

中村道子氏お悔みへの返礼

青木怜子 GWI (IFUW)元会長より (2021.5.5)

Dear Members of GWI,

Thank you very much for your warm and touchy condolences given to M. Nakamura on her passing recently.

Mails reaching us, as you might have noticed it, were tremendously numerous, coming from almost all over the world, which evidently showed how she had been missed by many and how deeply she was beloved and considered as an important person to GWI. Indeed, she deserved them because of her deeply committed contributions to GWI/IFUW and because of her amiable personalities.

As some of you may know, and as Kay Fusano already mentioned in her recent mail to Elizabeth Poskitt on Discussion line, JAUW had two big stars by the name of M. Nakamura, both of them were so active for many years in the past for IFUW. One was Mitchiko Nakamura who recently passed away because of heart failure, and another was Michi Nakamura who had left us several years ago because of cancer.

Mitchiko, Professor of English as well as the president of a women's university in Tokyo, was a taller one, and Michi, Curator and Head of the Library at Tsuda Women's College was a shorter one. Both of them were initiative members of JAUW, contributing greatly to IFUW since after JAUW was acknowledged as a member of IFUW in 1954.

Both names such as Mitchiko and Michi were known to us from the very start in our organization, and we understood it in the way that their names, one with "t" and another shortened, were due to their growth in childhood in the US (and Michi by origin) so that they could be easily and correctly pronounced by their American friends. Mitchiko (as she used to say by herself, I am Mitchiko with "t"), was a taller M, who served as a committee member of then the Status of Women of IFUW and served as well the Chief Organizer of the IFUW Circum-Pacific Regional Conventions in Japan in 1979 (when Fumi Takano was the Second Vice President and Daphne Purves

of NZ was the President). Outside IFUW, she was socially active, too, as Alternative Representative of Japan to the UN GA in the midst of adopting the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1979.

Michi, a shorter one, though without any official commitment to IFUW, gave an everlasting moral support to IFUW, by managing the budget at home for supporting the Office of IFUW. In fact, she even made her personal will before her death to contribute some out of her own pocket for the use of IFUW for whatever the purpose was. The will was exercised by Yasuko Igarashi, the past treasurer of JAUW, by passing contributions to Christine, then IFUW staff responsible to IFUW treasure. Besides, what we should not forget about mentioning for Michi was that she served as the Secretariat of the Office at Yokohama Conference of IFUW in 1995. All the registration was carried under her authority and responsibility. Besides, both Michi and Mitchiko served at home as the past presidents of JAUW.

In spite of a distinction made by Mitchiko and Michi, or because of this distinction that was made, a funny confusion was made in Vancouver Conference in 1980 at the receptionist desk of the dormitory of the University. Because of that the registration was made under the same surname but with different first names, the registration desk took them as a couple, and they arranged a room for Mr. & Mrs. Nakamura to be put together in the same twin-bed room, applying some special discount rate for the "couple." However, both Nakamuras, instead of taking this profitable offer, by explaining the situation, chose to be "safely" put in the separate rooms at a normal charge!

Both Mitchiko and Michi were so active and alert almost to the end of their lives, although while Michi attended our AGM a year before her passage, Mitchiko, because of her hearing problems, did not appear in person in any public meeting. Mitchiko, however, conversed with us on the Internet, and we received always an appropriate answer back to the questions we proposed. She was also humorous by sharing with me some jokes she heard from someone, and she was quite accurate up to the end through our digital communication. She passed away very peacefully, as we heard from their relatives, and celebrated the New Year's Day in quite good conditions. Her death was so sudden to us, and we could not accept it at first, but considering her age beyond 100, her physical strength was something amazing and extraordinary. So now, having both Mitchiko and Michi had passed away, heartfelt obituary given to

"Michiko Nakamura", either with "t" or without, or either shortened or not, must have reached to both of them.

Thanking you for having good memories of two M. Nakamuras,
All the best,

Reiko Aoki, the Past President of IFUW, 2001-2004