

E-Newsletter of the Organization of Chinese American Women

April 2024



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501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization

(from Linda Devine, Editor)

As we gradually warm up into spring, I hope that all is well with all of you. My thanks as always to those who contributed material for the e-newsletter. I also especially appreciate my husband Ed's work on preparing the photos, as there were a very large number this time.

I continue to encourage OCAW members to write articles or submit information if there is something you think would be of interest to the membership.

Please also feel free to send me any suggestions that you might have for the e-newsletter at:
devinefive@comcast.net

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News from the Virginia Chapter

(Barbara York, President)

Chinese New Year Potluck Lunch

(from Barbara York)

The OCAW Virginia Chapter Chinese New Year Potluck Lunch was a great success. It was held on Sunday, February 18, 2024, in Amy Lee's condo's penthouse party room in Alexandria, VA. Between chapter members and their guests, there were 21 total attendees.

The food of course was FABULOUS and included: a huge charcuterie platter; Donna's homemade char siu; Christina's most delicious meatballs on cabbage; Frank's very healthy snow pea shoots and sauteed Gailan; Florence's amazing sliced beef shank as well as a pickled cabbage salad; Amy's worthy-of-being-on-a-magazine-cover nut-crusted baked salmon; Jane's melt-in-your-mouth red cooked pork belly with steamed lotus buns; Cathy's delicious sticky rice studded with sausage, mushrooms, and other yummy bits; Alice's hugely popular, every-bit-eaten 10-vegetable medley with vermicelli noodles; Maria's can't-believe-you-made-it 8-treasure stuffed duck; Barbara's vegetarian chow mein; Pu-Chin's famous Apple Cobbler; and Noreen's Mochi Balls. Assorted chocolates and cookies also showed up.



The mouth-watering spread

(Photo taken by Amy Lee)



(Photo taken by Wanda Eshleman)



Steve Chang, Cathy Roberts, Christina Chang, Donna Byler, Wanda Eshleman, and Alice Yee Way

(Photo taken by Amy Lee)



Jane Pan, Florence Kwok, Alice Yee Way, Cathy Roberts, Christina Chang, Donna Byler,
Wanda Eshleman, Amy Lee with Soleil, and Barbara York

(Photo taken by Steve Chang)

A good time was had by all. A HUGE THANK YOU to all the cooks and their wonderful spouses and friends who helped!

Chinese New Year Celebration

(from Cathy Roberts, National Vice President for Membership and OCAW-VA Treasurer)

Lunar New Year is the most important and celebrated holiday of the Chinese traditional calendar. Every year the Hai Hua Community Center hosts a celebration at the Fair Oaks Mall in Fairfax, Virginia. This year the event was held on the weekend of February 17-18.

The two-day celebration included many activities: arts and crafts; musical instrument performances; Lion, Dragon, and other cultural dance performances; and martial arts presentations. The famous lion dances and dragon dances are believed to ward off evil spirits by the accompanying loud drumbeats and cymbals, along with the aggressive dancing of the lion or dragon. Arts and crafts activities included Chinese knotting, paper cutting, lantern making, origami, Chinese calligraphy, and face painting. Multiple Asian cultures were represented, including China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

This year, on Sunday the 18th, Camilla Ng, former OCAW-MD President, performed a graceful Chinese dance. Christina Chang, OCAW-VA member and former National President, also participated as a member of a group in a Chinese dance.



Christina Chang



Camilla Ng

Note by Camilla on her dance:

She performed a traditional Water Sleeves dance to the music “Spring Blossoms on Moonlit Night.” This piece of music is based on a poem by Tang dynasty poet Zhang Ruo Xu (660-720). The dancer’s costume has long sleeves. Long sleeves dance first appeared during the Zhou Dynasty period (1046 to 256 BCE). However, it was during the Ming Dynasty (1368 to 1644 CE) that long-sleeve garments came to symbolize water and became known as water sleeves.

(Photo credited to Hai Hua Community Center)

All enjoyed the festive occasion.

Editor’s Note: Barbara York also wrote that Cathy Roberts herself participated in the event by writing attendees’ names in Chinese characters on bookmarks. I suspect that Cathy was just too modest to mention this in her article!

“MGM Delight” – Field trip to see MGM National Harbor’s Chinese New Year Decorations

(from Amy Lee)

One of the most outstanding sights in our area is the Chinese New Year decorations in the Conservatory of MGM Grand at Washington National Harbor in Oxon Hill, Maryland, just south of Washington, D.C. This year the display featured a 70-foot jade water dragon and a bamboo forest, among other sights.

On Monday, February 26, 2024, Amy Lee, Alice and Norman Way, and Christina and Steve Chang had the pleasure of feasting their eyes on the ginormous dragon, lantern, money tree, bamboo forest, and other gold-colored dragons.



Amy Lee, Alice Yee Way, and Christina Chang

(Photo taken by Steve Chang)

(Photo taken by Steve Chang)



(Photo taken by Amy Lee)



(Photos taken by Amy Lee)

After snapping pictures, we had a nice lunch in the food court. The occasion surely was a delightful Chinese New Year highlight for us.

Field trip to see 350 orchids at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery

(from Barbara York)

On Saturday, March 2, 2024, Amy Lee and Cathy and Dick Roberts met to see this magnificent display after Amy kindly brought it to everyone's attention.

It received rave reviews, and the artist whose work was mingled with the flowers was from Taiwan.



Cathy Roberts and Amy Lee

(Photo taken by Dick Roberts)



(Photo taken by Amy Lee)



(Photo taken by Amy Lee)

“Anyang: China’s Ancient City of Kings” Exhibition Tour

(from Cathy Roberts)

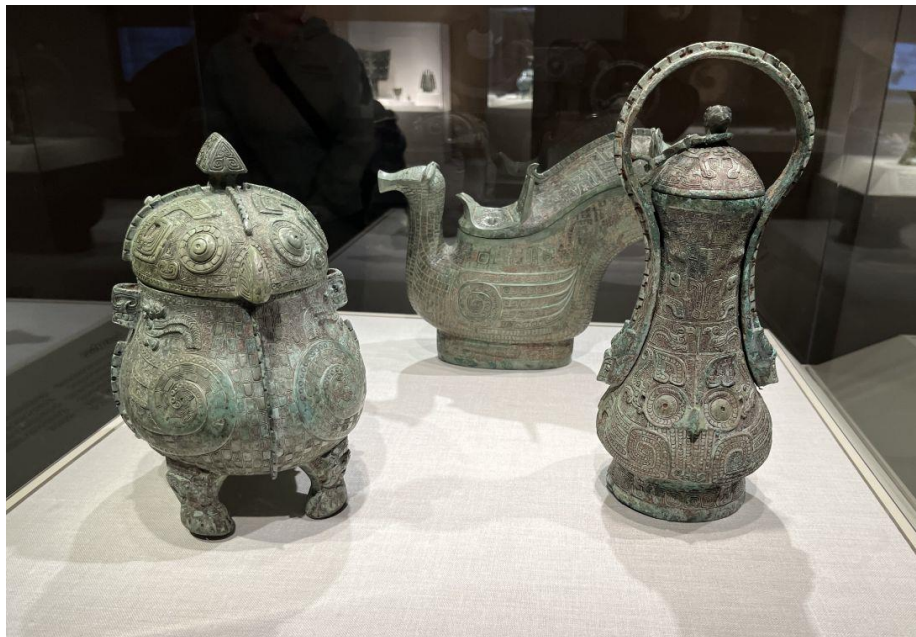
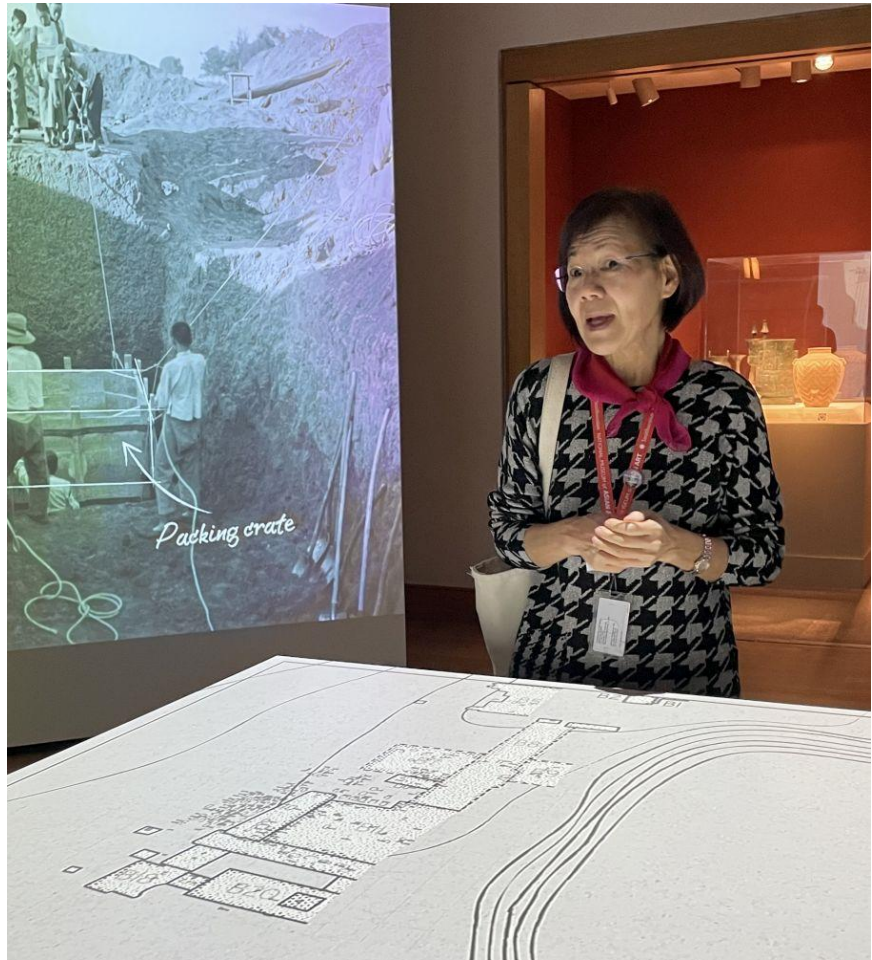
On Monday, March 18, 2024, Virginia and Maryland Chapter members and friends joined together to visit the Sackler Gallery of Art (part of the Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art in downtown Washington, D.C.) to see the first major exhibition in the United States dedicated to Anyang, the capital of China’s Shang Dynasty (ca. 1250 BCE–ca. 1050 BCE). We were fortunate to have a very knowledgeable subject matter expert of the Smithsonian, docent Ru Fan, who guided us on this special tour. Ru is a former OCAW Maryland Chapter President. The event was initiated by former OCAW Maryland Chapter President Camilla Ng, also a docent, and arrangements were coordinated by Barbara York, OCAW Virginia Chapter President.

The Exhibition features over two hundred remarkable artifacts. We started by viewing a 3D picture of an Oracle Bone, then Ru Fan guided us through each collection – jade ornaments, ceremonial weapons, ritual bronze vessels, bells, and chariot fittings – and explained to us in-depth history and other details. The exhibition includes a series of digital visual presentations, developed in partnership with the award-winning production studio UNIT9. Viewing these videos allows visitors to dive deeper into the life of the city.



Docent Ru Fan

(Photo taken by Amy Lee)







(Photo taken by Linda Devine)





Reportedly, this is most museum-goers' favorite item!

(All of the foregoing photos were taken by Cathy Roberts, unless noted otherwise.)

We very much appreciated Ru Fan's expertise and sharing her knowledge with us.



Shu See, Bill and Judy Carter, Maria Yang, Amy Lee, Bill Zeile, Linda Devine, docent Ru Fan, Andy Rylyk, Cathy Roberts, Camilla Ng, and Dick Roberts

News from the New Orleans Chapter

(from Patricia Ellzey, President)

Chinese New Year Lunch Meeting

The OCAW New Orleans Chapter held a lunch meeting at the Chinese Presbyterian Church in Kenner, LA, on Saturday, March 2, 2024, when we celebrated the Chinese New Year. There were 17 members attending. Although we lost a few members, this year our membership increased to 23 members of which 11 became lifetime members.

Our celebratory meal included Beef Chow Fun, Chicken with Garlic Green Beans, Salt/Pepper Fish, Shrimp with Eggplant, Roast Duck, and steamed rice. Our members enjoyed the meal so much that there were no leftovers!

Our Secretary, Nellie Underwood, reported that the **Asian Pacific American Society (APAS), which our chapter supports via local Chinese community participation, will sponsor their annual Asian Heritage Festival** on Saturday, May 18, 2024 in the French Market in the New Orleans French Quarter. **APAS invited our chapter to again participate** via cultural performances, and to set up our OCAW Chapter table to publicize our association. Some of our members have formed a popular music and classical music singing group, a Chinese cultural dance group, and a Chinese Fashion group who perform at fundraisers and celebrations such as this Asian Heritage Festival.

The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) and other health news reported that a research study verified that Tai Chi was better than more vigorous aerobic exercises in lowering blood pressure, especially for more sedentary people. Since Tai Chi is also a Chinese cultural tradition, **President Pat Ellzey suggested that our future meetings include at least 5 minutes of Tai Chi to begin the meeting.** The meetings will be held at the church where we can use the large TV screen to follow a Tai Chi session via YouTube.

There were two speakers. Our member and former President, Dr. Lihua Zhang, MD, spoke about good nutrition diets, weight loss, and getting into shape after all of the wonderful celebratory eating events in the past five months. She then answered other health-related questions, such as what should be in a home first aid kit, etc. Lihua was very informative as usual, and we appreciate her generous sharing of her knowledge.

Our second speaker was Liz Beltran, Project Manager of the All of Us Research Program from the LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans. This NIH program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. **It is seeking one million people nationwide who will participate in a DNA research program to assist health researchers to learn more about the health risks that affect our communities.** This program will identify hereditary health risks using saliva, blood, and urine samples. If one joins this program, the person will get a complete personal DNA profile, and if one has a potential health risk, they will receive immediate health assistance.

All of the results will aid researchers to record statistics that will be used in future medical data. There is a lack of data of Asians and other minorities, so there is a lack of correct diagnoses and medical treatment for Asians in particular. This research will also help researchers understand more about why people become sick or stay healthy. If one joins the program, they will be remunerated \$25 along with a personal profile and an opportunity to participate in a nutrition study which will determine the best nutritional diet for their body.

To expand and expedite this event, President Ellzey introduced this DNA research study to the Chinese Presbyterian Church and obtained approval to utilize the church as a meeting center. **Thus our OCAW MEMBERS, family members, and friends, and the church congregation, etc. will meet with LSU personnel – computer techs to help expedite online registration and lab techs who will collect the specimens needed for the research study – on Friday, May 10, 2024 from 2 to 6:30 p.m.**



(Note from Pat: Unfortunately, not shown were guests who had to leave early.)

News from the Silicon Valley Chapter

(Jen Tsao, President)

The Beauty of Chinese Calligraphy Art

(from Yufan Lu, Vice President)

On Sunday, December 3, 2023, OCAW-SVC Vice President Yufan Lu gave a presentation on the Beauty of Chinese Calligraphy Art. It was via Zoom from 2 to 4 p.m. PST.

Yufan received a Bachelor's degree from Peking University with a major in English and American Language and Literature. Her education credits also include a Master's degree in Education from Wake Forest University in North Carolina and a computer associate's degree. Her career comprises being an assistant professor and instructor at Peking University for six years, a network management certification lecturer for three years, and a teacher at Sitanfu Chinese School in Northern California for 17 years.

In Yufan's presentation, highlights included:

A clear definition about Chinese calligraphy art is its writing in Chinese Characters and following the rules of the seven major forms: Oracle or Bronze Inscriptions or one of the five major writing styles/scripts developed through more than three thousand years in Chinese history.

1. 什麼是中國書法藝術？

What is Chinese calligraphy art? Three key words:

Chinese: 中文/字;

calligraphy: 书法 decorative handwriting/lettering

art—艺术 the expression of human creative skill and imagination

(Pictures 1/2/3 source: Internet)



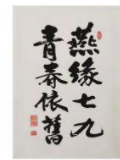
英文书写, English calligraphy



英文书写, English in Chinese calligraphy



中文草书 Chinese scribble style



書法作品 Chinese calligraphy artwork

Writing Chinese calligraphy needs some special tools.

2. 書寫工具:

Working on Chinese calligraphy needs some basic special tools:

文房四宝为工具:

- Unique Chinese brushes: 毛笔作为书写的特殊工具, 是书法艺术一个重要方面(硬體書法)。 筆(浙江/湖筆)
- Special ink-sticks 墨(安徽/徽墨)
- Special paper 紙(安徽/熟宣、生宣)
- Inkstone container 硯台(广东/端硯)



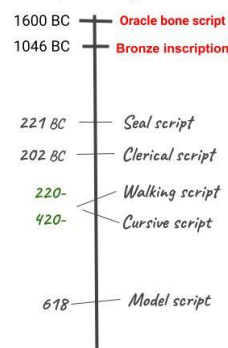
She discussed a timeline which gives the picture of the development of Chinese calligraphy arts.

3) The five traditional scripts:

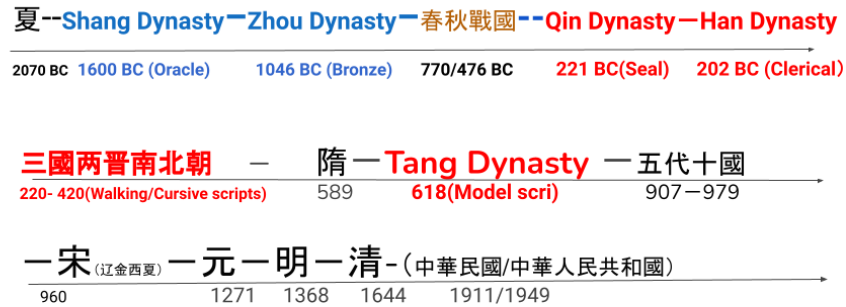
- 1) Seal script: 小篆 (Qin Dynasty 221 BC)
- 2) Clerical script: 隸書 (Han Dynasty 202 BC)
- 3) Regular script: 楷書 (Tang Dynasty 618 AD)
- 4) Walking script: 行書 Jin Dynasty—
- 5) Cursive script: 草書 220 AD—589 AD

- Oracle bone script: 甲骨文 1600 BC (hieroglyphics)
- Bronze inscription: 金鼎文 1046 BC

Five scripts forming Timeline



Chinese calligraphy major styles forming Timeline



Three historic eras mostly influenced the development of Chinese calligraphy, and she described them.

She then presented examples of Chinese calligraphy artworks by herself and her father, Zhongyang Lu, a well-known calligraphist. By Zhongyang Lu:

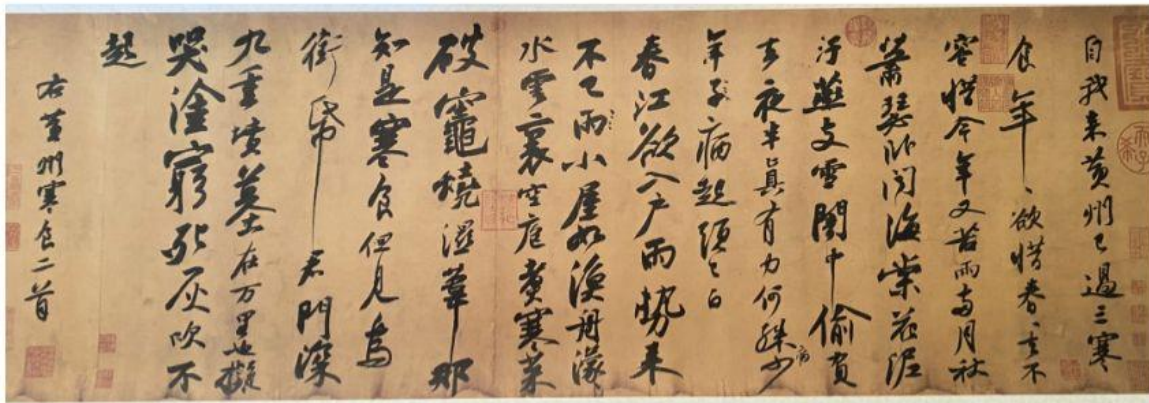




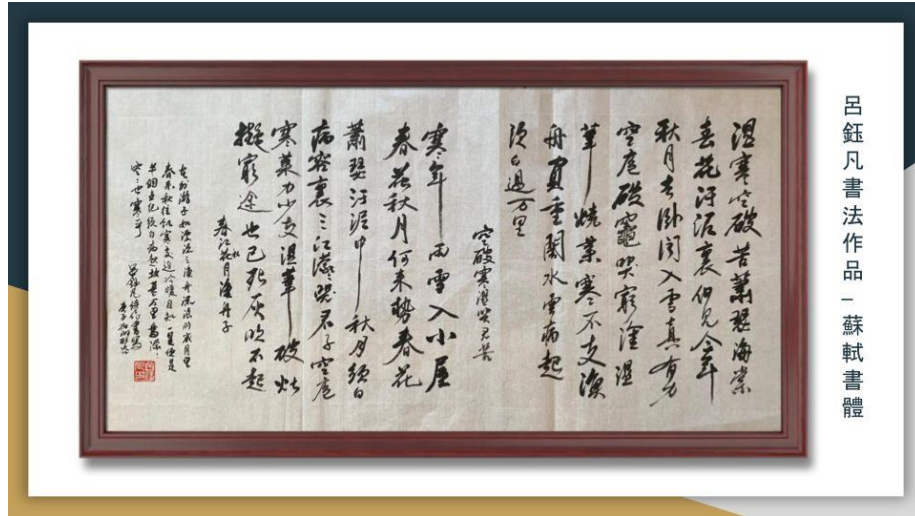
She also called attention to three masterpieces of Walking Scripts which are highly ranked in Chinese calligraphy history.

One such piece:

苏轼 1082年，寒食節行书十七行，129字 於東坡雪堂寫下的二首詩



Yufan wrote poems based on one of these masterpieces.



She concluded by giving examples of scribble scripts.

The lecture was given in memory of Yufan's father. Zhongyang Lu was a well-known calligraphist in Huzhou, Zhejiang, a place known for its brush. He lived in Saratoga, CA, with Yufan's family for over 23 years and used his talent to serve in many community activities. As a result, he was honored by the Saratoga City Council as an honorary resident in 2013.



He passed away in 2017, and his hometown gave him a huge calligraphy exhibition.



Under the influence of her father, Yufan picked up the brush and started to write Chinese calligraphy in her childhood.

Lunch with OCAW Immediate Past National President

(from Anne Hu, Communications)

An enchanting luncheon took place on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at the Golden Palace Restaurant in Cupertino. The luncheon was particularly special as we had the honor of hosting the immediate past OCAW National President, Christina Chang, and her husband, Steve, who were visiting from Virginia.

Christina and Steve joined us while they were in town visiting Steve's brother in the Bay Area, allowing us the perfect opportunity to reunite. We were also joined by some remarkable members of our organization, including Jen Tsao, President; Yufan Lu, Vice President; Sophia Yang, Treasurer, and Anne Hu, Communications for the Silicon Valley Chapter. Past Silicon Valley Chapter Presidents Cynthia Chang, Chia Huei Chen, and Lily Tan were also present, making it an unforgettable gathering of past and current leaders.

The convivial atmosphere was filled with lively conversations and shared memories, as these longtime friends caught up on each other's lives and reminisced about their journey with OCAW. It was heartwarming to see the bonds of friendship and solidarity that have been a hallmark of our association over the years. The luncheon once again affirmed the strength of our OCAW community, and we left the Golden Palace Restaurant feeling uplifted and connected. As we bid farewell and lingered in the restaurant's parking lot, the reluctance to part ways was a testament to the close-knit spirit of our community – a spirit that continues to thrive and bring us together.



CWASFB Seminar

(from Jen Tsao)

On Saturday, February 24, 2024, OCAW-SVC joined The Chinese Writers Association in San Francisco Bay (CWASFB) and co-hosted an in-person seminar given by Dr. David Yun. The topic was “Van Gogh and Mata Hari – Dutch genius and beauty wondering in France.”

Dr. Yun was from Taiwan. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from National Taiwan University as well as a doctorate in History of International Relations from Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (HESS) in Paris.

The event was held at the Silicon Valley Asian Art Center in Santa Clara. The exhibition room reached its capacity with about 100 attendees.



(Photos taken by Tracy Lee)



Dr. David Yun (*3rd from the left*). Tracy Lee, a former President of OCAW-SVC (*2nd from the right*).

A second CWASFB Seminar

(from Jen Tsao)

On Sunday, February 25, 2024, OCAW-SVC joined CWASFB (The Chinese Writers Association in San Francisco Bay) once more, and co-hosted an online event via Zoom. Topics were:

“An Interview on the historical and cultural process of France, Germany and Britain”
and
“From Caroline, Charlemagne to the Louvre”

Presenters were Dr. David Yun and Dr. Joe-Ming Cheng, the President of CWASFB. There were over 100 participants via Zoom.



講題：法德英歷史文化進程訪談
次題：加洛琳查理大帝到羅孚宮

講員：雲中君 博士 教授
訪問者：鄭佐明 博士, 金山灣區華人寫作協會

協辦：美華婦女會矽谷分會

時間：二月25日2024
週日，美東 7pm, 美西4pm ;
台港 週一，2月26日 8am.
Zoom ID: 510 304 1203
Password: 94555

OCAW E-Newsletter Presentation

(from Linda Devine)

I would like to thank Jen Tsao, SVC President, for kindly inviting me to participate in SVC's recent officers meeting on Sunday, March 31, 2024 via Zoom. She had asked me to join them for 15 minutes and share some principles to submit articles and information to the OCAW e-newsletter.

I was pleased to be able to discuss my philosophy about the e-newsletter, specific mechanics involved with editing and photo credits, restrictions on content based on our 501(c)(3) status, desired subject matter, and my promotion of as much diversified material as possible. Officers asked some good questions afterward.

However, I am very tech-UNsavvy, and rely on my son to set up the computer to participate in Zoom meetings. But we ran into a glitch with a new laptop, so my face did not appear on screen – which was just fine with me, as long as the officers could hear my presentation! Jen subsequently sent me a photo that they had taken with “Jeremy”! ☺



(top row) Jen Tsao, Yufan Lu, and Sophia Yang
(middle row) Carol Yuan , Ai-Chu Wang, and Cynthia Chang
(bottom row) Sherry Hsu, “Jeremy” (a.k.a. Linda Devine), and Anne Hu

Jen and the officers appreciated my joining them, and she related that they learned how to better prepare articles for the e-newsletter from the editor’s point of view. Also, as a result, they decided to send an email to their members to encourage them to write an individual article, perhaps about an issue meaningful to them, or about a personal journey, etc., for a future issue.

I also had met several of the officers when they flew from California to Washington in 2017 to attend OCAW’s 40th Anniversary Celebration: National Conference and Reunion, and it was nice to see them and talk with them again.

Upcoming Events

Museum Field Trip

To celebrate Asian Pacific, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, OCAW-SVC will have a field trip to the Chinese American Historical Museum – the Ng Shing Gung to learn about the Chinese history in San Jose. The docent will speak English.

Date and Time: Saturday, May 18, 2024 at 11 a.m.
Address: 635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose, CA 95112
The tour is limited to 25 people, ages 10+.
Please RSVP by May 10.

The Longest Day event

SVC will co-host “The Longest Day event – Dance for Health” to raise funds and awareness to help advance the care, support, and research efforts of the Alzheimer’s Association.

Date and Time: Saturday, June 1, 2024, 1 p.m.-5 p.m.

Location: Culture Center of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco (Milpitas), Multipurpose Room

Address: 100 South Milpitas Blvd., Milpitas, CA 95035

Three different kinds of dance will be taught, including line dances, folk dances, and total body fitness.

The event is free. Donations are welcome.

News from the Hawaii Chapter

(from Sharlene Chun, President)

The Hawaii Chapter has been keeping active with an assortment of events to entice the growing membership to participate. We start 2024 with more new members, and as of this date, our total membership is over 52.

Mahjong Games

A popular draw and quite successful in recruiting new members, is Mahjong Games for Beginners. A second round was held on Saturday, February 3, 2024, at Dr. Sandy Young’s condo Community Lounge, with six tables set up and over 24 ladies coming to play. There was a range of players, from beginners, to non-players, to the knowledgeable ones, and composed of OCAW members and prospective members. A healthy \$5 snack was also available, along with lots of fun and fellowship.









Blanket-making Project

On a beautiful Sunday morning, February 25, 2024, fourteen OCAW Hawaii Chapter members and friends met at Dr. Sandy Young's condo Community Lounge for an Outreach Project making No-Sew Blankets. These blankets will be donated to the Palolo Chinese Home and The Women's and Children's Shelter in Honolulu. The project was Roberta Wong's brainchild from last year, and Sharlene Chun as incoming president followed through with the pre-purchase and storing of all the supplies at her house until this year.









General Membership Meeting

On Sunday, March 10, 2024, the Hawaii Chapter held its General Membership Meeting at the Maple Garden Chinese Restaurant, with an attendance of 31 members and guests. Our new male member, Ross Lee, was also an attendee. The guest speaker was Mona Choy, past president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii and now the President of the United Chinese Society and the District Manager and Senior Vice President for the Home Street Bank, Western Division (Hawaii and West Coast branches).

Her inspirational life story was shared to help mentor the next generation of leaders. Mona is a private person but disclosed her humble beginnings and struggles to make ends meet. She was a woman who did not finish college and needed to work to earn rent money, and was divorced and raising her sons alone. But given the opportunity to work hard and achieve the respect of both men and women, she succeeded because of her perseverance. She continues to encourage her employees to give back to the community as well. Mona is a founding member of the YWCA's Patsy T. Mink Center for Business and Leadership, and active with many other programs helping families and individuals.

Susan Chong Wong introduced Mona Choy, Kimberly Hoi helped with the Power Point presentation, and Wendie Liu said Grace. Jeri Jeffryes donated three loaves of fresh baked fig bread for door prizes, perfect for our three tables. Incidentally, this was a seven (7) course lunch!

Vice President Susan Chong Wong
introducing the speaker





Guest Speaker Mona Choy









Hawaii Chapter officers Sharlene Chun, Susan Chong Wong, Serena Kyi-Yim, and Kimberly Hoi; Guest Speaker Mona Choy; and Communications Chair Sharon Chun

Upcoming Event

The Hawaii Chapter's next General Membership Meeting has been announced by Communications Chair Sharon Chun: Sunday, May 19, 2024 at the King's Restaurant. The featured speaker, Nicole Malia Coglietta, is the co-founder and CEO of CareSift, a Hawaii-based long-term care navigation service which was started in

2015. It is a much needed free service for so many of us, in that stage of life where we seek help for our elders or even for ourselves. Since its founding, CareSift has helped hundreds of families navigate the complexities of long-term senior care.

April showers bring spring flowers, and the merry month of May beckons us to the bright days ahead. Wishing all our OCAW sisters (and brothers!) a warm aloha.

From and About Our Members

About Karina Hou, Maryland Chapter President

(from Karina Hou and Anny Lai, Maryland Chapter Secretary)

OCAW-MD President Karina Hou has been busy with many events and activities. Below are some of these.

On Saturday, January 6, 2024, received the Global Power Women Award 2023 presented by Hollywood International Women Achievers Award (IWAA).

This is a yearly event that happens every March in celebration of International Women's Month. It brings women together from across the globe and honors their accomplishments and contributions in worldwide community development. *Sourced from: <https://www.iwaawards.org/about-us>*



Karina Hou (left)

On Saturday, February 10, 2024, invited to attend the Lunar New Year Concert hosted by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.



The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO) welcomed the year of the dragon with its second annual Lunar New Year performance at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in February. This year's Lunar New Year concert celebrated Asian music and culture with South Korean conductor Moon Doh; Canadian pianist and gold medalist at the First China International Music Competition, Tony Siqi Yun; and acclaimed Chinese erhu player, Cathy Yang. *Sourced from: bsomusic.org*

On Friday, February 16, 2024, invited to attend the Lunar New Year celebration event hosted by the World Bank Group.

The World Bank Group is the largest development bank in the world and an observer at the United Nations Development Group. In order to help educate the community about the Lunar New Year, the World Bank Group hosted a celebratory event to highlight Chinese culture in Washington, D.C. On behalf of OCAW Maryland, Karina was invited to attend as a guest and promote the new year traditions featured that day. Amongst a diverse group of attendees, the event encouraged cultural exchange and engaging activities for people of all ages.



Karina Hou (*front row, right*)

On Tuesday, February 27, 2024, invited to attend the cultural exchange dinner hosted by the Thai Embassy.

Karina and OCAW Maryland sisters were invited by the Thai Embassy to participate in a cultural exchange dinner that featured great food, music, and enriching conversations. It was an opportunity to enjoy the company of OCAW members while also learning about Thai history, culture, and tourism.



Poem

(from Yufan Lu, Silicon Valley Vice President)

A Dialogue between a Tourist and a Polar Bear

by Yufan Lu

I want to be close to you,
I want to leave you alone.
You want me to be close to you,
You want to be left alone.
But I came all the way to visit you.



A big plane, a small plane,
Even a smaller flying machine,
Took me across Hudson Bay,
Landing on the Dymond Lake,
Which I thought was Diamond Lake,
Shining pure crystal-like paradise.
You wonder why I am there,
In the snowy tundra you desired to leave.
You linger outside the wired enclosure,
in an early morning say Hello,
Which thrilled me to rush out,
My temporary cozy den in the wild.



But a fence between us,
Blocks the chance I pat you,
I saw you gnawing at the wires,
The staff here scared you might hurt me.
I am told mixed stories about you.
You are such a powerful creature,
Though most of the time you show,
So innocent, so cute and so lonely,
People are eager to be with you.
Then you are such a huge animal,
When you stand to fight,
You show your power.
As a human being without arms,
I am defenseless and weak,
Slowly I backed to my place,
Where we paid to be safe inside.
Because touched by your legends,
I came all the way from California,
To Churchill Canada,
On your free homeland,



You can walk freely as you want,
You can breathe freely as you like.
I came with a humble respect,
Want to stay with you just
A few days and a few moments,
Will you be gentle with me?
Are you happy to see me?
I am a tourist for the last season,
At the Dymond Lake Lodge,
Wish to say “Bon voyage” to you,
Before you start your journey,
Towards the Arctic Territory.



Dymond Lake Ecolodge, Churchill, Canada



Looking for polar bears on the Dymond Lake

Warrior Queen Oracle Bones

by Camilla Ng

(Editor's Note: Camilla is a former President of the OCAW Maryland Chapter.)

To celebrate the National Museum of Asian Art's centennial in 2023, the museum organized [Anyang: China's Ancient City of Kings](#), an exhibition devoted to the art and archaeology of the last capital of the Shang Dynasty. Occupied between roughly 1250 BCE and 1050 BCE, the Anyang site is associated with the

earliest surviving corpus of Chinese writing; palatial building foundations; immense underground royal tombs; large-scale human sacrifice; the arrival of horses and chariots in China; and an extensive system of urban factories, where sophisticated goods in a variety of materials, including bone, jade, ceramic, and bronze, were manufactured at an industrial scale.

Drawn exclusively from the museum's collections, the exhibit features over two hundred remarkable artifacts that can be linked with Anyang and other material cultures contemporary with the Shang, including ornaments, ritual vessels, bells, weapons, and chariot fittings.

None of the artifacts in the exhibit are from the excavations that the Freer Gallery of Art sponsored in 1928-29. It is because of the scientific excavations, which are still ongoing in Anyang, that the museum curators can identify the age of the items in the museum collection to the Shang period. Most important, these artifacts show the early development of Chinese writing (oracle bone script), enduring ritual practices, innovations in weaponry and warfare, advances in design and manufacturing, and the highly personal spaces of tombs, including objects chosen for the afterlife.

Since the artifacts cover such depth and breadth of the Shang culture, I choose to focus on the story of Fu Hao, a military general and queen, to share with the readers. I hope you will have the opportunity to see the exhibition in person before its closing on April 28, 2024. You can also visit the National Museum of Asian Art website to see and read descriptions of the artifacts.

Divination rituals were an integral part of Shang kingship and the administration of the state. Either the shoulder bone of an ox, or the lower side of a tortoise's shell (known as the plastron) would be used.



To prepare the shell for divination, it was first trimmed, cleaned, and polished. The ritual specialist would cut arrays of double hollows, deeply cut narrow grooves next to a shallower circular depression. The diviner then interpreted the auspiciousness of the cracks.

Writing at this time was mostly pictographic, meaning that a word was represented by a picture that closely

resembled its meaning. Over time, this writing would become more ideographic.

In 1936, 10,000 pieces of oracle bones were discovered in Anyang. Researchers found the female name “Fu Hao” 婦好 etched over 250 times on these oracle bones. According to historical records, Fu Hao was the wife of Wu Ding, the greatest king of the late Shang Dynasty. Existing historical materials show that Wu Ding had as many as 60 wives, only three of whom enjoyed status as queen, with Fu Hao ranking first among them.

However, the queen’s surname was not Fu; that character referred to a relatively high-ranking official position in the Shang Dynasty. As a queen, Fu Hao’s first task was to give birth to offspring for the royal family. According to the inscriptions on the oracle bones, she likely delivered several children. Some pieces of the divination inscriptions asked whether Fu Hao was pregnant, whether her delivery would be smooth, when she would deliver, and the coming babies’ gender. Considering that the inscriptions feature so much about Fu Hao’s pregnancies and childbirths, many agree that she must have been the first wife of Wu Ding, which would give her considerably more privilege than other wives.



The inscriptions on this oracle bone were used for divination before the childbirth of Fu Hao, a queen of the Shang Dynasty. The oracle bone is in the collection of the Tianjin Museum.

In addition to being a cosseted queen, Fu Hao was also a brave and battle-wise general. The Shang Dynasty was plagued by wars. The Xia Dynasty (2100-1600 B.C.) was overthrown by the Shang by force, as was the Shang by its successor Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 B.C.). Wars at different scales were frequent during the Shang Dynasty. Especially during the reign of King Wu Ding, there were many attacks by tribes in northwestern China. Fu Hao not only participated in, but won many battles in military campaigns.

According to the record on oracle bones, Fu Hao recruited 3,000 warriors to attack the Qiang tribe in the west. It was the largest military expedition of the Shang Dynasty recorded on discovered oracle bones. She was commander-in-chief of the expedition. The military expedition diminished the strength of the Qiang tribe and

restored peace on the Shang Dynasty's western border.

Later, Fu Hao was sent by Wu Ding to conquer nomadic tribes in the northwest, the Yi people in the southeast, and the Ba kingdom in the west, contributing much to the expansion of the territory of the Shang Dynasty. The battle against the Ba kingdom was particularly commendable. To cooperate with Wu Ding's frontal attack, Fu Hao led an army in advance to set up an ambush behind the Ba army. When the Ba army retreated after being defeated by Wu Ding's troops, it fell into the trap led by Fu Hao. She and Wu Ding surrounded the enemy and annihilated them. This battle is regarded as the earliest known ambush in the history of Chinese warfare.

Oracle bone inscriptions demonstrate that Fu Hao was not only a general, but also a "civil official." She hosted various types of sacrifices and divinations. Oracle bone inscriptions show that, in general, divination activities were presided over by kings of the Shang Dynasty in person because the rituals were very important and mysterious state events involving contact between humans and deity. Ordinary people had no right to participate. But Fu Hao practiced divination on behalf of the king and worked for the divination agency responsible for inspecting the tortoise plastrons and animal bones for divination. She was also the "Minister of the Interior" and helped King Wu Ding handle political affairs. Once, she was dispatched to meet a state teacher who educated noble children. She also ventured out of the palace to meet members of a women's association.

In 1976, a well-preserved tomb of a royal family member of the Shang Dynasty was found at Yinxu in Anyang, Henan Province. Based on the stratigraphic relationship of the tomb and the inscription "Fu Hao" on most bronzes unearthed there, archaeologists have determined that the owner of the tomb is Queen Fu Hao. Her tomb is currently the only one of the Shang royal family that has been determined in terms of historical period and the owner's identity, thanks to relevant records on oracle bones.

Many exquisite funerary items were unearthed from Fu Hao's tomb, including 468 bronze vessels, 755 jade wares, 564 bone wares, and 6,800 seashells. The burial objects are not only large in number and rich in variety, but also beautiful in appearance and exquisite in craftsmanship. They are regarded as national treasures, fully reflecting the highly developed level of bronze work in the Shang Dynasty and the noble identity of the tomb owner. According to the structure of the tomb and its contents, researchers are gradually learning more about the mysterious woman recorded on oracle bones.

Sources:

National Museum of Asian Art, Khan Academy, "Queen of Oracle Bones" (Ma Baochun, 2019)

(Editor's Note: Camilla is grateful that she was able to find a wealth of information online, with which to write this article.)

Culture Corner

European Christmas Markets Cruise Part IV: Germany and the Netherlands

by Cathy Roberts

(Editor's Note: Cathy is National Vice President for Membership. The following is the final part of her comprehensive article on her and husband Dick's European Christmas Markets Cruise. Parts I, II, and III appeared in the OCAW e-newsletters of June 2023, September 2023, and February 2024.)

On Tuesday, December 13, 2022, we arrived in Wertheim, Germany. After breakfast, we took a walking tour of the fairy-tale town. It has two attractions: Wertheim Castle, which was captured and destroyed during the Thirty Years War, but is still impressive today; and The Tower of Wertheim, whose noticeable lean is due to 800 years of flooding rather than an architectural defect. After the city tour, we went back to the ship and left the Main River for the Rhine River. We enjoyed spectacular views as we sailed along the Middle Rhine River.

The next afternoon, the ship made a brief stop at Braubach to visit the Marksburg Castle. We then continued sailing to Koblenz. We stayed on the ship for live music and dinner while some of the guests attended Moselle wine tasting or visited the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress.



Koblenz Christmas Market



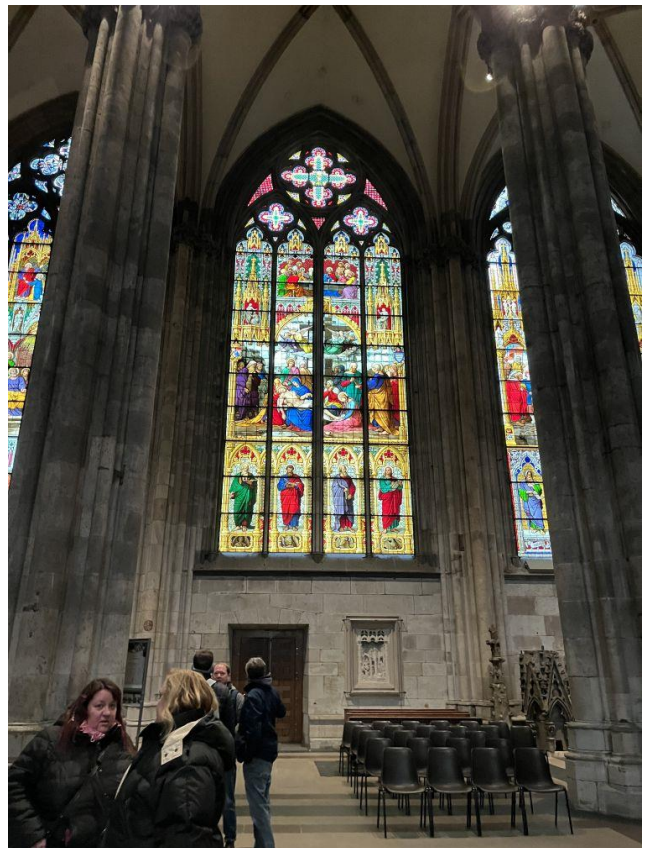
Koblenz Christmas Market



Ehrenbreitstein Fortress

Afterward the ship sailed off from Koblenz bound for Cologne.

We arrived in Cologne the next morning (December 15). All of us left the ship to visit the Cologne Cathedral and the Shrine of the Magi.



Inside the Cologne Cathedral

There were many Christmas Markets, large and small, all over the city. We enjoyed shopping for crafts from the various vendors and eating different street foods. We wandered around the city until evening, and then headed back to the ship.



Cologne Christmas Market

The ship departed Cologne for KinderDijk in the Netherlands after midnight and arrived in KinderDijk around 2 p.m. We spent the afternoon visiting windmills and walked around the surrounding area, and then returned to the ship to join the Captain's Farewell Cocktail Party.





On December 17, we arrived in Amsterdam early in the morning. We picked up our luggage, said goodbye to our new friends, and headed for the airport and home. It had been a very enjoyable experience.

(Photos taken by Dick Roberts)