



## IN MEMORIAM

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### **Crashi Mitoma, MD, 1921-2005**

CRASHI MITOMA WAS BORN on June 18, 1921, in the little farming town of Suisun, east of Fairfield by the Delta. He was the sixth of eight children. The Mitoma family tended orchards and chickens; it was hard work on the farm and just trying to survive as a family was difficult.

The Mitoma boys shared a passion for fishing. Their favorite spot on Suisun Bay meant crossing a field in which a large bull roamed; a couple of the boys would distract the bull while the others scurried to the bay. Crashi kept this passion for fishing (and for Suisun Bay) for the rest of his life.

Working on a farm meant becoming familiar with car motors. As teenagers, Crashi and a brother would remove the engine from a farm truck, install it in a car and drive to Seventh Day Adventist Church (attended by a lot of pretty girls) in Mountain View for the weekend. They would then return to the farm and reinstall the engine on the truck.

Crashi had attended one quarter of college when Pearl Harbor was bombed on December 7, 1941. The Mitoma family was evacuated by the U. S. Government to Tanforan Race Track. I had known Crashi and his brothers since 1939. The Ozawa family was also sent to Tanforan and we became better acquainted with the Mitomas.

Crashi's first contact with the medical field occurred when he was given a job as an orderly and ambulance driver. The Mitoma and Ozawa family, along with the remainder of the detainees from Tanforan Assembly Center were sent to Topaz Relocation Center in Delta, Utah.

The President of Madison College was able to convince the U. S. Government to allow Crashi to attend Madison College in Tennessee. He received a service deferment and graduated from Washington Missionary College in Maryland with a degree in theology.

Crashi married his long time girlfriend, Mary Imaoka, on June 25, 1946. Mary, an RN, encouraged him to return to Washington Missionary College to take premed with his two sons in tow.

Crashi was accepted to Loma Linda University School of Medicine (we met there again - I was a year ahead of him) and graduated with the class of 1958. He then took a two-year family practice-oriented internship at Sacramento County Hospital, now the UC Davis Medical Center.

In 1960, Crashi opened his practice in South Sacramento on Freeport Blvd. and practiced there for 30 years. He retired in 1990 and spent time fishing and traveling. He was active in the Seventh Day Adventist Church and accepted leadership roles. He was a biblical scholar able to read the scriptures in both Greek and Hebrew.

In 2000, Crashi and Mary moved to Loma Linda to be close to their two surviving children, son Glenn and daughter Terri Kunihara, both dentists. (Their oldest son, Crashi Jr., died in his 50s, from a heart attack during his sleep.) Crashi's remaining years included teaching his seven grandchildren to fish and taking family trips to numerous

locations of interest. In April 2005, Crashi was hospitalized with rapidly progressing Lou Gehrig's Disease. He died peacefully on July 29, 2005.

Crashi and I traded calls for 30 years, and never had an argument. His love for God was reflected in the way he treated patients, friends and his peers.

Crashi will be missed and will be long remembered by those who knew him.

- Kenneth Ozawa, MD

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