

LANTERN

November 2013



Splendor of China Gate Opening Ceremony with President Betty Brow, Chair Giffory Chang and Co-chair Tina Au.

65th Annual Narcissus Queen Pageant Tickets for Sale

by Michele Choy

Tickets for the 65th annual Narcissus Queen Pageant are now on sale. The pageant returns to the Hawaii Theatre Center on Saturday, January 11, 2014, and runs from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. This annual event attracts many supporters, family, and friends who come to see a Chinese beauty and cultural pageant with hopes of not only seeing their favorite participant win the title, but to hear about and see Chinese traditions and culture proudly displayed by the contestants. Family and friends will witness the amazingly beautiful transformation that take place within each contestant. **Billy V** will return as the pageant's master of ceremonies. Tickets can be purchased through the contestants as well as the Chinese Chamber. Ticket prices are \$25.00 and \$30.00, plus a \$4.00 HTC restoration and service fee. Don't wait, place your order now!

Chamber Christmas PARTY

by Michele Choy

The Chinese Chamber's annual Christmas Party, scheduled for Thursday, December 12, is quickly approaching. It will be held at the beautiful Honolulu Country Club. There's lots of free parking and a fantastic buffet menu! The planning committee has worked hard to ensure a fun-filled evening and promises networking for all those who attend. Each year, the Narcissus contestants are invited to attend the Christmas party. Funding their dinners are generous donors so that the beautiful young ladies can meet Chamber members and network with those attending. In the spirit of giving, contestant coordinator **Michele Choy** is appealing to Chamber members for any monetary donation so that the contestants can be a part of the evening. Please contact her or the Chamber if you are in the Christmas-giving mood. It will be much appreciated. Don't miss out on this fun evening and sign up right away for all of the fun and Christmas cheer!

TYPHOON HAIYAN RELIEF

The typhoon, which made landfall on November 15, was the second deadliest Philippine typhoon on record and apparently the strongest recorded tropical cyclone to make landfall. With widespread devastation in the central Philippines, the U.S. quickly dispatched military units, including the USS *George Washington* carrier battle group, to assist a long-time friend and ally. A variety of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) began providing assistance as well. UK-based ShelterBox (www.shelterbox.org and www.shelterboxusa.org) already had a ShelterBox Response Team (SRT) nearby, originally dispatched in response to an October 15 7.2-magnitude earthquake in Bohol province. (Rotarians may remember that Rotary International has been partnered with ShelterBox for several years. Donations are used to assemble boxes with a tent and supplies, selected according to local conditions and what's needed most. Where there is an overwhelming need for shelter, the boxes are instead packed with two tents, each sheltering up to 10 people). Oxfam (www.oxfamamerica.org) is another relief organization, and the local Filipino Community Center (filcom.org) in Waipahu and the Honolulu Chinese Jaycees are also accepting donations. Donations to Filcom Center are being matched 1:1 by Consuelo Foundation, whose President, Jon Matsuoka, is also a CCCH board member. Eddie Flores and Betty Brow are on the Board of Governors of Filcom Center. Chamber Board has recommended that Chamber members who wish to donate should make checks donation to Filcom Center but have the checks sent to CCCH Office so that the Chamber can present all the checks as a group to Filcom Center and receive recognition for the Chamber as an organization. All the individual donations to Filcom Center are tax deductible. Panda Express is not only accepting in-store donations, but is generously matching those donations 1:1. The *USA Today* Web site has a list of 16 other NGOs (<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/11/09/haiyan-how-you-can-help/3484467/>), together with a link to Charity Navigator (www.charitynavigator.org) so that you can check an NGO's *bona fides*. A *USA Today* story on November 13, however, was headlined "Donations pouring in for Philippines may not be enough." Both Senator **Brian Schatz** and Representative **Colleen Hanabusa** have resource pages on their respective congressional Web sites.



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THE
CHINESE
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OF HAWAII



President
Betty Hoang Brow

November 2 and 3 were fun and rewarding days for everyone who attended the 11th Splendor of China (SOC). Guests arriving at the **Neal Blaisdell** Exhibition Hall were immediately wowed by the spectacular entrance, which was a replica of a section of the Great Wall of China. The vermilion gate through which all had to enter was also a copy of one of the gates to the Forbidden City. Visitors could also have their photos taken while sitting on the rickshaw that was displayed at the gate.

Inside the hall, visitors were treated to a buzz of activities and entertainment, with something for every taste, preference, and age. The extremely talented Chinese acrobat, **Hong Wang**, performing acts not seen in previous Chinese Chamber events, was one of the absolute highlights of the varied entertainment program. The vendors who came this year displayed an impressive array of products for sales. We received enthusiastic participation from the Chinese societies, and their booth displays appeared more colorful than ever, their staging at prime locations gave them welcome visibility with visitors. There were diversified food offerings, ranging from the reliable and always appreciated Panda Express Chinese food to exotic Thai food, Hawaiian fare, Ba-Le's baked goods, and even HMCOA's fabulous bubble tea drinks and coffee!

Past SOC events also featured lucky drawing prizes, which were provided by sponsors and vendors. However, this year's SOC committee outdid past years with absolutely fantastic prizes, ranging from round-trip airfares to Beijing, to vacation packages for two to Las Vegas, to meal certificates to

restaurants, art works, bags, umbrellas, jewelry, tickets. Altogether over 120 prizes, all donated by sponsors and vendors.

Xinhua News agency, the prominent Chinese media group, staged a photo exhibit for the second year in a row. This year's exhibit displayed rare photos of students and schools/universities from the beginning of China's Republic to the present.

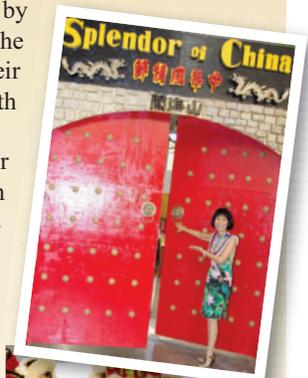
Keikiland was one of the most popular activities, with **Sylvia Louie**, the 2014 Pageant contestants, the Chamber associate members, and other volunteers making this corner one the most visited areas of the SOC.

Always a highlight at SOC was the longevity display (also called the heritage display) that continued to impress all visitors, and as usual, was the most photographed attraction of the show. SOC would not be the same without our longevity exhibit that featured the symbols of health, happiness and longevity at the center of all Chinese values. We are grateful to **Blossom Tyau** and her friends for having agreed to set up this treasured cultural display once again, despite having assured the SOC committee each year for the past few years that it would be "just for one more year".

Also a first for a SOC was the Chamber signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Trade Cooperation with the Shanxi Branch of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT). The ceremony was conducted on center stage immediately following the grand opening ceremony, and was witnessed by Mayor **Kirk Caldwell** and **Deidre Tegarden**, the State's Director of Protocol, along with other officers from both the Chinese Chamber and the Shanxi Province delegation. The 17-person Shanxi delegation came this year to participate in SOC and purchased five booths to display unique art products from Shanxi Chinese artists. The artwork they shared with us are considered "national treasures" by the Chinese government, ranging from special carved ink-stones to intricate paper-cut "paintings" that gave one the impression of viewing master calligraphy scrolls of Chinese landscapes and people rather than just paper-cuts. There were also fine three-dimensional silk paintings, embroidery, and handicrafts as well as unique dough sculptures.

We all owe a great many thanks to the SOC Committee, led by Chair **Gifford Chang** and Co-chair **Tina Au**, and also to the Chamber office staff, **Wen Chung Lin** and **Lucia Liang**, for their dedication and hard work over several months to make this 11th SOC one of the most memorable events of the Chamber!

Our Chinese Chamber is now off and running to prepare for our next big event, which is the Christmas party celebration on Thursday, December 12. We know that members of the Christmas party committee are already working furiously to make sure we will be celebrating the winter holiday season with lots of fun, good cheer, and great friendship with each other.



PPACA Follow-up

After the problematic rollouts of the national Healthcare.gov and Hawaii Health Connector Web sites on October 1, there have been additional “scandals” or controversies regarding the low number of enrollments and the cancellation of some insurance policies. Unfortunately, the print, broadcast, and cable news have shown discerning members of the public that there is a distinct difference between “reporters” and “journalists.” All too often, they have been content to repeat misinformation, and in some cases even promote disinformation, thereby adding to public confusion and alarm.

Very few of the reporters and pundits seem to have even a passing knowledge of information technology (IT). What they fail to realize is that the Web sites, particularly healthcare.gov, involve massive “system integration.” According to *Computerworld* columnist **Patrick Thibodeau**, “The troubled rollout shouldn’t come as a surprise – the early success rate for large, complex IT systems is very low.” Standish Group International, which has a database of 50,000 government and commercial projects, found that out of “3,555 projects from 2003 to 2012 that had labor costs of at least \$10 million, only 6.4% were successful.” According to **Jim Johnson**, Standish founder and chairman, “The very fact that most of it did work at all is a success in itself.” Not according to the fact-free critics.

You may remember that before the 2010 enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) in 2010, health insurance companies were not your friend and were the real “death panels”: no insurance coverage for people with “pre-existing conditions;” lifetime limits on the amount that would be paid out for people with catastrophic illness; no coverage on parents’ insurance policies for children once they turned 18 years of age; and on and on. See **Michael Hiltzik**, “Remember when people hated their health insurance plans?,” *Los Angeles Times* (10/31/13).

However, with the PPACA or “Obamacare” came certain minimum standards or coverage for health insurance policies. (Similarly, when no-fault motor vehicle insurance was enacted in Hawaii in 1987, minimum standards were set for liability coverage. See Section 431:10C-301(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes). Gone are the “preexisting condition” barrier and lifetime caps, and now young people can be included in their parents’ health insurance policies until the age of 26.

With respect to the “low” number of people enrolling, a similar situation occurred with the 2006 rollout of Romneycare, the

continue on next page...



Signing Ceremony of Memorandum of Understanding on Trade Cooperation with Shanxi CCPIT at Splendor of China.

NEW MEMBERS

At its October 29 meeting, the Chamber board of directors approved the applications for four members and ten associate members. The four members are **Ivy Chang**, owner of Ivy X. Chang, CPA, LLC (recommended by **Sonny Zhang**); **Nathan Chong**, president of engineering firm M&R Facility Concepts, Inc. (recommended by **Walter Chang**); **Keith Tse**, founder of iHawaii Travel (recommended by **Sonny Zhang**), and **Ho Yin “Jason” Wong**, an associate at CBRE industrial services, acquisition and leasing (recommended by **Sonny Zhang**). The associate members (and Narcissus Pageant contestants) are **Nancy Cheung**, **Trisha Chong**, **Eula Chu**, **Wai Yan Chan**, **Jackie Huang**, **Chi Jow**, **Brittany Lee**, **Simeng Qu**, **Taj’a Wong**, and **Christen Young** (all recommended by **Michele Choy**). Welcome to each of you and we look forward to meeting you at the next Chamber membership event.



HAWAII VETERAN GOODWILL DELEGATION

Back (L-R): RADM Joseph McClelland, LTG Francis Wiercinski, COL Wesley Fong, and MG Stephen Tom. Front (L-R): Mrs. McClelland, Mrs. Wiercinski, Chamber President Betty Brow and Mrs. Tom.

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MEMBER NEWS

City Councilman **Stanley Chang** was profiled in **Dan Boylan's** October 22 column. Stanley was the first person to announce his candidacy for the 2014 election for the 1st Congressional District seat. While the general election will not be held until next November, the primary election, with a current field of six Democrats (so far) facing off, will be held on Saturday, August 9, 2014.

Stanford Yuen has been selected by the United Chinese Society as its 2013 Model Citizen of the Year. He will be honored at the UCS dinner at the Empress Restaurant on Sunday, December 8. In addition, according to the November 15 *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, Stanford is one of three people on the short list submitted by the Board of Regents' Candidate Advisory Council to Governor Neil Abercrombie to fill a vacant seat on the board.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov 2	Sat	11th Splendor of China Neal Blaisdell Exhibition Hall 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Nov 3	Sun	11th Splendor of China Neal Blaisdell Exhibition Hall 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Nov 11	Mon	Veterans Day
Nov 19	Tue	Executive Board Meeting Chamber Office – 6:00 p.m.
Nov 26	Tue	Board of Directors Meeting Empress Restaurant – 12:00 p.m.
Nov 28	Thu	Thanksgiving Day
Dec 12	Thu	Christmas Party Honolulu Country Club – 6:00 p.m.

continue from PPACA Follow-up on p.3...

model for Obamacare, in Massachusetts, according to recent articles in the *Washington Post* (10/29/13) and *Boston Herald* (11/15/13). After a slow start, enrollments sharply increased just before the enrollment window closed and coverage began. Human nature being what it is, the same or similar experience is expected this December.

Finally, there is the matter of insurance policy “cancellations,” ostensibly due to Obamacare. (Instead of “cancellation” letters, Washington state insurance commissioner **Mike Kreidler** calls them “discontinuation and replacement notices” since the existing policies would be replaced with something more profitable for the companies). What is conveniently left out or overlooked on the news is that 79% of Americans are covered by employer-based health insurance, Medicare or Medicaid; 16% are uninsured; and 5% have individual policies, according to Kaiser Family Foundation data. It is the latter group, with skeleton or bare-bones insurance, who have been receiving “cancellation” notices. Back in March, 2012, *Consumer Reports* covered “Junk health insurance: Stingy plans may be worse than none at all.” (Earlier in August, 2010, *Consumer Reports* warned “Steer clear of ‘scam’ insurance plans). For more information, see Michael Hiltzik, *Los Angeles Times*, “Obamacare hysteria: Don’t believe the canceled insurance hype” (10/30/13); **Stephanie Mencimer**, “The Real Story behind the Phony Canceled Health Insurance Scandal,” *Mother Jones* (11/4/13); and **Dan Munro**, “Estimate of ‘Junk Health’ Insurance Market – Over 1,200 Plans Covering 4 Million Americans,” *Forbes* (11/12/13).

According to **Wendell Potter**, a whistle-blower, former CIGNA health insurance vice president of corporate communications, and author of *Deadly Spin: An Insurance Company Insider Speaks Out on How Corporate PR is Killing Health Care and Deceiving Americans*, the health insurance companies have been trying to get people into either high-deductible, slightly higher premium “consumer-directed” plans or else plans with low-deductible, substantially higher premiums. No mention is made in their letters of checking the state or federal online marketplaces which would enable comparison shopping by coverage, out-of-pocket expenses, monthly premium amounts, and subsidies for those with certain low incomes.

For reliable information, *Consumer Reports* has a “Guide to health care reform”, a 100-day countdown to the January 1, 2014, Obamacare deadline. (See <http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/health/insurance/health-care-countdown/index.htm>) The countdown started on September 23 and perhaps fortuitously, Days 37, 38, 39, and 53 deal with insurance “cancellation.” Another trusted source of information is the Kaiser Family Foundation Web site, which has a Health Reform section (<http://kff.org/health-reform/>), including a subsidy calculator (<http://kff.org/interactive/subsidy-calculator/>).

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