

As I read about the circumstances about the unearthing of the Wakasa monument, I am saddened by some of the inflammatory language surrounding the event and the innuendo demeaning the character of Jane Beckwith and the Topaz Museum Board. For nearly four decades, these are individuals who have been the eyes and ears, the boots on the ground, in remote Delta. Without their constant presence, compassion, love and fiduciary duty, the Topaz site would likely have remained under many private entities and Main Street, Delta would be devoid of a modest-sized, world class museum.

I grew up in the rural communities of American Fork and Pleasant Grove, Utah. While a 5th grader, my mother was elected to be the president of the Grovecrest PTA in Pleasant Grove. My father was invited to become a member of the Lions Club in American Fork and was elected as a club officer. Me, I had a happy childhood, just another kid in the mix. I didn't realize until much later, but that acceptance of our family into the lives of these two communities were acts of redemption. I know our family was not alone in in that regard. Bob Hiyamizu, a childhood friend also had similar experiences. He now resides in the Bay Area and whether over lunch or a phone call we always reminisce about the positive experiences we had in Utah.

The abrupt and unannounced unearthing of the Wakasa monument has resulted in anguish, anger and pain for many in the Japanese American community. The pain and suffering also extends to Jane Beckwith and the Topaz Museum board. Finding a path forward requires all parties to be inclusive, to show some love, to show some compassion. A redemptive path forward is one way to honor Mr. Wakasa.

Jonathan Hirabayashi
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