



Designing their Return
Families in Altadena rebuilding after the fires.

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Kyodo Photo
HUMAN WASHING MACHINE: A "human washing machine" that cleans and dries the entire body and drew large crowds when showcased at the World Exposition in Osaka this year will be sold to consumers in 2026, its developer said. Shipments to caregiving facilities for the elderly will begin next March, with general sales of the machine developed by bath and shower equipment manufacturer Science Co. to start by the end of 2026. The machine "will reduce the burden of bathing" on both users and caregivers," said Yasuaki Aoyama, chairman of the firm based in Osaka. The device resembles a raised rectangular bathtub. Users enter through a side door and sit down to soak in the water. Utilizing "fine-bubble" technology to make tiny bubbles that can slip into small crevices, the machine will enable full-body cleansing without the need for shampoo or scrubbing, with one bathing session taking around 10 minutes. The machine will be sold for 1.45 million yen (\$9,200).

FAILURE TO DELIVER: A Japanese H3 rocket carrying the sixth satellite in a seven-orbit geolocation system failed to deliver its payload into orbit after liftoff on Dec. 22, the country's science ministry said. The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency is assessing the situation and investigating the cause of the second-stage engine's premature cutoff that occurred shortly after liftoff from the Tanegashima Space Center in Kagoshima Prefecture. Placed on multiple orbital planes, the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System will enable Japan to operate highly accurate positioning services vital for smartphones and vehicle navigation, covering close to 100 percent of Japan, including urban canyons and mountain terrain, according to JAXA. The launch of Michibiki No. 5 from an island in southwestern Japan had been originally scheduled for Dec. 7, but was rescheduled to Dec. 17 and then Dec. 22 after abnormalities were detected in the rocket and ground facilities.

in the news



OC HALL OF FAME: Athlete Sammy Lee (1920-2016) was posthumously inducted into the Orange County Hall of Fame on Dec. 9. A physician and a resident of Newport Beach, he was the 1948 and 1952 gold medalist in Olympic platform diving. He was the first Asian American man to win an Olympic gold medal for the U.S. and the first man to win back-to-back gold medals in Olympic platform diving. The Hall of Fame plaque was accepted by Sammy Lee Jr. Other inductees were Oscar-winning director James Cameron, surfer Robert August, Olympic high jump medalist Ed Caruthers, conductor Carl St. Clair, philanthropist James Irvine, businessman Ed Laird, philanthropists Henry and Susan Samueli, Polly's Pies co-founder Eddie Sheldrake, and former Orange County Board of Supervisors Chairman Gaddi Vasquez.

OBITUARY

Frank Chuman, 105; Pioneering Nisei Attorney and Author

Frank Fumio Chuman, a pioneering Nisei attorney who was active in many of the key civil rights-related cases in the early postwar era, died on May 22, 2022 in Bangkok. He was 105.

His passing became public knowledge only recently. His daughter, Diana Heyd, told *The New York Times* that it went unreported at the time because it had been decades since Chuman had practiced law and he had been living in Thailand for many years.

Born in 1917 in Montecito, he was the son of immigrants from Kagoshima. His father managed a local estate and his mother was a "picture bride." The family moved to Los Angeles, where the elder Chuman worked as a gardener and dry cleaner.

Frank Chuman became an Eagle Scout and graduated in 1934 from Los Angeles High School, where he was on the debating squad and served as class valedictorian. He graduated in 1938 from UCLA, where he served in ROTC.

He considered applying to the Foreign Service, but the dean of UCLA's Political Science Department dissuaded him, saying that the State Department would not hire someone of his ethnicity.

In his memoirs, Chuman described a Depression-era climate in which racism was rampant. Nisei Caltech graduates could not get engineering jobs and law firms would not hire Nisei attorneys. He found work in a market on West Beverly Boulevard lugging crates of produce.

He wrote, "One day one of my co-workers in the produce department who was born in Japan approached me and in a sarcastic tone sneered, 'I heard you graduated UCLA and that you are



(Photo by Toyo Miyatake Studio, courtesy of Japanese American National Museum's Hirasaki National Resource Center)

Sen. John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts (center), future U.S. president, is pictured with members of the Japanese American Democratic Club on Sept. 19, 1956, at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. Pictured with him are (from left) Frank Chuman, Frank Kurihara, Meri-Jane Yokoe and James Mitsumori. Kennedy was campaigning for Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver, the Democratic nominees for president and vice president. They lost to the Republican incumbent, Dwight Eisenhower.

saving up money for more education. Forget about this foolish dream. ... All the good jobs are for white people, not for people like us who are Japanese.' I remained silent, knowing that what he was saying was true."

Chuman was hired as a messenger by Los Angeles County in the fall of 1938. He carried files around county departments and courts, where he found exchanges between lawyers and judges fascinating. He enrolled at USC as a law student in September 1940 and worked at the L.A. County Probation Department. When Executive Order 9066 was

issued, Chuman was confined at Manzanar. In March 1942, he was appointed chief administrator at the Manzanar Hospital, where he served for a year. Following the Manzanar Riot in December 1942, he supervised the care of inmates shot by military police.

He initially answered "no-no" to the government loyalty questionnaire out of resentment over his confinement, but through the efforts of Ralph Merritt, Manzanar's camp director, he was able to withdraw those answers and be approved for a leave permit.

Through sponsorship of the American Friends Service Committee, Chuman left Manzanar in the fall of 1943 to continue his legal studies, first at the University of Toledo in

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JANM Mourns the Passing of Barbara Keimi

The Japanese American National Museum (JANM) mourns the passing of Barbara Keimi.

She and her husband, Harold "Hal" Keimi, began volunteering at JANM nearly 34 years ago — before JANM opened its doors to the public in its Historic Building in 1992.

Keimi was born in Los Angeles' Sawtelle neighborhood to Chihiro Harry Mikami and Fumiko K. Mikami in 1935. Chihiro was born in Japan and Fumiko was born in Buena Park in 1912. Fumiko's family returned to Hiroshima when she was around three years old.

Growing up, she aspired to become a doctor, but her dream did not come to pass. Fumiko met her future husband through a family member, who arranged their marriage.

After marrying in 1930, Chihiro and Fumiko immigrated to the U.S., where Chihiro was a chauffeur for wealthy families in Los Angeles. The Mikamis lived in Beverly Hills and Sawtelle, and they eventually moved to North Long Beach.

During that time, Chihiro worked for Masami Sasaki, Keimi's grand-uncle and the "Chili King of Orange County," who was known for his prosperous chili pepper farm in Huntington Beach. Both of them were involved in the community. Chihiro joined the board of the Japanese language school in Huntington Beach and Masami hosted civic groups at his warehouses. When the Japanese military bombed Pearl Harbor, the Mikami family lost everything.



Harold and Barbara Keimi

Shortly after the attack, Keimi's parents were arrested by the FBI. In their absence, the Mikamis moved from North Long Beach to the chili farm in Huntington Beach to live with Keimi's grand-aunt, Shigeko Sasaki. When Chihiro and Masami were taken to the Tuna

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Commission Fines Councilman John Lee \$138,000 for Alleged Ethics Violations

By JOSE HERRERA
CITY NEWS SERVICE

The Los Angeles City Ethics Commission on Dec. 17 sustained all 10 counts of ethics violations and imposed a penalty of \$138,124.32 against Councilmember John Lee, who allegedly accepted lavish gifts and misused his position in 2016 and 2017 during a trip to Las Vegas and at various Los Angeles restaurants when he was chief of staff to then-Councilmember Mitchell Englander.



John Lee

In a 3-1 vote, the commission voted to uphold a decision made by Administrative Law Judge Ji-Lan Zang, who determined Lee violated the city's ethics rules pertaining to the dollar amount of gifts a city official

can receive and disclosing such gifts through what is known as a Statement of Economic Interests, or Form 700.

Commissioner Aryeh Cohen voted against the final outcome while member Terry Kaufmann was absent during the vote.

Commissioners, however, did not agree with Zang's dismissal of additional counts against Lee regarding misuse of his position and for assisting Englander in misusing his position — ultimately adding those violations to the list.

In a separate 4-0 vote, commissioners agreed to impose a maximum penalty of \$138,124.32 for all 10 counts, as recommended by city investigators rather than Zang's suggestion of \$43,730 for the first five counts.

A representative for Lee's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment, but the councilman denied the allegations during the commission's proceedings.

Lee faced two counts for allegedly accepting gifts that exceeded a limit, three counts for allegedly failing to disclose those gifts, four counts for allegedly misusing his position and one count for allegedly helping Englander misuse his position.

"Our determination is made based on the facts of this case," Ethics Commission President Manjusha Kulkarni said. "It's made based on our understanding of the law as it's been presented by both sides. We do not pass judgment whether individuals are good people or bad people. We make determinations based on the facts of whether actions were taken and whether those actions, based on the laws, policies and regulations violated, what was stated in our

Please see Lee, page 4

LTSC Mourns the Loss of Marsha Aizumi: Okaeri Founder, Advocate, and Friend

With a heavy heart, Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC) mourns the passing of Marsha Aizumi, founder of Okaeri, cherished mentor, bold leader, and dear friend.

After battling cancer, Marsha died peacefully on Dec. 18, surrounded by family.

Marsha founded Okaeri in 2014, dedicating 11 years to empowering, advocating for, and celebrating LGBTQ+ Nikkei and their families. Marsha was a mother figure to anyone in need, always ready with a big hug, a smile, and an open heart. Her thoughtful attention made you feel like the most important person in the room, and her genuine empathy made you feel seen and deeply cared for.

LTSC is forever grateful for the leadership, insight, and compassion Marsha brought to Okaeri and our community. LTSC officially onboarded Okaeri as a program this year, and is dedicated to carrying forward Marsha's legacy of inclusivity and advocacy. As we mourn this heavy loss, we remember the love and joy Marsha brought to



Marsha Aizumi and her son Aiden.



Members of Satoru Tsuneishi's family participated in the groundbreaking for the park in June.

Grand Opening of Satoru Tsuneishi Park Set for Jan. 13

The grand opening of Satoru Tsuneishi Park, located at 1111 Encino Ave. in Monrovia (just east of the DoubleTree Hotel parking lot), will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 13, at 3 p.m.

The opening was originally scheduled for Dec. 8.

Mark Tsuneishi posted on Facebook, "This park will honor the legacy of our grandfather and his family who helped settle the area and whose four sons served with distinction in the U.S. Army during World War II when their family was interned in Heart Mountain, Wyoming."

In an earlier post, Jonathan Tsu-

neishi said, "During the groundbreaking earlier this year, in conversations with the mayor, councilpersons and staff from the city, it was conveyed to me that they wanted the park to not only recognize their native son, but to remember the contribution of early Japanese American farmers like my grandfather, whose farm bordered the famed Route 66.

"And it was clear to me that the city also wanted a way to recognize the history of interment while remembering the military service of Japanese Americans like my uncles who served in the U.S. Army and my

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Customs Broker Who Defrauded Clients and Dodged Taxes Sentenced to Prison

CITY NEWS SERVICE

A customs broker who siphoned more than \$5 million from businesses that ship goods into the U.S. and who dodged paying at least \$1 million in taxes was sentenced Dec. 18 to four years and three months in federal prison.

Frank Noah, 64, of Corona, was sentenced in Downtown Los Angeles and also ordered to pay \$7.57 million in restitution, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

He pleaded guilty in February to one count of tax evasion and two counts of wire fraud.

Noah owned Comis International Inc., a logistics and supply-chain company headquartered in Cerritos. Comis was a customs import broker for the national Daiso chain, a Japanese-based variety and value store with outlets in Southern California, from 2007 to 2019.

Noah admitted inflating customs import duty fees he paid while billing Daiso, resulting in the company overpaying him nearly \$3.4 million.

After Noah was indicted for defrauding Daiso in 2022, he continued to defraud other clients out of over \$2 million, according to his plea agreement.

Noah also admitted causing a loss to the IRS of nearly \$2.4 million by cheating on his taxes from 2008 to 2010, making partial payments for what he owed while using his income to make payments on mortgages he put in the name of his girlfriend for properties in Corona and Rancho Mirage.

After agreeing that he owed over \$1 million in taxes in 2014, Noah still avoided IRS attempts to collect the amount owed, and instead spent thousands on country club memberships, travel and golf, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

After the Fires: Rebuilding

For many in Altadena, the question of whether to stay – or to move on – after the Eaton Fire is a matter of identity, community and family.

By MIKEY HIRANO CULROSS
RAFU STAFF WRITER

The last of three parts.

Hearing Keiko Green's recollections of finding a place in Altadena begins to tell the story of what makes a house a home.

In 2019, she and husband Brian were freshly married and in Southern California after making the decision to relocate from the Bay Area. On a whim and a random Saturday in August, the two decided to stop by a few home showings to have a look and gauge the possibilities.

"I knew Pasadena and towns around the area, because I had lived in the area as a young college graduate," Green said. "I specifically remembered loving the area of Montrose and La Cañada, where I rented a studio from a couple of families. Altadena triggered a memory as well. Though I had never lived there, something made us curious enough to see some open houses."

Green said she and Brian typically don't have much stamina for shopping activities, but "send us to the mountains and we can hike all day."

Somewhat discouraged by what they'd found to be available – plenty of properties hastily prepared for sale in an effort to flip them for a

profit – the couple happened upon a modestly-sized house on Mount Curve Avenue, near the foothill top of Lake Avenue and close to Farnsworth Park.

Green said they were taken by surprise with the emotions they felt from the Spanish revival architecture of the home and the feeling of community radiating along the small residential street.

She remembered being welcomed in by high ceilings, archways and gorgeous, exposed beams. Stained-glass window panes prised the afternoon light and a baby grand piano in the living room corner seemed to dare them to surrender to the house's calling. The pool in the back yard was the clincher.

"I thought we were being discreet, whispering in delight, downplaying our comments and genuine interest," she said, particularly after learning of how the previous late owner would host opera parties and was an ardent supporter of education.

"This house was not just a house, but a legacy and responsibility to uphold."

Through nothing less than what she calls a small miracle, the Greens were able to sell their property in the Bay Area and move into this new home in Altadena.

Around two years later, however,



Sisters Julie Toyama, left, and Sandy Watson with her husband, Lewis, at Altadena's landmark Christmas Tree Lane. The family home nearby, where the sisters were raised and where Julie was living when the Eaton Fire broke out, is being redesigned and will be rebuilt.

the Greens found themselves living in Spain, as Brian took an assignment in the animation industry. They were still in Europe last January – on vacation in France, as it turns out – when they received word from the family renting their Altadena house that fire was ravaging the neighborhood.

The tenants evacuated safely, but everything in the home was lost, including Brian's portfolio of artwork used in some Pixar films. Over the Thanksgiving holiday last month, Keiko and Brian were back in Altadena, having made the choice to restore the home.

"We definitely toggled between selling versus rebuilding, but insurance made the decision for us to rebuild," she explained. "The process has been healing, as we talk with neighbors going through similar circumstances. We are choosing to build like for like, changing a few things to modernize it a little."

As the process of designing and constructing a new home moves slowly forward, Keiko said she feels deeply for those who were present for

the fires and are having to deal with its aftermath on a daily basis.

"After talking with the architects and seeing the prospects of what the updated house could be, we feel hopeful in the process. We have the Olympics to look forward to, and what a way to usher newness. We will be close to retiring by then and perhaps we push the restart button yet again."

• • •

Scott Uriu was strumming a new Martin guitar on the couch in his bright and airy apartment in Highland Park, describing how he underestimated the peril at the outset of the fire that eventually took his home.

"I did not take it seriously. It's amazing," he recalled. "I saw the glow in the distance, but the wind was blowing south. We decided to leave around 9 p.m. that night, thinking we'd be back in a few hours. I didn't unplug my server, which would have taken 30 seconds, and I left my collectible guitars hanging on the wall. What an idiot."

Uriu and his wife are renting temporarily while their home on Punahoa Street in Altadena is being redesigned and rebuilt. It's a process countless families are navigating, but Uriu's case is unique, as he is the architect steering his own project.

"For the majority of people, this was never on their agenda, thinking about rebuilding a house – how a kitchen lays out, how they would use the space, morning light on the east side," he said. "That was never on the agenda, but that's my job, to try to help guide them toward what they want."

Uriu teaches graduate and undergraduate architecture design at USC and is a former member of the design team of the late famed architect Frank Gehry. He has several current rebuilding projects in the area of the Eaton Fire in Altadena, including three on his home street.

Uriu's reputation as a designer is complemented by his knack for communication, a lively penchant for conversation that friends and clients have said brings comfort to the business. Having lost his own home, he finds himself in



Courtesy KEIKO GREEN
Keiko and Brian Green (fourth and fifth from left) with neighbors in front of their Altadena home in 2021.

a position to make decisions on his own behalf, the same way he makes them for those who seek his services.

"I think I have a reputation for not leading my clients up a golden path, not by any means," he explained. "I know the sets of contractors, and form follows finance. It's gotta fit whatever we're doing to what people can afford."

"On the other side, as an architect, you're designing for yourself. There are some oddball things I'm trying, but many more straightforward, like to radiantly cool the house by using groundwater ... As an architect, you rarely get to do exactly what you want, but at the same time, we're trying to do these very interesting things at a reasonable cost."

Uriu's two children, now both in college, grew up in Altadena and thrived in the Pasadena public schools. Originally from Davis, Calif., he graduated from Cal Poly Pomona and attended the Architectural Association School in London before settling down in Pasadena.



He isn't sure of the timeline for moving back in, but Toyama said the County has seemed committed to expediting the process for the hundreds of families who want to come home. "By next Christmas maybe. Cross our fingers."

Asked what would be first to bring back home, Toyama half-jokingly said, "Mom," adding, "We have to get it back to being a home. Maybe photos and things like that."

Her sister, Sandy, was watching the progress of the fire via a mobile phone, app, as it went from yellow to orange to red. The next morning, Toyama received a photo of her house being consumed by flames.

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Her sister had a more pragmatic response.

"There won't be a first thing, it'll be everything."



Scott Uriu said he was given a new guitar after his prized collection of collectible instruments was destroyed, along with all his business records and family photos. Above, Uriu's concept design of his family's new home.



Toyama looks over the now-cleared property where her parents bought their home in 1966. "It was never a question of whether to build. Of course we are," she said.

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Cary with me and Miss Universe Brook Mahealani Lee at a MANAA awards dinner, May 2000.



George Takei, Cary and I discuss "Rising Sun" with Ron Wakabayashi (far right), 1992.

Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa: The Perpetual Asian Villain Who Had Been the Secret Hero All Along

The actor was MANAA's secret source against his own film, "Rising Sun."

By GUY AOKI

On Thursday, Dec. 4, I was scrolling through Facebook and came across a picture of Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa dressed as Shang Tsung, the villain he'd played in the 1995 cult movie favorite "Mortal Kombat." At the bottom: "1950-2025." I closed my eyes and cringed.

Because my first thought was of a career unfulfilled.

Cary made a career out of playing evil villains. In "Showdown in Little Tokyo" (1991), after discovering the mole in his criminal organization, he drugged a naked blonde and beheaded her with his sword. He was the recurring villain in the CBS series "Raven" (1993) and the bad guy fighting the superhero "The Phantom" (1996).

Yet it's only after his death that I can reveal how he was really the hero behind the biggest media campaign instigated by my organization, Media Action Network for Asian Americans (MANAA), which put us on the map.

Shortly after our formation in April 1992, we had been concerned about the upcoming film "Rising Sun," based on the best-selling novel by Michael Crichton. This latest version of the "yellow peril" brought it closer to home because the Japanese were in Los Angeles and had bought out high-ranking senators to do their bidding — even murdering fellow white people.

The paranoia was all around. Anyone looking Japanese — or Asian — could be subverting our country's values.

Ron Wakabayashi, head of the L.A. Human Relations Commission, and Dennis Hayashi of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) had met with executives at 20th Century Fox on July 7. Ron invited me to join the follow-up meeting with Fox President Strauss Zelnick and director Philip Kaufman's producer son Peter for Aug. 10. But at the last minute, Fox told them I couldn't attend because, as a columnist for *The Rafu Shimpo*, I was a "working journalist."

Ron and Dennis decided to go ahead with the secret meeting but were angry at the studio and almost walked out.

On Aug. 17, 1992, MANAA co-founder George Johnston and I did an interview on KPJK radio talking about our concerns about the movie and grievances against Fox. Cary had his assistant record the interview and the actor contacted me through the MANAA Hotline.

He was playing Eddie Sakamura, who was suspected of strangling to death a white woman during rough sex. So Cary had an interest in knowing what our media watchdog organization was going to do.

The actor generally supported our cause because it was clear the images of Asians and Asian Americans in the media were unbalanced. He had been

an activist in his younger days and I reminded him of how he used to be. But Cary didn't think "Rising Sun" was a film deserving of protest.

We met at the Eatz Café near the golfing range on Loz Feliz Boulevard. I told him we needed to know what was going to be in "Rising Sun" because we were planning to mount major protest against it when it opened.

After a while, he said, "I've looked into your eyes. And I trust you." He gave me a copy of his shooting script. I asked what had been revised and he filled me in as best he could (I shared it with JACL).

Only Johnston, me and a third MANAA board member knew that Cary was my source for the script, and we all understood how crucial it was to keep it a secret. We needed to protect his reputation and not jeopardize his career.

Months later, an anonymous source supplied me with the finished script. OK, the only thing we didn't know was what scenes would be cut out for time? And we eventually saw the movie four days before the protest.)

Fox was still playing games with



KCAL debate on July 30, 1993.

us. They cancelled our Sept. 18 meeting the morning of and postponed it to Oct. 8. We were furious.

MANAA got 16 community and civil rights organizations to sign a petition to Strauss Zelnick asking Fox to place a disclaimer at the beginning of the film saying they didn't want it to encourage resentment against anybody of Asian descent, and to recognize that hate crimes are a very important concern; to agree to hire more Asian Americans in decision making positions; and to cast more Asian American actors in positive roles.

"What's in it for me?" Zelnick yelled at the end of the phone line. He later concluded, "I don't think your protest is going to affect the success of our movie."

So on April 1, we went public and garnered unprecedented coverage from every news outlet imaginable. The film didn't even open until July 30. But by that time, we had controlled the narrative. No, this was not just a murder mystery. This was a dangerous movie that could put Asian Americans at risk.

Fox spent millions of dollars on their press junkets, yet with a minimal budget, MANAA prompted every news outlet to ask the director and actors of "Sun" to respond to our accusations.

We protested outside the

Mann Theatre near UCLA for two nights. (From the 5:06-7:20 mark <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUQHlh3KUM&t=440s>)

Earlier that first day, Cary had given an interview to *The L.A. Times*, shocking the writer by saying such protests are good because they raise important concerns. Cary was siding with the protestors against his own movie!

In the middle of our demonstration, I went across the street near a gas station to do a live debate with Cary on KCAL-TV. I thought it was going to be chummy where I could say, "Hey you, warubozu!"

Instead, he attacked me over and over again, saying this wasn't a serious protest because I hadn't read the book the film was based on. I said it didn't matter — I had the script ("Uh, including the shooting script which you'd given me, pal!") I thought to myself). But he kept interrupting me: "Yeah, Guy, and the fact that you haven't read the book..."

The only way for me to see the actor was too look down at a monitor on the ground. So whenever he accused me of something, I probably looked guilty or self-conscious to



viewers because I was looking away from his glare.

Some of the protestors wanted to kill him.

The next day, Cary came down to the demonstration with his hand extended. "Hey, Guy, I wanted to apologize."

"I don't know if I wanna shake your hand, man!"

"Oh, c'mon!"

"What the hell was that last night?!" He wanted us to talk in his limousine. "Is Fox paying for this?"

"Yeah..."

I gave him two enthusiastic thumbs up with a fake smile. He shook his head in disappointment, as if dealing with an immature child.

We wound through the curvy streets of Beverly Hills hashing it out. At the cast screening, Cary had seen how happy people were with the work they'd done. He got some calls about his *L.A. Times* interview, so he thought about his career and what he wanted to achieve ... Yeah, and siding with us was not a good idea.

The protest was the largest Asian Americans ever mounted against a movie (spanning at least seven cities) and the film was a critical and commercial flop. The impact we made on society was clear when just two weeks after the movie came out, *The L.A. Times* did a poll about how Asians

were viewed because I was looking away from his glare.

are covered in the media. While only 17% felt news coverage of Asians was negative, 72% said that our film portrayals were "distorted."

For years, during our countless conversations, Cary rationalized that he'd rather play a confident villain than a good guy because they're often boring.

"You end up being dead and the audience wants you dead on top of it! They cheer when you die! Why wouldn't you want to be the good guy?!"

Finally, months later, he said, laughing, "OK, Guy, OK! Yes! I want to be the hero!"

He later admitted he finally was able to let his son watch one of his movies because he didn't die in it.

In 1996, Cary called me up all excited. He's just been cast as Lt. A.J. Shimamura in the "Nash Bridges" TV series starring Don Johnson and Cheech Marin. Apparently, my arguments with him had gotten through. "This is what we've been working toward my entire career!" From now on, he would only play good guys.

Earlier that year, I had helped Jesse Jackson organize his protest of the Oscars (where only one black person was nominated for an award). Consequently, Jackson, me and 16 other media and civil rights advocates had a meeting with CBS President Les Moonves, where I praised him for casting Tagawa, because it went against the actor's typecasting as the Asian villain and marked a significant change in his career.

When I relayed this to Cary, there was silence on the other end of the line. He finally said, "Sh*t, you guys are serious!"

But Cary had problems with Johnston and when the star asked that an episode focusing on Lt. Shimamura be rewritten for himself, Cary left the show. He was often back playing villains again, until it got to the point where he wasn't even the MAIN villain in TV episodes.

Tagawa proclaimed he was the only person acting in three blockbuster movies that made over \$100 million at the box office in 2001 — including "Pearl Harbor" and "Planet of the Apes" — but believed he lost momentum after 9/11.

When he was in town (he was living in Kauai at the time), Cary included me in his entourage to eat at his favorite Japanese restaurant and supported MANAA at its awards dinners. He even came to the first gathering announcing our formation in 1992, a year before "Rising Sun" was released.

I last saw him on March 26, 2015 at the Center for Democracy in Little Tokyo for a screening of "Little Boy." He played a Japanese American concentration camp internee who becomes the surrogate father of a white boy who hates all Japanese people because his father was away fighting them overseas.

I spread the word to support him, bringing many MANAA and JACL members. At one point during the Q&A, Cary broke down, something I'd never seen before (I forgot over what). Talking about the racial injustice that has continued to plague this country, he declared, "If I'd been born black, I'd either be dead or in jail."

I'm glad his last major project was "The Man in the High Castle" (2015-18), the pilot of which was the most-watched project Amazon Prime had developed. He played the enigmatic Japanese trade minister Tagomi, who ultimately turns out to be ... a good guy.

And that's how I'll always remember Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa: As someone who was a good guy. And to what extent I could finally reveal that.

I wish I'd had a last conversation with him to learn how he felt his career had gone. Had it lived up to his expectations? Was he frustrated? Reconciled?

As his "Castle" character Tagomi travelled between different dimensions and parallel universes in order to bring peace to warring nations, I hope Cary's exploring wondrous worlds in the afterlife and that he ultimately found peace here on Earth.

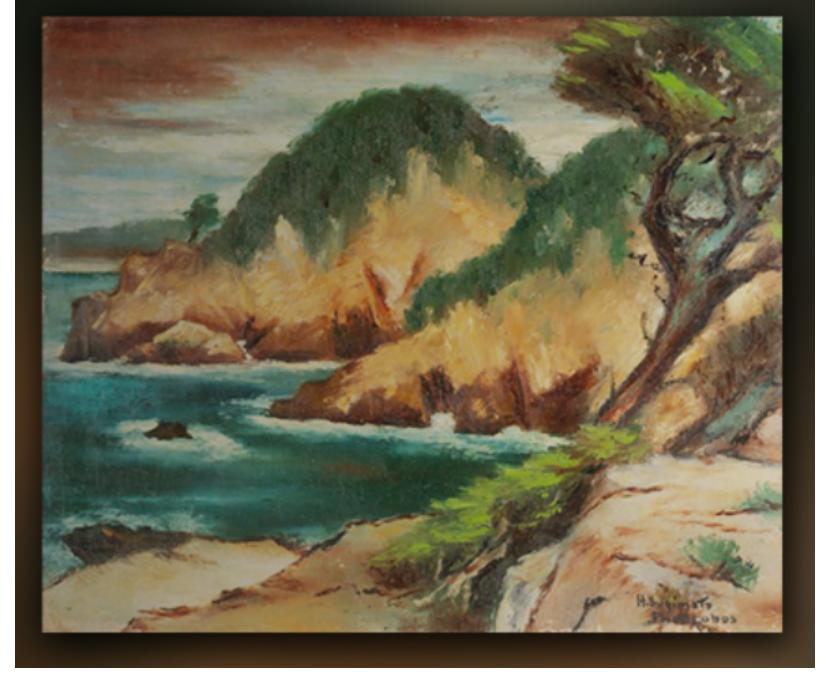
JANM to Present 'Tracing Shared Histories from Japan to California'

connections abound.

Join researchers, curators, filmmakers, and descendants as they trace the interesting threads that connect these places.

This program is presented in partnership with JANM's sister museum, The Museum of Modern Art Wakayama, and is organized by the Executive Committee for International Exchange Programs on Migration Studies in Wakayama. It is supported by Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs.

Free but registration required. Info: www.janm.org/events/2026-01-17-undercurrents-tracing-shared-histories-japan-california



Henry Sugimoto, "Point Lobos," ca. 1932-1942, oil on canvas, 18 x 21.5 in. Japanese American National Museum, Gift of Madeleine Sugimoto, 2015.2.688

Chuman

Continued from page 1

Ohio, then in Baltimore at the University of Maryland Law School, where he learned about the ancient common law known as writ of error coram nobis. He graduated in 1945 and returned to Los Angeles.

Chuman was hired by civil rights lawyer A.L. Wirin as a law clerk for his law firm, which served as special counsel to the JACL. In the process, Chuman helped draft the briefs for several landmark constitutional cases argued before the U.S. Supreme Court, notably *Oyama v. California* and *Takahashi v. California Fish & Game Commission*.

In 1946, Chuman won a legal challenge to racial restrictive covenants in South Pasadena, which maintained restrictions against minorities on publicly owned land.

After passing the California bar in 1947, Chuman joined John Aiso in a law partnership, which remained active until Aiso became a judge in 1954. He then practiced with David McKibbin until 1968.

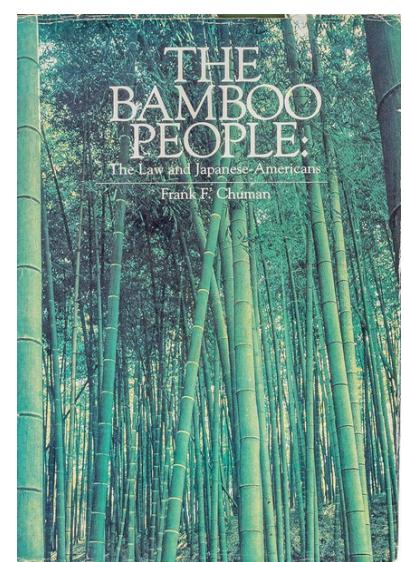
In 1946 he became president of the JACL's newly reopened Los Angeles chapter. He was legal counsel for the National JACL from 1953-60 and served as its national president from 1960-62. During his term as president, Chuman negotiated with UCLA the creation of the Japanese American Research Project (JARP), to be housed at the university, with archives holding materials on Japanese immigrants. He helped raise \$220,000 to fund it.

In connection with JARP, Chuman devoted several years of research to the creation of a legal history of Japanese Americans, including the evolution of legislation and jurisprudence in regard to immigration restrictions, alien land laws, wartime confinement and other subjects. This resulted in his book, "The Bamboo People: The Law and Japanese Americans," published in 1976.

Chuman formed part of the JACL committee that was assigned in summer 1963 to draft a statement on civil rights. He was named a member of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission and organized intergroup meetings to avoid racial violence.

In the 1970s, Chuman was active in developing the Japanese American redress campaign. He wanted to use the writ of error coram nobis to reopen the wartime Supreme Court cases of Fred Korematsu, Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui, in which the court supported the incarceration of Japanese Americans.

In 1981, during testimony before the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRC), Chuman proposed using the writ to attack the convictions. Soon after, lawyer/scholar Peter Irons and attorney Dale Minami independently undertook a coram nobis petition, based on newly discovered proof of official misconduct — the concealment of evidence that Japanese Americans were not a security threat. Chuman joined the legal team as an adviser.



The coram nobis petition ultimately led to the reversal by federal court judges of the convictions of all three men, but one judge refused to address the issue of government misconduct in Yasui's case.

In the early 1990s, Chuman worked at *The Rafu Shimpo*. His titles included acting editor-in-chief and advisor to the Japanese section.

In 2005 he received a Distinguished Graduate Award from University of Maryland School of Law. In 2011 he published "Manzanar and Beyond: Memoir of Frank F. Chuman, Nisei Attorney," when he was 94.

In 2012, living Nisei students of USC whose education was interrupted by the mass incarceration were granted honorary degrees, but by then Chuman had moved to Thailand with his wife, Donna, sometime after 2000. In 2021, USC President Carol Folt allowed honorary degrees to be granted to all Nisei students. Grace Shiba, executive director of the USC Asian Pacific Alumni Association, was able to contact Chuman and have an honorary degree sent to him.

In a video message, Folt said, "On behalf of our university, I am so sorry you were never allowed to complete your law degree at our institution. Eighty years after this grave injustice, I hope you will accept the diploma as our way of thanking you for your distinguished career in law and your everlasting contributions to the Japanese American redress efforts."

She added, "Your activism in civil rights and involvement in the landmark constitutional cases argued before the Supreme Court show what is just and right about the United States. You're a shining example that our students of today will aspire to follow."

Sources: *Densho Encyclopedia*, *USC News*

The Rafu Shimpo

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MANAA and JACL members support Cary at the "Little Boy" screening in 2015.

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Pub# 454-140

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LEGAL NOTICES

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Case No. 25CMCP00219
ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles
200 West Compton Blvd
Compton, CA 90220
Compton Courthouse

PETITION OF: Jaime Uriel Mondragon for change of name TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
1. Petitioner: Jaime Uriel Mondragon filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

1. Present name:
Jaime Uriel Mondragon
Proposed name:
James Uriel Mondragon

2. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING
Date: 02/17/2026, Time: 8:30, Dept. E, Room: 1004

The address of the court is same as noted above.

3. A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:

THE RAFU SHIMPO
Date: 12/3/2025
ELIZABETH L. BRADLEY
Judge of the Superior Court
Published: 12/12/25, 12/19/25, 12/26/25, 1/1/26.

RS 100139

Happy Holidays!

THE RAFU SHIMPO
LEGAL NOTICES (213) 629-2231

Keimi

Continued from page 1

Canyon Detention Station, they moved to Marysville in Northern California, and stayed with friends' relatives.

When Executive Order 9066 was signed by President Roosevelt, Fumiko and her children were imprisoned at the Merced temporary detention station, where Chihiro reunited with them. Together, they were transferred to the Amache concentration camp in Colorado.

Keimi's strongest memories of camp were of her mother. Prior to World War II, Fumiko took sewing classes at the Pacific Sewing School in Little Tokyo. She continued honing her skills at Amache, where she took sewing, tailoring, and ikebana classes. She even made a suit for Chihiro in camp.

When Chihiro and Fumiko requested to return to Japan, they were sent to Tule Lake, where they eventually decided to stay in the U.S. They were released from Tule Lake in 1945, shortly before Keimi turned ten years old.

After the war, Fumiko taught ikebana and sewed clothing by the piece and Chihiro eventually started his own gardening business.

Keimi attended East Los Angeles College and the University of Southern California, where she studied accounting and office management. Many of her USC friends were majoring in teaching, and that is where she met Hal, her future husband and Heart Mountain survivor.

While working in the accounting department at Lucky

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Aizumi

Continued from page 1

co-executive director. "Right now, the leaders of Okaeri are processing this loss, and many are finding comfort in the messages of love coming from across the world, sharing how Marsha made them feel seen."

"The Okaeri community will share more about Marsha's lasting legacy in the weeks to come, but today and as we step into the holiday break, we are going to slow down to openly grieve. Our hearts go out to Marsha's family — including her chosen family — and all those who loved her."

Information about Marsha's memorial service and how to send your condolences will follow shortly. Updates will be posted to: <https://www.ltsc.org/in-memoriam-marsha>

Lee represents the 12th Council District, encompassing the northwest San Fernando Valley.

The case stemmed from alleged violations related to lunches, dinners, a Vegas trip and other gifts connected to Englelander. In 2020, Englelander pleaded guilty to scheming to obstruct a federal investigation into the 2017 Vegas trip, and his acceptance of \$15,000 in cash and gifts from businessman Andy Wang. He was sentenced to 14 months in prison.

Lee was not charged by federal prosecutors nor named during Englelander's federal indictment, but referred to as "City Staffer B."

Lee's ethics case involves gifts such as food, wine, hotel stays, transportation and about \$1,000 worth of gambling chips, which were provided by Wang, lobbyist Michael Bai, and developer Chris Pak.

Zang heard Lee's case from June 2-6 via video conference, according to city documents. Enforcement Officer Marian Thompson and Director of Enforcement Keith Hardy represented the commission while

attorneys Amber Maltbie and Brian Hildreth represented Lee.

"Accordingly, Counts 1 to 5 of the Accusation are sustained, while Counts 6 to 10 are dismissed," according to Zang's 59-page proposed decision.

"Considering the severity of respondent's violations, his intentional concealment of his violations, his lack of remorse, and his lack of candor at the hearing, the maximum monetary penalty authorized under Charter section 706, subdivision (c), for each violation of Counts 1 to 5 is warranted."

Lee denied the allegations during those proceedings, explaining he attempted to pay for lodgings and food, or declined to eat during lunch meetings with Wang, Bai and Pak.

On Dec. 17, Lee's attorney refuted the allegations and reiterated the councilman's defense. Lee's attorneys argued that investigators incorrectly calculated the value of the gifts, contended the statute of limitations expired on the alleged ethics violations, and contended the issue regarding disclosure of gifts was due to the dollar amount being disputed.

Gifts under \$50 do not have to be disclosed. Lee's attorneys argued that

generosity and dedication, but for the warmth, kindness, and grace she brought to everything she did. Our thoughts are with Hal and their family during this difficult time."

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VOX POPULI

Are Sansei Baby Boomers Stronger Than the Issei and Nisei?

By RON IKEJIRI

Growing up in the 1950s (commonly referred to now as "the mid-century") era, we watched and learned first-hand that the Issei and Nisei never felt entitled.

- They knew that life would not wait for them to be okay!

- They got up, they carried the burden of the day.

- They kept going.
- They did it with patience.
- They did it with dignity.

- They were respectful of others, even if others were not respectful of them.

Issei in their new land of opportunity and facing various forms of hardships, race discrimination and economic struggles ...

- The Issei did not wait for things to get better.

- They kept the belief that their sacrifices were for "kodomo no tame ni" ... for the sake of their children.

- They exhibited "gaman ... perseverance" in often unbearable circumstances.

That is how the Issei and Nisei, by the 1980 U.S. Census, set the foundation for Sansei males to have the highest college educational attainment of ALL males in the U.S.

Today we find a new generation of Yonsei and Gosei that have little or no knowledge, understanding or appreciation of their roots and the sacrifices of the Issei and Nisei.

Simply stated, some feel they are ENTITLED to everything that they may enjoy today by just being. While time will tell, my observation is that the Yonsei and Gosei may go through life with the unfortunate experience of not making any bold statement of their roots and exude exclamation marks in their respect and pride of their American Japanese ancestry experiences.

- No bright shooting stars
- Just go through a life of entitlement
- And then just fade away without a whimper.

To give meaning to the Issei and Nisei experience, one last time (*mou ichido*), I ask that the Sansei Baby Boomers make themselves available to be ADOPTED by a Yonsei or Gosei and share with them your personal life stories.

We are not talking about formal meetings or seminars. We are talking about one-on-one chats, over boba, or macchiato latte ... or whatever the drink of choice they may wish or whatever is trending.

Share with them just "how cool" it was to have Bachan's salty origiri and cold tempura and karaage chicken sitting at the beach or on a mountain hike, or just the comforting taste of hot miso soup with gohan, a bit of fish, tsukemono and ocha ... and explain to them the essence of this comfort food called *ochazuke*.

Share with them that your friends from school would have turkey dinners or spaghetti and meatballs, and just how trendy in your Japanese home, dinner was more often than not, *nokorimono* ... leftovers.

Share with them the truthful meaning of leftovers ... that was all there was to eat with the limited funds that so many Issei and Nisei had during those early years.

Share with them that your family were *early adopters* of this World War II miracle canned food called Spam that could be eaten cold or sandwiched in between grains of rice. And, if you were celebrating a special event ... you even made Spam teriyaki style, just like a sous chef. If you couldn't find Spam, you just got wiener, cut them on a diagonal and cooked them in "sato and shoyu or sugar and soy sauce," with a bowl of rice, and you had a meal fit for a Sansei samurai.

Share with them Mom telling you to eat every grain of rice, because she reminded you that because of the war on the Korean Peninsula in the 1950s, the kids your age had nothing to eat.

During all of these chats, interject a thought or memory of Jitchan or Obaachan ... Mom or Dad's moments of joy, sadness and challenge. It will make the moment memorable for the Yonsei or Gosei that adopted you.

United States Senator Spark Matsunaga from Hawaii once shared with me some 48 years ago, "Only through personal suffering will you truly appreciate the sacrifices of your parents' and grandparents' generation."

While no one truly wants to suffer, it's not like you wake up and say, "Ok my goal is to be subjected to personal suffering today!" What was meant is that through adversity we learn patience and dignity.

Share with them how appreciation and gratitude was learned and taught not by some grand gift or awesome event ... but daily little gestures of kindness and supporting one another, a little bit of "kimochi ... heart," one thoughtful gesture at a time.

We Sansei Baby Boomers may not measure up and be stronger than the Issei and Nisei.

- But we can be the bridge to the Issei and Nisei for the Yonsei and Gosei.

- We need to do it now in 2026, as so many of us are leaving each day.

- So please resolve to be that bridge ... Rekindle not only our memories of the Issei and Nisei life stories, but to share them with the Yonsei and Gosei.

The Issei and Nisei made the American Dream a reality for the Sansei and we have a "on and giri ... duty and responsibility" to share with Yonsei and Gosei the roots of that American Dream ... to help them to step up boldly, make an exclamation-mark statement and take their "rightful" place furthering the Japanese American contributions to the American way of life.

- Do not, "guzu-guzu ... put it off," do it now.
- Time is fleeting
- Tomorrow is too late
- Get it started today.

Onegei shimasu ... Yoroshiku (I am counting on you!)

Ron Ikejiri is a former member of the Gardena City Council. Opinions expressed in Vox Populi are not necessarily those of The Rafu Shimpo.



Ramblings From the Son of a Paper Son By Bill Yee

Christmas Time Is Here ...

Even though I grew up in a non-Christian family, my family

loved Christmas and singing Christmas carols. Of course, it didn't hurt that "yours truly" was born on Christmas Day. It was also part of our assimilation into American society as the children of immigrants.

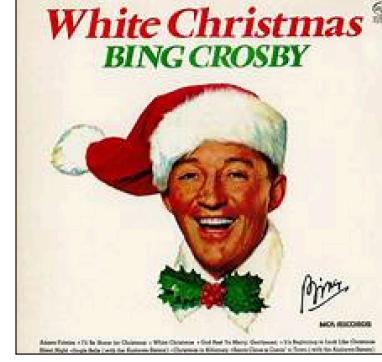
We always had a real Christmas tree. We looked upon fake trees as a form of Christmas heresy. Like the aluminum tree in "A Charlie Brown Christmas," it just was not Christmas without a real tree.

It was a ritual every year that my older brother and I would go out and buy a real tree. He would usually also treat me to dinner beforehand. It was one of my favorite childhood memories. Afterwards, the box of lights and ornaments would come out and the decorating would begin. We always fought for who would put the star on the tree.

Listening to and singing Christmas carols was also part of our family tradition.

My brother had an old hi-fi record player and one Christmas we bought a Christmas album from the Firestone Tire store across the street from our flat. It was a promotional item. I think it cost \$1.99.

We played that record over and over during the Christmas



season. I remember the vocalists included Andy Williams, Perry Como and San Francisco native Johnny Mathis. I can still hear Perry Como's rendition of "Santa Claus Is Coming To Town."

My older brother Benny would sing carols to us. His favorite was "White Christmas." The Bing Crosby version is the best-selling record of all time. Benny taught us the lyrics to the popular carols. My sister Helen and brother Teddy would sing along at the laundry to the songs on the radio. We would even sing to our customers.

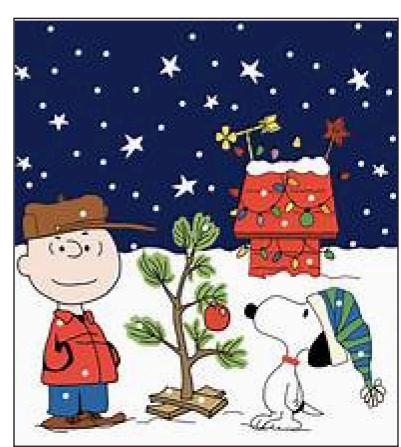
As kids we also performed in the Christmas program at Redding Elementary School. Even though the school was just two blocks from our laundry, our parents were too busy with work to attend. My sister-in-law Merry (as in "Merry" Christmas) did attend! My sister Helen always appreciated that!

One year my dad got in the Christmas spirit and ordered a roll of paper with Santa Claus sitting on a roof next to a chimney. We wrapped the finished laundry packages in the holiday paper.

Television also had a big impact on our family Christmas traditions. Our parents enjoyed watching holiday shows, including Bing Crosby, Andy Williams and Lawrence Welk family Christmas specials, to name a few. As a family we all looked forward to watching these shows together.

In 1965 "A Charlie Brown Christmas" became an annual event in our household, and it remains a holiday classic in my home even though Apple TV and not CBS has the rights.

One of my fondest Christmas memories was using the tips I got for delivering laundry to our customers and going downtown to buy a gift for my parents. One customer, Mrs. Atherton, would take



us to Woolworth's and treat us to a soda and candy. She always baked cookies for us too.

One year Mrs. Atherton helped us buy two pillowcases for my parents.

We also went to the toy department at the Emporium and, in our heads, put together a wish list of what we wanted for Christmas. Our parents did not really celebrate Christmas or even give us gifts. It was a grand-aunt who would make sure we all had something for Christmas.

She would always give the best gifts that were most sought after by kids.

In San Francisco, many listen to radio station KOIT, which plays nothing but Christmas music during the season.

Christmas is not just about getting presents or singing Christmas carols. It's a feeling that there can be peace in the world and we can have a "White Christmas." For me as a Christ believer, the real reason I celebrate is the coming of our Savior!

Merry Christmas!

Bill Yee is a retired Alhambra High School history teacher. He can be reached at person52@gmail.com. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The Rafu Shimpo.

All artwork must be suitable for a family-friendly exhibition. Submissions may not include:

- Violent or graphic imagery
- Obscene or pornographic content
- Illegal, non-compliant, or rights-infringing material
- Any imagery inappropriate for minors

JACCC reserves the right to review and decline works that do not meet these guidelines. JACCC is not liable for damage to artwork during the exhibition.

Artwork can be retrieved from Jan. 28 to Feb. 13.

For more information, call (213) 628-2725 or email info@jacc.org.

JACCC Seeking Shikishi Submissions

The Japanese American Cultural & Community Center is seeking submissions for its 21st annual New Year Shikishi Exhibition, to be held Jan. 10 to 24 in the JACCC's George J. Doizaki Gallery.

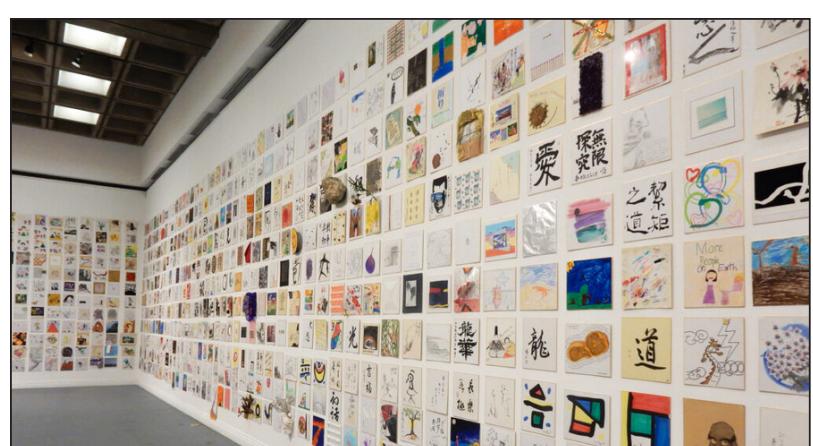
Shikishi is a traditional Japanese rigid art board made of high-quality washi (Japanese paper) laminated onto a hardboard backing, with distinctive gold foil edges, used for calligraphy (shodo), ink painting (sumi-e), poetry (haiku), watercolor, mixed media, or autographs, offering a sturdy, decorative surface for artists and fans. These boards come in various sizes, often

small squares or rectangles.

Artwork must be submitted by Monday, Dec. 29, to the JACCC, 244 S. San Pedro St. in Little Tokyo.

Use a standard 9-1/2" x 10-3/4" shikishi board, and write your full name clearly on the back or front corner. Any medium is welcome, 2D or 3D, as long as it can be safely hung on the wall. Artists may use ink, watercolor, calligraphy, markers, sumi, mixed media, 3D assemblage, or photography.

If it fits on a shikishi board and can be displayed on the wall, you are encouraged to explore and experiment. Shikishi boards are available at local art stores or for purchase at JACCC's front desk for \$5 (cash only).



Masako Koda

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Masako Koda, who passed away on December 15, 2025, at the age of 95. Born on March 5, 1930 in Tokyo, Japan, Masako came to the United States in 1956 and lived in Los Angeles and later Gardena.

Masako was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother, and great grandmother.

She is survived by her daughter, Shirley Miyuki Dohzen; son, Richard Masanobu (Carolyn) Koda; grandchildren, Tiffany Dohzen, Traycie (Cory) Koyanagi, Samantha (Malcolm) Ahoy and Alyssa Koda. Also surviving her are her two great-grandsons, Aiden and Devin Koyanagi, as well as many extended family members whose lives were touched by her presence. Her husband, Dan Noboru Koda, preceded her in death.

Funeral services will be held at Gardena Buddhist Church, 1517 West 166th Street, Gardena, on Sunday, December 28, 2025 at 10:30am.

www.fukuimortuary.com (213) 626-0441

Masako Koda

Reiko Suzuki

Funeral services for the late Reiko Suzuki, 92-year-old, Japan-born, resident of Torrance, who passed away peacefully on December 11, 2025, at her residence, will be held Monday, December 29, 11 a.m. at Gospel Venture International Church, 17811 S. Western Ave., Gardena, CA 90247, with Pastor Akiko Kim officiating.

She is survived by her loving family: sons, Richard Yasuhiro (Michelle) Suzuki and Brian Hiroshi Suzuki; grandchildren, Aaron and Brett Suzuki; brothers, Kenichi (Reiko) Tsuchikawa and Hideki (Yuko) Tsuchikawa, both of Japan; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews, and other relatives in Japan.

www.fukuimortuary.com (213) 626-0441

Yoshie Ishigame

Funeral services for the late Mrs. Yoshie Ishigame, 85-year-old, Los Angeles-born resident of Monterey Park, a long time member of Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, who passed away on December 18, 2025, will be held Sunday, January 11, 2026, 2:30 p.m. at Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, 815 E. First St., Los Angeles, Calif.

Predeceased by her husband, Matsumi Ishigame.

She is survived by her daughter, Alice Miki (Alan Tao) Ishigame-Tao; son, Henry Toshiro (Maria Fajatin) Ishigame; grandson, Kenny Ichiro Tao; siblings, Masaharu Yamada, Yoko Okumoto, Meri Isefumi of Japan, Kunio Yamada of Japan, and Hiroshi Yamada; also survived by many nieces, nephews, and other relatives here and in Japan.

www.fukuimortuary.com (213) 626-0441

Richard Wataru Nakashima

June 10, 1937 – December 1, 2025

Richard Wataru Nakashima, 88 years old, Sacramento, Calif.-born, longtime resident of Los Angeles, California, passed away peacefully on December 1, 2025, at St. John's Emergency Hospital in Santa Monica, Calif.

He is survived by his loving wife, Kazuko Nakashima; children, Steven (Dana), James, and Judy (Eddie); grandchildren, Ryu, Koyo, Takuya, Kae, Yuka and Hideo; sisters, Atsuko Tremble, Takeko Watanabe, Michiyo Shimbashi, and Aiko Hayashida; also survived by many nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends.

Private family service was held at Fukui Mortuary on December 16, 2025.

www.fukuimortuary.com (213) 626-0441

Richard Nakashima

Mark Haruo Dobashi

August 31, 1952 – November 22, 2025

Mark Haruo Dobashi of Whittier, Calif., born to Masao and Shizue Dobashi in Los Angeles, raised in ELA and Monterey Park, passed away peacefully at home on November 22, 2025.

A devoted husband and father, and a proud journeyman plumber, he provided for his family working decades in the private sector and 14 years in the City of Los Angeles. He liked the work and enjoyed the camaraderie and respect among co-workers.

He loved cars, motorcycles and the Dodgers. He cherished every cat and dog that shared his home. He enjoyed his privacy, time alone and sharing his wry sense of humor with friends.

Kind and generous, he leaves behind a loving family – wife, Michiyo; son, Michael (Charlene) Dobashi; daughter, Robin (Karim Chee) Dobashi; grandson, Brock Dobashi; sister, Elizabeth (Wade) Kato.

He is also survived by an aunt, cousins, nieces, nephews and in-laws.

A small private service was conducted in accordance with his wishes.

The family requests, please, no koden. Your good thoughts and warm memories are sure to find Mark, wherever he ventures to journey.

www.fukuimortuary.com (213) 626-0441

<p

RELIGION

RAFU Event Calendar

DECEMBER SCHEDULE

Gardena Buddhist Church 1517 W. 166th St, Gardena 90247, 310-327-9400. Gardenabuddhistchurch.org. Dec 28 (Sun): No Sunday service. Dec 31 (Wed), 7 pm—Joya-e year-end service. Joya-e service is held to express gratitude for the past year. In-person service in the Hondo. Jan 1 (Thur), 8 am—Shusho-e New Year's Day service. Shusho-e is a day to celebrate rededication and looking forward to the year ahead. In-person service in the Hondo.

Grace First Presbyterian Church, 3955 N. Studebaker Rd., Long Beach, (562) 420-3393. Pastor Dr. Marion Park. Community Food Bank on the first Saturday of each month. Traditional service at 9 am. Praise service at 11 am. Fellowship after each service.

Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple 505 E. 3rd St, L.A. 90013, 213-626-4200. hhbt-la.org. Rinban Kenju Kawakawa.

Jodoshu North America Buddhist Missions P.O. Box 11068, Torrance, CA 90510, 213-346-9666.

Koyasan Buddhist Temple 342 E. 1st St, L.A. 90012, 213-624-1267. www.koyasanbetsuin.org.

Las Vegas Buddhist Sangha 4110 N Martin Luther King Blvd, North Las Vegas, NV 89032, 702-483-9754. LVBS.org. Led by Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada and minister's assistants. Please join us every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month at 10 am.

L.A. Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple 815 E. 1st St, L.A. 90012, 213-680-9130. nishihongwanji-la.org. Rimban William Briones. Services are back in-person. We do recommend that masks be worn while indoors.

Long Beach Buddhist Church 2360 Santa Fe Ave, Long Beach 90810, 562-426-4014. Sunday service at 10 am followed by a social hour at 11 am. Meditation is on

Wednesday evening from 7:30-8:30 pm and Sunday mornings from 8:30-9:30 am. Ondo for exercise class every Friday from 7:30-8:30 pm. Kimekomi doll making class every 3rd Saturday of the month at 1 pm.

Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church 144 S. Greenwood Ave. Montebello CA 90640, (323) 721-5568, montbelloucc.org. Join us for in-person and online worship service at 10 am Sunday mornings or YouTube.com/mpccucc. Contact mpcc@montbelloucc.org for details.

Orange County Buddhist Church 909 S. Dale Ave, Anaheim 92804, 714-827-9590. ocbuddhist.org. Dec 27 (Sat), 7 pm—Zoom BEC Japanese class (Rev Dr. Mutsumi Wondra). Dec 28 (Sun): No services. Dec 30 (Tue): Office closed. Dec 31 (Wed), 4:30 pm—Joya-E New Year's Eve service (office closed). Jan 1 (Thur), 10 am—New Year's Day service (office closed). Jan 2 (Fri): Office open. Jan 3 (Sat): Office open; 3:30 pm—Shotsuki Hoya monthly memorial service (in-person). Jan 4 (Sun), 8:30 am—Mindfulness service (in-person); 10 am—Sunday service (hybrid); 11 am—Adult discussion and Dharma School (in-person). Jan 5 (Mon), 10:30 am—In-person BEC Japanese class (Rev Dr. Mutsumi Wondra). Jan 6 (Tue): Office closed. Jan 7 (Wed), 7 pm—Zoom mindfulness service. Jan 8 (Thur), 9 am—Tai chi class (in-person). Jan 10 (Sat), 7 pm—Zoom BEC Japanese class (Rev Dr. Mutsumi Wondra). Jan 11 (Sun): No mindfulness service, adult study, or Dharma School. 10 am—Hō-onkō service (hybrid)—Rev. Laverne Imori (E) and Rev. Noriko Kawai (J).

Pasadena Buddhist Temple 1993 Glen Ave, Pasadena 91103, 626-798-4781. Pasadenabuddhisttemple.org. Resident minister: Rev. Jundo Gregory Gibbs.

Senshin Buddhist Temple 1311 W. 37th St, L.A. 90007, 323-731-4617. senshinktemple@gmail.com, senshinktemple.org.

Hill Dr, S. San Gabriel 91770, 626-288-1212.

Gospel Venture International Church (GVIC) 17811 S. Western Ave, Gardena, 90248, 310-527-6112.

Grace First Presbyterian Church 3955 N. Studebaker Rd., Long Beach 90808, 562-420-3393.

Hope Chapel Torrance 3521 W Lomita Blvd, 2nd Floor, Suite 202, Torrance 90505.

Japanese American Christian Chapel 300 Mission Dr, Camarillo 93010, 805-384-9333.

L.A. Holiness Church 3660 S. Gramercy Pl, L.A. 90018, 323-733-5000.

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection 9812 Hamilton Ave, Huntington Beach, 92646.

Lutheran Oriental Church 2654 W. 164th St, Torrance 90504, 310-329-9345.

Mission Valley Free Methodist Church 1201 S. San Gabriel Blvd, San Gabriel 91776, 626-285-6788.

New Life Christian Church 1020 W. Kenneth Rd, Glendale 91202, 818-242-8801.

Newport Beach Higashi Honganji 254 Victoria St, Costa Mesa 92627, 949-722-1202.

Nichiren Shu Buddhist Temple 2801 E. 4th St, L.A. 90033, 323-262-7886.

Orange County Christian Church 4872 Bishop St, Cypress 90630, 714-827-2801.

Palos Verdes Baptist Church 28 Moccasin Lane, Rolling Hills Estates 90274, 310-541-1811.

Pioneer Ocean View United Church of Christ 2550 Fairfield St, San Diego, 92110, 619-276-4881.

Resplendent Light Community Church 3200 Ocean Park Blvd, Santa Monica, 90405, 310-450-0459.

Rise OC 3198-B Airport Loop Dr, Costa Mesa 92626, 714-641-1944.

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Church of L.A. 2701 E. 1st St, L.A. 90033, 323-269-4741.

Gedatsu Church USA 7850

SNI Church (Seicho-No-Ie) South Bay Center 14527 S. Vermont Ave, Gardena 90247.

SNI Church (Seicho-No-Ie) Orange Center 2225 E. Lincoln Ave, Anaheim, 92806, 714-776-5759.

Union Church of L.A. 401 E. Third St, L.A. 90013, 213-629-3876. www.unionchurchla.org. Email: English@unionchurchla.org. Weekly worship is held at 11 am in-person and on Zoom.

Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple 12371 Braddock Dr., Culver City, 90230, 310-391-4351. vhbt.org. We are open for regular morning services at 9:30 am. Special services and activities include the following: On Tuesday, Dec 30, at 7:30 pm, we will hold our year-end Joya-E service, followed by our traditional toshikoshi soba (year-end noodles) prepared by our tireless Fujinkai ladies using our secret recipe! Please check our website, vhbt.org, for more information.

W. Covina Buddhist Temple 1203 W. Puente Ave, W. Covina 91790, 626-689-1040. livingdharma.org.

Dec 28 (Sun): No Sunday service. Jan 1 (Thur), 11 am—New Year's Day service (Shusho-e). Jan 4 (Sun), 10 am—Shotsuki service (hybrid). Jan 8 (Thur), 10 am—Howakai Japanese service. On Thursday, Jan 1, New Year's Day service (Shusho-e) will be held from 11 am. The service will be in-person only. January Shotsuki service will be held on Sunday, Jan 4, at 10 am both in-person and online. Howakai Japanese Shotsuki service will be held on Thursday, Jan 8, at 10 am. Please contact the temple (wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com) to receive a meeting ID and password to join the service online.

W.L.A. Buddhist Temple 2003 Corinth Ave, L.A. 90025, 310-477-7274. Rev. Koho Takata and Rev. Koe Umezu. Dec 23-28 (Tue-Sun): Office closed. Dec 31 (Wed), 6 pm—Year-end service. Jan 1 (Thur), 10 am—New Year's Day service. Jan 1-4 (Thur-Sun): Office closed. Jan 4 (Sun): No service.

Wintersburg Presbyterian Church 2000N. Fairview St, Santa Ana 92706, 714-740-9400. wintersburg.org.

Zenshuji Soto Mission 123 S. Hewitt St, L.A. 90012, 213-624-8658. Check for details and schedule changes: www.zenshuji.org. Zen Aerobics for Seniors and their family and friends on Sundays, 1 pm offered online Zoom and in-person when conditions are deemed safe. Call to confirm the schedule and check the website for additional classes.

Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church 1850 W. Hellman Ave, Alhambra 91803, 626-284-3229.

San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple 9450 Remick Ave, Pacoima 91331, 818-899-4030.

South Bay Adventist Church 401 S. Prospect Ave, Redondo Beach, 90277, 323-214-3123.

South Bay Japanese Episcopal Church 408 S. Broadway, Redondo Beach, 90277, 323-616-4208.

Sozenji Buddhist Temple 3020 W. Beverly Blvd, Montebello 90640, 323-724-6866.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church 1432 Engracia Ave, Torrance, 90501, 310-328-3781.

St. Francis Xavier Chapel Japanese Catholic Center (Maryknoll) 222 S. Hewitt St, L.A. 90012, 213-626-2279.

St. John's Episcopal Cathedral 514 West Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, 90017, 213-747-6285.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church 961 S. Mariposa Ave, L.A. 90006, 213-387-1334.

Sukyo Mahikari Centers for Spiritual Development 860 E. Mariposa St, Altadena, 91001, 626-529-4160, 23151 Camino Altozano, Rancho Santa Margarita, 949-459-1409 and 3525 Lomita Blvd, Torrance, 90501, 310-987-3082.

Sunrise Foursquare Church 5853 Laurel Canyon Blvd, Valley Village 91607, 818-782-8738.

Sunrise Van Nuys Church 14705 Wyandotte St, Van Nuys 91405, 818-782-8738.

Tenrikyo Mission HQ in America 2727 E. First St, L.A. 90033, 323-261-3379.

Torrance First Lutheran Church 2900 Carson St, Torrance 90503, 310-320-9920.

Rise OC 3198-B Airport Loop Dr, Costa Mesa 92626, 714-641-1944.

Rissho Kosei-kai Buddhist Church of L.A. 2701 E. 1st St, L.A. 90033, 323-269-4741.

W. Covina Christian Church 1100 E. Cameron Ave, W. Covina 90025, 310-479-1379.

Westlight Community Church 2650 Federal Avenue, L.A., 90064.

W.L.A. Holiness Church 1710 S. Butler Ave, L.A. 90025, 310-473-2138 (E), 310-473-2130 (J).

W.L.A. United Methodist Church 1913 Purdue Ave, L.A. 90025, 310-479-1379.

We welcome submissions to our Events Calendar. Email information to jyamamoto@rafu.com.

DEC 26-28 — Hikari, 4:30-9 pm at Tanaka Farms, 5380 3/4 University Dr, Irvine. See more than a million twinkling lights while sipping hot cocoa and going for a wagon ride. There are also arts and crafts, games, a chance to meet Santa and live music on Fri and Sat nights. Adults \$25-\$35; children \$15-\$25, Closed Dec. 24-25. Info: (949) 653-2100, tanakafarms.com

DEC 26-28 — 45th anniversary performance of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" at South Coast Repertory, 655 Town Center Dr, Costa Mesa. Directed by Hisa Takakuwa. Cast includes Sharon Omi and child actors Aya Hanai and Natalie Yokota. Showtimes: Tue-Thur 7 pm, Fri 7:30 pm, Sat 2:30 and 7:30 pm, Sun 12 and 4 pm (matinee only Dec. 28). Tickets range from \$43-\$128 with discounts available for children under 12. Info/tickets: (714) 708-5555, www.scr.org.

DEC 26-JAN 4 — MOCA Focus: Takako Yamaguchi at MOCA Grand Avenue, 250 S Grand Ave, Los Angeles. Hours: Closed Mon; Tue, 11 am-5 pm; Thur, 11 am-8 pm; Fri, 11 am-5 pm; Sat-Sun, 11 am-6 pm. Born in Okayama in 1952, Yamaguchi moved to the US in the early '70s and began to appropriate imagery from sources as diverse as Mexican muralism, Renaissance art, Japanese Nihonga, and Art Nouveau in ornate paintings that pose a challenge to rigid notions of ethnic identity and cultural ownership. Info/tickets: www.moca.org/exhibition/takako-yamaguchi

DEC 26-JAN 4 — Totoro Show: A Ghibli Universe Art Exhibition at Giant Robot Store, 2015 Sawtelle Blvd, West Los Angeles. Hours: Closed Mon; 12-6 pm Tues-Thur; 11:30 am-6pm Fri-Sat; 12-6 pm Sun. Concurrent with exhibitions at GR2, 2062 Sawtelle Blvd. Hours: Closed Mon-Tue; 12-6 pm Wed-Thur; 12 pm-4 am Fri; 12-8 pm Sat; 12-7 pm Sun. Purchases can be picked up same day or ship out ASAP. Info: (310) 478-1819, giantrobot.com

DEC 26-FEB 18 — "Package Craft: From Candy Box to Sculpture" at Japan Foundation Los Angeles, 5700 Wilshire Blvd, Ste 100, Los Angeles. The exhibition showcases a creative form of papercraft that transforms empty boxes into 3D figures such as heroes, animals and Buddhist statues. Hours: Mon-Fri, 12-6 pm; Sat, 10 am-3 pm; closed Sun and Dec 25-Jan 3. Info: <https://www.jflal.org/event-details.php/315/package-craft-from-candy-box-to-sculpture>

DEC 27 — Little Tokyo Farmers' Market, 9 am-2 pm every Sat at Noguchi Plaza, 244 S San Pedro St, Little Tokyo. Designed to support low-income residents, Japanese American farmers, and the broader Little Tokyo community. Info: <https://jaccc.org/events/little-tokyo-farmers-market-2025/>

DEC 31 — New Year's Eve with Elemental Funk, 6:30-10:30 pm at Gardner VFW Post 3261, 1822 W 162nd St, Gardena. Appetizers and champagne toast included. \$50 pre-event sale price, \$60 after Dec 26 or at the door. Info/RSVP: Brian Yamamoto, (310) 408-4730, bri_yama@yahoo.com

JAN 1 — Oshogatsu in Little Tokyo, 10:50 am-3:40 pm at Weller Court, 123 Astronaut Ellison S Onizuka St; 12:30-4 pm at Japanese Village Plaza, 335 E Second St. Featuring entertainment, food, children's cultural activities, sake fest. Presented by Japanese Chamber of Commerce of SoCal and Japanese Chamber of Commerce Foundation. For info on Kimono Contest: www.lakimonoclub.org/event-details/new-year-kimono-contest

JAN 3 — Nikkei Socials afternoon dance and New Year's party, 1:30-4:30 pm at Gardner Valley Japanese Cultural Institute, 1964 W 162nd St, Gardena. Dance lesson at 1:30 pm with Gira Nakamoto. DJ

常石さんの孫にあたるマークさんは自身のフェイスブックで、「この公園は、当地の開拓に尽力した祖父とその家族の功績をたどるもの。祖父の一家は第2次世界大戦中にワイオミング州ハートマウンテン収容所に収容されたが、4人の息子は米陸軍に従軍し顕著な功績を残した」と述べている。

同じく孫の一人であるジョナサンさんが先に投稿したエイスニックの別の記事

常石覚さん(1888~1987年)

常石さんは自身のフェイスブックで、「この公園は、当地の開拓に尽力した祖父とその家族の功績をたどるもの。祖父の一家は第2次世界大戦中にワイオミング州ハートマウンテン収容所に収容されたが、4人の息子は米陸軍に従軍し顕著な功績を残した」と述べている。

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常石覚さん(1888~1987年)

音楽の散歩道



小川 弘子

極上のぜいたく

指揮者、世界中のオーケストラは勲章を受章するなど、主要な歌劇場

は、6月に行われた起工式を振り返り、実現の背景を次のようについて述べている。

「起工式の際、市長や市議会議員、市民と話す中で、市が単に元出身者を顕彰するだけでなく、国道66号線沿いで農業に携わった祖父のようない初期の日系米国人農家の貢献を大切にしたいと考えて、いたことが伝わってきた。また、日系人強制収容の歴史を認識しつつ、米陸軍に従軍したおじたちや、戦後の占領期

を顕彰する方法を求めていたことが明確だった。祖父母、両親おじ・おばは皆サン

ゲーブルバレーに暮らしてき

た。私の家族や地域の人々

は、この公共空間を祖父のよ

うな日系米国人をたどるえる場

所として捉えている」

と記述している。

ジーナサンさんはさらに、

「私たち家族はこの公園をモ

ンロビア市と、祖父であり、夫、父親、農家、そして俳

優であるとともに、この地域に

示す場として捉えている」

と記述している。

ジーナサンさんはさらに、

「

南加愛媛県人会

創立115周年、盛大に祝う

母県との絆一層強固に

コロナ禍で創立110周年
の記念式典を開催を断念した
が、先人から受け継いだ团结
力を發揮し、115周年に向
け会員一丸となつて準備を進
め、5年越しとなる記念式典
を実現させた。

リフォルニアの日系コミュニ
ティーの因い紳を改めて実感
できた」と感慨深げに語つ
た。「115周年の節目は、
われわれのコミュニティの
強靭さと回復する力、不屈の
精神を表している。愛媛県人
会は創立当初から1世紀以上
経過した今日まで、日本人と
日系米国人が友情を育み、互
いに助け合い、自分たちの文
化を誇りを持って守り継いで
きた」と強調した。「われわ
れはこの115周年記念を通
じてもらい、愛媛県と南カ
州では子どもたちに大人気の獅子舞が練り歩く

し、勇気と決意、希望を持つ
て移住した先駆者に感謝した
。先駆者はわが身を犠牲に
して、われわれが今日まで恩
恵を受けている基礎を築いた
」と敬意を表した。また、
次世代を担う若者に向け
に、日本と日系米国人共
にユニークで長きにわたり
県人会が果たしてきた役割を
さらに、自らが懸け橋となり
遣産を継承し、長く続くわれ
われの物語を次の章につない
でほしい」と願いを込めて
語った。そして最後に、今日
参加した全ての会員と家族と
友人そして支援者が115周
年を祝うことで歴史をたた
え、今日の姿があることに感
じて、未来に向かって共に歩
んでいこう」と呼びかけた。

式典では、来賓が祝辞を述べ
、式典を支えた実行委員な
ど関係者の労をねぎらった。
また、県人会が同郷人の親
睦を深め、戦前から戦中の
多くの困難を團結力で乗り越
え、式典を支えた実行委員な
ど関係者の労をねぎらった。

謝し、未来に向かって共に歩
んでいこう」と呼びかけた。

式典では、来賓が祝辞を述べ
、式典を支えた実行委員な
ど関係者の労をねぎらった。

記念品の交換で、大西誠副議長(左)から愛媛
城が描かれた漆器の大皿を贈られる大谷会長

年を祝うことで歴史をたた
え、今日の姿があることに感
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