

"Tis The Season To Be Jolly" so fa la la la la to all of you!

It is post "gobble gobble day" ..!"the busiest shopping day", and pre "Ho, Ho, Ho day!", SO, I hope all of you have had a wonderful Thanksgiving day... lots of turkey and pumpkin pie.

I'm always amazed at our country's ability to serve the traditional turkey and all its trimming, no matter where you were...there's always a mess hall with turkeys and stuffings...and all the wonderful trimmings that goes with our Thanksgiving Day...remember, in our relocation camps, we had turkeys...and those of you who worked postwar with the military governments remember the turkey dinners in all the messhall...I saw on the CNN news of men overseas eating turkey...this country, with all its many mistakes, is still great for getting the "hot" turkey meals even during war time...no easy task.

So much to be thankful for...I would fill this page up with all the wonderful "gifts" of life, the love and care of family and friends...the connection we make with each other, here and there, and I thank you all for making this Chatter a success! 1996 is almost over...a year with wonderful memories of Crystal City Reunion...banquet and picnic...IT WAS WONDERFUL!!! Thanks for more warm memories!!! sumi

"CAMPAIGN FOR JUSTICE"...Update Sei Dyo

The class action lawsuit against the United States government was filed on August 28, 1996.

This is a very important act in behalf of the Latin Japanese who were interned in Crystal City Internment Camp who have not received a formal apology or redress from the U.S. Government.

This is a costly lawsuit and need the attention and support of all Crystal City Camp Internees. Many of you have already received the apology and redress but it remains that many have been denied.

IT IS TIME TO SHOW YOUR COLORS AND STAND AND BE COUNTED!

A small donation to defray the expenses will certainly help.

There are many volunteers that are working hard to obtain the benefits that you will receive should we win this lawsuit. Unfortunately, too many internees are doing NOTHING. Out of hundreds internees, only a handful have shown support. Don't lay back and let someone do YOUR WORK. To those who have made donations, we thank you very much.

Please make your support contributions payable to: CAMPAIGN FOR JUSTICE

Gardena CA 90248

Thank you Sei for your effort in helping our Peruvian Japanese friends from Crystal City. You've been attending many of their meetings and giving them the support and guidance that they need. I hope many of you will write the letter on page 3, to President Clinton, to ask for his assistance in getting the apologies and redresses to our Latin American friends. THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT CAUSE!!! LET US NOT SIT ON OUR "OKOLE" or be indifferent towards our friends...we never got to know them well in camp but we were in the same camp, and endured the same injustice, and separation from our arrested parent (s).

Their time IS LIMITED! ACT NOW! PLEASE...HELP THEM! We can all make the difference...not indifference!!! Please write the letter in your own handwriting...otherwise, they just weigh "printed letters" and do not read them...many of us at the group meeting for solicitation for the JAN Museum took time out to write this letter and had them sent that day...Sei and Ets Dyo provided us with stationary and stamps.

\* \* \* \* \*

From the President's Corner

Toni T. Tomita

As we have mentioned in past Chatter editions, the Crystal City Association has launched a campaign to help the Japanese American National Museum raise funds for their Phase II building project. It is a magnificent and ambitious project to house our legacy and to share the experiences of Americans of Japanese ancestry.

We are spreading our fund raising campaign to all of you. Unlike some camp internees who resettled in large proportions in specific regions, we former internees of Crystal City are spread across the continent and overseas. Some of you may wonder why we undertook such a task as we were fewer in number than the ten relocation camps. The 1994 Family Expo exhibit was the first public recognition that there was such a camp as the Crystal City Family detention center. Volunteers at the exhibit remarked on the many comments from visitors ex-

(Continued on page 2)

President's Corner, Cont'd

pressing no knowledge of such a camp to "oh, the bad guys were sent there". The words "Crystal City" elicits fewer blank stares now; even more so with the ongoing campaign today to seek justice for our Perukai friends.

The memory of Crystal City will live in individual families - how strong or lasting depends upon how internees have shared these stories with their offsprings. The memory of Crystal City can live for a larger audience and for posterity through the Japanese American National Museum. Those who volunteer at the museum are enthusiastic and often re-energized by the visitors they meet. They see the purpose and vision of the museum's goals. The volunteers at the museum have started their own campaign to raise money amongst themselves. Museum staff, like Fred Hoshiyama and Florence Ochi, criss cross the country speaking to groups. They comment on the strong support they are receiving from individuals in such diverse places as New Jersey and Wisconsin.

"The season of giving"...Will you look into your hearts and be a part of this campaign?

\* \* \* \* \*

We Crystal City Association have pledged to raise \$100,000. for the JAN Museum. It loomed up so high and "impossible"...and I myself thought..."I just don't know how to solicit or ask for donation...how can we reach this goal?"...well, last meeting was Saturday, Nov. 23rd...and we raised \$40,575.

I'm overwhelmed from not only the generosity of the givers, but some of my friends are not even Japanese or have any real involvement with the JA group...but my Tai Chi friends are giving...and I said, "...but, you're Chinese, not Japanese...why?" and the answer I got was, "Sumi, whatever you stand for...you fight for good causes...so I support your museum"..Well, Chris Woo...I thank you, very, very much for your faith and support towards what I believe in...your total trust in what I stand for...makes me feel 10 feet tall, and then some... Shaquille O'Neal move over...

Florence Ochi stated that there are over 34,000 members from every state in the country now...50 states...and from 14 countries overseas...so the Japanese American National Museum is growing...

I have heard from people in other areas that this is Los Angeles' Museum...simply because (Cont'd next column)

the Museum is located in Los Angeles, however, this is Japanese American NATIONAL MUSEUM and is located in Los Angeles...the location first was not only available, but the Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple was a perfect setting for our first museum...but it is small and the exhibits are stored often, when some of them are out on display...we must have the Phase II facilities with larger places to display many of the historic displays, store those not on display etc.

I know there are local museums...the San Francisco Japanese Historical Museum, the San Jose's, etc...and we know it is important to have displays in these local museums...but we also need a National Museum to display many original documents, have in access information on computer (like looking up names of those in different camps...information about the person (s)...for children, grandchildren, etc. to find)...we need a centralized "voice" for all of us who were in assembly centers, relocation centers, and of course, our one of a kind internment camp in Texas!

That's why I'm requesting contribution to build this Phase II museum. The barrack that was brought over here from Heart Mountain, Wyo. for display since the Family Expo in '94 is being dismantled and the ground breaking of the Phase II is to begin very shortly (in few weeks)...

Please send in checks made out to: JAN Museum...and sent to Crystal City Ass'n. [redacted] Camarillo CA 93010...I will make sure that the JAN Museum will receive it!

Thank you. sumi \* \* \* \* \*

We will have our next meeting...the CCAs... for the Phase II fund raising at Sei Dyo's Imperial Mobile home meeting room Dec. 7th, Saturday noon time...we hope many of you will attend...we will have pot-luck lunch...so come and enjoy our fellowship-meeting.

Address: [redacted] ... Hope to see y'all there.

\* \* \* \* \* I know most of you may not contribute towards "Donor Wall Levels"...but the Museum now has Children's Courtyard listing \$100 per name of children (grandchildren) under 21 as of April 1, 1996.

There's also Windows to the Future for \$250 per name. If anyone is interested in these special honoree spaces, please write ASAP to me...I will send you forms for these special recognition areas.

President William Jefferson Clinton  
The White House  
c/o The Campaign For Justice  
P.O. Box 214  
Gardena, CA 900248

Dear President Clinton,

I am writing to ask you to stand up for basic human rights, justice and decency! I'm asking that you use your powers as Chief Executive of the U.S. government to correct a grave injustice that the U.S. government committed in World War II and continues to this day!

During World War II, the Roosevelt administration orchestrated, financed, and carried out the mass abduction and deportation of over 2,200 people of Japanese ancestry from 13 Latin American countries, mostly from Peru. They were forcibly brought to the U.S. and then imprisoned in INS detention camps (most in the Crystal City camp in Texas). There was no rational reason for their treatment, other than fulfilling the U.S. government's scheme to have prisoners available to exchange for war prisoners of Japan.

Even though the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 has provided redress to U. S. citizens or residents of Japanese decent who were interned by the U.S. government during World War II, the same law has denied redress to those Japanese kidnapped from their homes in Latin America and imprisoned in the U.S. The excuse given is that they were not U.S. citizens or permanent residents at the time of their internment. This callous denial of redress is inexcusable when it is undisputed that it was the U.S. government who forced the Japanese Latin Americans to be brought here for incarceration in camps and forced prisoner exchange with Japan.

On August 28 of this year, a class action lawsuit titled "Carmen Mochizuki vs. The United States of America" was filed in federal court to seek inclusion of the Japanese Latin Americans in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, on the grounds that denying them eligibility for redress violates constitutional guarantees against such irrational and unjust discrimination. The 1988 law would provide them compensation and an apology, which they most surely deserve.

Mr. President: Recently, you intervened in a case involving the German government's denial of redress to a holocaust survivor because he was not a German citizen. Your petition to the German government said to deny redress because of his nationality was to allow a technicality hamper a simple act of justice. Don't allow a technicality in their case interfere with real justice.

You have the power to settle this lawsuit, to include these Japanese Latin Americans in the Civil Liberties Act. Please act now, and don't make them wait another day for justice long overdue.

I look forward to your response. Thank you.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Your Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Your Mailing Address

Letters to the Editor:

Oct. 25, '96

Dear Mrs. Shimatsu,

Thank you for your letter of Sept. 25 and for the address of Dr. Helen Ishida. Also I appreciate your putting me on your mailing list to receive copies of the Crystal City Chatter. Thank you.

Sadly, on April 23, 1996, Archbishop Nitten Ishida passed away. As a result of reading about his obituary in the San Francisco Nichi Bei Times, I was finally able to get an address for the Ishida family. Along with my condolence to the Ishida family, I included my original letter and pictures of Mrs. Lunz holding the calligraphic scroll written by Archbishop Ishida. Helen wrote back thanking me and regretting that her father was not able to see the pictures.

Congratulations on a very successful Crystal City reunion. It was nice reading about Mrs. Lee Lunz being invited as a special guest and her reunion with her former students. I'm sure she felt highly honored and touched to be so fondly remembered.

I can understand her comment (regarding Crystal City) that "there's nothing there." When we visited in March 1995, we were disappointed to see the downtown area so economically depressed. And I can also empathize with most former CC internees (as we did) of wanting to return at least once.

Thank you again for taking the time from your busy, busy schedule to write to me and for including me on your mailing list.

Sincerely,

Tetsuko (Morita) Suzuki

Dear Tetsuko-san,

Somehow, many of us CC internees have many fond memories...of the wonderful, warm atmosphere this special camp had...perhaps we all were united in the spirit of our "gaman" while being separated from our parent (s) who were arrested, and were taken away for year (s) to many desolate detention camps while we families worried and wondered...until we united in Crystal City...

to have the WHOLE family together again...those families who relocated together to the ten relocation camps will not understand what separation of a family is like...and the unknown future of what those in the detention camps were facing...the hearings...those "forced" labors...abuses and things we family were never told...as papa said to me."it is better if you did not know"...so he never revealed to me those hours of interrogation, hearings, and though I did not hear from my father, I did hear from few other men how they were kicked, hit, or rifle butts hitting them...so the few stories we heard of men working out in hot sun in Lordsburg, New Mexico...the two who were shot because it was said by the guards that they were trying to escape, but the Issei men stated the two were very tired...one was recovering from stroke, another had heart condition. ...how the guard received \$400. from the people in town at the bar he went to.

This Chatter voices these men's injustice...and I hope that many Niseis and Sanseis will understand why Crystal City was INTERNMENT CAMP..it gave the families of those arrested to be together as a family once again...and it really felt good to see our Issei parents not worry and wonder how their husbands..wives were...to see their children growing once again.

Wow, didn't mean to be writing such a long answer...but I really feel strong on how rough it was for our folks...I really admire them. What "quiet" inner strength. Is it from the old Bushido?

Sincerely,

sumi

Nov. 4, 1996

Dear Sumi,

I appreciate your sending me the Crystal City Chatter

and the letter to me that you included. I smiled over your describing us as "correct".

In fact, I had a chance Saturday to be "correct" again. A Spanish speaking station from Laredo was here to film and interview for a thirty minute program on Crystal City. Mike Delgado asked me to talk to them about the Internment Camp. I expected they would film the historical marker, so I stressed the word, "internment". The young man who was doing the interview had a printout from your Crystal City book and said "like this?" So at least we will have a verbal correction.

Mike smiled when I told him he would win in getting you to come for the Spinach Festival rather than in the spring as I suggested.

Best wishes to all,

Lee Lunz

Dear Mrs. Lunz,

Thank you for your letter. I'm glad that we "correct" people are trying to educate others on using the proper vocabulary...however, I was corrected that President Roosevelt himself used the words "Concentration Camp" in describing the camps that the Japanese and Japanese Americans were being sent to so words are interchanged constantly, and many try to imply being placed in camps against personal wishes...in other words, being forced into these barracks with watch towers, soldiers and actually guns ready to shoot...(and we're told it was for our protection) is what makes many use words that emphasize strongly being removed from our homes...communities...etc. Well, we may not be successful in educating everyone of proper words...but we try...thanks. sumi

Letters to the Editor, Cont'd

11-4-96

Dear Sumi,

Hope all is well with you and your family.

I was going over your old and new issues of "Chatter" and just realized that I failed to send you the enclosed contribution - hope it isn't too late for the CC group to get credit.

Your group did a fantastic job for the last reunion - we all enjoyed it very much. I also appreciated your last "Chatter", but I was a bit embarrassed to see my scribbled note included.

Sincere thanks, again, for all your effort in keeping the C.Cites informed.

Most sincerely,

Doris Kawahira Yamane

Dear Doris,

Thanks so much for your continued support...everytime we are requesting for this or that...for picnic or banquet, you're always supporting the CCA and believe me, I appreciate your true blue spirit!! This is the wonders of CCA... so how can I quit when all of you continue to give us your all!!!

Never feel embarrassed for your letters/notes makes this newsletter interesting for all the readers...so keep writing and hoping you'll join us in our pilgrimage to Crystal City November 1997...we have 26 signed up and few more that verbally said they're going too...so let's have fun again!

Thanks again,

sumi

Nov.12'96

Dear Sumi

Thank you for the Crystal City Chatter. As I mentioned last August we donated to JANM in the names of our grandchildren's Phase II Pavilion.

Sumi, we would like to invite you, Derick, etc. to Mario's Restaurant. The fare is Japanese Peruvian and de-

licious. Enclosed is a menu.

I gave Mario's son Dennis September issue of the Chatter. He seems genuinely interested in history of our internment. He said he visited Manzanar as part of his studies in college.

Please add him to your mailing list.

Enclosing a check to help defray cost of mailing, etc.

It's been too long since our clans have gotten together. Lets work on it for next year!

Love to you and Derick,

Ellen Suzuki

Dear Ellen,

Thanks for the menu...my dear friend Chieko Kamisato mentioned this restaurant...she's one of the Peruvian Japanese whose father was arrested in Peru and the whole family brought to US...they were in Crystal City with us...there were about 1800 Peruvian Japanese brought into Crystal City...many went to Japan and endured hardship, others stayed in U.S. because they were not permitted to return to Peru, and worked in Seabrook Farm in New Jersey...

They all suffered hardship, in new country, learning new language, and having to start from nothing...I give them so much credit for their "gambaru" spirit...they really had it so rough...yet, they succeeded!!!

Let's get together soon... and thank you so much for the Chatter donation...it really helps with all the expense of sending out 500 newsletters.

Love to all,

sumi

(Ellen Suzuki is my husband's cousin's wife...we used to get together for Miyagi-Ken-Jin-kai picnics...our kids grew up together, running all those races, eating bentos... old, old memories...lots of my families and friends support this newsletters though they were not in CC...they enjoy reading the Chatter...thanks family and friends...I really appreciate your unfailing support)

11 Nov. 96

Dear Sumi,

I recently met Estella Hoshimiya when she went to Berkeley to meet my mother Yoshi Imamoto. Both Estella and my mother were part of that unknown group of women held in the Terminal Island Prison in 1942 facility. She brought a copy of the Crystal City Chatter which included the names and brief comments on about 7 of these women - my mother knew at least one - the Gunkan lady - Perhaps the others were there prior to her arrival.

I would like to contact the person who had this much information on the 7 women to know where she got that information. Mother recalls about 17 of the 30 or so people there. Mother is 99 and very alert. She just strained her back and is in great pain so she doesn't want to see anyone she doesn't know. With reluctance she met Estella but we enjoyed meeting her - my parents hold her parents in high esteem.

I would appreciate a reply from you. Very few people are interested in what and why this terrible thing happened to so few women - I am still trying to pursue this through Immigration and Naturalization - FBI gave me no help.

May resort to calling my congresswoman.

Sincerely yours,

Alice Takemoto

Dear Alice,

I know by now you received my answer. It's a wonder you heard about this through the Chatter way out in Maryland...how it got there, I don't know, but I knew the women mentioned...and know one of the daughter of the woman arrested and sent to Seagoville Texas after time in Terminal Island Prison.

(Cont'd page 6)

Letters to the Editor, Cont'd

I cannot reveal who this person is...the arrest of both her father and mother, to this day, has been so stressful, it is impossible to have her talk about this, let alone know who else was in Terminal Island at the time her mom was there..in fact when she went to visit her mom with her brother, they were held there for over 8 hours because "no one was to leave the facility", so their visit was one of even more painful, and distressful moment in her life.

In Crystal City, however, I knew those whom I have mentioned...Mrs. Furuzawa, Mrs. Onodera, Mrs. Aoki, Mrs. Uchida (of Utah, released with her husband earlier before I entered camp), Dr. Mori from Hawaii. Mrs. Kawawa, Mrs. Kazahaya, Mrs. Iseri, were not in CC.

I'm sure they are in the Archives in Washington D.C... all information is supposedly stored in this Library of Congress.

How wonderful your mother is healthy and alert (inspite of her temporary backache) at 99. That is just wonderful!!!

Thank you for your letter, I hope you are able to find more information on this terrible injustice to the 30 women arrested...

Sincerely, sumi

11-22-96

Dear Sumi,

Thank you for sending me the CC Chatters which I enjoyed reading immensely.

Enclosed is a small amount of money to defray the cost of publication.

Thank you again,

Sincerely, Yuri Ishizuka

Dear Yuri,

Your generous donation is greatly appreciated...with all the solicitation for the JAN Museum, the cost of fighting for the redress for our Peruvian Japanese friends, I can't

ask for Chatter donation...it just seems like this edition is for "give, give, give" and would turn anyone off from the Chatter...but we appreciate those of you who are understanding the cost of putting out the newsletter...so THANKS A LOT TO MANY OF YOU who have throughout the year helped defray the cost of sending these papers to you.

So thank you Yuri...

Sincerely,

sumi

Several weeks ago, there was a picture of Bay Area Japanese Americans who solicited for JAN Museum...picture of Jordan and Maru Hiratzka as successful campaign workers...they raised over megabucks...over \$185,000. so...our Northern Californians...BIG HURRAH AND OMEDETO...we salute you!!! It's no easy task to go out and raise all this money...DEKASHITA!!!

(You succeeded)

\* \* \* \* \*

THE GERMAN EDUCATION SOCIETY

Several weeks ago, I was contacted by telephone by a Mr. John R. Lawrora, General Secretary and Administrator of this group...somehow, he heard about our Crystal City Association and inquired about our internment camp, etc., because some of the people in this society were in Crystal City Internment camp during WW II. He asked for information pertaining to our camp so I informed him of our album and sent it to him..."...I and my associates are quite impressed with your 1993 Reunion Album and the newsletters which you sent me..."...that they will review the material, etc...their group is located in Jersey City, N.J.

I'm always amazed at how words get around and I receive telephone calls from many corners of this country...letters inquiring about our camp, requesting newsletters, etc. It seems like just our small camp group that enjoy reading this paper, however, words get around and I find many inquire... and also would like interview when we go to Crystal City next year (Mr. John MacCormack, reporter for San Antonio Express-News)...

Yesterday, I received a telephone call from Prof. Tetsuden Kashima of Washington University, that on April 17, 1997, Thursday night from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. there will be a discussion group, with Kazie Katayama, Akira Ichikawa and Sat Ichikawa, sponsored by Smithsonian Mobile Museum, Seattle JACL, Washington University, Asian-American Dept. (Dr. Kashima), and Crystal City Association.

It's really heart-warming to know that somehow, knowledge of our internment camp is growing...here and there...it is not only the story about the injustice that our folks have endured, but the heroics of their strong faith, spirit that upheld them throughout this difficult situation. I am very grateful that somehow, our situation in CC will be known to many, many people all over...that it will never happen again.

Then, I will feel that my time, energy and typing info is reaching and educating those who never knew about our camp... so when we say "Crystal City"...we won't have blank looks or "the camp with bad people"...that there were Japanese, Japanese Americans from Hawaii, Mainland, Japanese Peruvians, from Peru and other Latin America...Germans and one Italian family. (four members).

There were several from Alaska, and a couple, POW Japanese from Marshall Island...a nun (Japanese) from another island.

JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM Phase-II Campaign Contribution Form

(Please Type or Print.)

Section 1 Donor Information

1. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Mr. & Mrs. Dr. Dr. & Mrs. Other
Name (First) (M.I.) (Last)
Company Company Contact:
Address
City State Zip
Bus. Phone Res. Phone

Section 2 Type of Gift

\*\* 2a. I/We wish to make a contribution to the Japanese American National Museum. Please make check payable to the JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM or JAN Museum
Check one: DonorWall General Contribution Other
2b. I/We wish to increase my/our existing gift from \$ to \$

Section 3 Gift Information (Complete Section 3a or 3b as applicable)

3a. Phase-II Gift - (For gifts made in one installment)
Enclosed is my/our tax-deductible gift in the amount of \$
(\* For Family Gifts, please complete the reverse side of this form).
OR
3b. Phase-II Pledge Gift - (For gifts made in multiple installments)
It is my/our wish to pledge to the Japanese American National Museum, in cash, securities, and/or marketable real or personal property, a total value of \$ (Please complete the following payment schedule.)
My/our pledge will be paid over the next years.
Enclosed is my/our first installment payment of \$
Amount to be paid: Date(s) by which payment(s) will be made to the Museum:
Date Amount Date Amount Date Amount
(\* For Family Gifts, please complete the reverse side of this form).

I/we understand this pledge document is required by the Museum in order to secure necessary pledge-financing through appropriate lending institutions.

Signature: Date:

Section 4 Donor Recognition

4. The Museum will recognize gifts publicly for the purpose of acknowledging donors.
Yes, you may include my/our name in Museum publications. It should appear as:
Yes, I/we wish to have my/our gift listed on the Museum's Donor Wall (gifts of \$3,000+) as:
I/we wish to have my/our gift remain ANONYMOUS.

If applicable, to be completed by Campaigner)

Campaigner Name: CRYSTAL CITY ASSOCIATION Date:
Team Name: Same Region: Crystal City

PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHATTER:

CAMARILLO CA 93010

040695

Thank you!!!



"OMOIDE"...MEMORIES

There is a saying that as you grow "older", memories of the past are so "fresh" and the things that just happened somehow gets lost in the maze of those "wrinkles" in our brain.... but I find memories are treasures...(of course, I mean "good memories")...the warmth and happy Christmas of yesteryears...I know many of you know Christmas as a Christian holiday...and it is, but my father, Nichiren Buddhist, and my mother, Zen Buddhist celebrated Christmas in grand, American way...BIG TREE...LOTS OF GIFTS UNDER AND AROUND THE TREE...DECORATIONS SO EXOTIC...glass, colorful birds, peacock, etc. from then expensive store, Robinsons...hanging, along with huge colorful balls, etc. My folks, along with my two older sisters spoiled me with the belief in Santa Claus...hanging mom's longest stocking on my bed post, stuffing it not only to the top but spilling over to the floor...coins, candy, little stocking stuffers, so many things in that huge stocking...oh, how I LOVED CHRISTMAS! It was Wonderful!!!

Wartime changed all that. My sisters were in Japan when the war broke out...papa was arrested, and mama and I had to store our furniture and personal belongings in our home (all stolen naturally), and went to Pomona, Heart Mountain, Wyoming...then to Ellis Island via Missoula, Montana...then to Crystal City, Texas.

In Heart Mountain, I received a Christmas gift (so did mama...a kerchief) from some people called the "Quakers"...I didn't know who these people were...then in Crystal City, more gifts from these "Quakers"...I wondered who cared about us...out in the boondocks with all the sagebrush and cottonwood trees...no pine or mistletoes but these people cared...it left an indelible question mark in my mind...

Lo, and behold, these same group of people had gifts for us going to Japan on S.S. Matsonia...right in the middle of the Pacific Ocean...Incredible!!! Who would have thought that gifts would be given out to us there...December 1945? So my curiosity continue to grow!!! I had to find out who these people were...and why.

We landed in Uraga...that "Mijime na" place (miserable) in Japan...we had a small taste of hunger...and singing Christmas Carol with Caroline Fujisaki (her family, and Ito family were sharing one room with mom, dad and myself in a very cold, windy, barrack room)...Kiyo and Yone Ito...however, it was so cold, and going downstairs to the horrible toilet was such a nightmare...we all tried to hold ourselves in our blankets (it was so wonderful that CC camp gave us some blankets...the blanket provided by Uraga shed no warmth)...so the caroling just stopped as I stifled tears and choked on old memories of Christmas of yesteryears.

In Sendai, Japan, I started to work for the 8th Army, 9th Corps military government almost immediately as typist and interpreter...it was great! Eating at the messhall, having food to wrap up and take home to my family...and Christmas was American Christmas...my brother-in-law and I went out and chopped a Christmas tree for our home...and decorated it with whatever we had..."origami"...colorful chains made out of colored papers...whatever we could dress it up with...IT WAS JUST WONDERFUL...and did we sing...we didn't have much gift or the stocking filled to the top by "Santa" but WOW...I had Christmas again...and we shared that warm feeling with our relatives who didn't know what this holiday was all about...but they enjoyed it with us! It made up greatly for Uraga's bitter winter the year before...but again, it was a great lesson...appreciation and gratitude for this holiday was multiplied!

Returning to L.A. and working as schoolgirl while attending Fairfax High School in 1947, I experienced again, something unique...due to my extreme naivete...I lived with Mr. and Mrs. Stern close to Farmer's Market...Christmas was approaching so I asked Mrs. Stern when she was getting a Christmas tree...I wanted a big one...and she just became very quiet, but she and Mr. Stern brought home a 7½ feet silvertip pine tree...IT NOT ONLY LOOKED FANTASTIC...IT JUST SMELLED HEAVENLY...THAT PINE SCENT FILLED THEIR HUGE LIVING ROOM...she bought boxes and boxes of new ornaments and we hung them up...I placed three stockings by the fireplace for their two black cats, Inky and Dinky...and a stocking for their dog, Kippy.

December 24th is their wedding anniversary, so they had about 100 guests that came over for drinks and hor d'ourves, etc...looked shocked exclaiming, "Sylvia, vat iss thiss?"...and she calmly said, it's Sumi's Christmas tree...and I didn't understand why everyone was making such a big thing out of it...later, when I met my husband, he explained to me that Hebrew religion DOES NOT CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS...SO THE STERNS MUST LOVE ME VERY MUCH...YES...THEY GAVE ME L O V E...NEVER QUESTIONING ME...OR telling me they don't have Christmas trees! That's LOVE!

OBITUARY: DR. JIMMY HIGASHI, husband of Mabel Higashi, father of Nicole...

We send our deepest, heartfelt condolences to Mabel, Nicole and families...as ill as Jimmy was, he came with his family to our banquet and picnic in August...I'm sure it was no easy task to come down...but we all admired his spirit and being with us..."Yo-gambatta"... "What a fight!"...

It's very difficult time for many of you who lost your family members...especially at this time of the year...I know...yet, am grateful for the time we had...no matter what, our memories really are treasures...I cherish mine very much...and no one can take it away from me...so "Kansha, kansha, kansha"...as my dearest friend taught me in CC Texas.

So Everyone...

I wish you a wonderful holiday...for some of you Christmas...for all family togetherness, quality time with loved ones...and the solitude and quietness of your soul...let it "speak" to you. You may be surprised...in what you may or can "hear"...that is the "MU"...the so-called "nothingness", "emptying of your concious self", the "void" in the act zazen...

This quietness also taught in the art of "Chanoyu"...I'm grateful to my friend Hiromi Yamashita (Sensei's daughter) who teaches "Chanoyu" in its profoundness...the stillness of our often "busy" mind...IT is an art! and religion!

Meditation...contemplation..."food" for our soul...so vital in our life!!!

LIVE  
LOVE  
LAFF

!  
LIFE IS

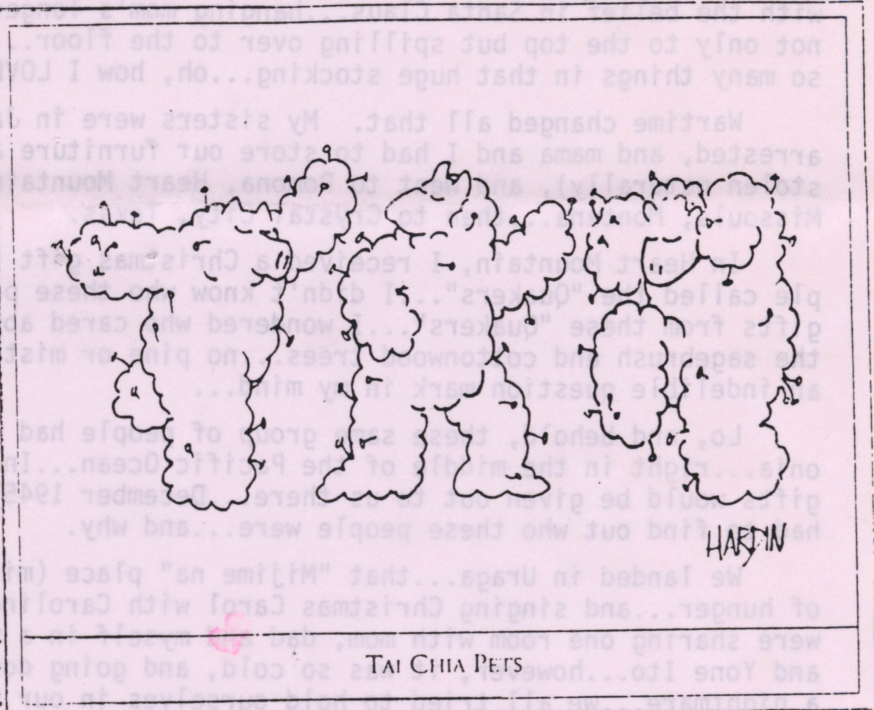
"SHINNEN OMEDETO GO ZAIMASU"

"Mata rainen mo yoroshiku onegai neh"

"HAPPY NEW YEAR"...and let's have another wonderful year together...sumi shimatsu-u.



Crystal City Chatter  
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Camarillo CA 93010



TAI CHIA PETS

I do hope you don't receive a Chia as gift...fruit-cakes...and high cholestral delicious cakes, cookies, or those chokolaties brownies and fudge...but if you do...what the heck...ENJOY!!! Mmmmmmm good!



TAD & SATOMI ISHIDA  
[Redacted]  
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94116