

# LANTERN

November, 2007

## Flavors of the Far East

The Chamber will be having a mixer, "Flavors of the Far East," as a get-together and networking opportunity for members, new and old. It will be held from 5:45-8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 14, at the Hawaii Loa Ridge clubhouse, 669 Puuikena Drive. There will be heavy *pupu*, desserts, and liquid refreshments, and you're asked to bring a bottle of your favorite wine to share. The cost is \$15.00 per person. If you plan to attend, call the Chamber at 533-3181 or e-mail **Grace Chan** at [gchan@chinesechamber.com](mailto:gchan@chinesechamber.com) by Monday, November 5. (Since Hawaii Loa Ridge is a gated community, your name must be on the list at the guard's booth).

## NARCISSUS FESTIVAL OVERVIEW by Ted Li

The 59th annual Narcissus Festival is now under way! It started with a very successful 5th annual Splendor of China on Saturday and Sunday, October 6 and 7. Next will come noon-time public appearances of the thirteen lovely contestants: Sunday, November 11, at Windward Mall; Saturday, November 17, at Kahala Mall; and Sunday, November 25, at Ala Moana Center. Then comes the evening that everyone has been waiting for, Saturday, January 5, when a new Narcissus Queen and her four princesses will be selected. The gala Coronation Ball will be held on Saturday, January 26, at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Coral Ballroom, with an evening of delicious food, pageantry, and the new Narcissus Queen's crowning and first waltz. The Chinatown Open House will take place on Friday, February 1, when the Narcissus court, escorted by Chamber officers, will make their way through Chinatown, extending best wishes in area stores and restaurants. Concurrently, on Friday and Saturday, February 1 and 2, there will be a Chinatown New Year Celebration, with a variety of booths at the Chinatown Cultural Plaza and on Maunakea Street. Chinese families will gather in Hawaii and around the world on Thursday, February 7, to celebrate the coming of a new year, the Year of the Rat. And the Narcissus Festival will come to a conclusion with the stage production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Flower Drum Song," tentatively scheduled for the Diamond Head Theatre on Wednesday, March 26. Each of you is cordially invited to participate in each and all of the events!

## *Narcissus Pageant* ALERT

by Michele Choy

This year, the Chinese New Year starts early, on Monday, February 7, 2008. As a result, the 59th annual Narcissus Pageant will be held on Saturday, January 5. Once again, it will be held in the historic Hawaii Theatre, starting promptly at 6:30 p.m. Emcee for the evening will be **Joann Shin**, formerly of KHNL News 8. Tickets are now available through the Chinese Chamber office until November 12; after that, tickets will be available from the Hawaii Theatre Center box office. Prices are \$33.00 and \$28.00 each (prices include a \$2.00 restoration fee and \$1.00 service fee). The thirteen lovely contestants have been working hard since late August and are currently going through cultural and pageant training classes. Come see the result of their hours of practice on January 5!

## COMMUNITY INTEREST

PAAC study tour. For those Chamber members with public high school (9th-12th grade) students, the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council will have a 2008 summer study tour to China and Taiwan. The tour will be from June 15 to July 1. Applications are available and must be postmarked not later than February 25, 2008. For more information on the twenty scholarships and eligibility and selection criteria, as well as applications (and other scholarship programs), call **Natasha Chappell** at PAAC at 944-7759 or visit its Web site at [www.paachawaii.org](http://www.paachawaii.org).

Recycle your phone books. Hawaiian Telcom is in the process of distributing new telephone books (four were in a plastic bag!), apparently to every business and home on Oahu. (Then there are competitors also distributing books as in the last several years). At least HT has begun collecting old (or even new) unwanted telephone books on October 23 and will supposedly continue doing so until November 17. According to KITV-4 News, collecting takes place Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., at three Oahu locations, including HT's Mapunapuna base yard at Kikuwaena Place. For more information (seemingly unavailable at HT's Web site), go to <http://www.thehawaiiichannel.com/news/14408740/detail.html>.



夏威夷中華總商會

THE  
CHINESE  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE  
OF HAWAII



President  
Edward Y. W. Pei

Five years ago, **Reuben Wong** had a vision that the Chinese Chamber could stage a trade show at the Blaisdell Exhibition Hall that would provide an opportunity for Chinese merchants in Hawaii and abroad to display their wares. He also envisioned that thousands of residents and visitors would come to this event and enjoy the opportunity to shop and browse through interesting shopkeepers' booths and cultural exhibits displayed by the Chinese societies and organizations in Hawaii. And, of course, what would a Chinese show be without Chinese food? For the first two years, the event was called "Taste of China," but the name was changed to "Splendor of China" the third year to assure that this show would not be narrowly perceived as just a food show.

Five years have passed, and this year, the event hosted 130 vendor booths, and received 15,000 to 20,000 visitors. This event also set a new standard by bringing in a troupe of performers from Sichuan Province that dazzled the audience with authentic folk dances, daring acrobatics, and amazing face-changing artistry. Congratulations to **Dennis Hwang** and his hard-working committee for dedicating countless hours to the many facets of this complex operation. Kudos also to **Lisa Ontai**, our publicist, who did a magnificent job of getting the Chamber considerable air time to promote the event on television, on radio, and in print.

One of the goals of this event was to afford the Chinese merchants in Chinatown an opportunity to reach an audience

that may not frequent Chinatown. Hopefully, the heavy dose of Chinese culture and merchandise dispensed at the Splendor of China will encourage more of our residents and tourists to visit Chinatown. But why aren't people going there in the first place?

Did you know that Honolulu's Chinatown is the oldest in the United States? Furthermore, tourists who find their way there are enthralled by its authenticity, the sights and sounds, the wonderful cuisine and interesting merchandise, and a cultural setting that is foreign to them. And residents go to Chinatown to buy produce, roast duck, moon cake, and other Chinese and Asian delicacies. And, yes, there are so many wonderful restaurants there.

The average resident visiting Chinatown spends 1.5 hours per visit and \$30.21. The tourist spends over 2 hours per visit and \$64.50. The resident averages 14.55 visits per year while the tourist averages 2.66 visits per year. These numbers aren't bad, but there aren't nearly enough tourists visiting Chinatown and residents typically only come on weekends. So, why aren't more people going to Chinatown? When was the last time you made the trek?

Perhaps some shy away from Chinatown because they perceive that there is a lack of parking. Did you know that within the Chinatown district, there are nine parking structures available for the public, at reasonably affordable rates? Unfortunately, some of these lots are not sufficiently marked and the uninitiated may have difficulty finding one of the lots. An easy solution may just be appropriate signage.

There is also a perception that Chinatown is dirty, crowded, and unsafe. Some might spend more time in Chinatown if public restroom facilities were more readily available. Despite these shortcomings, those who visit Chinatown like the diversity and culture, the food and restaurants, the open markets and fresh produce, and the shopping and stores.

The tourists actually like the atmosphere and the ambience.

Actually, portions of Chinatown are undergoing a renaissance of sorts. Certainly the arts community has embraced Chinatown, and events like First Friday are doing much to bring people into the area. There are talks about creating loft space to attract more residential use of Chinatown. Some small businesses have moved into the area because rents are reasonably affordable. The City is offering free wireless Internet (Wi-Fi) access in the area. These developments are all helping to revitalize Chinatown. We only hope that we will not lose the cultural ambience and "authenticity" that many treasure.

So, what role should the Chinese Chamber play in the future of Chinatown? Should we be advocating for improvement in infrastructure, relaxing of prohibitive regulations, or creating a better experience for our visitors? Should we focus on stimulating sales and foot traffic for the merchants? Should we band together with the other organizations with a vested interest in Chinatown to come up with mutually agreeable strategies? Does the Chamber even have the capacity to pursue these ambitious undertakings?

I hope all of you will help us answer these questions. Fortunately, there was an extensive research project conducted last year, and as a first step, we will be reviewing the results and recommendations. I will appoint an *ad hoc* committee to begin discussions on how the Chamber should be involved in shaping the future of Chinatown. I would certainly welcome any input our membership might have on the role the Chamber should play.

See you soon!

[Editor's note: Six of the nine Chinatown parking locations are municipal lots and have day and after hours rates. A printable map of these locations – together with Century Square and Harbor Court – is available at <http://artsdistricthonolulu.com/parkingmap/parkingmap.pdf>].

# Splendor of China Wrap-up

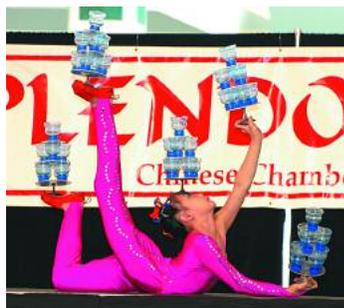
by Dennis Hwang

Who would have guessed that only five years ago, an event envisioned by **Reuben Wong** called “The Taste of China,” with only 30-40 booths and karaoke as one of the main attractions, would grow to be such a success! However, under the able leadership of past chairs **Terrill Chock**, **Alvin Wong**, **Ed Pei**, and **Ted Li**, the event has grown each year in attendance, the number of vendor booths, publicity, and sophistication.

This year’s fifth annual event was no exception, with record crowds of over 10,000 in attendance and nearly 130 vendor booths. Certainly the highlight was the Sichuan Provincial Folk Arts Performance Group, which charmed the audience with their traditional dance, amazing acrobatics, and face-changing magic. The crowds were happy to be treated to such rare entertainment, and they massed around the stage of each performance, sometimes waiting two or three hours in the exhibition hall for the next act or coming back the next day. The *Keiki* Corner was also packed as **Pearl Yuen**, with the help of title sponsor Panda Express, created an elaborate display that featured Chinese animals such as the giant Panda. Even traditional acts such as the eating contest, Chinese dog show, fashion show, and lion dancing on poles (*jongs*) continued to draw the crowds.

The vendors were equally happy with the attendance, and some have already indicated that they would come back next year and sign up for multiple booths! Especially popular were the 2008 Beijing summer Olympic logo items, the jewelry, fashions, and of course, the food.

The Chamber would like to thank the many committee chairs who made the event possible: **Wanda Tse** and **Angie Shiroma** (manpower); **Vernon Ching** (entertainment); **Gerald Chang** (sponsors); **Libby Lew** (administration); **Laisin Lee**, **Daniel Chun**, and **Doreen Sue-Ako** (translators); **Kevin Lam** (site); **Rena Hwang**, (stage management);



Photos courtesy of Linda Louie, Yen Chun, and Dennis Hwang.

**Reuben Wong** (opening ceremony); **Sylvia Louie** (reception); **Walter Chang** (hospitality); **Lisa Ontai** and **Yu Shing Ting** (publicity); **Nelson Wang** and **Cy Feng** (Sichuan logistics); **Justin Goo** (Web site); **Angela Wu-Ki** (graphics); **Lily Tang** and **Joe Young** (Chinese societies); **Patrick Graham** (chamber sales); **Danny Auyoung** (food area); **Michele Choy** (fashion show); **Linda Louie** (*mahalo* party); and **Daniel Chun** (vendors). All of them did a terrific job!!

If you would like to help with next year’s Splendor of China (Saturday and Sunday, October 4 and 5, 2008), please let the Chinese Chamber know (tel. no. 533-3181). Next year will be even bigger, with more entertainment and fun for the entire family. Also, reserve your booth(s) if you are a Chamber member. Early registrants will be given a preferred location and will lock in this year’s booth prices.



## MEMBER NEWS

It's a boy! On Tuesday, October 2, Chamber director and *Midweek* managing editor **Yu Shing Ting** gave birth to a twenty-one inch son, weighing in at seven pounds, fourteen ounces. Congratulations, Yu Shing, and maybe you'll bring the little one to one of the Chamber's upcoming Narcissus Festival or other Chamber events to show him off.

The *Honolulu Advertiser's* 2007 *Ilima* Awards to "Hawaii's best restaurants" has come out as a very large supplement insert and been distributed to its subscribers. Among the recipients were **Thomas Ky's** Assaggio (People's Choice for one of three "Best Ethnic

Restaurants" as well as one of the "Best Italian") with its four locations around Oahu; **Jennifer Chan's** Little Village Noodle House, **Linda and Larry Chan's** The Mandarin; **Raymond Siu's** Pah-Ke Chinese Restaurant in Kaneohe; and **Li May Tang's** Shanghai Bistro were selected as "Best Chinese;" **Kwock Nam Lau's** Royal Kitchen in the Chinatown Cultural Plaza was selected in the "Manapua and other Chinese Takeout" category; Jennifer Chan's Restaurant Epic was among the "Best Island Contemporary" (and the newspaper adds that the name is an acronym for "Euro-Asian Pacific International Cuisine," so should be listed as EPIC); **Thanh Quoc Lam's** Ba-Le Sandwich Shops, with its many locations around Oahu was one of the "Best Vietnamese;" and of course, **Eddie Flores, Jr.** and **Kwock Yum "Johnson" Kam's** ever-expanding (in Hawaii and on the mainland) L & L Drive-Inns was chosen in "Burgers, Plate Lunch, and Takeout." Both Little Village Noodle House and Pah-Ke Chinese Restaurant are past *Ilima* Award winners. Congratulations to each of you!

**David Low**, managing director of Hawaii Capital Management, recently won the 2007 Hawaii's Fittest CEO contest, sponsored by ESPN, 24 Hour Fitness, the Medical Corner, and *Hawaii Business* magazine. A

buff-looking Dave is pictured with his racing bike in the October issue of *Hawaii Business*.

According to the "Dining Out" insert in the October 7 *Advertiser*, the \$12.95 lunchtime *dim sum* buffet at **Li May Tang's** Shanghai Bistro has been reduced to \$8.95. Five made-to-order entrees – salmon steak, vegetarian hot-and-spicy beef, pork chop, shrimp "steak," and *kung pao* chicken – are available for \$4.00 each. And the 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. buffet includes hot entrees as well as salads.

The October 17 issue of *Midweek's* "Honolulu Pa'ina" focused on the recent launch of Coldwell Banker Pacific Properties' new *Island Homes Collection* magazine. Among those pictured were Coldwell Banker realtor-agents **Elle Zhang** and **Sharissa Chun**. Elle is a new member and Sharissa is a former member and something of a *feng shui* expert.

Narcissus Queen **Jessica Lau** was pictured — crown, sash, and *cheongsam* – in the October 24 *Midweek's* "Honolulu Pa'ina" while attending the 2007 Technology Industry Awards during the Pacific Technology Foundation's recent seventh annual "Flavors of Technology" gala .

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov 12	Mon	<b>Veterans Day</b>
Nov 14	Wed	<b>Chamber Society Event – Flavors of the Far East Mixer</b> Hawaii Loa Ridge Club House 5:45 – 8 p.m.
Nov 20	Tue	<b>Executive Board Meeting</b> Chamber's Office – 12:00 noon
Nov 22	Thu	<b>Thanksgiving Day</b>
Nov 27	Tue	<b>Board of Directors Meeting</b> The New Empress Restaurant 12:00 noon

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### NEW MEMBERS

At its October 18 meeting, the Chamber board of directors approved the application for **James Brow**, a Realtor-Associate with Prudential Advantage Real Estate (sponsored by **Ted Li**).



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