

2012  
*Japanese American Citizens League  
Arizona Chapter*

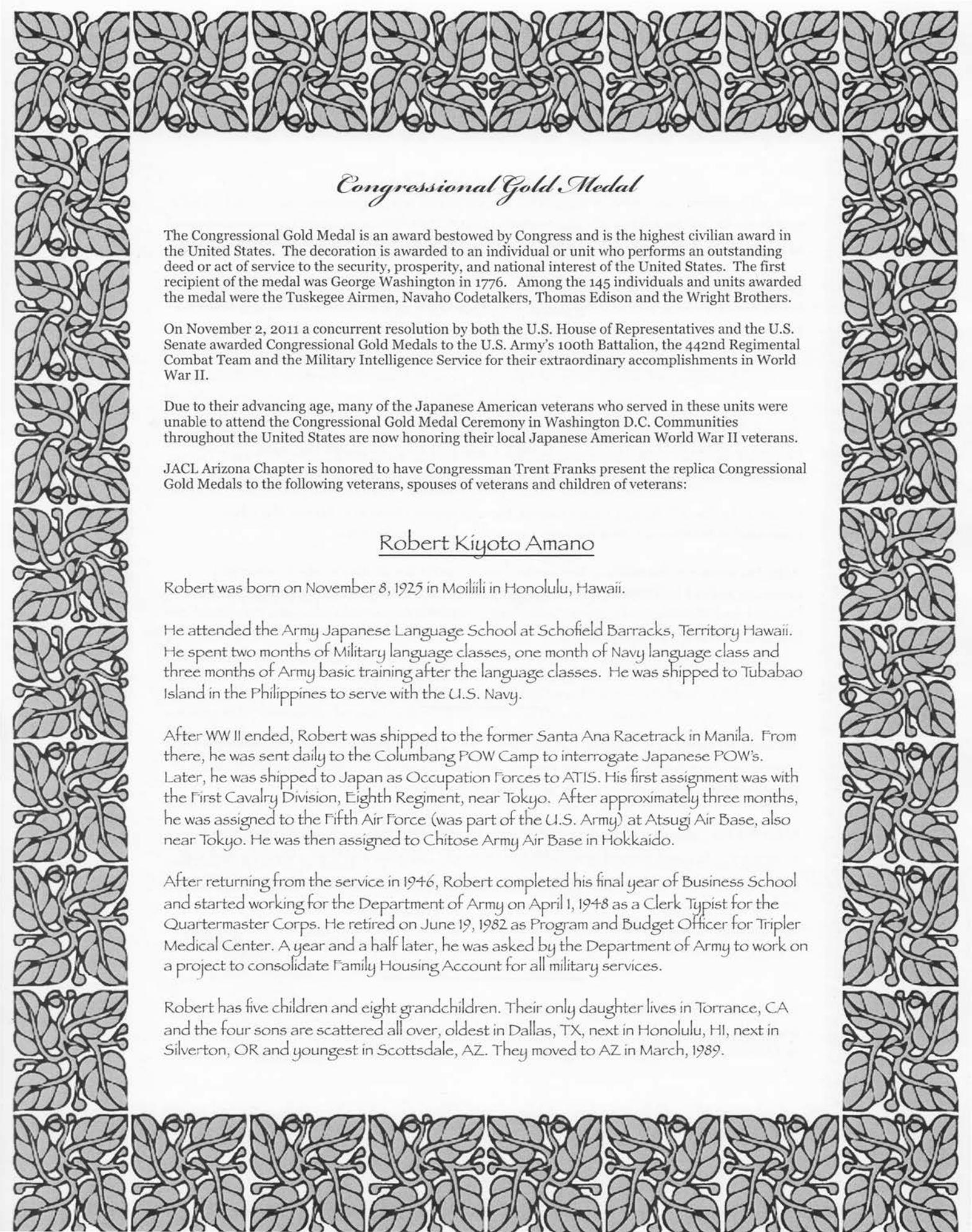


*51st Anniversary*  
*Sara Hutchings Clardy Scholarship Awards*  
*Graduates' Luncheon*  
*and*  
*Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony*  
*for Nisei WWII Veterans*



*Glendale Civic Center  
5750 W. Glenn Drive  
Glendale, AZ 85301*

*April 22, 2012*



## *Congressional Gold Medal*

The Congressional Gold Medal is an award bestowed by Congress and is the highest civilian award in the United States. The decoration is awarded to an individual or unit who performs an outstanding deed or act of service to the security, prosperity, and national interest of the United States. The first recipient of the medal was George Washington in 1776. Among the 145 individuals and units awarded the medal were the Tuskegee Airmen, Navaho Codetalkers, Thomas Edison and the Wright Brothers.

On November 2, 2011 a concurrent resolution by both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate awarded Congressional Gold Medals to the U.S. Army's 100th Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service for their extraordinary accomplishments in World War II.

Due to their advancing age, many of the Japanese American veterans who served in these units were unable to attend the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony in Washington D.C. Communities throughout the United States are now honoring their local Japanese American World War II veterans.

JACL Arizona Chapter is honored to have Congressman Trent Franks present the replica Congressional Gold Medals to the following veterans, spouses of veterans and children of veterans:

### Robert Kiyoto Amano

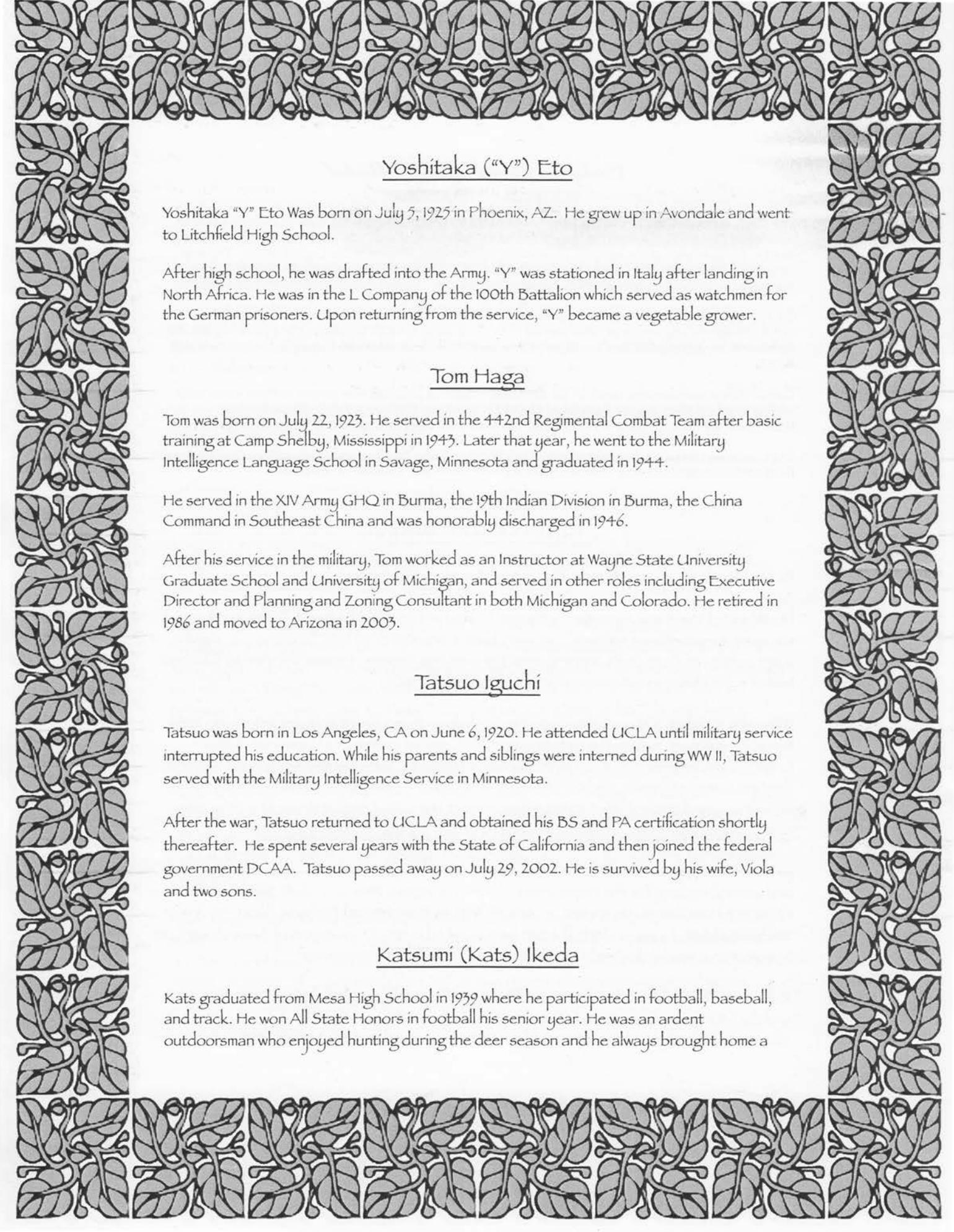
Robert was born on November 8, 1925 in Moiliili in Honolulu, Hawaii.

He attended the Army Japanese Language School at Schofield Barracks, Territory Hawaii. He spent two months of Military language classes, one month of Navy language class and three months of Army basic training after the language classes. He was shipped to Tubabao Island in the Philippines to serve with the U.S. Navy.

After WW II ended, Robert was shipped to the former Santa Ana Racetrack in Manila. From there, he was sent daily to the Columbang POW Camp to interrogate Japanese POW's. Later, he was shipped to Japan as Occupation Forces to ATIS. His first assignment was with the First Cavalry Division, Eighth Regiment, near Tokyo. After approximately three months, he was assigned to the Fifth Air Force (was part of the U.S. Army) at Atsugi Air Base, also near Tokyo. He was then assigned to Chitose Army Air Base in Hokkaido.

After returning from the service in 1946, Robert completed his final year of Business School and started working for the Department of Army on April 1, 1948 as a Clerk Typist for the Quartermaster Corps. He retired on June 19, 1982 as Program and Budget Officer for Tripler Medical Center. A year and a half later, he was asked by the Department of Army to work on a project to consolidate Family Housing Account for all military services.

Robert has five children and eight grandchildren. Their only daughter lives in Torrance, CA and the four sons are scattered all over, oldest in Dallas, TX, next in Honolulu, HI, next in Silverton, OR and youngest in Scottsdale, AZ. They moved to AZ in March, 1989.



## Yoshitaka ("Y") Eto

Yoshitaka "Y" Eto Was born on July 5, 1925 in Phoenix, AZ. He grew up in Avondale and went to Litchfield High School.

After high school, he was drafted into the Army. "Y" was stationed in Italy after landing in North Africa. He was in the L Company of the 100th Battalion which served as watchmen for the German prisoners. Upon returning from the service, "Y" became a vegetable grower.

## Tom Haga

Tom was born on July 22, 1923. He served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team after basic training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi in 1943. Later that year, he went to the Military Intelligence Language School in Savage, Minnesota and graduated in 1944.

He served in the XIV Army GHQ in Burma, the 19th Indian Division in Burma, the China Command in Southeast China and was honorably discharged in 1946.

After his service in the military, Tom worked as an Instructor at Wayne State University Graduate School and University of Michigan, and served in other roles including Executive Director and Planning and Zoning Consultant in both Michigan and Colorado. He retired in 1986 and moved to Arizona in 2003.

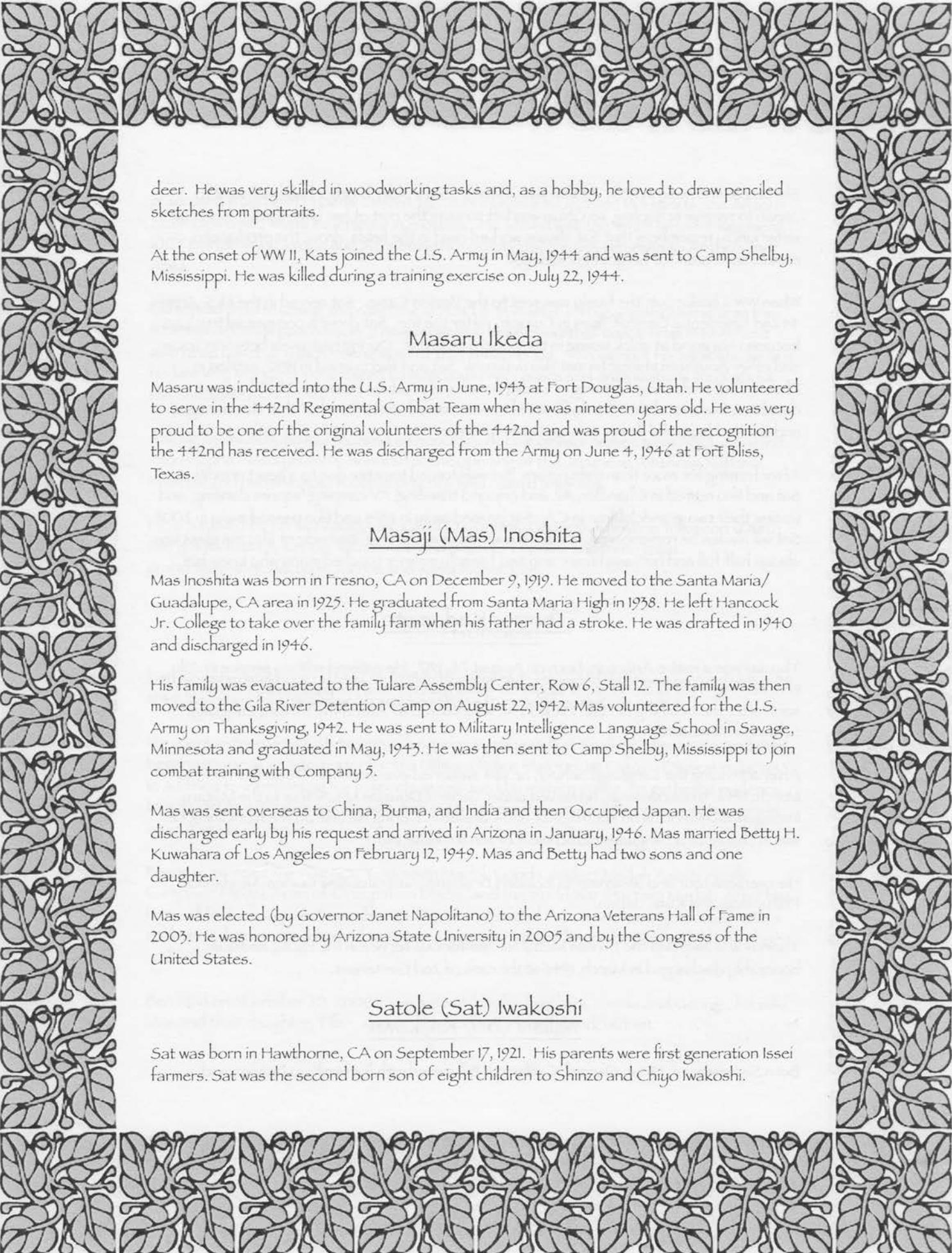
## Tatsuo Iguchi

Tatsuo was born in Los Angeles, CA on June 6, 1920. He attended UCLA until military service interrupted his education. While his parents and siblings were interned during WW II, Tatsuo served with the Military Intelligence Service in Minnesota.

After the war, Tatsuo returned to UCLA and obtained his BS and PA certification shortly thereafter. He spent several years with the State of California and then joined the federal government DCAA. Tatsuo passed away on July 29, 2002. He is survived by his wife, Viola and two sons.

## Katsumi (Kats) Ikeda

Kats graduated from Mesa High School in 1939 where he participated in football, baseball, and track. He won All State Honors in football his senior year. He was an ardent outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting during the deer season and he always brought home a



deer. He was very skilled in woodworking tasks and, as a hobby, he loved to draw penciled sketches from portraits.

At the onset of WW II, Kats joined the U.S. Army in May, 1944 and was sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi. He was killed during a training exercise on July 22, 1944.

### Masaru Ikeda

Masaru was inducted into the U.S. Army in June, 1943 at Fort Douglas, Utah. He volunteered to serve in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team when he was nineteen years old. He was very proud to be one of the original volunteers of the 442nd and was proud of the recognition the 442nd has received. He was discharged from the Army on June 4, 1946 at Fort Bliss, Texas.

### Masaji (Mas) Inoshita

Mas Inoshita was born in Fresno, CA on December 9, 1919. He moved to the Santa Maria/ Guadalupe, CA area in 1925. He graduated from Santa Maria High in 1938. He left Hancock Jr. College to take over the family farm when his father had a stroke. He was drafted in 1940 and discharged in 1946.

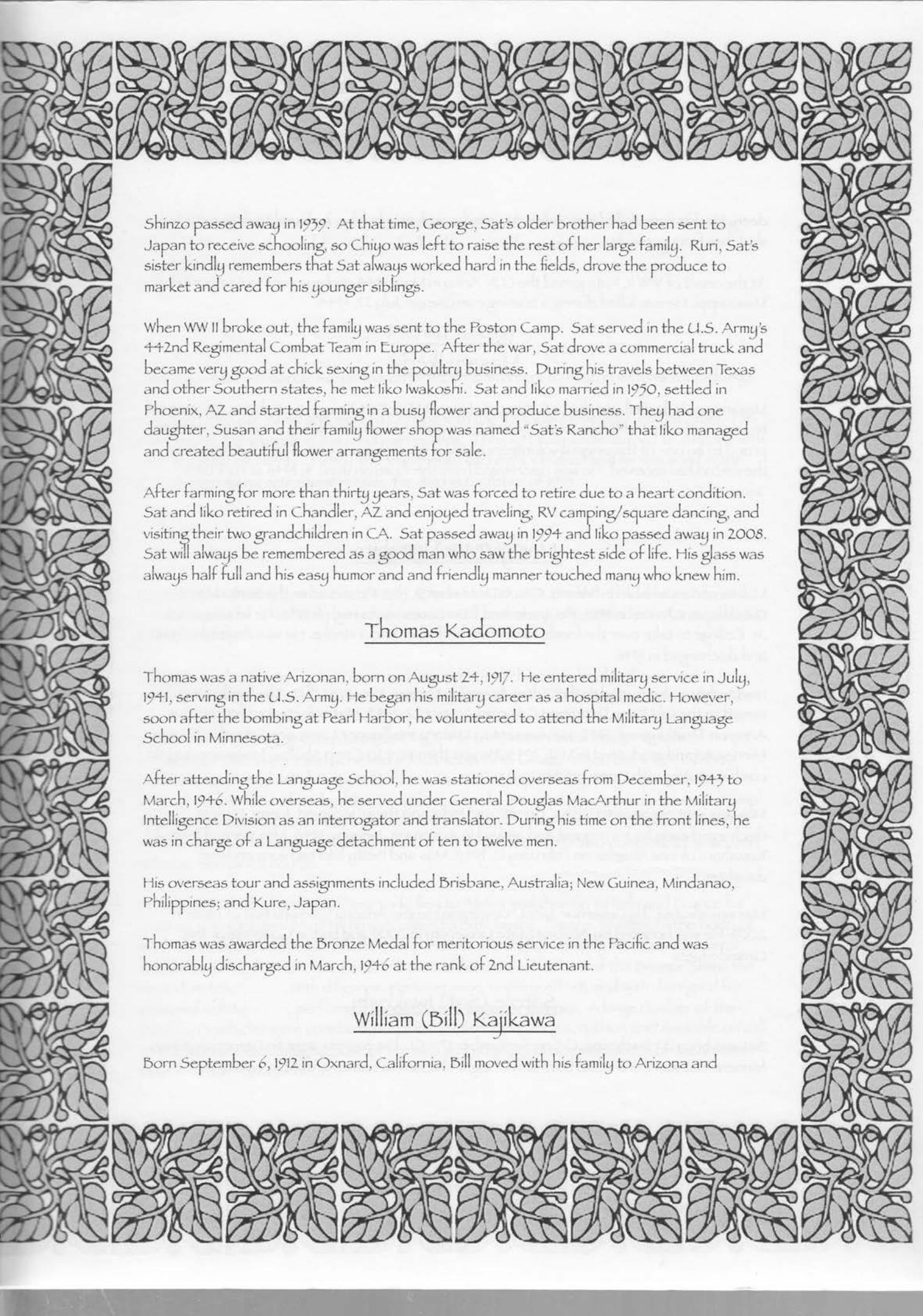
His family was evacuated to the Tulare Assembly Center, Row 6, Stall 12. The family was then moved to the Gila River Detention Camp on August 22, 1942. Mas volunteered for the U.S. Army on Thanksgiving, 1942. He was sent to Military Intelligence Language School in Savage, Minnesota and graduated in May, 1943. He was then sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi to join combat training with Company 5.

Mas was sent overseas to China, Burma, and India and then Occupied Japan. He was discharged early by his request and arrived in Arizona in January, 1946. Mas married Betty H. Kuwahara of Los Angeles on February 12, 1949. Mas and Betty had two sons and one daughter.

Mas was elected (by Governor Janet Napolitano) to the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame in 2003. He was honored by Arizona State University in 2005 and by the Congress of the United States.

### Satole (Sat) Iwakoshi

Sat was born in Hawthorne, CA on September 17, 1921. His parents were first generation Issei farmers. Sat was the second born son of eight children to Shinzo and Chiyo Iwakoshi.



Shinzo passed away in 1939. At that time, George, Sat's older brother had been sent to Japan to receive schooling, so Chiyo was left to raise the rest of her large family. Ruri, Sat's sister kindly remembers that Sat always worked hard in the fields, drove the produce to market and cared for his younger siblings.

When WW II broke out, the family was sent to the Poston Camp. Sat served in the U.S. Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team in Europe. After the war, Sat drove a commercial truck and became very good at chick sexing in the poultry business. During his travels between Texas and other Southern states, he met Iiko Iwakoshi. Sat and Iiko married in 1950, settled in Phoenix, AZ and started farming in a busy flower and produce business. They had one daughter, Susan and their family flower shop was named "Sat's Rancho" that Iiko managed and created beautiful flower arrangements for sale.

After farming for more than thirty years, Sat was forced to retire due to a heart condition. Sat and Iiko retired in Chandler, AZ and enjoyed traveling, RV camping/square dancing, and visiting their two grandchildren in CA. Sat passed away in 1994 and Iiko passed away in 2008. Sat will always be remembered as a good man who saw the brightest side of life. His glass was always half full and his easy humor and friendly manner touched many who knew him.

### Thomas Kadomoto

Thomas was a native Arizonan, born on August 24, 1917. He entered military service in July, 1941, serving in the U.S. Army. He began his military career as a hospital medic. However, soon after the bombing at Pearl Harbor, he volunteered to attend the Military Language School in Minnesota.

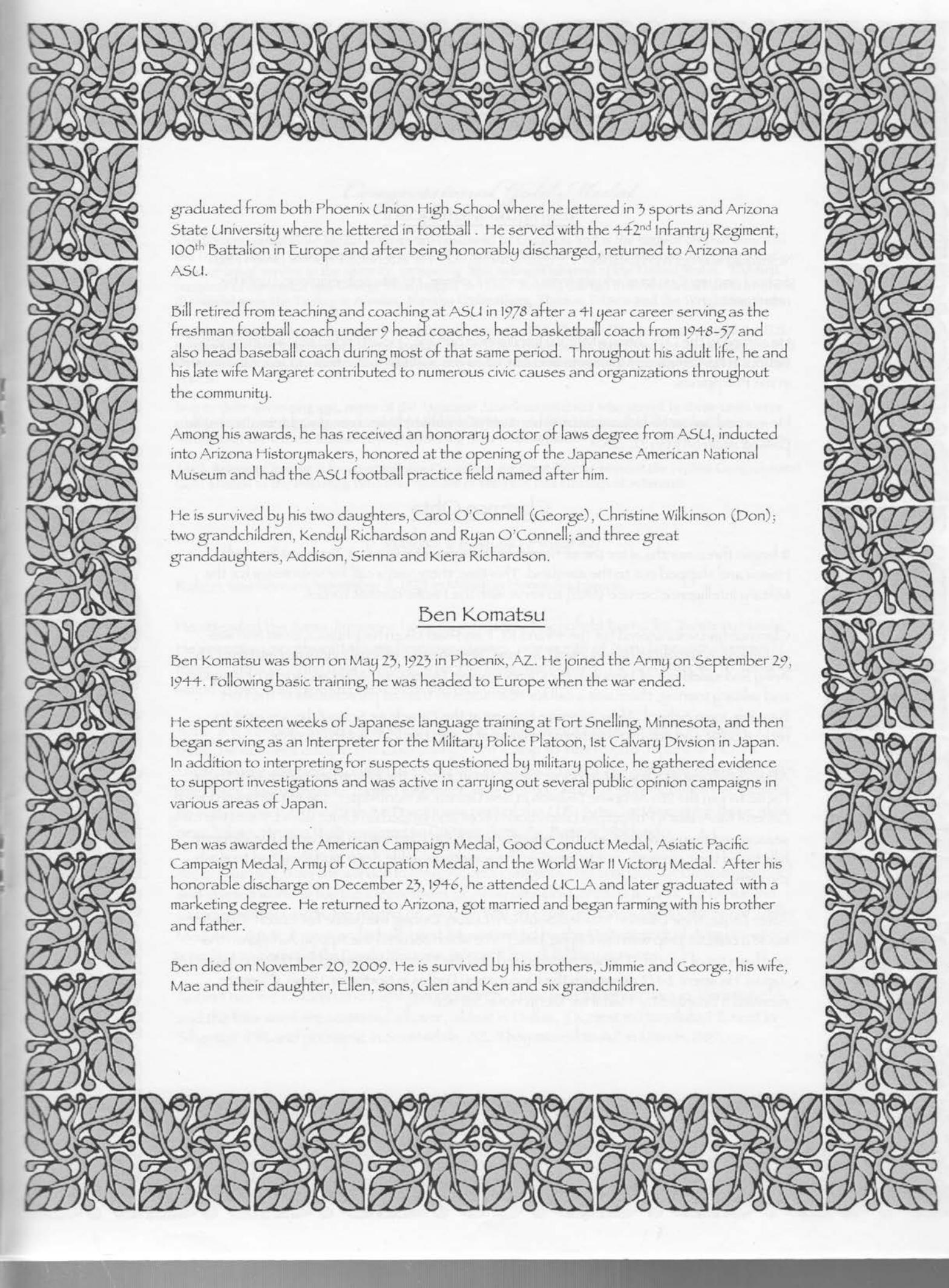
After attending the Language School, he was stationed overseas from December, 1943 to March, 1946. While overseas, he served under General Douglas MacArthur in the Military Intelligence Division as an interrogator and translator. During his time on the front lines, he was in charge of a Language detachment of ten to twelve men.

His overseas tour and assignments included Brisbane, Australia; New Guinea, Mindanao, Philippines; and Kure, Japan.

Thomas was awarded the Bronze Medal for meritorious service in the Pacific and was honorably discharged in March, 1946 at the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

### William (Bill) Kajikawa

Born September 6, 1912 in Oxnard, California, Bill moved with his family to Arizona and



graduated from both Phoenix Union High School where he lettered in 3 sports and Arizona State University where he lettered in football . He served with the 442<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion in Europe and after being honorably discharged, returned to Arizona and ASU.

Bill retired from teaching and coaching at ASU in 1978 after a 41 year career serving as the freshman football coach under 9 head coaches, head basketball coach from 1948-57 and also head baseball coach during most of that same period. Throughout his adult life, he and his late wife Margaret contributed to numerous civic causes and organizations throughout the community.

Among his awards, he has received an honorary doctor of laws degree from ASU, inducted into Arizona Historymakers, honored at the opening of the Japanese American National Museum and had the ASU football practice field named after him.

He is survived by his two daughters, Carol O'Connell (George), Christine Wilkinson (Don); two grandchildren, Kendyl Richardson and Ryan O'Connell; and three great granddaughters, Addison, Sienna and Kiera Richardson.

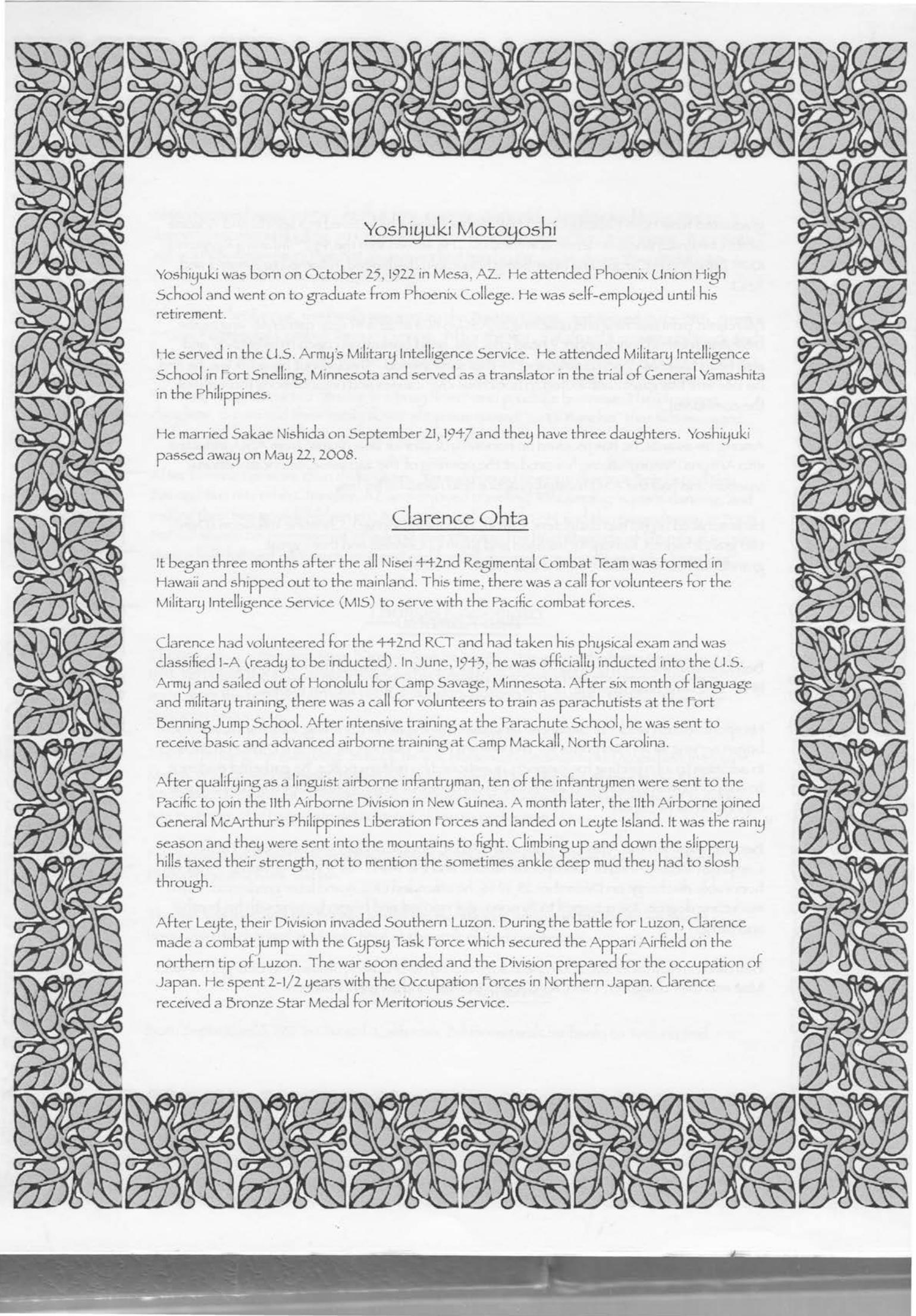
### Ben Komatsu

Ben Komatsu was born on May 23, 1923 in Phoenix, AZ. He joined the Army on September 29, 1944. Following basic training, he was headed to Europe when the war ended.

He spent sixteen weeks of Japanese language training at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and then began serving as an Interpreter for the Military Police Platoon, 1st Cavalry Division in Japan. In addition to interpreting for suspects questioned by military police, he gathered evidence to support investigations and was active in carrying out several public opinion campaigns in various areas of Japan.

Ben was awarded the American Campaign Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal. After his honorable discharge on December 23, 1946, he attended UCLA and later graduated with a marketing degree. He returned to Arizona, got married and began farming with his brother and father.

Ben died on November 20, 2009. He is survived by his brothers, Jimmie and George, his wife, Mae and their daughter, Ellen, sons, Glen and Ken and six grandchildren.



## Yoshiyuki Motoyoshi

Yoshiyuki was born on October 25, 1922 in Mesa, AZ. He attended Phoenix Union High School and went on to graduate from Phoenix College. He was self-employed until his retirement.

He served in the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Service. He attended Military Intelligence School in Fort Snelling, Minnesota and served as a translator in the trial of General Yamashita in the Philippines.

He married Sakae Nishida on September 21, 1947 and they have three daughters. Yoshiyuki passed away on May 22, 2008.

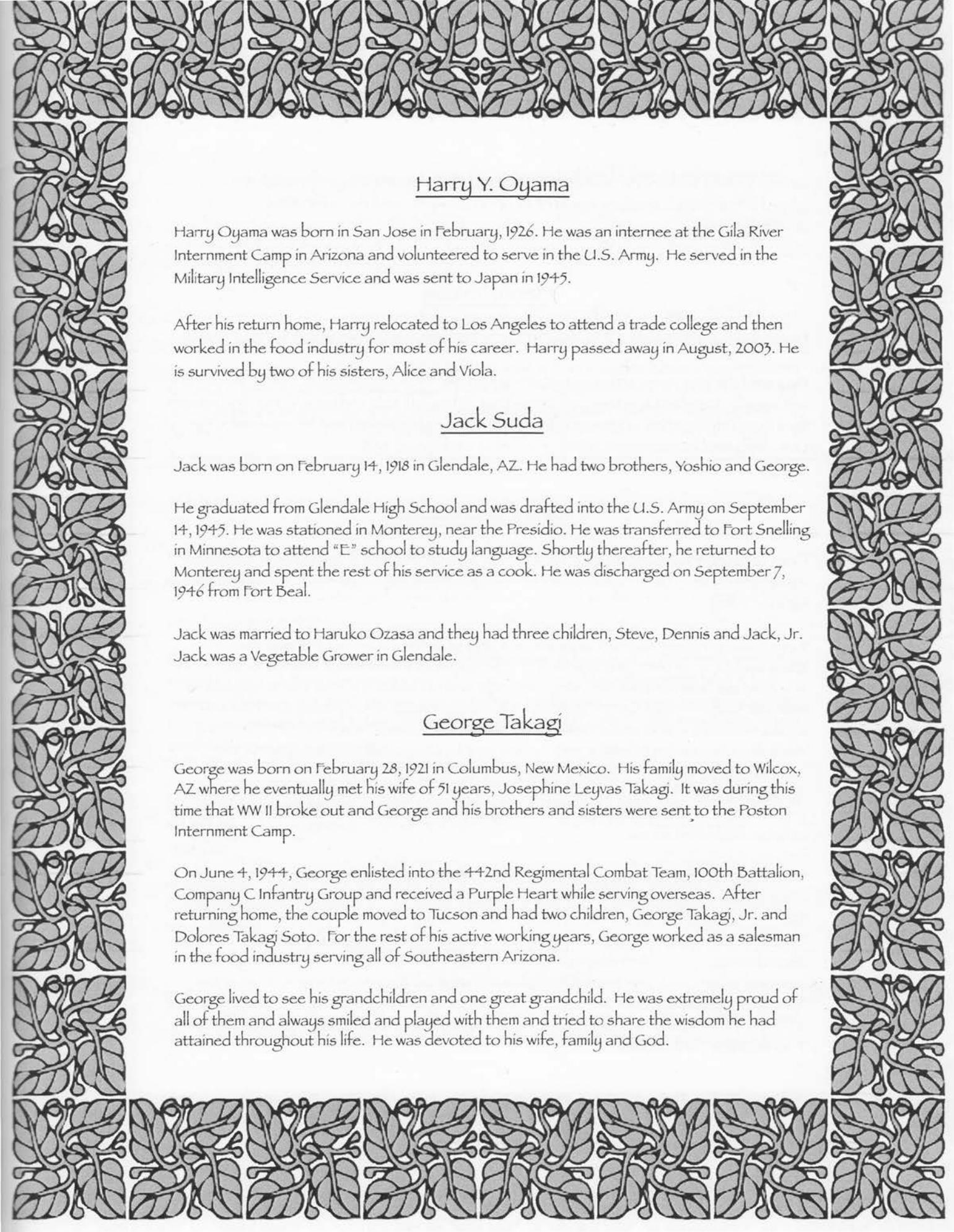
## Clarence Ohta

It began three months after the all Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team was formed in Hawaii and shipped out to the mainland. This time, there was a call for volunteers for the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) to serve with the Pacific combat forces.

Clarence had volunteered for the 442nd RCT and had taken his physical exam and was classified 1-A (ready to be inducted). In June, 1943, he was officially inducted into the U.S. Army and sailed out of Honolulu for Camp Savage, Minnesota. After six months of language and military training, there was a call for volunteers to train as parachutists at the Fort Benning Jump School. After intensive training at the Parachute School, he was sent to receive basic and advanced airborne training at Camp Mackall, North Carolina.

After qualifying as a linguist airborne infantryman, ten of the infantrymen were sent to the Pacific to join the 11th Airborne Division in New Guinea. A month later, the 11th Airborne joined General MacArthur's Philippines Liberation Forces and landed on Leyte Island. It was the rainy season and they were sent into the mountains to fight. Climbing up and down the slippery hills taxed their strength, not to mention the sometimes ankle deep mud they had to slosh through.

After Leyte, their Division invaded Southern Luzon. During the battle for Luzon, Clarence made a combat jump with the Gypsy Task Force which secured the Aparri Airfield on the northern tip of Luzon. The war soon ended and the Division prepared for the occupation of Japan. He spent 2-1/2 years with the Occupation Forces in Northern Japan. Clarence received a Bronze Star Medal for Meritorious Service.



### Harry Y. Oyama

Harry Oyama was born in San Jose in February, 1926. He was an internee at the Gila River Internment Camp in Arizona and volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army. He served in the Military Intelligence Service and was sent to Japan in 1945.

After his return home, Harry relocated to Los Angeles to attend a trade college and then worked in the food industry for most of his career. Harry passed away in August, 2003. He is survived by two of his sisters, Alice and Viola.

### Jack Suda

Jack was born on February 14, 1918 in Glendale, AZ. He had two brothers, Yoshio and George.

He graduated from Glendale High School and was drafted into the U.S. Army on September 14, 1945. He was stationed in Monterey, near the Presidio. He was transferred to Fort Snelling in Minnesota to attend "E" school to study language. Shortly thereafter, he returned to Monterey and spent the rest of his service as a cook. He was discharged on September 7, 1946 from Fort Beal.

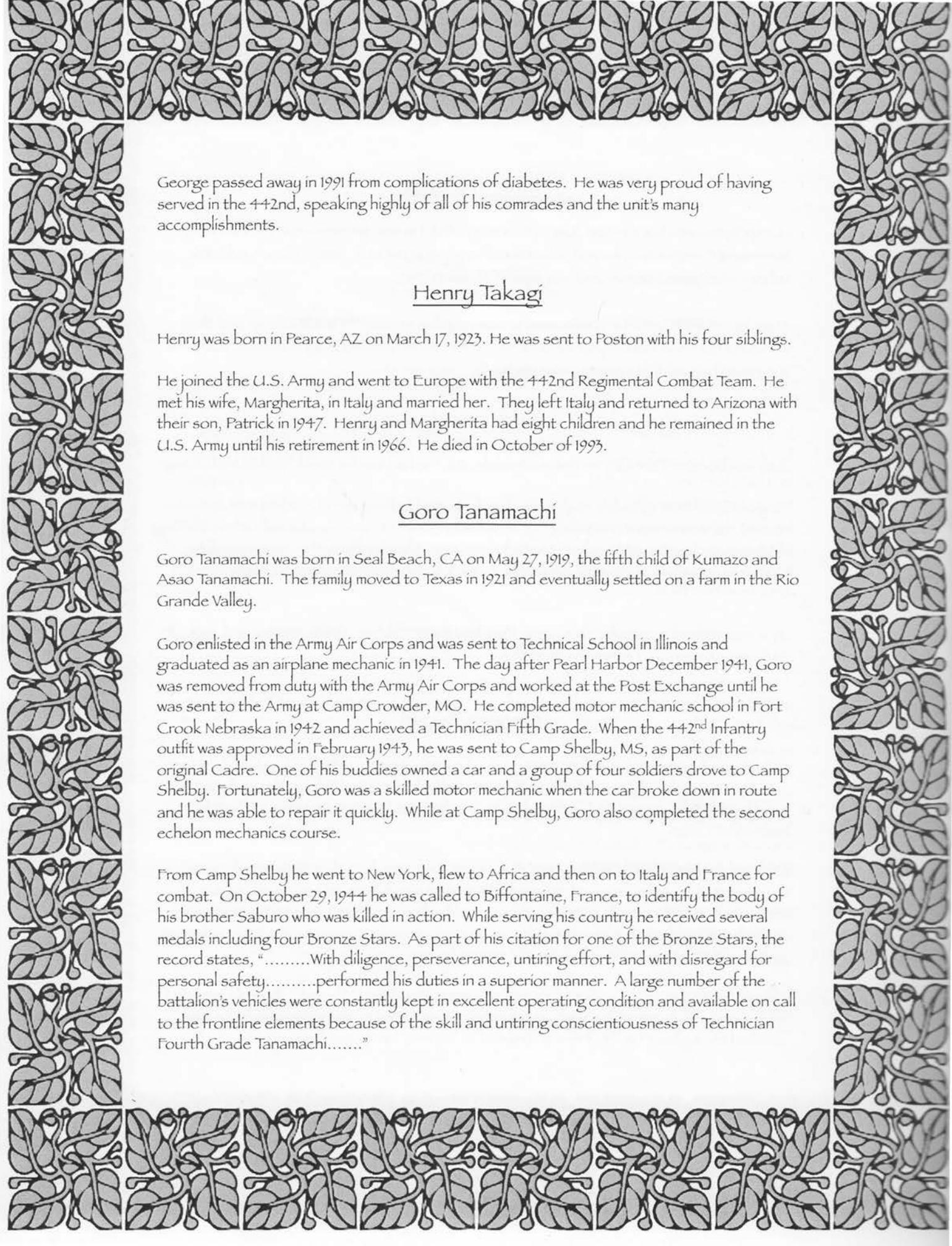
Jack was married to Haruko Ozasa and they had three children, Steve, Dennis and Jack, Jr. Jack was a Vegetable Grower in Glendale.

### George Takagi

George was born on February 28, 1921 in Columbus, New Mexico. His family moved to Wilcox, AZ where he eventually met his wife of 51 years, Josephine Leyvas Takagi. It was during this time that WW II broke out and George and his brothers and sisters were sent to the Poston Internment Camp.

On June 4, 1944, George enlisted into the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, 100th Battalion, Company C Infantry Group and received a Purple Heart while serving overseas. After returning home, the couple moved to Tucson and had two children, George Takagi, Jr. and Dolores Takagi Soto. For the rest of his active working years, George worked as a salesman in the food industry serving all of Southeastern Arizona.

George lived to see his grandchildren and one great grandchild. He was extremely proud of all of them and always smiled and played with them and tried to share the wisdom he had attained throughout his life. He was devoted to his wife, family and God.



George passed away in 1991 from complications of diabetes. He was very proud of having served in the 442nd, speaking highly of all of his comrades and the unit's many accomplishments.

### Henry Takagi

Henry was born in Pearce, AZ on March 17, 1923. He was sent to Poston with his four siblings.

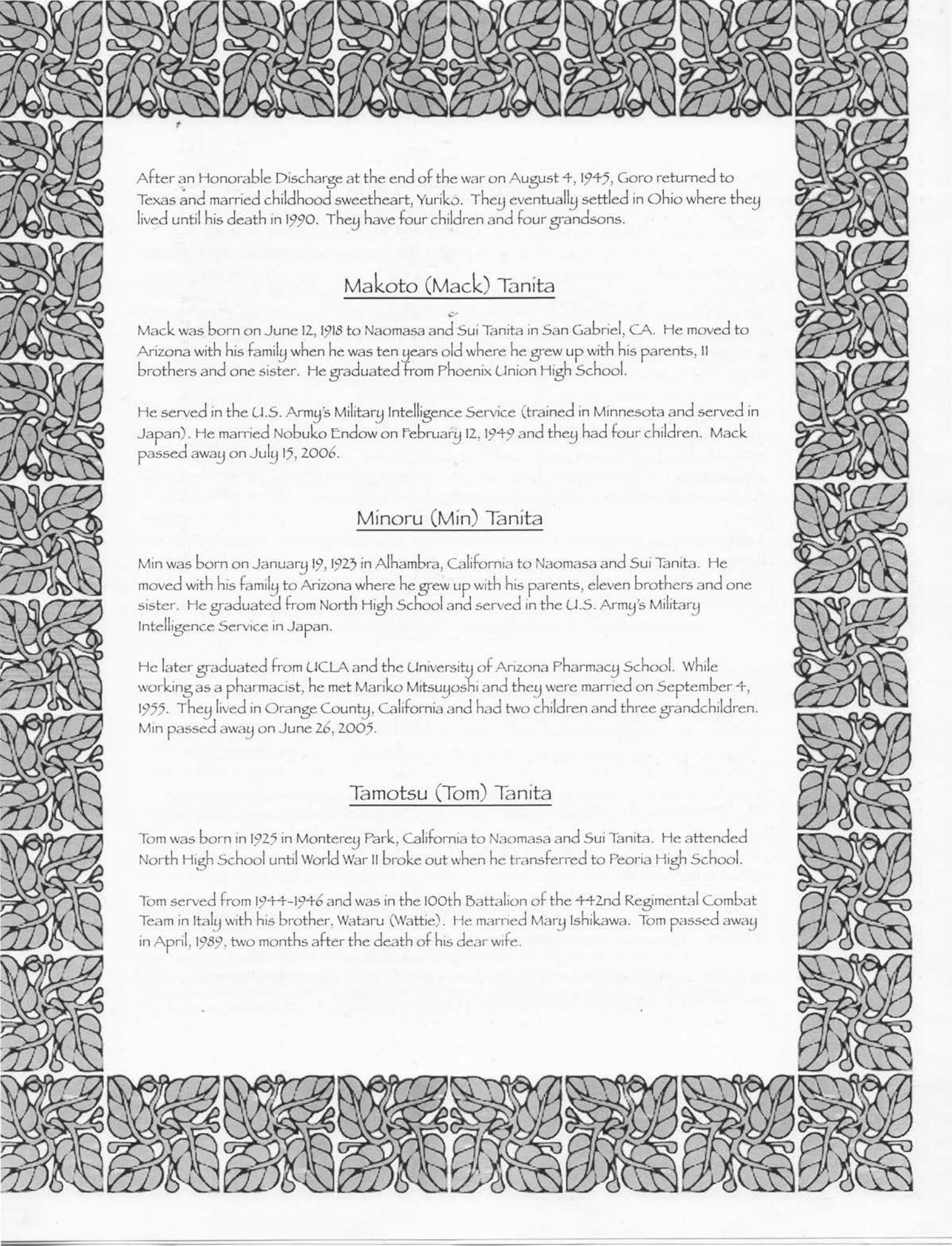
He joined the U.S. Army and went to Europe with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. He met his wife, Margherita, in Italy and married her. They left Italy and returned to Arizona with their son, Patrick in 1947. Henry and Margherita had eight children and he remained in the U.S. Army until his retirement in 1966. He died in October of 1993.

### Goro Tanamachi

Goro Tanamachi was born in Seal Beach, CA on May 27, 1919, the fifth child of Kumazo and Asao Tanamachi. The family moved to Texas in 1921 and eventually settled on a farm in the Rio Grande Valley.

Goro enlisted in the Army Air Corps and was sent to Technical School in Illinois and graduated as an airplane mechanic in 1941. The day after Pearl Harbor December 1941, Goro was removed from duty with the Army Air Corps and worked at the Post Exchange until he was sent to the Army at Camp Crowder, MO. He completed motor mechanic school in Fort Crook Nebraska in 1942 and achieved a Technician Fifth Grade. When the 442nd Infantry outfit was approved in February 1943, he was sent to Camp Shelby, MS, as part of the original Cadre. One of his buddies owned a car and a group of four soldiers drove to Camp Shelby. Fortunately, Goro was a skilled motor mechanic when the car broke down in route and he was able to repair it quickly. While at Camp Shelby, Goro also completed the second echelon mechanics course.

From Camp Shelby he went to New York, flew to Africa and then on to Italy and France for combat. On October 29, 1944 he was called to Biffontaine, France, to identify the body of his brother Saburo who was killed in action. While serving his country he received several medals including four Bronze Stars. As part of his citation for one of the Bronze Stars, the record states, ".....With diligence, perseverance, untiring effort, and with disregard for personal safety.....performed his duties in a superior manner. A large number of the battalion's vehicles were constantly kept in excellent operating condition and available on call to the frontline elements because of the skill and untiring conscientiousness of Technician Fourth Grade Tanamachi....."



After an Honorable Discharge at the end of the war on August 4, 1945, Goro returned to Texas and married childhood sweetheart, Yuriko. They eventually settled in Ohio where they lived until his death in 1990. They have four children and four grandsons.

### Makoto (Mack) Tanita

Mack was born on June 12, 1918 to Naomasa and Sui Tanita in San Gabriel, CA. He moved to Arizona with his family when he was ten years old where he grew up with his parents, 11 brothers and one sister. He graduated from Phoenix Union High School.

He served in the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Service (trained in Minnesota and served in Japan). He married Nobuko Endow on February 12, 1949 and they had four children. Mack passed away on July 15, 2006.

### Minoru (Min) Tanita

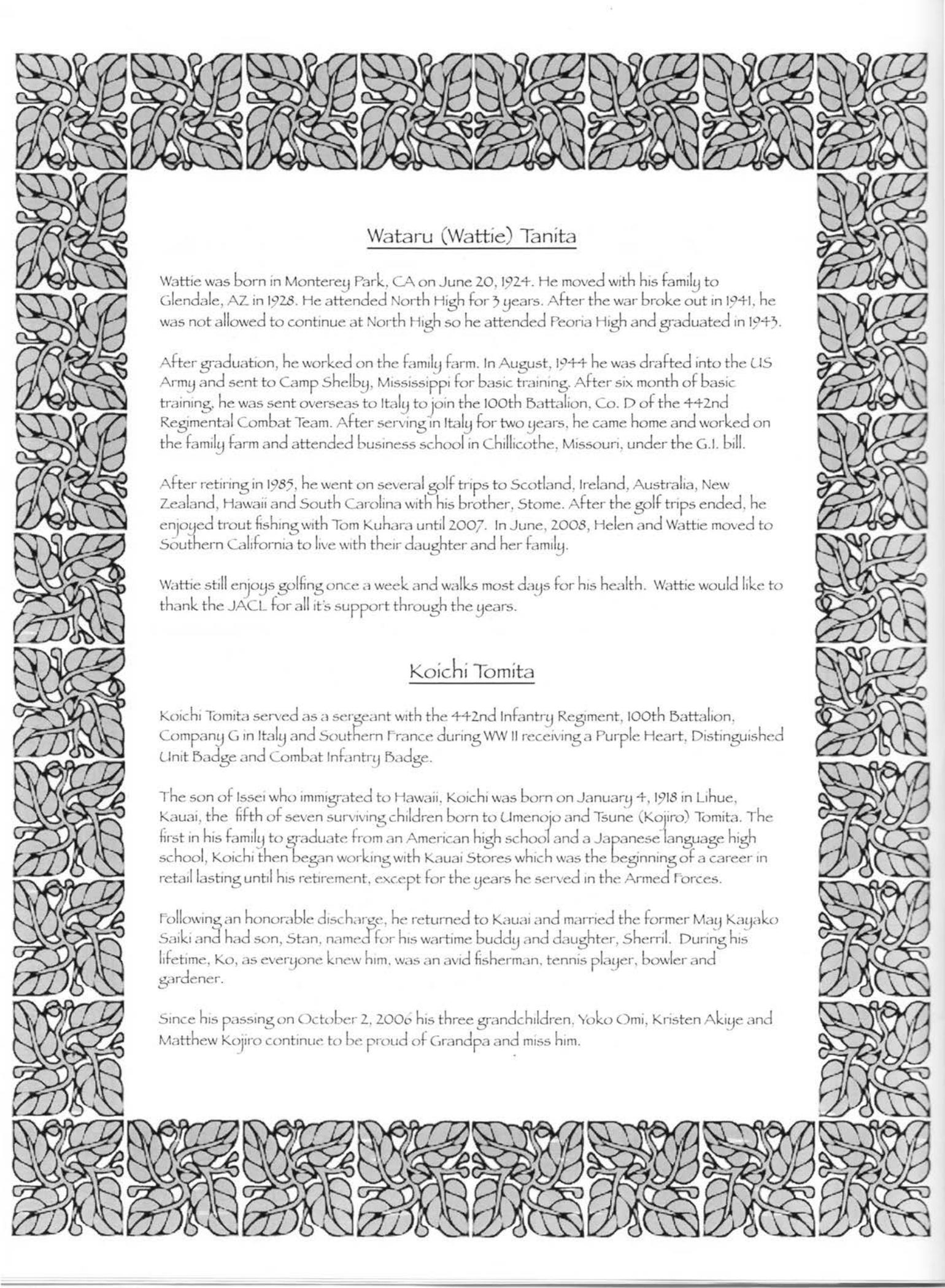
Min was born on January 19, 1923 in Alhambra, California to Naomasa and Sui Tanita. He moved with his family to Arizona where he grew up with his parents, eleven brothers and one sister. He graduated from North High School and served in the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Service in Japan.

He later graduated from UCLA and the University of Arizona Pharmacy School. While working as a pharmacist, he met Mariko Mitsuyoshi and they were married on September 4, 1955. They lived in Orange County, California and had two children and three grandchildren. Min passed away on June 26, 2005.

### Tamotsu (Tom) Tanita

Tom was born in 1925 in Monterey Park, California to Naomasa and Sui Tanita. He attended North High School until World War II broke out when he transferred to Peoria High School.

Tom served from 1944-1946 and was in the 100th Battalion of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team in Italy with his brother, Wataru (Wattie). He married Mary Ishikawa. Tom passed away in April, 1989, two months after the death of his dear wife.



### Wataru (Wattie) Tanita

Wattie was born in Monterey Park, CA on June 20, 1924. He moved with his family to Glendale, AZ in 1928. He attended North High for 3 years. After the war broke out in 1941, he was not allowed to continue at North High so he attended Peoria High and graduated in 1943.

After graduation, he worked on the family farm. In August, 1944 he was drafted into the US Army and sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi for basic training. After six months of basic training, he was sent overseas to Italy to join the 100th Battalion, Co. D of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. After serving in Italy for two years, he came home and worked on the family farm and attended business school in Chillicothe, Missouri, under the G.I. bill.

After retiring in 1985, he went on several golf trips to Scotland, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and South Carolina with his brother, Stome. After the golf trips ended, he enjoyed trout fishing with Tom Kuhara until 2007. In June, 2008, Helen and Wattie moved to Southern California to live with their daughter and her family.

Wattie still enjoys golfing once a week and walks most days for his health. Wattie would like to thank the JACL for all its support through the years.

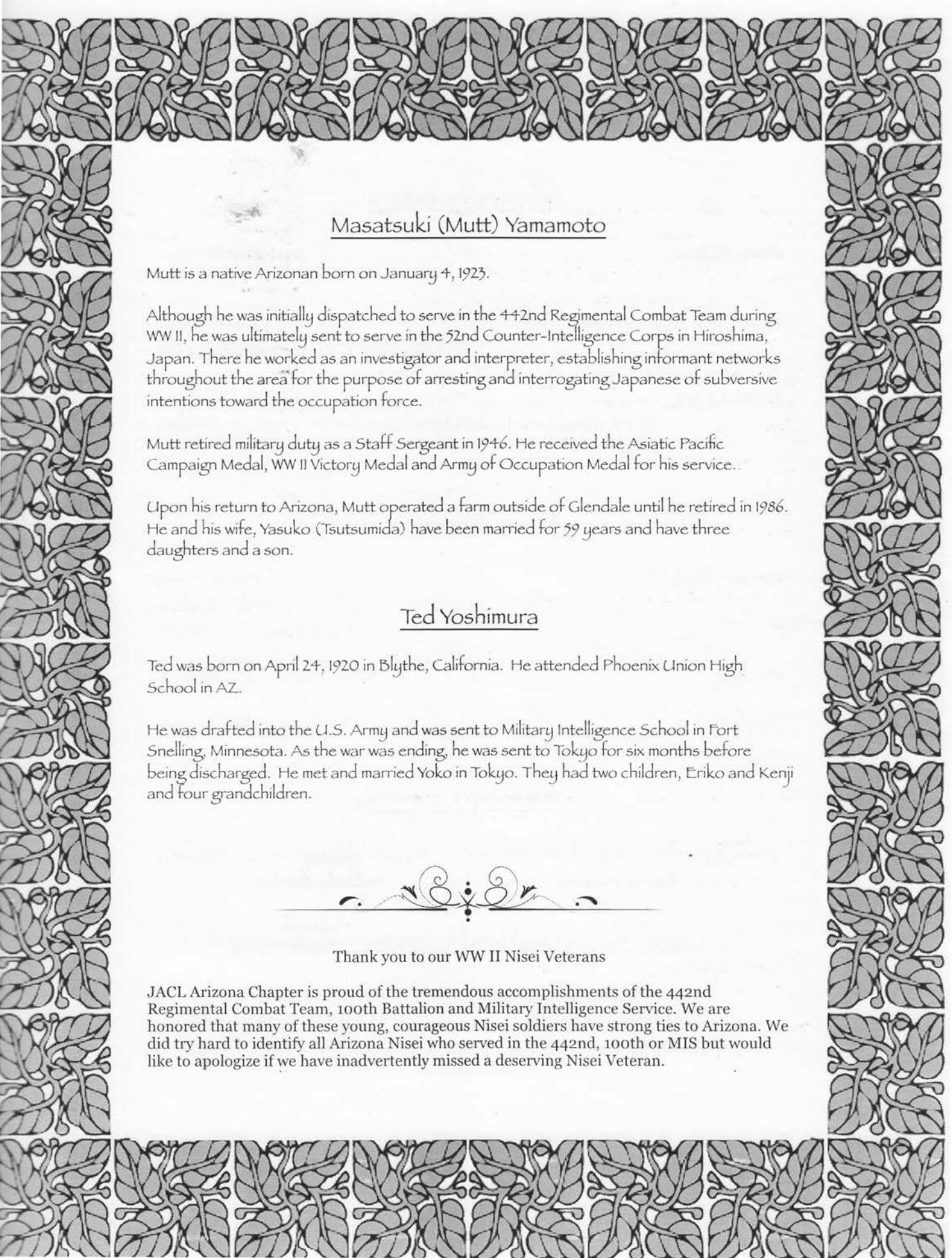
### Koichi Tomita

Koichi Tomita served as a sergeant with the 442nd Infantry Regiment, 100th Battalion, Company G in Italy and Southern France during WW II receiving a Purple Heart, Distinguished Unit Badge and Combat Infantry Badge.

The son of Issei who immigrated to Hawaii, Koichi was born on January 4, 1918 in Lihue, Kauai, the fifth of seven surviving children born to Umenojo and Tsune (Kojiro) Tomita. The first in his family to graduate from an American high school and a Japanese language high school, Koichi then began working with Kauai Stores which was the beginning of a career in retail lasting until his retirement, except for the years he served in the Armed Forces.

Following an honorable discharge, he returned to Kauai and married the former May Kayako Saiki and had son, Stan, named for his wartime buddy and daughter, Sherril. During his lifetime, Ko, as everyone knew him, was an avid fisherman, tennis player, bowler and gardener.

Since his passing on October 2, 2006 his three grandchildren, Yoko Omi, Kristen Akiye and Matthew Kojiro continue to be proud of Grandpa and miss him.



## Masatsuki (Mutt) Yamamoto

Mutt is a native Arizonan born on January 4, 1923.

Although he was initially dispatched to serve in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team during WW II, he was ultimately sent to serve in the 52nd Counter-Intelligence Corps in Hiroshima, Japan. There he worked as an investigator and interpreter, establishing informant networks throughout the area for the purpose of arresting and interrogating Japanese of subversive intentions toward the occupation force.

Mutt retired military duty as a Staff Sergeant in 1946. He received the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, WW II Victory Medal and Army of Occupation Medal for his service.

Upon his return to Arizona, Mutt operated a farm outside of Glendale until he retired in 1986. He and his wife, Yasuko (Tsutsumida) have been married for 59 years and have three daughters and a son.

## Ted Yoshimura

Ted was born on April 24, 1920 in Blythe, California. He attended Phoenix Union High School in AZ.

He was drafted into the U.S. Army and was sent to Military Intelligence School in Fort Snelling, Minnesota. As the war was ending, he was sent to Tokyo for six months before being discharged. He met and married Yoko in Tokyo. They had two children, Eriko and Kenji and four grandchildren.



Thank you to our WW II Nisei Veterans

JACL Arizona Chapter is proud of the tremendous accomplishments of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, 100th Battalion and Military Intelligence Service. We are honored that many of these young, courageous Nisei soldiers have strong ties to Arizona. We did try hard to identify all Arizona Nisei who served in the 442nd, 100th or MIS but would like to apologize if we have inadvertently missed a deserving Nisei Veteran.