

Superintendent's Update from Judy Geniac

You played a key role in helping Minidoka National Historic Site reach a number of goals this year. FOM engaged in many projects, did much fundraising, recruited hundreds of volunteers, and worked hand-in-hand with site staff and student interns. FOM provided and facilitated input from former incarcerated to help the NPS address planning, compliance, and a number of projects. FOM helped engage the local community, which serves as a gateway for visitors to the site. Below is a quick summary of accomplishments and spotlight projects for 2017.

This year, the Baseball Field-in-a-Day project (inspired by Yosh Nakagawa), truly met the site's existing planning goals and the desire of the public to help. We had over 200 volunteers representing 4 states and Canada. Staff prepped the site for the Pilgrimage, and found that through this event we continue to learn and increase our understanding. For the 2016 NPS centennial celebration, we gathered comments and placed them in a time capsule, which is scheduled to be re-opened in 2066. Restoration of the Farm-in-a-Day (Herrmann) House is well underway. The construction documents are nearly complete for the permanent visitor center, and we plan to have the construction contract in place this winter. With special permission, the site was able to utilize some funds from the construction project to design the exhibits, which will cover the times that led up to forced relocation, incarceration, and both heartache and success after camp. The focus is to provide an understanding of the breadth of experiences, through a number of historic images and clips of oral histories. The site must now seek funding for the exhibit completion. The contract to produce the "park film" is now in place, and it will allow the development of a film for the Bainbridge Island memorial as well. We will be installing a new well, close a noncompliant well (likely established in the early 19050s), and seek funds to close an injection well (the one that was threatened by a flood of manure that flowed into the historic site in the Spring of 2016). The site also hosted many tours and school groups. We had the largest service project to date: three busloads of local students who helped clean waysides, pulled weeds, cleaned buildings, and more. The Mess Hall is now covered in a material that looks much like tar paper, but will better protect this historic structure. The windows of the barrack building have a fresh coat of paint. The Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium focused on mass incarceration, and

the collaborative team hosted an evening event to view the Minidoka art exhibit at the Boise Art Museum. We continue to receive donated items. We learned of a person who has a ledger of many of the deaths that occurred at Minidoka, and we are being considered as a repository for the ledger. We greatly appreciate FOM's leadership role in the resurfacing of the parking lot at the camp's entrance and the planning of the multi-generational legacy exhibit.

The farm just west of the site still has its permit to create a CAFO (feed lot), but the permit is expected to expire at the end of this year, and the farm is currently for sale.

We look forward to 2017: the construction of the permanent visitor center, the completion of the historic landscapes report, structure documentation of the Root Cellar and some initial work on that structure, and seeking signage on the highway and side roads to direct visitors to the site. We plan to engage in the annual Pilgrimage and the annual Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium. We will host the official opening of the temporary visitor center on February 19, 2017 in honor of the Day of Remembrance. We will be engaged with others in highlighting the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066.

I cannot leave this update without noting that I recognize, every year, this nation suffers the loss of individuals who were incarcerated in the camps – all amazing in their own right. I recognize the mission of Minidoka serves to keep all who have passed and all who are present in our memory and that the progress we make is a way to honor them.



Superintendent Judy Geniac

A Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Thanks to all of you, 2016 has been a year of immense progress for the Friends of Minidoka and Minidoka National Historic Site.

In May, for the first time in the history of the site, we created a volunteer force of 200 people and completed a historic reconstruction project in a day. The Field-In-A-Day was not only a feat of energy, resources, people, and organizations coming together; it brought many local residents to Minidoka for the first time and introduced them to the critical history of the site. It will continue to teach visitors about life in camp and especially the gaman spirit. As educators, we have helped with more site tours, field trips, and outreach requests than ever before. We have introduced learners of all ages to the Minidoka story, and connected with first time and returning donors, volunteers, and visitors. As advocates, we asked congress to continue to support these important sites and to work with us in future endeavors. We hosted a successful Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium examining historic and current mass incarceration and how it threatens civil liberties. We wrote letters to the Twin Falls mayor and city council asking them to be steadfast in protecting our Muslim and refugee neighbors and friends.

We continue to collaborate with our friends with common missions and to connect with new partners in Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, and beyond. We are active members of the all-camps consortium, building coalitions with our fellow Japanese American advocacy groups to preserve the sites, stories, and legacy of the Japanese American incarceration. We are currently engaged in the design process for the new Visitor Center and the park film, which are on track for completion in 2018. We also continue to work with the NPS to increase opportunities for visitors to understand the site, including through our own permanent legacy exhibit.

As we look to 2017, we are filled with a sense of purpose more urgent than ever. As we near the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 and the unconstitutional forced relocation of 120,000 Japanese legal residents and American citizens of Japanese descent, our nation has become divided and violence of word and action is being used as a response. Many are being targeted based on their race, religion, and sexual orientation. We have the responsibility to organize, speak out, and fight to protect the civil liberties of all Americans. After all, we have seen how fragile they can be. Let's make 2017 the year that Japanese Americans and their friends stood up and said, we will not let this happen again. Minidoka National Historic Site is a place that inspires empathy, courage, diversity, compassion, and active democracy. It has the power to tell the story of a nation divided by prejudice and hysteria. As we embark to make 2017 our most impactful year yet, we ask that you consider giving your time, energy, stories, and photographs to support us in this endeavor. Please also consider making us part of your annual giving by renewing your membership, mailing a check, donating stock, or planning to support Friends of Minidoka through your estate.

Let it not happen again.

Mia Russell
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2016 Minidoka Pilgrimage

The 2016 Minidoka Pilgrimage was the largest to date. The 14th annual Pilgrimage which was held from June 22-24, 2016 had over 250 participants and culminated in the dedication of the new baseball field. Participants had a great time and took advantage of educational, cultural and social opportunities. The Friday education program consisted of 6 different sessions including a film screening of *Children of the Camps* by Dr. Satsuki Ina and an introduction to *Minidoka Memoirs: The Untold Stories from the Yoshito Fujii Files* by Ken Mochizuki. On Saturday, participants toured Minidoka National Historic Site in the morning and in the afternoon participants share stories about their experiences while incarcerated in Minidoka. For those who were not incarcerated at Minidoka, they shared their thoughts about how Minidoka has affected them. This year, the closing ceremony on Sunday was held in an area overlooking the new baseball field near Warehouse No. 5 and was followed by the ball field's dedication.

Thank you to all of the pilgrims who keep this history alive, and to the Minidoka Pilgrimage Planning Committee for organizing such an invaluable event.



Courtesy of the Minidoka Pilgrimage Planning Committee

Short Film “Shiro Kashino” wins a local Emmy Award

The short film “Shiro Kashino” won an Emmy Award for the Seattle Channel in the historic/cultural/special category at the 53rd annual Northwest Emmy Awards. The film, based on the graphic novel “Fighting for America: Nisei Soldiers,” was written by former Friends of Minidoka Board Member Larry Matsuda. It was illustrated by Matt Sasaki and produced by Shannon Gee. Dr. Matsuda also received an Emmy for writing the story.

2016 Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium

The 2016 Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium was held at Boise State University on October 15th and 16th, 2016. The theme was Mass Incarceration in the Land of the Free. This was the 11th annual Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposium and was presented by the Friends of Minidoka, ACLU Idaho, Boise State University, the National Park Service, and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. This year's program sponsors were the Idaho Statesman, the Boise Valley Japanese American Citizens League, and the Boise Art Museum, as well as donations from generous individuals.

Speakers included Tom Ikeda on *Minidoka's Story*; Dr. David Adler on *When the Bill of Rights Failed Japanese Americans*; Michael Santos on *Life Behind Bars in America*; Judge Mark Bennett, Dick Rubin, and U.S. Attorney Wendy Olsen on a federal sentencing panel; Dr. Satsuki Ina on *Family Detention of Immigrants Through the Lens of Japanese American Incarceration*; Dr. Rajini Srikanth with *From the WWII Japanese American Incarceration to Guantanamo Bay*; Karen Korematsu on *Fred Korematsu and Black Lives Matter*; Sheriff Gary Raney, Kevin Kempf, and Amber Beierle on an incarceration in Idaho panel, and Holly Yasui on the *Minoru Yasui Tribute Project*



Dr. Rajini Srikanth, Karen Korematsu, Dr. Satsuki Ina at the 2016 Civil Liberties Symposium, photo courtesy of Mia Russell.

2016 JACS Grant Update

In March of this year, Friends of Minidoka received a \$78,000 grant for an exhibit from the National Park Service's Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program. The Minidoka Legacy Memorial Interpretive Exhibit Project will incorporate the design and fabrication of a 400-square foot exhibit that will be temporarily housed at the Minidoka National Historic Site Visitor Center until their permanent exhibit is built. This exhibit will focus on the Issei, Nisei, and Sansei who were incarcerated at

Minidoka during WWII and will also tell the story of the local community as well. We are looking for images from Minidoka to be used for research and potentially in the exhibition. If you would like to donate your images, please contact Hanako Wakatsuki at hanako.wakatsuki@gmail.com or at 208-761-9638. Donations can include the actual donation of picture or just a high-resolution scan that allows you to keep the originals.

Field-In-A-Day

The Friends of Minidoka partnered with the National Park Service to host the reconstruction of one of 14 baseball fields that existed at the WWII Confinement Site. Playing and watching others play baseball was one of the means used to make life more bearable during the incarceration. The baseball fields were also used for special events: high school graduations, memorial services for fallen soldiers, and plays and musical events such as Bon Odori. As part of the project, a replica of the stage where these special events were held will be built at a later date.

On Saturday May 28, 2016, over 150 volunteers from Idaho, Washington, Oregon and California came to work on the project. The morning began a bit chilly and windy, but with the sun out, the weather warmed and it was a pleasant day. Volunteers cleared vegetation from the field, built players' benches, 2 bleachers, the pitcher's mound, scoreboard and a huge backstop with metal fencing that reached 20 feet in the air. Formal dedication of the field will take place Sunday, June 26 during the annual Minidoka Pilgrimage. We can't wait to welcome all of you back to the site to see your new baseball field. Thank you again for supporting this project.

Through our online crowdfunding webpage at generosity.com, donations by mail and on the FoM website, and a small grant, we raised approximately \$25,000 for the baseball field reconstruction. Thank you all for making this project possible!

Mike Furutani, a volunteer from Salinas California donated this vintage catcher's mask, chest protector and catcher's glove to the National Park Service for future interpretation related to Japanese America baseball at camp. The equipment belonged to his uncle who was incarcerated at another Camp.



Mike Furutani



Courtesy National Park Service

Honor Roll Additions

Seventy-nine names were added to the right panel of the Honor Roll located at the entrance to the Minidoka National Historic Site prior to the 2016 Minidoka Pilgrimage. Twenty first names were added to existing last names and another fifty-nine complete names were added. The goal

of the National Parks Service is to reproduce the entire right panel in time for the 2017 Minidoka Pilgrimage. The Honor Roll was constructed and dedicated in 2011 with a Japanese American Confinement Sites grant awarded to the Friends of Minidoka.

Independent Filmmaker to produce Minidoka Documentary

by Karen Day

Two years ago, I visited Minidoka for the first time.

As a filmmaker, I was morally outraged by the social injustice inflicted by upon the innocent internees. In response, I voluntarily produced a short film: A QUESTION OF LOYALTY, to serve as witness to the human cost of racial prejudice. This film is publicly posted and plays at the Boise Art Museum's current exhibit, Minidoka: Artist as Witness.

Continuing to work with the NPS and Friends of Minidoka, I've documented the evolution of the monument into a profound Site of Conscience. Interviewing surviving internees, I have captured their stories of struggle, sacrifice, loss and moments of grace under pressure. These people taught me a completely new word and meaning for Minidoka: Gaman: enduring the seemingly unbearable with patience and dignity.

Today, more than ever, America needs to be introduced to the message of "inclusion and forgiveness." One of the best ways to promote these moral imperatives is to expand the

5-minute Minidoka film into a 22-minute television half-hour titled: GAMAN. This film will premiere at Sun Valley Film Festival 2017, IDPTV and beyond.

I will be donating my time and skill, and we already have 50% of needed footage—but we still need is to RAISE 14K for editing, usage rights, music, graphics and archival materials—and the DEADLINE is January 31st!

That's why I'm reaching out to you. Please, if you can, help us produce GAMAN, a film that will be an enduring example of Japanese-American forgiveness and compassion. This link will allow you to view the 5 minute film and make a tax-deductible donation –with rewards!

<https://fromtheheartproductions.networkforgood.com/projects/18998-documentaries-gaman>

Please contact me if you have questions. Thank you for your kind consideration and support.
www.karenday.net

Updates regarding Twin Falls Muslim and Refugee Community

by Board Member Ron James

Last June, reports of a sexual assault case involving refugee children at an apartment complex brought national and international attention to Twin Falls. The case involves three under aged boys from Iraq and Sudan who are accused of sexually assaulting a 5-year old girl at the Fawnbrook Apartments Complex. The case is currently winding its way through the juvenile court system, but opponents of Islam and refugee resettlement seized on the case as a way to incite fear and suspicion of refugees and Muslims.



Twin Falls has been providing sanctuary for refugees since the early 1980s. Thousands of refugees from Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Bosnia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Romania, and now the Middle East and Africa, have been resettled to make Twin Falls their home and have become productive and valued members of the community. It should be emphasized that the majority of Twin Falls residents, including the city council, are supportive of refugee resettlement and appreciate the many opportunities and benefits that result from having a culturally diverse population.

However, a movement to shut down the refugee resettlement program in Twin Falls, began last year following reports that Syrian refugees were going to be resettled in Twin Falls. A proposed ballot measure to close the refugee center failed to get enough signatures to qualify for the November election.

Those opposed to refugees in general and Muslims in particular may constitute a minority, but they are part of a well-orchestrated national movement. The case afforded the Alt-Right with an opportunity to spread false and inflammatory rumors disguised as journalism with such lurid headlines as: Syrian Refugees Rape Little Girl at Knife-point in Idaho.

These stories were false. No Syrians were involved, and there was no gang rape. Twin Falls county prosecutor Grant Loeb (a conservative Republican) blames anti-refugee groups for circulating misinformation, stating that "There is a small group of people in Twin Falls County whose life goal is to eliminate refugees, and thus far they have not been constrained by the truth."

Over the course of the summer, members of the Twin Falls City Council and the city manager were deluged with hundreds of angry emails. The Times News reported that "One man left voice mails for Camille Barigar, wife of Mayor Shawn Barigar, and for two other faculty members at the College of Southern Idaho, which administers the refugee program in Twin Falls, accusing them of bringing "humanity's lowest common denominator, essentially human garbage, from Africa and the Middle East, into the Twin Falls area."

On July 29, the Friends of Minidoka Board sent a letter addressed to Mayor Shawn Barigar and the Twin Falls City Council expressing serious concerns about the tone and direction of these comments. The letter stated that "The Friends of Minidoka cannot help but see the obvious and ominous parallels between the hatred being directed at refugees in Magic Valley and the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans in concentration camps during WWII. The fear and suspicion directed at Japanese Americans in 1942 was unfounded and unjustified, as are the cruel remarks regarding refugees. The cruel comments and threats being made are not only unfounded but completely divorced from reality. We repudiate this bigotry and, prefer instead, to celebrate the hospitality and compassion that Twin Falls has offered to the many immigrants and refugees who have made this community their home. If Twin Falls turns it back on refugees, not only are the lessons of Minidoka lost, but Twin Falls loses an important part of what has made the community a unique and remarkable place to live. Friends of Minidoka offers our support and heartfelt gratitude to the Twin Falls City Council for their continued resolve in the face of intolerance, and for working to make Twin Falls a welcoming community to all.

The lessons and warnings offered by the WW2 incarceration of Japanese Americans have never been more urgent and needed than right now. The current sinister climate of paranoia and xenophobia is not an aberration; it is an integral part of the American story, but so also are the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice. Nidoto nai yoni – let it not happen again.

News from Other Camps

Heart Mountain – The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation (HMWF) Executive Director Brian Liesinger is leaving his position effective November 15, 2016. He has been the Executive Director since 2013. Brian has attended the Minidoka Pilgrimage twice and was a leader in the effort to create an All Camps Consortium. The HMWF's search for a new Executive Director is in progress. Information can be found at http://heartmountain.org/jobs_2_899579540.pdf.

Heart Mountain – In July 2016, Friends of Minidoka Board Member and Secretary Hanako Wakatsuki was appointed to the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation's Board of Directors.

Heart Mountain – The Fifth Anniversary Heart Mountain Pilgrimage was held on July 29 and 30, 2016. The Friday night banquet featured a first time silent auction and video presentations of Heart Mountain stories created by participants in a digital workshop earlier in the week. On Saturday, the program featured speakers former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norm Mineta and U.S. Senator Alan Simpson (ret.). The keynote speaker was Luis Valdes, renowned director and playwright.

Topaz - The 2016 Topaz Pilgrimage was held on August 2, 2016 in the Delta City Park in Delta Utah. "Ties That Bind" was the theme of the event, which began at 7 a.m. with a bike ride to the Camp and a tour of the site. Videos, memorabilia, a program and dancing were also featured.

Topaz – The Topaz Museum's inaugural art exhibition, "When Words Weren't Enough: Works on paper from Topaz, 1942" will close in November for the installation of the permanent exhibit which will open in January 2017. The current exhibit draws from the museum's permanent collection, and focuses on artists who contributed to the art and culture of the Topaz Internment Camp that confined people of Japanese descent during World War II.

Tule Lake – The 2016 Tule Lake Pilgrimage was held from July 1st through 4th, 2016 with 450 participants.

Tule Lake – National Parks Service (NPS) draft of its General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (GMP/EA) for the Tule Lake Unit of the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument is available for review and public comment. The GMP/EA describes three distinct alternative strategies for protecting and managing the Tule Lake Unit, as well as an analysis of the environmental impacts and consequences of implementing each of these alternative strategies. The GMP/EA recommends a preferred alternative. It will guide development of the site over the next 20 years or longer. Copies can be obtained at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/TuleLakeGMP>. The NPS staff will be holding meetings along the West Coast in the fall of 2016 to get feedback on the draft GMP. Comments are due by February 10, 2017.



Support Friends of Minidoka While You Shop

Did you know that Fred Meyer and Amazon Smile will both donate a portion of qualified sales to Friends of Minidoka?

Fred Meyer donates \$2.5 million per year to non-profits in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Sign up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Friends of Minidoka at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards. You can search for us by our non-profit number 91168. Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping FoM earn a donation! You still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points, and Rebates, just as you do today.

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Support the Friends of Minidoka and the work we are doing. Join or Renew your membership!

By becoming a member, you...

Support public information on Minidoka National Historic Site and FOM projects at minidoka.org

Support the projects we are working on and ensure your voice is present in the plans and implementation of Minidoka as a National Park.

Receive FOM bi-annual newsletters, informational and e-bulletins.

Vote in the FOM Board Elections.

Please mail Membership Forms to:
Friends of Minidoka
PO Box 1085
Twin Falls, ID 83303-1085

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

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\$25 Student or Senior \$ _____

\$50 Individual \$ _____

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