



KOKORO KARA

"from our heart"



Cover image
Norman Mineta, photographed with the original Heart Mountain barrack on display at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, CA.
Courtesy of The Rafu Shimpō, Photographer Mario Gershom Reyes, April 2019

Kevin J. Miyazaki

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*In memoriam

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Check out the magazine page on our
website to read all past issues of *Kokoro Kara*!

www.heartmountain.org/kokoro-kara-magazine



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KOKORO KARA

Volume 11, Issue 2
Editors: Kate Wilson & Krist Ishikawa Jessup
Design/Layout: Kate Wilson

Have an idea for an article?
Would you like to be a contributing writer?
We're interested! Write to Krist Ishikawa
Jessup with your story ideas—these could
include a profile of a former incarcerated, a
specific aspect of the Japanese American
experience before/during/after the war, or
an act of kindness from a non-incarcerated,
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WHAT WOULD NORM DO?

CHAIR SHIRLEY ANN HIGUCHI

I can't think of how many times since I joined the board of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation when I have said, "What does Norm Mineta think about this?"

Every time I asked him for his advice or opinion, it was on target. Norm Mineta's experiences and disposition made him an invaluable resource.

I'm devastated thinking of life and our foundation without his guidance and leadership.

Norm's strength and wisdom, however, came in grooming future generations for success.

He did that for me at Heart Mountain and in the Japanese American community, and he did it for thousands of others as well.

That was obvious by the hundreds of people who turned out in early May for a video tribute and reminiscence session online. So many people at the height of their careers recounted how much he had helped them along never expecting to be paid back.

That feeling was repeated in person in Washington, San Jose and Los Angeles in June for memorial services for Norm.

I had the same feeling in 2018, when a documentary about his life premiered in Washington. Then I marveled at the presence of leaders of both parties who paid Norm tribute.

I also realized that I was not alone in knowing that I could call on Norm for help and guidance. Others did, too, even those whose rank in public affairs far exceeded mine.

His example is something I try to follow, and it's a big part of our foundation's future.

We have added younger board members to help keep our foundation strong for the future.

That's evident in the role that Aura Sunada Newlin has taken on as our interim executive director. I know she shares Norm's spirit and generosity, which makes me optimistic about our future.

Our combined success depends on telling our story to new generations. We see that each year in our Pilgrimage, as younger family members join their parents and grandparents to learn about their history.

That's one of the main reasons for our creation of the Mineta-Simpson Institute. We are training educators to teach new generations of students about the Japanese American incarceration and the conditions that made it possible 80 years ago.

The arc of his life showed that Norm learned from and honored his elders, brought others along as his career began to rise and continued to develop leaders long after he could have retired with his beloved wife Deni and family at his home on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

We want the extended Mineta family to view Heart Mountain as their second home, which is why we were so grateful for their attendance at our July pilgrimage. We thank the Aratani Foundation and our supporting partners, the Japanese American Citizens League and the Japanese American National Museum, for providing the resources to allow everyone to attend in person.

We were also graced by the presence of Deni Mineta, Norm's widow, Erika Moritsugu from the White House and Margot Walk, recipient of our LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness Award.

"We know that the work of remembering and teaching the past in order to build a better future is never done," Margot said.

Norm's gift to me was showing me that I could make a difference. That is a gift I want to pass on, and I hope you will join me.

Stay inspired!

Shirley Ann Higuchi



Compassionate Witness Award recipient Margot Walk with Shirley Ann Higuchi.



Below: Pete Simpson, Shirley Ann Higuchi, Deni Mineta, & Alan Simpson preparing for the groundbreaking of the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain.

Deni Mineta with Alan Simpson



Keynote Speaker Erika Moritsugu

"Injustice does not dim with time. We cannot wait it out. We cannot ignore it, and we cannot shrug our shoulders at our past. If we do not refute the shame of the indictment here and now, the specter of this tragedy will resurface just as surely as I am standing here before you, and the injustice will recur."

—Norman Mineta, September 18, 1987

FAREWELL

FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DAKOTA RUSSELL

Before we dive into this latest issue of *Kokoro Kara*, I would like to share some personal news. This is my last column as executive director of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. I accepted a new position leading the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association in Salem, Massachusetts at the beginning of the summer. My family and I are excited about this fantastic opportunity, but I have to confess I will miss my work at Heart Mountain and the tremendous sense of purpose and community that comes with it.

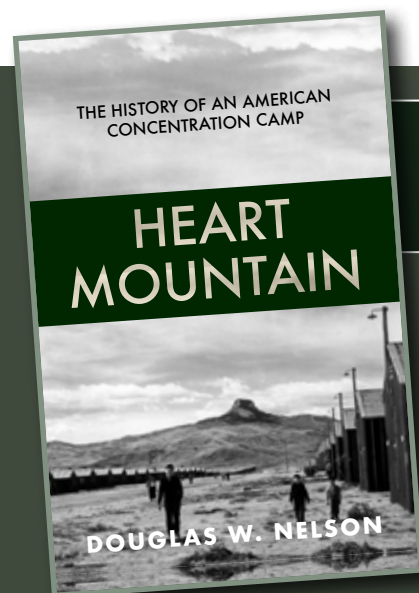
I am proud of everything we have accomplished during my time at Heart Mountain. The ongoing projects to rehabilitate the barrack and root cellar are just the first steps in growing our National Historic Landmark Site. The current special exhibit at the Interpretive Center, “Bob Kuwahara and the Nisei Animators,” is our best yet. And the Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium that we helped create has become a powerful network and an advocate for spreading awareness about Japanese American history.

Most importantly, of course, is the creation of the Mineta-Simpson Institute, which will allow us to expand our work and carry the Heart Mountain mission further than ever before. Thanks to the generosity of so many of you, our capital campaign to build the Institute has

gathered real momentum. And though we must now find a way to forge ahead without Norman Mineta’s leadership, honoring his life and his legacy means more than ever.

It makes it easier to leave knowing that Heart Mountain is in excellent hands. We’ve built an amazing staff here over the past couple of years, and I am pleased to hand the reigns over to Aura Sunada Newlin, longtime Secretary for our Board of Directors, who has stepped in as Interim Executive Director. With her vast experience, skills, and knowledge, I know she will make this transition seamless and keep on with our ambitious slate of projects.

I want to thank all of you for trusting me as your ally in telling the Japanese American story, a story that is so deeply personal for many of you. It has been my honor. I look forward to continuing to serve as part of the Foundation’s Advisory Council, and it was wonderful to get to see so many of you this past summer at the Heart Mountain Pilgrimage. 🙏



New Edition of Groundbreaking Heart Mountain History Released



When it was first released in 1976, *Heart Mountain: The History of an American Concentration Camp* by Douglas Nelson immediately transformed the scholarship of the Japanese American incarceration.

Before its publication, few scholars knew about or discussed the resistance to the military draft that roiled Heart Mountain during 1944. They knew

GREETINGS

Interim Executive Director Aura Sunada Newlin

Greetings to my Heart Mountain family! I stepped into the role of Interim Executive Director in June, but in some ways I have been on the job for almost ten years, having joined Heart Mountain’s Board of Directors in 2013 and served as Board Secretary for most of that time.

In other ways, I have been on the job for 40 years. I am yonsei, and the picture shown below is from my first Heart Mountain reunion at age two, playing with my big sister in front of the original honor roll on which our great uncle’s name was inscribed. My friend and mentor, Dr. Satsuki Ina, offered a comment about this photo that accurately captures my spirit at present: “I love the coat... Especially the little smudges that indicate you may wear pink, but you definitely know how to get down and dirty!”



I feel a deep affinity with many segments of the Nikkei community, as my family history crisscrosses with multiple Japanese American trajectories: incarceration at Heart Mountain; segregation to Tule Lake; service in the 442; self-evacuation from the West Coast; inland railroad layoffs; and more.

Additionally, Latin American and Indigenous concerns have played a dominant role in my own life, which makes me especially passionate about justice for Japanese Latin Americans and new opportunities for Native American and Japanese American collaboration.

The pain of losing Norm Mineta and the trepidation of stepping into Dakota Russell’s very large shoes has made me all the more appreciative of our staff’s professionalism, our leadership’s passion, and our membership’s commitment. I come to you with gratitude, grace, and grit. Thank you all for entrusting me with the sacred duty of caring for the Heart Mountain legacy—maintaining what we have built through the Interpretive Center and ensuring safe passage into our next phase of growth with the Mineta-Simpson Institute. 🙏



little about the passionate incarcerated who declined to knuckle under to the government that had imprisoned them.

In the 46 years since its publication, the book has inspired activists such as Bacon Sakatani, now known as Mr. Heart Mountain, and scholars such as Eric Muller.

Its importance is one of the many reasons we’re proud to present an updated version of *Heart Mountain: The History of an American Concentration Camp* in time for the holiday season. This new edition includes more than sixty photos, a

new chapter on the history of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and foreword by legends Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson.

We’re grateful to Doug for everything he’s done for the Foundation and to alert the world to this historic injustice. It makes us even prouder to bring this new edition to the public. 🙏

For more information, visit our museum store: shopheartmountain.org

JOHN KIM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



John Kim comes to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation as the Annie E. Casey Foundation's inaugural chief administrative officer. In this role, he oversees all administrative and operational functions at the Foundation. Before his most current position, he also served as director of grants managements, chief of staff, and vice president of the Foundation. John earned his law degree from the University of Baltimore while working at Casey. He holds a master's degree in international affairs from Georgetown University and a bachelor's degree in public policy from the University of Chicago.

Growing up in a Korean-immigrant family that worked in retail in the South Side of Chicago, John noticed at an early age that there were vast disparities in the opportunities people had depending on where they grew up in the city. He firmly believes that if you are actively engaged in finding the right solutions, have the right resources and point of view about what it takes to bring about change, you can actually improve lives.

He decided to join the board because he believes HMWF's efforts to educate and remind all Americans of the dark history of the incarceration of Japanese Americans will help safeguard the American values of liberty and freedom from oppression. In serving on the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation board, he hopes to contribute to honoring those whose family histories include Heart Mountain, and to make certain that the Center remains a poignant reminder of what we must never allow to happen again. 🏞️

DAVID FUJIOKA

ADVISORY COUNCIL



David Fujioka is the newest member of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation Advisory Council. He was born and raised in Los Angeles, California. David still calls Los Angeles his home, and is a proud Sansei Japanese American. David is a retired graphic designer, who worked for various departments at UCLA during his career.

David's father and grandparents were incarcerated at Heart Mountain. His uncle, Ted Fujioka volunteered to join the 442nd RCT out of Heart Mountain when he was 18 years old. Sadly, Ted would pay the ultimate sacrifice over in France at the age of 19. David's commitment to Heart Mountain began in 2011, when he attended his first pilgrimage there. Since then, David has volunteered at every Heart Mountain Pilgrimage with his cousin Coleen. He has pledged to honor and preserve the memories of the Fujioka Family.

Okage sama de – I am what I am because of you. 🏞️



On November 1, 2022, my contract ended with the HMWF. I am really thankful for the past four years that have definitely been a turning point in my life. I'll now spend more time working on my

own family history with even more knowledge, connections and enthusiasm. I am really excited that Eva Petersen, with her knowledge of the museum and life in Wyoming along with her DC savvy roots will be continuing as the executive assistant to the Chair.

During my time with the HMWF, we were able to accomplish so much. I always told people, "I am just trying to keep up with Shirley!" Shirley published her book during the Pandemic and we participated in over 25 authors events on-line and in-person at universities, libraries, law schools, museums and bookstores. We conceptualized the Heart Mountain Institute that eventually became the Mineta-Simpson Institute. We developed closer relations with the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. and welcomed Ambassador Sugiyama and a delegation to our Pilgrimage, the first time to host an Ambassador. Shirley was chosen as a storyteller in the Japan Up Close program and traveled to Japan, toured schools and was reunited with family members. As a result of that trip, we were able to have a closer relationship with her father, Dr. William Higuchi's former graduate students who recently fundraised for and completed the Japanese translation of *Setsuko's Secret*. Shirley became a Friend of the US Japan-Council and strengthened relations with an important partnership for the Mineta-Simpson Institute.

While assisting Danielle McAdams and Dakota on their visit to the National Archives, I learned that the Fair Play Committee were not "No-No," but "Qualified No-Yes" respondents to the Loyalty Questionnaire. Shirley, Dakota, Cally, Brandon, Sam, Takashi, Bacon, Shig and I participated in the first ever *Tadaima!* Community Virtual Pilgrimage. It was truly a groundbreaking program that continues today and creates a safe, open and highly accessible space for Nikkei and allies.

During this time, we saw the strengthening of the Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium that was spearheaded by Shirley and the HMWF. With the leadership of Mia Russell, we

Thank you!

hosted the first in-person advocacy day on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, Congressional Briefings, film screenings and receptions with the Embassy of Japan and two well-attended on-line educational conferences. Shirley and I participated in the early days of the formation of Tsuru for Solidarity and Dr. Satsuki Ina's Healing Circles© which has deeply impacted my life.

We were able to partner and deepen relations with organizations such as JACL National, JACL DC, the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, the Japanese American National Museum, the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, the American Psychological Association, the National Park Service and Friends of Minidoka on local and national events, both virtual and in-person. I now consider the people of these organizations friends and family.

Working on the NEH Landmarks of American History and Culture educator workshops with Ray and Tyson was definitely a high point. I learned so much about the layered diverse histories of Wyoming with a multitude of voices: incarcerated and non-incarcerated Japanese Americans (and the diversity within) and the past and present Aspsaalooke people and Homesteaders. I also learned a great deal from our diverse participants who came from all across the country.

Finally, I learned so much from the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation board, advisory council, the Heart Mountain staff and community. Early on, La Donna Zall and Joyce Harkness were so kind to me, invited me into their home and shared their stories and infectious passion for Heart Mountain. I learned a lot from Shirley and Dr. Higuchi. I had the honor of working with Norm, Deni Mineta and their family. I met so many people on the phone or at virtual or in-person events and Pilgrimages with a desire to learn and connect and always kept me clear on why we do our work. I'll always ask myself, "What would Bacon or Sam think?" I'll always remember the words of Naomi Oshita, "Stories and memories not shared are lost." Okagesama de. 🏞️

Kokoro kara,

Julie



National Day of Remembrance



80 Years of Reckoning

REMEMBERING THE INCARCERATION ON THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF E.O. 9066

By Ray Locker

Eighty years after the signing of Executive Order 9066 is no time to give in to the demands to sanitize the history of the Japanese American incarceration, President Joe Biden said in a proclamation released on February 18, 2022.

“The words we use to describe the historical and present treatment of communities of color and other underserved communities have profound meaning,” Biden said.

“Today, we recognize that euphemistic terms that we have collectively used in the past—such as ‘assembly centers,’ ‘relocation,’ or ‘internment’—do not adequately describe the injustice experienced by some 120,000 people; we recognize the forced removal and mass incarceration of Japanese Americans and others during World War II; and we reaffirm our commitment to *Nidoto Nai Yoni*, which translates to ‘Let It Not Happen Again,’” he said.

Biden’s proclamation, read by White House aide Erika Moritsugu, was released at the start of three days of online panels on the incarceration and its effects 80 years after it was authorized by the executive order signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942.

The panels were presented by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, the National Park Service, the Japanese American National Museum, Japanese American Citizens League, and the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation.

“We must be able to look into the past with clear eyes,” Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie Bunch III said.

Bunch’s call came at a time when some local school systems and state legislatures have banned books and passed laws to sanitize the teaching of history that involves

racial discrimination and oppression, such as the Japanese American incarceration.

Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, and multiple panelists said it was essential to present American history accurately, particularly to ensure that abuses such as slavery and incarceration don’t happen again.

It’s essential, Harris said, “to look without flinching at the human cost of racism and xenophobia.”

HEART MOUNTAIN REPRESENTATION

Shirley Ann Higuchi, the Heart Mountain board chair, was among the many participants with strong ties to Heart Mountain. She appeared on a panel with Ann Burroughs, president and CEO of the Japanese American National Museum and a Heart Mountain board member. Former Executive Director Dakota Russell also spoke on the panels, which were organized with the help of former Washington Affairs Director Julie Abo.

Burroughs said Bunch’s call to action about confronting the nation’s racist past is a critical part of her museum’s mission. “It’s a new direction for all of us,” she said.

Higuchi said she also didn’t learn about the incarceration in school or at home, even though both of her parents were incarcerated at Heart Mountain.

Her parents, however, always took their children to museums, she said, adding that “museums are an easy way for children to connect and learn about our history.” That’s why, Higuchi noted, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation is so diligent about presenting accurate history at its museum and through its educational programs.



Heart Mountain was well-represented at the Japanese American National Museum’s Day of Remembrance events, including the signing of one of Judge Gogo’s 48-star flag. Pictured here are a gathering of former incarcerated (top) and Shig Yabu & Willie Ito (right), the dynamic duo behind the story *Hello Maggie!* Read more about this in the article starting on page 23.



In Memoriam

Keiichi Ikeda (1926–2022)



Bacon Sakatani

Keiichi was born on October 30, 1926, in Los Angeles, California. Just prior to World War 2, his family moved to the Hollywood area. After the war started, the family was first sent to the Santa Anita Assembly

Center and later to the Heart Mountain, residing in block 29. He spent his high school sophomore year in the barracks of block 7, but starting in the fall of 1943, he attended the new high school with sports facilities for basketball and football. The Heart Mountain High School was able to join the Big Horn Basin Athletic Conference. Keiichi never played high school football before and in his first game, he made a 50-yard run which turned out to be the longest run of the game. Later, he caught a pass and ran for 30-yards, the second longest gain and Heart Mountain won 7 - 0. Only 3 players on the team had prior high school football experience. In another game, he scored twice on runs and threw a pass for another touchdown. Heart Mountain finished undefeated winning all 4 games in 1943.

The Heart Mountain basketball team played 19 games with outside high school teams in 1944 – winning 10 of the games against much taller players. Keiichi was the leading scorer with 174 points. He was the Junior Class president for the second semester, and the Boys League vice president.



Harumi

During the 1944 football season, they finished 5 - 1, losing their final game against the eventual state champion Casper High School. They were the Big Horn Basin champs. During the 1945 basketball season, the team played 10 games with outside high school teams and won 6 of them. Keiichi was the Senior Class president for one semester.

In April of 1944, the high school had its “Students Day” where the students took over the running of the school for the day. Members of the Student Council selected him to the top position of superintendent of the school. After graduating from Heart Mountain High School in 1945, he served in the U.S. Army. After his discharge, he returned to the Los Angeles area and was employed by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

In 1982, he became a member of the Heart Mountain Reunion Committee of Los Angeles that put on the first of many Heart Mountain camp reunions. Following suit, the cities of San Jose put on two reunions, Seattle two, and Salt Lake City one. A total of 16 Heart Mountain reunions were held, with Los Angeles leading with 11 of them. Keiichi was one of 5 Heart Mountain persons attending all 16 reunions.

Keiichi's and his teammates' exploits on the football field are chronicled in the book *The Eagles of Heart Mountain* by Bradford Pearson.

He is survived by his wife Toshi, sons Darrell and Gary, brother Harry and sisters Hiromi Uyeda and Sachiko Alice Ikeda, and other relatives. He was predeceased by his younger brother Masami.

Takashi Ogawa (1925–2022)

As far as the eye could see along Road 90 where it meets Lane 9, stretching down the vast dusty farmland of Powell, Wyoming, and extending for miles in the shadow of Heart Mountain, sixty tractors paraded by the homestead farm that Tak Ogawa tended and nurtured for more than seventy years. The procession of farmers was there to pay tribute to the man they knew as a pioneer, neighbor, co-worker, helper, and friend.

On March 31, Ogawa passed away quietly at the age of 96, just as the sun was rising and most likely around the time he was usually heading out to plow the fields. The oldest working homesteader out of 215 veterans awarded homesteads after the war, Tak faithfully toiled the fields on one of his John Deere tractors until the age of 93. After his wife Emmy died a decade ago, he readjusted to a solitary farming life without her by his side. With typical humility, Tak used to say that there was nothing else he knew how to do and, perhaps more accurately, that his life would be empty without it.

I met Tak in 1994 when I volunteered to help move two barracks from the former site of the Heart Mountain camp to the Japanese American National Museum, where one barrack still greets visitors at the entry to its permanent exhibition. Tak graciously donated a part of the only barrack he received as part of his homesteader allotment. The ramshackle building remnant held bleak memories for those once forced to live in them and later provided sparse shelter for incoming homesteaders. The whitewashed 20 by 40-foot segment that Tak used for a storage shed was discovered by former Heart Mountain incarceratedee Bacon Sakatani, who befriended Tak and arranged for its transfer.



Angika Keinfeldt



Stan Honda

An Idaho native, Tak escaped incarceration because he lived outside the military zone and became the only Japanese American to be awarded a homestead at a time when the area was still reeling from the nearby incarceration camp that held as many as 14,000 Japanese Americans. As an army veteran who was first turned away from the Navy when he tried to enlist in 1941, and later drafted in 1944 to serve at Fort Bliss, Texas, until 1946, his military service qualified him to receive 114 acres and a barrack.

When photographer Stan Honda and I went to Wyoming in 2016, to work on our book and film project, *Moving Walls*, we found Tak coming home from another hard day's work, having just endured a protracted hospital stay for a heart condition a few months earlier. Appearing as robust as ever at age 90, he talked about retiring but somehow you knew it wasn't going to happen, at least as long as he had an ounce of sweat left in him.

Tak was never “just” a farmer, as he would like to call himself, but he embodied the qualities that make farming more than another humble profession. He gained the respect of all his farming neighbors by working hard, quietly doing his chores, and frequently helping them do theirs if they needed him. You could always find Tak out in the fields—severe Wyoming weather permitting—and I would venture to guess when harvest season rolls around, Tak's spirit can still be seen atop his trusty John Deere—much like the congregation of faithful farmers riding by to say farewell to their dear friend for the last time.

This remembrance was written by Sharon Yamato. A version of this article previously appeared in Rafu Shimpo.

A full-page photograph of Norman Mineta, an elderly man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. He is sitting on a wooden stool, looking directly at the camera. Behind him is a long, low wooden building with many windows, and several strands of barbed wire are stretched across the foreground. The scene is set indoors, likely in a museum.

NORMAN

MINETA

By Ray Locker

As a young boy, Norman Y. Mineta witnessed one of the darkest chapters in American history. His experience being incarcerated with his family at Heart Mountain inspired him to pursue political office. This was no easy feat. When Mineta ran for Mayor of San Jose in 1971, no Japanese American had ever led a major U.S. city or represented a congressional district outside Hawai'i. Mineta was first on both counts, but he was far from the last. He led the way for other Japanese Americans like Representatives. Robert Matsui, Doris Matsui, and Mark Takano to serve in the United States Congress.

When Mineta left public service in 2006, he had led two Cabinet agencies—Commerce and Transportation—for two different presidents: Democrat Bill Clinton and Republican George W. Bush. He had also chaired the House Transportation Committee when it passed landmark public transportation laws to build the nation's infrastructure. One of his greatest acts of political leadership was to help create the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, tasked with investigating the reasons behind the incarceration during World War II and its effects on the Japanese American community.

Mineta never forgot Heart Mountain, where he, along with the rest of his family, was incarcerated for 18 months of his childhood from 1942 to 1943. Before the war, the Mineta family built a successful life in San Jose. Kunisaku Mineta, Norm's

Norman Mineta, photographed with the original Heart Mountain barrack on display at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, CA.

*Courtesy of The Rafu Shimpo,
Photographer Mario Gershom Reyes, April 2019*



Above: Norm with longtime friend Alan Simpson.



Top right: Keiichi Ikeda, Norm, & Bacon Sakatani.



Shirley Ann Higuchi, Norm Mineta, Takashi Hoshizaki, LaDonna Zall, Bacon Sakatani, Alan Simpson, & Daniel Inouye at the 2011 Grand Opening of the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center.



Norm with Ann Burroughs, President and CEO of the Japanese American National Museum where he chaired the Board of Trustees.



Norm connecting with current boy scouts, and sitting with former Heart Mountain boy scouts, preparing to raise the flag.



Tom Brokaw speaks to Norm & Al about their friendship and work in politics and social justice.



father, immigrated to the United States in 1902 and worked in a sugar plant in San Jose. He survived the 1918-1920 influenza pandemic and became an insurance agent at a time when few companies would write policies for Japanese Americans. The Mineta family's forced removal and subsequent incarceration ripped them away from their piece of the American Dream. Thankfully, a white friend volunteered to watch their home for them, allowing them to return to San Jose after the war was over.

One shining light within Norm's incarceration was the lifelong friendship that he began with Alan Simpson, a friendship that would help shape U.S. history and provide inspiration for the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. In 1944, Japanese

American Boy Scouts inside the Heart Mountain camp invited scout troops from surrounding towns to join them in a jamboree. All of them refused, except for one troop from nearby Cody.

Simpson was among the Cody boys who passed the barbed wire fence to enter Heart Mountain for a jamboree unlike any other. Mineta and Simpson were paired together for a variety of activities, including erecting a tent and building a fire. Together, they enjoyed pulling pranks on their fellow scouts and came to realize they were kindred spirits. They never forgot that day together in the shadow of the mountain.

More than 30 years passed before they met again, when Simpson arrived in Washington as the newly

elected Republican senator from Wyoming in 1979. Mineta had arrived just four years earlier as a Democratic House member from San Jose. Despite Mineta and Simpson being from two different parties and having two very different life experiences, they picked up their friendship right where it left off. They regularly worked together to pass legislation in Congress and better the lives of all Americans.

In a sincere and profound act of bipartisanship, Mineta and Simpson helped pass the historic Civil Liberties Act of 1988 in which the Federal Government apologized for the Japanese American incarceration and paid each surviving incarcerated \$20,000. They also worked together to designate Heart Mountain as a National Historic Landmark,

and fostered the creation of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation in 1996.

The multiple examples of cooperation that Mineta and Simpson set during their political careers inspired our foundation to create the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain. The Institute is dedicated to honoring Mineta and Simpson's legacy of bipartisanship by fostering empathy, courage, and cooperation among our nation's next generation of leaders. Mineta believed in the need for this institute and the message it sends to a nation that needs and wants unity, even as some forces try to tear us apart. His life and career were inspiring examples of what we can accomplish when we work together and help others. 🙏

DISABILITY & ISPLACEMENT

AT HEART MOUNTAIN

By Nora James



Japanese American National Museum Eaton Collection

News of Faye Mayeda's incredible floral creations spread throughout the Heart Mountain camp via a *Sentinel* article describing her work.

Making Shell Corsages Hobby Of Former Tule Lake Resident

By KAY KUSHINO

Exquisitely modeled shell flower corsages and necklaces put together with infinite patience and care, are the handiwork of Faye Mayeda, 35-3-D, a former Tulean, who has found that a pleasant hobby can be the means of earning an income. Formerly of Longview, Wash., Miss Mayeda was evacuated with her family to Tule Lake where, with other residents, she discovered that a veritable gold mine of tiny shells existed, waiting to be excavated by enterprising people.

The camp was built on the bed of a former lake and before long, young and old alike learned that with a little expenditure of energy and effort, mementoes of former marine life could be accumulated and transformed into works of artistic beauty.

A childhood attack of infantile paralysis confines Miss Mayeda to a wheelchair, and so it was

her mother who ventured forth daily to dig in the lake bed and sift the soil for shells. Taking her lunch and shovel, she left early each morning and persisted in her work until sunset when tired, but rewarded with a handful of shells, the gleanings of an entire day's work, she brought them to her daughter.

A great amount of patience and painstaking labor goes into the making of a corsage. Each shell is carefully scraped with a penknife and scrubbed with soap and water. A coating of colored nail polish is then applied. The shell is glued by hand, then affixed to a cardboard base. Green wire stems and shells painted in green carry out the leaf motif of each corsage.

Among those on display are gardenias, roses, lilies of the valley, sweet peas and others which are Miss Mayeda's own creations. She explained that it requires a whole day to turn out one corsage, even with her mother's assistance, but, she added, "Since I can't do anything else, it gives me a lot of satisfaction to make something well so that others can get pleasure out of it."

At the request of friends, she has been filling orders for



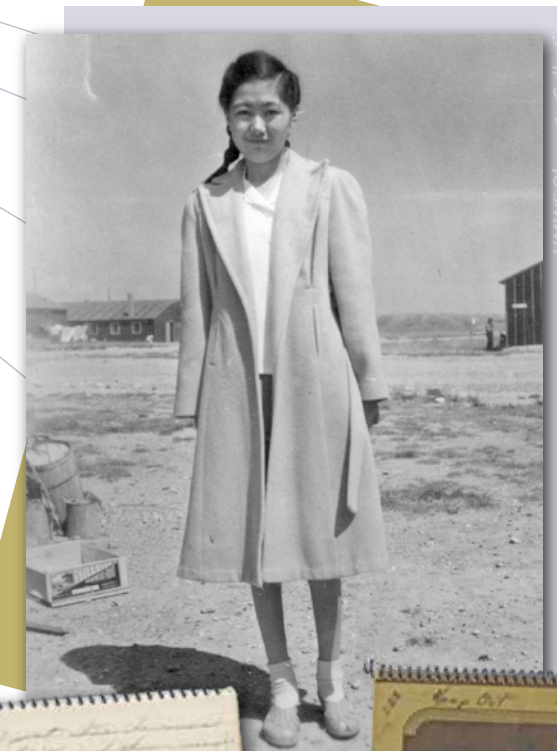
Disabled incarcerated people like Faye were very visible in the Heart Mountain camp. Peruse other issues of the *Sentinel*, and you'll find dozens of mentions of disabled incarcerated people, from advertisements for Braille lessons to a notice for a blind man's missing cane. Given that the disability community is one of the world's largest minority groups, this should be unsurprising. However, until recent decades, disability history has often been neglected. By looking more closely at the stories of disabled and chronically ill incarcerated people, we can gain a fuller understanding of incarceration and the Japanese American experience during WWII.

Navigating Forced Removal with Disabilities



Initially, the government issued exemptions to forced removal orders for orphans, Deaf and blind Japanese Americans, and others with severe disabilities. However, the government later amended these exceptions to only cover severely disabled people who were institutionalized. Sadly, at least a few people passed away in institutions on the West Coast or in Hawai'i while their families were incarcerated during the war and unable to visit them. These exceptions included many patients residing in tuberculosis sanatoriums on the West Coast; however, the government established two segregated, Japanese-American only sanitariums in California. While not everyone with chronic illnesses like tuberculosis identify as disabled, many of them do. Furthermore, many chronic illnesses can lead to further disabilities.

According to the National Park Service, approximately 1,000 of the 120,000 Japanese American incarcerated people subject to forced removal were disabled or infirm. Predictably, the government's plans for forced removal and incarceration often overlooked or blatantly ignored the needs of disabled and chronically ill people. In one case, a Deaf Japanese American man was unaware of the removal orders posted in his neighborhood; when he did not report for removal, government officials arrested him in the middle of the night without giving him any time to pack or prepare. In another instance, a man hospitalized on the West Coast for a heart condition was loaded on a train to Heart Mountain, Wyoming, which did not stop for medical attention until it reached Cheyenne. One camp administrator described it as a "case of premeditated murder." This lack of care and support for the needs of disabled Japanese Americans was layered on top of the already egregious disregard for their humanity and rights as citizens and residents of the United States.



Emi Mihara kept a meticulous diary documenting her experience at the Heart Mountain Hospital.

Education for Disabled Students

When sixteen-year-old Emi Mihara arrived at Heart Mountain in September of 1942, she was admitted to the Heart Mountain Hospital almost immediately. According to her younger brother, Mits, Emi was asthmatic with a weak heart. Before the war, she received treatment at the Santa Clara County Hospital, and was also hospitalized while

incarcerated at the Santa Anita temporary detention facility in California. Emi would spend the next three years in the Heart Mountain Hospital. In her first year at Heart Mountain, there were no arrangements for Emi to receive an education. Emi wrote to the principal of the Heart Mountain High School to enquire whether she could catch up through summer school and eventually received books to continue her education independently. Unfortunately, lack of an adequate educational system was an appallingly common experience for disabled students in the camps.

The WRA initially attempted to place Deaf and blind Japanese American students at schools for the Deaf and blind. However, many of these efforts failed due to racist anti-Japanese sentiment at these schools. The first class for disabled students in the camps was organized by a teacher at Manzanar in the spring of 1943. In the months before, students like Hannak Takagi, a Deaf fourteen year old from Berkeley, California, had no access to schooling. Like Emi, Hannah attempted to educate herself by spending hours in the camp library around her job making camouflage nets for the war effort. While the new class may have been better than nothing, the quality of education was still distinctly lacking.

In May of 1943, the WRA hired Natalie Perry, who had worked with mentally disabled students on the East Coast, to begin a school for disabled students at Tule Lake. Excited by the prospect, Hannah's family transferred to Tule Lake so she could attend. Hannah suggested they name the new school the "Helen Keller School," and wrote to Keller to share the news. Keller responded with encouraging words for the students, urging them to "remember this,—their courage in conquering obstacles will be a lamp throwing its bright rays into others lives besides their own." Unfortunately, the school suffered from many problems. Students were grouped together regardless of their age or disability, and according to Hannah, Miss Perry was unequipped to address all of their needs. Deaf students like Hannah were not allowed to use sign language in favor of lip reading and speaking, a practice called oralism which was common at the time. In 1943 when Tule Lake was converted into a segregation center with the advent of

the loyalty questionnaire, the Helen Keller school was shut down. The Takagi family eventually relocated to Illinois, where Hannah ended up at a school for the Deaf which allowed her to use sign language.

After the Helen Keller School at Tule Lake closed, Natalie Perry came to Heart Mountain to establish a similar program. Although a *Sentinel* article from December of 1943 announced that Miss Perry would create a separate school for "children requiring special guidance and instruction," just two weeks later another article explained that after conducting a survey of disabled children at Heart Mountain, Miss Perry would not be starting a special school. Instead, she planned to offer tutoring services to students who needed additional support. In a third apparent turnaround, an article from April, 1945 implies Miss Perry did begin a formal classroom, as a New York church donated toys and supplies to "the special corrective classes of the Washington Elementary School." Unfortunately, there is very little additional information about the makeup of these classes or the quality of education offered in them.

The Limitations of WRA Support

The WRA did set up some support systems for disabled Japanese Americans. At Heart Mountain, many of these systems were administered through the Social Service or Medical Social Service departments. Social workers met with families on a case-by-case basis and could help incarcerated secure mobility aids like canes or artificial limbs, hearing aids, or books in Braille. In several cases, people who became blind at Heart Mountain were connected with state services for the blind, who offered Braille instructors and talking book machines.

The Medical Social Service Department ran what they called a "Crippled Children's Clinic," to connect families with physically disabled children to doctors and services in the area. They also ran a hostel where chronically ill patients at the Heart Mountain Hospital could have slightly more independence while still receiving care, similar to an assisted living community.

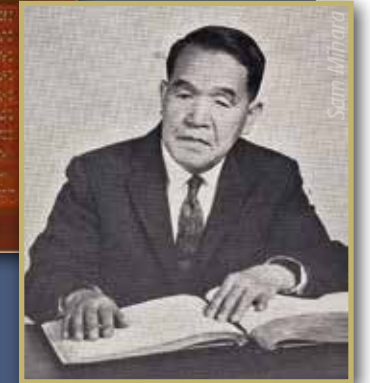


Tokinobu Mihara lost his eyesight while he was incarcerated at Heart Mountain due to a lack of proper medical care. Tokinobu designed his own form of Japanese Braille and used this Braille board to teach his system to other blind and low vision incarcerated at Heart Mountain.

Much of the social workers' time was occupied with transporting mentally ill and mentally disabled patients to institutions. While the Heart Mountain Hospital was equipped with a mental ward, complete with a padded cell for patients, the space was never intended to provide long-term care for mental patients. Given negative attitudes and a general lack of understanding towards disability and mental illness in the 1940s, institutionalization was a common response to all kinds of disabilities at the time. At least 25 individuals were institutionalized at Heart Mountain. Most ended up at the state hospital in Evanston, although a few were actually placed at institutions in California as early as February, 1943, an exception to the exclusion zone created by General DeWitt.

There were limitations and drawbacks to the services the WRA provided. Often when social workers attempted to obtain services or resources for disabled or chronically ill incarcerated, they were flatly denied. In one case, a man with tuberculosis of the hip was denied services by the Wyoming State Department of Rehabilitation because he was not a Wyoming resident - never mind that he couldn't access services on the West Coast because of the executive order. Other tuberculosis patients were denied admittance to state sanatoriums. Although disabled or ill Japanese Americans who were unable to work at Heart Mountain were eligible for compensation, disability payments generally fell in the lower range of the already meager pay scale in the camp.

The stark reality of forced removal and incarceration resulted in many becoming chronically ill or disabled at the camps. Poor living conditions and tight quarters led to a high incidence of communicable disease. Diseases like tuberculosis, German measles, or polio could lead to further disabilities. Inadequate medical care in the camp and lack of access to specialists



Tokinobu Mihara and the Braille Board

One of the most well-known stories about disability at Heart Mountain is that of Tokinobu Mihara and the Mihara Braille board. Tokinobu lost his sight at Heart Mountain when the WRA denied his requests to see a medical specialist outside the camp. He created his own Japanese system of Braille and taught it to other blind and low-vision incarcerated in the camp. Learn more about Tokinobu's story in Sam Mihara's article in the Spring/Summer 2020 issue of *Kokoro Kara*, "Beyond the Braille Board: Tokinobu Mihara's Legacy" and in the article on page 22 of this issue.

It's impossible to sum up the experiences of every disabled Japanese American unjustly incarcerated during WWII. Many of their stories have been lost or overlooked due to prejudice and stigmatization. For instance, stories of physically disabled people can be easier to research than those of mentally disabled individuals. However, attitudes towards disability and illness have come a long way since the 1940s. Whenever you are confronted with history, ask yourself which perspectives are missing or misrepresented. Asking these questions is the first step in writing a more inclusive and representative history.

Morale of Blinded Nisei High During Training

Morale of nisei soldiers, even though permanently blinded in combat, remains high, it was shown here this week in Christmas greetings sent The Sentinel from Pfc. Yoshinao Omiya from Old Farms Convalescent hospital, Avon, Conn.

Private Omiya, native of Hawaii who lost his sight in Italy, recently was featured in a full-page picture in LIFE magazine. He was a member of the famous 100th infantry battalion, the most highly decorated single unit in the U.S. army.

"Thank you ever so much for your fine, informative newspaper. It has kept me in close contact with our boys. It is most gratifying to hear of the wonderful showing of our boys in combat. Will be going to Morristown, N. J. on Dec. 28 for a month's training with my Seeing Eye dog. After getting my dog I will charge papers."

At Old Farms blinded "see through the face", a time in history this sense developed by army psych

"We've known for 200 ahead of them through Jacob Levine, who is in is the first time that the blind people."

In the training, the b they click as they walk waves strike the screen.

After several weeks, amazing accuracy that the proximately how far ah through which they can p Dr. Levine believes t a long step toward norma pleted the course.



Despite never having been incarcerated, Yoshinao Omiya was well-known at Heart Mountain due to his feature in *Life* magazine, and went on to feature in two *Sentinel* articles.

sometimes resulted in disabilities, as in the case of Tokinobu Mihara. Mihara became blind at Heart Mountain when the administration refused to allow him to leave the camp to see an ophthalmologist to manage his glaucoma.

As Japanese Americans began to leave Heart Mountain in 1945, the Social Services Department was inundated with requests for financial assistance from families who had received aid while incarcerated. In March of 1945, 746 families were on the list for welfare services after camp. This list was compiled by social workers with assistance from education staff and community leaders. One of the most common qualifications for welfare recipients was a disabling condition that prevented one from working. However, a number of families who qualified for aid at Heart Mountain were taken off the list because they were deemed to have sufficient resources to manage after leaving camp. Considering the government's negligence in assisting Japanese Americans after they left the camps, it is unsurprising that assistance for disabled individuals was lacking.

The Roots of a Movement: Disabled Nisei Veterans

According to the front page of the December 16, 1944 issue of the Heart Mountain Sentinel, "Morale of Blinded Nisei High During Training." The army provided training for veterans who lost their sight in combat, including training with guide dogs. The article focuses on one Nisei veteran: Yoshinao Omiya, who lost his sight in a land mine explosion during the crossing of the Volturno River in Italy. Although Omiya was from Honolulu, Hawaii, and had never been incarcerated, he was well-known at the Heart Mountain camp. Omiya was featured in a full-page feature in *Life* Magazine, praising his courage and service in Italy. It seems that incarcerated were eager to follow his story, as the Sentinel printed a follow-up story just two months later as Omiya headed back to Hawaii with his new guide dog, Audrey.

Many Japanese Americans who fought in WWII became disabled in combat situations. While many of these men were either from Hawaii like Yoshinao Omiya or did not return to the camps after being discharged from the military, their stories clearly resonated with Japanese Americans in the WRA camps. Additionally, disabled Nisei WWII veterans played a role in the larger disability rights movement. In the years following WWII, disabled veterans advocated for greater support and resources for disabled individuals. Their advocacy contributed to advances such as the advent of Social Security Disability Insurance in the 1950s.

Several disabled Japanese American WWII veterans were involved in the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. Among them were Senator Daniel Inouye from Hawaii, who lost an arm in combat in Europe, and Senator Spark Matsunaga, also from Hawaii. Another Japanese American politician involved in the disability rights movement was Congressman Robert Matsui from California, who was not disabled in military combat but lost 20% of his hearing when he contracted an ear infection while incarcerated at Tule Lake. Without the work of these men and others, the disability rights movement may not look the same today.



Sam Mihara at the JACL's annual convention in Las Vegas on August 6, and with fellow award winner Dianne Fukami.

Bottom: Sam, age 4, holding the sign, with his brother Nob and his parents at Yellowstone National Park in 1937.

2022 JAPANESE AMERICAN OF THE BIENNIUM WINNER SAM MIHARA

In August, the Japanese American Citizens League awarded its Japanese American of the Biennium award to two incredible contributors to our community: Dianne Fukami in the field of Arts, Literature, and Communication and Heart Mountain's own Sam Mihara in the area of Education and the Humanities.

Sam has been lecturing for the past eight years, reaching more than 90,000 people through upwards of 450 presentations. Audience members are introduced to the parallels between the Japanese American incarceration and more recent and contemporary injustices and constitutional violations.

While giving an overview of this chapter in history, he also shares his personal experiences from his time at Heart Mountain, specifically the medical hardships his family had to endure. Pictured on the right is Sam with his brother and parents in 1937 on a visit to Yellowstone National Park. The photo is significant as his father is looking straight at the camera, showing that his eyesight was still good at this time after 17 years of treatment by a glaucoma specialist in San Francisco. In the time Tokinobu Mihara was incarcerated at Heart Mountain, he was denied specialist treatment and was left permanently blind. Sam's work supports efforts to aid in humane treatment for immigrants and other marginalized communities. His lectures engage the public and ensure this story is spread far and wide.

This is my message: be proactive. Don't wait for audiences to come to you. Go out and find them. Find the people who want to be part of our history that should never be forgotten.



BOB KUWAHARA & the Nisei Animators

By Dakota Russell

In 1959, a cartoon mouse named Hashimoto-San stepped onto the silver screen for the very first time. He wasn't destined for celebrity—like that other mouse—but to his creator, Bob Kuwahara, he was everything. Bob had been an animator in some of America's biggest cartoon studios before World War II. He watched as those same studios made cartoons depicting people of Japanese ancestry as grotesque and evil caricatures. The incarceration of Bob's family at Heart Mountain was testament to the consequences of such insensitive and racist representation.

After he was released, Bob created Hashimoto-San to set the record straight. The little mouse was the first positive representation of Japanese culture ever to appear in Western animation. Hashimoto was wise, witty, and always stood up against injustice, even when facing a much larger opponent. Bob wanted his children to see themselves on the screen, to see everything they could become.

Uncollected Lectures by Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Edward Ringe Publishing, 1932.



In the 1930s, Bob Kuwahara worked as an animator for both Disney and MGM Studios.



Kuwahara first worked as a book illustrator. He drew this portrait of Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1929.

The Golden Age

Unlike most Japanese Americans his age, Bob Shinruko Kuwahara was an Issei—an immigrant from Japan. He came to California in 1910, at just nine years old. His father tutored him in English for only a short time before sending him to public school in Los Angeles. Kuwahara's talent for art emerged early. By high school, he was drawing cartoons for the student newspaper. After graduation, he studied at the Otis Art Institute.

By the time Kuwahara left Otis, Hollywood was entering a Golden Age of animation. To the surprise of many young artists, studios were happy to hire Asian American and Latin American animators. Their Black colleagues, on the other hand, were largely locked out of the business. In 1932, Bob Kuwahara went to work for Walt Disney Studios as one of the first professional Japanese American animators.

At first, Kuwahara worked as an "inbetweener", the artist who draws the frames in between the important action. However, his talent caught the eye of the studio's leadership. He soon became Disney's first "story sketch" man, working closely with the writers to create a visual

Bob Kuwahara and Julia Suski were married in 1932. Fellow artist and maid of honor Gyo Fujikawa is also pictured.

Right: Fujikawa's books showed great sensitivity to the hopes and fears of young children, and her illustrations featured kids of all backgrounds playing together.

First named Jasper & Jinx, the characters from "Puss Gets the Boot" would later become famous as Tom & Jerry.



script for each cartoon. This practice is widely used today, to make both cartoons and live-action films.

Kuwahara left Disney Studios for Metro Goldwyn Mayer (MGM) in 1937. He joined a project with MGM's two young hotshot animators, William Hanna and Joseph Barbera. Hanna and Barbera had an idea for a slapstick cartoon featuring two enemies—a cat and a mouse—locked in constant battle.

"Puss Gets the Boot" borrowed heavily from two feline-centered *Silly Symphonies* Kuwahara worked on at Disney. After it was nominated for an Academy Award, MGM ordered a whole series of cartoons featuring the cat and mouse duo.

Kuwahara, sadly, would not be around to celebrate the success of this series. In 1942, the Federal Government forcibly removed Kuwahara from his home and sent him to the Heart Mountain concentration camp in northwest Wyoming.

Nisei Women in the Arts

In the early 1900s, art and animation were dominated by men. Yet, many Japanese American women pushed their way to the top. These young women became known for both their talents and their unique perspective.

Julia Suski was born in San Francisco in 1904. Her father, P.M. Suski was a man of many professions—ironworker, tailor, photographer, and medical doctor, to name a few. He encouraged his children to be equally well-rounded. Julia began medical school at the University of Southern California, but instead switched to study art, music, and journalism.

Originally dressed in jockey's silks, Li'l Neebo changed to clothes better suited for the desert when he moved to Amache.



When her sister Louise became the English language editor of the *Rafu Shimpo* newspaper in Los Angeles, Julia joined the staff as an illustrator and columnist. The *Rafu Shimpo* started in 1903 as a Japanese-only publication, but, with Julia and Louise's help, grew into a bilingual voice for the Nisei generation in the 1930s.

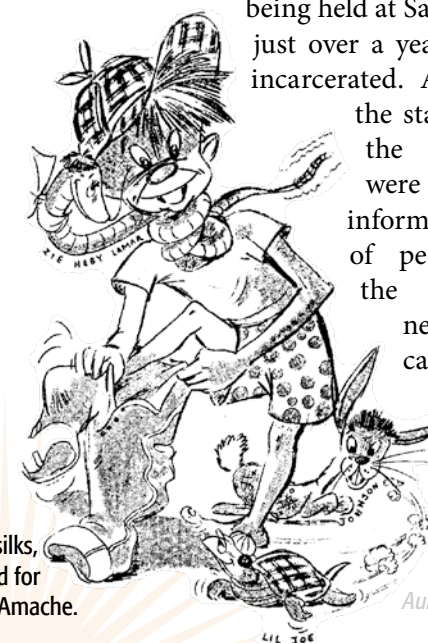
In 1932, Julia met and married Bob Kuwahara, who had recently returned home after failing to make a living as a commercial artist in New York.

Camp Comics

In 1942, Bob and Julia Kuwahara—along with their two sons Dennis and Michel—were sent to a makeshift camp at the Santa Anita Racetrack outside Los Angeles. Temporary detention centers like Santa Anita held incarcerated while more permanent concentration camps, including Heart Mountain, were built.

Another young animator named Chris Ishii was also being held at Santa Anita. Ishii had worked just over a year at Disney before he was incarcerated. At Santa Anita, he joined the staff of the camp newspaper, the *Pacemaker*. Newspapers were vital for quickly spreading information to large numbers of people in camp. In fact, the government encouraged newspaper projects at all the camps, but monitored their content closely.

Ishii's contribution to the *Pacemaker* was a one-panel comic, "Li'l Neebo." The strip



Auraria Library, Denver, CO

depicted the misadventures of an awkward lad adjusting to life at Santa Anita. When Ishii was moved to the Amache camp in Colorado, Neebo came with him, appearing in the pages of the *Granada Pioneer*.

Japanese Americans incarcerated at the Tanforan Racetrack near San Francisco also had a character to call their own. Jankee was created by Bennie Nobori and published in the *Tanforan Totalizer*. Like his fellow animators in Santa Anita Nobori had also worked for Disney Studios before the war.

Both Nobori and "Jankee" moved from Tanforan to Utah's Topaz camp in September 1942. Willie Ito, then just a boy, remembers flipping through the *Topaz Times* in search of Nobori's comic strip. It was one of his early inspirations to become a cartoonist.

In 1943, Nobori and his wife obtained a transfer to Heart Mountain, where her parents were held. For the *Heart Mountain Sentinel*, Bennie created Zootsuo, a character based on Heart Mountain's rebellious *pachuke* zootsuiters.

Other camps had comics, too. Eddie Sato drew the character "Dokie" for Idaho's *Minidoka Irrigator*. The Jerome, Arkansas camp paper featured Harry Kuwada's "Alec" and "Pete & Zeke." Amache had characters in abundance: Tom Okamoto and Jack Ito continued "Li'l Neebo" after Chris Ishii left for the army, and he was joined by Esther Takei's "Ama-Chan," Rosie Arima's "Eva-Cuee," and Tom Yabu's "Curlie." These comic strips reflected on the humorous parts of life in the camps, and injected some much-needed levity into the lives of incarcerated.

The Kuwaharas at Heart Mountain

Bob Kuwahara did not cartoon much while incarcerated. Instead, he focused his energy on painting and teaching. While at Santa Anita, Kuwahara organized art classes for his fellow incarcerated. He believed that art could help Japanese Americans express the anger, pain, and fear they were feeling. "Art is not only cultural, but practical," Kuwahara told a reporter from the *Pacemaker*. "It is a natural part of our existence."

In Wyoming, Kuwahara joined a group of like-minded artists—known as the Art Students League of Heart Mountain—to teach classes on an even wider



Jankee—short for "Japanese Yankee" faced problems that many incarcerated could relate to.



Bennie Nobori drew popular comic strips in the newspapers at the Topaz and Heart Mountain camps.



Where Topaz's Jankee was helpful and kindhearted, Heart Mountain's Zootsuo was more of a fashionable rebel.

scale. Because of the efforts of this group, a thriving arts community developed within the camp. Incarcerated made art both as a distraction from the indignities of life in Heart Mountain and as a means to cope with emotional distress.

While Bob Kuwahara taught art, Julia Kuwahara began organizing music classes. Using a piano in one of the camp's recreation halls, she started teaching piano lessons for adults and children alike. Every Sunday, she also played the organ at the camp's Maryknoll Catholic Church. During the week, Julia worked as secretary for Heart Mountain Reports Officer Bonnie Mechau.

In 1943, the government sent filmmakers to Heart Mountain to record life inside the camp. It was probably Mechau who recommended the Kuwaharas to them as an example of a model Japanese American family. Bob and Julia staged scenes of life inside the barracks for the cameras. The footage was used in the 1944 propaganda film "A Challenge to Democracy." The film emphasized the loyalty of Japanese Americans, but ignored the indignities of camp, painting an image of life that was far more comfortable than it really was.

After almost a year at Heart Mountain, Kuwahara was allowed to leave camp to seek work in Chicago, under the



The Kuwaharas older son, Dennis, did not appear with them in the 1944 government propaganda film. A smaller family made their barracks room look much less crowded.

Taught by professional artists like Benji Okubo, pictured here, and Bob Kuwahara, art classes at Heart Mountain were open to everyone.



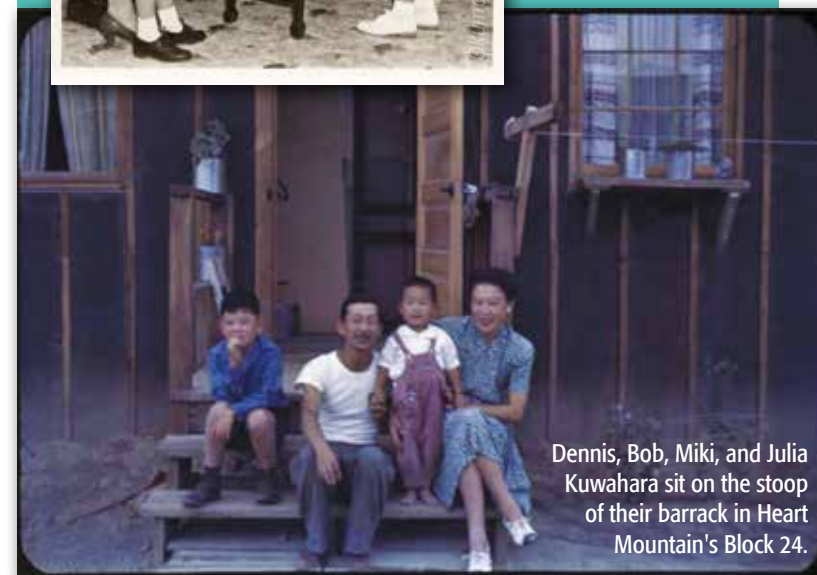
Julia Kuwahara leads her students in a singalong after a piano class at Heart Mountain.



"Miki" ran from 1945 to 1950, and told stories about a young boy and his imaginary—or possibly magical—best friend, Uncle Harry.

"Miki" ended its run when Kuwahara took a job with Terrytoons Animation in nearby New Rochelle, New York. Kuwahara mostly worked on animated cartoons, but in 1954, he created a comic strip for the studio, "Barker Bill." Circus ringmaster Barker Bill was the host of Terrytoons' first television show, but only just barely. Tight budgets meant that Bill was never animated. He only appeared as a voice and a series of static title cards.

Kuwahara's challenging task was to make America love this paper-thin character. Kuwahara created a whole backstory for Bill, as well as a circus full of exotic animals and colorful supporting characters. Kuwahara's strip ran under the name of the studio's founder, Paul Terry, for a year before Terry retired and sold his business to CBS. The new owners scrapped the character of Barker Bill altogether.



Dennis, Bob, Miki, and Julia Kuwahara sit on the stoop of their barrack in Heart Mountain's Block 24.



Kuwahara's "Barker Bill" comic strip turned the Terrytoons' cartoon host into the frazzled owner of a struggling two-bit circus.

In 1956, while still working at Terrytoons, Kuwahara entered a United Features Syndicate contest seeking out new comic strips from across America. He placed fifth—not high enough to win any prize money, but enough to get a contract for his submission, "Marvelous Mike." Coming in first was Tom Okamoto, one of the former cartoonists for the Amache camp newspaper. "Marvelous Mike" ran in papers nationwide until the end of 1957, and was the first and only time that Kuwahara was able to publish a strip under his own name.

Back to the Drawing Board

By 1950, Bob Kuwahara had been out of the animation business for eight years. Living on the East Coast, far away from Hollywood, there were few chances for Kuwahara to break back in. However, just a few miles away in New Rochelle, New York, a legacy animation house was springing back to life. Terrytoons Studios would be Bob Kuwahara's home for the rest of his career.



Mighty Mouse gave Terrytoons Studios new life. When the company moved to larger offices in 1949, Terry had his star painted on the side of the building.



For nearly half a century, Paul Terry was a leader in American animation.



Terrytoons' veteran animators—Vinnie Bell, Gene Dietch, and Bob Kuwahara—review some of the studio's work in 1957.



In "Marvelous Mike" a family unwittingly adopts a talking baby, who meddles in their lives and changes them for the better.

Paul Terry made his first cartoon in 1915, when American animation was still in its infancy. His *Aesop Fables* series and his character Farmer Al Falfa were inspirations to young artists like Walt Disney, Ub Iwerks, and Max & Dave Fleischer. He developed one of the first cartoons with sound in 1928—one month before Disney premiered "Steamboat Willie."

As animation grew more sophisticated—and more expensive—Terry gained a reputation for enforcing tight budgets and looking after his bottom line. "Let Walt Disney be the Tiffany's of the business," he was fond of saying. "I want to be the Woolworth's!" Terry's studio, Terrytoons, was eclipsed by new competitors in the 1930s, but stayed profitable thanks to his cost cutting.

In 1942, Terry and his team had an idea to spoof the popular Fleischer Studios Superman cartoons. They settled on a tale about a heroic mouse protecting his city from feline criminals. The character of Mighty Mouse was a smash hit, putting Terrytoons back in the game.

Throughout the 1940s, Terrytoons continued to debut popular new

characters like Gandy Goose and Heckle and Jeckle. Terry scaled up production, moving to a bigger building in downtown New Rochelle and hiring more animation talent. Bob Kuwahara joined the Terrytoons crew in 1950 and quickly adapted to the breakneck speed of work, helping to create 19 cartoons in that year alone.

Ever the shrewd businessman, Paul Terry saw that the future of cartoons was in television. He partnered with CBS to create *Barker Bill's Cartoon Show* in 1954, recycling old theatrical shorts for new audiences of children. He sold his studio to CBS the following year and retired. A new chapter had opened in animation history—the era of Saturday morning cartoons had arrived.

The Japanese House Mouse

Work at Terrytoons did not change much after CBS bought the studio in 1955. Bob Kuwahara and his animators were still tasked with producing cartoons as quickly as possible for as little money as possible. However, the small studio offered Kuwahara opportunities he would never have had at Disney. By the end of the 1950s, he was directing his own cartoons, and had the chance to create a new character.

For his first star character, Kuwahara drew upon his Japanese heritage for inspiration. Hashimoto-San, a small and unassuming mouse, lived in the idyllic countryside of Japan. He outwitted evil cats, pursued adventures with his wife and kids, and told stories to his American reporter friend. Hashimoto-San cartoons prioritized entertainment over education, but most taught a lesson or two about Japanese history or culture along the way.



Bob Kuwahara walks fellow Terrytoons animator Tom Morrison through the storyboard of a new cartoon.

Hashimoto-San challenged the presumption in 20th century cartoons that white America was the only place where loving, supportive families existed.



Kuwahara's cartoon mouse, Hashimoto-San, represented Japanese people and culture in a positive way.

The first Hashimoto-San cartoon short was released in theaters in 1959. "Hashimoto-San" was simply animated, but Kuwahara's passion for the project ensured it was more artistic than the studio's typical output. CBS even screened the cartoon for Academy Awards voters, though it failed to get a nomination. Kuwahara made sixteen more Hashimoto-San cartoons over the next four years.

Though Kuwahara and Terrytoons never called attention to it, Hashimoto-San was a groundbreaking character. In the early years of Western animation, Asian and Asian American characters were racist stereotypes that echoed anti-immigrant views. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, cartoons joined other American media in making villains of all people of Japanese ancestry. These stereotypes persisted through the 1950s and beyond.

The Hashimoto-San cartoons were the first positive portrayal of Asian culture in American cartoons. The character of Hashimoto loved his family, was kind-hearted toward his friends, and expressed an open mind and worldview. Quietly, Kuwahara used Hashimoto-San as a tool to change audience expectations about Asian characters on-screen.

One mouse could not fix all the problems of racial stereotyping and representation in American cartoons. Many of those same problems still persist today. But Kuwahara created a space—however small—for Asian American kids to see heroes that looked like them on television, and opened a door for artists of color to create characters that faithfully reflected their own backgrounds and experiences. It's a fitting legacy for Bob Kuwahara, an immigrant from Japan who helped shape the course of some of the most celebrated pop culture in America.



Popular characters like Bugs Bunny and Donald Duck went to war in the 1940s, but their cartoons reinforced hurtful stereotypes that affected all people of Japanese ancestry.

RACE AND CARTOONING

Cartoons have long been used as weapons, to stereotype and dehumanize racial and ethnic minorities. Japanese Americans in the 1940s knew this all too well. Since the late 1800s, in both print and animation, Asian immigrants had been depicted as snakes, rats, and bucktoothed monsters.

And yet, even Japanese American cartoonists demonstrated racial bias in their work. Bennie Nobori's *Zootsuo* comic strip include a Native American character who spoke in the stilted English of a Hollywood Indian. The character of "Mammy Two Shoes," who first appeared in Bob Kuwahara's Disney shorts and was later used in Tom & Jerry cartoons, was so offensive to Black audiences that MGM later redrew these old cartoons to remove her. Even Hashimoto-San, for all of his positive qualities, was voiced by a white man doing a broad imitation of a Japanese accent.

Anti-Asian racism in animation persisted throughout the 20th century. Today, the character Shang-Chi is known for his positive portrayal in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, but he made his debut in comics in 1973. Marvel wanted to capitalize on the Kung Fu movies popular at the time, but gave writers some restrictions. They had to make Shang-Chi half white, and they had to use legacy villain Fu Manchu, who Marvel had just gained the rights to. Fu Manchu was created by British author Sax Rohmer in 1913, expressly as an anti-Asian propaganda tool—"the Yellow Peril incarnate in one man." Marvel cast the villain as Shang-Chi's father and nemesis, but changed little about his racist history or appearance.

Sadly, animation has not entirely shaken off its spotty history with race. It was only in 2020, after years of protest from the Asian American community, that *The Simpsons*

Zootsuo's sidekick was a racist caricature of Native Americans, based on portrayals that Bennie Nobori saw in Hollywood Westerns.



California State University

Walt Disney Company



Insensitive cartoons can do real harm. Kids of South Asian heritage describe how *The Simpsons'* portrayal of Apu seemed to give permission for others to laugh at their appearance and accents.



The appearance of the Marvel super villain, Fu Manchu, in 1973 was an almost exact copy of this Yellow Peril propaganda from 1898. Yellow Peril was a racist trope that encompassed grotesque, harmful imagery and the belief that Asian people posed an existential threat to Western society and values.



Bibliothèque nationale de France

retired its long-running Indian American character, Apu. The character had been criticized for his exaggerated accent—provided by a white actor—and for leaning into damaging stereotypes about South Asian immigrants.

Audiences have started to understand the importance of allowing animators of different races and ethnicities to tell their own stories. Recent films such as *Turning Red* and *Encanto* have given minority creators the opportunity to faithfully depict their own cultures and experiences.

Meanwhile, in Los Angeles...

The incarceration abruptly ended the careers of many promising Japanese American animators. However, their work inside the camps—whether drawing comics or teaching art classes—had an impact on the kids who looked up to them. After the war, these young Nisei artists followed in the footsteps of their idols.

Iwao Takamoto was incarcerated at the Manzanar camp in California when he was just 17 years old. Bored, he passed the time by sketching in his notebook. His drawings caught the eye of two older incarcerated—possibly Kango Takamura and Albert Nozaki—who had been art directors at major studios before the war. The

two men recognized Takamoto's talent and debated how best to ensure his success after the war was over.

Takamoto was too poor to go to art school and didn't want to move to Japan to make comics, so his mentors finally suggested he apply at Disney. His confidence boosted, Takamoto called Disney Studios as soon as he was released from Manzanar. The studio hired him as an inbetweenner.

Takamoto had a talent for designing characters, and soon rose through the ranks at Disney. He left the studio in 1961 to join Hanna-Barbera Productions, where he spent the rest of his career. Takamoto is most celebrated today for his animated adaptation of E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* and his character design for Scooby-Doo.

In 1954, Willie Ito walked into the Disney offices with his portfolio of artwork under his arm. He was interviewing for his dream job. In the hiring office, Ito was surprised to come face-to-face with another Japanese American. Iwao Takamoto silently and seriously looked through Willie Ito's portfolio, then gave him a wide smile. "Takamoto became my mentor, my sensei, and my friend," Ito later said. Ito spent his first weeks at Disney working on the spaghetti scene for *Lady & the Tramp*, one of the most memorable sequences in animation history.

Ito followed Takamoto to Hanna-Barbera, where he worked on *The Flintstones*, *Secret Squirrel*, *Wacky Races*, and much more. He rejoined Disney in the 1980s as a creative artist for products and publications—much the same role Gyo Fujikawa had held at the studio years before.



Willie Ito



Willie Ito was hooked on animation from the moment he saw *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* at age five.

Shig & Maggie

After retiring from Disney in 1999, Willie Ito wanted to use his art to share stories about what happened to Japanese Americans during World War II. He heard his friend, Shig Yabu, tell a group of children about the magpie Yabu adopted while incarcerated at Heart Mountain. The bird, named Maggie, learned to mimic words and phrases she heard around the camp. Maggie and Yabu became constant companions.

Ito realized that this story would make a wonderful children's picture book. He and Yabu collaborated to create *Hello, Maggie!* in 2007. The book has since sold thousands of copies all over the world. Each year, visitors come to Heart Mountain Interpretive Center specifically to pay their respects to Maggie.

In 2019, Ito began working with students at both the Nemo Academy of Digital Arts in Florence, Italy, and Sheridan College in Toronto to develop plans for a *Hello, Maggie!* animated short film. Despite COVID lockdowns and international travel restrictions, work continued through the pandemic. Character designs, layouts, and storyboards for the film are now complete.

"Bob Kuwahara & the Nisei Animators" was an exhibit we created and displayed at the Interpretive Center from May 2022 to January 2023. At the 2022 Heart Mountain Pilgrimage, we were pleased to welcome Bob Kuwahara's son Miki (pictured also on page 26 as a child) and granddaughter Beth. Here they are visiting the exhibit while participating in the Pilgrimage.



Shig Yabu & Willie Ito



Iwao Takamoto could not afford art school after he left the Manzanar camp, but was still hired on at Walt Disney Studios in 1945.



When writers approached Takamoto about adding a dog to their team of animated amateur detectives, he had the idea to make the character a big, clumsy Great Dane. This is one of Takamoto's first sketches of Scooby-Doo.

2022 HEART MOUNTAIN PILGRIMAGE

FILMS

The 2022 Heart Mountain Pilgrimage opened with the Wyoming premiere screening of *Omoiyari*, a song film directed by Kaoru Ishibashi, who performs as Kishi Bashi, and Justin Taylor Smith. In a darkened Wynona Thompson Auditorium, former incarcerated and descendent families watched the weaving of archival footage, music, and stunning imagery to tell a story all too familiar to them. As the film ended, the lights came up and the applause dissipated, people were visibly moved by the film. Aura Sunada Newlin, struggling to express her gratitude through her tears, began a Q&A with Kishi Bashi and Smith about what it meant to them to create the film and the journey that Kishi Bashi took in examining this history.



Kishi Bashi & Justin Taylor Smith prepare for the screening and discussion of their film *Omoiyari*.



That evening, we also screened *Fugetsu-Do*, an intimate portrait of a sweet shop that has been an anchor of the Japanese American community in Little Tokyo since 1903. Brian Kito, third generation owner of Fugetsu-do, and Heart Mountain descendant, brought mochi for the audience and participated in a Q&A with filmmaker Kaia Rose. Many in the audience shared their fond memories of going to the shop to buy mochi with their families as children.



Sweets from Fugetsu-Do!



Brian Kito



Kaia Rose

WORKSHOPS & EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS

On Thursday, early arrival participants had the opportunity to participate in an array of special workshops, including a behind-the-scenes peek at the production of our podcast, a guided tour of the original root cellar, a hike up Heart Mountain, and a family history and genealogy workshop administered by Densho.

Friday, we hosted four educational panels that featured authors who have written about the Japanese American incarceration, a photography & documentary journey highlighting the unique experiences at each confinement site, a digital storytelling & mapping project, and the firsthand experiences of a former incarcerated and his family at Heart Mountain. Each panel ran two separate sessions. They were so well attended that, even after bringing in more chairs, it was standing room only for both sessions. We hope to continue to provide more of these fascinating sessions at future pilgrimages, giving a platform to diverse voices in the Japanese American community.



Museum Manager Cally Steussy leads a tour of the original Heart Mountain root cellar.

This year's intrepid hikers prepare to ascend Heart Mountain!



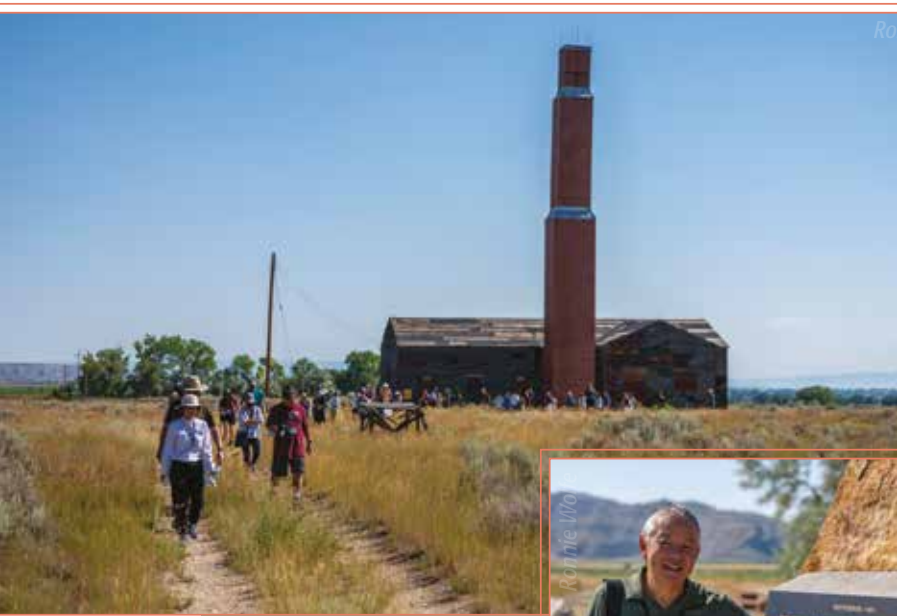
Erin Aoyama leads an educational session about a digital storytelling & mapping project.



SATURDAY SITE TOURS

The Saturday tours around the hospital grounds, memorial and honor roll, and the original barrack were full despite the temperature reaching nearly 90 degrees that day. In the sweltering barrack, attendees learned about what life was like inside a barrack and how the incarceration affects each generation differently. On top of the hill, families gathered near the honor roll to hear about the patriotism of the men of the 442nd RCT

as well as the Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee. Afterwards, many who had a family member serve in the military went to find their name on the honor roll in an act of remembrance. Finally, at the hospital complex attendees heard the story of Sam Mihara's father, Tokinobu, and how he went blind inside the camp. Heart Mountain board member Lia Nitake helped Sam discover that the Augmented Reality plaque featuring his voice and his father's story was located at the hospital complex, much to Sam's delight.



Ronnie Wolfe



Kathy Santa Yulie



Ronnie Wolfe

Lia Nitake demonstrates the Heart Mountain AR App (augmented reality) to Sam Mihara. The plaque at the hospital features Sam's family story at Heart Mountain.

Pilgrimage attendees explore the hospital, honor roll, and memorial walking trail.



Ronnie Wolfe



JUDGE GOGO FLAG

We were honored to be a part of Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Johnny Cepeda Gogo's flag signing project! Judge Gogo sent one of his 48-starred flags to Heart Mountain during the Pilgrimage and asked that all former incarcerated sign for themselves and any family members they had. The flag was proudly displayed throughout the day on Saturday for everyone to see.



Kathy Santa Yulie



Kathy Santa Yulie

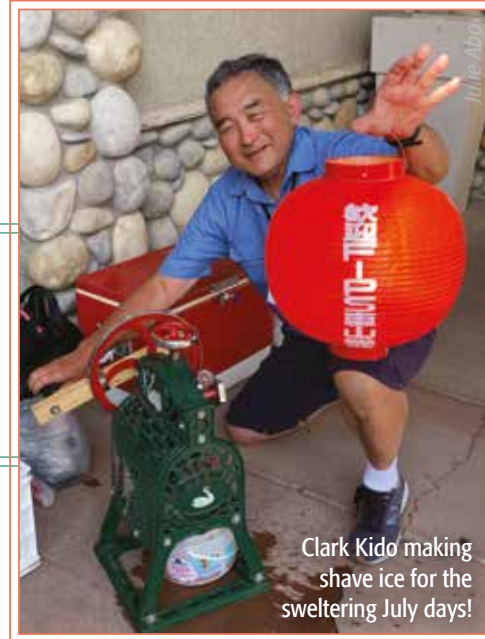


Kathy Santa Yulie

Former incarcerated sign Judge Gogo's flag during the course of the Pilgrimage.



Kathy Santa Yulie



GROUND BREAKING: THE MINETA-SIMPSON INSTITUTE AT HEART MOUNTAIN

It seemed as if the canopy covering the site of the groundbreaking for the Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain could not hold any more people as the members of the families of Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson jammed together on Saturday. They had convened, some for the first time, to help turn the ceremonial shovel to start work on the institute that is dedicated to the lives and careers of Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson, two celebrated public servants who first met as Boy Scouts at Heart Mountain in 1943.

"It's a physical building that we are constructing, but it's much more than that," said Aura Sunada Newlin, interim executive director of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation. "It's the expansion of our ability to reach a national and international audience with the story of our past here, but also the dynamism of our present and the vision that we have for the future."

"The friendship of Norm and Al really represents what this nation should be and can be," Rep. Liz Cheney (R-Wyo.) said. "Their friendship demonstrated what could be accomplished when we come together." The crowd of about 400 people

greeted Cheney, Wyoming's sole House member, warmly, in part for her support of Heart Mountain and for her work on the committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

Erika Moritsugu, the White House liaison to the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, said she felt the power of place being at Heart Mountain. "We're remembering our collective history," Moritsugu said. "This is not just a Japanese American story, but it's an American story with implications for the entire world."

At the Saturday lunch, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation presented its LaDonna Zall Compassionate Witness Award to the Walk family, which was represented by Margot Walk, a longtime supporter of the foundation. Walk's father, Maurice Walk, was an attorney who resigned in protest from the War Relocation Authority because of its treatment of Japanese Americans. "He spoke out against the loyalty oath and racism," Margot Walk said of her father. "My father was one of the first compassionate witnesses." Cynthia Walk, Maurice's daughter and Margot's sister, also shared in the honor.



Pete Simpson, Shirley Ann Higuchi, Deni Mineta, Alan Simpson, and Aura Sunada Newlin prepare to break ground on the new Mineta-Simpson Institute at Heart Mountain.

Multiple generations of the Mineta family journeyed to Wyoming to honor Norm Mineta this summer and participate in the Pilgrimage.

Reflections of a Sansei



Tadashi Kinoshita



Kazuko Kinoshita
at Heart Mountain

I never met my grandfather, Tadashi Kinoshita. He died on January 26, 1952 almost 10 years before I was born. Until recently, my knowledge of him was based on family lore from my mother and uncles, a few pictures, and publicly available records.

Being a point of pride for my mother, Tadashi was the first Japanese person to climb Mt. Whitney, the tallest peak in the contiguous United States; a story I have heard many times. Another frequently told story laments the loss of the family samurai sword. According to my mother, not long after Pearl Harbor, the FBI came for her father and interrogated him. I don't know how long he was gone. I don't know what he was asked. I just know that is part of the story of the beautiful samurai sword wrapped in cloth and thrown down a well. However, the stories I dwell on

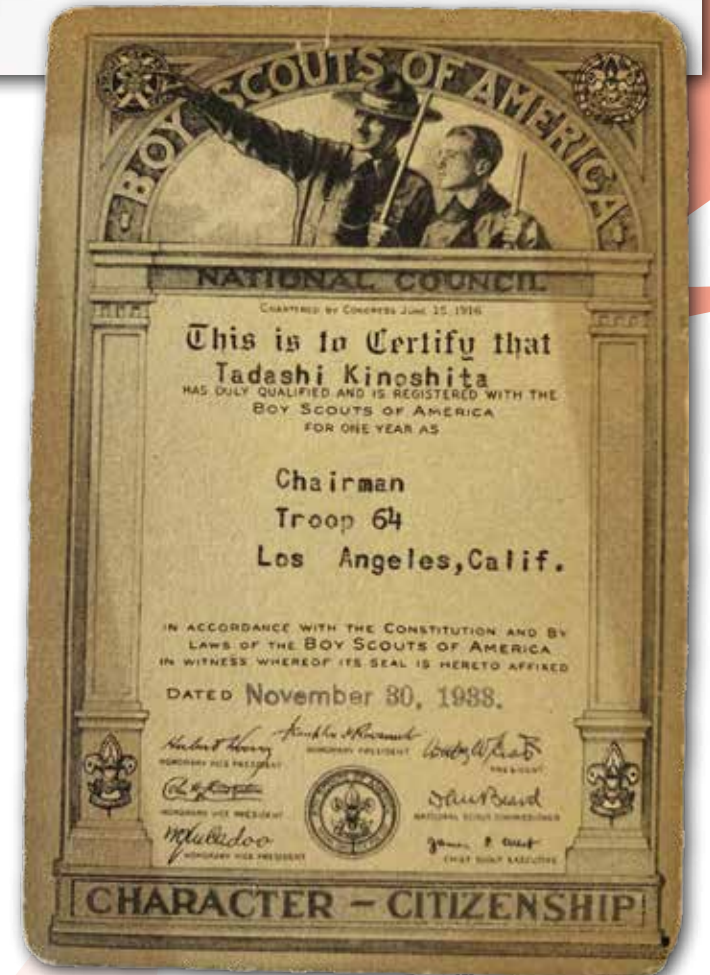
most are the stories of camp.

No one ever sat me down and told me that our family, my mother, uncles, and grandparents were imprisoned during the war. It's just something I always knew. I have spent a lot of time wondering what I would have done when President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 9066 in February of 1942. It is easy for a Sansei raised in the '60s and '70s to imagine staging a protest or chaining myself to a pole to avoid forced removal, but I can never really know what it was like for my family or the tens of thousands of other Japanese Americans.

My mother, Kazuko Kinoshita, is now 96 years old. It has been 80 years since she was a teenager riding a train to Heart Mountain, and now my twin sister and I are cataloging her belongings for our descendants. Amid the inkwells, baby clothes, carefully wrapped kimonos, and oil change receipts there are hundreds of original documents from camp, both Heart Mountain and the temporary detention center at Santa Anita.

With each tattered yellowing paper and black and white photo passing through my hands to my sisters, a larger understanding, and a deeper sadness washes over me. These contemporaneous records of life in camp, both mundane and historical, amplify the stories of my childhood.

What I knew about my family's forced removal is this: My grandparents and three uncles had moved from Seattle to Los Angeles in 1921, and Tadashi established himself as a successful businessperson and respected community member. They lived in El Monte; my grandfather was a salesman for Sun Life Insurance of Canada with his office in the heart of Little Tokyo. He was prominent in the Methodist Church, and a sponsor and leader in the Boy Scouts of America. In general, my family was probably luckier or more privileged than most. The evening before their forced removal, they spent the night at the Olympic Hotel and reported to the assembly point on May 9, 1942. Although they had already sold off most everything they owned, they were able to take their car full of belongings from the assembly point to Santa Anita Racetrack which meant they had more than many families.



Top: Boy Scout Troop camping trip, c.1930s.
Above: Tadashi Kinoshita's Boy Scouts leadership card.

By Gwyne Yoko Copeland

Recently my mother told me how strange it was to be locked up only three miles from their home in El Monte. But it was through the documents saved over the years that I learned they were assigned to District VII Barrack 1 Unit I at the Santa Anita Racetrack and lived there for four months. When the time came to leave for Heart Mountain, I learned Tadashi was assigned to be the Car #5 Monitor and given this document:

SANTA ANITA ASSEMBLY CENTER

Car # 5

PERSONAL INSTRUCTIONS ON EVACUATION RELEASE NO. 1

The people listed below are hereby directed to be prepared to leave this Center for Relocation Center at Heart Mt. Relocation Project-Vocation, Wyoming on Sunday August 30 1942, and must report to the Inner Gate at 7 A. M., prepared to check out and board the train.

NAME	AGE	U.S.E.S. NO.	ID. NO.	ADDRESS
Kinoshita, Tadashi	58M	9644	4734	ST-12-1-1 & 2
Iwaku	46F			
Lloyd	23M			
George	21M			
Robert	20M			
Kasuko	16F			

713

PRELIMINARY PREPARATIONS

On Friday August 28 commencing at 8 A .M., the interior guards will conduct an inspection of all property in your apartment. Immediately thereafter, you will pack all personal property EXCEPT BED ROLLS, TRUNKS, AND HAND BAGGAGES for loading into freight cars. This freight must be placed OUTSIDE of your apartments ready for tagging and pick-up by truck within two hours after inspection. All property such as sewing machines, large radios, and anything that may be damaged in transit must be crated.

On Saturday August 29, 8 P. M., by _____ .M. all BED ROLLS, TRUNKS, and HAND BAGGAGES must be packed and placed OUTSIDE your apartment ready for tagging and pick-up by truck. It will be permissible to carry small bundles and overnight hand baggage.

On the day of movement, an early meal will be served to those leaving at kitchen # 3 Green Room at 6:30 A. M. All necessary meals will be served on the train; therefore, no personal lunches will be allowed to be carried.

Gene W. Wilbur
Center Manager

Reading their “Personal Instructions on Evacuation” a feeling of dread washes over me and I cannot believe that a horse stall is referred to as their apartment. Previously, the only thing I knew about their trip to Heart Mountain was an anecdote from my mother. She recalls being shocked upon seeing the “Colored Only” restroom signs while traveling through Texas. I always found that ironic since at that very moment she was being forcibly removed from her home and imprisoned.

My uncle Robert Kinoshita described the trip in an interview for a U.S. Government study, now archived at Heart Mountain:

For the next three days and nights we went through the toughest trip imaginable. We went by way of Texas and Colorado. When we got to Colorado there was a washout on the bridge so that we had to go back down to Texas and then go up to Wyoming by another route. Many times, we ran out of water on the train. The cars were all crowded, and it was very uncomfortable. The little kids had a terrible time, and the food was inadequate. It made me resentful to see all of those American citizens being herded like animals without water all night. We couldn't wash and the toilets became jammed. On top of that some of the young kids had diarrhea.

I imagine the whole family was relieved to arrive at Heart Mountain on September 1, 1942. Within days of their arrival the Project Director C.E. Rachford, welcomed the “colonists” to Heart Mountain. Reassuring them that their health, welfare, and safety was the primary concern.

A Model Community

"It is our desire to make this city one of the best in the country...Self-governance will be the practiced to the greatest possible extent...Ample opportunity will be given residents to discuss policy as regards the governing of the camp. All residents are urged to take an interest in the camp's welfare and progress."

C.E. Rachford, Heart Mountain
Program Director
August 26, 1942



Tadashi & Iwaku Kinoshita in front of their Heart Mountain barrack.

While it is absurd for the US Government to refer to the people incarcerated at Heart Mountain as colonists, it reveals the image they were trying to portray. It's true, the incarcerated were afforded some freedoms. But I am reminded of something that has stuck with my mother all these years, a time when the mess ran out of ice cream right before she reached the front of the line, and there was nothing to be done. Despite the incarcerated's efforts to live a “normal” life and the War Relocation Authority's promises that Heart Mountain would be self-governing, the reality was they couldn't run to a corner store for more ice cream or erase the armed guards from the towers.

My grandfather's documents show that the Japanese and Japanese Americans had no idea how long their imprisonment would last or whether they would

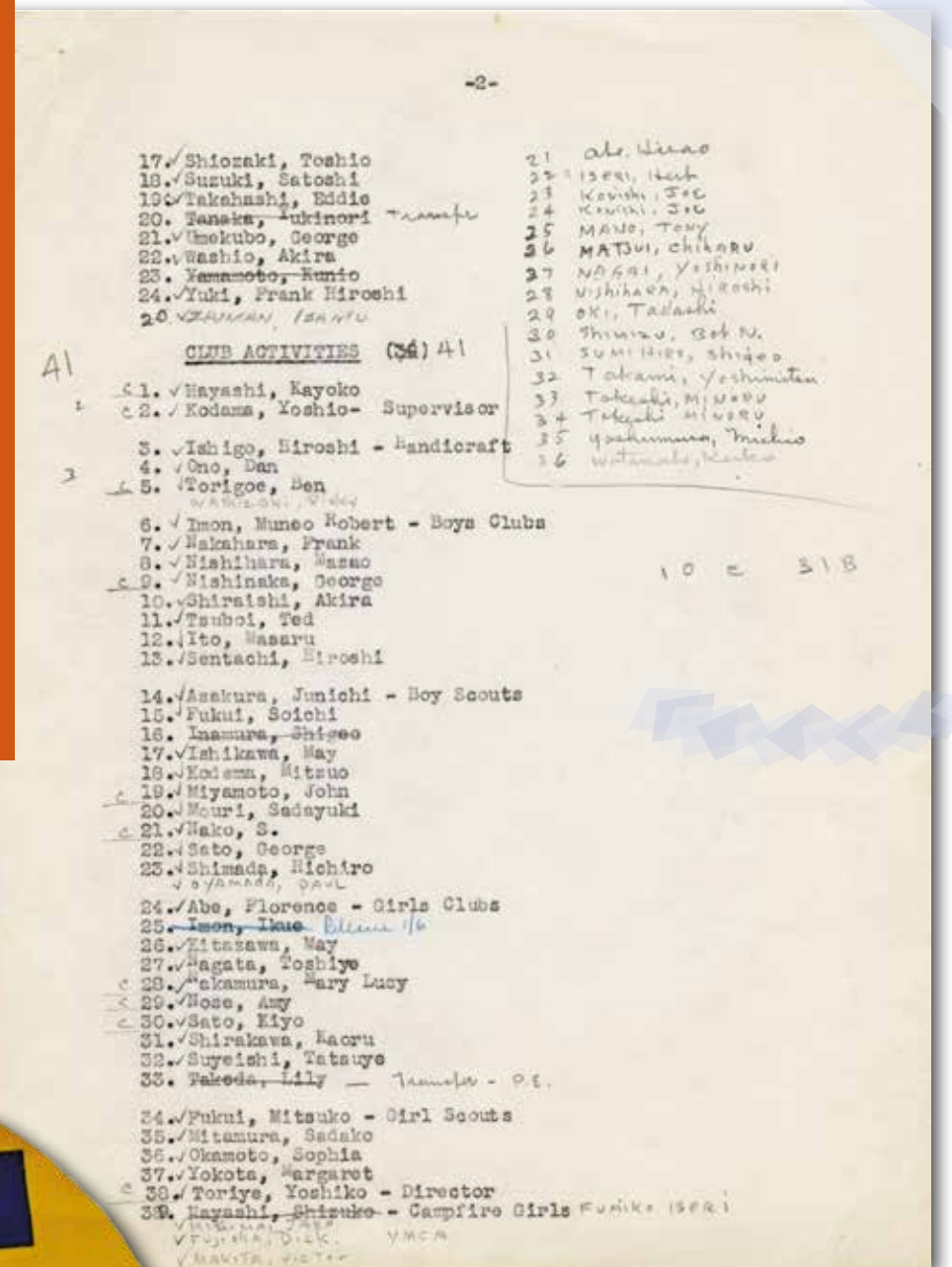
DUSTED OFF

Highlights from the Heart Mountain Collection

This past summer, as the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation broke ground on the Mineta-Simpson Institute, we honored one of the most famous stories to come out of Heart Mountain. Two boys from very different backgrounds, one of them incarcerated in a concentration camp, the other a multi-generational Wyomingite, who, despite their differences, forged a lifelong friendship that transcended political divisions to shape laws in the halls of Congress.

Norman Mineta and Alan Simpson met after Heart Mountain Boy Scouts invited their fellow scouts from Cody, Powell, and surrounding towns to a jamboree. The Nisei scouts relished an opportunity to go camping, work on merit badges, and meet their compatriots. Unfortunately, almost all the troops declined the invitation, with only scouts from Cody attending the jamboree. In an act of serendipity, Norm and Al were assigned a tent and the rest, as they say, is history.

Norm Mineta was just one of the many scouts incarcerated at Heart Mountain. The camp was home to numerous Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, as well as Cub Scout Packs during its three years of operation. These organizations were seen as an important way to keep young people in camp engaged in something constructive and away from the roving gangs of youths that roamed Heart Mountain's streets. Scout troops were part of the Recreation Department and comprised a large amount of the staff and volunteers the department needed, especially compared to other youth activities.

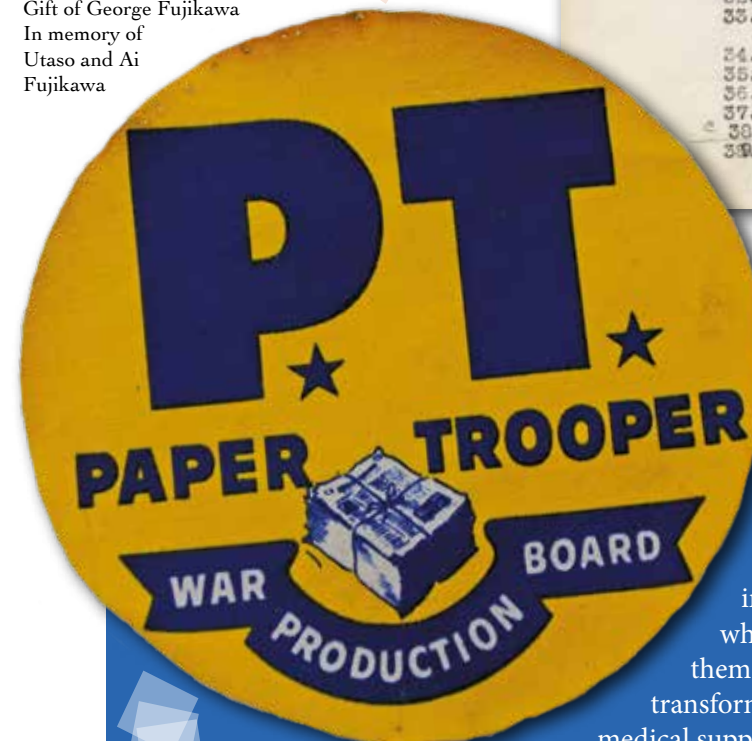


2011.032.010 Folder 2 Item 13
Gift of Patricia S. Yamamoto
In memory of David and Shizu Yamakawa

2011.025.006
Gift of George Fujikawa
In memory of
Utaso and Ai
Fujikawa



2011.003.049
Gift of Tadao Nagaishi



For scouts around the country a common way to support the war effort was to collect scrap materials like paper, old pots, and worn out tires from their friends and neighbors that could then be remade into components used in military fabrications. Heart Mountain troops collected what they could. However, in a community that was already recycling fruit crates into furniture, there was little beyond scrap paper to collect. Scouts who collected paper were given paper trooper badges to distinguish them as contributors to the war effort. Scrap paper was eventually transformed into packaging for everything from ammunition, rations, and medical supplies to protective bands for 1,000 pound bombs.

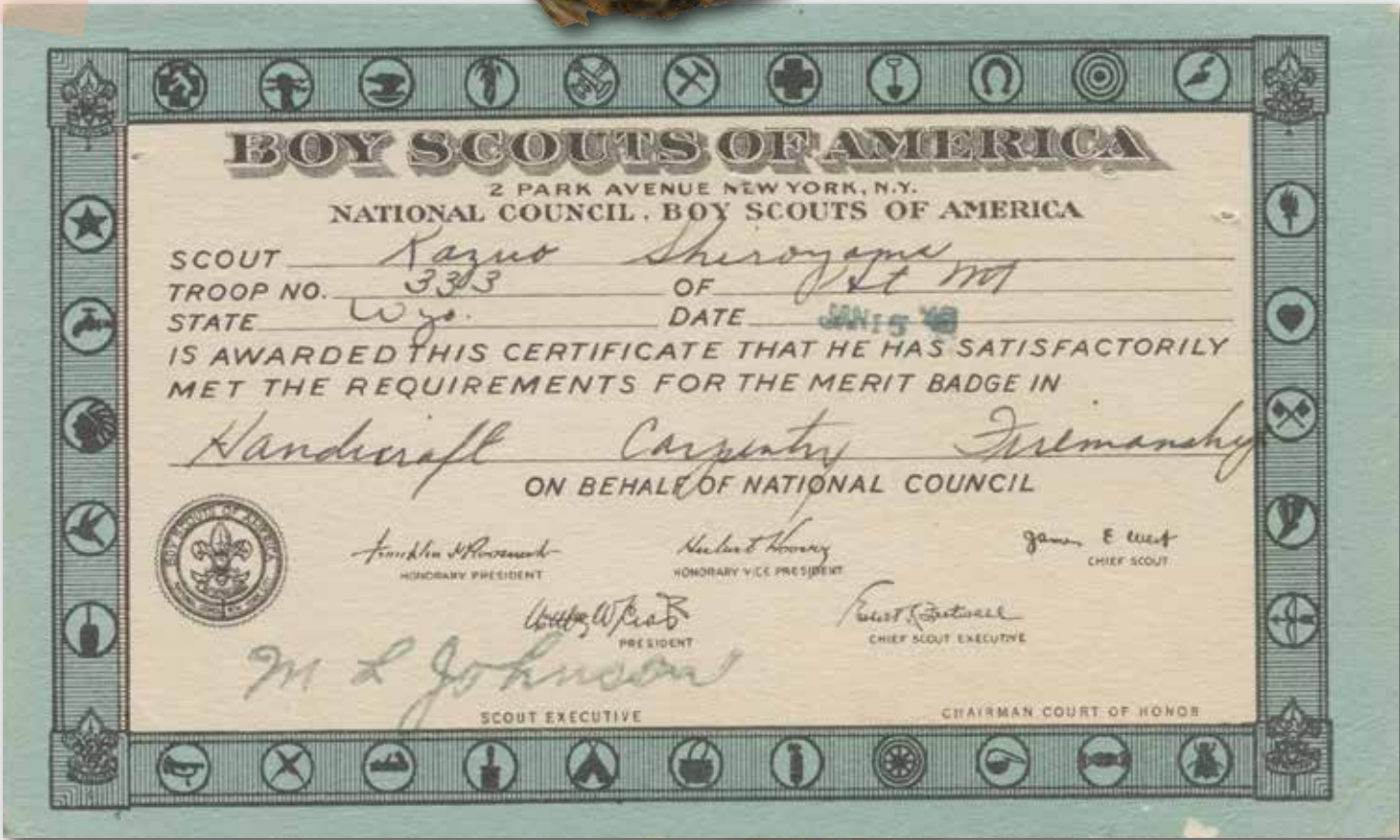
One of the main ways that scouting could keep a young person busy was of course, merit badges. In 1943, there were 111 merit badges that a Boy Scout could possibly earn. Kazuo Shiroyama, for instance, earned three particularly useful merit badges for life at Heart Mountain; Handicraft, Carpentry, and Firemanship. The Firemanship merit badge, known today as Fire Safety, would be of vital importance to life in camp given how quickly a fire could start or spread in the barracks.



Firemanship Merit Badge
2011.003.040
Gift of Kaz Shiroyama



Handicraft Merit Badge
2011.003.042
Gift of Kaz Shiroyama



2011.003.034
Gift of Kaz Shiroyama

Of course, one of the core activities for all scouts is venturing into the wilderness and experiencing what the natural world has to offer. As any visitor to the Bighorn Basin today can tell you, Yellowstone National Park is one of the grandest, most spectacular natural areas in the country. In the summer of 1944, a joint trip to Yellowstone was organized for the Heart Mountain Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops so that they too could experience its beauty.

2021.002.004 Box 1 Folder 5
Anonymous Donor
In memory of Reiko O. Kasama



2021.002.004 Box 1 Folder 5
Anonymous Donor
In memory of Reiko O. Kasama

Scouting's emphasis on service to the community and emergency preparedness as well as its ability to foster love and appreciation for the natural world has impacted millions of young peoples' lives in the century that it has existed in the United States. For the scouts at Heart Mountain, it gave them something constructive to do while they were incarcerated in a concentration camp. Perhaps more importantly, it gave them an opportunity to leave that concentration camp, if only for a few days. For Norm Mineta and Al Simpson, scouts helped foster a friendship that has lasted a lifetime.



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Happy
New Year!

Warm wishes for a happy
& healthy year ahead
filled with joy