



THE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII

夏威夷中華總商會

LANTERN

NEWSLETTER

Oct & Nov, 2020

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Chamber Drive-Through Christmas Party

Due to the continuing coronavirus pandemic and the need to avoid large gatherings, this year's Chamber Christmas party will be a "drive-through" on **Thursday, December 17**, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The location is Yum Yee Kee *Dim Sum* Restaurant, 1411 Kapiolani Boulevard. (Entry is from Kapiolani Boulevard, with exit on Kona Street).

There will be a box lunch, and the cost is \$15.00 for Chamber members. Members must RSVP and prepay by contacting **Tina Ge** at the Chamber (tel. No. 533-3181). Included in the box are several different kinds of *dim sum*: lotus wrapped chicken and *mochi* rice; *har gau*; *siu mai*; snow-top *char siu bao*; taro puff; chive chicken *gau*; and a custard tart, plus Yum Yee Kee house noodles. (Sounds good enough to order an extra box lunch or two). Kindly RSVP and make your payment by Monday, December 14. (Free gift bag for all attending Chamber members only.) There will also be a lucky number drawing with a number for each person signing up for the lunch. Needless to say, lucky number winners need NOT be present to win.

Please note that donations are being accepted for "Toys for Tots." Bringing a toy for "Toys for Tots" donation will have a chance to win another drawing (a \$20 Youngs Fish Market Gift Card).



Farewell, Daniel Lau

On October 21, long-time Chamber member and director **Daniel Lau** passed away at the ripe old age of 101. At the end of the month, he was due to belatedly receive a Bronze Star medal for his actions during World War II. Seventy-nine years ago, Daniel was one of the Chinese-Americans serving in the Territorial Guard when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

Upon graduation from the University of Hawaii in 1941, Daniel was on the verge of signing a professional baseball contract when he was drafted and assigned to the 298th Infantry Regiment, training at Schofield Barracks. By the fall of 1944, he was a member of the 78th Infantry "Lightning" Division, arriving in England in October, France in late November, and entering combat in the Ardennes in mid-December. Daniel was severely wounded in the

back and arm when a German 88-mm round hit the farmhouse he was defending during the Battle of the Bulge, killing two other soldiers.

After recovering in a military hospital in Paris, Daniel returned to Hawaii and was discharged with the rank of sergeant. In 1952, he joined with five other prominent Chinese-Americans to establish Finance Factors, one of the first industrial and consumer loan companies in Hawaii. (Daniel was the last surviving founder). Since then, Finance Factors has grown to a family of sixteen companies with about \$600 million in assets and is around the eleventh-largest landowner in Hawaii.

Daniel spent a lifetime in business and community service while raising a family of three sons (**Jeffrey**, **Russell**, and **Girard**) and a daughter (**Vicki**), and of course continuing his love of baseball. Our deepest condolences to his wife **Evelyn** and his four children.



President
Elvira Lo

How can you safely celebrate the Christmas holiday this year?

For the Chamber, we welcome all the members and friends to celebrate on **Thursday, December 17**, with a Drive-Through Christmas Party, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Yung Yee Kee Dim Sum Restaurant, 1411 Kapiolani Boulevard. See the attached flyer for detailed information. Please join us, along with your fellow Chamber officers, directors, and members as well as the Narcissus Queen and Court and our Christmas Party chair and committees, to share Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays greetings! Bring a "Toy for Tots" donation and you will receive a gift bag.

This time of the year is a truly wonderful and magical one, and Christmas is a holiday with a beautiful spirit and traditions. One tradition is greeting each other with Merry Christmas wishes, and this year is one to "stay safe and healthy, wear your mask." The spirit of giving, expressing love and gratitude, and a celebration of life helps to make Christmas a very special time of year.

We are still in the City's tier 2 emergency order, which allows us to celebrate with only those in our household. If we want to do a small gathering, it must be done outdoors, limiting the number of people, wearing face coverings, and keeping everyone apart 6 feet.

Although we are urged to stay home and work from home, our Chamber staff is working full-time at the Chamber office to serve our members. We are doing the ADA project, renovating the restroom and hallway on the second floor of Chinese Chamber building. The ADA project is under a State grant program for Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), running from November 16 to January 15, 2021. Our Third Vice President **Michael Young** volunteered to be the project manager, working with Executive Vice President **Wen Chung Lin** and the contractor. The building permit was received on October 28. Soon we will have a brand new hallway and two first-class restrooms.

Another exciting event is celebrating the Congressional Gold Medal for the Chinese American WWII Veterans. Special Reyn Spooner aloha shirts are for sale at the Chamber office. The price is \$88.00 until the end of this month, then will increase to \$100.00. Shirts can be picked up at the Chamber or mailed with a shipping charge of \$12.00 per shirt.

We took part with the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii in partnering to promote the Business Pivot Grant program. Our Chamber staff translated the application form into nine pages of traditional Chinese and simple Chinese to help the Chinese businesses in Honolulu to apply and participate in this City grant project.

We were the official partner with 2020 Census Hawaii, which we achieved the goal for Hawaii this year even in the midst of a pandemic. We sincerely thank you all for your participation in the last 12 months.

Sending lots of peace and joy to you and your family this holiday season. Wishing you and your family stay safe and healthy while sharing warm and joyous times.



C H A M B E R ' S N E W S

Congressional Gold Medal Update *by Michele Choy*

The Washington, D.C., Congressional Gold Medal (CGM) ceremony for Chinese-American World War II veterans will be entirely virtual in December. The local CGM ceremony honoring our veterans will be some time in the summer of 2021.

A replica CGM will be presented to each registered Hawaii veteran. So far, there are 300 registered Hawaii veterans and still counting. In the meantime, if you'd like a duplicate medal for yourself or family members, please go online to place your order so that the U.S. Mint knows how many medals to produce for the veterans as well as duplicates for their families and friends as well as medal collectors: <https://catalog.usmint.gov/chinese-american-world-war-ii-veterans-bronze-medal-3-inch-19MH.html?cgid=military#start=1>. The medal does not include a case, but a black presentation case is available for \$10.95: <https://catalog.usmint.gov/deluxe-black-presentation-case-for-3-inch-medal-052.html?cgid=medal-cases#start=1>. Medals must be ordered by the end of December to lock in the 2020 price of \$39.95. In January 2021, the price will increase to \$200.00.

In addition, the Reyn's commemorative limited edition CGM aloha shirts are still available for purchase. The shirts are a fund-raising effort to help pay for the medals for our Hawaii veterans. You can help out by contacting **Tina** at the Chinese Chamber to place your order. Shirts are only \$88.00 if you pick them up from the Chamber. A shipping charge of \$12.00 for each shirt will be added if you want your order mailed.

Chinese American Veterans
World War II Bronze Medal



(front)



(back)



The Reyn's commemorative
limited edition CGM aloha shirt

Census Update

Under the Census Clause, Article I, Section 2, of the U.S. Constitution, a census or count of all people residing in the U.S. must be conducted every ten years. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 2020 census was a historic success with a remarkable “completion rate” of 99.9%, about one-third higher than any previous year. However, if you go to a Census Web page <https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates/nrfu.html>, all 50 states and the District of Columbia hit 99.9%, but the actual “self-response rate” ranged from 54.7% in Alaska to 75.1% in Minnesota for an overall rate of 67.0%. The balance in each state was made up by the “non-response follow-up” (NRFU).

There is reason to question not only that 99.5% claim, but the reliability of the data collected and now being processed. Former Census Bureau Director **John Thompson** said that “a high completion rate doesn’t mean a whole lot in terms of coverage” since census-takers are allowed to take shortcuts or “work-arounds” like “counting by proxy” by asking neighbors about a specific resident who could not be reached or “taking a pop count” to fill in a partially completed questionnaire. In addition, while the census report is being rushed so that the president can eliminate noncitizens from the count, this is an unconstitutional action that may shift representatives from states which have many “undocumented immigrants.” (Ever since the first census in 1790, all residents of the states and territories, regardless of their citizenship status have been counted, and the Supreme Court recently heard oral arguments on a lawsuit challenging disregarding some residents while counting others). Meanwhile, career Census Bureau officials are pushing back against the political appointees, warning that they will be unable to meet a year-end deadline to hand in data due to irregularities found in the number crunching phase. As a result, the population count will not be complete until some time between January 26 and February 6 next year. At stake are reallocation of House seats and distribution of \$1.5 trillion in federal funding among the states.

COVID-19 Update

As everyone knows (or should know), the SARS-CoV-2 virus is referred to as a “novel coronavirus” or nCoV, the word “novel” indicating that it is new, and while experience and scientific research over the last ten months has increased knowledge about transmission and treatment, much is unfortunately still not known.

It is highly contagious and poses a severe threat of severe illness or even death for people of all ages, especially those who have “comorbidities” or underlying chronic health conditions, such as high blood pressure, obesity, and the like. As a result, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reporting has statistics for those who died solely due to COVID-19 (6%) and people who had other conditions that increased the risk of dying from COVID-19 (94%) or “COVID-19 complications.”

Due to a fragmented response at the national level early on, the states were told that they were essentially on their own in procuring desperately needed personal protective equipment (PPE), respirators, and other critical items. Mitigation efforts were undercut by early advice from CDC that people didn’t need to wear masks; the real, unstated message was that due to shortages, masks (especially the ones rated N95) should be reserved for medical personnel and first-responders. As a result of this ill-considered misdirection, there are

millions of Americans who now claim that they have a nebulous constitutional right to go maskless, exhaling droplets and aerosols into the air around them, and a few anti-maskers have gotten violent when asked to put on a mask.

The first coronavirus cases were reported in the U.S. and South Korea on January 22. In contrast to “downplaying” the infections at the highest level in order to avoid “creat[ing] a panic,” the South Koreans responded quickly with testing, coupled with a far more effective system of isolating and containing infections, likely due to their experience with the 2012 MERS outbreak. While South Korea had more new cases, population-wise, in February and March, by St. Patrick’s Day, the U.S. took and has held the dubious lead position. (And soon, hospitalizations and then deaths follow).

In contrast, while the U.S. has more tests in absolute numbers, they are still far less than recommended by medical experts, and the U.S. still does not have a comprehensive national testing strategy. (And no, only the innumerate or those ignorant in mathematical concepts would believe that more new cases are “the result of more testing”). In a December 4 *Washington Post* column, **Philip Bump** pointed out the differences, including the South Koreans’ experience with face masks during the 2012 MERS outbreak.

Speaking of face masks, there have been developments in Japan in response to a problem identified months ago in New York’s restaurants: People were removing their masks to eat, drink, and converse. While doing so, droplets and smaller, longer-ranging aerosols were being spread by asymptomatic people. Such transmission is shown in a December 11 *Washington Post* video, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/2020/12/11/coronavirus-airborne-video-infrared-spread/?arc404=true>

Leave it to the Japanese to come up with a high-tech solution that might rescue indoor dining (presuming that there is adequate ventilation). A *Japan Times* article printed in the November 12 *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* described supercomputer-developed face shields with a movable lower half that could be moved out of the way for eating and drinking while the upper half provided eye protection. While normal face shields may block about 30% of oral droplets from spreading through the air, the bowl-shaped face shield can block 70% of droplets. More importantly, according to the article, Toppan Printing (www.toppan.com/en), in partnership with Suntory Liquors Ltd., will make the design available FREE to the public.

Early on, scientists warned about contaminated surfaces or “fomite transmission.” Over the last ten months, however, they have found little evidence that the virus is spread by contaminated surfaces. Instead, it is activities, such as coughing and sneezing as well as singing, yelling, breathing, and talking, that spray droplets and even smaller aerosols. So in most instances, there is no need for “deep cleaning” of indoor residential or office spaces. The one prominent exception is the White House, which has been the site of a number of recent “super spreader events,” including the **Amy Barrett** reception on September 26, an election night party on November 3, and a couple of dozen Christmas parties this month.

With some 20% of infected people being asymptomatic and yet contagious, widespread use of masks would help control what has become an largely uncontrolled pandemic in every county in the U.S. (According to the December 10 *Star-Advertiser*, the first case was recorded in Kalaupapa, the last COVID-free county in the U.S.).

The masks protect others from the droplets/aerosols produced by an infected mask-wearer and also reduce the amount of droplets/aerosols that would otherwise be inhaled by an uninfected mask-wearer. (In early August, the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) forecast 295,000 deaths by December 1, while there would be a reduction of more than 66,000 lives if 95% of Americans wore masks on leaving home; in mid-December, there have been over 300,000 deaths. The IHME now forecasts that by April 1, there will be over 500,000 deaths and 55,711 lives would be saved if 95% used masks).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec 15 • Tue
Executive Board Meeting
Google Virtual Meet – 6:00 p.m.

Dec 17 • Thu
Christmas Drive-by Party
1411 Kapiolani Blvd. – 11:30 a.m.

Dec 22 • Tue
Board of Directors Meeting
Google Virtual Meet – 12:00 p.m.

Dec 25 • Fri
Christmas Day

Jan 1 • Fri
New Year's Day

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Finally, once again, the “Three Ws” include wearing a mask, washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, and watching that you’re keeping a 6-foot social or physical distance. However, it may be that six feet is not enough, at least indoors in poorly ventilated restaurants, where it’s possible to get infected through “close contact” of over fifteen minutes and air flow that can spread aerosols further than twenty feet. Remedial action would involve upper-room UV germicidal systems and fans over each table. So when dining out, check whether there is sufficient space between tables and whether the place is well ventilated, among other things.

Vaccines Are Coming

In three successive weeks during November came news of apparently highly successful Phase 3 trials of three competing vaccines from Pfizer/BioNTech (NYSE: PFE), Moderna Inc. (NASDAQ: MRNA), and AstraZeneca PLC (NASDAQ ADR: AZN). Each was ostensibly highly effective: PFE – 95%, MRNA – 94.5 %, and AZN – 90%. (Apparently, the two mRNA vaccines will not prevent infection, but they will prevent getting the disease itself). As a result, the *New York Times* scrambled a **Winston Churchill** quote from after the 1942 British victory at El Alamein, “The Beginning of the End of the Pandemic.” That may have been premature – perhaps “The End of the Beginning” – since there are some vaccine “bumps in to road” that bear watching.

The Pfizer vaccine requires expensive (\$10,000) ultra-cold (-94° F) refrigerators, which are not widely available and use a lot of electricity. In addition, once thawed, the vaccine must be used within five days. Taken together, those factors raise complicated distribution and storage considerations and may result in some wasted vaccine. Storage-wise, the Moderna vaccine can be stored at -4° F while the AstraZeneca vaccine does fine at 36-36° F. (In comparison, according to *Consumer Reports*, normal freezer temperature is 0° F and normal refrigerator temperature is 37° F). According to a November 23 summary comparison from the American Council on Science and Health: Pfizer and Moderna are producing fewer but more effective (and pricier) vaccines, while AstraZeneca is making a greater number of less effective (and cheaper) vaccines. So “the government pays its money and makes its choice.”

A review of state distribution plans reveals that officials don’t know how they’ll deal with the difficult storage and transport requirements of Pfizer’s vaccine, especially in the rural areas currently seeing a spike in infections. And in light of previous missteps over the last ten months, don’t hold your breath for the State of Hawaii and counties to get it right the first time.

By early next year, the Moderna and AstraZeneca vaccines, which do not require ultra-cold refrigeration, may be more readily available. Until then, however, as CDC Director **Robert Redfield** testified to the Senate in September, the best defense is still the face mask (along with the other mitigation measures of social distancing and hand washing). Dr. Redfield also stated that NO vaccine can offer 100% protection. (Whether for COVID-19 or for seasonal flu, measles, etc., the effectiveness of vaccines can vary: 45% for the 2019-20 seasonal flu vaccine; 93%-78%-88% for measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, etc.). So it may be that even with the advent of effective vaccines, masking will still be “the new normal.” (According to a *Japan Times* article that appeared in the December 3 *Star-Advertiser*, unlike a masking mandate becoming part of the culture war, the mask-wearing practice throughout East Asia except Japan was a result of the 2003 SARS coronavirus outbreak while the practice has a much older history in Japan).



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