

## **Beyond Heart Mountain: An offbeat Western reinventing Superman's 'American Way'**

**By Alan O'Hashi**  
**bvet22@yahoo.com**  
**303-910-5782**

**Draft December 1, 2019**  
**November 12, 2019**  
**October 23, 2019**  
**September 5, 2019**

### **Where were you?**

(Ground Zero pix, anti-Japanese button)

It was an unusually hot day in September. I must have been in a hurry because I didn't bother to turn on the *Today Show* or the *Morning Edition* on Colorado Public Radio while getting ready for my commute to work in Denver. This particular morning I took the Regional Transportation District (RTD) route 205 bus from the stop near my Boulder condo to the RTD Walnut Street station in downtown Boulder.

My bus stop was next to the convenience store where I stopped most days for a cup of coffee.

"Looks like it's going to be a good one out there," I don't think the dark-skinned clerk understood a word I said about the great weather predicted for the day. He grinned and handed over my change. I clunked a couple cents into the plastic leave-a-penny take-a-penny tray on the counter and cut through the gas pumps to the bus stand.

Living near the corner of Valmont Road and 28<sup>th</sup> Street was convenient - walking distance to the liquor store, and the Asian market. The condo complex was a converted 1970s era apartment building. Across Goose Creek was a vintage plumbing store called Rayback that stocked ancient brass fittings for small maintenance jobs.

From the downtown Boulder bus station, few passengers waited to catch the B Express bus to Denver. There's no free parking. I was okay with transferring from a local bus downtown so as to get the seat of my choice, which was one with extra legroom toward the middle of the cabin a couple rows ahead of where a wheel chair would be parked - similar to the exit row seats on an airplane.

By the time we reached the last Boulder stop at the Table Mesa Park 'n Ride, the seats were filled with commuters rattling their morning papers, cramming for college classes at the Auraria campus, reading books, listening to music on iPods, catching up on sleep.

This was well before laptops, internet hot spots, and smartphones. I had a cell phone. It was a Kyocera with a personal digital assistant (PDA) built in and the size of a small box of Velveeta cheese. I didn't think to call anyone.

"Did you hear what happened in New York," the guy sitting to me asked. "No, I hadn't heard anything."

“An airplane crashed into one of the Twin Towers,” he said. “No, I hadn’t heard. What kind of plane?” The guy shrugged.

Other passengers murmured about the news and I overheard, “It was a small plane, like a Cessna.” Hmmm, small plane, nothing to see here, folks, and soon we all returned to being immersed in ourselves.

The bus pulled up to a stall in Market Street Station. We disembarked and made our ways up the stairs and escalators to the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall.

My connection on 17<sup>th</sup> Street was for the eastbound RTD 20 bus that dropped me off near my work in a converted single-family home in an older neighborhood.

I walked up the steps and creaked open the wrought iron screen door before winding my way up the stair case towards my office.

“You can go home if you want,” my boss greeted me at the top of the stairs. “Two planes hit the World Trade Center. There isn’t much more information but all the air traffic is grounded.”

“There was talk on the bus about a plane hitting one of the towers,” I said.

My colleagues had all gone. I had the longest commute to and from Boulder and the last to hear.

I walked back to the bus station and noticed the eerily quiet streets - no car engines, no airplane noise, not many people out and about. When I stood waiting for the light at Broadway and the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall, I glanced up at the Denver World Trade Center that I later learned was a similar target as its namesake in Lower Manhattan.

The bus back to Boulder was a-buzz with rumor, but I didn’t engage.

### **The Day the Earth Stood Still**

(Remember Pearl Harbor button, Osama bin Laden button)

There’s a movie called *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) that stars Michael Rennie and Patricia Neal. It’s about a flying saucer that comes to earth and warns the earthlings that unless humans quit fighting among themselves, the planet will be destroyed. As a demonstration of their cosmic abilities, the aliens neutralize electricity and offer an ultimatum that people better live in peace or face annihilation.

Not much explanation is necessary about what happened on September 11, 2001, other than it was a day the earth stood still. You likely know where you were and what you were doing that day. My unremarkable commute to work that summer morning is one I’ll always remember.

When the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were hit by three commercial passenger jets, and a fourth that crashed in a Pennsylvania field, those terrorist attacks would fan the flames of racial and

ethnic xenophobia in America that was sparked similarly when the Empire of Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 7, 1941 and drew the United States into World War II.

After the attack, in May 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) signed Executive Order (E.O.) 9066 that ordered, among other things, Japanese - particularly those living on the West Coast - to uproot themselves from their homes and businesses.

There was fear that there may be Japanese spies embedded within the general citizenry on the West Coast.

Throughout *Beyond Heart Mountain*, I provide some insight into the huge government bureaucracy that was established as a result of that national paranoia.

Parts of the federal government were reorganized, and new agencies established to manage somewhere between 112,000 to 120,000 men, women and children of Japanese descent who were sorted out in 15 assembly centers before being herded up and shipped by rail to one of 10 makeshift war relocation centers constructed in remote places within the interior of the United States.

To say that E.O. 9066 dug a cultural trench between Asians and white America is an understatement. While researching this story, I learned the American quest for cultural and racial homogeneity dating back to George Washington in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and continuing through history to Donald Trump in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It's not like the U.S. government always propped up a xenophobic culture.

After the United States left Vietnam in the capable hands of Communists in 1975, thousands of "boat people" travelled to the free world, including the United States. The military set up detention camps at several army bases to temporarily house Vietnamese refugees.

The week before Saigon - now Ho Chi Minh City - fell, U.S. Navy ships and its air force evacuated 95,000 South Vietnamese. Later in 1975, another 125,000 refugees left South Vietnam and received at U.S. military bases in the Philippines and Guam before being transferred to other domestic installations where they were housed in preparation for permanent resettlement.

At the beginning of the mass exodus, there wasn't a strong consensus among Americans around whether South Vietnamese refugees resettlement in the United States was a good idea or not.

Despite the split public opinion, the U.S. Congress approved the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act and signed into law by President Gerald Ford in May 1975.

To prevent the refugees from forming ethnic ghettos and minimize their impact on local communities, they were distributed around the country, but over time, many coalesced in California and Texas.

President Gerald Ford allowed Vietnamese refugees to enter the United States under a special status along with \$405 million in resettlement aid and pardoned disgraced President M. Nixon, are two factors that contributed to his 1976 reelection defeat to Jimmy Carter.

The earth is still standing still.

### **Superman's 'American Way'**

(Alan, Grandparents, Zorro sword pix, Superman Kellogg button)

I called up my mom to talk about 9/11 sometime after news sources established that *al-Qaeda*, the extremist Islamic network founded by Osama bin Laden and Abdullah Azzam, was responsible for the attacks.

After exchanging a few pleasantries and condolences about what happened she said, "Thank God no Asians were involved."

Both my parents and their families had first hand experience and knowledge about racism toward Japanese and, by association, all other Asians following Pearl Harbor.

"I feel for Muslims, but now they'll be watching all of us," my mom said referencing anyone with brown skin would be scrutinized by the dominant culture.

"You be good. You'll be noticed if you aren't." she always warned me. "That's just the way it's always been. Don't draw attention to yourself."

There was a 1950s TV program that boys, including myself, watched religiously. The narrator at the beginning of the show set the story backdrop:

"Faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, able to leap tall buildings in a single bound. Look up in the sky – it's a bird, it's a plane! No, it's Superman. Yes, it's Superman. Strange visitor from another planet who came to earth with powers and abilities far beyond those of mortal men; Superman, who can change the course of mighty rivers, bend steel in his bare hands, and who, disguised as Clark Kent, a mild mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper, fights a never ending battle for truth, justice and the American Way."

*The Adventures of Superman* (1958)

"Superman's American Way" exemplifies a society that in theory is fair and provides opportunity for all, regardless of individual or group identity.

Superman's American Way is characterized by a continual reach for high material success, rugged "I can do it myself" individualism, acceptance of others based on assimilation, winning is better than losing, bigger and more are better than smaller and less.

What if Superman's American Way was re-envisioned to reflect the multi-cultural nature of the United States, and we strive for truth and justice based on collaboration, decisions made by consensus that value opinions of the few and acceptance of everyone.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the United States was metaphorically characterized as a "Melting Pot" in which races and ethnicities would learn English and assimilate themselves into homogenous Americans.

That was true during racial segregation when the pot contained white cheeses like Swiss, Edam, Gouda, Parmesan and Feta, they blended together to make a mixed pot of assimilated white cheese.

Immigrants from Europe had the benefits of Superman's American Way to look forward to after they learned English, and easily blended into the dominant American culture. There are other immigrants who didn't have those benefits ahead of them because of public policies that limited immigration, and in some cases, prohibited immigration, particularly from Asian countries.

Regardless of America's long history striving for homogeneity, the country has become racially and ethnically multicultural as a result of immigration.

Today, the blended food metaphor would be more like a "Tossed Salad" that has separate ingredients unified with a common dressing.

What is the common dressing?

The common dressing is our collective quest for "truth justice and the American Way," as our country becomes more culturally diverse and socio-economic gaps continue to widen.

Change will have a greater likelihood of happening if it is instigated from within by the dominant culture. There's no telling what will happen when Millennials and their kids are in charge and change things. It was explained to me by a Millennial mom that her melting pot consists of M&Ms and Skittles being blended together.

What if Superman's American Way based on rugged individualism; cultural divides resolved by assimilation into the dominant culture; and quests for power and control; evolved into truth, justice and a different American Way?

*Beyond Heart Mountain* is an offbeat story of the West. It's about Cowboys and Indians in the historical context of Japanese residents, who interdependently thrived on two blocks in downtown Cheyenne, then moved away in the aftermath of racial injustice spurred by the War. I refer to World War II as the "War."

This spurred my way of pondering, if there anything we can learn from the presence and absence of diverse cultures and how mainstream America can intentionally support and bridge cultural and racial divides by fostering interdependent relationships.

While the history of a small Wyoming city may seem insignificant, *Beyond Heart Mountain* tells a story about the U.S. government public policy and resultant efforts to contain the Japanese Americans and obliterate their culture.

In the current day, we can learn about the importance of social cohesiveness among a community of people and how that relates to fostering and maintaining a sense of place where all can live, work, and play in a quickly changing multi-cultural world.

## **Inciting incident**

(Alan at cousin Matt's place in Utah pix, Irish button)

There once was a vibrant Japanese neighborhood in downtown Cheyenne's Westside particularly on the 400 and 500 blocks of West 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

My upbringing in Cheyenne's Japanese community certainly wasn't like it might have been in a Little Tokyo you'd find in, say, New York City or Los Angeles, or Japantown in San Francisco, but nonetheless, how these two blocks evolved from vibrancy into parking lots is a cautionary tale.

I had forgotten about my childhood time on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street. Well, I hadn't actually forgotten, but was reminded about it when I saw John Dinneen giving an interview on the local TV news.

John and I were classmates at Cheyenne East High School (EHS) – the class of 1971. He and his family have deep roots in Cheyenne. They sold cars – Lincoln and Mercury - at least in the 1960s. My dad did quite a bit of business with the Dinneens over the years.

One of our memorable family cars was a 1963-or-so Monterrey sedan that had a rear window called the “breezeway” that rolled down. We also had a big avocado green Mercury “family truckster” station wagon with the fake wood paneling on the sides. The family truckster, of course, was the car the Griswold's drive from Chicago to Wallyworld in the cult classic *Vacation* (1983) starring Chevy Chase and Beverly D'Angelo.

When John and his brother, Jim, decided to get out of the car business, they were left with the original and historic dealership and automotive repair garage, which was re-purposed into an office building anchored by a steak house.

Additionally, there is the land where their car lots were located. Some was sold off, but one old, non-descript long-vacant building at 509 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. was still standing. They acquired the land and building with the hopes of razing it and constructing 10 townhomes, which are under construction and soon to be occupied.

The structure in question was over 50 years old, and found not to be architecturally significant by the Cheyenne Historic Preservation Board (Board), but rather, a historic place because it was the last building standing in what was the heart of the Cheyenne Japanese community.

John's TV interview followed a hearing before the preservation Board. His demolition request was approved but with a condition, that a cultural and historical survey be completed of Japanese operated businesses and downtown residents. Some on the Board wanted the building preserved because razing it would remove the last vestige of Cheyenne's Japanese community.

On this particular site, the 400 and 500 blocks of West 17<sup>th</sup> Street is largely vacant. The residents who hustled and bustled around the neighborhood left 40 years ago. The landlords unable to keep their building occupied, razed them after they became empty.

Based on my renewed interest in the neighborhood, John asked me to do that survey of past denizens and land uses. That survey work is the basis of this book.

The Japanese neighborhood demise was, in my estimation, a combination of a cultural identity crisis and urban sprawl that occurred concurrently and culminated during the late 1960s into the 1970s.

“Don’t it always seem to go  
That you don’t know what  
You’ve got ‘til it’s gone  
They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot”

*Big Yellow Taxi* by Joni Mitchell (1960)

With my family being a part of the Japanese community, I’ve wondered about how my assimilation, contributed to the two blocks evolving into a sea of parking lots.

My sister and I are third generation Japanese American and Cheyenne natives. Back when Lorinda and I were growing up there, being a Baby Boomer wasn’t a “thing,” we were just kids. I didn’t self-identify as Japanese, for that matter.

My family often drove to Salt Lake City, Utah to visit my dad’s sister, Marie, and her family for Easter break. Back then, reference to school time off wasn’t yet secularized to “Spring break.”

Marie was one the youngest of my dad’s siblings. She left Cheyenne and went to college at Weber State in Ogden where she met and married her husband Masao “Mooch” Matsukawa.

She taught school and Mooch was a social worker. They lived in a suburb called Murray and had two kids, Matthew and Mauri. We all attended Easter services together at their Japanese Church of Christ. It was always fun to go there because afterwards we could walk to Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) Temple Square where the Mormon Tabernacle and Mormon Temple are located on a beautiful campus.

We also visited another one of Dad’s older sisters, Amy. She and her husband Ichiro “Ich” Doi lived in the Salt Lake City suburb of Bountiful. They ran the Deluxe and the Excellent dry cleaner shops. They didn’t have kids. Amy had kidney disease, which eventually took her life. Dialysis was just being developed.

Dry cleaners have a distinctive odor. Clothes were dropped off and eventually soaked in a chemical solvent. When the garments were tumbled in dryers, I imagine most of the solvents were vented out into the outside air. That which remained on the clothing was steam-pressed out. There’s a classic Three Stooges episode called *Sing a Song of Six Pants* (1947). Moe Howard, Larry Find and Shemp Howard own a dry cleaner about to be repossessed by Skin and Flint Finance. In one scene, Moe opens the steam press, pours on blobs of batter and presses a row of pancakes.

During a visit in 1966, Auntie Amy introduced me to live theater. I went along reluctantly to be courteous. Besides that, my mom made me go. Little did I know that the tickets were for *The Music Man*.

The theme of the musical had a big influence on my outlook on life, as will be explained later in this story.

When I was older, many of my high school friends were LDS. Some wanted me to convert to their faith. Out of curiosity, I went to their after school “seminary” classes from time-to-time. Some kids were preparing to go on their two-year missions and practiced their pitches with me, since I was a skeptic. I’d say that I know more about the Mormons than your typical gentile.

I remained a run-of-the-mill protestant, which was a throwback to my assimilation. My mom told a story about the first time we attended an Easter service with the Matsukawas, I looked around the congregation and wondered, “Why are we the only ones here not Japanese?”

When my grandparents and parents passed on, little cultural glue remained to keep my sister and me engaged as we went our separate ways with what few bits of the Japanese culture we retained.

For me, that’s pouring *shōyu* (soy sauce) over everything and eating with chopsticks. As I’ve gotten older, certain wheat breads now give me indigestion and I eat more rice. When I serve pasta and Marinara sauce, I substitute *Phō* noodles that are made from rice flour.

Throughout this story, you’ll notice the names O’Hashi, which is the surname of my dad and his youngest brother Jake, and Ohashi the name of everyone else in the family. How and why there are two spellings are subjects of family folklore.

One possible explanation is accidental. In anglicized Japanese the long “ō” has a dash over it and when it was hand-written, the dash if slid over and could have been mistaken for an apostrophe.

In Japanese, *ō-hashī* means “big bridge” as opposed to *o-hashī* that translates to “chopsticks” with the preceding *o* added for grammatical politeness.

*Hashi* is a Japanese homonym. The kanji characters for bridge and chopsticks, while pronounced the same, are different. Both have strokes that have to do with “wood.”

What’s the best explanation? My father was born on St. Patrick’s Day and some school principal added the apostrophe in jest. Nonetheless, I’ve had this Japanese - Irish thing following me around since junior high school.

*Beyond Heart Mountain* is told from my point of view to provide context and also because my grandfather Ohashi had a pool hall, and my grandmother was a cook at the City Café, both in the West 17<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood.

While there were many prominent Japanese families who lived in Cheyenne, this story focuses mostly on those that had a physical presence on the 400 and 500 blocks of West 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

## Revisionist Wyoming history

(Alan gun magazine pix, Tim McCoy button)

Wyoming is best known for being a place that epitomizes a standard ballad that's become the anthem of the American West.

“Oh give me a home where the buffalo roam,  
Where the deer and the antelope play,  
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word  
And the skies are not cloudy all day.”

*Home on the Range*, lyrics by Dr. Brewster M. Higley;  
music by Daniel E. Kelley

Lyricist Dr. Brewster Higley settled in Kansas on property granted to him by the Homestead Act after pioneering west from Indiana. His friend, Daniel Kelley set music to the lyrics.

This version of Wyoming's past is about all I learned in my history classes. This Wild West view of Wyoming is perpetuated by the movie production industry that once flourished in the state.

*Shane* (1953) was shot in Jackson Hole and stars Alan Ladd as a dashing former gunfighter, who moves to a homestead, only to be called back to action when a conflict develops between a big cattle rancher who wants to drive other settlers off their land.

Gary Cooper played *The Virginian* (1929), a ranch hand near Medicine Bow in south central Wyoming. The story is based on the novel by Owen Wister, who wrote the novel in his cabin located across the street from the Virginian Hotel on what's now U.S. Highway 30, also called the Lincoln Highway.

I'm working on a couple documentary projects about cowboy actor Tim McCoy who lived in Lander and Thermopolis and worked closely with the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes on the Wind River Indian Reservation.

His first job as a casting director was to recruit 200 tribal members – mostly Arapaho to be background actors in the 1923 epic silent movie, *The Covered Wagon* (1923). The story is about settlers moving west in a big wagon train, complete with fending off Indians attacks and evading a buffalo stampede.

The wild and woolly romantic west continues to be the Wyoming vision of its self.

“Wyoming is where the untamed spirit of the West and majestic natural beauty open your mind and invigorate your senses to release your own inner freedom and sense of adventure.”

*That's WY*, Wyoming Travel and Tourism Office

I find it odd that there's no particular reference to Wyoming people, but then again, 150 years ago, there weren't many permanently settled people in what is now Wyoming.

As a student, I was required to take Wyoming history classes in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades. I learned about mountain men like John Colter being chased, naked, through the woods during the winter by cunning savages; and Catholic missionaries like John DeSmet proselytizing the heathen red man.

I don't recall learning anything in Mrs. Knudsen's 4<sup>th</sup> grade class about the World War II Japanese relocation camp where thousands of Japanese from California were interned near Heart Mountain in northeast Wyoming; nor about the Wyoming Alien Land Act prohibiting Japanese from owning land in any of Mr. Cope's 7<sup>th</sup> grade history class teachings.

It wasn't until the 1980s when I was living in Lander that I learned anything about the Heart Mountain Relocation Center located between Cody and Powell in Northeast Wyoming and one of ten constructed around the interior of the U.S. during World War II.

"Center" is a misnomer. Tall barbwire fences surrounded each compound with towers constructed around the perimeter manned by armed guards. Based on conversations with my parents and their contemporaries, they referred to them as "camps" where several thousand Japanese were interned after being herded up and transported from their homes mostly on the West Coast of the United States.

Researching this story, I found that some sources called the relocation centers as "concentration camps," and internees as "prisoners." I chose not to use those characterizations because, I think, the terms race bait and are inflammatory. My mission isn't to inflame but to inform and entertain.

Regardless, the *Casper Star Tribune* reported on November 24, 1942, a group of internees protested the erection of the barbwire fence and the guard towers, saying "we are not Prisoners of War (PoW)" in a petition to the War Relocation Authority (WRA).

The WRA was formed in March 1942 when FDR issued E.O. 9102 that charged the new agency with management of the Japanese who were ordered into relocation camps.

I happened to be in Park County for some reason in the 1980s and found the place. At the time, it wasn't very well marked.

I rolled into a gas station in Powell and asked about it.

"You can't miss it," the attendant said. "There's a tall chimney. Look for a turn off the road and then after the railroad tracks you drive up a hill."

When I first rumbled up the uneven dusty dirt road to explore the ruins, the Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) stored rolled-up orange plastic snow fence in one of abandoned barracks. Those original structures look much the same today.

The BoR was established in 1902 as a part of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DoI). The BoR constructed dams, power plants and water delivery canal systems in 17 western states. These projects promoted and supported economic expansion and encouraged homesteading in the otherwise arid western frontier.

After the War, many Heart Mountain camp barracks were repurposed around western Wyoming. Some of the pitched-roof wooden structures were refurbished into single-family houses. Those are the subjects of a documentary film, *Moving Walls*, by my colleague Sharon Yamato.

I helped her record interviews with people who currently live in the renovated barracks near Heart Mountain. Some barracks were moved north of Riverton and became the Cottonwood Cottages.

The area landmark is Heart Mountain. It's a limestone and dolomite geologic feature that protrudes 8,123 ft in elevation through the Big Horn Basin floor and overlooks the relocation camp.

The weird thing about Heart Mountain is, the rock that pokes up out of the top is 300 million years old, but the underneath part of the mountain is 50 million years old.

At the time, I didn't quite know what to make of my first visit to the Heart Mountain camp or how I felt about being there. I understood it intellectually, but I wasn't sure how I felt emotionally.

Wyoming was not immune to the anti-Asian sentiment that swept up and down the West Coast and across the country. Local and national anti-Japanese propaganda shaped attitudes and opinions about the news that Wyoming would host a large Japanese population from someplace else. Reactions ranged from racist to xenophobic to apathetic.

Some Wyomingites were practical in their thinking that internees could provide agricultural and industrial labor to make up for the shortage created when local men went to fight in the War.

However, the general consensus was, Japanese internees were not welcome to remain in Wyoming once the War was over.

Nonetheless, the huge local, state and federal bureaucracies needed to construct maintain and operate the Heart Mountain camp, as well as the other nine camps scattered around the United States interior, kick started local economies recovering from the Great Depression. The United States stock market crashed on Black Tuesday - October 29, 1929 – and plummeted the world into financial chaos that lasted until the beginning of World War II.

The Heart Mountain Irrigation Project, overseen by the BoR, was a part of the larger Shoshone Project. Because priorities changed to support War efforts, the irrigation system was not completed and in June 1942, the BoR transferred 20,000 acres to the WRA.

The WRA took over the day-to-day operations of the Japanese relocation from the Wartime Civilian Control Administration (WCCA).

The WCCA was established in 1942, to initially evacuate Japanese from the West Coast, which was broken down into Military Area 1 consisting of the western halves of California, Oregon, Washington, and southern Arizona with the remaining parts of these states in Military Area 2. The relocation effort encouraged voluntary compliance to minimize military involvement.

Most WCCA administrators were Caucasians who formerly worked for the Work Projects Administration (WPA).

Shortly after his inauguration in 1933, FDR established a variety of agencies as parts of his “New Deal” that employed millions of Americans who lost their jobs during the Great Depression. The construction projects were mainly building roads and public building and made a smooth transition to the War effort.

When the WCCA was phased out, the first WRA director was Milton Eisenhower, a former president of three universities and brother of war hero General Dwight Eisenhower, who would go on to be President of the U.S. for two terms, 1953 through 1961.

Director Eisenhower disapproved of the mass internment. He initially tried to limit the internment to adult men, while allowing women and children to remain free. He also unsuccessfully proposed that WRA internment camps be similar to subsistence homesteads in the rural United States that were set up during the Great Depression.

In 1934, one New Deal program recognized the importance of sharing in community when the Subsistence Homesteads Division was established within the DoI.

The program provided safe housing to the urban poor who were relocated onto plots of land where several households would cooperatively grow and sell crops to sustain themselves.

Subsistence homesteads were ahead of their time. The effort was marginally successful. If the program were resurrected today, I imagine there would be many takers with the rise in popularity of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), which is a system that allows subscribers to share in a farm’s harvest.

The \$5 million Heart Mountain camp construction began immediately after the land was ceded. The project created local construction jobs and generated more sales for local businesses. Notices in the *Powell Tribune* said, “If you can drive a nail, you can qualify as a carpenter.”

The Department of War - now the Department of Defense, its Army Corps of Engineers, civilian and military labor forces built 468 barracks, 39 communal halls and utility buildings, a 150-bed hospital, schools, and a livestock farm that included pigs and chickens.

Inexperienced workers hastily built the shoddy structures that were unable to withstand Wyoming’s freezing cold winter weather. Winds howled into the apartments through poorly installed doors and windows that didn’t close and seal tight.

Personal privacy became an issue. Conversations carried through the air and household activity could be viewed through the huge gaps between wallboards that up the barracks into apartments. Internees strung bed sheets from the ceiling and plugged the cracks with rags and newspaper pages.

The first internees arrived at the Heart Mountain camp in August 1942 and assigned to quarters that varied in size based on the number of family members. Each room was furnished with a stove, a light with one bulb, and folding cots. Overtime, some internees improved their sparse rooms by building furniture from scrap wood.

The barracks lacked running water. Banks of showers and toilets were separated by gender, and located in communal utility halls that also included laundries equipped with washtubs and scrub boards.

Internees were served cafeteria-style meals in mess halls. The fare included cheap and processed American food like pancakes, macaroni, frankfurters and pickled vegetables. An important part of the traditional Japanese diet included fresh vegetables. Camp community gardens provided desired fresh produce.

The camp farms were productive and contributed to the local and state economies. For example, in 1942, the Big Horn Canning Company in Cowley was awarded the contract to can 12,000 pounds of surplus beans. The hog farm produced 40 head per week that were sent to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved slaughter facilities.

An unintended consequence of collective meal service was the breakdown of nuclear family relationships. Young children were no longer reliant on their parents for food preparation.

Older kids tended to dine with their friends rather than with their families. To get enough food, growing kids would often wander to multiple mess halls for extra meals.

Japanese people, including my family, who built lives in places like the middle-of-nowhere Wyoming, were deemed to be little threat to national security.

My parents were both native born citizens. Dad was born in Kent, Washington, and Mom in Thermopolis, Wyoming, just south of Heart Mountain. My sister and I were born in Cheyenne where we grew up in the 1950s through the 1970s.

Heart Mountain High School had a first-year enrollment of 1,500 students. As a comparison, my EHS graduating class size was around 350. Teaching materials were in short supply, but schools did provide students an academic routine.

The yearbook shows pictures of the band and sports teams that competed against public schools.

White staff members filled most of the leadership positions at the high school. The school hired Japanese and Caucasians as teachers, and teacher aides. WRA pay grades differed by race, and favored Caucasians who were paid more.

At the Wyoming State Archives, I came across a photo in the 1945 Heart Mountain High School yearbook of one of my biology teachers at EHS, Miss Jean Cooper. Before teaching in Cheyenne, she taught at Heart Mountain High School.

Based on the preferential treatment teachers like Miss Cooper received at Heart Mountain, it doesn't surprise me that she made no mention to me about her teaching stint there.

Scanning through microfilm copies of the 1990 *Wyoming Tribune Eagle* there was story about an anonymous teacher telling her experiences at Heart Mountain. I'm pretty sure that was Miss Cooper.

There was an editorial disclaimer that the source didn't want to use her name because the World War II camp experience was still a sensitive one.

### **Asians in strange places**

(Pham in Buford pix)

When I meet people, I'm generally asked, "Where are you from?" I answer, "I was born in Cheyenne, Wyoming." Then the follow up question is, "Where are you FROM," which are code words asking about my race and ethnicity.

The conversation generally gets around to their assumption that they thought I was from Hawaii or California and surprised when I reassure them, "I'm just a city kid from Wyoming."

"You don't look like you're from Wyoming," is a typical follow up, and my snappy answer is something like, "I left my hat and boots back at the ranch."

Both sides of my family came to Wyoming from Japan as typical late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century immigrants.

Paternal grandparents, Toichi "George" and Natsu "Mary" Ohashi came through Colorado via Alaska and Washington State before ending up on Cheyenne's Westside. He brought his family to Wyoming by way of Monte Vista, Colorado making a living as a truck farmer. He bought vegetables from area farms and resold them to restaurants. He also parked his panel van on roadsides and sold his produce to passers by.

Maternal grandparents Jusaburo "Joe" Sakata and Toki Iwasaki arrived in Washington State and eventually ended up in Cheyenne by way of stops in Hot Springs and Converse counties with the Chicago Burlington & Quincy (CB&Q) railroad.

My parents, Frank and Sumiko (Sakata) O'Hashi, married in October 1946 and became very involved in Cheyenne's Japanese American community. They met at a picnic that happened at Hynds Lodge, west of Cheyenne.

Just married with no kids, my mom was the first secretary of the newly established Skyline Nisei club in 1950. The club was formed in response to the racist backlash towards Japanese during and after World War II.

Nisei is the term for second generation Japanese born in the United States - my parent's generation. Their Japanese immigrant parents were known as Issei. My generation is called Sansei and we're mostly Baby Boomers. Offspring of sansei are called Yonsei.

Back when I was young and a frequent denizen of the West 17<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood, I took my life hanging around there for granted.

My dad was the production manager for the local Coca Cola bottling company. He let me tag along on weekends and have breakfast with his guys at Jim's Café on East Lincolnway in the same block as the Buffington's Sinclair station on the Logan Avenue corner.

After the plates were cleared, we went on our separate routes restocking Coke products around town.

IMHO, my dad's best stop was the little Buford store, just off the Interstate-80 (I-80) exit to the U.S. Forest Service Vedauwoo (Vee-Duh-Voo) Recreation Area.

The area of rounded and crystalline rocky outcroppings north of the interstate is named after an anglicized version of the Arapaho word *bito'o'wu* (earth-born). The 1.4 billion year old Sherman Granite site includes a day-use picnic area, an overnight campground, and several popular technical rock climbing areas.

My dad let us build the EHS class float in one of the garages at the Coke plant. Some pals stole one of the water pumps from a Vedauwoo campground that added the final touch to our homecoming float in 1971. The Mighty, Mighty T-Birds played the Sheridan Broncos that year.

The homecoming theme was the title of a movie *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* (1969) that stars a cast of popular actors including Jane Fonda and Bruce Dern who continue working today. The title references a childhood memory of one of the characters who dreams about a horse that breaks its leg and then shot to put it out of its misery.

We used the water pump as a prop placed next to a horse-watering tank, out of which the back end of a yellow and blue bronco draped out.

When I was a University of Wyoming (UW) graduate student in Laramie, I took a class offered by Rocky Mountaineering, which was a downtown outdoor equipment store and learned how to technical rock climb at Vedauwoo. Rocky Mountaineering evolved over the years and is now called Atmosphere Mountainworks, previously owned by the same guy named Scott.

The sharp nubbins make for great friction climbing. The chimneys between faces also offer challenging off-width crack climbs.

The last time I tried climbing was a couple years ago at Vedauwoo. I had a fantasy about ascending the Grand Teton with a crew lead by *plein* air artist Joe Arnold from Laramie.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, impressionist artists painted outdoors, *plein* in French, to take advantage of natural light. Joe's unique views from mountain summits were the subjects of his work.

He ended up making a short movie about that ascent.

After a few steps up the crack, it was clear to me I hadn't regained enough lower body strength after a death defying illness back in 2013, that experience is outside the purview of this story.

South of I-80, opposite of Vedauwoo, is Buford, which was originally a Union Pacific Railroad (UP) section house and later a 1905 one-room school located midway between Cheyenne and Laramie. A railway section house is located near or next to a railroad line. During construction of the Transcontinental Railroad in the 1860s, Buford boomed with a population of around 2,000.

Railroad sections consist of anywhere between six and 40 miles of track where workers were housed and a place where maintenance equipment was stored. Section houses were used mainly from the 1890s to the 1960s.

By the time I began frequenting Buford, one of the section houses was a quaint neighborhood bar and the area post office. The interior was paneled with varnished knotty pine boards that glistened in the morning sunlight.

It took about 30 minutes to make the drive from Cheyenne to Buford in my dad's noisy pick up truck. To keep me occupied while he carried in the yellow, wooden cases of 6-1/2 oz Cokes, Dad handed me some coins and let me play the arcade bowling game, and eat Slim Jim beef jerky sticks, even before lunch.

There was a big jar of pickled eggs sitting on the counter. The slightly discolored ovoids were a curiosity that reminded me of a mysterious jar I once saw in a creepy *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode called *The Jar* (1964) based on a short story by Ray Bradbury.

*The Jar* is "must-see" TV. A farmer buys a jar filled with strange contents at a carnival. His wife is frightened by it. He refuses to get rid of the jar because he is now locally famous because of the sideshow attention he has been able to bring to himself. The curious come from miles away to ponder what's in the jar. She gets creeped out, opens it, and gets rid of the contents.

Spoiler alert ...

The enraged farmer kills his wife, refills the jar so all are able to see the same thing. You're probably way ahead of me on this and can guess what was inside.

I didn't dare try one of those eggs until I was old enough to know better.

That would be when I was away at Hastings (Nebraska) College. Instead of drinking Coke and aiming pucks at arcade bowling pins in the Buford Store, I was drinking beer and sliding pucks down the saw-dusted shuffleboard at the Wagon Wheel Bar.

Talk about Asians in strange places, among other things, I'm a videographer. In April 2012, I was contacted by a California-based reality TV show production company about helping document the auction sale of Buford, a stop off I-80 with a population of 1.

A guy named Don Sammons was the owner of Buford. He served as its mayor, police chief, public works director, and dogcatcher. He bought Buford and its 10 acres in 1992, but decided to retire and then put his hamlet up for sale. Needless to say, Buford and Sammons instantly became the subjects of international news stories.

The Buford store had drastically changed since I spent Saturday mornings there as a kid. There were no pickled eggs, for one thing.

I met my TV crew in Cheyenne for a production meeting. The next morning, we formed a caravan to Buford, 28 miles west of Cheyenne on I-80 and halfway to Laramie. We were on location early, scouting and setting up the master shot then picking up some B-roll of the convenience store.

There were travelers unaware of the impending auction pulling in to gas up, tourists browsing through the close-to-empty shelves and souvenir clothes rack admiring the “BUFORD Population 1” T-Shirts emblazoned with Sammon’s mug shot.

Soon, a steady stream of cars filled with auction bidders, news media trucks, and the curious rolled into the gravel parking lot.

The auction started at noon. I wasn’t allowed to record the auction, itself, but set up a wide shot above the store.

Qualified bidders had to provide evidence of having ready access to at least \$100,000 and when the bidding started, many who made the trip to Wyoming with the hopes of buying the unique hole in the road were left in the dust.

The bidding quickly jumped to the winning \$900,000 bid placed by a Vietnamese businessman named Nguyen Dinh Pham, the proud owner of a house, the store and gas station on 10 acres of land. Rozetta Weston of Al-Roz Auction and Realty in Cheyenne represented him.

Roz is married to Alan Weston who was a high school classmate of mine. We first met playing Little League Baseball on the AAA Red Sox around 1965. He later worked as a pressman for my uncle Jake at Pioneer Printing on West 19<sup>th</sup> Street.

Legend has it that following his purchase of Buford, Pham now proudly struts his newfound cowboy swagger on the streets of his native Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) while wearing a Stetson western hat. When I heard that, I couldn’t help but picture myself as the “Kimono Cowboy” at Cheyenne Frontier Days (CFD) of yore. More on that later.

His market development strategy was to rebrand Buford as PhinDeli Town and sell Vietnamese PhinDeli coffee to Americans. Vietnam is the second largest coffee exporter in the world, behind Brazil.

Over the years, I’d stop for a cup at the PhinDeli when I found myself between Cheyenne and Laramie. It was pretty good coffee, but it’s tough for a business to make a go of it \$2.00 at a time.

The point of sale wasn’t exactly Starbucks. The finger foods available were Lay’s potato chips and Hostess Twinkies.

The highest value items on the shelves were interesting drip coffee makers from Vietnam.

We didn't get a chance to talk to Pham, but it didn't matter because the reality TV producers were hoping one of the other American families would be the successful buyers which they thought would have made a pretty good "fish out of water" story about them moving to middle-of-nowhere Wyoming and all that goes along with that.

After first moving to Windsor, Colorado, Sammons ended up returning and worked with Pham and regained his Mayoral status. A formal property manager was eventually hired who, in the long run, was unable to keep the doors open. The last time I drove by Buford, plywood sheets covered the windows and the gas pumps were no more.

I did get a chance to visit with Sammons, who was in Vietnam with the U.S. Army during 1968 to 1970. He said it was ironic that he and Pham were there at the same time. I later heard that Pham had some contact with American culture when he served in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) between 1968 and 1969 during "Vietnamization."

As the war in Vietnam became unpopular across America, President Nixon, following his reelection in 1972, began a gradual withdrawal strategy reduced American involvement in the Vietnam by transferring military responsibilities to the ARVN.

Personally, I think if Pham brought his family members from Vietnam to set up shop in Buford, they would have been some even bigger fish out of water.

Given his brief military background, I doubt Pham ever dreamed during his basic training that he'd own a place named for Civil War hero Major General John Buford who is credited with choosing the field of battle for the Gettysburg Campaign that spelled the end to the Civil War.

The Gettysburg battle was July 1 to 3, 1863. The main Confederate army commanded by General Robert E. Lee invaded Pennsylvania. Buford's defensive troop positions holding the high ground south of Gettysburg allowed additional troops to support and better control the field of battle.

The Union won a decisive victory at Gettysburg with both sides taking heavy casualties. Buford continued to chase the Confederates in Virginia until General Lee eventually abandoned Richmond, the Confederate capitol in Virginia. Unable to reunite his forces, Lee and his 28,000 troops surrendered April 9, 1865.

Buford was well acquainted with the West. Throughout 1860, John Buford was stationed in the western frontier. He and his fellow soldiers lived with talk about secession of the South and the possibility of civil war. That was confirmed when Pony Express delivered information about Fort Sumter, South Carolina being fired upon in April 1861.

As was the case with many West Pointers, Buford had a difficult choice between siding with the North or South. Based on he being a native Kentuckian, son of a slave-owning father, Buford had cultural reasons to join the Confederacy. A number of his family members, including those of his wife, joined the South.

Buford attended school in the North and graduated from West Point before his deployment to the rugged frontier. He remained loyal to the U.S. Army.

At 8,000 ft in elevation, Buford is the highest point on I-80. Because of the 2,000 ft drop in elevation, the uneventful drive back to Cheyenne in my dad's pick up truck in a higher gear was always a little faster.

When we arrived back in downtown Cheyenne one of the stops was my grandfather's pool hall at 516 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. where there was a Coke machine to restock.

I wasn't allowed to go in, for fear I might be exposed to the "libertine men and scarlet women" who frequented pool halls *The Music Man* con artist Professor Harold Hill warned about. After watching the *Music Man* live for the first time with my aunt and uncle, I've seen six different renditions from dinner theater to community theater to high school productions of what is my favorite musical.

Professor Hill's come-on was convincing the unwitting citizens of River City, Iowa that to keep boys out of trouble in a pool hall, they needed a town band.

To keep me pure, I had to wait at the door, but remember the stale smell of tobacco in the room dimly lit by bluish fluorescent lights glowing above each green felt-covered table and the clatter of billiard balls.

Another downtown stop was at Boyd's Cigar Store at 308 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. I wasn't allowed to go in there, either, but an old "Call for Philip Morris" that pictured Johnny, the bell hop, on a sepia-tone cardboard sign hung on the wall near the entrance of the store. I still wonder what happened to that poster. It would be a real find today.

In the 1960s, the Salvation Army store was on the corner of Pioneer Avenue and West 17th Street. Around that time, I started collecting things - mason jars, green and pink depression-era glass, paper stuff like posters and baseball cards. More on that later, too.

### **Yes, Nukes**

(Old missile launch site pix, No MX button)

The United States is the only country to deploy nuclear weapons when American B-52 bombers dropped atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 1945.

Don't f\*ck with the Americans.

The massive destruction that occurred, for all practical purposes, ended World War II. Flying long distances to deliver bombs was cumbersome and the U.S. military began research to deploy nuclear weapons on missiles.

In November 1952, the U.S. military developed the much lighter and powerful hydrogen bomb. The new payload enabled missiles that were reduced in weight and accuracy wasn't as important, because the warheads were more powerful.

Twelve years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Air Force ended up commanding the Atlas and Titan ICBM deployments. The Titan operational base ended up at Lowery Air Force Base in Denver, and the Atlas at Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne.

Nuclear weapons began 45 years of tension during the “Cold War” between two Super Powers. The United States led the Western World, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) led the eastern European communist countries until 1991.

Even though during World War II, the USSR was a key member of the Allied nations that led the defeat of the Axis powers of Germany, Japan and Italy there was great distrust between the USSR and its allies over the cold-blooded and violent leadership of Joseph Stalin and the subsequent perceived problems that could result from the spread of Communism.

This ideological conflict between the United States and the USSR resulted in an undeclared war fought on the nuclear arms, and space race battlefields. The two engaged in proxy wars with each super power backing opposite sides, for example in the undeclared wars in Korea, and later in Vietnam.

I won't go into the contest to conquer outer space, except to say that when the USSR Sputnik satellite first left the earth's atmosphere in 1957, that achievement lit a fire under U.S. space program efforts. The race to space intensified when, in 1961, USSR cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first man to leave the earth's atmosphere and orbit the earth. Later that year, U.S. astronaut Alan Shepard Jr. was the first American in space followed by John Glenn who first orbited the earth in 1962.

It wasn't until 1989 that the Cold War ended symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the 1991 dissolution of the USSR. Russia continues to be at odds with the United States.

The dismantling of the USSR began in Poland in 1989 when the trade union Solidarity won an overwhelming victory in a partially free election in Poland that led to the fall of Communism there. Shortly thereafter, citizen action overthrew governments in Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and East Germany.

Nuclear weapon proliferation, however, continues with the U.S. and Russia pitting their best weapons in a war of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) with the idea that stockpiled weapons would deter the other side from ever initiating an attack on the other.

During the Cold War, Cheyenne became a primary target because of the high concentration of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) sites surrounding the city.

In 1960, the first 24 Atlas missiles deployed were well received in Cheyenne where a military presence has been a constant during three centuries. In addition to southeast Wyoming, missiles were scattered in the ranching country across western Nebraska and northeastern Colorado.

The Atlas missiles were phased out between 1963 and 1965 and replaced by Minuteman I missiles, and later by Minuteman III between 1972 and 1975. I won't go into additional history, but suffice it to say, both nuclear stockpiles continue to be irrationally MAD.

There was a heightened time of international tensions during October 1962. I won't go into the details of the Cuban Missile Crisis between President John F. Kennedy (JFK) and USSR Premier Nikita Khrushchev.

I remember reading in the *Weekly Reader* about the USSR missile sites constructed in Cuba, 90 miles away from Florida. I don't know if kids still have access to the *Weekly Reader*, but it was a four-page tabloid newspaper with age-appropriate news written for elementary school students.

The *Weekly Reader* could have changed the way I learned.

In the first grade, the reading groups were broken down by the veracity of various birds. The top readers were in the Eagles and the slow readers, that included myself, were Sparrows. The classification system was demeaning for me. Regardless, I saw Mrs. Stogsdill, my first grade teacher at the 10-year high school class reunion. I think she appreciated that I thanked her for teaching me how to read.

Had I been allowed to read non-fiction, like the *Weekly Reader*, rather than fiction, I would have become a better reader. I couldn't relate to the *Friends and Neighbors* storylines with no character arc about Dick, Jane, Sally, Puff, and Spot, but I digress. To this day, I'm not much of a reader.

Turned out I was an auditory and kinetic learner – still am. At Fairview elementary, we had periodic air raid drills, and learned what to do during a nuclear attack by watching Civil Defense filmstrips and movies telling us to duck under our desks and, “Do not look at the fireball.” We practiced how to leave the classroom in an orderly fashion and head to the bomb shelter fashioned in the boiler room, ably manned by Mr. Costello, the custodian.

The drills were more for peace of mind because the nuclear missiles pointed at Cheyenne by the USSR would vaporize everything within at least a 100-mile radius.

Nonetheless, my dad led a family project building a fallout shelter in the basement and keeping it stocked with canned food and water. Following a nuclear attack, fallout was nuclear dust that remained in the atmosphere and would eventually float down to the earth.

Like me, my dad was also a scrounger. We spent Saturdays browsing around the Salvation Army, Goodwill and army surplus stores looking for extra can openers, water containers, tableware and other sundry items to make life as normal as could be in a 10 x 10 ft concrete room with no windows.

My friend, Tad Leeper, had the best bomb shelter. It was constructed in his family's back yard accessible through a hatch door on the surface and a short descent down a ladder into a big cylindrical underground pod.

While the grandparents were still living, bunches of my cousins came to visit in Cheyenne. The bomb shelter was one of the popular places to play. In the hot summer, it was also the coolest place in the house.

My pack rat hobbies were habits I picked up from cousin Matthew. Matt's basement in Utah was full of old stuff collected by his dad, and my uncle Mooch, who saved Kodak Brownie box cameras, among other things.

I began to accumulate pink and green Depression glass. The pieces were inexpensive glassware that were premiums in Images of some of the artifacts I've collected over the years illustrate each of this story's chapter headings.

At the time, they were sold for regular tableware for a dime or a quarter, making it very affordable for a kid like me. I still have a couple boxes filled with them. Their values have increased by 300 percent, but the collectible market is glutted with them.

The most valuable pieces are known as Vaseline glass. They were made with small amounts of uranium that gives them an iridescent look.

Now the big thing is Midcentury Modern. I now see pyrex mixing bowls that were around the house when I was a kid now selling for hundreds of dollars that were once a few bucks down at Gambles Hardware.

What people won't collect.

### **Intentional community**

(Hastings dorm pix, Cohousing football game pix)

My family open-door philosophy was the nature of our family social fabric. That prepared me for my other living situations going forward. I'll touch on that here, in case you only get this far in the story.

My dad had a huge family, 13 brothers and sisters. One sister, Mae, died and the remaining 12 grew up in Downtown Cheyenne in a boarding house across from the UP Depot, on West 15<sup>th</sup> Street, then at 620 W. 18<sup>th</sup> St.

I'm a user of ancestry.com, and received a hint notification about a boy and girl not mentioned in family lore, and so my research continues.

A new cousin showed up in my paternal family database, too, bringing the cousin total to 19. Most of them have families including my "newest" cousin. I've met very few 2<sup>nd</sup>-cousins.

My grandparents later moved from downtown to 714 E. 8<sup>th</sup> St. on the Southside, which was the family headquarters. It was purchased in my uncle Rich's name since he was a native born citizen.

That house had a great cellar, which was also a bomb shelter of sorts. I don't know how long anyone could stay down there. It was musty, but a solid concrete foundation where my grandmother had some canned food stored.

Over the years, they added on to the back of the house, but didn't encroach on my grandmother's garden.

She had quite the green thumb and one of the family activities was string bean picking from the vines that wound their way up the laths poked into the fertile earth. After picking, my favorite job was popping off the stems and plinking the pod ends into a pan and the beans into a paper bag.

My grandmother rewarded the harvesters with stir-fried beans and bacon over rice.

There was a revolving door of uncles and aunts who stopped by daily, not to mention frequent formal and informal family gatherings - holidays, birthday parties, random dinners, watching sports on TV and worm hunting.

The summer time was also fishing season. After dark, the cousins helped Uncle Rich catch night crawling earthworms from the back yard. In the cool of the night, the worms wiggled their way out into the grass.

One cousin would be the spotter with a flashlight and I would grab the slimy creature before it had a chance to retreat into its hole in the lawn. Some kids had quite a worm business selling them around town, but I figured out at that I didn't want to be responsible for any product that had a shelf life.

Both sides of my family were fishers. The summer between my kindergarten and first grade year, my dad bought a couple bait-cast fishing reels for my sister and me from the Gambles store in the Cole Shopping Center. The reason I know when this happened is because we still lived on East 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The rods and reels were exactly the same, but were labeled with our names with red fingernail polish. This was before felt-tipped Magic Markers.

A bait-cast reel mounted on a pole is fishing in its purist form. Fishing line is wrapped around a spool and bait is attached to the hook, which is lowered into the water or lightly cast.

We would make family outings to the lake near the Cheyenne Country Club. There were some pretty good holes near the concrete rickrack made of busted up street curbing, and old sidewalks. On the way out, we would stop by to see Uncle Rich and pick up a few worms.

My dad's job was to help bait the hooks. I was never squeamish and was okay with threading the hook through the worm. Mom's job was untangling the fishing line. The first fishing trip was a successful one. I caught a small perch that was part of our dinner that night. Mom coated it with flour and corn meal and pan-fried.

Of all my dad's brothers, Rich was the most avid fisher. On the way home, we stopped and showed off the day's catch.

My immediate and extended family units were tightly knit. I remember when I was in Kindergarten having to give up my bedroom when my grandfather moved in with us for a period of time.

He was diabetic and my grandmother couldn't care for him. It didn't cross my mind to complain about sleeping on the floor or on the couch.

His big insulin syringe that consisted of a glass barrel, stainless steel plunger and big needle fascinated me. One morning, he showed me how to stab the syringe into his thigh muscle and administer his medication.

Maybe that's why I'm okay with being poked by large numbers of acupuncture needles.

Always having family members around made living on top and around other people easy for me.

At college, I lived in the dorms, in fact in the same dorm room for four years. Altman Hall had a nice lobby and a downstairs with a kitchen and TV room. Altman was also the "co-ed" dorm – men in one wing and women in the opposite side of the lobby but joined together by the basement, which had the TV room and a large open recreation area.

I had no yearning to live off campus, not seeing the utility of living with maybe a couple other people. I liked having many classmates around, sharing meals in the cafeteria, and playing pool or shooting the breeze afterwards. In my way of thinking, going off to college a day's drive away from Cheyenne was very liberating.

I did get a chance to live with housemates. My first job took me to Gillette, Wyoming where I chipped in with two other guys and got financing for a three-bedroom split-level house. We set up what would now be called a "co-op" house that became known as the "3003 Club," which was our address on Foothills Blvd. We each had a bedroom and added space for a couple others in the basement. We shared the kitchen and bathroom, prepared common meals, and divided up the household chores.

After moving for new work in Lander, my first apartment there was downtown above the Ace Hardware store. This was before mixed-use urban living was fashionable. At the time, I thought it to be demeaning. Lander is very small and pedestrian-friendly. I didn't drive locally hardly at all that first year. In retrospect, I should have stuck downtown as long as I could.

I'll mention that living around and on top of other people continues to be a way of life for me today. I live in a cohousing intentional community located in north Boulder, Colorado.

My cohousing community consists of 16 privately owned condominiums occupied by around 30 residents who own private homes, and have agreed to share a common mission and values about living together while maintaining the common spaces like the courtyard, and provide neighborly assistance to one another.

Cohousing communities consist of members who are largely members of the dominant culture – Caucasian, politically liberal, highly educated, 65 percent of the time an introvert, and 70 percent of the time a woman.

In large part, because cohousers have agreed among themselves to undo Superman's American Way, they are well suited to bridge the massive cultural divides that exist today.

Success in America is generally characterized by individual material success, bigger and more are better, majority rules, and people who are viewed as different from the dominant culture are excluded unless they assimilate.

The basic philosophy behind cohousing is the opposite. By definition cohousing communities adopt the philosophy that the good of the group is viewed as more important than self-interested individual wants, smaller and less are better, decisions are by consensus giving a voice to all, including opinions of the few, and there is recognition that everyone is different and all are included without assimilation.

Socialism? Communism?

No, it's not a change in government structure, but rather a community construct that returns to a time when families knew each other because their kids all went to the same neighborhood school.

There's nothing inherently wrong with material success and individuals excelling to the best of their abilities, but what if Superman's American Way was achieved more collaboratively?

While the tenets of cohousing are noble, they are easier said than done since Superman's American Way is pounded into our heads from the moment we pop out of the womb.

Based on how I grew up with a strong extended family, living in the dorms, buying into a co-op as my first home as an owner, my transition to cohousing was easy, compared to that of some of the neighbors who haven't had much experience living on top of one another.

### **My mom's family**

(Family pix and flower arrangement pix)

My mom's family was much smaller. Mom's sister, Hisako, lived in Washington D.C. and made it Cheyenne sporadically, and over Christmas and New Years. Uncle George was in Alliance, Nebraska and seldom visited Cheyenne, particularly after his kids grew up and he got divorced, I saw him last when he was on his deathbed at the Veteran's Hospital in Cheyenne.

I think my mom always felt a little bit like an outsider since family life mostly revolved around my dad's family. We did have multiple Christmas and Thanksgiving stops around Cheyenne, which was a big side benefit of having lots of family in town.

My maternal grandfather Jusaboro "Joe" Sakata came through Washington. He later returned to Japan and married my grandmother, Toki Iwasaki who was 21 years younger, before the two returned to Wyoming.

He worked as a section foreman for the CB&Q railroad, later called the Burlington Route. Railroads are comprised of several divisions that consist of districts and those broken down into sections. Each section is maintained by a section gang led by a section foreman. The section foreman and his crew keep their section of the railroad in good repair.

In 1869, the CB&Q established the Burlington and Missouri Railroad Company (BMRR) in Nebraska, which continued building west and reached Denver in 1882.

Around that time, BMRR expanded to southeast Wyoming with the hopes that Cheyenne would become a crossroads between the Midwest and the Puget Sound in the Pacific Northwest.

Because the UP railroad held the route to Salt Lake City, BMRR would not expand any farther west.

When Grandfather retired, he and Grandmother lived a couple blocks from the state Capitol Building in Cheyenne. He did some paid gardening work around his neighborhood and landscaped his own manicured yard with bonsai-style trees.

My grandmother was quite the seamstress. She had a clothing alteration business in their spare bedroom that led her to travel back to Japan and became a master Japanese *sakura ningyo* doll maker. She designed and sewed her doll's to-scale beautiful clothing.

One of her steady alteration customers was Wyoming Secretary of State Thyra Thomson. Over the years, she became a family friend. Thyra and her sons lived a few blocks to the east and south on Warren Avenue.

Thyra and her husband Keith were both popular politicians in Wyoming. Keith was a three-term Congressman and was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1960, only to die of a heart attack a month after taking office. Thyra was elected in 1962 to her first of six terms as Secretary of State.

When her kids left home, she moved to the Cole Addition and lived a block away from us on Windmill Road. I've since become reacquainted with one of her son's, Bruce, through our mutual connections in the Wyoming arts and culture community.

Grandmother also studied *ikebana* (flower arranging) and was in a class by herself when it came to winning ribbons at the Laramie County and Wyoming State fairs.

As a kid, I learned some of the basics of *ikebana* from my grandmother, which was an activity we did together when the Laramie County Fair rolled around. The fair had a men's category for flower arranging. I had the distinction of being the defending men's blue ribbon winner before I left for college and subsequently for Laramie in 1973.

Their house was a great gathering spot during CFD when much of the action was downtown. The head of the parade was a couple blocks away in front of the state Capitol Building.

My mom's sister, Hisako, was the first family member who graduated from college. She went to UW and later went to be a middle-level budget administrator at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Washington, D.C.

Their brother, Tokinori "George," kept up his family tradition and worked for the Burlington Route that evolved into the Burlington Northern (BN) railroad in Alliance, Nebraska raising his family there. He

served during World War II at the rank of Private 1<sup>st</sup> Class in the all-Japanese 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team (RCT). The 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was the most decorated regiment in World War II.

After the War, he refused to sleep on the ground again. He was an avid outdoorsman and transported himself in a truck with a big camper.

The BN came about in 1970 when the CB&Q; the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway; the Great Northern Railway, and the Northern Pacific Railway all merged.

BN acquired the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway in 1996 and formed the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway, which is still in operation as the BNSF, and now owned by Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway.

I'm pretty sure Uncle George had undiagnosed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after the War. He chain-smoked menthol cigarettes. My mom described him as being "shell shocked."

He and Perry had two daughters, Tracy and her family are in Topeka, Kansas; and Tami Jo and her family are in Bargersville, Indiana; and a son, Robert, with Down's Syndrome who earned the top Eagle Scout rank. Tami Jo, Bob's guardian, tells me he's developed early onset Alzheimers and living in a Wichita group home.

After my sister and I were born, my mother stayed at home with us. Mom had been an employee with the state of Wyoming Health Department. When we moved to Laramie in 1973, she went back to work, this time at the UW. She was the office manager for the Accounting Department in the College of Commerce and Industry.

It wasn't until I was in college that I got to know Auntie Hisako. She lived in a swanky mid-century modern condominium in Washington D.C. Among her neighbors were former Vice President and U.S. Senator Hubert Humphrey and his wife, Muriel.

When I was in college, I took a political science class that made a month-long field trip to D.C. She held a big party for my classmates and me in her flat. She was pretty good friends with U.S. Representative Bob Kastenmeier (D-Wisc.) who was a member of the U.S. House Judiciary Committee that oversaw the impeachment of President Nixon.

### **Upwardly mobile middle class**

(Cole Addition pix, Leave it to Beaver button)

I didn't pay much attention to the Japanese community history in Cheyenne until researching this story. It was a cultural renaissance, in a way, that brought up lots of memories and a bit of angst. I lived in Wyoming from my birth in 1953 until 1993 or so.

My Wyoming end time is indeterminate, since I kept an apartment in Lander. I continued to do work from there, including commuting back and forth to Boulder, and Bozeman, Montana. My transition from Lander was unsettling. I had a chip on my shoulder being a relatively big fish in the small Wyoming pond.

I never, really, had to apply for a job before. Looking for work in Colorado was difficult. I did a lot of consulting before the “gig economy” became trendy.

I never had a proper send off from Wyoming. Not surprisingly, many of my Wyoming acquaintances think I still live there.

Wyoming is one of those places where it’s tough to make a clean break because, there’s still a lot of “street cred” around being a Wyoming Native.

The state is the least populated with 577,000 people. There are more than twice as many cattle that graze around Wyoming than people. Wyoming is characterized as a small town connected by long streets. There’s a lot of truth to that.

When I see a random person walking around, pretty much anywhere, wearing a Wyoming-marked garment, I generally stop and talk with them. Chances are, we’ll have some person in common, or at a minimum some story about a place or event.

Here’s an example of that.

Since 1986, one of my stops there is a bar and restaurant in the Theater District of Manhattan called Sardi’s, which has been in business since 1927. The walls are covered with maybe 1,000 caricatures of show biz celebrities. Sardi’s is a popular pre and post-theater gathering spot. There’s a scene in the Mel Brooks movie called *The Producers* (1967) that’s a satirical look at corruption and the casting couch in the theater business. During intermission of the musical *Springtime for Hitler*, the theatergoers flow into a bar, which is reminiscent of Sardi’s.

While I was in Lander, I also wrote sports for the *Wyoming State Journal* and in 1986, followed the UW basketball team played in the National Invitational Tournament final four in Madison Square Garden. The Cowboys lost in the title game to Ohio State, 73-63.

A group of us Pokes fans who stayed at the Marriot Marquis hotel drank the nearby Sardi’s bar out of tequila. I’ve been going there ever since. The bar snacks are Ritz Crackers and cheese spread.

A few years later, I visited New Jersey on some project, and ended up in New York City sometime in the late 1980s.

Anyway, my colleague and I were trying to get into Sardi’s but stopped by a tall and wide bouncer. The upstairs was closed for a private post-theater event. Who should walk down the stairs, but U.S. Senator Al Simpson (R-Wyo.) and his wife, Ann. We met while I was in grad school at UW and became acquainted when he represented Park County in the Wyoming state legislature. It was one of those, “What are you doing here,” moments.

They were in town supporting their daughter, Susan, who had a show open, at the Helen Hayes Theater across the street. After some small talk about the event, we were allowed up. It reminded me of the

scene from the *Wizard of Oz* when Dorothy and her entourage pounded on the door to get into see the Wizard and greeted by a mustachioed doorman, “Well bust my buttons, c’mon in!”

Another time, I met my cousin, Milton, from San Francisco in Laramie. We went out to the Buckhorn Bar. The bouncer was a Galileo High School classmate of Milton. Galileo High School also is O.J. Simpson’s *alma mater*.

I’d say any Wyomingite who’s reading this book has a similar “all roads lead through Wyoming” story.

My parents moved us to the suburbs of Cheyenne where I was socialized to be part of the rising American middle class. They waited until I was out of kindergarten to make the move.

At the end of the Industrial Revolution during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Americans improved their standards of living and in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the first suburban areas developed, largely because of improvements in mass transportation and personal automobiles became more available. Americans no longer had to live near where they worked.

Nationwide, during the 1950s and 1960s, suburban residents grew from 35 million to 84 million, according to the U.S. Census. This alternative to urban living gave a new middleclass the chance to separate themselves from other urban-centered economic and racial groups.

What happened to all the Japanese?

Between 1900 and 1910, the Wyoming Japanese population increased from 303 to 1,590 persons surpassing Native Americans as the second largest minority population the state, according to the U.S. Census. That population increase is generally attributed to work available on the railroads and in agriculture.

By 2010, the number of Japanese in Wyoming declined to 485 residents. Suburbanization coupled with discriminatory land ownership laws in place at the time of World War II, contributed to the demise of the Japanese community.

### **The 400 Block**

(Carol Lou in front of market pix)

### **The California Fish Market**

(Brian Matsuyama in front of market pix, Webster St Blues pix)

The Japanese community on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street was once vibrant and active. Some families lived above their businesses, including at the California Fish Market that was originally located at 402 and owned by Itsuo and Kamo Hashimoto beginning in 1920.

Later, the market moved to 422 when the Matsuyama family then the Kishiyama family owned it.

In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with limited transportation and more pedestrians, mixed uses were generally accepted with homes above businesses. Living and working in the same building was a common configuration throughout downtown Cheyenne, as it was in other urban areas.

Itsuo immigrated to the United States in 1905 and worked in gold mines in California, Nevada and Arizona. In 1913, he moved to Cheyenne and worked for the UP railroad. He married his “picture-bride,” Kamo.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, immigrant workers in the United States, largely from Asian countries, would choose a bride by way of a matchmaker in their home country who paired the bride and groom using photographs and family suggestions as to the best spousal combinations.

Japanese matchmaking is the subject of a movie called *Picture Bride* (1995) about a young Japanese woman who moves to meet her future husband at a Hawaiian pineapple plantation. His “dating” profile didn’t quite match up with his current persona and his bride couldn’t afford to move back to Japan.

Kamo operated the fish market while Itsuo continued to work for the railroad. Together, they had six children. Their two sons, Harry and Kaye, had jobs in downtown Cheyenne. Harry was a chef at the UP Depot and the Plains Hotel.

Later, he was well known as the food services manager at the UW. Because I lived in both Laramie and Cheyenne, I was often mistaken for being a Hashimoto.

Kaye was one of the main portrait photographers in Cheyenne. His first studio was downtown at 2300 Carey Ave. He took my high school graduation photo at his studio on East Pershing Boulevard.

Their sister, Grace, was a good friend of my auntie Rose. They both ended up in San Francisco. Grace married Toshiaki “Gump” Kubota. Rose married Haruo “Vince” Ichiyasu and reared my California cousins, Carolyn, Milton, Teresa, Leonard and Walter.

The two couples lived in apartments above each other on Webster Street near Japantown.

Grace and Gump had two sons, Warren and Russell. Warren wrote an award-winning play about his Vietnam War era childhood called *The Webster Street Blues* set in 1972. Knowing Warren, the play narrative is an introspective autobiography based on the Kubota and Ichiyasu families.

The story is about four Sansei friends who hang around Japantown in San Francisco and their angst around having to live in their Japanese world but at the same time exist in the dominant culture. The story ends with the characters having grown up and giving into the dominant society.

California theater critics didn’t understand the story’s familial subtexts and largely panned the play. Warren died shortly before it was set to debut in San Francisco in August 1987. I received permission from his brother, Russell, to produce it. He sent me a draft of the stage play, which I rewrote and produced at the Mercury Café in Denver.

Not being very close to the Denver theater production crowd, it was a challenge to find four actors to portray Japanese teenagers. The cast ended up being four pan-Asian 20-somethings who had no acting experience. The project raised disaster relief funds following the 2011 earthquake that rocked Japan.

### **Accidental disloyalty** (Anti-Japanese button)

In 1931, the Hashimoto family sold the fish market to Masuji and Yoshi Matsuyama. The Matsuyamas abandoned their farming work near Fort Lupton, Colorado and moved to Cheyenne where Masuji worked as a railroad machinist at the UP roundhouse and Yoshi tended to the fish market.

Things were good for the Matsuyamas until Pearl Harbor was bombed. Masuji was fired in 1942 as a result of E.O. 9066.

The Matsuyama's oldest son, Bill, took over the fish market in 1932 shortly after his graduation from Cheyenne High School.

After the sale, the Hashimoto family opened the Mikado Cleaners nearby at 1617 Pioneer Ave., which was north of the Dinneen Garage between 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> streets. They operated the business until 1946 when they sold to Tatsu and Marie Takahashi, who renamed the business as Miracle Cleaners in the same location.

During the War, the Japanese community hall was first located on the second floor above the Mikado Cleaners and later near the California Fish Market.

Heart Mountain internee and author Bill Hosokawa was the editor of *The Sentinel* camp newspaper and went on to be a well-known writer at the *Denver Post*. Each of the 10 relocation camps published at least one paper.

*The Sentinel* was an eight-page weekly tabloid that was published October 1942 until July 1945. The newspaper kept internees informed about WRA policies and maintained morale with news about internees and camp activities.

Early editions of *The Sentinel* were typewritten offset-printed handouts that were distributed before the tabloid newspaper format. The newspaper staff named their paper after the geologic Heart Mountain landmark because it watched over the camp like a sentinel. They wanted the newspaper to serve as a guardian for the internees.

After the War, Bill wrote a book entitled *Nisei: The Quiet Americans* (1969). According to Hosokawa, Japanese were serving in the U.S. military well before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. A number of recently inducted Nisei soldiers stationed at Fort Warren outside of Cheyenne were taking basic training in 1941.

At that time, it was an army base where my auntie Hisako worked as secretary to the base chaplain. She arranged to get passes for the Nisei GIs stationed there to attend a dance planned for December 7<sup>th</sup> at the Japanese community hall.

That day, the Cheyenne Japanese community prepared a spread of traditional food for the servicemen. The townspeople arranged for a record player - not a common living room item back then - to provide music and accompany some dancing.

Despite all the planning, nobody was in a very good mood to dance to the music and partake in the fancy dinner. All returned to the base and listened to FDR's declaration of war speech the next day.

My aunt's experience after Pearl Harbor reminded me of a family connection to 9/11. That day, the American Airlines (AA) Flight 11 aircraft was a Boeing 767 scheduled to take off from Boston's Logan International Airport (BOS) to the LAX airport in Los Angeles.

One of the crewmembers that morning was flight attendant Betty Ong. She scheduled herself on AA Flight 11, so she could meet her sister in Los Angeles on their way to Hawaii for a vacation.

The aircraft capacity was 158 passengers, but on September 11<sup>th</sup>, but departing BOS, the flight was only about half full.

After five passengers hijacked the plane, Betty made an Airfone call from the back of the plane. Airfone was an air to ground telephone signal broadcast over radio frequencies. The technology was developed by MCI and allowed passengers to make in-flight telephone calls for around \$4. The service was discontinued in 2006 due to lack of use.

Betty made contact with the AA operations center in Raleigh, North Carolina. She told the center supervisor that her aircraft had been hijacked and provided the hijackers' seat assignments, which later led investigators to learn their identities.

On board that morning were Mohamed Atta, Abdulaziz al-Omari and Suqami sat in business class, while Waleed al-Shehri and Wail al-Shehri sat in first class seats.

The hero of AA Flight 11 was Betty Ong, one of the 92 passengers who perished that morning and the fiancé of my cousin, Leonard Ichiyasu.

By the time of World War II, the fish market was relocated down the block at 422 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. Bill Matsuyama and his wife, Mary Arima, lived in the apartment above the market with their two sons, Brian and Jim. The two boys are much older than me and I didn't know them, although I received information and old photos from Brian for this story.

Mary ended up in Cheyenne by way of Worland following her internment at Tule Lake Relocation Center in California, which began construction in April 1942.

The Tule Lake camp became the largest and most notorious of the 10 camps with a peak population of close to 19,000 internees.

About 500 Japanese volunteers arrived a month ahead of time to help set up the Tule Lake camp in preparation for the first group of Japanese initially herded into assembly centers at Sacramento, Pinedale, Marysville, Pomona and Salinas.

After the initial 3,200 detainees were sorted and processed by the WCCA, they traveled to the Tule Lake camp that formally opened in May 1942. The Tule Lake camp population originated primarily from Sacramento County, California; King County, Washington; and Hood River County, Oregon.

By 1945, the Tule Lake camp developed manufacturing businesses including a *tōfu* factory, a bakery and furniture factory; a hog farm and slaughtering facility. There were also goods and services provided by a shoe repair shop, a beauty shop, fish market, funeral home, along several co-op stores. The Tule Lake camp had eight Buddhist churches, three Christian churches, and four *dōjō* where *judō* was practiced.

A *dōjō* is a formal training place for the Japanese martial arts ending in “*dō*” which is derived from the Chinese *Dao*, which means the “way” in the sense of a path or course.

The Tule Lake camp became the most infamous when in February 1943, the WRA and the U.S. Army distributed *Statement of U.S. Citizenship of Japanese American Ancestry* application forms for leave clearance. Internees 17-years old and older in the camp network were required to fill out the questionnaire before they were allowed to exit the camp.

The application form was ill conceived and ended up creating disharmony ranging from refusal to complete the form to outright violence among the internees that resulted in political and bureaucratic nightmares for the WRA.

The Tule Lake camp became known for the largest internee insurrection. News of the Tule Lake “riot” spread quickly and escalated the already high levels of anti-Japanese sentiment.

Two questions intended to separate the “loyal” from the “disloyal,” sparked the most controversy when “no” answers were given for both. The disloyal became known as the “no-no” boys.

Conversely, those who answered, “yes” to both questions were deemed to be “loyal,” or “yes-yes” boys.

*Question #27 - Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty wherever ordered?*

This question was asked of Issei men who were far older than the age allowed to serve in the military and a “no” answer would be construed as “disloyal.” This question caused a split. Some draft age Nisei were willing to show their loyalty and enlisted, while others, most infamously from the Heart Mountain camp in Wyoming, resisted and were imprisoned.

*Question #28 - Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?*

This question was also problematic to Issei who were not allowed U.S. citizenship and asked to renounce allegiance to the only country where they were citizens. The Nisei also figured that if their parents answered “no” to both questions, and they answered “yes” it could be viewed as showing disrespect to elders.

The Tule Lake camp ended up with the largest number of internees who gave clear “no-no” responses and deemed “disloyal.” Those who responded with qualified “yes” answers by adding comments like “when our family civil rights are restored” were also designated as “disloyal.”

Of the nearly 11,000 responses to Question #27 about military service, 30 percent refused to give unqualified “yes-yes” responses. In their responses to Question #28 about disavowing loyalty to Japan, 16 percent were considered “disloyal” because they qualified their “yes” answers.

Despite threats of \$10,000 fines, 20 years in prison or both, Tule Lake camp dissenters were imprisoned in Alturas and Klamath Falls county jails.

In July 1943, the WRA changed the camp designation. Tule Lake became a Segregation Center as the camp where “no-no” Japanese would be corralled. By September, over 12,000 “no-no” Japanese were moved from the other nine camps.

The most activist internees lived in one place and reminiscent of Stalag Luft III in Germany, which was the German PoW camp that imprisoned mostly military officers from the Allied forces, and fictionalized in *The Great Escape* (1963) movie starring Steve McQueen. The cunning POWs planned the most daring escape during the War in Europe.

A couple months later, thousands of men, women and children gathered around the Tule Lake camp administrative headquarters where a meeting was held. The crowd came to support their elected representatives, the *Daihyo Sha Kai* (Negotiating Group), that protested food shortages, poor working conditions and the hospital staff bedside lack-of-manners.

At the meeting, a story was told about the death of an infant girl who fell into scalding water at the hospital. The attending physician refused to transfer the girl to a fully equipped hospital. A report was received that a pack of young internees entered the hospital and severely beat the doctor.

In response, the U.S. Army occupied the camp with tanks rolling through the barracks. Tear gas was fired. Soldiers aimed 50-caliber machine guns at bystanders.

The military moved into Tule Lake. The camp came under maximum-security martial law in November 1943 until January 1944. Internees were subject to a curfew. More barbwire was added to a 16-foot high fence. Fewer daily recreational activities were offered. The six guard towers surrounding the camp were increased to 28, and a battalion of an estimated 1,000 military police (MP) with armored cars and tanks were deployed.

The MP pawed through private quarters seeking contraband. They searched the entire camp hunting down the Negotiating Group leaders who were hidden in safe harbors around the camp.

Needless to say, Tule Lake camp management became more complicated. Two thirds of the camp population consisted of activist leaders and no-no boys from the other nine camps.

Even though no criminal charges were filed, in the end, the Tule Lake camp dissidents were incarcerated along with a couple hundred other disobedient internees from the other relocation camps around the country.

The remaining third of the camp population were “loyals” who did not want to be reassigned to another relocation camp, while other “loyals” were dispersed to other camps.

While he owned the fish market, Bill Matsuyama became a trusted leader in the Cheyenne Japanese community during the War. He was a liaison with federal and local law enforcement. There were no confrontations or uprisings Cheyenne.

In 1951, the Matsuyamas sold the fish market to my coattail uncle and aunt Carl and Lucy Kishiyama. Kanekichi “Carl” Kishiyama immigrated from Oredo, Japan and settled near Scottsbluff, Nebraska. Lucy Shiyomura was born in Lucerne, Colorado, and went to work in Denver to earn additional income to support her family.

Their parents served as matchmakers and arranged for Carl and Lucy to meet. Two days later, the couple was married.

The newlyweds later farmed near Meridan in eastern Laramie County before moving to Cheyenne. The family lived above the market with their children, Carol Lou, her sisters Jeanne, Janice and brother Larry.

Larry was much older than me and didn’t know him well when I was a kid. When we were both adults, I became reacquainted with Larry after he moved to Boulder where I live now. He was a martial arts *sensei* (teacher).

I found out Larry lived in Boulder when we had a random meet-up near Laramie. This is a typical Wyoming story. I stopped for a pit stop at the 12-ft tall Abraham Lincoln bust atop a 30-ft high granite pedestal monument at the Summit Rest Area and Visitor Center between Cheyenne and Laramie on I-80.

The sculptor, Robert Russin, was an art professor at UW. He originally erected the sculpture in 1959 nearby on Sherman Hill overlooking the old U.S. Highway 30. After I-80 was built, the Wyoming Highway Department moved the monument to its current location.

Russin gained his initial notoriety as a New Deal artist. He has two sculptures at the U.S. Post Office in Evanston, Illinois. He and his work are included in a documentary I produced that aired on Wyoming PBS, *New Deal Artist Public Art Legacy* (2018).

Through my Volkswagen (VW) Eurovan front windshield, there was Larry walking out of the visitor center. He was cruising around on his motorcycle. We had a brief conversation and agreed to meet up back in Boulder.

We traded services, with me digitizing some of his martial arts video recordings in exchange for some carpentry work. Larry passed away before he was able to get the flower box built.

Larry's sister, Jeanne, had a presence in Cheyenne's Westside. She married my uncle Jake who owned Pioneer Printing for a number of years at 514 W. 19<sup>th</sup> St. Pioneer Printing also carried other paper products. Carol Lou and Jeanne delivered paper-ware like napkins and cups to area restaurants.

Jake and his partners sold out around the time digital printing took off. The business was unable to catch hold and after 148 years in business, Pioneer Printing closed in 2018.

Jake and Jeanne had two daughters, my cousins, Alison and Leslie. They are the only two members of the original O'Hashi / Ohashi and Sakata families who still live in Cheyenne. Jake and my dad are the only siblings who used the "O'Hashi" spelling.

Alison is a psychologist and Leslie operates a Pilates business and the nonprofit Body Lines Dance Studio for which she was presented one of Wyoming Governor Matt Mead's annual art awards in 2017 honoring her work with adaptive dance for mentally and physically less able youth.

Jake was my dad's youngest brother. According to a 1990 account in the *Wyoming Tribune Eagle*, Jake recalls their house being searched by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). According to the story, he said the hunting rifles were confiscated and the radio was checked to be sure it didn't have shortwave capabilities.

Jake's taste in music was one that rubbed off on me. He listened to Burt Bacharach. He was a prolific pop music composer during the 1960s. He collaborated with lyricist Hal David and the two wrote several hits that were sung by Dionne Warwick including *This Guy's in Love with You*, that topped the charts in 1968.

While all my friends were buying rock and roll record albums, I was into Bacharach, Herb Alpert, and Andy Williams. When I'm in the car by myself – which is most times – my Bacharach mix is the most played.

After the Kishiyamas sold the fish market in 1955, the location became Ace Billiards, Dunbar's Recreation and Geeche's Pawn Shop before being vacant in 1959.

Carl stayed downtown and worked as custodian at First National Bank on the corner of West 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Capitol Avenue. Lucy was a well-known florist for most of her working life.

### **Baker's Place: prohibition and integration**

(Bill Miyamoto at bar pix, Sammy Davis Jr, button)

John A. Baker was a former Cheyenne police officer and a longtime businessman with a strong presence at 416 and 418 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St.

I've heard a couple rumors about him. One is, that he was half Native American and half African American. Another is, he was the son of Harry P. Hynds and his African American mistress. Hynds was a well-known local philanthropist and builder of the historic Plains Hotel located at Central Avenue and West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and his namesake, the Hynds Building, a block west on Capital Avenue at West 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

Regardless, all I've been able to find about Baker is his family has a nice headstone in the Lakeview Cemetery where he, his wife and mother are buried.

Around 1939, Tomizo "Bill" Miyamoto had a chance to move from Denver to Cheyenne and went into business with Baker.

As early as 1922, Aikichi Kake, Sami Yoshimura, Kambe and Yoshio Nomura occupied the boarding house above 416 before Baker is mentioned in 1926.

Baker's Bar was reportedly the only integrated establishment in Cheyenne.

In response to more Americans owning automobiles and becoming more mobile, *The Negro Motorist Green Book* travel guide was compiled that listed restaurants, bars, lodging and services where traveling African Americans and other non-whites, including Japanese, could be safe during the time of racial segregation in the Jim Crow era.

A New York City mailman named Victor Hugo Green, authored *The Green Book*, as it came to be known. It was published annually from 1936 to 1966. Eventually, the book expanded its coverage from the New York City area to continental North America.

*The Green Book* (2018) is the subject of an Oscar-winning movie about an African American concert pianist Dr. Don Shirley (Mahershala Ali) and his racist Caucasian driver Tony Lip (Viggo Mortenson) who negotiate their concert tour through the segregated South. Through their association, both men learn more about themselves and become more accepting of one another.

While other Cheyenne businesses are listed, Baker's Place isn't mentioned in any edition of *The Green Book*, but Miyamoto family members say African American enlisted men from Fort Warren, including Private First Class (PFC) Sammy Davis, Jr., regularly patronized the bar during the War.

Typical for the time, Sammy Davis, Jr. experienced high levels of racial prejudice while in the service and Baker's Place was considered safe. In various TV talk show interviews, Davis, Jr. has fond recollections of one of his sergeants who helped him be a better reader, which later became important as he built a career as an A-list entertainer.

By 1917, the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the U.S. Constitution was enacted that prohibited "intoxicating liquors." In 1920, Wyoming was the last state in the Rocky Mountain West to go "dry." By then, the bar name

was without reference to alcohol. It was known as John Baker Billiards in 1932, John Baker Soft Drinks in 1934, and John Baker Beer Parlor in 1938.

Wyoming's alcohol prohibition repeal while enacted in 1933 didn't take effect until 1935, but had earlier approved the sale of 3.2 beer and became known as John Baker Liquors from 1942 to 1948. In 1950, it was called Baker's Place.

Bill moved his family into the apartment at 418 where he and his wife, Hatsuye, brought up their three boys, Ted, Bill (Doc) and Tom.

After their father retired, the three sons bought out Baker and operated the business as Tomi's Bar and Lounge. As Cheyenne's downtown began to slowdown, Baker's Place was closed and the brothers transferred the liquor license to the Two-Bar Bowl and later the Spot Bowl on the outskirts north of town.

Tom Miyamoto was the eldest son who graduated from Manual High School in Denver. He was quite the baseball player at UW where also excelled as a wrestler.

World War II squelched his chances to play professional baseball. Interested teams decided not to risk taking a Japanese player. He was a member of the Wyoming Nisei All Star baseball team that played around the Wyoming, Nebraska and northern Colorado.

Instead, he worked with his father and Johnny Baker managing the bar business.

Tom eventually married Connie Yashiro, who was from North Platte, Nebraska, but was reared in California when the War started. Her family owned a grocery store that was forced to close when they were sent to the Pomona center. Her destination was the Heart Mountain camp.

Connie was released from the Heart Mountain camp and moved to Denver, where in 1944 she met Tom. The couple had three sons, Glenn, and twins Ron and Marty. Internees could be released to a specific location after a "sponsor" was secured. I met Glenn and Ron the first time at a recent Miyamoto family reunion. Marty was a popular school teacher in Rawlins and Parker, Colorado who died in 2008.

In May 1942, the Pomona center opened for about four months and located at the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds (Fairplex) about 30 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. That summer, the camp population peaked at around 5,400 persons. The detainees originated mostly from Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Santa Clara counties. They were transferred to the Heart Mountain camp.

Despite only being in operation for three months, 309 housing barracks were built in eight buildings that included combined bathroom - shower - laundry facilities. Each building included mess halls and kitchens.

There were 36 communal shower and latrine buildings. Detainees wore *geta* (Japanese clogs) to avoid developing athlete's foot fungus by raising their feet off the concrete floors. Soon a small *geta* making industry thrived.

Since there were no existing buildings, the Pomona center cost more than any of the other 14 assembly centers with a price tag totally a little over \$1,000,000. The Pomona center was the only assembly center that had a perimeter fence topped with barbwire.

The U.S. Army curfew required detainees to remain indoors from 10:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. that was later tightened to 9:30 p.m. The WCCA prohibited and confiscated Japanese language publications. Notices written in the Japanese language with an English translation had to be submitted to the camp director for approval before they could be posted.

Detainees could request a pass and allowed to see visitors in a fenced-off zone at the center's far west end between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. after a pass was approved. Because so many out of town visitors were unaware of the procedure, camp administrators issued visitor gate passes. The Pomona center's visitor pass system was one of the most efficient through out the war relocation industrial complex.

As in all short-term assembly centers, there was a full recreation program that included organized sports leagues and games like bridge tournaments. The detainees were in charge of organizing the various activities.

Classes were offered for *ikebana* (flower arranging) woodworking, and sewing, as well as band and orchestra instruction. The American Friends Service Committee (the Quakers) donated 1,700 books to the Pomona center library.

Detainees showed their patriotism by collecting money from detainees to purchase defense stamps and war bonds to support the War effort. On Veterans Day, cash donations were collected from the sale of little artificial poppies.

Unlike many other assembly centers, there was no comprehensive school program but a temporary school in two recreation halls held classes after regular hours attended by children aged four to 10 was voluntary.

The camp director had to approve the use of the Japanese language in church services that were held initially in two barracks for a Catholic, eight Protestant, and four Buddhist services each week. The amount of space was doubled by June to accommodate 2,700 detainees.

A small store was opened to serve the camp detainees soon after the camp was occupied. The inventory included sundry items such as candy, cigarettes, soft drinks and toiletries.

The main camp operations were run by the detainees, which kept them busy, while saving the WCCA money. When the camp opened, 1,600 detainees were given work assignments.

Bill "Doc" Miyamoto finished his optometry degree after he returned from combat. He married Margaret "Marge" Makino while in school in Chicago. They had a daughter, Linda.

Marge was sent to the Tule Lake camp. When the camp became an isolation center for dissident internees and subsequently militarized, she was relocated to Camp Amache in southeastern Colorado.

The third Miyamoto brother, Ted, and his wife Yoshi Ogata had two children, Terie and Steve.

Cousins Terie and Linda are both older than me and we became better acquainted during this writing project. Terie worked for the phone company through its various name changes and is now retired in the Denver area. Linda also moved to Colorado where she served a term as the Boulder County Clerk and Recorder.

Ted was a decorated member of the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT during the War. Yoshi was first relocated to Minidoka Relocation Center in Idaho. She received clearance to move to Minneapolis, where she met Ted.

The Minidoka camp was constructed 16 miles east of Eden, Idaho, in Jerome County on the Snake River Plain of south-central Idaho 20 miles northeast of Twin Falls.

In August 1942, internees began moving into the Minidoka camp. They were transported from Oregon, Washington, and Alaska. The camp consisted of 44 residential blocks and more than 600 buildings and housed a peak population of a few over 7,300.

The Minidoka camp was built on BoR property where the Miller-Gooding and North Side canal systems provided irrigation water the arid agricultural lands.

The camp configuration was different from the other camps with building layouts that followed the bends in the North Side Canal rather than on a perpendicular grid layout.

The BoR assumed that internees would provide an inexpensive labor force to construct irrigation canals and laterals. Most of their time was spent in area fields due to labor shortages caused by the War effort. Some area farmers put their prejudice aside when they had to hire internees to help with the harvest.

In 1943, tensions ran high in all 10 camps when the WRA required internees to fill out the loyalty questionnaire. The most controversial questions asked whether men would serve in the U.S. military and the other asked about denouncing loyalty to the Emperor of Japan.

Even though civil unrest was relatively low among Minidoka internees, compared to some of the other camps, 38 men were arrested for draft evasion in 1944. Within 11 days, 33 men were tried. One defendant was acquitted. Others who plead guilty were sentenced to 18 months in prison, and those who went to trial were convicted and sentenced to three years and three months in prison and levied with a \$200 fine.

Regardless, there were close to 2,000 “yes-yes” Japanese relocated from the Tule Lake camp to the Minidoka camp for their safety.

Minidoka also had a high percentage of internees who volunteered for the all-Japanese 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT that joined the ally forces in Europe. Of the total number of 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT enlistees, 25 percent volunteered from the Minidoka camp.

There were a few other Asian owned businesses on the 400 block of West 17<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1922, Takamatsu Matsushima opened a barbershop at 408. He was born in Kumamoto, Japan in 1887 and died in Cheyenne in 1927.

He was married to Kikuyo Matsushima who kept the barbershop open until 1939. She died in 1944. The family lived across the street at 415 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St.

It was later the location of Wahl's Bicycle and Key shop in 1942. Wahl's was the local Schwinn dealer. I liked going into Wahl's to browse around at the bikes. My parents couldn't afford a Schwinn, which was okay with me.

Even in the 1960s, the higher quality bikes were older ones. I rode what I considered a "souped up" clunker. One of the guys at my dad's work named Danny was very handy. He restored older bicycles. One he made for me was a "Sting Ray," modeled after the chopper style motorcycles.

Baby Boomer biker movies were very popular starting with *The Wild One* (1953) with Marlon Brando who leads one of two rival gangs who terrorize a small town. In *The Wild Angels* (1966), Hells Angel Bruce Dern has his chopper motorcycle stolen and Peter Fonda, and Nancy Sinatra help track down the thieves.

The stingray bicycle model was a foot-pedaled version of bad boy motorcycles with a banana seat, tall handlebars and a knobby back wheel.

My red stingray with the white seat served me well. I didn't get into motorcycles, although I did ride a Cushman scooter in Lander, and now ride an Aprillia Mojito.

There is now a payday loan service at 408.

Between 1910 and 1920, The Mikado Restaurant occupied 420 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. The restaurant was later called the Lee Wung, presumably serving Chinese food through 1938 when it was operated as the Manila Café, likely Filipino.

Beginning in 1922, Aikichi Kake, Kambe and Yoshi Nomura lived above the Walter Davis Barber Shop at 416. In 1939, Takematsu Matsushima moved his barbershop here for a year.

While there is a records gap, Takematsu returned to Japan after the start of World War II where he died in 1944.

From 1939 to 1955, it was the Shamrock Café, Niven's Café, Webb's Café and Wheel of Fortune before the location was unoccupied.

When the California Fish Market at 422 finally closed, it was the location for Ace Billiards, Dunbar's Recreation and Geeche's Pawn Shop before the location was vacant in 1961.

### **Railroads and manifest destiny**

(Andrew Jackson button, Burlington pins)

Other Japanese families lived on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street to be close to their downtown jobs, including at the Burlington, and UP railroad yards located at West 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Capitol Avenue, which were walking distance a couple blocks away.

Railroads relied heavily on the availability of immigrant laborers from Japan and China who, ironically, fueled the “manifest destiny” engine that expanded the railroads that accelerated westward settlement.

Railroad construction peaked during the 1860s largely because of hard working immigrants, who were willing to accept lower wages. When the transcontinental railroad was completed, mass transportation made it easier for settlers to seek their fortunes in the western frontiers as the United States population rapidly expanded.

It’s still amazing to me that individuals and families risked trekking thousands of miles on foot, by horses and wagons from points east to Wyoming seeking better lives.

New York *Democratic Review* newspaper editor John O’Sullivan is credited for first dropping the phrase “manifest destiny” in 1845. There was a rift among Americans following the annexation of Texas. Not only did Texas provide more territory into which more settlers could live, it also meant more non-whites becoming U.S. citizens.

O’Sullivan urged that the country come together as it expanded westward to meet the needs of an ever-growing population. During 1800 to 1860, the U.S. population expanded from 5 million to 30 million people. The growth resulted from immigration and high birth rates.

Early American colonists, including Thomas Jefferson, believed that God’s plan was to take over the entire continent from coast to coast. His successful effort to purchase Louisiana from France in 1803 nearly doubled the size of America.

Westward expansion began in earnest when President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act of 1830 that forced the dispersal Native American tribal members, particularly those in the southern United States onto other federal lands in the newly acquired territories west of the Mississippi River in exchange for white settlement of their ancestral lands.

The forced removal became known as the “Trail of Tears” and included members of the *Tsalagi* (Cherokee); *Mvskoke* (Muscogee); *Oconee* (Seminole); *Chikashsha* (Chickasaw) and *Chahta* (Choctaw) nations.

The U.S. government’s expansion philosophy was hastened by subsidies given to the UP. President Abraham Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act on July 1, 1862. The 1862 Act created the subsidized UP railroad, and the existing Central Pacific railroad by granting 10 square-mile sections of land for each mile of track laid.

In 1864, a second Pacific Railroad Act drafted by UP railroad attorneys doubled the land grant to 20 sections for each mile, which created a checkerboard of odd-numbered sections for 20 miles on each

side of the line and amounted to nearly 4,600,000 acres in the Wyoming Territory, alone. The land grant also gave mineral rights under these lands to the railroad.

In addition, the government loaned the railroads \$27 million, enough to cover half the cost of construction. The loan was amortized over 30 years at six percent interest.

The UP also sold \$11 million of stock, and \$30 million in bonds. Most of the investment came via financiers in New York who sold the stocks and bonds on the East Coast and in Europe. Investors included merchants who earned their fortunes from trade in China, Civil War financiers, and European nobility.

Indian wars during the 1860s were unintended consequences of manifest destiny. The conflicts involved Native Americans as a new enemy who wanted to reclaim their conquered lands; migrating settlers looking for a new place to live; the railroads that made it easier for westward expansion, and the U.S. military trying to protect the settlers and railroads from attacks by Native Americans.

There were many treaties between the U.S. government and Native American tribes, including the Treaty of Fort Laramie, Wyoming approved in 1851 among the United States and several Plains and northern Rocky Mountain tribes allowed roads to be built, and military troops stationed along the Oregon Trail generally through Wyoming to protect migrating settlers.

As the rails extended into Utah in early 1869, construction money was running short. There were unexpected obstacles like having to blow out more road cuts, feeding mules that graded rights-of-way across rugged terrain, extra costs for lumberjacks chopping down trees for railroad ties, and laborers who spiked rails across the high plains of Wyoming.

The UP route eventually plowed through southern Wyoming and linked the United States from coast to coast at Promontory, Utah with the final “Golden Spike” pounded into the track on May 10, 1869 celebrating the completion of the transcontinental railroad.

The railroad’s financial woes delayed the ceremony for a few days. The event was originally planned to happen a couple days earlier.

The train transporting UP Vice-President Thomas Durant and his entourage rolled into the tiny western Wyoming town of Piedmont, not far from the Utah border. Piedmont was a stop with a roundhouse for train maintenance, a water tank to replenish the steam engines, a telegraph office, and a few businesses to support the railroad crews.

On May 6, over 400 laid off tie cutters, who had been waiting three months for their back pay, hijacked the “Durant Special.” The mob greeted Durant and switched his car onto a sidetrack where his train car was chained to the tracks.

After futile attempts to gain his freedom, Durant finally relented. The men’s pay arrived from UP headquarters in New York a couple days later.

Little remains of Piedmont now, but during the railroad boom, the town bustled 10 miles southwest of Evanston. In 1868, five beehive-shaped kilns were constructed by Mormon pioneer Moses Byrne to produce charcoal for Utah steel smelters. Charcoal is near-pure carbon that when heated, generates the high temperatures necessary to smelt iron ore.

That Utah industry would later be tied to the World War II war effort and later, the U.S. Steel Atlantic City iron ore mine south of Lander.

A supply of timber from the nearby Uinta Mountains pine forests made Piedmont an ideal point for charcoal processing. To make charcoal, kilns were loaded with wood and a lit on fire. The kilns were sealed and the wood slowly smoldered over several days.

The Piedmont charcoal kilns are now part of the Wyoming state parks system.

Passenger rail service boomed with 98 percent of intercity travelers transported by train 1916. Before World War II and more competition from airlines, commercial bus service, and the automobile the railroad market share dropped to 67 percent. That number surged during the War, but in the 1950s, the number of train travelers dropped to 34 percent.

By 1971, there was enough rail service demand from the public for the U.S. government to step up and fund what became the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, which consisted of 20 of 26 railroads that transferred their passenger service to what became known as Amtrak.

### **Enter the U.S. Army**

(Hell on Wheels CFD float, Hell on Wheels button)

Wyoming has always been a “pass through” state marked by the transcontinental railroad bringing business and settlers west, beaten paths where cattle herds and flocks of sheep were driven north, and the need for protection provided by the military.

I include here some “I didn’t know that” type factoids about the forts established along the railroad. Some are pit stops along I-80 designated historic sites and managed by the Wyoming state parks system.

When the UP decided to stay north and plotted out its main route through Cheyenne instead of Denver, that decision transformed Cheyenne from a dusty prairie town into a booming 19<sup>th</sup> century metropolis. Denver later paid for a railroad spur to connect with Cheyenne.

With more settlers arriving and business being transacted, came a need to protect the railroad route and the towns popping up along the way from attack by the tribes protecting and reclaiming their lands.

Ironically, the Cheyenne passenger rail service which began in 1867 lasted until 1983 when Amtrak moved the California Zephyr route through Colorado. Freight continues to be moved across southern Wyoming.

Beginning at the eastern border of Wyoming, the U.S. Army established themselves at Camp O.O. Howard near Pine Bluffs in 1885. It was a temporary military encampment to protect UP laborers.

General Oliver Otis Howard won the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Civil War. He was later deployed to the West where he was a celebrated Indian killer. After the Civil War, he had charge of integrating freedmen (former slaves) into American society.

The Post on Crow Creek was Cheyenne's first military designation and built in 1867 as the base for the 2nd U.S. Volunteer Cavalry, which included soldiers from Crook, Weston, and Sheridan counties in northeast Wyoming.

The post was renamed Fort David Allen Russell honoring the Civil War general who was killed in 1864 during the Battle of Opequon in the Shenandoah Valley of Pennsylvania.

In 1867, President Andrew Johnson nominated Russell to the rank of major general, retroactive to his death on the battlefield.

In 1930, the fort became Fort Francis E. Warren and taken over by the Air Force in 1948. Warren was awarded the Medal of Honor as a soldier in the Civil War and best known for serving as Wyoming's first territorial governor in 1885 and elected as the state's first governor in 1890. He resigned as governor when he was elected to the U.S. Senate.

In July 1867, General Grenville M. Dodge and his surveyors plotted the site for "Crow Creek Crossing" where the UP railroad crossed over Crow Creek, a tributary of the South Platte River. The railroad town in the Dakota Territory was renamed "Cheyenne" after the Cheyenne Indian tribe closely allied with the Arapaho.

In March 1868, Dodge put Cheyenne on the map as a key railroad town. He selected the location for the UP locomotive repair and maintenance yards. Cheyenne was eventually the location for a major depot.

Around the time of its founding, Cheyenne quickly had a population of 4,000 people. It arose almost by slight of hand and nicknamed "The Magic City of the Plains."

Cheyenne boomed. Local businesses provided materials and supplies for the railroad as well as entertainment for the workers with money to burn but no place to burn it. In 1868, there were 70 bars in Cheyenne, along with brothels, gambling parlors and live theaters.

"Hell on Wheels" was a big tent set up in Cheyenne. It was an end-of-the-tracks attraction that moved with the railroad where patrons could down a shot of whiskey, try their hand at poker, hire a prostitute and get a shot of penicillin for venereal disease, all at the same place.

During CFD in the 1960s, the local Jaycees Club set up a big "Hell on Wheels" canvas tent along Crow Creek and later in Holliday Park. One of the CFD parade standards is the "Hell on Wheels" float featuring bar floozies and raucous railroad workers guzzling beer.

Despite the unchecked chicanery in the city, there was a growing need to protect even more settlers and the railroad as expansion continued westward.

South of Laramie and east of the Laramie River, Fort John Buford - different from the Buford railroad section stop between Laramie and Cheyenne, but named after the same guy - was built in 1886 to protect railroad workers and settlers trekking west on the Overland Trail.

It was later renamed Fort Sanders and now the Cavalryman restaurant. The ruins of a stone guardhouse and magazine remain and were marked by a monument placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1914.

It is said that frontierswoman and scout, Martha "Calamity Jane" Cannary was stationed there in 1872 as a scout during the Indian Wars.

Staying true to the boom and bust cycle, in February 1868, as the end-of-the-tracks moved west, Cheyenne lost population to fast-growing Laramie.

By spring 1868, crews laid rails to Laramie, but not before extending them over Sherman Hill. At an elevation of 8,200 ft above sea level, the rail line over the Sherman summit in the Laramie Range became the highest railroad in the world when it was completed during the spring of 1869 before descending into the Laramie Basin.

To span Dale Creek, just west of the summit, a bridge 125 ft high and 1,400 ft in length was required. That trestle became the highest along the UP route west of the Missouri River.

Boom times in Laramie were no different than those in other rail camp towns. Railroad work attracted men earning too much money and no place to spend it. There was trouble waiting to happen among single men, prostitutes, gamblers, and thieves who scrounged the money trickling out of the pockets of drunken rail workers.

Between Laramie and Rawlins, Fort Fred Steele was built in 1868 to protect the railroad and settlers heading north to Montana on the Bozeman Trail. Fort Steele was a key settlement that protected the railroad bridge across the North Platte. The fort guarded a shipping point for lumber and railroad ties cut from Medicine Bow forest timber that floated down the North Platte to the railroad loading dock.

Frederick Steele served in the U.S. Army as a Major General during the Civil War. He was assigned to the Army of Arkansas and credited for taking Little Rock and subsequently returning Arkansas to the Union.

After the fort was abandoned in 1886, more businesses opened and settlers took up residence. The site was restored by the state of Wyoming and now a part of Seminoe State Park.

Next along the route, Fort Rawlins was originally sited in 1868 at Rawlins Spring, north of the current city of Rawlins, to protect railroad workers. It was named after Civil War General John Aaron Rawlins who was a longtime advisor to President Ulysses S. Grant.

The fort was later relocated to the north bank of the Timpanogos River, two miles east of Provo, Utah in 1870, to quell growing Mormon insurrections there.

President Grant appointed Rawlins to be the Secretary of War. In 1869, Grant dispatched Rawlins to the Utah Territory, thinking the dry climate would be good for Rawlins' tuberculosis, which took his life a few months later.

His main orders were to observe Mormon life, mostly monitoring men marrying multiple women. When Rawlins returned to Washington he convinced Grant to adopt a hard line policy against the Mormons and particularly their doctrine of polygamy.

While the railroad no longer transports passengers along the southern Wyoming passage, I-80 and U.S. Highway 30 (the Lincoln Highway) continue to be important east – west routes.

### **Systemic racism**

(Tom and Joan wedding pix, Anti-Japanese button)

Poet Emma Lazarus wrote a sonnet in 1883 that she donated to an art and literary works auction to raise money to construct the Statue of Liberty pedestal on Ellis Island. The last stanza reads:

“Keep, ancient lands, your storied poem? cries she  
With silent lips. Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the gold door?”

from *The New Colossus*, by Emma Lazarus (1883)

Her sonnet rings true, if a European immigrant agrees to Superman's American Way, but an émigré from Asia after 1924 was not allowed entry into the United States.

Before 1924, the West 17<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood attracted a host of Japanese. When the national Immigration Act of 1924 was signed into law, the subtext was to preserve the Caucasian racial and ethnic homogeneity of the United States.

The 1924 Act excluded all immigrants from anywhere in Asia and limited the quota of other immigrants who were allowed to enter into the United States through a quota system based on a person's national origin.

The quota provided visas to two percent of the number of immigrants of each nationality currently in the United States based on the 1890 census.

As background, the U.S. Congress enacted the first widely restrictive immigration law in 1917 in the name of national security during World War I. The 1917 Act required immigrants over 16 years of age to prove basic reading comprehension in their native language. The immigration tax paid upon arrival was increased. Immigration officials were given more discretion to determine who to include or exclude.

The 1917 Act excluded anyone born in a defined “Asiatic Barred Zone” except for Japanese and Filipinos. This is because the Japanese government voluntarily limited Japanese immigration to the United States. At that time, the Philippines were a U.S. colony, so its citizens were U.S. nationals.

Following the Transcontinental Railroad completion, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 signed into law by President Chester Arthur denied any additional Chinese visas for 10 years.

During this moratorium, the UP re-deployed their Chinese labor force to work in the company mines located along the railway rights-of-way.

There was an anti-Chinese movement that arose among the white labor force largely because the UP hired Chinese because they would work for lower wages. Labor-related racial tensions reached their peak in September 1885 when the Rock Springs Massacre in Wyoming resulted in the deaths of 28 Chinese miners and destruction of 78 homes of Chinese miners.

One of the main topics of the 1924 immigration debate was the deeply engrained quota system. While there were some who wanted to increase the number of immigrants allowed, the agreed upon plan lowered the quota from three to two percent of new foreign-born residents based on the 1890 census, rather than the 1910 census to further restrict the number of immigrants.

The 1924 Act meant that Asians, including Japanese, would no longer be admitted into the United States. The new provision ran contrary to the Japan’s voluntary immigration limits that had been observed since 1917.

That change created tension between the U.S. government, and that of Japan. The U.S. Congress determined that preserving the racial homogeneity of the United States was more important than good relations with Japan.

On top of it all, further westward expansion coupled with a more diverse citizenry from Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia, would mean they would have the right to representation in state and territorial legislatures, and the U.S. Congress. This would be problematic, based on the desire for racial homogeneity and systemic oppression of the new racially and ethnically diverse population.

It wasn’t until the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 that the 1924 Act became more relevant.

Near the end of the 1943 Wyoming state legislative session, Senate Joint Resolution Number 1 was approved and declared, “the people of the great State of Wyoming to join in a program of unity, to the end that all differences be laid aside in a spirit of mutual coordination of our efforts toward the one thing we all seek at this time-victory in the present war.”

Despite the “feel good” resolution, that same week, the Legislature passed and Governor Nels Smith signed Senate File 24 into law that prohibited land ownership by “aliens ineligible to citizenship.”

Two state senators representing people near the Heart Mountain camp sponsored the Wyoming Alien Land Act. Republican George Burke of Powell and Democrat J.A. Farlein of Worland, wanted to prevent West Coast Japanese removed from their homes and sent to the Heart Mountain camp from

acquiring real estate in Wyoming. Interestingly, the bill excluded Chinese from the law's provisions. The penalties included a \$5,000 fine or five years in prison or both.

The 1924 Act and the Wyoming Alien Land Act explain why no property on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street was under Japanese ownership. The 1943 law remained on the books until February 2001 when the Legislature repealed it during the Governor James Geringer administration. The legislation to repeal was introduced by state Representative Keith Goodenough from Casper.

Geringer was also a part of a documentary I produced about Dutch Hop Dancing. He's from Wheatland in East Central Wyoming, which is also a cultural pocket of German Volga Russians, the ethnic group that keeps the unique art form going.

There were other systemic constraints. In 1955, Auntie Joan and Uncle Tom Lee were married in Greeley, Colorado because interracial marriages were against the law in Wyoming.

Joan was the youngest in the family. I really didn't know her that well growing up, mostly because she and Tom were in Colorado. I didn't know Tom at all, but at first glance he was a James Dean, *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) kind-of-guy. The movie was about a troublemaker who moves to a new town, but learns, no matter where you go, there you are.

Joan and Tom were involved in a serious car crash. I know that Joan broke her back in that accident. She wore an upper torso body cast. I don't think she ever fully recovered from that accident.

I knew Tom as a stock car racer. He parked his car in the garage on my grandfather's ranchette south of Cheyenne near the racetrack. I'm not sure of how Grandfather acquired the split-level home built into the side of a hill. I don't know why he had it or who actually stayed there. It was sparsely furnished with Western-style oak chairs and tables. Grandpa raised a few pigs and chickens.

Grandma Ohashi and my parents took my sister and me there to tend the chickens. It wasn't until much later that I viewed the outing as a rite of passage. One visit, the mission was to slaughter chickens. I won't go into the gory details, but it was the first and only time that I'd seen a chicken running around with its head chopped off.

My dad took my sister and me to the stock car races in the summer. We parked at my grandfather's place and walked down to the backstretch of the track. There was a double chain link fence that had obviously been slammed into by more than a few racecars. Thinking back, it wasn't the safest place to watch, but I liked being near the dust flying and the banging sounds of metal-on-metal, despite the risk.

Why did Tom and Joan end up in Colorado? The Wyoming law banning interracial marriage was adopted in 1913 was one of a dozen states that banned marriage between Asian variations (Mongolians and Malays) and Caucasians.

In Wyoming, interracial couples found guilty of the misdemeanor could be fined between \$100 and \$1,000 and sent to prison for up to 10 years. Nationally, laws banning mixed-race marriage go back to 1661 when the first law banning interracial marriages was passed in Maryland.

It wasn't until 1965 that the Wyoming miscegenation law was repealed. However, interracial marriage in the United States has been legal since the 1967 U.S. Supreme Court (SCOTUS) decision in, *Loving v. Virginia*.

It wasn't just public law that institutionalized racism, in the wake of the nationwide anti-Japanese sentiment. My mom and dad were kicked out of the American Bowling Congress (ABC) during World War II.

They were part of an all Nisei league, I don't know why, but the league was allowed in Cheyenne despite the long-standing ABC "white men only" policy in place since 1916 that happened to coincide with the timing of the Immigration Act of 1917.

Not only were all teams in ABC-approved city leagues restricted to white men, but also the ABC would not permit sanctioned matches to take place at any bowling alley that sponsored tournaments for mixed-gender or non-white teams. ABC also restricted the number of bowling lanes available to non-whites.

Following World War II, after being released from war relocation camps, Nisei bowlers scattered across the country where they formed teams in their new communities. By 1947, the Japanese American Citizen League (JACL) estimated that more than 400 Japanese-American bowling teams formed around the continental U.S. and Hawaii.

In March 1946, the JACL began efforts to reverse the ABC exclusion rule by picketing tournaments around the country. The protests grew into a coalition that included the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the JACL and labor organizations like the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

Despite grassroots pressure, the ABC continued to discriminate when selecting members. The ABC disregarded legal actions in Illinois, Wisconsin, New York, Wisconsin, and Ohio. ABC Secretary Elmer Baumgarten said that if the ABC lost its right to select members, the "American Way" of life would be lost.

In the spring of 1950, an Illinois judge found that the ABC abused its corporate franchise to do business in the state and ordered the organization to drop its discriminatory policy and pay a hefty fine, or have its state corporate charter revoked.

At the ABC annual meeting in May 1950, a resolution was introduced to overturn the national exclusion policy. The resolution was adopted quickly on a voice vote. Shortly thereafter, the JACL issued a statement hailing the move.

The first integrated tournament was held in Minneapolis in 1951. My parents were reinstated and my dad's team won the ABC the Cheyenne city league 1953 – 1954 tournament.

The news wasn't all positive. To ensure enough votes to support the change, there was an exception made that allowed ABC chapters in southern Jim Crow states to use race to determine membership.

“Jim Crow” generally describes segregation and discrimination that was lawful in the South until the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As mentioned before, there were other laws that institutionalized discrimination elsewhere in the United States.

Jim Crow isn't a real Southerner.

A white actor named Thomas Dartmouth Rice based in New York City began performing in blackface, wore shabby clothing, and emoted the stereotypical slow moving demeanor of lazy slaves he claimed to have observed. His racist song and dance act was called, “Jump, Jim Crow.”

His act was popular in New York where blackface minstrel shows became a common form of musical theater. Jim Crow became associated with legalized racial segregation.

### **Japanese diaspora**

(Alan and Dad in front of 2213 E. 10<sup>th</sup> pix, New Deal Housing button)

The Japanese scattered away from downtown Cheyenne for a couple reasons - cultural upheaval caused by assimilation following World War II, a general slowdown in downtown activity resulting from consequences of urban sprawl, and *Nihon* “*Jin Crow*” discriminatory real estate practices. *Nihon Jin* is a Japanese person.

The suburban lifestyle of middle class America continues to be an idyllic way of life. No matter what our perceived social class might be, the middle class has been admired based on the stereotype of personal resiliency and the hard work of its members.

Had the wider Cheyenne citizenry been more collaborative with the Japanese after the War, would the West 17<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood continue to exist?

In hindsight, probably so.

Based on the Japanese community experience on two blocks in Cheyenne, the residents who lived there identified with and had a sense of belonging to their neighborhood where they lived and worked. When those feelings of community dissipated, the sense of community was lost.

Indicative of this, after getting out of the fish market business, the Kishiyama family moved from downtown after they purchased a home with some acreage south of Cheyenne. Carl taught *judō* classes from a Quonset building there. When I was in high school, I took a few lessons from him thinking it would help me modify some wrestling moves, but martial arts have a very different skill set.

The Kishiyama place became the annual gathering grounds for shooting off fireworks on the 4th of July.

My dad had a bunch of young guys working for him at the Coke plant. As near as I can figure, they made a fireworks run to Nebraska where big firecrackers like cherry bombs and M-80s were legal.

Wyoming hasn't stringently regulated fireworks as long as I can remember. I think the best contraband business straddling the Wyoming-Colorado border would be selling fireworks on the Wyoming side and *marijuana* on the Colorado side.

After my family moved to the Cole Addition, while not legal, we shot a few off in the backyard, mostly bottle rockets. I remember a Roman candle stand off between Mr. Murray and Mr. St. Clair with the green, red and white balls of fire launched from the cardboard candlesticks flying across Cactus Hill Drive. The Murrays and St. Clairs lived across the street from each other.

My dad was finishing our basement and there were short lengths of half-inch copper water line left over from the bathroom installation. My friend Tad Leeper and I fashioned rocket launchers from the tubing scraps. We had wars at his uncle and aunt's home on the Preston Ranch west of Cheyenne.

I do remember one of my errant rockets side-winding its way into Tad's cache of fireworks that set off quite a series of explosions. I'm surprised we didn't shoot our eyes out.

Around the 4th of July, the neighbor kids - mostly boys - rode our bikes to the fireworks stand. The city limits ended close to the Cole Addition boundary. The 1-1/2 inch Zebra firecrackers were the largest allowed in Wyoming and not large enough.

My pals and I unraveled firecrackers for the gunpowder and made small bombs out of my uncle George's cigar tubes.

The World War II themed TV show *Combat!* (1962 – 1967) was a favorite starring Rick Jason and Vic Morrow. The show was about the lives of U.S. GIs as they fought the Germans in France. The stories were good with World War II as the back drop.

An episode entitled, *Cry from the Ruins* (1965) is a favorite of mine. It's about a distraught mother who searches for her baby buried in a cellar following an air raid. The American troops encounter a squad of Germans who begin shooting at each other.

The woman disrupts the skirmish and implores that the two sides put down their weapons and help find her baby.

Spoiler alert.

Turns out, the woman suffers from PTSD and imagines her baby crying in the ruins after the bombing stops. Nonetheless, the Germans and Americans part peacefully realizing the killing each other is pointless.

The Goepherts had a color TV and was a popular gathering point to watch the show in its final season in 1967.

During the summer, the Cole Addition boys put on our *Combat!* gear and took our war strategies to into the neighborhood at night.

My hero was Sgt. Saunders. He wore a helmet with a camouflaged fabric covering and carried a Thompson submachine gun. One of my prized possessions at the time was a toy version of that weapon. I also had a spring-loaded toy bazooka that shot plastic projectiles.

We blew stuff up in the nearby vacant lots and shot each other during our war games, but that didn't lead us to shoot up any schools.

Between firecracker bomb explosions and walking alone to and from school, I don't know how I made it through childhood alive.

When I was born in May 1953, the Skyline Nisei club minutes congratulate my parents. At that time, my parents cut back on their volunteer work in the community to set up a household. My sister came along a couple years later.

They had a small home at 2213 E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street at Logan Avenue, which went over the railroad viaduct to the Southside.

There were places in Cheyenne where people with high financial risk purchased homes on the west and south sides. These "pockets of poverty" came about as a result of "redlining."

In the 1960s, a sociologist named John McKnight coined "redlining" to describe what turned out to be a discriminatory practice that created geographic boundaries where banks could avoid investing based on community demographics.

The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was formed as a part of the National Housing Act of 1934. New Deal FHA policies that were intended to provide banks with criteria to guide safe lending practices ended up accelerating inner-city decay in areas largely inhabited by lower income minority households.

In 1935, the Federal Home Loan Bank Board through the Home Owners Loan Corporation evaluated 239 cities and designated areas on "residential security maps" to indicate the real-estate investment risk levels:

- \* Type A "Newer" areas in the suburbs most desirable for lending were outlined in green.
- \* Type B "Desirable" neighborhoods were outlined in blue.
- \* Type C "Declining" older areas were outlined in yellow.
- \* Type D "Risky" communities considered poor investments were outlined in red.

Based on these risk assumptions, an externality that arose was an increase in racial segregation and urban decline. While redlining is not prevalent today, its legacy is one of decaying urban areas in need of revitalization or redevelopment.

Our first place on East 10<sup>th</sup> Street was at the Gateway to the Southside. My parents were American citizens and were allowed to own real estate.

It was close to my dad's work at the Coca Cola bottling company on East Lincolnway. Even before moving to the suburbs, we were always a two-car family. One was a passenger car and the other a pick up truck.

That rubbed off on me. I've generally driven a truck or van, but this time around, I bought a new 2015 VW Golf station wagon that was my first with air bags. It was my first new car since the VW Scirocco I purchased in 1977 after the rear end collision I had while driving the sky blue Ford Pinto.

My dad told a story that during the Blizzard of '49, his transmission was frozen stuck. He drove his Ford pickup to work and back home in reverse. He always told me to learn how to drive backward - I did turn into a pretty good parallel parker.

That snap of cold weather 1949 is considered one of the worst weather events in northern Great Plains recorded history.

The first storm began January 2<sup>nd</sup> and continued through January 5<sup>th</sup> with heavy snow, strong winds, and below-zero temperatures. Twelve people reportedly died in Wyoming during the blizzard.

### **Civil disobedience and reparations**

(Kishiyama letter to U.S. Attorney pix, Anti-Japanese button)

Following the issuance of E.O. 9066 by FDR, travel restrictions were placed on, at least, some Japanese because Fort Warren, west of Cheyenne, was considered a likely strategic military target, but not as important as any on the West Coast.

E.O. 9066 authorized the secretary of war, Harry Stimson at the time, and any military commander designated by him to prescribe military areas from which any or all persons may be excluded.

I'm unaware that my parents or other relatives had to report their whereabouts, but Carol Lou Kishiyama Hough showed me a fistful of letters. Her family had to notify the U.S. Attorney in Cheyenne about their travel more than five miles from their home.

Japanese could be arrested if travel occurred without approval.

Back then, my parents likely didn't have anyplace to travel outside of Cheyenne mostly because their families were in town. When life was simpler, most small towns, like Cheyenne, were more self-sustaining.

Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Cheyenne Japanese community quickly came together. While I never talked to her about this, Auntie Hisako was likely one of the community organizers. She was later active with the JACL in Washington D.C.

In 1929, in reaction to the Immigration Act of 1924, several already-established Nisei organizations merged to form the JACL, including American Loyalty League in Fresno, the Seattle Progressive Citizens League, and New American Citizens League based in San Francisco and held its first national conference in Seattle in 1930.

The newly formed JACL began work expanding the citizenship rights of Japanese and Asian Americans, who were ineligible for citizenship.

The JACL was later criticized for its decisions to support Japanese relocation to camps; abet U.S. government intelligence gathering efforts by helping identify “disloyal” Japanese, particularly Issei elders; and taking a hard-line stance against the draft resisters in camp.

Nonetheless, a group of Cheyenne Japanese worked with local leaders including Mayor Ed Warren, Governor Nels Smith, news media owners and law enforcement officers. They published a resolution signed by a number of Cheyenne Japanese in the *Wyoming Eagle* and *Wyoming State Tribune* newspapers.

While compliance by local Japanese was the rule, the federal district court in downtown Cheyenne was the venue for a high-profile case involving draft resisters from the Heart Mountain camp.

In 1944, a group of draft-eligible men formed the Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee that attracted 63 draft resisters. The Fair Play Committee did not wish to be perceived as disloyal to the United States or as pacifist and established criteria for membership: A man needed to be a U.S. citizen who was loyal to the United States; willing to serve in the U.S. Army if his legal rights were first restored; and pay a \$2 membership fee.

Beginning in February 1944, the Committee organized evening meetings in the camp mess halls. As more and more men received orders to report for pre-induction, meeting attendance grew.

Through March, the resisters who refused to report for their physicals went about their lives behind the barbed wire. The Committee ignored the WRA that tried to prohibit Committee meetings. At the end of the month, U.S. Marshals stormed the camp, arrested offenders and charged them with draft evasion and eventually imprisoned in the city of Cheyenne and Laramie County jails.

The 63 men were tried in the largest federal district court mass trial in Cheyenne before Judge T. Blake Kennedy.

After a short trial, the judge sentenced the 63 defendants to three years in prison. The younger men served their time at the McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary near Tacoma, Washington, and the older Issei men at the Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary in Kansas.

The U.S. 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court in Denver affirmed their convictions and sentences on appeal. The defendants served out their jail terms, and didn't return home until 1946.

The draft evasion prosecution didn't include the Committee leadership. Because of their ages, the Issei men didn't receive draft notices. Even so, they were later charged with conspiracy to abet others evade the draft. In October 1944, a federal district court jury convicted them. A few months later, the federal Court of Appeals in Denver overturned their convictions on a technicality.

The military draft resistance efforts at the Heart Mountain camp created a divide between Japanese who were patriotic and those who supported civil disobedience.

Contrary to the draft resistance movement, were others who went along and answered the controversial loyalty questionnaire affirmatively. The “yes-yes” boys included 1,500 men who volunteered for military service from the relocation camps and another 2,700 enlistees from Hawaii. They became the highly decorated 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT.

After the War, President Harry Truman pardoned the 63 draft resisters and recognized the injustice of the WRA and the unjust treatment of Japanese Americans.

The buck didn't stop with Truman.

President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act in 1988. Congressman Norm Mineta (D-Calif.), who was an internee as a child at the Heart Mountain camp and U.S. Senator Alan Simpson who, as a Boy Scout from nearby Cody, met Mineta while visiting the camp originally sponsored the act.

In 1988, it was estimated that 60,000 people who were interned were still alive.

The legislation had its roots in a 1979, the National Council for Japanese American Redress class action lawsuit against the federal government on behalf of former relocation camp internees.

A year later, at the behest of U.S. Senator Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) Congressmen Robert Matsui (D-Calif.), Spark Matsunaga (D-Hawaii) and Mineta, Congress appointed a committee to study the effects of the incarceration and the potential reparations.

The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians held hearing around the country. Testimony was heard from over 700 former internees who recounted their experiences in camp and discrimination after the War.

In 1983, the Commission reported its findings in *Personal Justice Denied*, writing that the displacement of Japanese Americans during the War resulted from “race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership” and recommended monetary reparations be made to former internees.

The bill to issue a formal apology and appropriate \$20,000 in reparation funds to each internment camp survivor was introduced in 1987. Despite resistance from President Ronald Reagan and Senate Republicans opposed to increased federal spending, the bill was signed into law in August 1988.

The approval of reparations and apology to former Japanese relocation camp internees generated more public interest in the camps, themselves.

### **A Little Bit of Discipline**

(Peter Park production pix, BTV button)

In 1996, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation dedicated to the historic preservation of Heart Mountain camp was established. The Foundation received National Historical Landmark status for the Heart Mountain camp.

Visitors to the Heart Mountain camp landmark can walk through the permanent and temporary exhibits at the interpretive learning center.

The historic site became a location for one of my first short movie productions that I made in 2005 about the relocation camp experience.

After the economy tanked following 9/11, I was laid off twice. I was the Development Director for two nonprofit organizations. It was a tough time for a fundraiser, particularly because charities associated with 9/11 received proportionately more funds as donors changed the giving priorities.

Meanwhile, I was in graduate school for the second time at the University of Colorado in Denver earning a Masters in Public Administration (MPA) in domestic violence prevention. The degree hasn't been much use to me except in very tangential ways that aren't germane to this story.

The second time around I reinvented myself as a moviemaker.

My friends counseled me to try something I've always wanted to do, but haven't done it because I shackled myself to a job. I didn't really "follow my dreams" but the new path did allow me to get better at what I was really good at, which is writing.

All through grade school and college, I'd written for the school newspaper and eventually plied my vast stores of general knowledge writing sports, obituaries, weddings, news and sundry columns for the twice-weekly Lander *Wyoming State Journal*. After moving to Colorado, I pretty much abandoned any news or creative writing.

To that end, I collected unemployment insurance payments, and leveraged my student loans. In exchange for the monthly stipends, I was required to look for work, get retrained to do something else, or both. I enrolled in some TV production classes at the Boulder public access TV station, and tried my hand at screenwriting.

My friend, Clay Fong, dragged me along to his screenwriting class taught by a really good writer, Alexander Philippe. I eventually figured out story structure after traveling to New York City for a *Story* seminar by renowned script doctor Robert McKee. That had a huge impact on me.

In case you don't know Robert McKee, his gruff and cussing character is portrayed in a movie called *Adaptation* (2002) starring Nicholas Cage and Meryl Streep. It's a story about screenwriting, writer's block and orchids. Beyond that, you'll have to look it up yourself and watch the movie.

I now think in 3-act structure.

The Boulder Asian Pacific Alliance (BAPA) sponsored an annual film festival. As part of the festival, I organized a screenplay contest around Asian themes.

What was the prize? The winning story would be produced.

In the initial year, 2005, a writer from Powell, Dennis Goldberg, won the contest with a screenplay called *A Little Bit of Discipline*.

The movie was cast mostly with BAPA members. Peter Park played the part of a former Issei camp internee, Uncle Seito. He remained in the rural community near the camp where he was interned and faces his struggles with the continuing prejudice towards Japanese by the townspeople and his reluctant acceptance of his Nisei nephew, Kenji's (Phil Chung), modern ways. That includes accepting Diana, Kenji's Caucasian girlfriend (Robin Litt).

One of the young actors who meets grown up Kenji and Diana is Tanner Barngrover. His mother currently works for the Heart Mountain, Wyoming Foundation.

Also in the movie was Aya Medrud who was interned at the Minidoka camp as a child. Aya was honored at a Martin Luther King Day celebration a few years ago. I made a short tribute documentary about her. After the War, she was working as a librarian in occupied Japan and met Nelder "Med" Medrud. He was a scientist and stationed in Japan where he monitored the weather. Aya and Med married and because they were a mixed-race couple they could only move to certain places, stateside. They eventually came to Boulder.

After E.O. 9066 was ordered, Aya recalled when the FBI came calling.

"The FBI came shortly after that and ransacked the house. I remember being a neat and tidy child and saying to the guy who was dumping the stuff out of my dresser drawers on to the floor. I said, 'You going to put it back, aren't you?' My dad just didn't say anything. He put his hand on my shoulder and said in Japanese, 'Shut up.'"

Aya Medrud, *Voices of Change* honoree, 2013

She became a Quaker and while at a meeting following 9/11 she was moved to activism around the thousands of Muslim men, women, and children detained without due process of law. She, and others, advocated for their release.

The *A Little Bit of Discipline* establishing scenes were shot on location at the former Heart Mountain camp.

A story ran in the *Powell Tribune* seeking background actors to walk around the camp remains. We were unprepared for the casting call response. There were well over 30 would-be actors from all over Wyoming and Montana. Some were serious actors who brought a headshot and resume.

Every extra was placed, and I'm pretty sure, there hadn't been that many people at the Heart Mountain camp since World War II. I stopped for a beer at the Union Bar in Hudson, which is located between Lander and Riverton. There was a segment on the Casper TV news about the shoot. There's nothing like unanticipated earned media!

I had a steep learning curve to get ready for the project. It was the first time I'd taken any ownership of the World War II relocation camp evacuee histories. I wouldn't learn until later that my grandfather Ohashi and Uncle George were detained in California for a few months. More on that later.

After the War in 1945, the internees left the Heart Mountain camp and most returned to where they originated on the West Coast, but some remained or moved elsewhere.

Returning Caucasian veterans were allowed to set up homesteads on the former camp, and some acquired barracks repurposed into starter homes for \$1 each. The camp farm equipment was auctioned to area farmers and ranchers.

After the War, a barracks building was sold to the town of Greybull, Wyoming, 60 miles from the Heart Mountain camp. Later the structure was acquired by Iowa State University and moved 15 miles east of Greybull to Shell where it was repurposed into a geology field station.

In 2015, Iowa State donated the building to the Heart Mountain Foundation and paid the \$140,000 relocation and historic preservation refurbishment costs. It is now a part of the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center collection.

A few months later, *A Little Bit of Discipline* screened at the Rosebud Film Series at Northwest College in Powell.

Much to everyone's surprise, the screening was disrupted before it started when it was discovered that the digital versatile disc (DVD) was taken out of the player.

I learned that the culprits were from a small sect of young, local racists who I'll call skinheads. I had another copy in the car and was able to play the movie.

A month or so later, I received the disc back in the mail. At least the troublemakers were honest.

At one level, I'm glad the movie got some notice, but on the other hand, it was an eye-opener that some people still reacted negatively towards the Japanese World War II experience, even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Suburbanization**

(Cole Shopping Center sign, Rexall box)

West of 408 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. is now a parking lot that resulted from the general demise of the Japanese community. There was also general urban flight, as Cheyenne boomed in the 1960s during the Cold War. Cheyenne again boomed with workers moving into town to construct the highest concentration of Atlas nuclear missile sites in the country.

Housing suburbs sprouted up in the Buffalo Ridge, Cole and Sun Valley additions in north and east outskirts of Cheyenne to meet the growing need for places to house the construction workers and employees from accompanying support businesses.

During Cheyenne's boom, its emerging middle class migrated from outside the state and into tract developments that consisted of single-family, ranch-style homes, and continue to be occupied today.

Shopping centers popped up around town to serve the expanding population in the 1960s. On the eastside, Wyo Plaza opened and served the Cole and Sun Valley additions. The anchor business was a department store called Tempo. Cousin Leslie currently has her Pilates practice and Body Lines Dance studio located there.

It was a short bike ride up Windmill Road and across Nationway, named after long-time Mayor Bill Nation. The Nations lived across the street from my grandparents Sakata on Capitol Avenue.

On the north side, the Melton Shopping Center (later renamed Indian Hills) opened near the Miyamoto's Two-Bar-Bowl - holding Baker's Place liquor license - and was more convenient to the Buffalo Ridge subdivision.

Town & Country shopping center, where Uncle Roy worked at the liquor store, was on the South Greeley Highway. Cheyenne's Southside was likely a redlined area. There was no significant suburban development. That part of town now has a high concentration of discount "dollar" stores, and several payday loan businesses.

When the indoor Cheyenne Frontier Mall opened in 1981 on the north edge of town, businesses fled downtown, including mainstays JC Penney, and People's Sporting Goods. Fowler's, a longtime local department store in the Carey Building on the corner of Carey Avenue and W. 17<sup>th</sup> Street, opened a second location at the Mall, but was eventually unable to compete with large chain department stores and closed its downtown and mall locations in the early 1990s.

When Fowler's went out, the Carey Building storefront was then occupied by Z's Furniture that was owned by EHS classmates Dave and Kim (Stogsdill) Zwonitzer. Their store eventually moved out to the northeast side of town. Kim is also the daughter of my first grade teacher, Mrs. Stogsdill. Remember? she's the one who taught me how to read.

The Carey Building fell into disrepair under absentee ownership. The historic structure was recently razed in favor of new construction of an expanded municipal court building.

My family bought into the suburban lifestyle, largely to blend in with mainstream America. Even though all suburbanites have unique experiences, on the surface, my family life was no different from that of the neighbors.

When it came to birthdays in the suburbs, we had the family who came from miles around with the Japanese version of the birthday party with lots of favorite Japanese food, like *maki sushi*, *teriyaki* chicken, and fresh *mōchi* (rice pounded into a glutinous paste and shaped into sweet delicacies).

*Mōchi* is traditionally made during a New Year ceremony called *mōchitsuki*. It's a big community activity. A mortar is hollowed out from a large diameter tree section. Hot rice is placed in the vessel and *mōchi* pounders take turns mashing the rice into a paste with a big two-fisted mallet.

The women in my family didn't do the rice pounding, but smooshed up hot rice in a *suribachi* (ceramic mortar) and kneaded with a *surikoji* (wooden pestal). It was definitely a team sport.

Then we had the neighborhood All American version of the same birthday party for schoolmates. On my eighth birthday, I remember giving out packs of 1961 Topps baseball cards as party favors. We noshed on plenty of hot dogs from the charcoal grill and washed them down with Coca Cola.

In Cole Addition, within a four-block area, all the kids knew each other since we all went to the same nearby school, Fairview elementary.

We knew each other so well, there were times when a childhood disease epidemic would spread through the school. Parents talked among themselves about illnesses going around and planned play days with kids with the mumps or measles so we could self-infect ourselves so as to develop future immunity.

Downtown activity also waned as a result of in-fill urban sprawl like at Grand Central Plaza that was constructed next to Eastridge Elementary School - now part of Carey Junior High School - on East Pershing Blvd and Concord Road. Montgomery Wards relocated there from its downtown location on East 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue.

Grand Central department store was the Target of the 1960s and was the only place in town that carried my mom's favorite perfume, Desert Flower, which I bought her most Christmases.

Fairview elementary was a feeder school for Carey Junior High. The Grand Central turned out to be a big after school hangout at the snack counter. A bag of piping hot french-fries right out of the deep fryer for a dime was my go-to after school snack.

Much earlier, in 1953, Frank Cole built the Cole Shopping Center at Pershing Blvd. and Converse Avenue in east Cheyenne. It was plopped down in the middle of a residential neighborhood and was an oasis on the way to and from Carey Junior High.

There was a Ben Franklin five and ten-cent store that over flowed with kids making their ways home from school. The Garber's had a dry cleaner, the Gambles hardware store expanded from the Southside. I recall a place where Sperry & Hutchinson (S&H) Green Stamps could be redeemed. The business was founded in 1896 and was very popular during the 1960s.

Green Stamps were rewards given to shoppers in a variety of businesses like grocery stores and gas stations in exchange for spending a certain amount of money, similar to the "points" reward programs used by coffee shops and airlines to promote customer loyalty.

One of my family jobs was to lick the glue on the back of the stamps and place them in the books that kept track of the stamp quantity. Trade value was based on the number of books.

It was fun to browse around the store. We accumulated enough stamps to trade for knick-knack items like sets of drinking glasses, games and toys. I don't know why this sticks in my mind, but we had two aluminum plaques with bas-relief pilgrims that hung on the wall.

One of the anchor businesses was Garvalia Music that eventually gave way to Blockbuster video rental. Garvalia's sold pianos and other band instruments. It was where my piano teacher, Miss Hess, and later

Mrs. Goff – she married one of the Fairview sixth grade teachers - sent her students to buy sheet music and lesson books.

Mr. and Mrs. Garvalia were the “older” couple that lived two doors down from us on Windmill Road. They didn’t have kids and weren’t crazy when we careened down the hill on our skateboards.

Remember my grandfather’s ranchette on the South Greeley Highway? One of the oak end tables from the living room had broken. In my junior high wood shop class, I fashioned a skateboard from one of the table slats and mounted wheels repurposed from a pair of Uncle George’s roller skates.

The last place to turn before gaining too much speed was into the Garvalia’s driveway or bailing out onto their front yard. Sometimes a smooth turn was made, but other times the landings weren’t so graceful.

When they heard the clatter of skate wheels hitting the sidewalk cracks, their front drapes were pulled open so as to give us threatening scowls when we crashed on our skateboards on their perfectly manicured lawn.

On the opposite side of the shopping center was the other anchor, the Cole Store, which sold clothing. We, pretty much, quit shopping at Fowler’s downtown since Cole’s was so much more convenient.

It was much closer to Cole Addition - biking distance - with lots of parking. We could still make multiple shopping stops like at the Safeway and Roedel’s Rexall drugstore, not to mention buying Candy Buttons at the Ben Franklin’s store.

The sugary dots were stuck on strips of paper in lengths of 22-1/2 or 11-1/4 inches. Each strip of the tiny confections included three flavors - cherry (pink), lemon (sky blue), and lemon (yellow). Two companies first introduced them - Cumberland Valley in Williamsburg, Virginia and J. Sudak and Son Brooklyn, New York. The candy button machine invention is credited to engineer George Theolfiel Dib.

My mom and sister liked another clothing store, Cooksey’s. That was the place where I could consistently buy dress shoes since they stocked narrow sizes.

The little kids knock-around shoe store was Dick’s Bootery that specialized in brands like Buster Brown and Golden Goose. I bought my sneakers there - Posture Foundation (PF) Flyers that made me “run faster and jump higher.”

Thinking back, I first chose PF Flyers because Boston Celtics star Bob Cousy endorsed and wore them on the Boston Garden parquet floor during the 1960s.

My dad played hoops in the city basketball league and sported white Converse All Star Chuck Taylor high tops. Because Celtics center, Bill Russell wore them, I later opted for black oxford Chuck Taylor All Stars and wore them through high school.

Somewhere along the way, I picked up a pair of PF flyers that I wear when I shoot baskets, which happens on rare occasions these days.

There also was a small branch library that opened up. That also meant way fewer visits to the main library in downtown Cheyenne.

The Blue Credit Union recently purchased the Cole Shopping Center property and will soon begin constructing a new campus consisting of offices.

Meanwhile, in downtown, the City Café was the last West 17<sup>th</sup> Street holdout. The Shutos hung on for a few years after moving their restaurant to West 19<sup>th</sup> Street that later was leased to the state of Wyoming as a supper club for disabled patrons, but now continues in business as a pan-Asian restaurant called the Dynasty.

Post War suburban development happened on undeveloped land where the economies of scale were more desirable. Members of Cheyenne's Japanese community, including my family, choose to blend in with the American Way and moved to the suburbs.

### **The 500 Block**

(Cupid's building pix)

### **Cupid's: The last building standing**

(Camping tent pix, Salvation Army button)

The last building standing in the once vibrant Japanese community at 509 and 511 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. was razed to make way for the Dinneen's new Lotus townhouses in the Nishigawa neighborhood.

While the building was not found to be architecturally significant, the Cheyenne Historic Preservation Board found it to be a historic place.

When the structure was razed, some of the building materials like the tin ceiling tiles and the storefront leaded glass windows were salvaged. I suggested that some of the red bricks be saved and made into the base for a sign summarizing the neighborhood history that the Board required to be erected.

Across the street, the lots that were once the City Café and residences above are now a parking lot. Japanese moved from the area after the Issei generation passed and Nisei and their families became absorbed into Cheyenne's middle class.

Mrs. Yoshio Shuto came to Cheyenne by way of Colorado and Nebraska. Her first business venture was a rooming house above the Cheyenne Tent and Awning at 509 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. Her Japanese boarders including Kanbe Nomura, Kenji Sakuma, Minor and Tomo Sakuma who lived there through the 1930s.

That was the last building standing the Dinneens were given permission to raze. As homage to the Japanese history of the area, they changed the name of their housing development to *Nishigawa*, which means "Westside neighborhood" in Japanese.

Between 1945 and 1974, the storefronts between 509 and 511 continued to have boarders living upstairs. Light industrial uses downstairs included Cheyenne Tent and Awning from 1928 to 1982; and Wortham Machinery from 1950 to 1982.

When Cheyenne Tent and Awning vacated 509, the Salvation Army, Jet Ink Sports and Westside Thrift Store occupied the property.

My dad had a large green canvas that was used as a lean-to for camp outs that developed a big rip which my dad had patched at Cheyenne Tent and Awning. I fondly remember the aroma of oiled canvas. It was noisy there, too, with the clanking of big sewing machine feet striking the bobbin cover plate.

When Wortham moved, new tenants included the House of Upholstery, Upholstery Unlimited, and Old Gold Antiques. The upstairs boarding house rooms were vacant beginning in 1988.

Probably the most controversial occupant was Cupid's adult entertainment store opened in 1989. John Dinneen took a tour of the building ruins before it was torn down. There was evidence of peep show booths, and a *marijuana* growing room.

### **The City Café**

(City Café pix, Shogun button)

Mrs. Shuto provided tasty meals to her boarding house tenants until around 1945 when she turned her cooking skills into her most successful business venture, the City Café, which epitomized the mish-mash culture of America. There's a musical that opened on Broadway in 1958 epitomizes the conflicts between the Old World Chinese immigrants and the younger generation.

“Chop suey, chop suey!  
Living here is very much like chop suey.  
Hula hoops and nuclear war,  
Doctor Salk and Zsa Zsa Gabor,  
Bobby Darin, Sandra Dee, and Dewey,  
Chop suey, Chop suey!”

*Flower Drum Song*, by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II (1958)

In 1926, the Tokio Café opened at 514. Through 1934, it was operated by several people, but didn't thrive. An arrangement was worked out and Mrs. Shuto acquired the café and operated it with Seiyo “Johnny” Saiki (aka Saiki San). She changed the name to the City Café.

The City Café layout was segregation in reverse. The non-white patrons sat in the front and Caucasians chose to walk through the kitchen and sit around large tables in the back.

The place became known for its Americanized, pan-Asian short orders but with a Japanese touch: *teriyaki* steak, egg foo young, chop suey, and chow mein were among the favorites.

The City Café on the Westside was not considered to be the best part of town, but patrons came from all over for the cooking of Mrs. Shuto, Saiki San, Haruyo Tani and my grandmother Natsu “Mary” Ohashi. There was also a big take-out business, for those who thought the neighborhood was a little too seedy.

My favorite was the pork *udōn* (noodle) bowl. It continues to be my preferred noodle choice, even though fancy *ramen* is now a trendy Japanese food.

When Grandma Ohashi left the City Café and opened the Highway 85 Café on the South Greeley Highway, she offered a similar menu.

One of the occasional jobs I did for my grandmother was to write the daily specials on a blackboard that hung next to the counter. I scrawled with a stick of chalk the menu items that included short order favorites like hamburger steaks, and meatloaf served with a scoop of canned green beans or corn, and a mound of mashed potatoes or rice. I don’t know what happened, but my handwriting has gone downhill since.

The only place I’ve found that comes close to the City Café or my grandmother’s pork noodles is the 20<sup>th</sup> Street Cafe across from Sakura Square in Lower Downtown Denver. The Okuno family has run the business for two generations. The current Sansei owners are Rod and Karen Okuno.

The wooden chairs pushed up to tables covered with light-greenish vinyl covers are throwbacks to my childhood at the Highway 85 Café.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the City Café after hours became the gathering place for the Skyline Nisei club where many of their Japanese community events were held.

Silent *samurai* movies were screened in the front for women and kids. I liked the stories about the Japanese warrior class that thrived in pre-modern Japan from the 17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

One of my favorites is *Yojimbō* (1961) that was directed by Akira Kurosawa starring Toshiro Mifune as an unattached *samurai rōnin* who comes into a town where two competing bad guys want to hire him as their bodyguard. The plot was remade as the western *Fist Full of Dollars* (1964) with Clint Eastwood.

The back of the café was reserved for drinking scotch whiskey and rousing *hana* (flower) card games, which is like gin rummy, but with pictures of flowers on thick cardboard tiles that made a clatter when slammed on the table.

The club meetings attracted Japanese from all over town. The City Café was a destination. The club later rented a separate hall in the 400 block of West 17<sup>th</sup> Street near Baker’s Place and the California Fish Market.

In 1958, Mrs. Shuto invited her nephew, Takeshi “Tommy” Takeda (Shuto), from Japan to help her run the café. Mrs. Shuto returned to Japan in 1964 where she became ill and unable to return to Cheyenne. She eventually died in Japan.

Tommy and his family operated the café for a few more years until around 1970 when a new building was built on a piece of land owned by Johnny Baker at West 19<sup>th</sup> Street and O'Neil Avenue where it still stands as a restaurant called the Dynasty.

When the City Café closed, the Tani family that boarded there was displaced and moved to a place on West 27<sup>th</sup> Street.

Jitsuzu Tani came to the United States in 1916. His soon-to-be wife, Haruyo Tsukichi arrived a couple years later with her mother. The two eventually married in Colorado and farmed until 1926 before moving to Cheyenne. They lived in a room above the City Café.

Jitsuzu went to work at UP and Haruyo managed the City Café rooming house. Residents included the Tanis, Kanji Nagata, and Mrs. Shuto. Haruyo also worked at the City Café until 1941. When the War broke out, Jitsuzu was laid off from the railroad. They both worked odd jobs until 1960 when they retired.

### **Wrong place, wrong time**

(Grandpa, George pix, Anti-Japanese button)

Before the War, my grandfather Ohashi, and his oldest son and my uncle George operated a truck-farming business. Their Western Growers Exchange began at 1619 Pioneer Ave. just north of the Dinneen Garage and was later moved to 304 W. 15<sup>th</sup> St. across from the UP railroad yard.

In the spring of 1942, Grandfather and Uncle George were buying vegetables in California for their customers in Wyoming and Colorado. They were in the wrong place at the wrong time when FDR issued E.O. 9066.

I don't know if they voluntarily turned themselves in or not, but the two were detained, according to family accounts, for several months at the Tulare center, halfway between Fresno and Bakersfield, California where their truck was confiscated.

The U.S. Army established 15 assembly centers that detained about 92,000 Japanese who were forced to leave their homes as a result of E.O. 9066. Those herded into these centers spent several months awaiting transfer to one of the 10 permanent war relocation camps constructed in the interior of the United States. About a third of the total number of internees not sent to assembly centers went directly to one of the 10 relocation camps.

According to the U.S. Army, the main purpose for the hastily established assembly centers was to immediately detain West Coast Japanese Americans before they relocated elsewhere domestically or returned to Japan.

Beginning in 1942, the Tulare assembly center was set up on the Tulare County fairgrounds outside of Tulare, California.

During World War I, the fairground site began as a livestock sales ring and became one of California's most important county fairs. The U.S. Army leased the site in March 1942 and renovated the fairgrounds

to accommodate approximately 4,800 Japanese who mostly lived north of Los Angeles in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Guadalupe, Santa Maria, Arroyo Grande, Pasadena and Torrance and Gardena.

The Tulare center was about half a mile long and a quarter mile wide. In April 1942, the Army Corps of Engineers turned the project over to the WCCA. The retrofit construction project was completed a month later at a cost of \$500,000.

The Army Corps renovated 19 horse stalls and built 152 barracks and communal halls for housing, food services and sanitary facilities. The barracks were 20 x 100 ft and had eight-ft high plywood partitions dividing the long structures into family apartments. A four-person apartment had 330 sq ft. Five persons were allotted 390 sq ft and six persons 460 sq ft. The rooms were furnished with a light bulb and army cots.

Ten of the communal buildings had kitchens and mess halls, each serving 500 people. Detainees went through the food lines in three 20-minute shifts.

Eight communal structures included 13 washrooms, 30 latrines, and five laundries. Three barracks served as 30-bed hospitals.

A fence seven-ft high fence topped with barbwire surrounded the camp guarded by eight watchtowers and 100 soldiers.

The U.S. Army wanted most of the operations run by the detainees, which gave the image of a self-sustaining community. This kept costs down and provided ways to keep the detainees occupied.

A third of the Tulare detainees between 18 and 65 years of age were put to work. Of the 1,200 employed, most worked in the mess halls and kitchen, some in the works and maintenance section, fire department, and others in the hospitals.

Auntie Elsie was eventually successful working with Cheyenne law enforcement agencies and U.S. Attorney's office to return her brother and father to Wyoming.

Had she not been successful, they would have been transferred to the Rivers Relocation Center in Arizona. The camp, informally known as "Gila River," was unique because it was on an Indian reservation.

Over the objections of the Arizona governor, the Rivers camp was located on the Gila River Indian Reservation also home to the *Akimel O'odham* (Pima) and the *Pee-Posh* (Maricopa) tribes. The camp was named after Jim Rivers, who was the first *Akimel O'otham* tribal member killed in World War I.

During the course of the War, the Gila River camp interned over 13,000 Japanese, mostly from California. The camp was divided into two smaller camps, the Canal sub-camp, which had the fire station and Butte sub-camp, which was the hospital site. Both camps had elementary and high schools.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Commissioner John Collier proposed that the DoI be authorized to work with the Japanese who would provide labor for the BIA and the BoR on irrigation and agricultural projects.

In addition to the Gila River Indian Community, the U.S. War Department chose the Colorado River Indian Community, home to the *Niüw* (Chemehuevi), the *Aha Makhav* (Mohave), *Hisatsinom* (Hopi), and *Dine* (Navajo) tribes, also in Arizona, for the Poston Relocation Center.

The BIA asked to manage both camps, but was approved to administer only the Gila River camp. The WRA took over the Poston camp after a disagreement with the BIA over lands that should be farmed.

Unlike other camps around the country, local residents who were Gila River Indian Community tribal members had low priority to be hired for jobs during construction and working inside the camp in favor of area Caucasian residents.

Internees first arrived at the Canal sub-camp during July 1942 to finish setting up the Gila River camp before others arrived from assembly centers or directly from restricted areas.

Initially, the 10,000 internees who came to the Canal sub-camp was double the capacity. There were tight quarters by the time the Butte sub-camp opened a month later.

The Gila River camp opened at the height of Arizona summer heat with 48 days over 100 degrees in July and August 1942. The barracks were not insulated. Some internees fashioned homemade swamp coolers to lower the temperature.

There was also widespread dissension around the loyalty questionnaire. About 1,300 internees were perceived as disloyal no-no boys were relocated to the Tule Lake camp.

To keep their families intact, 450 no-no internees at Gila River relocated to the Crystal City camp in Texas, where families were allowed to stay united or to reunite. Some families were split up at assembly centers or when FBI barged into homes.

Former Minidoka camp internee Aya Medrud told me about the time when she was a child at the time of E.O. 9066, the FBI came into their home in Washington State and took her father away, believing he may be a Japanese spy. She didn't find out about his whereabouts for three weeks.

There were 58 percent of the internees or around 7,700 men and women employed in the camp working on the 820-acre farmlands; in a factory that produced camouflage net for the War effort, and others working in service positions at the mess hall or hospital, the elementary and high schools, and as supporting WRA administrators.

In the fall of 1942, the camp farm harvested 242,000 pounds of produce. The nearby Poston camp received 64,000 pounds and the rest consumed at the Gila River camp.

The Gila River camp operated a dehydration center to preserve vegetables, and later set up a canning operation. The internees learned how to grow crops in the dry and hot conditions of central Arizona.

The climate was much different climate than that in central California. Their efforts resulted in shipping over four million pounds of produce to eight of the other WRA camps in 1944.

Life at Gila River was similar to other camps. Activities included Boy and Girl scouting, women's clubs, theater groups, and sports teams. Internees attended Buddhist and Christian services in camp. Students attended elementary and high schools at the Gila River camp and Butte sub-camp.

My grandfather and uncle dodged the full relocation camp experience and returned to Cheyenne, only to find their storefront gone and business at a standstill with no produce to peddle.

To make ends meet, he took jobs on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street as a custodian at Stockgrowers National Bank and washed dishes at the Mayflower Café. Mrs. Shuto hired my grandmother to cook at the City Café.

### **The Highway 85 Café**

(Corral Motel pix, Donut shop pix)

In 1951, my grandparents Ohashi and Uncle George also moved from downtown Cheyenne and opened the Highway 85 Café on the south Greeley Highway.

In the summer, Uncle George continued the truck farming aspect of the business. He set up a vegetable and fruit stand next to the café. It was an early version of a farm-to-table restaurant.

The café was originally farther south, but forced to relocate a few blocks north when I-80 came through. That was a good move because the café was then in the heart of the Southside motel district where many CFD rodeo cowboys stayed.

Working in the family business was my first summer job. I don't think my sister and I were technically old enough to work. She waited tables and I washed dishes.

I don't know how much work we did, but there was plenty of time to pal around with the neighbor kids. Directly across the highway was the Corral Motel, and a couple blocks to the north was the Lariat Motel owned by Marvin Goldhammer and his family.

Randy Goldhammer was around my age. We spent quite a bit of time hanging around together at the café, mostly because my uncle was freewheeling when it came to giving candy to kids.

During CFD, the café was hopping, particularly for breakfast. One job I had when I wasn't goofing around was grating potatoes for hash browns. After his day job was over at the Coke plant, my dad went in and flipped steaks until closing.

When my grandmother slowed down and Uncle George went to work at Laramie County Community College, my dad wasn't interested in taking over the business when it closed in 1966 after my grandfather died. The café has since transformed into a number of businesses, including a tobacco store and now a donut shop.

I've often wondered what may have happened if he decided to keep the restaurant open. My life would have taken a big turn. I would have gladly taken the challenge to own and operate it.

### **Rack 'em up**

(Alan at pool table pix, 9-ball pix)

There were a number of businesses at 516 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. before my grandfather took over the pool hall that eventually occupied the place.

In 1922, Taigo and Nao Suzuki operated a Japanese goods store at 516 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St., and also lived there from 1926. The market was sold to Kazuma and Ume Mikawa. Kazuma initially worked for the UP railroad.

Ume, recently widowed, married Kazuma in 1924, and two years later, they bought the grocery where they made and sold *tōfu*. The store was closed when they moved to Colorado in 1932.

It was next the David Cantor Meat shop that sold kosher food to the local Jewish community, which had a prominent presence in downtown Cheyenne.

Masaka Hosokawa originally came to Cheyenne in 1930. He was a machinist with the UP and roomed with Takematsu Matsushima in an apartment at his barbershop at number 408.

Masaka Hosakawa converted the meat shop into a pool hall in 1939 and three years later, sold the pool hall to Gontaro and Kiyo (Sato) Kubota. After selling out, Masaka worked odd jobs and continued to live in the Westside of Cheyenne, including above the City Café.

Gontaro Kubota came to the United States in 1906. He moved to Wyoming in 1915 and worked for the UP as the Sherman Hill section foreman east of Laramie. In 1921, he returned to Japan and married his wife, Kiyo.

The two returned to Wyoming and stayed their first night in Mrs. Shuto's boarding house at 509 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. The UP rehired Gontaro and they returned to the Sherman Hill section where the couple started a family and later moved with the railroad to the Buford section between Cheyenne and Laramie.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the railroad fired Gontaro and he moved his family to Cheyenne, which is when he bought the Hosakawa Pool Hall. The Kubotas operated the pool hall until 1957 when they sold to my grandfather Ohashi.

It was taboo for me to go into my grandfather's business. While researching this story, I posted on facebook asking for any recollections about the West 17<sup>th</sup> Street business district. Henry Pacheco responded that he worked for my grandfather racking billiard balls for tips.

He was paid \$0.50 a table to remove the covers and brush them off. He befriended a "fat Anglo" who was the bouncer and held the side bets for all the tables.

My grandfather owned the pool hall until his death in 1966.

I inherited one of his old Brunswick tables. The heavy oak rails and pedestal that supported two flat slate table pieces literally weighed a ton. I hauled it around to Lander and later donated it to the Northern Arapaho senior citizen center in Ethete on the Wind River Indian Reservation.

I kept 9-ball as well as many memories of that table, particularly when it was assembled in the basement next to my bedroom in our home on Windmill Road.

Since I wasn't allowed into the pool hall as a kid, when I was old enough to know better, I spent plenty of time shooting pool when I worked the late shift at the Bellevue House student center at Hastings College.

In Lander, I was a member of the One Shot Lounge Valley 8-ball team and won a couple trophies and many a 9-ball game. Considering the legacy of my grandfather, winning a couple trophies and many a 9-ball game were rites of passage for me.

Grandpa Ohashi was a gambling man. He came to the United States in 1898 and worked mostly in farming around Tacoma, Washington before moving to Ketchikan, Alaska.

In 1970, I was a high school junior and part of a Presbyterian Church summer work crew at Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka, Alaska. Our group took a ferryboat field trip to Ketchikan. While walking around, on the boardwalk there was a wooden sign that read, "OHASHI Candy and Tobacco."

My eventual college roommate, Sam Allen from Cody, and I went in and come to find out, the store was owned by my grandfather's brother. I have relatives who live in the Pacific Northwest. In a past life when I was building affordable housing, I attended a Habitat for Humanity conference in Seattle and ran into a distant cousin.

As a teenager, Grandpa was a cook at an Alaskan mining camp and learned the hard ways of the world at a young age shooting pool. He learned to say all the best cuss words in English.

In 1911, he returned to Japan and married Natsu Yonago. While in Washington, they had seven children. The others were born later in Colorado.

In 1925, my grandfather got a lead from a friend about a place in Monte Vista, Colorado that was good lettuce-growing country. He regretted that move because the land wasn't as productive as he was led to believe.

Making the best of the decision, he ended up in Brighton by way of Denver and Ft. Lupton where he opened a produce store selling vegetables from area farmers.

In 1934, he expanded his business into Cheyenne, where he and his family eventually settled. According to Auntie Elsie, their first home was on West 15<sup>th</sup> Street in a boarding house across from the UP rail yard.

On the other side of the street at 515, Tsunesaboro “Tsune” Ogasawara had a cigar store. Tsune had the business from 1920 to 1936. He died shortly in 1937 and buried in the Cheyenne Lakeview Cemetery.

According to Arlene Ogasawara, he isn't directly related to her well-known Ogasawara family that initially settled in Sweetwater County and eventually ended up in Cheyenne.

Shiro Ogasawara immigrated to Reliance, Wyoming in Sweetwater County in 1922 where he operated a boarding house for miners. He married Chizo Futa, who was born in Cheyenne.

In 1941, they were living in Stockton, California and were sent to the Rohwer Relocation Center in Arkansas. Rohwer was the easternmost of the WRA camps, and along with the Jerome camp, the only ones located in the Jim Crow South.

Former Ku Klux Klan member and Arkansas Governor Homer Adkins opposed the Rohwer camp being located in his state. He agreed only after being assured that white soldiers would hold the internees under armed guard and that the Japanese would be taken out of Arkansas after the War.

Rohwer is located in Desha County 12 miles northeast of McGehee and 110 miles southeast of Little Rock in forested and swampy lowland in the Mississippi River flood plain. Jerome camp was 27 miles away.

During the Great Depression, the Farm Security Administration (FSA) was set up to purchase unproductive farmland, including Arkansas swampy areas, from struggling farmers and resettled them onto group farms that were more productive. The FSA preceded what is now the Farmer's Home Administration in the USDA.

The WRA purchased the fallow 10,000 acres from the FSA in 1942 and the Army Corps of Engineers built the camp for \$4.8 million.

Similar to other camps around the country, there were 36 residential blocks on 500 acres enclosed by a barbed wire fence and secured by eight guard towers. Internee housing were also typical, 20 x 120 ft barracks divided into 12 apartments.

Each family was issued cots, mattresses, and blankets. Their apartment was illuminated by a single light bulb. Each block housed about 275 people served by communal showers, toilets, laundry facilities and a mess hall. Schools, hospitals, and offices were located in separate barracks.

There was not much personal privacy. Communal toilets that lacked stall dividers. The partition walls separating apartments didn't extend to the ceiling.

Agricultural products raised at the camp supplemented the government issued food ration. Rohwer produced over 100 different crops that yielded over 1.2 million pounds in 1943. Surplus vegetables from Rohwer were sent to nearby Camp Robinson and to the state veteran's hospital in Little Rock.

As at other camps, a large percentage of the population was school-age children. Kindergarten through high school enrollments totaled over 2,000 students who were taught by close to 90 instructors. WRA wanted to hire white teachers from the local community.

The federal wage scale for teachers was more than double the average salary of Arkansas teachers. The WRA didn't want to hire away too many local teachers for jobs at Rowher and agreed to a quota system that allowed the hire of no more than two teachers from any one school district.

Spectator sports like baseball, basketball and football leagues were popular activities among Rowher internees. The camp's 32 softball teams drew up to 2,000 fans.

The biggest events were camp variety shows produced by the Issei Recreation Department that attracted audiences of 5,000 show-goers. The traveling revue visited different blocks over several days.

I don't know this for sure, but I imagine the camp entertainment included audience participation in the *Obōn* Festival *bōn ōdōri* folk dancing. The Japanese American version evolved from *ōdōri nembutsu* dancing, which was a popular Buddhist chant and dance dating back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

*Bōn ōdōri* is a circle dance with participants of all ages moving to the music and the rhythmic beat of *daikō* (drum) drumming. There are various sizes of *daikō*. Players play the *daikō* with various sized *bachi* (sticks). The *daikō* are supported on *yagura* (stand).

Rowher camp internees were well known for creating *kōbu* (natural wood sculptures). Rowher was located in a swampy area. The wet terrain was a good source for hardwood tree limbs like oak, hickory, elm and cypress. Interesting natural wood pieces were polished and mounted for display.

After the War, Chizu and Shiro moved to the Cheyenne Southside.

Wortham Machine eventually took over the building at 515 to 517, which was torn down years ago. The lots were acquired by the Dinneens and now part of their Nishigawa Neighborhood townhouse development.

At the end of the block to 520, were apartments occupied by Tetsu Takahashi, the Kubota family and Fred Futa. Fred was the son of Chizu Futa and Shiro Ogasawara and was a member of the Cheyenne Nisei baseball team.

All that remains where the City Café once stood to the end of the 500 block is a parking lot. One of the requirements of the Cheyenne Historic Preservation board is for the erection of an information sign about the Japanese community that once thrived there.

### **Rite of passage**

(Alan with antelope pix, NRA button)

Uncle Rich worked as a meat cutter at Stop 'n Shop. He was a hunter and I didn't know much about that subsistence hobby of his. I still haven't developed a taste for venison, but I did like the elk steaks and hamburger when he brought that over after a big hunt.

Rich worked across O'Neil Avenue on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street at the Stop 'n Shop grocery store. A companion neighborhood business was the Fix 'n Mix liquor store and bar next door.

We kids weren't privy to his hunting excursions. All I knew about was a locked cabinet where he stored his long rifles.

It was pretty clear that I wouldn't have been able to go along if I was asked, which was quite a contrast with the Wyoming gun culture.

Hunting was a way of life in Wyoming, and I think it still is. Students would get excused from school when hunting season opened up in the fall. I viewed hunting as a rite of passage that I missed out while growing up.

It wasn't until later that I learned the FBI confiscated my grandfather's firearms after E.O. 9066, which is likely another reason my mom didn't allow any hunting rifles around the house.

I eventually felled an antelope while living in Lander and got that rite of passage out of my system. I bought a .243 caliber Winchester with open sights from a friend of mine named Mike for a couple hundred bucks. I bought a scope from Wendall over at the local camera store.

When you consider a guy like me was able to get a hold of an unregistered rifle, firearms are very accessible. It should come as no surprise there are nearly 400 million of them owned by 42 percent of American households reported owning a gun in a 2017 Gallup survey.

Mike helped me calibrate the scope at the local gun range north of town. I had some previous "experience" with guns.

While living in Gillette, one of my housemates was a decorated Vietnam War veteran named Tom. He had an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle in the closet that we would take out to the back lot and blast tin cans back to the Stone Age. It was hardly target practice.

I did take a hunter safety class and was as knowledgeable as any other first-time hunter. Mike was my guide. He had rules: No shooting from the vehicle or the road; I had to pick out an animal and stalk it.

We spent all morning following around an antelope buck. He finally stopped away from his herd and a hundred yards ahead. I aimed and squeezed the trigger. His knees buckled and the lifeless carcass dropped to the dusty prairie.

Next, Mike showed me how to field dress the animal. I waited while Mike brought around the pick up. We dropped it off at the processing place in Lander. Generally, I was never fond of antelope meat, but this was mild tasting compared to some I'd tried before. That was the first and last game animal I would shoot and kill.

Hunters colloquially refer to themselves as “sportsmen.” There wasn’t much “sport” in the exercise. I’m glad Mike at least made a day of it with his stalking rule. Otherwise, we could have been home hours earlier. An animal has absolutely no chance against even a small-bore rifle like mine.

That rifle was moved around from closets, to crawl spaces, and to basements. I finally traded it to a guy in exchange for some tile work I had done on a condo remodel in Boulder.

I imagine Uncle Rich was able to make use of his big game field dressing experience at the Stop ‘n Shop.

Rich later went on to work for his brother and my uncle Jake at Pioneer Printing.

### **Baseball and my first Black guy**

(Alan batting pix, Elston Howard 1964 signed card)

I met my first African American guy at the Fix ‘n Mix in 1964 on the way to a baseball game in Denver. The AAA Denver Bears played in the American Association and over the years was one of the farm teams for the New York Yankees.

I’m a third generation New York Yankees fan and thought everyone was a Yankees fan since they were on TV all the time. In 1964, former manager Ralph Houk was promoted to general manager.

The Yankees had five consecutive World Series appearances. After losing to the Pirates in 1960, Casey Stengel was fired and coach Houk was promoted to be the team manager.

The Yankees won the Series in 1961. That was the year Roger Maris broke Babe Ruth’s regular season home run record with an end of the season blast off Boston Red Sox rookie pitcher Tracy Stallard.

Bud Daley, who lived in Lander after retiring, pitched the winning game. He was quite the golfer ran a landscaping business. My colleague from the newspaper, John, and I opened up a sports card store in Riverton called “Pine Riders.”

For the grand opening, we invited Bud to stop by and sign autographs. Another major leaguer, Woody Held, mostly known for playing for the Cleveland Indians was also a special guest. He lived nearby in Dubois.

Bud has since moved to Riverton. The last time I chatted with him was in front of a slot machine at the Wind River Casino.

The Yankees won again in 1962 but lost back-to-back, first to the Los Angeles Dodgers – Wally Moon’s team - in 1963 and then to the St. Louis Cardinals in 1964.

In the 1963 off-season, catcher Yogi Berra was promoted to manager and Houk was named the new general manager. Elston Howard took over the fulltime catching duties.

Howard was the first African American player on the Yankees who joined the team in 1955.

The Yankees signed Howard on July 19, 1950 and assigned him to their Central League farm team, the Muskegon Clippers. He served in the U.S. Army and missed the 1951 and 1952 seasons. After his discharge, Howard played for the Class AAA Kansas City Blues of the American Association. The following season, the Yankees invited Howard to spring training in Florida.

My dream job has always been to play shortstop on the New York Yankees, but the job is always taken: Tony Kubek (1961 - 1962 World Series champs), Bucky Dent (1977 - 1978 World Series champs); Derek Jeter who was "Mr. November" (2001 World Series).

I attended two 2001 World Series games in New York City. The post-season championship match up between the Yankees and the Arizona Diamondbacks was postponed following the 9/11 attacks.

Airplane tickets were inexpensive and I picked up tickets from ebay to games 3 and 4 in Yankee Stadium that I had mailed to my favorite Midtown Manhattan dive, the Hotel Pennsylvania, where rooms were plentiful. This was before counterfeit tickets became a growth industry. The hotel's phone number was made famous by the Glenn Miller Orchestra rendition of, *PEnnsylvania 6-5000*.

After the Diamondbacks dominated the first two games in Phoenix, play resumed in the Big Apple with the Yankees winning three games in dramatic fashion. Derek Jeter hit a homerun in the early morning hours of November 1<sup>st</sup> adding to the sweep and taking a 3-2 game advantage back to Arizona.

During those three days in 2001, every baseball fan in the world was a Yankees fan. If I ever felt like a patriotic American it was when the stars and stripes from the World Trade Center fluttered in the centerfield fall breeze during Lee Greenwood in the house singing *I'm Proud to Be an American* as President George W. Bush threw out the first pitch.

It was emotional and electric at the same time, even though the Diamondbacks went on to win the Series in seven games on a blooper hit into shallow center by Luis Gonzalez off Yankees closer Mariano Rivera scoring Craig Counsell to end game 7.

Being in New York not only to watch the Yankees was exciting, but to be around the aftermath of the terrorist attack, even a month later, was sobering. To this day, when I visit New York City, I make a quick train ride downtown to the 9/11 "Ground Zero" site.

After Jeter retired, the Yankees have had a revolving door at shortstop - I was passed over again. I should have kept up with piano lessons instead of Little League.

I might have had a better chance banging out *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* on the Yankee Stadium organ than diving for hot ground balls up the gap.

My grandfather Sakata traveled around quite a bit, including to visit his daughter, Hisako, in Washington D.C. One trip, he brought me back a Washington Senators cap with the red "W" emblazoned across the front.

That must have been around 1960 before the Senators became the Minnesota Twins. While I was appreciative of his gesture, my mom helped me embroider a replacement Yankees "NY" on that cap.

The 1960 World Series was my first to see on TV making my Yankee fanaticism more real, at least in two dimensions. One of the low points of my life was watching Bill Mazeroski's walk-off homer to win game seven and the series. I'm still not much of a Pirates fan today and don't get me started about Mazeroski being in the Hall of Fame, but I digress.

Mr. St. Clair and his family lived across the alley. He organized the neighbor kids and took us on field trips to places like Plains Dairy where you can see that I'm wearing that makeshift NY hat. Anyone who knows me now, knows I still wear a Yankees cap.

The Bronx Bombers were playing an exhibition game in Denver against the AAA Denver Bears, which was a Yankees farm team, off and on over the years.

My dad and a bunch of his guys at the Coke plant bought tickets and invited me along. We carpooled down to the game played at the old Mile High Stadium where the Bears also played.

One of the truck drivers was Tony Rizzuto from New York. He was a relative of former Yankees shortstop Phil Rizzuto.

On the way out of town, we pulled up to the front of the turquoise-painted concrete block Fix 'n Mix bar to pick up Tony's friend, who was an African American airman stationed at F.E. Warren Air Force Base.

Tony had the air base Coke route and I assume the two must have befriended each other there. The airman was another big Yankees fan deployed from New York City to Wyoming. I don't remember his name - he may not have even been introduced to me - but I thought it odd that we met him at a liquor store.

I had seen African American people before, but it was always from a distance, and all were sport figures. My dad graduated from Cheyenne High, now Central, where he played basketball. At 5'10", he was tall for a Japanese guy and had a pretty good left and right handed hook shot.

Once in a while, Dad took my sister and I to watch his high school *alma mater* play at Storey Gym. In 1964, my favorite Central player was Barry West. What I remember about him most, not only was he a great all-around athlete, but also was a musician a great vocalist, along with teammate Percy Johnson.

We would occasionally drive over to Laramie and watch UW basketball games. In 1964, by far the Cowboys' best player was Flynn Robinson who eventually went on to play in the NBA for the Cincinnati Royals and the Milwaukee Bucks.

I had a chance to meet Flynn when he was inducted into the UW Athletics Hall of Fame. He autographed a basketball card for me.

Also, on that team was center Leon Clark. He was a great rebounder and scorer. For a small forward, he was able to dominate the boards at 6'6". It was because of Leon Clark that I became a Boston Celtics fan.

The Celtics were always dominant. They had one of the last picks in the NBA draft. The Celtics selected the best of the leftover players, who were from smaller conferences like the Western Athletic, including Leon Clark. He was touted as being the next Bill Russell, but he was too small and faded after a couple seasons in Boston and finished his career playing in Europe.

Later, the Celtics drafted Charles Bradley from UW and Danny Ainge and Greg Kite from rival Brigham Young University (BYU). The best basketball game I've witnessed was played in the UW Fieldhouse between the Cowboys and BYU on February 26, 1981. A friend and colleague named Barry made the drive over to Laramie from Cheyenne with me. We were there lobbying the state legislature on behalf of the Wyoming Association of Municipalities.

The Memorial Fieldhouse was a big home court advantage for Wyoming. It was known as the "Barn" because of the floor that was covered with mulch-like wood chips. Indoor rodeos were held in there, too. Not only did visiting teams have to play at 7,200 ft in elevation, but also in the moist, musty, and thick Fieldhouse air. The floor was the perfect substrate for mushrooms to grow – I'm not kidding.

Wyoming won the game 86-84 in double overtime. The Pokes tied the game in the final minute on a spectacular slam-dunk by guard Mike Jackson. I don't recall who scored the winning points, but remember storming the floor passed Danny Ainge who was crumpled on the floor after missing the last shot of the game.

After graduation, Ainge decided to play baseball and signed with the Toronto Blue Jays where he had a so-so career before being drafted by the Celtics. Bradley was the last pick in the first round by the Celtics.

They were all part of the Celtics 1980s dynasty teams along with teammates, Robert Parrish, Larry Bird, Kevin McHale and Dennis Johnson. Charles Bradley lasted only one season.

UW and BYU were big football rivals, too. Games between the two teams were heated, not to mention the "despicable" UW Cowboy fans, as BYU basketball coach Frank Arnold dubbed us. The earliest memory that I have of the rivalry goes back to 1967 and the infamous "Black 14" incident. There's plenty on the internet if you google it.

In 1967, I had big interest in Wyoming football. The Cowboy gridgers were the only undefeated team in the nation going 10-0 during the regular season and ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation. The Pokes went on to lose 20-13 to unranked Louisiana State University (LSU) in the Sugar Bowl played in Baton Rouge. My 8<sup>th</sup> grade PE student teacher was Paul Toscano who was the quarterback on that team. He went to be drafted by the Houston Oilers, but opted to coach high school football and basketball.

The 1968 season brought high hopes for the Pokes, but the team went 7-3 while winning their third consecutive Western Athletic Conference (WAC) championship.

The following year was plagued with racially charged unrest around the country following the assassinations of Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King the year before. Those politics slopped over to Wyoming.

The team began the 1969 season strong with four straight wins and ranked 16<sup>th</sup> in the nation. Before the BYU home game, the campus Black Student Alliance (BSA) met with the African American members of the football team just before the game asking the 14 players to wear black arm bands to protest the BYU's religious ties to the LDS church. At the time, the LDS church didn't allow African Americans to join the priesthood.

The players agreed with the BSA. After a meeting with their coach, Lloyd Eaton, the 14 players were kicked off the team. Short-handed Wyoming soundly defeated their rivals 40-7. The Cowboys went on to lose four out of five of the remaining games and in 1970 lost nine out of 10 games.

To commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Black 14, UW issued an apology to the former students. Wyoming's football program has never fully recovered from the controversy.

There were the boxers on TV like Floyd Patterson. My grandfather was a big fight fan. He couldn't see very well because of diabetes, but could distinguish the contrasting black and white trunks on the B&W TV.

He always had the latest copy of *Ring* magazine sitting on the end table. One reason I liked to go over to his house was to flip through and find out the latest heavyweight rankings.

I don't know what happened, but American boxing popularity waned in favor of those oddball brawling fistfight formats. I keep wondering when ear biting will be added as a legal fight tactic.

But the airman who came to the Yankees game with us was the first Black guy I had personal contact. We sat next to each other in the car. We talked baseball.

We sat together in the right field bleachers. The main attraction for me was watching Roger Maris (9) in right and Mickey Mantle (7) in center.

They only played about half the game, but to this day seeing "9" and "7" play is a big highlight of my life. A close second was sitting in Yankee Stadium for the two games during the 2001 World Series.

By 1964, Moose Skowron was traded to the Dodgers, and Joe Pepitone was the new first baseman. After the game, Joe walked across the outfield. This guy yells out at him, "Hey, Joe, how ya doin,'" as if he knew him and maybe he did, Pepitone is from Brooklyn. Joe waved back at us.

It makes perfect sense to me, now. Baker's Place was no longer in business. Fix 'n Mix, on the Westside and near the air base, was a safe, integrated bar.

There were two listings in *The Green Book* for Hotels and two Tourist Homes in Cheyenne.

The Barbeque Inn at 622 W. 20<sup>th</sup> St. and the Minnehaha Motel - now the Firebird - on East

Lincolnway at Logan Avenue were listed as safe hotels in The *Green Book* editions in the 1950s and 1960s.

A Tourist Home was similar to a bed and breakfast. Families would have a spare room or apartment in their private home where travelers could stay.

Mrs. L Randall at 612 and Mrs. M. Hermann at 621 W. 18<sup>th</sup> St. offered Tourist Home lodging. My father's childhood home was in the same block at 620 W. 18<sup>th</sup> St. and now a vacant lot.

It was a late night and we stopped at the Fix 'n Mix and dropped my new baseball friend off. I never saw him again.

### **Baseball and the American Way**

(Wyoming Nisei baseball team pix, NY v Rockies pin)

Even though I was away at college, during my freshman and sophomore years we still lived in Cheyenne, the Japanese community as well as my family continued to have big community events included indoor activities like samurai movie screenings and holiday parties, and July 4<sup>th</sup> and Memorial Day picnics at Holliday Park.

The last big family event happened when my dad's family had a big reunion in 1966. That summer, I broke my ankle sliding into second base and spent the 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnic on crutches.

After that, I lost my desire to get better at hitting the curve ball, and quit Babe Ruth baseball in favor of summer jobs.

It wasn't until I was researching this book that I feel very lucky I had the opportunity to play baseball in a town league.

There is a long history of Japanese baseball in the United States. World War II and E.O. 9066 cut short the baseball careers of many prominent Nisei players.

Baseball was one game that became a Nisei pastime at the 15 assembly centers and 10 relocation camps. That sport was a unifying activity that was allowed by the WRA, because the game would reinforce Japanese assimilation to adopt the American Way.

Japanese baseball originated in the United States when the Fuji Athletic Club of San Francisco was founded in 1903. By the end of the decade, the Japanese Pacific Coast Baseball League was formed, with teams in eight West Coast cities.

The all-Japanese leagues were segregated, similar to the Negro Leagues. By 1920, there were 20 teams that made up a baseball league in the Rocky Mountain region.

Following E.O. 9066, the Japanese leagues were broken up with players sent to relocation camps. Four of the 10 camps fielded teams that were allowed to travel to away games in other camps: Gila River and Poston camps in Arizona, Camp Amache in Colorado and Heart Mountain camp in Wyoming.

The Heart Mountain camp fielded a good team in 1944 that played an epic 13-game series against Gila River. The players paid their own ways from money they earned working jobs in camp.

The Arizona team made the 1,200-mile road trip in an old bus that broke down several times along the way. The players wore their uniforms during the trip, rather than street clothes. When stopped, it was simpler to explain that they were ball players. Gila River won the series that took about a month to play.

One member of the Heart Mountain camp team was Minol Ota. He was the camp veterinarian from Cheyenne who moved to Powell.

Minol and his brother, Joe, played on the Wyoming Nisei team that won the Tristate Japanese Baseball League 1943 tournament. That team had strong West 17<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood ties, and enshrined at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

Bill Matsuyama who owned the California Fish Market managed the team. His team members included son Harry; Tom and Bill Miyamoto who eventually owned Baker's Place; Kaye and Harry Hashimoto along with their brother, George who previously had the California Fish Market; Paul Tani, who lived above the City Café and Fred Futa who lived down the block from the City Café.

By the 1960s, Japanese baseball in Wyoming was non-existent. A Cheyenne team competed in a Northern Colorado league. The Denver Nisei team included a player named Art Arita who lived on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street in the 1940s as a child before moving to Colorado. He and his family were spared relocation because they lived in Cheyenne at the beginning of the War.

Another member of the Denver Nisei baseball club was Mas Yoshimura. He was the starting first baseman who ended up in Denver after being originally sent to the Jerome camp and later the Rowher camp.

He recalls when he and his family were transported by train from the Fresno center on its way to Fort Logan in Denver, the train made a stop at the Cheyenne depot for a break. All the detainees were let off the train and greeted by a host of soldiers stationed along the railway platform manning .50-caliber machine guns.

My dad and I played for the First Presbyterian Church slow-pitch softball team. He was the oldest guy on the team, I'll say he was in his late-40s. Dad played first base and was the catcher. Nobody liked to catch and he always had a spot on the team. "If you want to play, learn how to catch," he advised. "In slow pitch, it's easy."

His knees and back couldn't handle the position and I put on the mask and have been a catcher ever since, and I always played.

Dad took me to see the Yankees vs. Bears exhibition game in 1964. It was 31 years later that I took him to the first game played at the brand new Coors Field. It was an exhibition game between the Colorado Rockies and the Yankees.

The game wasn't quite a real game, since it was the beginning of the strike-shortened 1995 season and the replacement Yankees played the replacement Rockies. The Rockies made the playoffs that season as the first-ever Wild Card team. The Rockies lost to the eventual World Series champion Atlanta Braves in a best of four game series.

### **Reluctant heroes – 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT**

(Uncle George snapshot, 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT pin)

The Cheyenne Japanese community was most active during the 1940s to the 1960s. Nisei soldiers returned from Europe and there was a high level of camaraderie among Japanese community members as they recoiled from the racism experienced during and following the War, which sparked the origins of the Skyline Nisei club.

The club activities were originally hosted at the City Café. Later, a community center was established behind the California Fish Market.

One event the club organized was a dinner honoring a group of Japanese judges who visited Cheyenne in November 1950. There were 39 Issei and Nisei who attended the dinner at the Plains Hotel.

Cheyenne attorney George Guy, who is best known for defending Japanese war criminal General Tomoyuki Yamashita, invited the judges to Wyoming. He showed them around the justice system in Cheyenne.

Yamashita was tried for alleged war crimes committed by his troops during the Japanese defense of the Philippines in 1944. The General was found guilty of war atrocities even though there was no evidence that he approved or even knew of them.

It came out at trial that many of the crimes were committed by troops not under his command. Yamashita was sentenced and executed by hanging in 1946.

I'm grateful for the men who served with the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT in Italy and returned home. The 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT consisted of Japanese who were otherwise disallowed from enlisting in the U.S. armed forces and was the most decorated World War II regiment.

Ted Miyamoto was a member of the 442<sup>nd</sup> and decorated with the bronze star. His citation reads:

“For extraordinary heroism in action on Oct. 29, 1944, near Biffontaine, France. When the forward elements of Sergeant Miyamoto's company were pinned down by fire from an enemy machine gun and supporting snipers, he fearlessly worked his way forward to the enemy emplacement. While so engaged, he was wounded in the forearm by a sniper, but disdaining medical treatment, he continued to advance until he reached a point within 25 yards from the emplacement; exposing himself to get a better observation, opened fire with his submachine gun, killed the two gunners and thus neutralized the position. In the two-hour firefight which followed, Sgt. Miyamoto accounted for five more of the enemy and refused to be evacuated until the initial objective was reached.”

April 5<sup>th</sup> is “Go for Broke” Day honoring Japanese World War II veterans. That was the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT motto.

The 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was activated in February 1943, and composed of Nisei men from Hawaii and relocation camp volunteers who trained at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. The 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment; the 522<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion; the 232<sup>nd</sup> Combat Engineer Company became the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team and in June 1944, the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT deployed to Italy where they joined in combat with the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion.

Maintaining morale in the new regiment was difficult particularly among the Japanese soldiers from Hawaii and those in the army before the War plus the ones recruited from the relocation camps. All commissioned officers were white and all non-commissioned officers were Japanese selected from the ranks of mainland troops who were already in the army.

The soldiers from Hawaii were resentful that they were passed over for the non-commissioned officer jobs. There were arguments and fights between “buddhaheads” from Hawaii and the “kotonks” from the mainland.

The Hawaiian soldiers came up with these monikers, referring to their dominant religion and claim that “kotonk” was the sound the mainlander’s hollow noggins made when they smacked the ground.

While they had differences among themselves, their common struggle was dealing with racism towards Blacks in the Jim Crow South. The Japanese soldiers occasionally intervened on behalf of African Americans, which caused reprimands from their superior officers.

In September 1944, the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was sent to take part in the south of France invasion. They liberated Bruyeres and Biffontaine and rescued a battalion that had been cut off from its division.

The “Lost Battalion” is a story arc behind the movie *Go for Broke* (1951) starring Van Johnson as a bigoted commanding officer who changes his tune after fighting along side the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT. The movie was directed by Robert Pirosh, who also created the TV show *Combat!*

The 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT joined forces with the all-African American 92<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division in March 1945 and helped drive the Germans out of northern Italy.

The 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT was the most decorated having earned the following after two years:

- 7 Presidential Unit Citations
- 2 Meritorious Service Plaques
- 36 Army Commendation Medals
- 87 Division Commendations

442<sup>nd</sup> RCT individuals were awarded:

- 21 Medals of Honor
- 29 Distinguished Service Crosses

- 560 Silver Stars
- 4,000 Bronze Stars
- 22 Legion of Merit medals
- 15 Soldiers Medals
- 9,500 Purple Hearts

The 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT lost 650 men, over 3,700 wounded in action, and 67 declared missing in action.

The most decorated 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT individual soldier was from Wyoming. Toshiro “Tosh” Suyematsu was awarded a Purple Heart, a Purple Heart with an Oak Leaf Cluster, two Silver Stars and a Bronze Star.

The citation for one of Tosh’s Silver Stars summarizes his heroics:

“By direction of the President, the Silver Star is awarded to Toshiro Suyematsu for gallantry in action on 22-24 October and 28-29 October 1944, near Biffontaine, France. Sergeant Suyematsu was a forward observer with the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion during the unit’s isolation near Biffontaine. When he was directed to lay a creeping barrage on the reverse side of a hill to forestall the barrage from his Observation point until the rounds were just clearing the trees above him. Despite the ever present danger of the tree bursts and a subsequent counter barrage by the enemy which came in over the ridge and bracketed him between two curtains of fire, he continued his fire mission.”

Tosh moved with his parents Tsuchio “Ben” and Masa Suyematsu, from Oakland, California where Ben repaired shoes. The family moved to Casper in 1919 where Ben worked for the CB&Q railroad until the railroad strike of 1922, when 400,000 workers walked off the job over a national wage decrease.

After working for the railroad, Ben went back to his previous trade and set up a shoe repair shop in North Casper.

The Suyematsus were family friends on my mother’s side. I don’t know this for sure, but I’m guessing that since both my grandfather Sakata and Ben Suyematsu both worked for CB&Q at or near the Powder River and Arminto sections in Natrona County, the families grew acquainted. Tosh had two brothers, King and Taro, who I didn’t know very well. I met their kids, but only saw them on rare occasions.

Auntie Hisako was a friend of Tosh’s sisters. Sara was a nurse in Casper and Kiyoko was a music professor at Mankato State University in Minnesota. They, like my aunt, never married and spent quite a bit of time in Cheyenne. We went on family excursions to Casper. They were both athletic and took me on my first ski outing on Casper Mountain. That was back in the day of lace-up leather boots.

Tosh was a student at UW when he ran out of tuition money. He quit school to join the army. He attained the rank of sergeant, but on November 30, 1941, he was demoted to buck private.

A week later, Pearl Harbor was bombed. He and other Japanese soldiers, including his brother, King, were sequestered in desk jobs until given an opportunity to volunteer for the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT.

After the War, Tosh returned to UW and finished his undergraduate degree before going to law school. He remained in southeast Wyoming where he practiced law with his wife, Ellen Crowley in Cheyenne. She served in the Wyoming State Legislature.

Tosh was later named assistant U.S. Attorney General for Wyoming.

I had three uncles serve in the 442<sup>nd</sup> RCT. All three were PFC - Richard Ohashi, Vince Ichiyasu and George Sakata.

My dad was classified as 4-F with a heart murmur and sat out the War. Serving in the military wasn't a family priority, in that there was no pressure on me to serve. I think my dad felt guilty about his non-service. My mother was more of a pacifist and my dad was the family hawk. In 1964, Dad voted for Barry Goldwater while Mom supported Lyndon Johnson.

### **Vietnam guilt**

(Alan at the 73 inauguration pix, Bombing Cambodia button)

I missed military service other than when I turned 18, my mom watched me climb into the red Ford Falcon before I headed to the Selective Service office in the old Cheyenne airport terminal to register for the draft. It must have been after school. I was the only one who was in the office along with the recruiter.

Ironically, the Ford Falcon was the brainchild of former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara who served during the JFK and Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) administrations during the Vietnam War.

Before his public service, McNamara was a young upstart executive at the Ford Motor Company. Following the mid-size model Edsel debacle, he designed the Falcon, which proved to be a huge success in 1957, competing in the compact car market with the VW Type I Bug, the Corvair and the Valiant.

After being accepted into Hastings College in 1971, my draft-deferred status was 1-H. The Vietnam War was de-escalating while at the same time President Nixon ordered the secret bombing of Cambodia. A few of my high school classmates enlisted.

The Vietnam War was unpopular when the mass draft was replaced by the lottery in 1969. In 1973, my birth date lottery number was 275, pretty much sparing me from service. My college roommate at the time, Sam Allen, the same guy from Cody who went to Alaska with me, had a low lottery number in the teens and went for his physical. By then, Nixon was planning to pull out of Vietnam "with honor."

This was the time when Pham Dinh Nguyen, the fellow who purchased Buford, Wyoming served as a soldier in the ARVN during Vietnamization.

Serving in the military was a part of the socialization process for young men. Eliminating the draft changed all that when military duty turned into a job. In World War II, men were teachers and plumbers and after the War, they returned to their civilian work places.

There is the macroeconomics phrase, “Guns or Butter” which is an analogy for choices between defense and civilian spending and how the two can best balance the economic needs of the country.

With a volunteer army, when a war ends and soldiers are laid off, there is no job waiting for them. In my view, when wars end, soldiers should continue to be paid by the military and add to the public good, such as defending the United States border or building roads and bridges, or constructing affordable houses.

While not my first election, it was my first presidential vote and I cast it for Nixon in 1972. I’m still atoning for that.

Upon Nixon’s reelection, I took a one month class in Washington D.C. called “Legislators and Lobbyists.”

A busload of Hastings classmates attended Nixon’s inauguration on January 20, 1973. It was an action packed week. Walking back from the Capitol Building after the ceremony, some of us were tear-gassed during a demonstration against the bombing of Cambodia.

January 22<sup>nd</sup>, the SCOTUS decided *Roe v. Wade*, and former President Johnson died. He lay in state under the Capitol rotunda while we were D.C.

In retrospect, I could have enlisted, but after experiencing the anti-war unrest during Nixon’s inauguration, his subsequent impeachment and resignation, and I listened to the Vietnam war stories that my Gillette housemate Tom would tell. I missed military experience, but I don’t regret sitting that one out.

Wars, while devastating, were cultural manifestations of patriotism. The Vietnam War was fought on TV. I saw with my own eyes, the devastation of war rather than sterile and edited newsreel footage before the feature down at the Paramount. TV pulled the curtain back from patriotic images of heroes hoisting tattered battle flags.

### **Summer jobs and jerks**

(Hitching Post sign pix, RFK button)

One of my Carey Junior High School teachers, Sam Contos, who lived on the corner of Windmill and Old Trail roads along with his wife, Stella, son John and daughter Marti, got me a job at the Hitching Post Inn as a bus boy. Stella still lives there, probably one of the only “original” members of my old neighborhood.

He must have had a conversation with my dad about getting me out of the house. That job was an eye-opener. Among other things, I gained an appreciation for jerks at an early age.

In 1921, Petter and Nathan Smith, who emigrated from Russia along with nephew Harry were granted 240 acres of land 20 miles west of Cheyenne though the Homestead Act. Their original idea was to raise potatoes on the dusty prairie, but they ended up selling the property and used the money to buy land on

the west end of Cheyenne where the brothers built the Lincoln Court along the Lincoln Highway in 1927.

As automobile ownership became much more affordable, motor hotels - motels - like Lincoln Court popped up all along main highways, including the transcontinental U.S. Highway 30 and the famous Route 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles.

Lincoln Court evolved into the Hitching Post Inn that became a regional resort that hosted movie stars, politicians and became the unofficial home for the Wyoming State Legislature. When I worked there, Harry Smith and his wife Harriet were the owners of the Hitching Post that was managed by their son, Paul.

The Hitching Post wasn't my first food service job. The experience I gained washing dishes for my uncle at the Highway 85 Café more than prepared me for the work. If I had a resume' back then, having "no queasiness around dirty dishes" would have been a valuable job skill.

I remember clearing a table in the coffee shop and was approached by a frantic mom. Her son left his dental retainer on the paper placemat and wondered if I remembered clearing it from the table. Being a braces wearer myself, I identified with the kid's angst. After going back to the dishwashing area, I dug through the paper trash and, sure enough, found his retainer.

That mom better still be paying that favor forward, which could explain the good luck I've had over the years.

I worked at the Hitching Post solid for two summers, sometimes 50 or 60 hours per week, mostly at night. There was a pecking order. As a new busboy, I was trained during the breakfast and lunch shifts in the coffee shop. As I became more experienced, tips during the dinner hours in the two dining rooms - the Beefeater and Patio rooms - from 4:00 p.m. to midnight were much better.

My favorite shift was the 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. late shift during CFD. I ran booze and glassware from the bar to the Coach Rooms in the conference center where there were big shows.

The CFD day shifts were like other days, except way more people. Things died down in the afternoon when the crowds were at the rodeo.

There was a fairly well known lounge singer named Jody Miller who played the Hitching Post. She won the Best Female Country Vocal Performance Grammy award in 1966 for *Queen of the House* that climbed to number 12 on the Billboard Hot 100 and number five on the country singles chart. The song was her answer to Roger Miller's *King of the Road* and sung to the same tune.

I took room service to her from time to time. She wasn't much of a tipper.

The only other celeb who showed up on one of my shifts was a movie actor named Victor Jory. He sported a jungle field jacket and sat at the end of the coffee shop counter having breakfast. How people can eat and smoke a cigarette at the same time was a mystery to me.

I didn't know who he was, but the waitresses were gaga over him. He graciously signed a few autographs before digging back into his eggs.

His roles include that of Injun Joe in the movie version of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1938) by Mark Twain. In *Gone with the Wind* (1939) he played the part of slave master Jonas Wilkerson at the Tara plantation. He co-starred with cowboy actor Hopalong Cassidy in seven films between 1941 and 1943.

U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy (RFK) came through Cheyenne on a whistle stop tour in 1968. The local Democrats held a reception for him at the Hitching Post. That was my first taste of up-close, retail politics. Back then, Wyoming was politically purple and presidential candidates from both major political parties regularly stumped for votes in the Cowboy State.

For me, it was mostly about the symbols of politics. My mission that election cycle was to collect a bumper sticker and button from each of the candidates.

Even though LBJ won the election by a landslide in 1964, President Johnson declared, "Accordingly, I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your president," the race was wide open with huge Republican and Democratic fields.

There was no internet. I mailed handwritten letters to the campaigns to collect their campaign materials. Since then, I've managed to scrounge buttons for each major party nominee and their running mate starting in 1896.

My Carey Jr. High School pal, Mike Whitehead, was big into Democratic Party politics mostly because of his parents. His mom, Janet, was Laramie County Clerk and his dad, Ed, was a state legislator. He served in the Wyoming State Legislature with Ellen Crowley, Tosh Sueymatsu's wife, also an attorney.

It was May and we were still in school. Cheyenne was the first stop on a long train trip through Nebraska, which ended in Omaha just before the Nebraska primary in mid-May. Nebraska was a key state for RFK and he won it.

Mike and I decided to go see him. We taped six pieces of poster board together and stapled it onto a couple sticks of lathe. I don't remember what was scrawled on the sign with Magic Marker - which was a new writing medium back in those days. I was the cartoonist for the school paper, *The Tumbleweed*, and drew a pretty good caricature of RFK on the bottom of the sign.

We rolled it up and hauled it on foot 4 miles from my house in the Cole Addition to the Pavilion in Frontier Park.

I came to realize that this is what old fashioned politics was about. The place was packed with supporters and the curious. RFK was there with members of his family, wife Ethel and maybe some of his kids.

I don't think Bobby even said anything of substance. Whatever he said was inaudible because of the crowd noise.

He was like a rock star.

Afterward, the U.S. Senator from New York noticed our sign. He came over and shook our hands and autographed a “Join Now” campaign card I picked up at the door, which I still have.

There was a reception for RFK and his entourage at the Hitching Post after the event. I wasn’t working that day in favor of attending the rally.

Mr. Whitehead took us to the Hitching Post and we patiently waited outside. He emerged a short time later with some “real” autographs that he gave us.

I also learned at that rally how accessible politicians can be at any level of government, I didn’t realize it then, but this was my first taste of federalism - the relationships between, the national, state and local governments - that grew into a public service career in my first past life. That experience has stuck with me to this day, not to mention my fascination with autographs and political buttons.

Three weeks later, my clock radio turned on early in the morning to a live broadcast from Los Angeles about RFK’s murder. A bad guy named Sirhan Sirhan shot him at close range.

Working at the Hitching Post was the only time I felt openly discriminated against. It was mostly comments from out-of-towners of all types - rednecks to big city folk - during the day shifts. At night, it seemed like the crowd was much more accepting, but maybe it was the alcohol.

“Hop Sing, bring me more coffee,” some scrawny guy with a bad mustache and a Texas-like drawl hollered at me in reference to Ben Cartwright’s Chinese servant on the TV show, *Bonanza*.

I didn’t have a snappy answer to his obnoxious request. Coming up with clever responses is a skill I’ve had to develop over the years.

*Mad Magazine* had a recurring department called “Snappy Answers to Stupid Questions.”

When I first moved to Boulder and shopping at the local camera store, a woman approached me at the display counter and asked, “Can you read this,” while pointing to one of the language versions of a camera operation manual. “No, I don’t know Spanish,” was my answer.

Another time on an airplane I was sitting in one of the emergency exit row seats, you know, the ones with extra legroom. “CAN - YOU - SPEAK - ENGLISH,” the flight attendant loudly announced at me while also staring at me being sure I could see her lips move. “I’m Japanese, not deaf,” was my retort.

Having this summer job was also the first time I’d gotten to know adults other than those in my immediate family environment. The waitresses and other kids, all were older than me. I hit it off with a funny guy named Mark Samansky.

He went to Central High School and was four or five years older than me. I was a seventh grader at Carey Junior High. We both preferred the late CFD shifts. I wasn't old enough to drive and he drove me home if my dad couldn't come get me.

One night in 1968, after a big show, he climbed behind a drum kit and played the drum solo from *Inna Gadda Da Vida* by the band Iron Butterfly.

Our boss, Paul Smith, called Mark and me into his office about that. He didn't fire either of us. "Nice drum solo," Paul said, as a reminder that even though nobody saw, the walls had ears.

The Hitching Post Inn burned to the ground in September 2010. Later, the cause of the fire was determined to be arson. Nothing remains of the once regal landmark, except the iconic sign that's falling into disrepair. The asbestos-ridden hotel room annexes were also condemned and remain as boarded up ruins ready to be razed.

When Paul Smith was no longer involved, the Hitching Post went downhill. It was a destination, a west Cheyenne institution, and the home to the Wyoming State Legislature for 40 days in January and February.

### **Coke is life**

(Dad and Dick ad pix, Coke button)

I outgrew the Hitching Post job when I was in high school. My dad hired me during the summer of 1970. The wages I was making at Coca Cola were triple what I was paid bussing tables.

Besides, I had to raise money for my high school exchange trip the following spring to St. Louis Park, Minnesota. That fund raising effort became a family affair.

By the 1970s a growing middle class fled to the suburbs, along with its mass consumerism. One externality of the "Throwaway Society" was aluminum can recycling. My uncle Roy was a night owl and the janitor at Town & Country Liquor on the Southside.

He suggested saving aluminum cans from the bar that could be sold at the metal salvage place. "Free money," he said. "I'm getting paid to bag them up. I either put them in the trash or I give them to you. You'll need to get them ready to sell back."

Roy never married. He lived in a very cool trailer house that was in a mobile home park behind the Highway 85 Café. When I was in elementary school, I walked over to his place and pounded on the door with a porthole window near the front of the two-toned silver and blue aluminum outer skin. I hadn't been up close to an airplane, but thought that's what one would be like.

A smoldering briar pipe dangled from his mouth as he swung the door open. He always chuckled and waved me in like the Land of Oz gatekeeper.

What I considered to be a pleasant aroma, stale cherry-flavored Sir Walter Raleigh tobacco smoke wafted out of his dimly lit digs.

Uncle Roy didn't have much food around to share since he took meals at the café or at his mom's place, but offered up his menagerie of birds and fish to admire. He took care of colorful parakeets and little finches in cages.

The "tweet, tweet, tweet" from warbling birdies, and gurgling bubbles from the submerged fish tank aerators filled his front room, which was also the kitchen.

There were aquariums with all kinds of smallish exotic fish - sunfish, Dory clown fish, guppies. My favorites were the suckerfish that cleaned the insides of the glass and vacuumed up the fish poop dropped by the others on the bottom of the tank.

It was the first time I realized my life is also self-contained in a bowl.

He loaned out his parakeets. My parents allowed me to keep one at a time only if I learned to take care of them. Not that I'm the over nurturing type, but I enjoyed replacing the newspaper on the bottom of the cage and picking out food from the Petland store on the east edge of town.

Every few days, Roy would drop off huge plastic bags of beer cans at the Coke plant that he'd sorted out for me from Town & Country Liquors bar room trash.

The cans had to be crushed. I spent hours stomping on the tops of the aluminum cans and crunching them into flatter disks. My dad took them to Novick and Sons Junk Yard in west Cheyenne.

I was in Portland, Oregon recently. Sorting through public trash bins is a growth industry there. Since the scrap value is 10-cents per bottle and can, the state has a 90 percent redemption rate.

Working for my dad was a good experience. I learned how to drive a forklift, which was a good life skill and could still unload a truck if called upon. It was tedious stacking pallets of bottles so they wouldn't topple over.

I also learned about mass production and efficient workflow. My dad took pride in his work adding value to water, sugar and some flavoring.

At the time, it went unnoticed but in the early 1970s, Coke joined the convenient throwaway society and no longer used returnable glass bottles. That meant me no longer having to fish cigarette butts out of the bottles with a hooked wire before loading them into the soaker and washing machine.

Corrugated cardboard boxes of bottles arrived on pallets shrink-wrapped in plastic. One day, the delivery truck didn't park on the crown of the street but on the down slope. After inserting the forks and lifting the load, I maneuvered the forklift to a flatter grade, but the top-heavy load began to slowly collapse to the pavement.

Around that time, we no longer sweetened our soft drinks with granulated sugar but with high fructose corn syrup. Sugar was sugar with no worries about whether one was healthier than the other.

Besides, there were bigger health problems to worry about like poliomyelitis, which was not something to sneeze about. During the early 1950s, polio rates in the United States were above 25,000 annually; in 1952, a domestic outbreak happened that consisted of 58,000 polio cases with 3,200 deaths that year.

There were a few kids in my schools who had polio. One neighbor kid named Tim wore a leg support and hearing aid. Nobody thought much of it. A leg brace was akin to wearing glasses. Not that many kids wore glasses, either.

Around the time, I entered kindergarten. Jonas Salk's inactivated virus vaccine became publically available and had to be delivered by injection.

I remembered helping my grandfather jab himself with insulin and didn't look forward to getting a polio shot. I may have had shots earlier, but this was the first one I remember. One thing I learned is that I have a high pain threshold. I don't remember screaming and hollering when I was inoculated.

To this day, I have dental work done without anesthetic.

In 1961, Albert Sabin developed a live but attenuated vaccine that was delivered orally on sugar cubes. It was quite the social event when it became publically available.

We had a big Ohashi family gathering at my grandparent's house on the Southside. We all walked down to the neighborhood fire station where we stood in line along waiting to get our sugar cube.

By the time I was in high school, polio was no longer the public health threat it was when I was in grade school. I traveled to Uganda a few years ago, and required to get a polio booster by injection.

One of my other Coke jobs that became obsolete because of ready-made corn sweetener was hand blending Coke syrup.

Before each bottling run, I lifted 50-pound bags of sugar, poured the contents into a stainless steel vat, added a graduated amount of Cheyenne tap water and stirred it up with a big stainless steel paddle while adding the top secret Coca Cola flavoring. The concoction was gravity-fed into the bottling line.

Those steps were eliminated in favor of turning a big valve that released the pre-mixed syrup into the production system that flowed into the flavoring.

It was also the first time I'd seen my dad around other men besides neighbors and relatives. He could cuss and talk trash with the best of them. Dad took pride in the details production.

All the guys liked and respected him. He brought in donuts for coffee breaks, let them off to see their kids during the workday, or run errands.

He was a team player and filled in to perform any of the jobs if there was an illness or emergency. His horizontal management style was ahead of its time. Out of 12 brothers and sisters, he was one of the middle kids. Herd management skills were a part of his upbringing.

In my past “real job” life and to this day, I learn everyone’s jobs and make it a point to at least give everyone an opportunity to learn one another’s jobs.

The family moving to Laramie when I was in college was a good time for a change because my sister and I were no longer in high school and ostensibly out on our own.

Before my second year in college, my dad rented an apartment in Laramie where we lived the summer before the Cheyenne house was sold. He commuted back and forth between Cheyenne and Laramie on the weekends. I didn’t mind staying in Laramie on my own.

Summertime in Laramie was nice. Like most other college towns, the students were away and the weather was nice. I took physics class in summer school at UW.

I thought summer school at UW was one of the best-kept secrets in academia. Everyone on campus was invited to an all-school steak fry at the UW science camp in the Medicine Bow National Forest.

There was a perception that summer school was for kids who had to make up classes they flunked during the regular school year.

I took high school world history during the summer, which was way better than taking it in the fall. The summer I graduated from high school, learning how to type in summer school from Mr. Halverson was the most practical class I took - witness this book.

The family finally moved while I was in Nebraska. It was odd to go to a different home for Thanksgiving and having to ask, “Where are the forks?”

I continued working with my dad during the summers while in college. It was tough watching my dad adapt to the rapid changes happening in his work life.

Even though we moved only 50 miles away to Laramie and the bottling operation was similar in capacity, taking a similar Production Manager job wasn’t exactly a turnkey operation. The equipment was newer with more bells and whistles, but the production flow wasn’t efficient.

Starting out, he was a bit stressed working with a “co-manager” who happened to be the owner’s son. He had some sort of business degree, but not much mechanical knowledge. He eventually quit and left the company.

Being new in town, there was no familiar community to be a safety net or support network. Dad was engrained into Superman’s American Way of rugged individualism, climbing to the top, working 40 years for the same company, retiring, and then going about finding busy work around the house.

After moving to the new job in Laramie, Dad had to start his trajectory and again climb up the corporate ladder.

There was no family around except the immediate family. Being 50 miles from the rest of the clan in Cheyenne might as well have been 500 miles.

When he finally retired, I gave him a copy of *From Ag-ing to Sage-ing* by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. This was before I became acquainted with him and his wife, Eve, while in Boulder. He was a big inspiration and why I continue serving many communities as a Do Gooder.

After my mom quit working, she was more gregarious and enjoyed group activity like joining a quilting club and clogging dance classes. She was a breast cancer survivor and volunteered for Relay for Life and other related organizations. Dad followed along with that.

Nonetheless, it became a turbulent time for him because of all the changes with mergers and acquisitions in all sorts of businesses like hospitals and the beverage industry.

First, a company in Wichita Falls, Texas bought the Laramie Coke plant, which was good because they had a retirement program, at least while it lasted.

Swires, based in Hong Kong, in a rapid expansion mode during the late 1970s, acquired a large plant in Bonneville, Utah and soon gobbled up smaller bottling operations like Laramie, in favor of converting them into distribution points.

I don't recall that Swires kept up with Dad's retirement plan. His job evolved from tedious and exact management of production to organizing product delivery, which required less precision, but more heavy lifting.

Dad would have had a tough time reinventing himself if he quit. Ageism isn't a new thing. In the fledgling digital era, he never turned on, let alone looked at a computer or used a cell phone or calculator.

He retired shortly after that, but hired back for a couple more years because skilled workers were lacking. Deliveries were backbreaking and the wear and tear took their toll on him.

### **Cohesion and dispersal**

(Orpha gas pump pix, JFK button)

Those July 4th and Memorial Day picnics organized by the Skyline Nisei club were big social events. The moms prepared food like it was New Years Day in the summer. The events were the Cheyenne version of the *Bōn* Festival, which is the Japanese Buddhist version of Day of the Dead.

In Japan, the *Bōn* Festival was based on the lunar calendar and falls in early to mid August. After the western calendar became more common, the summer time events have evolved into times when families reunite, remember their family members, visit cemeteries and clean up graves.

When I was young, the picnic fare included American standards like hot dogs, hamburgers and potato salad, but also Japanese food. Some was packed in classic square enameled wooden boxes, but by this time, *tapuru waru* (Tupperware) became the standard.

There were all kinds of *maki sushi* rolled in *nōri* (seaweed paper) with fancy fish, like *unagi* (eel).

*Nigiri sushi*, the small wads of rice with pieces of fish or crustaceans on top, weren't part of the table. Those didn't meet the "working class" standard in that raw fish items weren't practical for a *bentō* (lunch) box. I didn't try *nigiri* until I was an adult.

There were *musubi* (rice balls) with a bit of *umebōshi* (pickled plum) in the middle. As an adult, my I developed a taste for SPAM *musubi* and *maki sushi*. The specialty items were *inari* made from *abura age* (thinly sliced deep-fried *tōfu* pouches) then stuffed with seasoned *gōhan* (rice).

Each family had their own *teriyaki* chicken marinade - some more sugary, some with ginger, some thicker, some thinner. My mom made thinly sliced *teriyaki* flank steak that was good. Flank steak was once a cheap cut and for some reason is now very expensive.

... and of course, Coca Cola.

If it was Memorial Day, after the first food go-around, we all went to the Japanese section of the Lakeview Cemetery and decorated gravestones.

On July 4th we were finished up at the picnic grounds in time to make a stop at the fireworks stand before heading to the Kishiyama place to blast off firecrackers.

The 1970s was a time of transition in the Japanese community, including with my family. As the Issei generation passed away, so did many traditions, like gathering at the cemetery.

When the Memorial Gardens cemetery opened on the east edge of Cheyenne, my family bought in as charter members. Headstone-less cemeteries sprung up all over the West on the outskirts of towns. They were easy to mow and maintain with plenty of room to expand.

All my family member's plots are out there. That move away from the urban Lakeview Cemetery also coincided with the Cheyenne Japanese scattering away from Cheyenne, particularly from downtown.

I keep threatening to get the few Sansei cousins and friends still in Cheyenne and ask my out of town cousins to return for a reunion. Seems like the only time I see my cousins these days is if there is a funeral or illness and we talk about a cousin reunion.

One thing that was passed on to me was to blend into the crowd. I couldn't understand conversations my parents had speaking Japanese with my grandparents and asked why they didn't teach us. "You have to blend in," my mom told me. "There's no reason to speak Japanese."

Blend into the background, we did.

My family attended the First Presbyterian Church in Cheyenne, Sunday school, Skyline Church Camp, Sunday afternoon youth fellowship, and potluck dinners in the church basement. I remember going to a potluck and there were mostly Jell-O salads, which was okay by me. I still like green Jell-O with fruit cocktail mixed into it.

The church was on the “other side” of town and kids from the other junior high school feeder schools went there.

In a sense, it was integration.

We went to church most Sundays. My parents were involved in the activities – women’s circle, Mariners. I’m pretty sure my mom was the main instigator of all that and my dad just tagged along for the food.

My sister and I went to Sunday school, sang in the choir and went to the youth fellowship group in the evenings. It was fun with not much emphasis on Christianity-related stuff. The mission was to make it home before “Batman” came on the TV.

When it came to summer church camp, the Presbyterians, Church of Christ, maybe the Congregational church all came together.

Presbyterians didn’t emphasize the “Jesus Saves” drills: sins = hell and good = heaven.

It was mostly about the liturgy of church life – baby christening (which I don’t remember), free Bible in the 3rd grade (which I still have and rebound it when I wore it out. Well, actually dropped it off the top bunk at camp one too many times); catechism – “What is the chief end of man?” (I still know the answer); and another Bible for high school graduation, which I have and still in the box.

The churchwomen’s club had a big rummage sale in the fall. My mom was a member of the women’s circle and I liked to help, but mostly I had a chance to look through all the merchandise and picked out a thing or two before the doors opened.

At the 1963 sale set for Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, I found a Rawlings baseball glove endorsed by Wally Moon of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Wally Moon was the National League Rookie of the Year in 1954. Moon played on three Los Angeles Dodgers World Series championship teams in 1959, 1963, and 1965.

The glove fit my tiny hand perfectly. For a dime, I used it all through Little League and Babe Ruth baseball.

The reason I remember this, the Friday before, on November 22<sup>nd</sup> JFK was assassinated in Dallas. There was quite a bit of chatter about the incident among the women. “It served him right,” one of the women’s club members growled, apparently a Nixon supporter.

She stormed into the kitchen disgusted about the assassination conversation as the others in the room stood aghast and quiet. The disdainful woman in my mom’s church group was one of our neighbors in the Cole Addition.

Shortly before he was assassinated in 1963, JFK made Wyoming stops in Cheyenne, Laramie and Jackson September 25-26. U.S. Senator Gale McGee and local newspaper mogul Tracy McCracken arranged his visit.

At the 1960 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, there's an often-used TV news clip of McCracken barking out the Wyoming delegation votes that put JFK over the top and securing the nomination for president.

I was one of the Cheyenne students let out of school to see JFK at the Cheyenne airport where he gave a short speech before heading over Sherman Hill to speak to a capacity crowd in the Field House on the UW campus.

My mom took my sister and me, but we arrived a little late and watched from behind the perimeter fence. He landed in Cheyenne because of its proximity to the Air National Guard hangar facilities where the plane could gas up.

How did we end up in the suburbs?

After my kindergarten year at the newly constructed Fairview Elementary School, the district boundaries changed. My parents invested in some land on the east side of Cheyenne. They sold that, kept their East 10<sup>th</sup> Street house as a rental. We moved to the Cole Addition at 1115 Windmill Rd. so as to stay the Fairview School boundary.

The alternative was Alta Vista School, which, in my mother's view, was more urban and a rough and tumble school compared to Fairview. Ironically, Alta Vista was eventually rebuilt. Fairview, like me, is still a relic of the 1950s.

My mom got her wish to live the American Way with 1.5 kids, a dog, two cars and a ranch style house in the suburbs. She settled for two kids, a dog that was re-homed, the house, a car under the carport, and a pick up parked out front.

This was quite a departure from her childhood. She and her family grew up in a clapboard Orpha section foreman's house in rural Converse County, Wyoming just off Fort Fetterman Road.

Fort Fetterman is located a few miles north of Douglas and now a Wyoming State Park. It was established in 1867 to protect settlers traveling to Montana on the Bozeman Trail.

The fort was named after Captain William J. Fetterman who was killed in combat along with 80 other soldiers. The Arapaho, Cheyenne, and the Lakota warriors lead by Red Cloud and Crazy Horse out-maneuvered the over-matched U.S. Cavalry.

We visited Orpha a time or two. One summer, my sister and I spent a month irrigating sugar beets on the Shinmori farm. Joe and Lucy Shinmori were childhood friends of my mom. They all went to school in the Orpha one-room schoolhouse.

That's how I got to know their kids Bobby, Kathy and Jay who taught me how to hand irrigate.

Spreading around irrigation water became a life skill for me. The SCOTUS upheld a lower court ruling and awarded the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho tribes, rights to over 500,000 acre/feet pre-territorial water.

The two tribes share the Wind River Indian Reservation in west central Wyoming. That arrangement has been problematic over the years, since the Arapaho and Shoshone were enemies prior to the Indian Appropriation Act of 1851, which set up the Indian reservation system.

When I was working for the Northern Arapaho Tribe, one of the staff directives was to use water and to keep as much of it as possible from continuing to flow downstream. One project was a 600-acre farm consisting mostly of fallow ground that was put under plow and hand irrigated. It's because of that experience, I self-identify as a farmer.

Not that I was any good at it, but I was surprised how few people know how to fill irrigation tubes by hand. The Arapaho farm manager was surprised I knew how to irrigate.

Rather than spreading water with more efficient gated pipe and center pivots, we created quite a few jobs by hand irrigating.

At first, it was an adjustment leaving the familiarity of my suburban neighborhood for the isolated Orpha country life, because being a kid in the Cole Addition was good.

There was a sense of homogeneity in the Cole Addition. Kids all went to the same neighborhood school, meaning kids all knew each other which meant parents got to know each other because hordes of kids traipsed through every house on the block.

There were neighborhood parties, lots of pick up football games at the nearby Triangle Park and half court basketball games in the Goepfert's driveway - they had a double car garage and the widest, flattest slab of concrete in a two-block radius.

These days, kids "choice" into schools and parents drive them miles back and forth that all add to the isolation within suburbia. School choice is basically, *defacto* segregation.

Later, as a result of the Japanese Diaspora from downtown, Paul Kubota, now a dentist, but still single, moved with his aging parents a block from us on Windmill Road. The Kubotas sold my grandfather their pool hall.

He eventually married his wife, Mary, and both continued to live with Paul's folks until they died. The only time I saw my dad with a bad hangover was after Paul Kubota's bachelor party.

He had a place on the floor where he took his afternoon nap, but on this after-party Sunday, it was an all day nap.

Because of their West 17<sup>th</sup> Street connection, the Kubotas were a good support system for my parents. Paul and Mary didn't have any kids, but maintained a connection with some of the other Japanese

families still in Cheyenne, particularly among the mushroom hunters, who we didn't associate with much.

Summertime was great in the suburbs. In the new subdivisions, there were community pools. Cole Pool was the gathering spot for every kid in the neighborhood. I didn't like splashing around in the water, and still don't, but liked sunning on the hot concrete, playing a bouncing ball game called 4-square.

My grandparents Sakata sold their place on Capitol Avenue to the adjacent First Christian Church that was expanding. They moved closer to us on Converse Avenue and East 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

They had a downstairs apartment, which eventually became quarters for Auntie Hisako who retired from the EPA and moved from D.C. to Cheyenne to take care of my grandparents.

She ended up passing away from smoking too many cigarettes. Hisako didn't marry and was the consummate role model for me. She traveled a lot while she was younger. That was probably a good thing. She trotted around the world before she contracted lung cancer.

When my parents both retired, they toured around to unusual places like Panama, Nova Scotia, and Romania. They almost let life pass them by, putting in time raising kids and working, but were able to enjoy each other's company for a few years before my dad got sick.

He had an agonizing last couple years with an undiagnosed lung condition before passing in August 2003. Mom died from a brain aneurism in her sleep four months later.

At Hastings, I was a speech jock (debater and extemporaneous speaker) and saw quite a bit of the country, mostly the Midwest, by car. I've spent time in all the states and on my second go-around. After college, I had a chance to travel around quite a bit and always had jobs that took me places.

My family just didn't have roots just in Japan, but also in South America.

### **Peruvian cousins**

(Peru group pix and pin)

Half my mom's family is Peruvian. Her uncle was being honored for some reason or another in Lima. My grandmother organized a family trip to Peru for the award ceremony in 1983.

On the surface, me having Peruvian relatives may seem unusual, but Peru was the first Latin American country to establish diplomatic relations with Japan in 1873. Part of my grandmother's Iwasaki family immigrated to Peru and my grandmother ended up in Wyoming after she married my grandfather Sakata.

During World War II, Peru cut off relations with Japan and considered an internment program of its own, but chose to deport over a thousand Japanese Peruvians to the United States, primarily to three camps in Texas which were nearest to the port in New Orleans.

Unlike the WRA-managed camps, the three detention centers in Texas at Seagoville, Kenedy and Crystal City were constructed and administered by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and governed by the Third Geneva Convention of 1929 - Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War.

In the early 1900s, the U.S. government was mainly interested in keeping immigration in check to protect American workers from less expensive foreign labor. Immigration management was a matter of commerce.

In 1903, Congress transferred the Bureau of Immigration to the Department of Commerce and Labor - now separate departments of Labor and Commerce. In June 1933, the INS was established.

In 1940, the INS was transferred to the U.S. Justice Department to deal with potential enemy aliens as the United States moved closer to involvement in World War II.

The American Red Cross monitored the INS to ensure the camps met enemy alien detainee treatment standards. The Geneva Convention set standards around the quality of food, size of living quarters, and amount and type of clothing that each detainee is allowed to possess in excess of what may have been issued.

The INS, like the WRA, designed the camps to be much like stand-alone communities with food stores, auditoriums, a hospital, places of worship, a post office, bakery, barber shop, beauty shop, school system, a Japanese *sumō* wrestling ring, and German *biertagens*.

In April 1942, the first ship, named the U.S. Army Transport (USAT) Etolin, left Callao, Peru with 141 Japanese men on board. During the course of that first trip, the Etolin picked up Japanese deportees from Colombia before heading for San Francisco, where the INS denied them visas and passports; classified them as enemy aliens; and detained at assembly centers.

Other ships, including the Swedish charter Steam Ship (SS) Gripsholm, the SS Shawnee, and the SS Frederick C. Johnson, transported Japanese from Peru to Panama before heading to the United States. The ships docked in New Orleans.

In April 1942, the INS took over a women's prison facility in Seagoville, Texas (pop. 700) and converted it into a detention center located 20 miles southeast of Dallas.

Most of the detainees were Japanese and Germans deported from Latin America to the United States. Women and couples without children were sent to the Seagoville center, men were sent to the Kenedy center and families with children to the Crystal City center.

The Seagoville center detainee population in July 1942 consisted of a handful of German men, 40 German and Japanese women. The number of detainees increased over the following months.

Most women detained were classified as "voluntary" because they agreed to join their interned husbands in other camps around the WRA camp network. The detainees were permitted to possess personal items like, hot water bottles, clothing, sewing supplies; creature comforts like rugs, curtains, cushions, and small electric appliances such as irons.

At its peak, the 550 Seagoville center detainees stayed in six, two-story dormitories divided into 40 to 68 single rooms, a kitchen, dining hall, living area and communal laundry, shower and toilet facilities. Another two-story structure housed classrooms, an auditorium, a library and medical facilities that included a maternity ward.

The Seagoville center population changed primarily as a result of detainee repatriation to Germany and Japan. In June 1942, the U.S. Department of State (DoS) repatriated 1,500 Japanese from Seagoville and other internment camps. By August 1944, the camp's population dwindled to around 380, mostly Germans.

By September 1943, nearly all of the Japanese Latin American detainees at Seagoville were repatriated to their home countries, with some families transferred to the Crystal City center. The Seagoville center closed in May 1945.

The INS in March 1942 repurposed a 22-acre Great Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) site into the Kenedy Detention Center in Kenedy, Texas located in Karnes County, which is 60 miles southeast of San Antonio.

The CCC was a voluntary public work relief program that operated from 1933 to 1942 in the United States for unemployed, unmarried men during the Great Depression. The CCC was a major part of President FDR's New Deal that provided manual labor jobs. Workers conserved natural resources and constructed federal, state and local government public works projects in rural areas.

There were numerous CCC projects in Wyoming - roads in Yellowstone National Park; facilities at Glendo State Park; and numerous public works projects around the state.

The U.S. Congress ended the program in 1942. The need for the massive work relief program declined with the World War II military draft.

There were 2,000 Japanese, Germans, and Italians deported from Latin America processed through the Kenedy center.

The initial wave of Kenedy center detainees arrived in April 1942 from Latin America and included a little over 650 Germans, and Italians. Within the following two months, 600 more German and Japanese detainees arrived.

In May and June 1942, large numbers of Germans were repatriated back to their homeland from the Kenedy center, and 388 Japanese were sent back to Japan in August 1943. A couple months later, the detainee population reached approximately 1,300 mostly Germans and Japanese.

Over time, the Kenedy center detainees separated themselves into ethnic "clans" such as the Germans from Guatemala, which was the largest clique. Conflicts grew among the various groups.

Towards the end of 1942, the U.S. Army focused on guarding hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war captured from the Axis nations of Japan, Germany, and Italy. The INS was given greater authority to

house potentially dangerous enemy aliens and U.S. citizen Axis sympathizers at internment camps and detention centers throughout the U.S.

Needing more space, the remaining Kenedy detainees were released, repatriated or transferred to other camps. The camp was closed in September 1944 and the site converted into a German and Japanese PoW camp.

For the third site, INS leased a little over 200 acres of land to build a detention center at Crystal City. The former FSA site is located 110 miles southwest of San Antonio. The camp held 4,000 detainees, most deported from Latin America.

Crystal City, located in Zavala County 50 miles from the Mexican border, was originally the site of a migrant labor facility. Beginning in the 1920s, Crystal City's population boomed when migrant farm laborers came across the border to work area farms.

The Crystal City center encompassed 100 fenced acres on which the INS initially constructed 41 small three-room cottages and 118 one-room apartments. As the camp population grew, additional housing was built that consisted of a total 245 duplexes, triplexes and quadruple design barracks, and three-room cottages.

Permanent housing offered individual cooking facilities, cold running water, and oil stoves. The German, Italian and Japanese bathhouses were separated by nationality to allow equal access to shower and toilet facilities in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention.

Over time, 103 temporary military wooden sided structures known as "Victory Huts" were constructed where newly arriving Japanese Peruvians lived before they were processed into the center or repatriated out to their native country or released.

The camp detained mostly Japanese and Germans deported from Latin America but also interned Japanese Americans transferred to the Crystal City from other WRA assembly centers. By the end of 1945, the Crystal City center held a little more than 3,400 mostly Japanese and German internees.

Floodlights were installed every 60 feet and observation towers at each corner where armed guards stood watch. Guards on horseback toured the area just outside the fence and guards stationed on roads.

The camp Education Division oversaw the recreational and American, German, and Japanese school programs. The WRA provided a primary and secondary school education consistent with the Texas state curriculum standards but provided little or no funds for textbooks and teachers. Japanese and German, American and Latin American detainees served as teachers and wrote their own curricula.

Continuing education programs were provided for detainees with hobby shops for men and home economics activities such as cooking, sewing, flower arrangement, and rug weaving for women. The camp offered classes in agriculture, accounting, and English, German, Japanese, Spanish, and French languages.

Another activity for detainees was as maintenance workers who were paid 10 cents an hour to provide laundry services, perform carpentry work, repair shoes, collect garbage, and deliver ice and milk to the barracks.

There were also recreational activities. Board and table games were popular. Boy and Girl scouting were outlets for youth. Detainees of all ages participated in team and individual sports such as soccer, tennis, ping-pong, *sumō* wrestling, and baseball.

Detainees were given camp scrip and ration points exchangeable for items from camp canteen. In addition to the goods available from the camp supply, detainees raised and harvested vegetables from their own gardens, an orange orchard, and agricultural fields outside the camp boundary.

Contract sewing by detainees produced 20,000 pieces of clothing and sundries, including shirts, blouses, trousers, suits, dresses, coats, shower curtains, mattress covers, sheets, and pillow cases. The internees also made uniforms, aprons and facemasks for medical workers in the hospital clinic.

Peru developed a strong wartime relationship with the United States during World War II. Riding the wave of anti-Japanese sentiment in Peru strengthened its western hemispheric defense.

The relationship resulted in Peru obtaining loans from American banks to finance a steel processing plant. In exchange, Peru allowed the U.S. military to operate an air base at Talara, a strategic location to defend the Panama Canal from attack.

I don't know why my great uncle and his family were allowed to stay in Peru. They owned property in Lima and in a remote town called Supe in the Barranca Province on the Pacific coast. In 1983, Supe didn't have running water and rudimentary electrical circuits were easily overloaded.

I have Peruvian cousins named Carlos, Juan and Pedro. Pedro moved to the United States and lives in Florida. Recently, he was in Colorado for a job-related conference. We met up briefly and took a whirlwind drive to Estes Park. We're in touch on facebook.

He was unsure why his family was allowed to stay in Peru rather than relocated. When the economy went bad in Peru, some of the cousins went to Japan where they faced discrimination because they were not native born.

I spoke fluent *espanlish*, but the common language among us was Japanese. Questions would be asked in either English or Spanish, then, translated into Japanese then the response given in either English or Spanish.

The Peruvian food was prepared Japanese style. We had a lot of *ceviche* (raw fish marinated and cured in lemon) and also with *shōga* (ginger) and *shōyu*. The Chinese food restaurants are called *chifas*. I've read that there are now Japanese-style *nikkei* Peruvian restaurants.

During 1983, was a turbulent time in Peru with the Communist Shining Path guerrilla fighters on a rampage. The terrorists slaughtered hundreds of tribal people who lived in the mountainous regions.

One of my Lander friends and colleagues was a retired Foreign Service diplomat named Dave Reynolds. He owned a bison ranch in Sinks Canyon. After I mentioned my trip to Peru, he gave me some advice, “When you’re on one of those Peruvian buses, sit next to someone with a chicken. If a terrorist gets on board, grab the chicken and blend in with the rest of the passengers.”

I didn’t experience chickens on the bus, but while flying to Iquitos on a side trip to the Amazon River headwaters, the Fawcett Airlines jet stopped on the taxiway to let on a passenger lugging a box full of peeping chicks who sat down in my row.

Reynolds also mentioned, “I have a friend who works in the U.S. Embassy in Peru - Frank Ortiz, I’ll call ahead and let him know you’re coming.”

In 1983, the chaos in Lima and the long lines of would-be asylum seekers extending around the U.S. Embassy looked like a scene out of that Sissy Spacek and Jack Lemmon movie called *Missing* (1982) about a journalist who disappeared during the overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile.

As a precaution, I took my family to check in at the Embassy. We went to the head of the long line and greeted by a young Marine sitting behind a glass window that was a foot thick. He buzzed us in to meet Frank Ortiz.

Turned out, Frank Ortiz was the U.S. Ambassador to Peru. He and his staff were madly packing up and getting ready to leave in the midst of domestic chaos. We only had time to exchange some small talk before we were ushered out.

The next morning, the newspaper headline was something about Frank Ortiz being recalled and the embassy closed by the DoS because of the political and social unrest.

Seems like many of my travels have some sort of adventure attached to them. I do want to continue seeing the world until I’m old and gray.

In the meantime, while I still have my wits about me, I want to gain some knowledge from my exploits and apply what I may learn from these experiences to everyday life and contributing to saving the world.

### **Fungus among us**

(Mushroom pix)

When we moved to Laramie in 1973, there was still family in Cheyenne, but my parents soon established themselves in Laramie. My mom was happy to leave Cheyenne in her rear view mirror.

I think she grew tired of having family life revolve mostly around my dad’s bunch. After she retired and spent time growing her watercolor art business, she reinvented herself and hyphenated her name as Sumiko Sakata – O’Hashi.

As for Laramie, I never really got the hang of the place. Leaving familiar surroundings and people in Cheyenne, going away to college and then uprooted to Laramie, was a big change.

Looking back, it mostly gave my parents a chance to build their own Japanese niche.

In Cheyenne, we had the big family thing going, but in Laramie, our new family role didn't exist until we broke into the mushroom hunting scene.

Albany County was allegedly one of the best hunting grounds for the elusive pine mushroom, *Tricholoma matsutake*, which is a delicacy in Japanese cooking. I like their chewy consistency. When freshly harvested, cleaned then sautéed in butter and *shōyu*, they are quite tasty.

The Matsuyamas who had the California Fish Market were among the best mushroom hunters. Old time Cheyenne Japanese families never disclosed their coveted areas and, thus, had the market cornered. Those families were very cliquish.

Living in Laramie was a big benefit when it came to mushrooms. The altitude and humidity were about right for all kinds of mushrooms and there were many hunting areas ripe for exploration.

Armed with small gardening trowels, everyone in the party spread out to cover every square foot where the mushroom caps would poke up through the *Pinus ponderosa* (Ponderosa Pine) pungent needle detritus.

I developed a pretty good eye and learned a few kinds of edible mushrooms like *Boletus edulis*, and *Suillus americanus*.

Digging up *matsutake* was secondary to the togetherness that was nurtured. The hunts were big social events and took a good amount of planning - food preparation, gathering the tools, sorting, cleaning the finds, and cooking some up.

We had a cabin near Centennial that was home base for not only mushroom hunting but also for skiing, summertime parties and family gatherings.

The hunting season was in the late summer and early fall. The ground in August and September couldn't be too wet or too dry. One week it may be too wet, but the next week perfect conditions.

We did stake claims on a couple prime mushroom-hunting areas but after the Issei were no longer alive, interest in *matsutake* went by the wayside.

I couldn't tell you, except in general terms, where we hunted. I'm not even mentioning the locations in general terms. The mental maps are going with me to my grave!

Whenever I see Ponderosa pines at around 7,000 to 9,000 ft in elevation, I look for evidence of *matsutake* hunters, like chopsticks wrapper papers on the ground. These days, *matsutake* are sold at the Pacific Mercantile Japanese store in Denver

### **Commute for rice**

(Alan at Mandarin and Carr button)

I haven't checked around Cheyenne lately, but I imagine there are stores that sell Japanese white rice, but I doubt it's available in 80-pound bags. Rice was packed in white cotton sacks. During the Great Depression, they were repurposed into dishtowels and aprons, at least that's what my grandmothers made out of them.

My grandmother Ohashi was the head of her household and cooked for her sons Rich, George, Roy and my grandfather, plus, slinging fried rice at her Highway 85 Café.

There was always something around to eat whenever family members would drop by. She went through a lot of rice. My dad was in charge of driving her to Denver so she could pick up a supply of Japanese staples, particularly around the winter holidays.

There were two places to shop for Japanese stuff, the Granada Fish Market and Pacific Mercantile. The delicacies were not available in Cheyenne like *takō* (octopus).

The most exotic on the shopping list was canned *awabi* (abalone). *Haliotis corrugata* habituate the coastal waters of California and Baja, Mexico. Abalone are also called "sea snails" and a delicacy at \$200 a can at Walmart – definitely not affordable. Give me a rubbery slice of octopus, any day.

Yikes!

The Granada Fish Market was originally owned and operated by a former Granada Relocation Center internee, Frank Tsuchiya from California. After the War, his business was so successful that he opened in Denver and reopened in Los Angeles.

The Granada camp was better known by its location near the Amache, Colorado post office. Although some regional business owners were anti-Japanese, most saw Camp Amache internees as valued customers. The camp gate was, for all practical purposes, open all the time with internees free to come and go.

After obtaining his parole from Camp Amache, Tsuchiya opened a fish market in nearby Granada in the southwest corner of Colorado. Somewhere along the way, since much of the state was under Spanish rule, Granada was named after the city in southern Spain.

Before leaving California after E.O. 9066, he owned a similar business in Los Angeles and still had business connections there. He sourced shellfish, *sashimi* (thinly sliced fresh raw fish or meat) grade tuna, and a variety of Japanese household pantry items such as *shōyu* and *udōn* noodles that were trucked to Granada.

Denver University archaeological digs unearthed evidence of these connections that included shards of an abalone shell.

Amache was named after the daughter of Cheyenne Indian Chief One Eye. Amache married a Colorado cattleman named John Prowers. He is credited with bringing the first Hereford cattle into the Colorado Territory. The county bears his name.

In 1864, Chief One Eye negotiated a truce between the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and the U.S. government. According to the agreement, tribal members would be guaranteed safe winter camping along the nearby Sand Creek.

Despite the pact, on the morning of November 29<sup>th</sup> soldiers from the Colorado First Volunteer Cavalry stormed onto the Prowers ranch and held Prowers and Amache hostage.

At the encampment along Sand Creek, the now infamous Colonel John Chivington ordered his regiment to attack the Cheyenne and Arapaho. The raid is now known as the “Sand Creek Massacre” claimed the lives of 150 tribal members, including Chief One Eye.

Before World War II, Granada was one of many small farming towns across the Arkansas River Valley, a few miles north of Camp Amache. The Prowers County seat is Lamar and located 17 miles west of the camp. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad established Granada as a railroad town.

Geographically, Granada is located in a rolling prairie basin tucked between the Rocky Mountains and the Great Plains. Despite the region’s aridity, the lush fields absorb plenty of Arkansas River irrigation water.

The semi-arid climate is broken up by severe summertime thunderstorms and tornadoes. Winters are cold and dry but can bring heavy snowfall. Throughout the year, high winds that sweep over the land kick up dust storms.

The Dust Bowl and the Great Depression hit Granada hard. The area remained economically depressed until World War II and Camp Amache helped bring about an economic revival.

The camp project was entirely on private property that encompassed over 10,000 acres of the Koen Ranch and the X-Y Ranch before it was purchased by the WRA. To create a contiguous perimeter, a dozen private farms and ranches were also included in the project area, mostly by condemnation, which caused ill feelings between the WRA and locals.

The Camp Amache’s population was around 8,000 internees, although over 10,000 internees came through the camp. At the time, Camp Amache was the 10<sup>th</sup> largest city in Colorado. The 2017 Granada population estimate was 496 persons.

The barracks were constructed on a low-lying hill that during heavy rains broke up the fast moving water and prevented erosion and flash flooding. Like other camps, the perimeter was marked by barbwire fence. Eight guard towers with soldiers with machine guns were placed around the camp.

The first internees arrived from the Central Valley of California, the northern coast, and southwest Los Angeles. Later, over 900 loyal yes-yes internees from Tule Lake camp, and when the Jerome camp in Arkansas closed, around 500 transferred to Camp Amache.

Camp Amache was also embroiled in the loyalty questionnaire controversy and had the distinction of the highest percentage of yes-yes internees compared to the other nine camps.

Colorado Governor Ralph Carr was the only governor who supported locating a WRA camp in his state. His cooperative approach is one reason for the lower level of statewide disdain toward Japanese. Carr is honored for his open mindedness with a statue of himself in Denver's Sakura Square.

The camp police department hired 60 internees to be law enforcement officers. The Amache Fire Department had three crews of internee firefighters. The 45-member print shop crew was prolific. The shop was set up in 1943 and produced internal camp program flyers and calendars. Training materials and over 250,000 color posters were printed for the U.S. Navy.

The majority of the camp acreage was reserved for agricultural purposes. In 1943, Camp Amache farms produced an estimated 4 million pounds of vegetables. Not only did the camp become self-sufficient as a result of its agricultural operations, surpluses were shipped to other relocation camps, including 600 bushels of spinach to the Poston and Gila River camps in Arizona, and 1,000 bushels to the U.S. Army.

Camp Amache internees found jobs at area farms. There was a generally positive relationship with area farmers and ranchers because of the wartime labor shortage. Internees were paid, but many helped out as volunteers.

At Christmas 1943, Tsuchiya and the Granada Fish Market acquired a truckload of pine trees from Portland, Oregon and donated them for each Amache Camp block mess hall.

The Granada Fish Market was so successful serving Camp Amache, after the War Tsuchiya opened up stores in Denver and his hometown of Los Angeles. The market in Denver is long gone, but in Lower Downtown, there's now a condominium complex called the Granada Market.

Pacific Mercantile is still in business and more like a regular grocery store that stocks mostly Japanese food and sundry items. It and located in Sakura Square next to the Buddhist temple.

I always liked to tag along for the ride with the hopes of being treated to a couple *mōchi* formed into tasty, gooey balls filled with *ankō* (sweet bean paste). At that time, the *mōchi* was fresh. These days, it's available frozen, including with ice cream in the middle.

Grandma liked a restaurant called the Mandarin on 20<sup>th</sup> Street across from the Buddhist temple and west of the 20<sup>th</sup> Street Café. That was the lunch place of choice when she wasn't in a hurry to rush back to Cheyenne, which happened most trips.

The menu was a lot like the City Café with short order Asian food like chop suey and my fave, pork noodles. The *tsukemōnō* (pickled cucumber salad) was as good as my grandmother's, except no sliced abalone. As abalone became more expensive, octopus was substituted, and with octopus not readily available, *surimi* (fake crabmeat) or *kamabōkō* (fish sausage) could be added.

### **The Kimono Cowboy**

(Alan, Lori, Carol Lou and CFD button)

CFD was and still is the most grandiose event in Cheyenne that happens the last full week of July and an extra weekend. Back in the day, CFD had a huge downtown presence.

For a city kid, CFD was a big deal for me. I was decked out in a straw cowboy hat, Lee jeans, Acme boots and western cut snap shirt. It was a big family event.

I was a Japanese cowboy trying to buck the Japanese farmer and gardener stereotypes, although not very convincingly, not unlike all the other drugstore cowboys in Cheyenne.

CFD is a huge 10-day outdoor rodeo held annually since 1897 the last full week in July - plus an extra weekend - and billed as "The Daddy of 'em All." The event annually draws over 200,000 celebrants from around the world to a variety of events of interest to everyone from cowboys to flatlanders.

If you're a vegan, healthy food eater, or animal rights advocate, CFD probably isn't where you'd want to spend your vacation days. I generally do some videography at CFD and required to ask permission from the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA), which wants to be sure I, or any other professional producer, likely won't be using footage for blatant anti-rodeo purposes.

The PRCA should be less worried about me and more worried about the animal rights activists sitting in the grandstands with smartphone cameras.

In addition to the daily rodeos that involve contests pitting men against steers, bulls and horses; followed by the night shows; there's a non-stop carnival Midway that offers rides, games of skill; and food vendors who hand out tasty turkey legs, deep-frying up funnel cakes, and cotton candy.

Downtown is the location for three morning parades of floats, antique automobiles, horse-drawn carriages with riders in period dress, and top marching bands.

On three days between parades, the local Kiwanis Club puts on free pancake breakfasts and serves 40,000 hungry rodeo-goers 100,000 pancakes and 3,000 pounds of ham.

In 1898, the CFD committee began inviting Native American tribal members from South Dakota and Oklahoma to participate in the Indian Village, which was originally set up downtown but in 1960, moved to Frontier Park near the rodeo arena. More recently, Northern Arapaho tribal dancers and oral historians from the Wind River Indian Reservation provide the CFD tribal culture programming.

I've been in Cheyenne for CFD every year of my life. I became embedded in the annual event because a couple of my mom's friends in her X-JWC women's club were involved in CFD. That meant all the kids were involved, too.

During July, we all gathered at the ranch operated by Doran and Enid Lummis, along with their children, Chris, Claudia, Cynthia - we all were in high school together - and their brother Del, who is a few years younger, and the sibling who I'm still the most in touch.

Their place was on the east edge of town where we assembled the parade float in the barn. My dad provided the Coca Cola flatbed trailer that was decorated into a parade float skirted with chicken wire stuffed with paper napkins.

Mom rode on that one with her X-JWC singing group called the Dearies. Their music genre was turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century music – *Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue; Blue Moon* etc. The Dearies entertained around town in their long hoop skirts and wide-brimmed floppy hats. From their parade float, their *acapella* voices carried pretty well over the street noise.

My sister and I climbed onto the hay wagon, which was the “entry-level” float for youngsters. We were coached into traditional gender roles, with the boys asked to be boisterous by yelling, “YEE HAW!” along the parade route, while the girls sat quietly, smiled, and waved hankies to the adoring crowd.

Dad was busy at the Coke plant brewing old-fashioned sarsaparilla for the Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) Hell on Wheels tent town in Holliday Park, which was a throwback to the original Hell on Wheels that rolled into railroad boomtowns, including Cheyenne.

He had no idea sarsaparilla would sell so well. Originally, a patent medicine that contained the fruit of a spiny vine called *Smilax ornata* was claimed to cure syphilis, which explains why it was available in bars during the railroad boom.

*Sarsaparilla* is a word in Spanish that means “prickly vine with little grapes.” Over the years, the beverage evolved into root beer that was originally flavored with sassafras, which is an aromatic deciduous tree that mostly grows in the eastern United States.

I think it was a donation because Danny, the guy who built my red stingray bike, was a Jaycee. My dad would have me come help him bottle up short runs of sarsaparilla that was dispensed into whatever bottles were clean at that moment.

The Jaycees is a community service and leadership development organization for people - it used to be men only - between the ages of 18 and 40.

There was also a wild and crazy Hell’s Half Acre float in the CFD parade. At 10 a.m., the beer kegs were flowing. It was a badge of honor to get on that float, and still is today. The bold parade watcher would jump the float from the street.

The bar floozies flaunting their heavy make up, alluring satiny can-can dresses and fishnet stockings partied through downtown Cheyenne.

After the parade, the float riders arrived at the Holliday Park tent town. The would-be drunken railroad workers, cowboys and prostitutes reveled with city dude tourists and provided entertainment for them.

Their vignettes about guys arguing over women or money or both and the subsequent gunfights resulted in bad guys falling to the ground and feigning death after being shot by a hail of blanks fired from their side arms.

YEE HAW!

When I was in junior high, cousin Matthew visited from Utah most summers. He, my sister and I teamed up with a neighbor named Pat to sell pop at the parade.

It was an annual gig for Matthew. The extended family tended to get together during CFD. That continued through the 1980s, until my grandparents and our Nisei parents passed away.

Subsequently, we cousins became more mobile and had fewer family reasons to return to Cheyenne.

Selling at the parade was a cottage industry for kids. The sales crews were mostly from the Westside, since it was so close. We Eastside entrepreneurs were outliers.

Over the previous few months, we saved up our weekly allowances and stocked up on grocery store-brand soft drinks like Shurfine, Cragmont and Shasta for resale. We could have sold Coke products, but even at wholesale, the profit margin wasn't as good. Besides, thirsty parade-goers didn't care about brands.

We bought bags of ice and sleeves of cups from my dad. That was before bottled water and we provided ice in cups if requested, which none of the other sales kid crews offered.

Early on parade day, we parked the family Pontiac on Carey Avenue near Brannen's grocery store that was a great supply depot. Then, kids could sell from the street.

Now, young vendors are required to get a permit, sell only on the sidewalk behind the crowd accompanied by a responsible adult – what's the point of that? The most practical life skill I learned and retained is how to count back change and appreciate it, particularly if a young person counts back my change.

Digital cash registers that figure out the change owed have killed customer service. No worker at a counter deserves a tip if they can't take the 10 seconds extra to count back the change - but then again, I'm old.

A few years ago, I was stuck at the airport in Durham, North Carolina. The power was out at the Starbucks and the cash registers didn't work. The young barista was at a loss about how to figure out how much change I should get back.

As the Cheyenne downtown lost its retail stores to urban sprawl, Brannen's, Miller's, and Safeway grocery stores closed and all three properties were bought up by the state of Wyoming for office space. CFD pop vendors lost their supply depots.

My next CFD parade phase happened when I was in high school. My EHS classmate, Jan Benton, organized patients who rode on the horse-drawn Civil War-era field ambulance. Some of my high school pals, Tad Leeper, Eddie Frye, and I played wounded soldiers and Jan was our Florence Nightingale.

We emoted in the back of the wagon as battle weary soldiers being all bandaged up in ripped up bed sheets, moaning and groaning. We had a M-rated bedpan act that entailed a jug of water with yellow food coloring added. Jan's mom was on the CFD Parade Committee.

When the parade was over, the crowds headed for Frontier Park and the rodeo in the afternoon, the Midway carnival, and night show entertainment.

When I was a kid, the CFD acts weren't extravaganzas like they are today. There were no super stars like Winona Judd or Florida Georgia Line or Charlie Daniels or Chris LeDoux,

The 1960s show talent included TV stars like Milburn "Doc Adams" Stone and Ken "Festus Hagen" Curtis from *Gunsmoke* (1955 – 1975) Festus spoke with an exaggerated country twang, "Safer than chitlins on a city folk's supper plate."

When he broke out of his Festus persona, Curtis was a really good crooner. He was the lead singer for the "Sons of the Pioneers" western quartet from 1949 to 1952.

The worst act IMHO was Robert "Jim West" Conrad from the *Wild Wild West* (1965 – 1969) TV show. He portrayed a 19<sup>th</sup> century steam punk James Bond. His talent that night was a fake fight, complete with the "KAPOW" and "ZONK" sound effects played over the public address system speakers.

After the night show, the wild and crazy action moved to the Hitching Post Coach Rooms for indoor music, and West 17<sup>th</sup> Street for partying on the streets at the Elks Club, the Blue Bird, the Mayflower and the Crown. I didn't learn first hand about the outdoor reveling until I was 19, when that was the drinking age.

When I was a senior in college, my graduation present was a base model pea-green 1974 Ford Pinto. I didn't have much luck with that model, which was the tiny cousin to the Mustang.

My college car was lost in the Big Thompson 1,000 year flash flood in July 1976 when I worked as the Glacier Basin Campground Ranger in Rocky Mountain National Park (RoMo). RoMo was the radio designation for the park dispatcher.

It was the last Saturday night of Cheyenne Frontier Days (CFD) in 1976. I was staying with Rick Thamer. He was one of my teaching assistant classmates at UW in Laramie.

He and our mutual friend John Accardo tried to get me to stay over, but I decided to head back to RoMo that night because I had to work on Sunday at 11:30 a.m. The Accardos lived in Cole Addition on White Cloud Road. His dad was a dentist who collaborated with my dentist, Dr. Carson on a complicated molar extraction that entailed a chrome plated chisel and mallet, but I digress.

The drive from Cheyenne into Colorado was uneventful, but when I took the exit off Interstate-25 (I-25) and headed west on U.S. Highway 34, a black ribbon of clouds shrouded the crimson sunset.

"Why are all these cars and RVs driving away from the Park," I asked myself as I wound my way into the "Narrows" at the mouth of the steep-walled Big Thompson Canyon.

Before I made it to the small town of Drake, it was raining, but not hard. I reined in the Pinto for a stream of water that trickled across the road. Before I knew it, the rain poured down in buckets. My little

steed slammed into a wall of water that streamed down the hillside and into the riverbed. Water soon flowed over the hood of the Pinto.

A family-filled car from Loveland coming toward me was carried into the torrent. How did I know the car was from Loveland? The license plate with the reflective LV caught my headlights as it was swept into the canyon.

It was like when Dorothy was picked up by the tornado and whisked away to the Land of Oz.

I looked with wonderment out the windshield. The wipers couldn't keep up with the rain, but my headlights lit up huge uprooted trees and big propane gas tanks as they bobbed by. I kept thinking Miss Gulch riding on her bicycle would float across the road through the deluge running down the canyon face.

I could feel boulders bigger than bowling balls clanking against the car body.

My back bumper caught onto a floating port-a-potty that acted like a rudder and steered me toward the canyon wall and not into the rushing water.

After rolling down the car window, I climbed out and waded up to the highway crest. A Colorado Department of Transportation truck picked me up and dropped me at a high spot called Rainbow Lodge where I spent the night.

Exploring the next morning, there were trophy-sized trout washed up onto what was left of the highway. The body of one not-so-lucky tourist was covered up with a tarp.

There were rumors that Lake Estes up the road was cresting and soon to overflow the dam. A group of us climbed up the side of the canyon and waited. We were eventually airlifted out by Chinook helicopter to a gymnasium in Loveland where I picked up a dry pair of socks and a cup of coffee.

The phone lines were out and I couldn't call my family in Laramie. I caught a ride to Cheyenne and was dropped off at my friend Tad Leeper's house. My parents eventually found me after first driving to Loveland to look around.

The insurance settlement was enough to get another Pinto. This one was sky blue, had better rims, a bigger engine and an AM/FM radio with a cassette tape player. It was my first car when I lived in Gillette in the late 1970s.

By this time, Ford recalled the Pinto.

I was on my home and slowed down at the light near Ole's Pizza on Highway 14 when an oil field water truck rear-ended me.

When I looked underneath to inspect the damage, the threaded end of one of the bolts that holds the transmission halves together crimped up against the gas tank and if punctured could have sparked an explosion.

Ironically, I sold that Pinto to Rick Thamer. He drove it to Texas where he was going to law school in Lubbock. It was my last American car and began my obsession with VWs starting with the sporty Scirocco.

Those are two narrow escapes I've had over the years. Seems like they come along every 20 years or so. I like to hedge my bets. The most recent flirt with death happened in 2013, but that's the topic of another book.

I remember standing in front of the Mayflower holding a Miller beer can. A cop came by and whacked it out of my hand. It clunked half-full onto the sidewalk covered by a layer of cans. I met a bunch of friends from Gillette at the Atlas Motel, which is a block from the Hitching Post. I can say this now that the Atlas is condemned, but we tore that room to pieces.

Bikers took over the Pioneer Hotel on West 17<sup>th</sup> Street, which was a flophouse then and one now. During CFD, everyone got along with everyone.

The Mayflower burned down, and made a brief comeback in the 1980s and now a *sushi* place. The CFD in downtown Cheyenne today, is just a shadow of its former wild and crazy self. Not everyone in Cheyenne is as CFD-crazy as me. Some plan their vacations around CFD and leave town.

### **Running away to the carnival**

(Alan, Anise pix and CFD button)

One summer when I was writing for the *Wyoming State Journal* in Lander, I wanted to write a first person account of working at the carnival.

I asked around and a guy named Dozer Simmons hired me on with the Bill Hames' Show. All the games and rides are privately owned and a cut is given to Show. I don't think he thought a city guy like me could cut being on my feet and talk non-stop for 12 hours at a time.

*Money*, by Pink Floyd blared from the loudspeaker by the Ferris wheel. It was mid afternoon on Friday and the rodeo had just gotten out.

Dozer paired me up with a blonde-haired carny named Anise. She was a born-again Christian who had a pretty hard life. "You get 'em to buy a dart for a dollar and pop a balloon and they win a mirror," she explained. "You stay on your half of the booth," she warned. "I won't hurt you, but there are guys who can get rough if you poach their marks."

Because of my experience as a kid selling pop at the parade, I wasn't afraid of being told "No." I was oblivious to offensive remarks from jerks based on my appreciation for them at an early age at the Hitching Post.

For the most part everyone was friendly and I was able to build relationships with potential customers, "That's a nice KISS T-shirt you're wearing, how about winning a matching mirror for your girl?" or

“Looks like you spent a lot of money winning that huge panda for the little lady, pop a balloon for a matching mirror and it only costs a dollar - a winner every time.”

Occasionally a kid would toss the dart in between two balloons. Nothing scattered a crowd faster than a loser as if the game was somehow rigged - underinflated balloons, too much space between balloons, or whatever.

If it was a really young kid, I held him inches from the balloons so as to have a “winner every time.”

I took on politically incorrect character traits being immersed in the carnival culture. Purveying those mannerisms was good for business. To this day, I break into carnival mode when I have to close a deal.

Lag time was spent slipping the square mirrors into cardboard sleeves. No matter how careful, microscopic glass shards cut my hands. I inflated 150 balloons and my jaws hurt. Tying the balloons wore down my cuticles. My fingers bled all weekend.

When I got busy, putting up more balloons or fetching a mirror for a winner, me keeping up the endless personal chatter with everyone waiting their turn was tiresome. I didn't want them to walk away since all players are potential return customers.

When I'm in a store waiting for some help from a busy clerk who doesn't bother to make eye contact, I walk away and find someone else.

I ended up working the entire weekend and made Dozer quite a bit of money.

CFD was done.

It was 2:15 a.m. on Monday. The music had stopped and it was time to strike the carnival. The process is called the “slough.”

It was the toughest hundred bucks I have ever earned. I bought a pool stick from one of the carnival vendors as a memento. That stick was lost misplaced. Writing this story, I decided to replace it and got a good deal on a “Sneaky Pete” Meucci stick. “Sneaky Pete” refers to a high-end, and very straight pool cue that looks like a “bar stick” so as to not attract attention when playing serious games.

For what it's worth, I was only truly hustled once. It was a game for whiskey at the Buckhorn Bar in Laramie. Before I knew it, my opponent had blocked every pocket before running the table. I owed him a shot of Jack Daniels on the rocks.

### **Aimless academics**

(UW button, and EHS bog pix)

There was a TV show called *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis* (1959 – 1963) that starred Dwayne Hickman. It was about a high school kid who always had some crisis come up with the women he dated. His sidekick was Maynard G. Krebs. He was a bongo drum-pounding collector of tin foil, shunned authority, and “Work?” That word would become his trademark phrase.

Like Maynard G. Krebs, my attentions weren't focused much on the future. Upon high school graduation in 1971, I didn't know what I wanted to do other than go to college, particularly since the only contact I had with a guidance counselor was to be informed that I had enough credits to graduate.

I can't say that choosing a career path was anything that was mentioned to me by my parents or other family members, otherwise I would have majored in something more useful than political systems analysis and ecological sciences.

Ever since grade school, my main interests were in the arts and telling stories with my art. I was a cartoonist for my school papers from junior high through college. I became more committed about biology after the student exchange trip to Minnesota.

After working at the Coke plant for a year and cashing in aluminum cans, I was able to pay for my first jet airplane ride flying from Cheyenne on Western Airlines to Minneapolis for a high school exchange trip in a suburb called St. Louis Park just before graduation in 1971. John Dinneen happened to be on that trip, too.

The St. Louis Park High School was let out on April 22nd for Earth Day. Attending Earth Day in a progressive community had an impact on me and influenced my late blooming interest in biology and politics.

I ended up taking more science classes and for someone who wasn't that great at math, did pretty well in the courses I took - including advanced biology taught by Miss Cooper - the science teacher at the Heart Mountain camp high school. I became a science major in college.

One of my wrestling coaches took me on a recruitment trip to Colorado State University (CSU) in Fort Collins. I was an okay wrestler, but not great. My role on the team would have been the "other guy" for the first-stringer to toss around the mat during practice, and that would have been it.

I used to coach youth sports - baseball and soccer. Occasionally an exceptional athlete would come along. "Go where you can play," was always my advice when we talked about future plans.

A kid on one of my Lander teams, Aaron Elling, went on to be the placekicker for the UW Cowboys football team and later the Minnesota Vikings in the National Football League (NFL). I like to think I had something to do with his development as a player, but he also was physically gifted, and had a supportive family, which helped a lot, too.

In the end, I gave up competing in sports. A bunch of my Presbyterian Church pals from both East and Central high schools decided to attend Hastings College in Nebraska. I didn't have a fallback school, not even UW. I wanted to get out of Wyoming. Nebraska seemed far enough away and with a few familiar faces it would be comfortable. Plus, I wanted to be at a smaller school, although had I looked around there were likely other compatible places.

There was more Presbyterian liturgy.

Chapel on Wednesday morning wasn't required, but there would be the occasional good program like Barbara Jordan and Dick Gregory. I was going through the motions, but still didn't get the religious part of campus life at Hastings College.

Dress up family style dinner on Wednesday night was a hassle. We were enticed to attend with pretty good food.

Then there was the social engineering.

Freshman women weren't allowed to leave campus for a few months at the beginning of the first semester. All women had to be back in the dorms by 1:00 am. They looked forward to daylight savings time because of the added hour.

There were very few minorities – a Latino who now happens to live in Boulder, a couple African American guys on the football and track teams, a Chinese guy and me.

These days, there aren't women's hours, but the school is still very white bread, but it fits in with that middle-of-the-grain-belt-culture, which is okay.

At the time, the conservative lifestyle suited me – I was Republican then. In fact, my first presidential vote was for Nixon, I'm sorry to admit. The school year was structured 3-1-3 (three months in the fall, one month in the January Interim and three months in the spring).

During the January Interim in 1973, I took a political science class called Legislators and Lobbyists in Washington DC. One of the activities was attending Nixon's inauguration. I was tear gassed during an anti-war demonstration.

Even at conservative Hastings, there were social justice actions taking place.

I think it was in 1975 when the campus National Organization of Women (NOW) group organized an after hours walk-out protesting that discriminatory practice. At midnight most of the women staged a rally at Bellevue House, the student union. At the time it seemed like a pretty big deal, mainly because it was a small link in the larger women's rights movement.

I lived in Altman Hall, the coed dorm on campus. One side was for men the other for women. A common basement that had the TV room, washers, and dryers connected the two wings. Every semester, the other dorms reported many infractions around the opposite gender students in the dorms after hours and failure to return before curfew. The women looked forward to Daylight Savings time ending when the clocks would "fall back." They'd get an extra hour of freedom.

Altman Hall seldom had any rule violations. Thinking something was awry, the Dean of Women called the dorm leadership into her office and accused us of a cover up. Let's just say, the Altman Angels had a code of honor.

It ended up that I did go to a school where I could play, but something besides sports. I missed interscholastic competition and joined the Hastings College speech team. I didn't compete in high

school, but took a couple speech classes. The main benefit? I didn't have to watch my wrestling weight from week-to-week.

My weekly workout was to read *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines, since I competed in debate and extemporaneous speaking about current events. To this day, my Hastings classmates are among my closest friends.

After graduating during the post-Vietnam War recession with degrees in biology and political science, there weren't many employers out there identifying mammal teeth or discussing whether the confederation is better form of government than a federation.

I applied around to graduate schools. I was accepted at the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay that had one of the first environmental politics programs, but no financial aid. I sent my paperwork in late to the UW graduate school and was accepted, but all the teaching assistantship grants were gone. I received a call from the registrar's office just before the fall term opened saying they had an opening, which I took immediately.

There was no career path, but the last-minute teaching job was a good first stride, even though I continued my academic missteps creating a new fangled discipline. I melded my two undergraduate degrees into, "environmental politics." Looking back, I was ahead of my time.

In 1962, American conservationist and marine biologist Rachel Carson wrote a book entitled *Silent Spring*. It's about the food chain reaction that happens when pesticides enter various ecosystems.

The environmental movement's inciting incident occurred when in late January 1969 when 100,000 gallons of crude oil spilled out of a Union Oil off-shore well platform near Santa Barbara, California over a 10-day period.

Images of many miles of black beaches, some of the 3,500 sea birds soaked in oil received above-the-fold news coverage that resulted in public outrage that did not fall on deaf ears.

Less than a year later, in January 1970, President Nixon signed the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) into law that created a thoughtful process to evaluate projects that would damage nature and be a risk to people by requiring certain projects to complete Environmental Impact Statements that evaluates various solutions and a preferred implementation alternative.

NEPA also established the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The CEQ coordinates various federal agencies and other White House offices about environmental and energy policies. The initial CEQ helped inform Nixon's government reorganization that resulted in the formation of the EPA.

Environmental activists rode the NEPA tide and organized millions of concerned citizens to rally around Earth Day on April 22, 1970 on the streets, in parks, on college and high school campuses. You name the environmental malady - raw sewage in waterways; toxic waste dumps; pesticides showing up in babies; there were any number of named disasters making headlines.

Earth Day 1970 garnered support from divergent groups - Republicans and Democrats; rich and poor; urban people and farmers; business elites and labor leaders.

Because of the high level of consensus, policy changes occurred quickly.

In July 1970, Nixon consolidated antipollution, pesticide control, air and water quality programs administered by the USDA, and the DoI under the EPA. Auntie Hisako eventually ended her public service career with the EPA.

The next couple of years were spent in Laramie figuring out the coursework for my environmental politics concentration. My research design paper was *The Earth Day Legacy: Environmental Attitudes Among College Students*.

What my data showed was that while college students were in favor of efforts to keep the environment clean; at the same time, students were not willing to do their individual parts by changing their consumption habits – giving up Superman’s American Way.

Class work was balanced with teaching Intro to Political Science and Wyoming Government, and later a Social Statistics class. I was big on social research and continue to be interested in designing surveys. My tuition was paid and also included a living allowance.

Before deciding to stay in Laramie, I thought about moving to Cheyenne, but my parents were okay with me staying at home along with my sister. Besides, I think they appreciated me being around, but soon realized that having another adult in the house wasn’t the same as young Alan David helping clear the dinner table before running outside to play “ditch” in the dark shadows around the neighborhood.

I didn’t know many people in Laramie, except for my parents church friends. I became acquainted with a few fellow graduate students, but many were married and had Laramie lives. The undergrads were younger.

After figuring out I needed to eventually find a job, all the elective classes I took had some sort of internship or hands-on experience associated with it. The most practical class was Introduction to Public Relations taught by Bill Roepke. I still refer to the textbook Cutlip and Center’s *Effective Public Relations*. The most valuable UW internship was blending spent in with many Wyoming state legislators during two legislative sessions.

That experience as a 19 year-old had the most long-term value. My assignment was with two Joint Appropriations Committee members, easy going Gus Fleischli from Cheyenne and stodgy Warren Morton from Casper, who also was the Speaker of the House. He eventually ran for governor and was defeated by Ed Herschler in 1982.

Gus was an oilman. Each morning, I met him at his office and we had breakfast at the Husky Truck Stop before we drove to the state Capitol Building in his white over red Cadillac Coupe de Ville. I still run into Gus now and again.

Morton's son, Bob, was a teaching assistant colleague of mine in the political science department. He once showed me a letter he received from his dad. Bob pulled the envelope from his backpack. It was formatted as a block business letter and typed out on an IBM Selectric typewriter on Wyoming State Legislature letterhead stationery and signed, "Sincerely, Warren Morton, Speaker of the House."

The first time I met former U.S. Senator Al Simpson was when he was the Wyoming House Majority Whip. He rounded up a bunch of his colleagues and me after a committee meeting and took us to the Mayflower Café where I had my first French Dip sandwich, for whatever that's worth.

He, and later his brother Pete, took a liking to me. I learned about his experiences as a Boy Scout from Cody, visiting the scout troop at the Heart Mountain camp during World War II and his lifelong friendship with Heart Mountain camp internee Norm Mineta.

Mineta was later elected to Congress in California as a Democrat and served as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation in the President George W. Bush administration.

### **Assimilation**

(Toga party or reunion pix and Kinda Like Gillette button)

Speaking of practical internships, I ended up getting my first job in Gillette as a result of some classes I took at UW through the Wyoming Human Services Project (WHSP). I'd say, moving to the Razor City marked an end of any meaningful contact I would have with my Japanese roots while in Wyoming.

After graduating from Hastings, finding a fulltime job was in the back of my mind, but I didn't know how to go about it. I've always been pretty good about change management so I wasn't too freaked out about having student loans to repay, no roof over my head and stuck somewhere between Nebraska and Wyoming.

As I mentioned before, my main course work at UW included many elective classes that had an internship or hands-on experience attached to it.

I was walking through the Student Union and came upon a sign-up table for the WHSP. The sign said something like, "If You Want a Job After Graduation, Join WHSP."

No searching for work?

No job interview?

That was my ticket. The state was just pulling out of an oil and gas bust in the mid 1970s. The Clean Air Act was amended in 1977 tightening the sulfur dioxide. On top of the regulatory changes, soft underground coal became a desirable fuel source because of its relative ease of extraction - surface mining.

Wyoming boomed again.

The WHSP curriculum taught students using a multi-disciplinary approach effective ways to develop social programs that could alleviate the negative impacts of rapid population growth in rural areas during the coal boom in the Powder River Basin that includes parts of southeast Montana and northeast Wyoming.

The region supplied about 40 percent of coal in the United States, but that has since tailed off as a result of competition from lesser expensive oil and natural gas.

The social problem the WHSP team was in town to reverse was known as the “Gillette Syndrome.” It was a typical boomtown stereotype of a bunch of rough and tumble single guys from Texas who lived out of their beat up pick up trucks, dug coal by day and partied hearty at night in a tiny town where they fought over women - the eligible ones were single moms living in trailers or still in high school.

The WHSP team members were from diverse academic disciplines with the idea that different perspectives would result in well-rounded impact mitigation and community development strategies. It was an early form of analog crowd sourcing.

The job exposed me to consensus decision-making before it became trendy.

My cohort consisted of an attorney, a social worker, parks and recreation staff, and myself, a political scientist. We worked half time with a local government agency and the other half of the time worked in with nonprofit groups, essentially as community organizers.

One project that continues today is the Council of Community Services that coordinates social services around Campbell County. It originated from an idea by a tall and rotund police officer named “Tiny” who wanted to maximize the amount charitable food and cash given to transients to encourage them to get out of town.

I blended into scrappy Gillette.

I mentioned before about Tom, the decorated Vietnam War veteran with the AR-15 rifle, he was a deputy county attorney. He and, WHSP lawyer, Phil, and I chipped in on a house we bought using Tom’s GI bill veteran housing benefit.

Our place was the gathering spot for a crowd of young and upwardly mobile professionals and known as the 3003 Club, which was our street number on Foothills Blvd.

I came to learn that I had lived a sheltered life in the suburbs of Cheyenne. Maybe there was debauchery happening around me, but I may have been obvious and not paying close enough attention. I mentioned before about how my taste in music was narrow with my favorite records being those by Burt Bacharach, Dionne Warwick, and other easier listening musicians.

One of my housemates was a guy from Boston named Bob O’Neil. We had a love-hate relationship – and still do - since he’s a Red Sox fan and me a Yankees fan. We most recently met up at a baseball game in Denver between Boston and the Rockies.

He was quite the audiophile who is still the only person I know, who had seen the Beatles live. His dad worked at live at Suffolk Downs racetrack in 1966 and Bob got in to watch.

He and I spent hours mixing music on cassette tapes. I don't even know if Wyoming radio stations played the tunes Bob collected – Patty Smith, Steely Dan, Boston, Styx, Talking Heads, Grateful Dead, New Riders of the Purple Sage, *et al.* I wish I had those tapes back. It was before technology was commonly available to convert analog data from tapes into digital form. There's something about the recorded sounds of scratches, pops and skips that gave the tape mixes character.

Another one of my housemates was Jim Izzo. He was one of the high school football coaches and played linebacker for the UW Cowboys. After I moved from Gillette, he returned to his roots in Detroit, Michigan. We kept in touch.

In 1981, I happened to be in Detroit for a meeting, I think it was the National League of Cities conference. He got a couple tickets to see the Rolling Stones at the Pontiac Silver Dome. That was what I consider the “disco Stones” era – *Start Me Up*, and *Hang Fire* are two tracks off that album. Iggy Pop and Santana were the opening acts. Santana was good, Iggy was booed off the stage.

I've since seen the Stones five more times in Denver.

That was a memorable trip for a small town kid. Jim took me to a White Castle hamburger stand - “Buy ‘em by the sack.” Now I buy ‘em in the frozen food section. We were noshing while walking and I came upon urban wildlife. It was a rat the size of a cocker spaniel sitting up waiting for hamburger bun crumbs to fall to the sidewalk.

That “co-op” animal house was my first taste of living in an intentional community, as bizarre as that sounds. We had a consensus decision-making process, “BBQ or Tacos,” and believe it or not there were disagreements, “Cheez Whiz, not grated cheese?”

In a sense, my pals and I embodied the “Gillette Syndrome.” This was my first job and I was making more money than I had ever made in my life and nowhere to spend it.

We all had excessively too much fun for a gang of young white-collar whippersnappers in the most conservative county in the state. Thinking back, all the felonious and risky fun we had around mostly weed, back then, is now legal in some form in Washington D.C. and most states.

I'll leave it at that. Get with me if you want to hear some pretty good tales about living on the edge.

To paraphrase the tagline from this Oscar winning movie:

“The events depicted in this story took place in Gillette, Wyoming.

At the request of the survivors, the names have been changed.

Out of respect for the dead, the rest has been told exactly as it occurred.”

*Fargo* (1997)

I was placed in the Gillette city administration as a grant writer. My big boss was Mike Enzi who was mayor at the time. He worked his way through the state legislature and is now the retiring senior U.S. Senator from Wyoming.

Governor Ed Herschler appointed his wife, Diana, and me to a couple terms on the Wyoming Private Industry Council that dealt with distribution of U.S. Department of Labor workforce training funds. Gov Ed was a gruff, but personable guy. He answered his own phone and smoked Phillip Morris Commanders. Bars stocked Cabin Still whiskey not knowing when Gov Ed might stop by to shoot the breeze.

When I was in Lander, Gov Ed appointed me to the Uranium Mill Tailings Task Force that dealt with leaching radioactive contaminants in Fremont County and the Wind River Indian Reservation. I arranged a meeting with U.S. Senator Al Simpson, who helped get federal legislation passed to clean up the mess.

There was a state senator from Riverton who stumbled into the meeting with a constituent. The good Senator Simpson chewed out the two for crashing the meeting. Afterwards, the state senator errantly took credit for putting the meeting together. Years later he apologized to me about that. He explained it as a political lie that got out of control. At least he felt guilty about it.

Mayor Enzi's direction to me was to bring as much federal and state money into Gillette as I could because, "If Gillette doesn't apply for it, some other place will," he advised.

Since my first job, I've been a fundraiser for 40 years and that's a philosophy and a life skill I continue to hone today.

My legislative internship turned out to be a valuable life skill. I ended up back in Cheyenne as a lobbyist for the city of Gillette. Mayor Enzi was very aggressive and turned me loose to raise \$30 million for what became known as the Madison Water Project.

I lived at the Hitching Post Inn for a month talking lawmakers into approving the funds because they were obligated to serve the good people of Gillette - the "Energy Capitol of the Nation."

That it was. Gillette was the headquarters for the fossil fuels industry that paid millions in severance taxes, which funded schools and public infrastructure for the entire state.

Convincing the lawmakers really didn't take much doing. The sponsor for the bill was Representative LJ Hunter.

I spent quite a bit of time in Gov Ed's office to be sure he would sign the legislation. It wasn't a slam dunk with the railroads chasing me down the court.

Ed Herschler typified politically purple Wyoming at the time. He was an FDR Democrat from Kemmerer on the southwestern edge of the state in Lincoln County. Gov Ed is the only three-term governor. He first defeated Dick Jones in 1974 riding the Democratic tide that swept the country after Watergate.

His “growth on our terms” mission during the 1970s energy boom resulted in some of the toughest state-sanctioned environmental impact regulations in the country. He barely defeated John Ostlund from Gillette in 1978. Four years later, he won his unprecedented third term over my legislative mentor Warren Morton.

Representative Hunter was a pharmacist and provided me with boxes of medicine bottles that I filled with water that smelled like rotten eggs with bits of scaly carbonate floating around in the fizzy water, and then placed them on each legislator’s desk.

The main roadblock was UP railroad lobbyist Jack Knott who needed convincing that the Madison formation water wouldn’t be used to transport coal in a slurry pipeline - obvious competition with coal cars rumbling to Texas power plants. Turned out Jack was the father of one of my high school crushes.

At the time, efforts were underway by Energy Transport Systems, Inc. (ETSI) led by a guy named Frank Odasz. His story was about a massive pipeline between Wyoming and Texas that would deliver a slurry of pulverized coal mixed with brackish Madison formation water to fuel power plants.

The city of Gillette project proved the Madison water was potable and, indeed, drinkable. The water issue was the least of ETSI’s problems compared to obtaining a right-of-way through four of the largest landmasses in the country – Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas and Texas.

Not only did I know my way around the Hitching Post Inn, I knew my way around Wyoming state government. I became pretty good at lobbying and did so for subsequent legislative sessions on behalf of the Wyoming Association of Municipalities.

While I didn’t realize it at the time, I came to learn that getting a job or any advantage was more about, first, “who I knew,” then “what I knew.”

Remember family friend Secretary of State Thyra Thomson? Wyoming operates on the Commission form of government. The top elected officials – Governor, Secretary of State, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Treasurer and State Auditor – all serve on a variety of boards and commissions that ultimately make decisions about various aspects of the state government.

One was called the Farm Loan Board, which granted and loaned state funds for local government capital projects – roads, fire stations, water plants, etc. Whenever I would appear before the board, Mrs. Thomson would invariably ask how my grandparents and family were doing, much to the chagrin of the other local government representatives in the room. I could always count on her support for my projects.

### **Jesus trading cards**

One of the main reasons I went to Sunday school was for the swag – Bible verse rulers, cookies, and trading cards – Jesus cards.

My Sunday school teacher had a lesson and then passed the cards around. I’m pretty sure the girls didn’t know what to do with them. Probably wrecked these paper treasures by gluing them in a scrapbook.

I'll trade this Mantle for your Jesus.

My favorite Jesus card is a 1965 baseball card of Jesus Alou. He and his two brothers, Matty and Felipe all played for the San Francisco Giants. Baseball factoid: In 1963, in three games, the trio played together in the same outfield.

Jesus began his career in 1959 with the Hastings Giants, which played in the short season Class D Nebraska State League. While I was in college, the Hastings College Broncos baseball team played at Duncan Field that was constructed in 1940 as a WPA project.

Will my Hastings coincidences ever cease?

While at Hastings, I became interested in author Erich Von Däniken and his book *Chariots of the Gods* (1968). Basically, it's about aliens from other dimensions who, the author believes, are the angels who talked to various Biblical characters through burning bushes, pillars of fire, angels, and other supernatural media. The chariot that Jesus is supposed to ride when he returns at the end of the world is an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO).

The Bible categorizes angels from archangels at the top to Satan at the bottom and several categories in between. There's supposedly a constant unseen battle happening between good and evil. Since I'm more into the tangible, the aliens / UFO / angels model started to make some sense.

I'll skip through time.

Since college, I had put all this supernatural stuff in the back of my mind. While in Gillette, a 1980 story ran in the *Casper Star Tribune* about strange lights in the sky bouncing around at the Morton Pass Farm owned by Pat McGuire and his family in the Sybille Canyon between Wheatland and Laramie on Highway 34. I called the reporter about it and even as a journalist, he was awe struck.

At that time, there was a TV show called *That's Incredible* (1980 – 1984) hosted by actress Kathy Lee Crosby, singer John Davidson, and former New York Giants and Minnesota Vikings quarterback Fran Tarkenton.

The show was sending a crew to Wyoming for a story about the UFO phenomenon happening in this remote space alien stage in Southeast Wyoming. "We have to go there," I said to a group of my friends.

The story is whacky and more involved than what I'll write here, but hold on to your aluminum foil hats.

A world-renowned paranormal psychologist from the UW named Leo Sprinkle specialized in alien abduction experiences and through hypnosis, regressed McGuire to the time he was taken aboard the UFO several years earlier.

He claimed to have been in touch with the Archangel Michael and given instructions to drill a big well on his property and begin farming.

Despite geologic reports that there was no water, the well he drilled was a gusher – over 8,000 gallons / minute.

Pat was approved for a low interest loan from the state of Wyoming for some irrigation equipment, even though hydrology studies that said the sagebrush country would remain dry and unproductive due to lack of water.

In homage to Archangel Michael and his other alien abductors, he flew the Israeli flag over the water well pumping station. He said the aliens wore Star of David belt buckles. He also sported one on the belt that held up his Wranglers.

After reading the newspaper story, my UFO entourage drove down and met the *That's Incredible* crew. The nocturnal lights weren't quite as active as they were earlier, but nonetheless, there were some to be seen, which I photographed.

On my way from Gillette to visit my parents in Laramie, I generally stopped at the McGuire's place through the early 1980s. One day, the access road was closed.

After that, I lost touch with Pat and his family.

Over time, I learned the McGuires had family and financial problems and were unable to make ends meet with their high altitude crops, even with the free water. I heard UW ended up with the farm. Pat died in 2009.

I read a couple books on the topic of angels as aliens. One was *Angels: God's Secret Agents* by Billy Graham. It puts into context good angels and bad angels and mentions the UFO phenomenon and I can't help but make the same comparisons with what I saw on those hills on Highway 34 that summer.

Graham writes,

“Some reputable scientists deny and others assert that UFOs do appear to people from time to time. Some scientists have reached the place where they think they can prove that these are possibly visitors from outer space. Some Christian writers have speculated that UFOs could very well be a part of God's angelic host who preside over the physical affairs of universal creation. While we cannot assert such a view with certainty, many people are now seeking some type of supernatural explanation for these phenomena.”

A few years later, after I moved to Lander, I was in Cheyenne for some reason. I saw that Billy Graham was speaking at Frontier Park. It was free, so I went over to listen.

It was the biggest religious event I'd attended, at least until I went to see Pope John Paul II at Cherry Creek Reservoir in 1993.

Now that was a crowd.

I'd only taken Catholic communion one time, and it was at that papal mass.

Rev. Graham didn't talk about angels or UFOs, but he's one inspiring speaker. I was compelled to give a few bucks when his minions passed the hat. I was attending the Evangelical Free Church, which was a fairly conservative branch of the Presbyterians.

The preacher and his wife were young and personable. I had forgotten that I wrote that as my home church on the offering envelope. Back in those days, to get a tax deduction, the church had to send you a receipt.

My minister was surprised I went to see Billy Graham and I told him my Angels and Aliens story.

He looked at me as if I was the son of the devil and the topic didn't come up again.

I'm still an avid trading card collector and plan to hold on to them, just in case. I don't want to be standing at the Pearly Gates and Peter says, "Welcome to heaven, but where's all your stuff?"

### **The economic development 'Music Man'**

(Lander pix and button)

After some professional success, having too much fun, not to mention chasing UFOs, I left the fast paced life in Gillette to work in the Lander city administration in the early 1980s. Things moved a lot slower in Lander, nestled at the foot of the Wind River mountain range in Fremont County located in west-central Wyoming.

Rather than coasting in from Gillette, I had to slam on the breaks, and then downshift to first gear when the Great Fremont County Depression hit.

The 1979 Three Mile Island nuclear power plant meltdown in Pennsylvania put a halt to further Fremont County uranium mining. When the Chernobyl reactor melted down in the Ukraine seven years later, that disaster didn't exactly quell public perceptions about the harms of nuclear power.

At that time, Jeffrey City, located 60 miles south of Lander was a bustling uranium boomtown that had a population of 4,500 that included mining families and those working in support services.

In the early 1930s, Jeffrey City was a family homestead known as "Home on the Range" which is also the name on an abandoned motel. The town was later renamed for Dr. Charles W. Jeffrey who was a big advocate for uranium mining during the Cold War.

In 1957, Western Nuclear Company established Jeffrey City as its bustling company town with schools, recreation facilities stores, restaurants and bars. When the uranium industry went bust in the 1980s, the downturn resulted in 95 percent of the citizenry heading out of town. The 2010 census lists the population at 58.

Compounding that was the closure of the U.S. Steel iron taconite mine south of Lander in 1983. Relative to the county population, the job loss was devastating.

Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Steel Geneva Steel mill in Vineyard, Utah became strategic with the idea being, an inland mill would be protected from any enemy attack.

The iron ore mine at nearby Cedar City was the main source of raw material, but soon became insufficient to keep the Geneva mill operating at full capacity. A secondary source identified was a large reserve at what became the Atlantic City taconite mine south of Lander.

Although the War had ended the Wyoming open pit mine and short line railroad to the Geneva mill began construction in 1960.

The steel market softened and U.S. Steel closed the Atlantic City mine and shifted the Geneva mill source to a taconite mine in Minnesota. In October 1983, the mine's 500 employees south of Lander were out of work.

When I arrived, there was a housing shortage because Lander was very stable. The first place I lived was in the Faust Apartments above the Ace Hardware store. That was well before mixed use urban living was trendy.

McRae's drugstore was two doors down; the Grand movie theater across the street, my bank at the end of the block and the Safeway behind my city hall office was 500 feet away.

I didn't drive around town much for a year. To this day, I now realize how my past living arrangements, in a Lander mixed use apartment, a Gillette co-op house, living in the dorms, and a close family life as a kid influenced why I became hooked on the high-density mixed-use lifestyle.

My work evolved from strictly city planning into facilitating economic development creating a good story for Lander.

Thanks to Auntie Amy who dragged me along to the theater, my economic developer role model was the *Music Man*, flim-flam Professor Harold Hill. After he convinced the good people of River City to purchase musical instruments for the boys to play in the newly formed town band, the young players would learn the music using the "think method."

Modeling the "think method" for the community was fairly successful. People would stop me on the street and tell me about a business idea or about a guy they knew who was looking for a place to move his business.

To paraphrase Professor Harold Hill, "You got trouble in Lander City and what you need is a Centennial celebration," was my self-imposed tagline.

For the "think method" to work, there has to be something to get the entire community to start think about as soon as possible. Like most cities, there are multiple possible centennial dates. In the case of Lander, that could have been, when the town site was designated as part of the Fort Laramie in 1868; or when Lander was incorporated in 1890. How about 1884, when Lander was established by land survey?

It was a stretch, but was timely and fit in with a "back to the past" economic downturn narrative.

It was a two yearlong event that started in 1983 and ended in 1985 that had long lasting, but largely unnoticed effects. There was a high amount entrepreneurship that was nurtured by a city council appointed Lander Centennial Committee that held a contest to pick out a logo that could be product licensed.

There were: commemorative plates, silver and bronze coins minted, a centennial Winchester rifle, shirts and limited edition lithographs based on a painting by Jerry Antolik, a limited run of Coca Cola cans with the logo. My friend at the museum came across a box of centennial memorabilia and seeking additions to the collection.

During this time, the city of Lander initiated a survey to designate the Main Street core area as a historic district. A part time weed and pest control seasonal employee named Nancy was kept on staff and given the task to develop and process the district survey.

A couple years later, the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office and the U.S. National Park Service added the Lander Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

There was pushback from a few Main Street business owners about “creeping socialism” and government taking of property rights, but despite the protests, the application was pushed ahead, and the rest is history.

I remember the first time I re-visited Lander after 20 years away. There were banners and signs welcoming tourists to Historic Downtown Lander. I heard later, that the Wyoming Department of Transportation paid for big improvements to Main Street in part because of the historic district designation.

The 1884 date also stuck. The *Wikipedia* entry for Lander has the founding date as 1884 rather than 1890, the incorporation year.

I brought with me from Gillette was the WHSP collaborative approach to problem solving. In Lander, that included two groups of dedicated citizens. The city Economic Development Commission and the private sector Leader Corporation.

The city applied for state grants and Leader loaned small amounts of seed money into projects. Both helped with some smoke stack chasing, but mostly worked with expanding local businesses, and counseled aspiring entrepreneurs.

After the economy bounced back, there was a mayoral change and the public sector lost its challenge. I decided to give free enterprise a try.

I went through an unfortunate marriage with a business partner while in Lander, which was further evidence I'm better helping others get started from the outside than working with people who think they know what they are doing from the inside of their business. I'd always been on an even keel, but if my life was ever in upheaval, it was after that failed business experience and related disruption in my personal affairs.

But everything always works out for the best.

### **The Arapaho and cultural renewal**

(National Geographic pix and Arapaho buckle)

Around that time, I received a life-changing phone call from the Northern Arapaho Economic Development Commission (EDC) chair Ernie SunRhodes. He asked if I'd be interested in working for the EDC.

After a couple stops and starts, I began what would be the start of a decades-long journey with the Northern Arapaho Tribe (*hinono'eiteen*) that also reconnected me to my Japanese roots.

The cultural upheaval Japanese experienced during and after World War II is a shadow compared to how manifest destiny affected Native Americans.

I learned about manifest destiny in my high school U.S. history class taught by Mr. McIlvain. I didn't have a practical understanding of it until I worked for the Northern Arapaho Tribe. The Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone (*sosoni'iiteen*) tribes share the Wind River Indian Reservation in west central Wyoming.

The tribes have separate tribal governments, but share and manage the reservation as a joint-tribe. Over the years, this arrangement has caused conflicts since the two tribes were enemies before the Indian Appropriation Act in 1851 created the Indian reservation system.

Every morning for four years, I made the 16-mile commute from Lander to Ethete, which translates to mean "good" in the Arapaho language, where the tribal government is located.

My first day in the tribal office building, I asked myself, "What are all these lawyers doing around here?" Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution grants sovereign nation status to tribes meaning each of the 573 federally recognized tribal governments each have direct relationships with the U.S. government.

Even so, tribal governments are in a constant struggle maintaining their sovereign rights largely ignored by the state and federal governments.

If you haven't had occasion to spend time among Native American tribal members, that's an experience every one needs to have.

It was a good fit for me. The Arapaho are collaborative and it takes awhile to gain consensus from several interests including spiritual leaders, elected officials, and the tribal members at-large. Besides, I look like an Arapaho, but not related to anyone, and couldn't vote, which were also beneficial attributes.

The Northern Arapaho proposed some controversial projects like Monitored Retrievable Storage (MRS). In 1991, the U.S. Department of Energy sought a state or Indian tribe to store spent nuclear power plant fuel rods shipped to a facility where they would be stored.

There were workshops for prospective MRS hosts about how to look to the future, which was thousands of years from the present when culture and languages changed.

Turned out, fear of environmental damage stopped the project that, theoretically, would have been created a steady labor force for 24,000 years, the half-life of Plutonium-239.

A group of private businessmen from Riverton picked up the MRS ball, but didn't get very far with the idea either. The timing wasn't the best after Bill Clinton defeated President George H.W. Bush. A friend from Gillette became the U.S. Department of the Interior Solicitor General and up until January 20, 1993, was helpful getting the project moved through the bureaucracy, but he was soon was out of a job when the guard changed.

Because of the soft fossil fuels industry, MRS has reared its head again as a way to diversify the Wyoming economy. There continue to be fears about atomic energy and potential danger of leaking casks storing spent nuclear fuel rods.

Wyoming has always had a largely pass-through economy: value added to fossil fuels at out of state power plants; livestock finished in out of state feedlots; tourists visiting Yellowstone; the Transcontinental Railroad moving people across Wyoming.

Wyoming's wild and woolly West story as an isolated place where more antelope and deer play, than people is one that attracts big projects fitting for the wide open spaces like an Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE) immigrant detention camp, or MRS.

Wyoming's history with the Heart Mountain Camp in Northeast Wyoming and the huge nuclear missile arsenal in Southeast Wyoming seems to make historical sense for the ICE facility and spent fuel rod storage.

The pre-territorial water rights the SCOTUS awarded the Arapaho and Shoshone tribes commoditized water. Much of that asset flows out of state. In addition to the tribal farm that adds some value to water, another project use of water was around reintroducing bison.

The first efforts began with a traditional bison ceremony that coincided with a summer school class session that was chronicled in *National Geographic Magazine* in November 1994. Here it is going on 30 years later and I'm still working on that Arapaho culture project.

The 16<sup>th</sup> century bison population that ranged around North America is estimated to have been 30 million animals. But to put our hands on one bison for this traditional bison ceremony was quite the ordeal.

A guy named Ed, who was the tribal insurance agent, and myself hauled a horse trailer behind his pickup to Lame Deer, Montana to pick up a bison promised by the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. After arriving, the herd manager had culled one, but it roamed back into the hills. The next stop was the Crow Agency, where a bison was available, but upon our arrival, that herd retreated into a canyon.

We rambled back to Lander, where we started, and ended up purchasing a bison from a herd that ranged around Sinks Canyon and owned by Dave Reynolds and his family. Yes, the same Dave Reynolds who introduced me to Frank Ortiz in Peru.

Following that sort-of-successful hunt, I've been involved with many of the same tribal members to return bison to the Northern Arapaho tribe. That and effort is marked by a similar bison ceremony organized in November 2015.

The bison were hunted nearly to extinction in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with fewer than 100 animals in the wild by the late 1880s.

To find one bison for this similar bison ceremony was a bureaucratic nightmare.

Wyoming is home to three public and sort-of free ranging public bison herds. The most well known is in Yellowstone National Park. The bison range should be much bigger than the boundaries of the park. The herd population is expanding faster than it can be contained natural mortality and predators.

They wander out onto non-federal lands causing conflicts among state wildlife and agricultural agencies, environmentalists and ranchers fearing a bacterium carried by bison called *Brucellosis abortus* will infect their herds and cause spontaneous abortions. According to the U.S. National Park Service, there has been no documented case of *B. abortus* being transmitted between a bison and cattle.

Ironically, culling the Yellowstone bison to seed and expand Great Plains tribal herds is the best solution. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) between LaPorte and Fort Collins, Colorado has a small quarantine facility that has produced a herd that now roams around on the Soapstone Prairie Natural Area managed by the city of Fort Collins, and the Red Mountain Open Space managed by Larimer County.

APHIS is the U.S. government agency that manages birds at airports to prevent their collisions with airplanes. The service has vegetable-animal sniffing dogs that monitor passenger check in lines for illegal critters and plants being smuggled in and out of the United States. APHIS also has a research branch that designed a way to keep prairie dogs from chewing up underground nuclear missile silo wiring.

There are two herds managed by the state of Wyoming at Hot Springs State Park in Thermopolis and Bear River State Park near Evanston. We received word of a "dry" bison cow from the Thermopolis herd. She was unable to reproduce and on the list to be sold.

After trying to work through channels, at the time, Wyoming Arts Council folklorist, Annie Hatch, coordinated a 10-minute meeting with some higher-ups in the state government.

To the chagrin of the state park superintendent, the result of that whirlwind meeting, freed up that animal for our ceremony. At market, the bison had an estimated value of \$1,000 that was lost to the state park coffer.

During manifest destiny, bison were commodities. They ran wild and hunted for their skins and other body parts with the animal carcasses left on the ground to be scavenged by coyotes and wolves. After the animals rotted, mass quantities of their bones were piled on railroad cars and shipped back east for processing into carbon black to refine sugar, fertilizer, and powdered into fine bone china.

Bison herds roamed and lingered in pastures to graze which made them easy targets for hunters more interested in their body parts than their spiritual significance. The U.S. Army condoned the unfettered extermination of bison herds. It was typical for one hunter to quickly kill 150 animals or more without moving from his blind.

Fewer bison meant more range for cattle driven up from Texas. Removing the Great Plains tribal members' main food source, which also was the center of tribal spirituality, would pressure them onto reservations.

The bison we were given for the Arapaho ceremony was a commodity.

Is the animal considered a "wild" animal or "domestic" livestock? If wild, has the bison been inoculated against Brucellosis? If domestic, would we be required to have a permit from the USDA to haul the load?

Turned out, it really didn't matter.

The day of the ceremony, an early model Wyoming state government pick up truck hauling an ancient desert khaki painted Bureau of Land Management (BLM) surplus horse trailer kicked up dust as it rambled slowly on the dirt road to the Ethete Rodeo Arena.

The driver backed up to one of the catch pens and his helper, who happened to be an EHS classmate of mine, Roger Shanor, unloaded the animal. I signed for her on a scrap of paper and we were set.

All the reservation schools were contacted about the event. Just after the bison arrived, a caravan of Yellow Dog school buses came from two directions and converged at the rodeo grounds. Hundreds of school children off-loaded to take part in the sacred event.

William Ignatius "Iggy John" C'Hair is the tribal elder who presided over the ceremony. "Alan, killing a buffalo is on my bucket list," he said to me. "Can I have the honor?"

Who was I to argue? After Iggy John gave a blessing honoring the bison, he was given instructions about where to aim his .30-06 caliber long gun. He squeezed the trigger. The rifle cracked and she dropped in her tracks. The bison was dressed in the traditional way supervised by one of the women.

One of the tribe's top priorities places primary emphasis on reversing assimilation. For a non-tribal member, I found the event to be very uplifting to watch the busloads of young tribal members who anxiously gathered around Iggy John and the bison to see how she was prepared for subsistence and ceremonial purposes.

Even before the Indian Wars, Native Americans, including the Northern Arapaho people were subject to U.S. government-sponsored Americanization efforts.

The United States was booming. With mass immigration from Europe, there was growing public support for standard education based on a set of cultural values and norms presumably held by all citizens, including immigrants, and Native Americans.

Between 1790 and 1920, the U.S. government forced cultural assimilation of Native Americans to culturally become Anglo-American. George Washington formulated a policy that encouraged a “civilizing” strategy.

When the Indian Wars ended in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, traditional religious ceremonies were outlawed. There are numerous books and movies about Native American boarding schools being established where tribal children were forced to leave their cultural traditions and required to learn English and attend Christian church.

The Dawes Act of 1877 broke down the traditional tribal structure into one of individuals - the American Way. Individual tribal members were given U.S. citizenship and allotted a chunk of their reservation tribal land to give a sense of ownership and turn Great Plains nomadic people into sedentary farmers.

After the Pacific Railway Act of 1862 passed, more settlers moved further west and along with that, bison numbers declined because the railroads wanted bison eliminated. Herds of bison damaged locomotives when trains failed to stop in time to avoid animals on the tracks. Bison could delay trains from moving for days.

Railroads hired commercial hunters, including William “Buffalo Bill” Cody, to shoot bison and as a side benefit, provide a food source for their laborers.

Hunters began arriving in masses, and trains would slow down so men with long rifles could climb atop the train roofs or fire shots at the herds from their passenger car windows.

This one bison cow from Hot Springs State Park was more regulated than the 30 million slaughtered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Eastern Shoshone Tribe recently established a herd on the west side of the reservation. Much to my surprise, a few miles away, the Northern Arapaho received 10 head delivered from the National Bison Range in Montana. I hear there are talks underway to de-commoditize the animals and merge the two herds into one.

Towards the end of my formal tenure on the Wind River Indian Reservation, a bunch of Arapaho artists led by Eugene Ridgely, Sr. wanted to create a cultural conduit to pipe their artwork and culture back to their ancestral homelands in Boulder, Colorado.

Art galleries on the Pearl Street Mall in the 1990s were plentiful and the owners opened up wall space for Northern Arapaho artwork. The pipeline was viable for a couple years, but wasn't sustainable

because the project management was largely a volunteer effort. On top of that, several galleries closed their doors.

For a year or two, I commuted back and forth from Boulder to Lander. It became a chore, particularly in the winter. Anyone who can navigate the I-80 “Snow Chi Minh” trail between Rawlins and Laramie when the winter roads were closed behind them can drive anywhere.

Why did I move to Colorado in 1993? I missed a few family holidays and funerals while in Gillette and Lander. The Colorado move was into the same Mountain Time zone and has sports teams from the Mountain West Conference. Me being baseball-starved, the Rockies baseball club just moved to town. Lander and Boulder are both situated at the base of the Front Range foothills.

The Front Range terrains and climates are similar but since Boulder is over 10 times larger in population, it was easier to get lost in the crowd. Plus, it was a couple hours to family affairs in Laramie and Cheyenne depending on the route, rather than four. People I meet are surprised when they find out I’ve only lived in Wyoming and Boulder – two extremes on social, economic and political spectrums.

### **Lessons not learned**

(Ground Zero pix and anti-Japanese button)

I started the story out by relating my recollection about “What I was doing on 9/11” and my mom’s observation about the backlash that would be experienced by Muslims. She was right about that.

Like the Japanese in 1941, in the days, weeks and years following 9/11, elements of American society turned against Muslims and people who look like Muslims. Shortly after the attack, the FBI without charge detained more than 1,000 Muslims and Arabs. Thousands of Muslim immigrants were subsequently deported from the United States.

People of the Muslim faith have a long history in the United States - much longer than that of any Asian people. It’s estimated that between 10 and 20 percent of people brought to colonial America to be enslaved were Muslim.

There are records of Muslims who fought on the American side during the Revolutionary War and of 300 Muslims, who during the Civil War, fought for the North.

Based on their long history in America, it seems that there were no federal laws passed limiting immigration of Muslims as happened with the Immigration Act of 1924 that limited the number of Asians entering the country.

Wyoming isn’t without its controversies involving Muslims. The Powder River Basin is home to a couple hundred residents who self identify as Muslim, with around 30 who live in Gillette, my former stomping grounds. When I was in Gillette, I can’t say I ever came across any Muslim people.

Northeast Wyoming has a long history with Muslim immigrants dating back to 1909 when Zarif Khan moved to Wyoming from Afghanistan.

There are numerous accounts chronicling the experiences of Kahn, who became known as “Hot Tamale Louie” because he sold the steamed cornmeal snacks on the street to passersby and eventually opened a storefront in downtown Sheridan called Louie’s. He and his business were respected and an entourage of Sheridan citizens supported his application for naturalization as a United States citizen, which was approved.

Meanwhile, the Immigration Act of 1924 was enacted which limited citizenship. There were a number of lawsuits during this timeframe seeking to strip citizenship from previously naturalized people.

Someone reported Louie to the immigration authorities. In 1926, by a long stretch of the 1924 Act, Louis was declared to be an Asian and stripped of his citizenship. In 1954, he reapplied for naturalization, which was approved.

Most of the Muslims in Gillette are descended from Khan. In 2015, a group of local Muslims decided to purchase a home and convert it into a mosque that caused an uproar between a local movement called “Stop Islam in Gillette” and the townsfolk.

The protests and rallies raised the eyebrows of law enforcement agencies, including the FBI. The conflict caused Gillette to boil and now is just simmering.

There was a conciliation of sorts between the Stop Islam group spokesman Matt Colvin and the mosque organizer Aftab Khan. Wyoming Public Radio, the state’s National Public Radio affiliate, set up a conversation for a segment entitled, *Time Heals All Wounds: Breaking Bread, Finding Common Ground After Angry Mosque Incident*. The upshot of the conversation was, the two advocates agreed to disagree.

Since 9/11, it doesn’t seem that much was learned from the Japanese experience in World War II as xenophobic history is repeating itself. The facts, of course are much different, but the cultural pushback is similar.

A week after the inauguration of President Donald Trump in 2017, he issued E.O. 13769, *Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry* into the United States. This was the first in a series of E.O. and presidential proclamations banning Muslims from entering the United States.

These efforts have expanded the cultural divide evidenced by nationwide protests both in favor and against the institutionalized xenophobia toward Muslims.

One of the most prominent was the now infamous “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017 that featured tiki torch-bearing marchers who chanted, “White Power!” and “Jews will not replace us!” among other battle cries.

Recall the World War II signs and slogans “No Japs Here,” and the “Slap a Jap.”

The rally was far from peaceful with a “Unite the Right” loyalist from Ohio careening his muscle car through the crowd that injured many and killed a woman. The perpetrator was recently sentenced to life in prison.

Between 2010 and 2016, state governments jumped on the Islamophobia bandwagon. State legislatures in 39 states considered 194 pieces of legislation of which 18 were enacted and ban *Sharia* law, which is a set of Islamic guiding principles, from being considered in the U.S. judicial system.

Like in 1924, a prevalent ideology of the current U.S. government is to maintain racial and ethnic homogeneity and a portion of the electorate galvanized around that. Recall the Alien Land Acts passed by some western states that banned Japanese from owning land in their states, including Wyoming.

Whether Muslim assimilation will become as normalized as what happened to Japanese after World War II is unlikely since there are no laws prohibiting Muslims from owning land.

### **Reinventing Superman's American Way**

( logo, Superman button)

There's nothing inherently wrong with Superman's American Way - individual prosperity and equality for all. But what if the means of achievement changed from winning and losing to collaboration; from inclusion from assimilation to acceptance by intentional efforts that bridge cultural divides among diverse people and xenophobic America.

During World War II, Superman fought the Axis powers – Japan, Germany and Italy. The good-over-evil comic book stories sent a mixed message.

At one time, comic books had a bad image. While these inexpensive and periodic publications were extremely popular among young people, critics looked down upon them. Comics were blamed for causing juvenile delinquency and the formation of gangs.

Comic books were the decadent video games of their day.

I read a blog post on the DC Comics website about how in 1949 DC Comics, to contrast with that negative public perception, wanted to send the message of inclusion and equality to its readers and collaborated with the National Social Welfare Assembly (NSWA) on a public service announcement comic book series featuring Superman.

The public backlash resulting from the World War II relocation of Japanese-Americans was of concern for the NSWA, particularly after the War when Japanese resettlement began.

The NSWA Committee on Japanese Americans published bulletins about conflicts around employment rights, housing availability, and legislation that codified discrimination toward Japanese-Americans, such as the various Alien Land Acts that prohibited property ownership by Japanese. The NSWA partnership with DC Comics was a natural fit.

In 1950, Superman reminded us that his American Way actually was one of cultural inclusivity.

“... and remember, boys and girls, your school – like our country – is made up of Americans of MANY different races, religions and national origins. So, if YOU hear anybody talk against a

schoolmate or anyone else because of his religion, race or national origin – don't wait" tell him  
THAT KIND OF TALK is UN-AMERICAN!"

*Help Keep Your School ALL AMERICAN!*, Superman  
public service announcement (1950)

How might we reengage Superman to remind us about his inclusive American Way?

Raising awareness is okay, rebuilding communities from within by writing a new dominant cultural story from rapidly changing diffuse interests will be time consuming.

The world would be saved by now if everyone had more spare time.

**Individual:** On a personal level, the only person I can change or control is myself. My social change bar is set at the "Grocery Store Line" standard. That means, a time when random shoppers waiting in line to check out hear an offensive or disrespectful remark from a fellow shopper. The bystander turns around and confronts the perpetrator and becomes an ally to the victim who received the brunt of the taunt.

It's a vulnerable place, but regardless, individuals must be willing to change. If I'm not willing to get out of my comfort zone, I can't expect others to do so either, which is why I walk my talk. Bringing about social change is tough work and I've had friends drift away over it.

A friend of mine is getting traction for a quiet movement that civically engages people one person at a time called You+1 ([www.youplusone2020.com](http://www.youplusone2020.com)) to create a counter narrative rather than reacting to the *status quo*. Social change doesn't happen by "liking" posts on facebook; ranting, chanting, raving and waving signs at rallies that make for good photo ops, but lack action steps.

**Groups:** Among several people, it's less daunting. I'm a facilitator with a group called Living Room Conversations (LRC). In this "fancy, frilly gotta have a gimmick digital world," LRC comes as close as I've found to a well-rounded way to bridge cultural divides.

While they are designed for face-to-face conversations that bridge across issues that separate us, such as around race and ethnicity, LRC also provides a simple online interactive structure through a web streaming platform that engages meaningful conversation among diverse participants from around the country.

The LRC ([www.livingroomconversations.org](http://www.livingroomconversations.org)) race and ethnicity chats are entry-level, in that it's a very safe space for individuals to begin unpacking their personal histories and begin the long journey toward redefining Superman's American Way.

I've focused on facilitating conversations about race and ethnicity. I want to work with as many people across the United States to do what I can to increase understanding, find common ground, and allow us to discuss solutions. My ideal Living Room Conversation is one that includes Superman.

**Neighborhoods:** I don't think it's hyperbolic to say that the results of manifest destiny that led to discrimination and racism towards Japanese relate to the consequences of urban sprawl. The West 17<sup>th</sup>

Street Japanese community as well as the rest of downtown Cheyenne slowed down in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Japanese experienced a cultural shift largely between 1924 and 1944 and overtime, assimilation was normalized.

When the 10 new townhouses are occupied on the 500 block of West 17<sup>th</sup> Street, the time would be ripe for the community to get together and attract compatible investment into the Nishigawa Neighborhood.

On a micro-scale, the decline of downtown Cheyenne, in part, was due to the displacement of Japanese as a result of discriminatory laws that erased the culture of the community coupled with razing many historic buildings with untold or forgotten stories of their own.

**Nationally:** Cohousing communities have as their premise, one of that reinvents Superman's American Way through acceptance of individual differences; inclusion of all perspectives; decision making by consensus, while working towards the community good.

A national movement can be scaled to organizations such as the Cohousing Association of the U.S. ([www.cohousing.org](http://www.cohousing.org)), which consists of 30,000 people either living in over 170 existing intentional communities and another 160 in formation.

Cohousing community members look to repurpose abandoned buildings; or stick-build on vacant property. Members can create a neighborhood story by working with the current residents and businesses and agree upon a narrative that defines the type of people and investors who are welcome to participate in the revitalization, redevelopment or development of their environs.

### **Reconnecting my family roots**

(Family reunion pix)

After snapping out of a deathbed illness, in 2014, my outlook on life was readjusted. I've been more intentional about getting my various "bands back together," including reconnecting with my family roots. That put me on the path to write this book.

After my cousins' Nisei parents passed away, all of us have gone our separate ways, forged lives of our own, and built new family traditions.

After my Issei grandparents passed away, my Nisei parents, uncles and aunts were freer to westernize their lifestyles. Only two aunts - sisters of my father are still alive.

Recently, I visited my cousin, Milton, in San Francisco over a Memorial Day weekend and visited the graves of Auntie Rose, Uncle Vince and cousin Carolyn we had a good visit.

We toured some haunts from our younger years on the Streets of San Francisco - Godzilla Sushi, where I ate sushi in a restaurant for the first time; and the Condor Club made famous by the stripper Carol Doda and her Condorettes.

We talked about a family reunion of sorts. Most of my Sansei generation first cousins are still on the right side of the grass. We're scattered around the country from Hawaii, Washington State, California, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado to Illinois.

I'm thinking that rather than a face-to-face meet up, for starters, we could have a virtual reunion using one of the live stream conferencing services.

Auntie Joan and Uncle Tom were long-time Greeley, Colorado residents. Both were in their 80s and recently passed away. I missed Joan's memorial several months ago, but after returning from California, I drove up to Tom's service that was held near Loveland.

Outside of my cousins, I didn't know anyone since they were mostly Tom's millwright colleagues and friends.

I've been out of touch with my cousins, for the most part. I had met a few of their kids, but when they were very young.

It was good to see cousins Margo and Gary who are still in Greeley. Even though they are only an hour away, they all have families and lives of their own and we have grown apart on a day-to-day level. Bobbi is in Hawaii and Kathy in California.

We do have in common our childhoods and past memories growing up with a strong extended family. But in the big picture of things those were experiences that helped us be who we are today.

"Now we're orphans and the family elders," Bobbi lamented, "How did that happen?"

I'm thinking all Baby Boomers have similar thoughts about generational succession. I knew I was getting old, but I didn't think it would happen this fast.

### **New traditions**

The other day I was having a conversation with my friend, Jennifer. We were talking about Thanksgiving. She mentioned that she hadn't hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for many years and was in the midst of planning a fairly big get together. I responded that since college, Thanksgiving was what I considered to be a second tier holiday.

While I was younger, my family always had a pretty big get together at our place in the Cole Addition. Grandma Ohashi usually had a spread on the Southside. There was no shortage of turkey.

Since my emancipation and I went off to college, I haven't found a new Thanksgiving groove, nor have I for any of the other holidays, for that matter.

Floundering around holiday traditions became even more prevalent after my parents died.

In college, we would get out for Fall Break maybe starting Wednesday after classes and then the long Thanksgiving weekend. I think I was on campus for Thanksgiving two years, invited to a classmate's

home for another and carpoled back to Wyoming once – Randy Johnston was the only Cheyenne classmate who had a car.

I liked being on campus during breaks – same with Spring Break. There were very few kids around. It was like having the place to myself. That makes perfect sense to me now that I figured out that I'm an introvert.

While in Gillette, I remember one Thanksgiving that I was planning to drive to Laramie, but a big snowstorm prevented my travel. Tom and I were both stranded at the 3003 Club. We went down to the 7-Eleven at the bottom of the hill and picked up a couple frozen steaks and some other convenience store food to round out our feast.

The great thing about living in America, Christmas can be celebrated in many ways. What was your childhood Christmas routine growing up?

When my sister and I were young, my parents, particularly Mom wanted to inculcate us with a family tradition. We put up a tree, but it didn't seem like it was around a particular date. Each set of grandparents had trees set up too.

The decorations were the hand blown delicate glass ones from Germany. Tinsel was made out of strands of some sort of lead alloy that was carefully placed one piece at a time on each bough twig, and disassembled with as much care and stored on a card in the original box for reuse the following season.

My fingertips were covered with gray tinsel dust. That can't have been good for me, but then again, my mouth was filled with mercury embedded into several fillings packed into my teeth.

On Christmas Eve, particularly when my sister and I were older, we went to the midnight Presbyterian Church service. There was no opening of a present that night, everything always waited until Christmas morning.

When I was in grade school one Christmas, Santa Claus was over at our new next-door neighbors, the Shermans. For some reason, Santa turned on the carport light, the beams of which shined directly into my bedroom window. That signaled to me that his visit to our house was done, even if it was 3 o'clock in the morning.

I was up and inspected around the tree. Luckily, I held a high degree of delayed gratification. My dad came out and reminded me that the action wouldn't start until 6 am and that I might as well go back to bed. When I did, I laid there in anxious anticipation.

Subsequent years, my window was covered with large cardboard Coca Cola advertising placards to obscure Santa's traipsing around at the neighbors.

After opening up the stocking stuffers that always included an orange that had worked its way down to the toe, we ripped into the packages. As a kid, I wasn't much into asking for things and happy with what I received – even socks.

I was pretty good at observing other people during the year and figuring out what would be a good present for them. I'm still pretty good at picking out thoughtful gifts. Don't be surprised if you get a random package from me in the mail.

One of my most "useful" gifts was the spring-loaded bazooka that shot the blue plastic rockets. My friends all wanted to be in my squad when we played *Combat!*

The bazooka was a ground-to-ground anti-tank weapon consisting of a steel tube braced on top of the shoulder that shot RPGs (Rocket Propelled Grenades).

A radio comedian named Bob Burns is credited with coining the term "bazooka," which was what he called an improvised musical instrument made from a length of pipe with a funnel stuck on the end.

After the living room was picked up, we loaded up along with a favorite gift or two and trekked over to my grandparents to round out the day. I do recall firing that bazooka around my grandparent Sakata's place, which wasn't a very good idea.

Even as an adult, I made it to Laramie for most Christmases. The tradition evolved to a Christmas Eve standing prime rib roast dinner.

Neither my sister nor I had children. Mom hung onto the family traditions as long as she could. I didn't realize the importance that young children play in the formation of traditions, particularly around holidays.

New Years Day was definitely Japanese style. My mother and grandmother put out big spreads of *maki sushi*, a steamed Pacific lobster, and Good Luck rice wine (*sake*) and, New Year soup (*ōzōni*), a clear soup served with globs of *mōchi*. I make a pot of *ōzōni*, but that's another tradition I haven't had much luck gaining any traction.

In Boulder one of the local Japanese restaurants, Sushi Zanmai, has a New Year *mōchi* pounding event and serves up *ōzōni*, I don't think it happens every year, though.

My dad died in August 2003 after a long bout with some sort of undiagnosed progressive lung disease that I suspect is what made me sick shortly after I turned 60. I was diagnosed *Pneumocystis pneumonia* (PCP). Maybe it was genetic.

Mom died the following December of a brain aneurism. That was the end of the O'Hashi family Christmas traditions, as I knew them.

The torch was passed when my father died, the rituals of carving the turkey at Thanksgiving and the standing rib roast on Christmas are now my responsibility – rites of passage.

My Christmas traditions have changed, too. I've rationalized sipping oyster stew on Christmas Eve since I took papal mass from Pope John Paul II in 1993 at the service held near Cherry Creek Reservoir in Denver. I adopted the ritual from my colleague Michael Conti, who said it has something to do with Catholics not eating meat on Fridays.

I do roast a standing prime rib either on Christmas Eve or on Christmas. Both are largely activities I do on my own.

When I turned 21, a started a new holiday tradition began that does appeal to my friends. My birthday in 1953 fell on the 79<sup>th</sup> running of the Kentucky Derby, the first Saturday in May. My dad had money bet on the favorite horse Native Dancer. Long shot Dark Star ridden by Henry Moreno won the race.

Since I got out of college, I've had a birthday event on Derby Day that involves mint juleps and when possible some off-track betting. Mint juleps are cocktails made out of bourbon, simple sugar syrup, mint and crushed ice. On-line betting is now allowed, making it unnecessary to watch the race at an off-track betting parlor.

Every now and again, my birthday falls exactly on Derby Day, which means a big blow out with women wearing the wide-brimmed elegant hats, BBQ, and horse race gambling.

As for the O'Hashi / Ohashi family reunion, maybe we'll get around to it next Derby Day or maybe a summer or two after that at the very latest.

No matter what your memories are from growing up, I hope they are fond ones. Do what you can to keep your stories and traditions alive. – Alan O.

### **What do I know ... ?**

(Terie and Linda Miyamoto pix)

My vast store of general knowledge does have limitations. In addition to threading my experiences and recollections through the story are historical details about the four years and millions of dollars spent by the U.S. government constructing and managing 15 assembly centers and 10 relocation camps to contain 120,000 people.

Being a news source my accuracy benchmark is 85 to 90 percent; and as a journalist I strive for between 90 and 95 percent accuracy. If you have beefs with any of my information, its interpretation, and / or perspective, please let me know.

If you have further questions that *Beyond Heart Mountain* may have brought up, the most comprehensive compilation of the Japanese American World II experience is included in the *Densho Encyclopedia* which is a publically accessible website and vetted pretty well.

As for other information, being a seasoned journalist, I cross-referenced at least two credible sources available on the World Wide Web to fill in some of the details about events and people I recalled.

Much of the information about the 400 and 500 blocks of West 17<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown Cheyenne is from the original manuscripts of the Japanese section in the *History of Cheyenne*, edited by Sharon Lass Field in 1989. My mom and Auntie Hisako were in charge of compiling the Japanese family histories that ended up in my files. Cross checking those, I found some inconsistencies and verified information with ancestry.com and newspapers.com, as well as other conversations with family members.

The Special Collections Room at the Laramie County Library has city directories and phone books spanning the past century, which were useful to determine where residents lived and businesses, thrived. The LeClercq Jones Collection is a great photographic record of Downtown Cheyenne from the mid 1970s through the 1980s, which also were very helpful.

Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com are also a great resource for ferreting out detailed information about people, places and dates. If you don't think you have a digital footprint out there, forget about it. I'm amazed how much data pops up, even with very simple search terms.

I can't forget Wyoming State Archive reference archivist Suzy Taylor, who can put her finger on just about any obscure file in the mysterious back room at the Barrett Office Building.

I also drew from personal conversations I had with my cousin Milton Ichiyasu, coattail cousin Carol Kishiyama Hough, high school friend Bob Walters, childhood friends Randy Suyematsu, Terie and Linda Miyamoto.

Many thanks to my longtime friend Juliette Rule from Cheyenne and now in Fort Collins, who edited the picture book version of *Beyond Heart Mountain*; and to a new friend, Jennifer Spencer, also in Fort Collins, who provides good *karma*, perspective and inspiration.

### **Shorthand Key**

1917 Act – Immigration Act of 1917  
1924 Act – Immigration Act of 1924  
AA – American Airlines  
ABC – American Bowling Congress  
ARVN – Army of the Republic of Vietnam  
BAPA – Boulder Asian Pacific Alliance  
BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs  
BLM – Bureau of Land Management  
BMRR - Burlington and Missouri Railroad  
BN – Burlington Northern railroad  
BNSF - Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway  
Board – Cheyenne Historic Preservation Board  
BOS – Logan International Airport  
BoR – Bureau of Reclamation  
BYU – Brigham Young University  
CB&Q - Chicago, Burlington & Quincy  
CFD – Cheyenne Frontier Days  
CIO - Congress of Industrial Organizations  
Camp – War Relocation Center  
CCC - Civilian Conservation Corps  
Center – Assembly Center  
Committee – Fair Play Committee  
CSA – Community Supported Agriculture

DoI – U.S. Department of the Interior  
DoS – U.S. Department of State  
DVD - digital versatile disc  
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency  
EHS – East High School  
E.O. – Executive Order  
FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation  
FDR - President Franklin Delano Roosevelt  
FSA - Farm Security Administration  
ICE – Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
I-25 - Interstate 25  
I-80 - Interstate 80  
JAACL - Japanese American Citizens League  
JFK - President John Fitzgerald Kennedy  
ICBM - Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile  
IMHO - In my humble opinion  
INS - Immigration and Naturalization Service  
LDS - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints  
LBJ - President Lyndon Baines Johnson  
LAX – Los Angeles International Airport  
MP - Military Police  
MRS - Monitored Retrievable Storage  
NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
NSWA - National Social Welfare Assembly  
PCP - *Pneumocystis pneumonia*  
PFC - Private First Class  
PoW - Prisoner of War  
PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder  
RPG – Rocket Propelled Grenade  
RCT - Regimental Combat Team  
SCOTUS – Supreme Court of the United States  
SS - Steam Ship  
UFO – Unidentified Flying Object  
UP - Union Pacific railroad  
U.S. – referencing the United States government.  
United States – referencing the country  
USAT - U.S. Army Transport  
USDA - U.S. Department of Agriculture  
USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
UW - University of Wyoming  
VW - Volkswagen  
War - World War II  
WCCA - Wartime Civilian Control Administration  
WPA - Work Projects Administration  
WRA - War Relocation Authority

## **Densho Encyclopedia Resources**

Heart Mountain Relocation Camp

[https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Heart\\_Mountain/](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Heart_Mountain/)

Tule Lake Relocation Camp

[https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Tule\\_Lake/](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Tule_Lake/)

Pomona Assembly Center

[http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Pomona\\_\(detention\\_facility\)/](http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Pomona_(detention_facility)/)

Minidoka Relocation Camp

<https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Minidoka/>

Tulare Assembly Center

[https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Tulare\\_\(detention\\_facility\)/](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Tulare_(detention_facility)/)

Gila River Relocation Camp

[https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Gila\\_River/](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Gila_River/)

Rowher Relocation Camp

<http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Rohwer/>

442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team

[https://encyclopedia.densho.org/442nd\\_Regimental\\_Combat\\_Team/](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/442nd_Regimental_Combat_Team/)

Seagoville Relocation Center

[http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Seagoville\\_\(detention\\_facility\)/](http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Seagoville_(detention_facility)/)

Kenedy Relocation Center

[http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Kenedy\\_\(detention\\_facility\)/](http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Kenedy_(detention_facility)/)

Crystal City Relocation Center

[https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Crystal\\_City\\_\(detention\\_facility\)/](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Crystal_City_(detention_facility)/)

Camp Amache

[http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Amache\\_\(Granada\)/](http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Amache_(Granada)/)