



THE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII

夏威夷中華總商會



LANTERN

NEWSLETTER

August, 2020

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Honolulu Chinatown Arch

by Eddie Flores, Jr.

Mayor **Kirk Caldwell** met with me about a year ago. He lamented that Honolulu has one of the oldest Chinatowns in the U.S. and yet it does not have a Chinatown arch. The Mayor asked me to take on the project to build a Chinatown arch that our Chinese community would be proud of.

It only took me a minute to say “yes” to Mayor Caldwell. I have many fond memories of Chinatown. I arrived from Hong Kong as a 16-year old immigrant in 1963. My family lived a couple of blocks from Chinatown. I always looked forward to watching *kung fu* movies at the American Theater with my friends. After the show, we would eat at *Tin Tin* Chop Suey or *Dalisay* Filipino Food, then meet my friends at the pool hall to play a couple of games. Chinatown was like my childhood playground.

I immediately returned to my office and asked my attorney to form a 501(c)(3) and named it “A Better Chinatown Association” (ABCA). The mission of ABCA is to build a Chinatown arch, to promote economic development activities, and to work closely with the City to have a safe and clean Chinatown. I signed an agreement with the City in June 2020 to authorize me to work on the project. The first arch will be built at King and Kekaulike Streets. The second arch will be located at Hotel and Kekaulike streets. **Andrew Tang**, who had extensive design experience in Holland, designed a very unique version of the Chinatown arch.

The first arch will honor ten individuals who made significant contributions to the Chinese community and Chinatown. They are the movers and shakers in the Chinese community. Their profiles will

be inscribed at the base of the arch’s two pillars. The selection committee consisted of **Michelle Choy**, **Victor Lim**, **Elisia Flores**, **Mona Choy**, **Peter Shi**, **Leonard Kam**, **Edwina Lee**, **Dr. Lucy Wong**, and myself. The committee has collected the names of 24 potential candidates for consideration and planned to make the final selection next month for the ten honorees.

NOTE: Eddie will be presenting a Zoom lecture, part of the Flores Real Estate Lecture series, with Alexander & Baldwin president and CEO **Chris Benjamin**, “Repositioning A&B After 150 Years: Twists, Turns and COVID-19.” The lecture will be on Thursday, **September 10**, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. If you’re interested, register by Monday, September 7, at shidler.hawaii.edu/realestate. Once registered, you’ll be sent the Zoom link in a confirmation e-mail.

Hawaii Foodbank Food Drive Challenge

by Michele Choy

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce Foundation partnered with the Hawaii Foodbank to hold a Virtual Food Drive Challenge. Foundation President **Michele Choy** presented the Foodbank with a check for \$6,510.00. Through the generosity of donors, we will be able to provide over 16,000 meals to Hawaii’s hungry. Joining Michele in the presentation were two of the Chamber donors, **Yen Chun** and **Michael Young**. Receiving the check on behalf of the Hawaii Foodbank were **Lillian Rodolfich**, VP/ Chief Financial Officer; and HF staff members **Beverly Santos**, Director of Food Drive and Events and **Laura Kay Rand**, VP/Chief Impact Officer.. Michele sincerely thanks the many kind donors who participated in the challenge and made a difference to Hawaii’s hungry.



President
Elvira Lo

After carefully considering the current status and all the uncertainty of the coronavirus pandemic in Hawaii, nationally, and internationally, the Chamber board of directors has voted to postpone the 72nd Narcissus Queen Pageant and Coronation Ball to 2022. The 71st Narcissus Queen and Court will stay until January, 2022, when the 72nd Narcissus Pageant will take place. The Narcissus Goodwill and Business Tour is also postponed to June, 2021. Safety is our first priority. Once the travel ban is lifted, we will work on the new itinerary for your review, and hope you can join us on the Tour.

For now, our membership third vice president **Mike Young** and first vice president **Jon Cook** have put together a series of four FREE business webinars for all Chamber members to sign up for and attend. Jon was the presenter for the first one, "You Google My Business Listing," on August

12, and **Carmelita Andia** of Business Growth Solutions, presented "Sorting through the Steps to Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan Forgiveness," on August 26. More information on the September 9 and October 7 webinars can be found elsewhere in this issue of *The Lantern*.

My electronic updates to Chamber members, with important information, covering topics such as the latest report on the SBA's PPP loan approvals and update data, eviction moratorium update, Hawaii commercial rent survey, and new City and State Covid-19 rules and practices go out once a week. I hope that through the weekly e-mails, I can bring you information and articles on local (and sometimes national and international) business voices, concerns, news, and opportunities.

I want to share a new survey of Hawaii business by the UH Economic Research Organization (UHERO), in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii. This report on business on all islands and various industry recovery efforts since the lockdown eased off this summer, can be viewed at the following link: <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/survey-update-shows-wide-spread-hardship-for-local-businesses>

Earlier, I shared the letter from the U.S. Census Bureau's **Robert Su**, encouraging all Chamber members, families, and friends to complete the census questionnaire by Wednesday, September 30, to ensure that the State of Hawaii will get the federal funding that we deserve. In addition, by getting 100% completion, Hawaii may get a third congressional representative and another voice in Washington, D.C..

On Thursday, July 9, the Quad Chambers, organized by the Korean Chamber, invited Filipino, Chinese, and Japanese Chamber members to attend an event with mayoral candidate **Mufi Hannemann** at the Waikiki Resort Hotel from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Chamber past president **Eddie Flores, Jr.** was a sponsor of the event. Under COVID-19 restrictions, they could only accommodate 50 guests. However, the event was well attended.

The Chinese Chamber was very honored to have Governor **David Ige** speak for 45 minutes at our Tuesday, July 28, board of directors' meeting, held at the Foreign Trade Zone. His visit was arranged with the help of past Chamber president **Robert Yu**. We brought him live, on-screen to update us about various state and local efforts in opening up the economy as well as the 14-day quarantine affecting inter-island and incoming Pacific travel. Since then, a new island-wide shelter-in-place order went into effect on Thursday, August 27. It will initially be for two weeks and it remains to be seen whether it will be extended.

I am working on more business-focused topics via webinar format for members, so please look for **Tina Ge**'s earlier e-mail announcement and details as well as the August inaugural schedule in this issue of *The Lantern*.

Please take care, be safe and healthy!

CHAMBER'S NEWS

2020 Census Reminder

In case you have not already filled out the 2020 Census questionnaire, you had better do so right away. On August 3, the Census Bureau announced that it was shortening the deadline from October 31 to September 30. This has stirred up a lot of concern nationally, and an August 9 *Washington Post* article detailed how the abrupt change could adversely affect minority groups – Black, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian. According to the Pew Research Center, the U.S. Asian population grew 72% between 2000 and 2015 (from 11.9 million to 20.4 million), the fastest growth rate of any major racial or ethnic group. The second-fastest growing group, Hispanics, increased 60% during the same period.

So if you haven't done so already, you may want to complete the census questionnaire online at <https://my2020census.gov/> or by phone at 844-330-2020. It takes only about ten minutes to answer the questions, and online, it's a lot easier and faster than using the hard copy, printed questionnaire, and is completely anonymous. With coronavirus considerations, it's better than dealing with a live Census-taker at your front door.

And without your input (and those of others), there is concern about the accuracy of the 2020 Census, and that has ramifications for

Hawaii's federal funding share since, according to Rep. **Ed Case** in the August 30 *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, 20% of our state budget is federally funded (and due to COVID-19, the state is facing a \$2.3 billion budget shortfall for fiscal year 2021 alone; FY 2021 started on July 1). Ed also noted that the \$9 billion that Hawaii received under the CARES Act of 2020 was based on the 2010 Census, and Hawaii loses an estimated \$16 million for each 1% undercount. Make no mistake, we need an accurate Census count for federal funding purposes; Hawaii is currently 31st among all the states, at just 61% statewide while Oahu is at 68%.

Congressional Gold Medal Aloha Shirt

Another reminder that the Chamber has Congressional Gold Medal aloha shirts by Reyn Spooner for sale at \$88.00. These limited-edition shirts are available in either red or blue, and come in sizes from X-small to 2x-large. You can use the order form previously sent out, together with a check made payable to "Chinese Chamber of Commerce Foundation Chinese CGM Special Account." Upon receipt of your order, you will be contacted by the Chamber, confirming the order as well as a date and time for you to pick up the

shirts at the Chamber. If the shirt(s) are to be shipped, there will be a shipping charge of \$12.00 per shirt. (More information on the CGM is available at www.caww2hawaii.org. Please note that the \$88.00 is a discount price, valid until Veterans' Day, Wednesday, November 11, 2020; thereafter, the price will be \$108.00.

COVID-19 Aug. Update

Well, here we are in the late summer of 2020, and April, when Americans were repeatedly assured that the coronavirus would miraculously "disappear in warmer weather," is long gone, but the pandemic is worse than ever. Looking at the news, however, there seem to be new developments from time to time regarding the virus and how it can be dealt with.

The old standbys of **Wearing** a face mask, **Watching** your six-foot social distance, and **Washing** your hands with soap and warm water (or else with hand sanitizer) or "three Ws" is still pretty much true, six months into the pandemic. However, after a month of triple digit new cases on Oahu, never mind "more data"; it's past time to require everyone to "mask up" when outside their shelter. That includes politicians who supposedly go jogging and don't (or won't) wear a mask. They should be pointed to an August 10 **Danielle Martinez** article in Huffington Post: "The Best Breathable Face Masks for Running and Exercising" as well as a June 17 *New York Times* article by **Gretchen Reynolds**, "Exercising While Wearing a Mask." In addition, **Teddy Amenabar** mentioned in a July 27 *Washington Post* article, "Why, when and how to wear a mask during this pandemic, according to the experts," the concept of "collective responsibility" as a rejoinder to those who feel their "constitutional rights" to the free flow of air past their faces are being violated.

The admonition "Don't Share Your Air" that is all too often unheeded by anti-maskers is particularly apt in light of new research into the novel coronavirus. According to an August 28 article by **Mike Moffitt** in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "The 6-foot rule is 'outdated': Researchers devise chart to gauge COVID risk." The two colorful, downloadable charts deal with the risk of viral transmission and consideration of the "four Cs": Close, Closed, Crowded, and Continuous, presuming that everyone is asymptomatic (or presumptomatic) as in the first few days of infection. (Research still indicates that in the first few days of an infection, the person is "shedding" or spreading the virus and it's only several days later that the person begins to show symptoms). **Julia Ries** has an August 28 article at Huffington Post, "What We Know (and Still Don't Know) About Asymptomatic COVID-19," which sheds light on current knowledge. A complementary article by **Jason Gale** and **Ari Altstedter** in the August 26 *Bloomberg* is "How Do People Catch COVID-19? Here's What Experts Say," an update of a February 20 article.

In the category of "making lemonade from baskets of lemons," earlier this month, the CDC announced that there was no need for tests for people who were asymptomatic. After a daylong uproar from public health officials and epidemiologists, it turned out that there had been pressure from "higher authority," presumably the same person who had announced earlier that if there were no tests being done, there would be no new cases. In any event, most of the states, including Hawaii, were NOT doing massive testing in May and June as suggested by CDC criteria. It turns out in the last month, that even then, Hawaii had insufficient contact tracers to follow up on positive cases within three days or less. (**Bill Gates** stated in a Huffington Post interview that waiting longer than 48 hours for test results is "insane" and a "complete waste," so the contact tracing delay mess in Hawaii

just compounds the problem). In case you're interested, the *New York Times* updates its information (with graphs) on "Is Your State Doing Enough Coronavirus Testing?" (As of August 30, unsurprisingly, Hawaii (number 18 at 36%) was one of 35 states far below the minimum level of testing needed to reduce the spread of the virus.

One last item. Earlier this month, a Duke University study was cited as the basis for not using neck gaiters instead of face masks. However, it turned out that it was a small study and that neck gaiters are just as effective as face masks, according to an August 17 *New York Times* article, "Save the Gaiters."

Hawaii's Best 2020

On Sunday, August 16, the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser's* "Hawaii's Best 2020" supplement was printed and circulated as part of that day's newspaper. A number of Chamber members have food service establishments that appeared on the list: La Tour Café (**Thanh Quoc Lam**), finalist in "Bread"; Jade Dynasty Seafood Restaurant (**Alan Ho**), first place, and Little Village Noodle House (**David Chang**), finalist in "Chinese"; L & L Hawaiian Barbecue (identified by its old name of "L & L Drive-Inn") (**Eddie Flores, Jr.** and **Kwock Yum "Johnson" Kam**), finalist in "Diner/Drive-Inn/Dive"; McDonald's of Hawaii (**Victor Lim**, with five stores), first place in "Fast Food"; Royal Kitchen (**Lau** family), first place in "Manapua"; and Ba-Le Sandwiches & Bakery (**Thanh Quoc Lam**), finalist in "Sandwich" and "Vietnamese Food." Congratulations to each of you, especially in what is undoubtedly a challenging year, with the pandemic running wild in Honolulu.

While on the subject of "good eats," McDonald's will reportedly have "spicy McNuggets," for a limited time starting on September 16, the first new flavor since they were introduced in 1983. And the August 27 *Washington Post* has a report that there is a campaign under way in China to get people in hot pot restaurants to use serving chopsticks in putting food into the pot or taking it out. Saliva is one way to transmit the coronavirus as well as "hepatitis A and E, typhoid fever and dysentery." Finally, **Laura Reiley** has an August 28 *Washington Post* article on "Friday night takeout," with information that may give food service operations some "food for thought" during the pandemic.

"The World's Greatest Economy"

People who have little or no experience in investing in the stock market, including a certain serial bankrupt real estate developer, may not be familiar with the adage that "The stock market is not the economy." At the same time, Americans are said to be "ahistorical," with little regard for history or historical development. About half of Americans don't own stock or mutual funds, and according to the *Washington Post*, 80% of the value of all stocks is held by the richest 10% of Americans. Nevertheless, at least some Americans are impressed by those touting the Dow Jones Industrial Average or Standard & Poor 500 hitting "record highs" or claiming that they built "the world's greatest economy" in a little over three years. (For those who may have forgotten, the DJI is composed of only 30 large companies while the S&P 500 measures the performance of 500 large capitalization or "large cap" stocks – the S&P 400 is made up of "mid-cap" companies and the S&P 600 is made up of "small cap" companies)

Such boasts or braggadocio have no basis in historical fact, both the long-running bull market and economic expansion having their basis over ten years ago when **Barack Obama** inherited the Great Recession of 2007-2009. The longest bull market in U.S. history ran eleven years, from March 9, 2009 to March 9, 2020. It ended two

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Aug 12 • Wed
Free Webinar – “Your Google My Business Listing”
Google Virtual Meet – 6:00 p.m.

Aug 18 • Tue
Executive Board Meeting
Chamber’s Office – 6:00 p.m.

Aug 25 • Tue
Board of Directors Meeting
Google Virtual Meet – 12:00 p.m.

Aug 26 • Wed
Free Webinar – “Sorting through the Steps to PPP Loan Forgiveness”
Google Virtual Meet – 6:00 p.m.

Sep 7 • Mon
Labor Day
Office Close

Sep 9 • Wed
Free Webinar – “Overview of Small Business Administration (SBA) Programs and Support”
Google Virtual Meet – 6:00 p.m.

Sep 22 • Tue
Executive Board Meeting - TBA
Chamber’s Office – 6:00 p.m.

Sep 29 • Tue
Board of Directors Meeting - TBA
Google Virtual Meet – 12:00 p.m.

Oct 7 • Wed
Free Webinar – “COVID-19 Recovery for Small Businesses”
Google Virtual Meet – 6:00 p.m.

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days later, on March 11 when the Dow Jones Industrial average (DJI) closed 22% off previous market highs, crashing into “bear market” territory. (On March 10, **Carmen Reinicke** presciently wondered in Business Insider whether the bull market’s end was near).

Similarly, the record-breaking 128-month economic expansion that began in June, 2009, came to an end in February, 2020. Unlike in previous cases where it takes them up to a year to weigh the data, the National Bureau of Economic Research’s (NBER) Business Cycle Dating Committee declared a recession in February, due to the sharpness of the contraction. Initially, many economists thought that the recession would be “particularly deep and exceptionally short,” according to **Jeanna Smialek**’s June 8 *New York Times* article, “The U.S. Entered a Recession in February.” However, with over 22 million Americans unemployed and both workers and consumers worried about the coronavirus, it should be obvious even to non-economists that the economy will not experience a V-shaped, short term recovery. Remember that two-thirds of U.S. GDP is based on consumer-spending, so if consumers aren’t spending, ... More likely, the recovery may come in late 2021 or 2022 when a “safe and effective” vaccine becomes available. An interesting article is the August 24 *Bloomberg* article by **John Authers**, “Those K-Shaped Fangs May Snap Shut on Investors.”

So just remember **David Lynch**’s March 28 *Washington Post* article: “The coronavirus crisis is exposing how the economy was not as strong as it seemed,” and consider the four main drivers for the “great economy” mentioned in the Reinicke article. To many economists, rebuilding the devastated American economy will take years, perhaps all the way to 2024 or later, in light of the unemployment and the many devastated industries, including airlines and tourism.

FREE Chamber Webinars

by Michael Young

The Chinese Chamber is providing a series of free webinars (6:00 to 7:00 p.m.) aimed at helping our members deal with a few of the challenges many Hawaii businesses are experiencing due to the impacts of COVID-19.

- August 12. **Jon Cook**, Internet Marketing Series #1 “Your Google My Business Listing: How to Create & Optimize Your Listing and Start Getting New Business Like Never Before.” RSVP is required, please sign up here (or email Tina): <https://forms.gle/faDNGbRMSQxBdQxu5>
- August 26. **Carmelita Andia** from Business Growth Solutions, “Sorting through the Steps to PPP Loan Forgiveness.” RSVP is required, please sign up here (or email Tina): <https://forms.gle/azPCnFfGxkMqgdME6>
- September 9. **Cynthia Yamasaki** with SBA, “Overview of Small Business Administration (SBA) Programs and Support.” RSVP is required, please sign up here (or email Tina): <https://forms.gle/Y1PNbnYDjw3QGqT8>
- October 7. **Cynthia Yamasaki** with SBA, “COVID-19 Recovery for Small Businesses.” RSVP is required, please sign up here (or email Tina): <https://forms.gle/s8jtgyMHY9KN5TaL7>

Venue: Google meet (Sign in details will be sent to those who RSVP). Please contact the Chamber Office with any questions or if you don't receive the link.

MEMBER NEWS

Long-time Chamber director and honorary Chinatown Mayor **Joseph Young**, DDS, celebrated his 95th birthday in a manner suited to the current coronavirus pandemic. Instead of a restaurant, Joe had a ‘surprise’ drive-by birthday, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., greeting people from his Aina Haina garage as they drove up to wish him a ‘Happy Birthday’ The invitations asked people to remain in their cars and no gifts or *lei*. Chamber president **Elvira Lo** stopped by and provided two photos of Joe.



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