweet bean paste and fruit, mochi ice cream and glazed mochi donuts. Recipes and a workshop recording will be distributed to all registrants.

Info: Visit <https://www.jccnc.org/events/dessert-mochi-virtual-workshop/> to register.

Eden Bazaar
San Lorenzo, CA
June 6; Noon-7 p.m.
Eden Township Japanese Community Center
710 Elgin St.

Price: Free

The annual Eden Township Bazaar returns featuring delicious BBQ chicken teri bento, curry rice/udon, chicken salad, corn, shave ice, mochi and other popular deserts, plus bingo and many more games for the entire family to enjoy!

Info: Visit edenjapanesecc.org.

Soy and Tofu Festival
San Francisco, CA
June 13; 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
The Event Center at St. Mary's Cathedral
1111 Gough St.

Price: \$5 General Admission

This signature annual fundraiser of the Nichi Bei Foundation celebrates the joy of soy through food, art, live performances, soy education and the beloved Soy-ful Youth Art Contest.

Info: Visit <https://soyandtofufest.org/tickets/> to purchase in advance.

'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.

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

Author Talk by Art Nomura
Culver City, CA
May 9; 4-5 p.m.

Culver City Julian Dixon Library
4975 Overland Ave.
Price: Free; Registration Encouraged
Born in Manzanar Concentration Camp and a professor emeritus at Loyola Marymount University, Art Nomura will talk about his book "Mizuko: True Spirit," an American immigrant tale of hardship, assimilation and eventual triumph.
Info: To register, Visit LACountyLibrary.org/Events.

Master Series: Tea Whisk by Tango Tanimura
San Diego, CA
May 29; 1-2 p.m.
Japanese Friendship Garden
Inamori Pavilion
2215 Pan American Road E.
Price: JFGM Member \$50; Nonmember \$65

This experience includes a special presentation by Tango Tanimura, a 20th-generation artisan of traditional Takayama tea whisks (chasen), who will share the history, techniques and cultural significance of chasen-making, followed by a live demonstration.

Info: Visit <https://www.niwa.org/artisans>.

Hana Effron and Travis Atreo Live Concert
Gardena, CA
May 30; 5:30-8 p.m.
Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute Main Hall
1964 W. 162nd St.

Price: Adult \$35; Student \$25; Youth \$30

Greater Los Angeles JACL and Intercollegiate Nikkei Council present this live concert plus appetizers all to support the Greater Los Angeles JACL and Intercollegiate Nikkei Council Youth Programs.

Info: For tickets, visit <https://tinyurl.com/39xvxe86>.

'Darkness and Humanity: The Complete Akira Kurosawa'
Los Angeles, CA
Thru May 30
Academy Museum of Motion Pictures
6067 Wilshire Blvd.

Price: Museum Admission

Presented entirely on 35mm film, this series of 28 screenings covers the director's key contributions to the jidai-geki samurai genre, as well as his contemporary gendai-geki dramas.

Info: Visit <https://www.academy-museum.org/>.

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

Kansha Nisei Lounge Fundraiser
Chicago, IL
May 14; 6-9 p.m.
Nisei Lounge
3439 N. Sheffield Ave.

Price: Free

Join the Kansha Alumni Leadership Board for this community bartending fundraiser. All cash tips will go toward the Kansha Project program. The event is 21+. Valid ID required.

Info: To RSVP, visit <https://bit.ly/KanshaNiseiLounge26>.

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.

JACL Chicago Scholarship Luncheon
Skokie, IL
May 17; Noon-2 p.m.
Maggiano's Little Italy Old Orchard Barolo Room
4999 Old Orchard Shopping Center
Price: \$35-\$60

This event celebrates the accomplishment of the chapter's scholarship winners, with funding made possible by the generous donations from JACL Chicago members, individuals and organizations from the greater Chicago Japanese American community.

Info: To RSVP, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-jacl-chicago-scholarship-luncheon-tickets-1985943736175?aff=oddtcreator>.

IDC

AAPI Culture Fest 2026
Denver, CO
May 22; 5-10 p.m.
Civic Center Park
101 14th Ave.

Price: Free

This event celebrates Denver's AAPI community and Mile High JACL will be there to host its Mochitsuki event, along with other vendors showcasing food, drinks, entertainment and art.

Info: <https://www.colorado-filipinos.org/event-details/civic-center-night-market-x-aapi-culture-fest>.

EDC

'Courage and Compassion: Our Shared Story of the Japanese American World War II Experience'
Delray Beach, FL
May 9-Aug. 30

Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens
4000 Morikami Park Road
Price: Museum Admission

This exhibit brings the national story of the Japanese American war sacrifice home to Florida, exploring the legacy of the historic Yamato colony and its residents.

Info: For more information, visit morikami.org.

'Shoes at the Door' Asia North 2026
Baltimore, MD
Thru May 31
SNF Parkway Theatre
5 W. North Ave.

Price: Museum Admission
The exhibit, curated by Dylan Kaleikau-maka Hill, brings together works by 17 artists that capture the breadth and diversity of hospitality customs and notions of home through painting, sculpture, drawing, textiles and more.

Info: Visit <https://maam.massart.edu/exhibitions>. ■

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George Ariyoshi, 100, Dies

First Asian American governor served thrice in Hawaii.

HONOLULU (AP) — Former Hawaii Gov. George R. Ariyoshi — the nation's first Asian American governor — has died at age 100.

Ariyoshi, a Democrat who led the state from 1973-86, died peacefully while surrounded by family on April 19, according to a statement from current Gov. Josh Green on April 20.

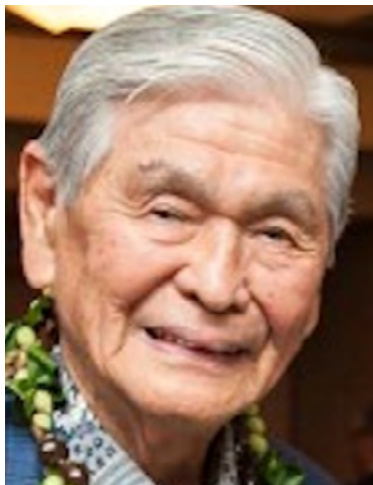
"Gov. Ariyoshi devoted his life to Hawaii with humility, discipline and an unwavering sense of responsibility to the people he served," Green said. "He led our state during a pivotal moment with quiet strength and integrity, and his legacy as a trailblazer and public servant will endure for generations."

Ariyoshi was a three-term governor who first rose to the position in October 1973. Three years earlier, he had been elected lieutenant governor, and he then became acting governor when Gov. John Burns fell ill with cancer.

Ariyoshi won the office outright in 1974 and was reelected in 1978 and 1982. Hawaii governors are now subject to a two-term limit. His political career coincided with the Democratic Party's rise to power in Hawaii.

Democrats wrested control of the legislature from Republicans in 1954, the year Ariyoshi won the first of two terms in the Territorial House of Representatives. He won a territorial Senate seat in 1958, becoming a state senator the following year when Hawaii became a state.

Ariyoshi won three more state



George Ariyoshi

PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN DIGITAL ARCHIVE

Senate races — in 1964, 1966 and 1968 — before becoming lieutenant governor.

Ariyoshi was born on March 12, 1926, in a two-room tenement near Honolulu Harbor to parents who immigrated to Hawaii from Japan. He grew up in the hard-scrabble neighborhood of Kalihi, near downtown Honolulu.

His father, Ryoza, a sumo wrestler from Fukuoka Prefecture, became a stevedore and owner of a dry cleaning shop in Hawaii. His mother, Mitsue, came from Kumamoto, Japan.

In his 1997 autobiography, "With Obligation to All," Ariyoshi wrote about growing up with a lisp.

"The fact that we had no money did not seem to be a barrier, but I had a barrier of a different kind," he wrote, describing how he wanted to grow up to become a lawyer if he could learn to speak properly.

Following graduation from McKinley High School in 1944, Ariyoshi served as an interpreter with the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Service in Japan at the end of World War II.

After the war, Ariyoshi attended the University of Hawaii before transferring to Michigan State University, where he received a bachelor's degree in history and political science in 1949. Ariyoshi earned a law degree from the University of Michigan Law School in 1952.

Going to school on the U.S. mainland, Ariyoshi didn't feel a sense of being treated differently. "On the contrary, I enjoyed the fact that Hawaii had a reputation even then for people of different backgrounds coming together and living harmoniously," he wrote in his book.

He began practicing law in Hawaii the year after he graduated from law school. Ariyoshi withdrew from private practice and resigned various corporate directorships after he was elected lieutenant governor.

He said his decision to seek the position was influenced by a desire to break the barrier for minorities.

"The new state of Hawaii had produced United States representatives and senators of Caucasian, Chinese and Japanese ancestry, reflecting our diversity," he wrote. "But only Caucasians had been governor."

Ariyoshi's time as governor was marked by Hawaii becoming a tourist destination and a booming population. "I was convinced that neither our infrastructure nor our environment would support this rate of growth," he wrote.

In 1975, Ariyoshi and his wife, Jean Hayashi Ariyoshi, attended their first National Governor's Conference in Washington, D.C., where they were invited by President Gerald Ford to a black-tie dinner at the White House.

Jean Ariyoshi wrote in her book, "Washington Place: A First Lady's Story," that as the couple jitterbugged on the dance floor, she stood on tip-toe and whispered in his ear: "Look at the little girl from Wahiawa dancing at the White House."

He replied: "And she's dancing with the kid from Kalihi."

John Waihe'e, who became Ariyoshi's lieutenant governor in 1982, went on to be elected the first governor of Native Hawaiian ancestry in 1986 with Ariyoshi's support.

In addition to his wife, Jean, Ariyoshi is survived by daughter Lynn and sons Donn and Ryoza. ■

News Briefs

TAAF's STAATUS Report Explores What It Means to Be 'Truly American'

Timed for release at the beginning of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, the Asian American Foundation's sixth annual Social Tracking of Asian Americans in the U.S. found "... widespread uncertainty about the place of the nation's 25 million AAPIs, revealing stark gaps in how U.S. adults think about the impact of federal policies on Asian Americans and the growing cultural influence of AAPIs" and that "... AAPIs are anxious amid mounting federal crackdowns on immigration, trade wars, safety concerns and other pressures." One of the takeaways of the report found that 13 percent of U.S. adults believe that being white is important for being truly American. Meantime, 84 percent of AAPIs believe that being a Christian is unimportant for being truly American — more than other racial and ethnic groups. The 2026 STAATUS Index was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of TAAF. The entire report may be viewed at tinyurl.com/4vfpca8.

Telejournalists Hirasuna, Fukuzaki Recognized for Lifetime Achievement

At its 76th annual Golden Mike Awards, the Radio and Television News Assn. of Southern California bestowed its Lifetime of Achievement Award on March 21 to multiple-award-winning KTTV reporter/anchor Susan Hirasuna, a 25-year veteran at Fox 11. Also winning awards at the RTNA event were KABC newsman David Ono in the best long-form program or documentary category for coverage of last year's Los Angeles County fires. KABC also won in the best sportscast category for its coverage of the Dodgers in Tokyo, led by Rob Fukuzaki. The Torrance, Calif.-born and Hawaii-raised sportscaster will be feted with the Los Angeles Press Club's 2026 Joseph M. Quinn Award for Lifetime Achievement at its 68th SoCal Journalism Awards Gala on June 28.

Japan Honors Former JAVA President Yamada With Order of the Rising Sun

At its April 29 Spring Conferment of Decorations on Foreign Nationals, the government of Japan awarded its Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, to former Japanese American Veterans Assn. President Gerald Hiroshi Yamada of Vienna, Va., for his "contributions to improving the social status of Japanese Americans and promoting friendship and mutual understanding between Japan and the United States." Yamada's efforts helped lead to the establishment of the annual Day of Affirmation ceremony that honors Japanese Americans who served in the military during World War II. Another Japanese American honored by the Japanese government was Hawaii's Paul Kaname Yonamine, former board chair of the U.S.-Japan Council, who received the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon, for "promoting friendship and mutual understanding between Japan and the United States."

Sacramento: Legislators, Leaders Call for Continued 'Stop the Hate' Funds

Assemblymember Mike Fong (AD-49), California AAPI Legislative Caucus chair, was among several politicians and community leaders who gathered on the California State Capitol stairs April 29 to call for a reauthorization of funding for the state's Stop the Hate program, which began in response to the spike in anti-Asian violence following the 2020 Covid crisis. Joining Fong were state Sens. Aisha Wahab (SD-10) and Scott Wiener (SD-11), and Assemblymembers Stephanie Nguyen (AD-10) and Ash Kalra (AD-25). Also appearing at the event were AAPI Equity Alliance Executive Director and Stop the Hate Los Angeles County Regional lead Manjusha P. Kulkarni, and Center at Sierra Health Foundation President and Stop the Hate Northern California Regional and Statewide lead Kaying Hang. Funding is set to expire June 30.

— P.C. Staff

'Songbird of Manzanar' Mary Nomura Dies

Mary Kageyama Nomura, who at 15 was incarcerated during World War II at Manzanar — one of the U.S. government's 10 War Relocation Authority Centers built to detain people of Japanese ancestry — but whose in-demand vocal skills resulted in her getting nicknamed the Songbird of Manzanar, died at her home in Huntington Beach, Calif., on April 6. She was 100.

The fifth of the six children of Tomitaro and Machi Kageyama, Nomura was born in Los Angeles. Mary's natural music talents were cultivated by her music teacher mother, who would put her daughter onstage to perform with her adult music students.

Both of her parents, however, would die before Mary was 7. Thanks to her older siblings, Frank and Fumi, however, Mary and her other siblings were able to stay together.

The parentless family's lives would become disrupted yet again, however, with America's entry into WWII, and within months, they found themselves imprisoned, along with tens of thousands of other ethnic Japanese living along the

Pacific Coast when Mary was 15.

It was at Manzanar when Nomura's vocal abilities came to the fore, when she would become an in-demand vocalist at camp functions. It was also at Manzanar where she would meet her future husband, Shiro Nomura.

Post-incarceration, they launched Shi's Fish Mart, a Japanese grocery store, one of the first Asian grocery stores in Orange County. Mary and Shi were married for 55 years.

Although she never pursued a professional singing career, Nomura was an in-demand performer at various Japanese American community events over the years. Nomura sang at 2015's Great Nisei Reunion II, accompanied by the Tex Beneke Orchestra, and at 2017's Great Nisei Reunion III.

Nomura was predeceased by her husband, Shi, and is survived by her sons, Alan (Yoshiko) and Norman (Dorothy); daughters, Mallory Saul (Tom), Lisa Ishibashi (Gerald) and Nina Williams (Larry); 12 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; sister, Mae Kakehashi; half-brother, Bill Fukawa; and many nieces and nephews. ■

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