



ORGANIZATION OF CHINESE AMERICANS, INC.
EMBRACING THE HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS OF CHINESE AND ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES



OCA Peninsula Chapter of San Mateo County P.O. Box 218 San Mateo, CA
 94401 (650) 533-3065 www.ocasanmateo.org July, 2008

OCA Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration

by Martin Jung

A sian/Pacific American Heritage Month began as Asian Pacific American Heritage Week in May, 1979. Our Chapter's co-founder, Hayden Lee, was executive director of OCA then and was at the White House signing on Oct. 2, 1978, when President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution – public law 95-419. It became a permanent month-long event in May, 1993. The law honors the achievements of Asian/Pacific Americans and recognizes their contributions to the U.S. May was selected because of two significant events: on May 7, 1843, Nakahama Manjiro (a.k.a. John Mung or John Manjiro) became the first Japanese immigrant to arrive in the U.S. and on May 10, 1869, the transcontinental railroad was completed in large measure by Chinese laborers.



Shaolin Cultural Center performs a Chinese Lion Dance

The Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration involved the OCA San Mateo Chapter, the Asian American Curriculum Project, Japanese American Citizens League, and the Downtown San Mateo Association (DSMA). It was a fun and educational event. Families joined us in celebrating the achievements and history of Asians, local arts and crafts, food and drinks, and raffle prizes held on May 10th at the San Mateo Central Park. Takahashi Market provided tasty food.

The sunny day began with Juliet Fernandez, Warren Slocum's office, opened with "The National Anthem." Steve Okamoto, JAACL San Mateo Co-President, gave a warm welcome. Our host was Vicky Nguyen of NBC11, who was wonderful with her outgoing personality. San Mateo City Council Member John Lee filled in for the Carole Groom, Mayor of San

Mateo. Kelly Mitter of the Downtown San Mateo Association was next, followed by Supervisor Jerry Hill who presented OCA San Mateo Chapter President, Newsy Yan, with a Proclamation. State Senator Leland Yee, gave AACP, Inc. a Proclamation.



Entertainer Charlie Chin plays Asian Folk Music

Beautiful Lilian Kim of ABC7 News guided us through the afternoon festivities. A variety of Asian talent was showcased. Kariyushi Kai – Okinawan Music was passionate, Jeff Whittier – Music from India highlighted the flute and drums, Shaolin Cultural Center – Chinese Lion Dance delighted the crowd, Karlina – Indonesian duet featuring vocalist Karlina Gunawan dazzled with her wonderful voice, Charlie Chin – Asian American Folk Music Performance gave people an appreciation for the Chinese experience, San Mateo Kendo Dojo – Kendo Demonstration impressed us with their sword fighting, and the Kapalakiko Hawaiian Band kept the emotions upbeat.

Bigsumo Asian T-shirts, Kay Woo ceramics, Kayoko Designs Yuzen-Shi Jewelry, Patricia Jeong handmade crafts, and Pomegranate Designs Michele Yamaguma's creative art were the Exhibits displayed. We were happy to have Rosemary Gong, author of Good Luck Life, Oliver Chin author of Year of the Rat and Julie Black Belt, Hazuki Kataoka Kaishibai versions of Peach Boy and Moon Princess share their books. The San Mateo Police Cadets made sure everyone behaved themselves.

Building OCA is Building Our Community

by Newsy Yan

Dear members and friends of OCA,

It has been a very busy year for our chapter and time flies...

During the first half of 2008, OCA San Mateo continues its contribution to our community with the events and programs that ensure OCA's relevance in the day-to-



day lives of the Asian Pacific Americans in the county.

Just to name a few, we have had business mixers, the Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration, book promotions, and a healthcare workshop. Proudly, we concluded our annual Speak and Lead with Pride and awarded 10 scholarships.

Special appreciation goes to the generous donation of our benefactors Phil and Louise Wang, Monica and Adrian Arima, Dr. and Mrs. Chen Chung Ho, and Wells Fargo Bank.

Naturally, none of the success is possible without the reciprocal support of our members and volunteers. We ask that you review our "report cards" by going to the chapter's website <http://www.ocasanmateo.org/> and give us feed back whenever you can.

We ask that you actively participate in our upcoming events—the summer picnic, the voter's registration drive and the Annual APA Achievement Awards Gala. Even more importantly, we ask that you refer more friends to join OCA San Mateo and be part of its worthwhile endeavor.

Summer Picnic

Mark your calendar
Sunday, Aug. 17th
San Mateo Central Park

OCA AND AACI SPONSOR A HEALTH CARE TALK

By Newsy Yan

What is the percentage of Asian Americans who live in San Mateo County and have NOT visited a dentist for 5 years or more? Which Asian ethnic group gets diagnosed with diabetes the most? What type of cancer is rated the highest risk among Asian Americans? These are just a few questions that were raised and answered by Ms. Michele Lew, the president and CEO of Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI.org), at her presentation on April 29, 2008, in the Foster City Library.

Co-sponsored by OCA San Mateo, the health care talk addressed dozens of issues facing the Asian American community. Nationally, Asian Americans generally enjoy higher educational attainment rates, higher median household incomes and lower rates of poverty, yet we continue to experience the disparities in access to health care and the quality of care.

In San Mateo County, interestingly, twice as many Asian Pacific Islanders viewed their general emotional and physical health condition favorably than their white counterparts, according to the results of the 2001 California Health Interview Survey.

Some important health facts about Asian Americans include the fact that liver cancer and cervical cancer are extremely high. Smoking among Asian men is higher than any other race (with Korean adult smokers topping 66%). South Asians have the lowest percentage ever being diagnosed high blood pressure, while Chinese enjoys the lowest percentage suffering diabetes.

To improve our access to affordable, culturally appropriate care, Michele made following recommendations:

- √ Promote community-based research programs and accurate data collection
- √ . Support community health clinics
- √ . Provide preventative care to the uninsured/underinsured Asian Americans
- √ . Increase diversity of the health care workforce

The Experience of the Chapter Interns

Our Chapter's three interns will be moving on to college this fall. Here, they tell their experiences as OCA Interns:

Ruby Chua: As the OCA publications intern for three years in a row, my duties were to take regular minutes during board meetings, volunteer at the organization's events and contribute articles or photos to the newsletter. I was also the president of YOCA and facilitated any requests of the board to the group.

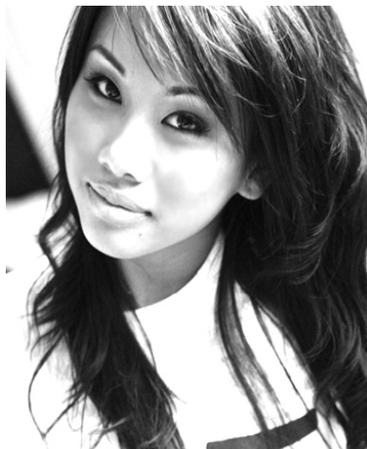


My experience with OCA contributed to my personal growth in many ways. I learnt the benefits of representing my heritage in the community for the advancement of civil rights.

Additionally, I was able to participate in the OCA national

convention in Sacramento, which was also an eye-opening event. At the convention, I met several youths with goals alike mine and attended conventions that encouraged us to aspire to the next level of achieving. I wish to continue my participation in OCA or a similar non-profit during and after my years in college.

Victoria (Tori) Souttaphonh: I want to express my sincere appreciation to The Organization of Chinese Americans, San Mateo Chapter. This opportunity lets me grow academically,



professionally and socially.

I'll always cherish family that once were strangers to me, the experience I've gone through, and the knowledge I gained throughout the year. I learned to be tactful and ethical during crucial times of busy work. As a public relations intern the experience has allowed me to use my continuous flow of imagination, combined with the cutting edge ideas, in designing the chapter publication such as event flyers and program.

Apart from school and work I've opened up to my Asian culture and grew to know more about my roots. If I were given the chance to intern again I would do it in a heartbeat.



Charles Zhang: My experience working as the technology

intern for the OCA San Mateo Chapter has been a very rewarding one. It was my first internship, and my first time working with adults in an official organization. Much of my job consisted of updating the chapter's website and tweaking its layout. I'd add photos from events, news, information about future events, and announcements.

To tell the truth, I did not have a whole lot of experience prior to the internship on web design and working with websites, but it was not too difficult to learn the system. You just need a program that can work with html files and an FTP program to transfer files onto their server. I also managed memberships and announcements on the Yahoo groups mailing lists. Each month, I attended board meetings; it was great to be able to see and sometimes participate in the decision-making process of the organization. At the meetings, the board members discussed the current status of the chapter, what happened over the past month, and what was in store for the future. This internship has been wonderful and beneficial to me, enhancing my work ethic, sense of responsibility, and communication skills.

Happenings at National OCA

by Melodie Lew, Board Member

The Greater Los Angeles Chapter of OCA hosted the April board meeting in downtown Los Angeles. Several items of business are noteworthy. State Farm is sponsoring an entrepreneur program in the Greater Washington, D.C. area, Chicago, and New York City. They are looking for new sites for the fall and 4 new sites to sponsor in 2009. The program provides training for Asian Pacific American women who are looking to start or grow businesses. Attendees meet regularly over a course of 10-15 weeks for 3-5 hours a day.

National OCA reported that the office wants to coordinate and document OCA chapter activities in voter/civic participation activities. This is especially crucial this year because of the presidential and Congressional elections.

Chapters are encouraged to switch to Quickbooks for finance and membership record-keeping. This will make information transfer much easier and facilitate communications between the local chapters and National. The cost per chapter is a discounted fifty dollars. Credit card acceptance is available for a reasonable cost. Chapters do not have to sign up for it on an annual basis, but can activate the credit card acceptance as needed. For example, if a chapter wants to accept credit card payments for a fundraiser, the service can be activated for that month only and the cost would be for that month only, plus the usual per transaction fee charge.

National OCA has begun monthly conference calls to help members stay on top of current events. The first call was the May 14th. Topics included the convention update and hate crimes—workshops, help with developing ideas for workshops, lessons learned, and updates on local hate crimes. Possible topics for June include media images. Please contact Kathay Feng for more information.

The board meeting occurred just after the Olympic torch passed through San Francisco, and the protests against China regarding its handling of Tibet. There was a measured discussion on how to handle the effects of comments made about the events. Excerpts from a statement released by National follow: "OCA...is concerned about the impact on race relations in the United States caused by the use of negative language and racial stereotypes in the ongoing debate on the Olympics in China....OCA strongly supports free speech, dialogue and engagement. These are the cornerstones of American democracy."

In promoting dialogue, however, we believe our public officials, media representatives, and community leaders need to be aware that the language used in this debate has a direct impact on race relations in the U.S. Whether bullying on the playground, hurtful behavior in the workplace, or more serious bias-related violence, racialized rhetoric can have a very negative impact on the daily lives of all Americans.

We restate that OCA does not take a position on the politics of any foreign country but instead focuses on the welfare and civil rights of Asian Pacific Americans. We also actively promote the need for thoughtful discussions and respectful language from all parties as we engage in this and other important dialogues. The evening was light and attendees participated in an Asian fusion dinner, mah jong, karaoke, and other fun activities.

OCA San Mateo Business Mixer

by Ruby Chua

On Wednesday, June 25, 2008, the OCA San Mateo Chapter held a business mixer at the Burlingame Doubletree Hotel. This was the first time OCA San Mateo held their event at the Burlingame Doubletree Hotel and the meeting room location provided was well equipped. While checking in, guests were provided with free parking tickets and encouraged to sign up for OCA membership. Light appetizers and refreshments were available as guests mingled and made business connections. OCA San Mateo has always had successful business mixers with good turnouts, and this one was no different.



At the Mixer: from left, Josephine Wang, Jacob Chu, Linda La, Warren Seeto, Wade Loo and Po Yee Ung.

ELECTION 2008 MADE EASY!

by Edwin Chan

The most common excuses people give as to why they didn't vote in the last election are: (1) they didn't register in time or (2) they didn't have the time to go to the polling place.

2008 will be a historic year for California voters. Registered Californians will have the opportunity to vote three times in the upcoming year—for presidential nominees in February, for candidates and ballot measures in the California State primary in June and in the general election in November. Don't forget: the deadline to register to vote in California is 15 days before each local and statewide Election Day.

Registering to vote is easy! Just go to www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_vr.htm and fill out the form. You can also register to vote at your local post office. Once you have registered, you don't have to register again unless you move, change your name, or change your political party affiliation.

San Mateo County also provides the election website in Chinese. Please visit www.shapethefuture.org/voters/CHdefault.asp

If you have a hectic schedule and do not have the time to go to your local polling places to vote, an alternative is to sign up for an Absentee Ballot. To receive an Absentee Ballot in the mail, go to www.shapethefuture.org/absentee/default.asp, sign up, and then use the absentee ballot to cast your vote in the comfort of your home and at a convenient time. You can either mail in your absentee ballot any time before Election Day or drop it off on Election Day at any polling place. Here are some important dates to keep in mind:

Deadlines to register for Absentee Ballots

February Election: January 29, 2008

June Election: May 27, 2008

November Election: October 28, 2008

2008 Officers & Directors

Newsy Yan, *President*
Martin Jung, *Vice-President*
Jacob Chu, *Treasurer*
Martin Jung, *Acting Secretary*

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David Chai, *Speak & Lead Program*
Walter Chao, *Co-Chair Website*
Jacob Chu, *Co-Chair Website/Co-Chair Interns*
Amy Chung, *Fundraising*
Hayden Lee, *Public Affairs/Communications/Newsletter*
Martin Jung, *Events/YOCA*
William C. Kwong, *Co-Chair Interns*
Po Yee Ung, *Membership*
Alden Soohoo, *Scholarship*

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Arlene Chang, Cary Chen, Karen Gok Lee, Melodie Lew

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OCA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name(s) _____
(please include all names if family membership)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (Day) _____ (Night) _____

Email _____ Occupation _____

Family, \$45 Single, \$35 Student, \$20

I am interested in helping in the following areas:

Activities Public Affairs Membership
 Newsletter Fundraising Other

Send application to: OCA San Mateo Chapter, P.O. Box 218, San Mateo, CA 94401

**Organization of Chinese Americans, Inc.
Peninsula Chapter of San Mateo County
P.O. Box 218
San Mateo, CA 94401**

TO:

2008 Events

- July 23. Voter Registration
- Jul. 31-Aug. 3, Natl Convention, Wash., DC
- August 17, Picnic
- Sept. 11, Mixer
- Sept. 27, Asian Achievement Awards, S.S. Francisco
- Oct. 16, Elections and Voting, with County Election Manager David Tom
- Oct. 19, Natl Corporate Achievement Awards, Salt Lake City
- Nov. 19, Second Harvest Food Sort
- Dec. 14, Holiday party