



THE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII

夏威夷中華總商會



LANTERN

NEWSLETTER

September, 2020

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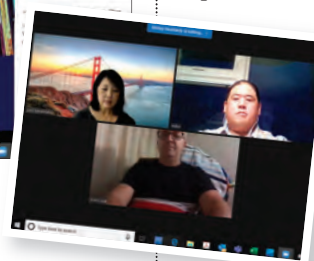
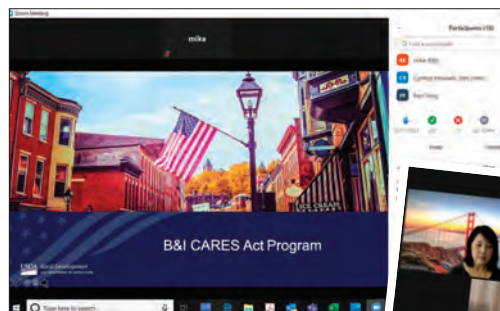
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Webinar Update

by Michael Young

The Chinese Chamber hosted its third free webinar on Wednesday, September 9. Speakers **Cynthia Yamasaki**, **Lori Hiramatsu**, and **Shirley Heatherly** shared very valuable information about various services and resources available to small businesses, both during COVID-19 and also in happier, non-pandemic times. There were 14 members who signed up to attend.

Topics covered included SBA services available locally, the Veteran's Business Outreach Center of the Pacific, and the Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program. The presentations are available via PDF upon request.

The next webinar will be on Wednesday, **October 7**, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. **Cynthia Yamasaki** and the Small Business Administration will discuss "Small Business Tips to Recover, Revive, and Be Resilient," and **Roseann Freitas** with the Better Business Bureau will cover "Building Your Business with Trust in A Dynamic Environment."

An RSVP is required, so please sign up or email Tina at the Chamber. There will be a door prize for this webinar, a gift card, and you must be on-screen to enter and to win. We look forward to you joining us for this and future webinars. Stay tuned!

until Saturday, **October 31**, the previous pandemic-influenced end date. For much of the year, many state and local governments were concerned that sufficient time was needed to ensure an accurate count. Much depends on accuracy, especially in areas where there are many minorities, both for representation in the House of Representatives and for sharing in federal funding. The latter is especially critical this year since many states, including Hawaii, and local governments' revenues have been adversely affected by the pandemic, and early federal assistance ended during the

summer and the Senate has refused to take action on more funding for state and local governments. According to a Hawaii-Counts.org "thank-you" advertisement in the October 11 *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, Hawaii is at "nearly 63%," one-percent short of 2010. So if you haven't done so already, please answer the 2020 census; it takes less than 20 minutes if done online. And for a late-breaking update, **Michael Wines** has an October 12 article in the *NY Times*, on questions about the accuracy of the 2020 census as well as the use of the data.

Note: On Tuesday, July 28, Robert Su, *Partnership Specialist in Honolulu of the Los Angeles Regional Census Center* dropped by the Board of Directors meeting held at the Homer Maxe Conference Center at the Foreign Trade Zone #9



to present Immediate Past President Michele Choy on behalf of the Chinese Chamber with a Certificate of Appreciation in being an outstanding partner of the 2020 Census with the Los Angeles Regional Census Center. Thru our partnership starting in January, the Chamber received an \$8000 grant for our ongoing efforts to promote the Census among the Chinese community in particular to increase our count.

Census Update

The end date for the 2010 census keeps changing back and forth. The latest news from the *New York Times* on October 7 seems to be that a decision from a unanimous three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit Court that the head count should continue



President
Elvira Lo

Aloha members and friends of the Chinese Chamber:

In the last few months, I have kept in close contact with federal, state, and city personnel on various stimulus plans for members' businesses and how to apply for financial assistance. One of the latest is the extension of the Small Business Relief and Recovery Fund program. You can find program information updated as of September 21 at the Web site, <https://www.OneOahu.org>. Even if you applied for the first reimbursable grant offered in July, you can still apply for up to \$20,000.00, less the amount previously received.

In addition, according to the September 24 *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, there is a Household Hardship Relief Fund, with \$25 million available since May. The funds are available to help with rent, utilities, child care, and even cellphone and Internet service for Oahu residents. Assistance to help pay various expenses and overdue expenses, up to \$2,000.00 per month. More information is available at the OneOahu Web site.

As previously mentioned, in my weekly email to the members, there is coverage on news from DBEDT, housing market

data, and other economic updates. On September 9, the Honolulu City Council passed resolution 20-208, which would establish a commercial property landlord-tenant real property tax grant program. This would give help businesses and landowners by using commercial annual real estate property tax data to evaluate how much each applicant should get. This will be used to determine the cost for business owners to operate, and the program is conditioned upon landlords providing rent forgiveness to their tenants.

As we are all aware, the Hawaii economy has been badly affected by the pandemic. On Tuesday, September 22, Mayor **Kirk Caldwell** announced a plan to gradually reopen Honolulu businesses, in four phases. This four-tiered system outlines restrictions, depending on the level of community spread of the coronavirus. The city will rely on two criteria to determine when to shift from each level: The number of daily cases reported and the positivity rate. For more details and a graphic of the four tiers, check September 23 *Star-Advertiser*. As a reminder, the program's first tier began on Thursday, September 24.

As residents of Hawaii, we all need to take personal responsibility to practice the safety and other mandates to save local businesses, local jobs, and the livelihood of our local families. We need to work together to save and rebuild the economy. Therefore, to do it right is really critical and challenging, and yet we can forge ahead on this recovery journey together.

Since this is the election year, in the past, candidates would arrange events during the day or after work to meet the public and their supporters. With the pandemic, however, we are experiencing this "new normal" that all meetings or gatherings are conducted virtually or remotely in the webinar format. The Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce is coordinating the Quad Chamber event, a mayoral candidate forum from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., on Wednesday, **October 7**. Each candidate will speak for 20 minutes on preset questions, then follow with questions and answers. This will be a great opportunity to listen to their views and plans for Honolulu. Space is limited to a maximum of 20 members for each Chamber. Please sign up with **Tina Ge** at the Chamber office.

In August and September, the Chamber coordinated three free webinars chaired by **Jon Cook** and **Michael Young**. Attendance has been consistent, with some increase. During the emergency lockdown order, the Chamber is working very hard to stay connected with our members through weekly emails and free webinars. We hope that you will have time to join future ones. We also welcome suggestions on topics that interest you and perhaps other Chamber members as well.

Last year, the Chamber celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival at the Mandalay Restaurant, featuring whiskey tasting, abalone moon cake shipped by air from Vancouver, Canada, and a six-course Chinese dinner. It was an overwhelmingly successful event. We hope that next year, the economy will have reopened fully and this celebration can resume once again. In the meantime, I would like to wish all of you a great and happy moon festival on Thursday, **October 1**, and that you will be sipping a cup of jasmine tea, along with a four-yolk moon cake, and appreciating the fullest moon of the year with your loved ones and families.



Medicare Open Enrollment

Publicity is starting for the "open enrollment" period for Medicare. It begins on Tuesday, October 15, and ends on Monday, December 7. What this means is that you can make changes – adding or removing – from your coverage. (And for those who don't want to participate in a "socialist" program, this one is 55 years old and is an "earned benefit," which you have paid for as a working American, through the FICA payroll deduction if you are or were an employee or through the comparable SECA tax for the self-employed. Although called "taxes," what you paid were actually insurance premiums, covering Medicare Part A for hospital insurance and Social Security). For more information or if you have questions, call 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227) or visit <https://medicare.gov>, the official U.S. government Web site. Medicare Part A and B (medical insurance) coverage begins either the first day of the month you turn 65 years old or if your birthday is on the first day a month, then on the first day of the previous month.

President Elvira Lo and 1st Princess Sabrina attended the Kam Society Drive By Banquet at Jade Dynasty.



71st Narcissus Queen Jamie, 1st Princess Sabrina, 2nd Princess Amanda, President Elvira Lo, and Past-President Leonard Kam attended the Kit On Society Banquet at Jade Dynasty.

75th Anniversary of WWII

Wednesday, September 2, the USS Missouri set the scene for the 75th Anniversary of the ending of WWII. The ceremony was televised live on Spectrum from 9 -10:30 am. A top notch, classy program was executed. Chinese, Japanese and Filipino veterans were represented and received VIP treatment. At age 95, Chamber Director, Dr. Joseph Young attended the historic ceremony along with Major General Robert G.F. Lee, US Army (Retired) and Major General Darryll Wong, US Air Force (Retired).



Seated l-r; Lambert Wai-Army-99 years old; Dr. Joseph Young, Army Air Corps-95 years old; Walter Ching, Navy-98 years old; Arthur Shak, Army Air Corps-97 years old. Admiral Philip Davidson, Commander US Indo-Pacific Command is in the background.

“It is what it is”

A few days after Memorial Day, the U.S. total of COVID-19 deaths passed 100,000, and the 200,000 mark was reached on or about September 20, just days after the 75th anniversary of the Japanese surrender in World War II. (By way of comparison, as many as 200,000 Japanese, mostly civilians, were killed in the atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki). According to the University of Washington’s Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation forecast, the U.S. may reach 410,450 deaths by January 1, 2021. (However, as many as 122,000 of those deaths could be avoided if 95% of the U.S. population made use of face masks).

There has been some quibbling, with misinterpretations of CDC statistics, with innumerate people claiming that as of August 15, “only 6%” or 9,683 deaths were due solely to COVID-19. On the contrary, the other 94% of people who had “underlying conditions” or comorbidities would not have died when they did if they had not been infected by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. (For a more through discussion, Dr. **Kavita Patel** had a September 20 article at NBC News on “The truth about CDC’s COVID-19 death rate”). Moreover, the statistics may likely be understated since in the first few months, when U.S. hospitals were inundated with patients, the CDC counted only those who were confirmed by medical examiners or coroners to have died of COVID-19. This was at a time when hospital morgues were overflowing and refrigerated reefer trucks outside the morgues were needed to store the overflow. And of course there is the wishful thinking that if the U.S. did no testing, there would be no new cases, and that “we have turned the corner.” Such statements are ludicrous in light of the fact that while the U.S. has 4% of the world’s populations, it has 20% of the world’s COVID-19 deaths, and that in recent days, we have passed 214,000 dead and have had successive days of 50,000 new cases per day.

Who Was That Masked Man?

Last month, CDC director, Dr. **Robert Redfield**, testified that face masks provide better protection than promised vaccines that have just begun the time-consuming process of phase 3 large-scale human testing. (In late July, a handful of American companies were each trying to recruit 30,000 volunteers; half would be injected with

the vaccine being evaluated while the other half would be given placebos). According to a CDC fact sheet, “Vaccine Testing and the Approval Process,” the phase 3 testing is to determine “safety and effectiveness” of a vaccine, and even after the lengthy process for approval and licensing, many times, there is a phase 4 for ongoing studies. Dr. **Anthony Fauci** and others have said that a vaccine would likely not be available until mid- to late 2021, and the process of getting over 330 million Americans vaccinated (especially when some Americans are “anti-vaxxers,” who would not take the vaccine even if it was available, according to the Pew Research Center).

Under the circumstances, while waiting for the development of one or more vaccines, the standard recommendations of the “Three Ws” are still applicable: **W**ear a mask outdoors and under certain conditions indoors as well; **w**atch your social distancing; and **w**ash your hands with soap and warm water. It should be added that events with large crowds should probably be avoided since all too many people, for one reason or another, don’t want to wear face masks to protect themselves or others. Originally, “superspreaders” referred to individuals, but more recently has been extended to events, such as the motorcycle rally in Sturgis, South Dakota, where 462,000 enthusiasts gathered, largely unmasked, from August 7 to 16; an August 7 wedding, performed by an anti-masker pastor in rural Maine, which led to 270 people infected and at least eight deaths; and more recently (and perhaps notoriously), the September 26 gathering at the White House, which has turned “the people’s house” into a virus hot spot.

Wearing masks offers two-way protection for people. First, it protects other people from SARS-CoV-2 droplets expelled by infected people coughing or sneezing. Second, for the wearer, it reduces the “viral load” of the virus in aerosols, which can travel up to 16 feet and also hang in the air, thereby infecting passers-by, and may reduce the severity of your infection. And it may be advisable to wear a mask indoors, such as a restaurant when you’re not actually eating or drinking. (That was a problem in January for nine diners in a Guangzhou restaurant who got infected although not at the same table as the infected asymptomatic person and has been a problem in New York City when indoor dining resumed). So wear a mask when appropriate, and “Don’t share your air.”

Testing, Testing

If you have been reading accounts of what Dr. **Anthony Fauci** has called a “superspreader event” at the White House on September 26, you will know that they relied entirely on “quick tests” of staff and visitors, and largely ignored the use of face masks and social distancing in the close confines of the West Wing. What you may not know is that the Abbott Labs’ ID Now system (testing unit and swab kits) has a cautionary notice on the FDA Emergency Use Approval (EUA) and is to be used “within the first seven days of the onset of symptoms.” So if the person being tested is not yet in the “acute phase” of infection, he or she will test negative. Apparently the attraction of the Abbott Labs’ system was that it would produce results quickly: Five minutes for positive and fifteen minutes for negative. More information on testing can be found in “What to Know About COVID-19 Tests, From PCR to Antigen to Antibody” by **Jamie Ducharme** in the August 20 issue of *Time* magazine.

Much has been made about the many tests done to date in the U.S. However, for the numerically challenged or “innumerate,” the



Governor Ige spoke to the July 28 Board of Directors' meeting at the Foreign Trade Zone Conference room, 37 attended.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct 20 • Tue
Executive Board Meeting
Google Virtual Meet – 6:00 p.m.

Oct 22 • Thu
Quad Chamber Event – Free Webinar
“A Public Reaction to Covid-19 Pandemic
and General Election Preview”
Zoom Virtual Meet – 12:00 p.m.

Oct 27 • Tue
Board of Directors Meeting
Google Virtual Meet – 12:00 p.m.

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U.S. has a population of some 330 million. Nationally, according to the Covid Tracking Project, the U.S. has a current nationwide target of 1.5 million daily tests and more than 111 million tests have been conducted since January. However, according to *NY Times* reporter **Katherine Wu** (who has a Harvard Ph.D. in microbiology and immunobiology), some experts have estimated that 4 million tests or more are necessary to keep the virus in check. (At that rate, it would take 82.5 days or nearly three months to test every American). According to the *New York Times*' "COVID in the U.S." section, Hawaii is one of only eleven states that is meeting its testing target of 270 daily tests per 100,000 people.

According to Dr. **Leana Wen** on CNN, there is a difference between "isolation" and "quarantine." If you are exposed to an infected person, you should be in quarantine for fourteen days while if you are tested and found to be positive for the virus, you should be in isolation for ten days in a mild case or twenty days for a severe case. And if you believe that you have been exposed to an infected person, "How Soon After COVID-19 Exposure Should You Get Tested?," at the Huffington Post Web site may be worth reading.

Into the COVID-19 Future

According to CBS News (among other sources), on October 7, the FDA issued tough new vaccine guidance, which seems to rule out an "October surprise" of a vaccine being approved before the November 3 election. (Even with "approval," one or more vaccines would not be available for distribution to the majority of the 330 million or so Americans). Under the guidance, upon issuing Emergency Use Authorizations (EUAs) for one or more vaccines, there will have to be monitoring for at least two months after Phase 3 trials are completed. Even then, life will not get back to a pre-pandemic "normal." However, *NY Times* science reporter **Donald McNeil**, who has been covering the pandemic since January, has become cautiously optimistic that there may be an end to the pandemic by the middle of 2021, but "until then, masks and caution are our best alternative." His article, "A Dose of Optimism, as the Pandemic Rages On," appeared on October 12.

One consideration may come up when one or more vaccines are approved. (With the onset of seasonal flu season and ads for various places offering flu shots, you may remember that there are at least two different versions – Flu A and Flu B – each year, and the formulations are set six months in advance, with the labs making their best estimate of which strains will appear in the fall). In any event, *NY Times* reporter Carl Zimmer, raises the possibility of vaccine confusion next spring with several vaccines "approved," but it is unclear which one is better than another. His October 12 article is "First, a Vaccine Approval. Then 'Chaos and Confusion.'"

Yet another consideration is that to date, more than 7.5 million Americans have been infected. In all too many cases, recovery is unlike the "strenuous" or seasonal flu, with minimal after-effects. Instead, the virus does damage to many internal organs, requiring periods of arduous physical rehabilitation. "Long haulers" are people who have ostensibly recovered from the coronavirus, sometimes after lengthy hospital stays, only to still experience symptoms weeks or even months later and need yet more medical care. Recent articles on the problem include *NY Times* articles by **Anahad O'Connor** (10/8), **Pam Belluck** on "brain fog" (10/12), and **Jane Brody** (10/12) and a Bloomberg essay by Andreas Kluth on the prospect of "long COVID" (10/09). So much for Americans safely "living with the virus."



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