

Chamber Building

As members know or should know by now, after almost a century, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii has a building of its own, with help from **Warren Luke** and the “warm-hearted” bankers at Hawaii National Bank. The building was dedicated and blessed on Wednesday, June 3, and an open house for Chamber members was held on Saturday, June 6. Even if you couldn’t make those events, please feel free to stop by the building and take a look at the upstairs office spaces. (Unfortunately, there is no elevator, but one is planned for the phase II renovations).

For the grand opening and blessing as well as the reception, floral arrangements were sent by Harry Winston (**James Schaefer**); Hawaii National Bank (**Warren Luke**); HomeStreet Bank (**Mona Choy-Beddow**); Skyway Travel (**Peggy Luu**); The Fund Development Group (**Patti Look**); Association of Chinese from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos; Hawaii Chinese Association; Lung Doo Benevolent Society; See Yup Society/Yee Yee Tong; and United Chinese Society. Art objects or pictures were received from Dong Guan Society of Hawaii and Kwantung Community Honolulu Lin Yee Hui. And *lisee* were received from Luk Tung Kuen Association of Hawaii, See Dai Doo Society, and U.S.-China People’s Friendship Association – Hawaii Chapter. These expressions of support and best wishes are gratefully acknowledged.

The new building is the result of over a year’s hard work by the building committee: **Wesley Fong** and **Victor Lim**, co-chairs; **Walter Chang**, **Kenneth Chong**, **Eddie Flores, Jr.**, **Frances Goo**, **Dennis Hwang**, **Libby Lew**, **Ted Li**, **Wen Cheung Lin**, **Edward Pei**, **Alvin Wong**, **Delwyn Wong**, and **Reuben Wong**. Acquiring a building for the Chamber had been a dream dating back to the presidencies of Ken, Wes, and Frances, but the search went into high gear in 2008 and a building was located in mid-year. With the building acquisition, the building committee is shifting to fund-raising to retire the mortgage as well as to accumulate funds for phase II renovations, including replacing the worn-out air conditioner, removing asbestos-containing roofing, and adding an elevator.

The office equipment, furniture, and computers were moved on Mother’s Day, Sunday, May 11. But starting on Saturday, May 10, dozens of boxes were moved from the both the office and the basement at 76 North King Street. On many of the weekends, male (and mostly senior) Chamber members have been moving boxes and boxes of Chamber property from the old office location. **Gerald Chang** rounded up the volunteers to help out with the heavy lifting: **Walter Chang**, **Chian Leng Chia**, **Vernon Ching**, **Roger Dunn**, **Gayle Lau**, **Alvin Wong**, and of course **Wen Chung Lin**. Roger was the newbie while all of the others were veterans of the earlier move several years ago from 42 North King Street. Special thanks go to Walter, Vernon, and Alvin, who as former presidents could have faded away, but who have remained active in Chamber affairs. The three of you epitomize the management principle of “leadership by example.” My deepest thanks to each of you as well as to the other members mentioned here. Well done, gentlemen!

In the near term, there still remains work to be done with the many boxes of Chamber property. There are about twenty boxes of albums and envelopes of photos, most of them presumably from past Narcissus Festivals and Goodwill



(continued on page 4)





President
Dennis J. Hwang

Aloha, members. I am greatly honored and humbled to serve as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii President for the next year. I have been with the Chamber for 16 years now and believe that our membership, including the past presidents, board of directors, members, and associate members, is our greatest strength.

Before I begin, I would like to thank **Ted Li** for doing an excellent job as president this past year. He, along with all the past presidents, have put the Chamber on very strong footing. During Ted's year, we were able to find, renovate, and move into our new office building, which the Chamber finally owns after almost 100 years in existence. The building gives us greater capability to serve our membership and community, to fulfill the Chamber's mission of civic responsibility, and to reach our full potential as an organization.

It is an honor to serve with our executive team, President-Elect – **Jeff Lau**, 1st Vice President – **John Hui**, 2nd Vice President – **Libby Lew**, 3rd Vice President – **Gerald Chang**, Treasurer – **Sylvia Louie**, Assistant Treasurer – **Gayle Lau**, English Secretary – **Michele Choy**, and Chinese Secretary – **John Zhang**. During the year, please support them and contact them if you have any comments, questions or ideas. They are all very capable and eager to serve the Chamber and our members.

During the installation of the officers on May 22, I outlined five areas that we should concentrate on to reach our full potential as an organization and to carry out our mission of serving our members and the community. Let me summarize:

1) We cannot help the community if we are not strong ourselves. We must strengthen our organization by renewing our efforts to serve our members. Several years ago, when I served as membership VP, someone asked what kind of members we want. To me, the

answer was simple, we want active members, those who benefit from the programs we have and contribute to programs we offer. From the awardees at the installation, such as **George Chu**, **Warren Luke**, **Blossom Tyau**, and **Paul Hayashi**, we know that many of our members continue to help the Chamber year after year because they have an interest in and passion for what they do. So we will find out where our members interests are, whether it be in networking, culture or business, and tailor or develop programs to meet those interests. We will find out what their passion is so that they can assist year after year and make our programs sustainable. Much time in the beginning of the year will be spent on planning, so that the members are best utilized and the goals of active members and sustainable programs are achieved.

2) We must concentrate on the new associate membership program and integrating these younger members into our organization. We are excited about this program and believe it can be a win-win situation – benefitting the associate member in the area of career development, our regular members in the areas of manpower and training, and even the Community Development Center in the programs that can be offered. How the associate members are integrated will be the subject of planning efforts in the beginning of the year. All members by now should have received a letter in the mail and a survey form on how you can participate. Please fill out the form, as this program can benefit you as well as the associate members and Chamber.

3) We now have our new building and the Chinatown Community Development Center, which is the skeleton for our future. We must now build a body around it, consisting of strong, sustainable programs that benefit the community. Our members have stepped to the plate and we already have a list of faculty, ready to offer classes, advice, and mentoring to small and future businesses in Chinatown. We have classes in starting a business, accounting, real estate, business structure, ethics, and basic computer skills. We have had a forum on the Obama Economic Stimulus package and one on the National Heritage Area, both affecting the Chinatown community. This is just a start. In the next year, along with our executive committee and other members, I will meet with as many organizations as possible to get to know them and to determine where there is a natural fit and overlap in our programs. Wherever there is a natural fit, we will be seeking partnering opportunities. We

would like to work with the UH Shidler Business School, the UH Center for Chinese Studies, Hawaii Pacific University, DBEDT, the City, and other Chinese organizations. The key is partnering at all levels to allow us to offer the kinds of classes, referral services, and programs that can best serve the Chinatown community.

4) It is important to put our organization on a solid financial footing. We must work to retire some of the debt from buying and renovating our new building and creating our training center. I will ask the building committee to remain as active as ever and to meet on a regular basis so that we can accomplish the goal of paying off this debt. I ask each of you to contribute to our building fund, and please remember that the Chinese Chamber will install a plaque listing you or your company with a donation of \$500.00 or more. In addition, with the Chinese Chamber Foundation, we will develop programs that are eligible for grants and assistance from the City, state, and federal governments, and on the international level.

5) Finally, I ask the Chamber to consider creating a Center for Foreign Relations and Exchanges within the Community Development Center that will foster foreign exchanges of all kinds in the areas of business, culture, education, and science. The center would work with all countries. In many of these areas, the Chamber is already active and in other areas, increased exchanges are readily attainable. In all cases, the Chamber and community can benefit by drawing on existing strengths on our organization.

In the area of culture, we have had world-class performers come in from Beijing and Sichuan province. These exchanges have helped to greatly enhance our annual Splendor of China event. In the area of goodwill, there are military exchanges led by past president **Wes Fong**; earthquake relief contributions spearheaded by past president **Reuben Wong**; and of course, our Narcissus Goodwill Tour (see next month's message), which has gone into China for 28 years now. All of these exchanges are good, but more can be done with a small portion of the Community Development Center's efforts devoted to exchange activities.

So these are the areas we will be concentrating on this year to continue to strengthen our organization and make it ready for its second hundred years of existence. Please join our executive team and me for the journey.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

The annual Chamber golf tournament, an "International Golf Challenge," will be held on Wednesday, July 22, at the links of Ewa Beach Golf Club. Check-in time and registration start at 10:30 a.m. and tee time is 12:00 p.m. The format is two-person, one best ball. The cost is \$100.00 per player, \$200.00 per team of two, which includes golf and cart fees, light lunch, and the post-tournament awards banquet. Please note that for those who can't make it for golf (or don't golf at all), you can still sign up for just the awards banquet for only \$30.00! Reservations deadline is July 15, and no refunds will be made after July 17. So come out for a day in the sunshine in Leeward Oahu or for at least the networking at the awards banquet.

Phoenix Dance Chamber Anniversary

On Saturday, August 1, the Phoenix Dance Chamber will celebrate its 20th anniversary with a Chinese dance concert, "Legacy of the Phoenix," starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Hawaii Theatre. Current members as well as founding dancers will perform. Over the years, the dancers have performed throughout the state, showcasing the cultural diversity of China; competed in the North America Chinese Dance Competition in Vancouver; and performed at various Chinese Chamber events. Scholarships are provided to enable some of the young dancers to participate in the trips. This is your chance to enjoy an evening of dances from throughout China, the grace and athleticism of the dancers, and the sumptuous, colorful costumes. Prices, including a \$3.00 Hawaii Theatre restoration fee, are \$29.00 general admission, \$25.00 seniors and students, and \$19.00 children. For tickets, call the Hawaii Theatre Box Office at 528-0506, Tuesday through Saturday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Come out and support this worthy Chinese group, which helps perpetuate our Chinese culture.

NARCISSUS PAGEANT DONATIONS

The 61st Narcissus Pageant will be held on Saturday, January 9, 2010. However, due to the Narcissus souvenir book printing deadline, Pageant chair **Michele Choy** is now looking for people or companies willing to donate any of the following: sashes for Miss Congeniality/Talent – \$65.00 each; trophies for Miss Congeniality/Talent – \$60.00 each; four semi-finalist trophy packages (A-D) – \$110.00 each; four bouquets for the princesses – \$40.00 each; four semi-finalist bouquet packages (A-D) – \$60.00 each; judges' luncheon – \$200.00; judges' dinner – \$375.00; and leis – \$200.00. All donors will be acknowledged in the souvenir book as well as the printed Pageant program. Deadline for donations is Monday, August 10. If you wish to donate for any of the items, please call the Chamber at 533-3181.

Hawaii's Best

The annual list of "Hawaii's Best" appeared in the Sunday, June 14, *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. As usual, a number of Chamber members' restaurants appeared in a variety of "Restaurants & Food" categories. Based on the votes of *Star-Bulletin* and *Midweek* readers, Little Village Noodle House (**Jennifer Chan**) was first in Chinese Food; L & L Hawaiian Barbecue (**Eddie Flores, Jr.** and **Kwock Yum "Johnson" Kam**) was first in Loco Moco and second in Plate Lunch; McDonald's (**Victor Lim** has seven franchises on Oahu) was second in Fast Food and Third in Coffee; Assaggio (**Thomas Ky**) was second in Italian Food; Royal Kitchen (**Kwock Nam Lau**) was second in Manapua; and Ba-Le Sandwich Shop (**Thanh Quoc Lam**) was second in Sandwich and Vietnamese Food. Congratulations to each of you.

DRAGON BOAT RACES

Saturday, June 27, was another bright, sunny in paradise, with a slight breeze blowing, perfect for rowing a dragon boat at Ala Moana beach park. Once again this year, the Chamber fielded a coed team to paddle against other Chinese organizations and societies. The Chamber crew competed in three heats, winning the first and third heats and coming in third in their second heat. There was also a Chamber picnic with food from Panda Express, which around 40 members and friends enjoyed. The event was co-chaired by **Patrick Graham** and **Jesse Zhai**. (**Walter Chang** and son **Jeff** were pictured on the front page of the Sunday *Advertiser's* Hawaii section, Walter drumming and setting the pace for the paddlers in the boat of another organization, which shall remain anonymous).



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Tours. These have to be inspected, put into chronological order, and if no longer needed by the Chamber, offered to the previous Narcissus Queens or the respective past presidents (or their families). There are other boxes of Narcissus Festival/Splendor of China-related decorations and “stuff” that should be consolidated. Old Chamber financial records no longer required to be retained for the IRS should be identified and disposed of with Shredex. Many boxes of Narcissus souvenir books must be inventoried and quite possibly (according to **Linda Louie**, who collects such things) sold off to collectors and others on eBay or craigslist. So each and every one of you Chamber members is cordially invited to help out, especially now that most of the heavy lifting has ended. Please let the Chamber know if you are available on weekends.

Due to space limitations, Member News and New Members will be in next month’s issue of the *Lantern*.



Survey Open to Members

Many members know 2006 Narcissus Queen and new associate member **Kristi Sue-Ako**. She is currently on vacation from her first year at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., working on combined master’s degrees in business administration and in public policy. To keep busy, she has set up Pipeline Project Hawaii as a means to get Hawaii-born young people to come home, in effect to reverse our local “brain drain.” As part of that effort, Kristi has short (ten question) surveys aimed at three different groups: Hawaii residents who left Hawaii and came back; Hawaii high school graduates who currently live and work outside Hawaii; and Hawaii high school graduates who are currently attending mainland colleges or universities. If you’re willing to help Kristi gather data, the surveys are located at <http://pipelineproject-hawaii.com/whats-up/>. Please note that the surveys are not age-limited, so it doesn’t matter how long ago you left and came back.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 4	Sat	Independence Day
July 21	Tue	Executive Board Meeting Chamber’s Office – 12:00 noon
July 22	Wed	Chinese Chamber International Golf Challenge Ewa Beach Golf Club - 10:30 a.m.
July 28	Tue	Board of Directors Meeting The New Empress Restaurant 12:00 noon



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