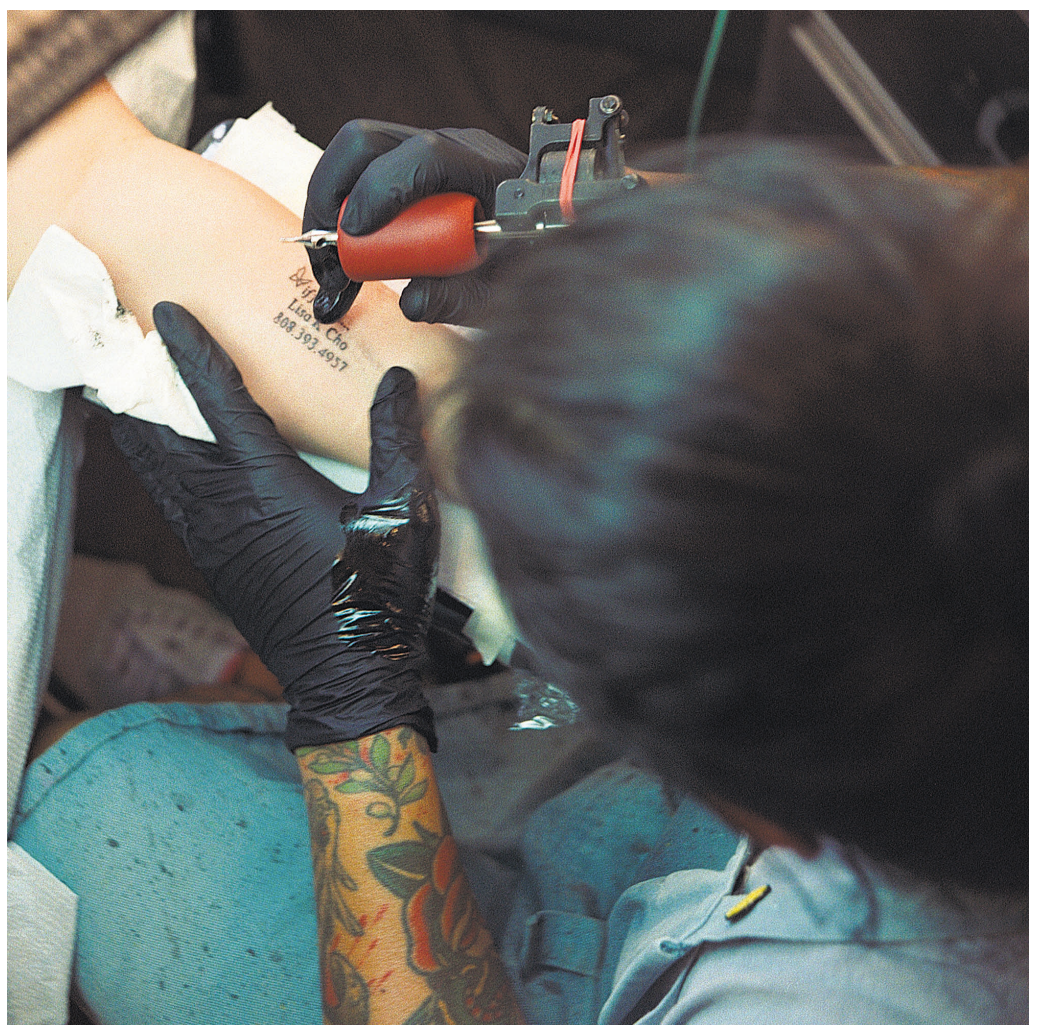


detours & travel

A mom's tattoo story

Susan Cho's decision to get inked was not frivolous, but practical



COURTESY PHOTOS BY LISA K. CHO

By Pat Gee
pgee@staradvertiser.com

A year ago, Susan Cho of Alewa Heights was approaching her 70th birthday and was having bad dreams about getting lost and not knowing how to find her way home.

With a history of dementia in her family, she was afraid of developing the same condition, although she's of

sound mind and in good health. Cho was seeing more frequent news reports about older people becoming confused and wandering about without identification, which increased her anxiety about how it could happen to her, she said.

That's why she decided to get a tattoo in August, a couple of months ahead of her October birthday. She wasn't being frivolous, like following a trend or making a fashion statement. Instead, she had her daughter's

name and phone number inscribed on her left arm right below her wrist, with a tiny butterfly adorning the first line: "if found...".

The tattoo would serve as permanent identification in an emergency, Cho thought, as she was always forgetting to put on her iWatch, which includes her identification and medical information. She never liked wearing medical alert bracelets.

Please see **TATTOO, D6**

Susan Cho received a tattoo from artist Steven Lam at the Working Class Tattoo Parlor in Kaimuki in August. Cho's daughter, Lisa K. Cho, documented the occasion with a series of photographs. The tattoo, a tiny butterfly with her daughter's name and phone number, serves as a permanent form of identification.