

E-Newsletter of the Organization of Chinese American Women

June 2021



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(from Linda Devine, Editor)

Thank you to those who submitted material for this e-newsletter. I am also grateful to my husband Ed for his efforts in preparing the large number of photos in this issue. And I hope that all have been vaccinated and that finally we will be returning to a more normal life after over a year of dealing with the pandemic.

As always, I encourage OCAW members to write articles or submit information for the e-newsletter if there is something you think would be of interest to the membership. I continue to aim for publishing a wide variety of material.

Please feel free to send me any suggestions or recommendations that you might have for any aspects of the e-newsletter. My email address is: devinefive@comcast.net

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News from the Maryland Chapter

Art Gallery Opening and Reception

(from Linda Devine)

It was a fine morning on Saturday, May 22, 2021, when a small group of OCAW members met in Boyds, Maryland, at the beautiful home of Karina Hou, OCAW Maryland Chapter President. Karina is a busy

person. In addition to chairing the MD Chapter, she is also President of the Chinese American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Washington (CACCGW) and Co-Chairwoman of the Montgomery International Film Festival (MIFF). She taught piano for many years. Karina recently retired from hosting numerous students from China who came to the U.S. for their high school education, and thus with more time to be productive, and more room in her house, she decided to turn her home into a small art gallery.

With the COVID-19 pandemic finally appearing to turn a corner and many of us now fully vaccinated, she thought it would be nice to host an Art Gallery Opening and Reception for a few members – a first step in returning to in-person gatherings. Karina is a master of Chinese painting; hopefully everyone enjoyed samples of her artwork in the February and April issues of the *OCAW E-Newsletter*. When she invited us to see her gallery, I had mistakenly assumed that we would see a few walls displaying her paintings. Little did I realize that she is a robust collector of fine art of all kinds, obtained from China, and gathered over a span of more than 20 years.

Once guests arrived, Karina gave us a tour of her art collection – nothing short of absolutely amazing! There were paintings, Chinese watercolors, wood carvings, teapots, porcelain, jade, and silk.



Karina Hou (*center, in the multicolored blouse*) describing the pieces in her art collection









After our tour, Karina gathered us together for Introductions and Opening Statements. She remarked on the privilege of leading the Maryland Chapter and wished for good things to come.



National President Christina Chang thanked her for inviting us to this wonderful event. Then Christina Poy, in her capacity as Administrative Director of the Commissions of Asian Pacific American Affairs and South Asian American Affairs for Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, presented Karina with a Governor's Citation, in recognition of her "outstanding commitment to the community – donating 3,400 bottles of hand sanitizer during a time of critical need during the COVID-19 pandemic." The Citation, dated March 24, 2021, was conferred upon her and expressed appreciation for her contribution and service on behalf of the State of Maryland and its people. It was signed by Governor Larry J. Hogan, Jr., Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford, and Secretary of State John C. Wobensmith.



We proceeded to enjoy a delicious luncheon featuring many dishes that had been prepared by Karina's longtime chef. While having our meal, since none of us knew all the guests present, Karina asked us to introduce ourselves. However, what were supposed to be short introductions turned into enthusiastic conversations as we learned about the many accomplishments, experiences, goals, and aspirations of one another – so much so that we ran out of time, and Karina's planned discussion about OCAW, ideas for the organization, future events, etc., had to be postponed for another time.



As if her event had not been enough, we left her home with generous gift bags containing a Chinese knot (traditional Chinese decoration) and a set of beautiful porcelain bowls.

Karina would like to host a future event for Maryland and Virginia OCAW members, and we all agreed that we'd love to return to her exquisite home. We will look forward to making plans.

Thank you, Karina, for your kind hospitality and a wonderful day! And thanks also to Karina's lovely daughter Elise, who greeted us, ably assisted with the event, and took many photos for us.



(Standing) Olivia Chang (MD Chapter member); Linda Devine (National VP for Communications); Maria Yang (former Virginia Chapter President and Maryland Chapter Acting President); Donna Byler (National Executive Director); and Cathy Roberts (National VP for Membership)

(Seated) Bei Ma (MD Chapter member); Karina Hou (MD Chapter President); Christina Poy (MD Chapter Treasurer); Christina Chang (National President); and Pam Wong (MD Chapter member)

(Photos taken by Elise Liu, Bei Ma, Donna Byler, and Linda Devine)

News from the Silicon Valley Chapter

(from Carol Yuan, President)

Zumba Fitness Socials

Our chapter has been having Zumba Fitness socials on Zoom on the third Sunday of every month, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., led by member Yufan Lu. Sunday, April 18, and Sunday, May 16, 2021 were the dates of our most recent events.

A handful of members have been joining in. Yufan chooses, compiles, and teaches each song and dance based on members' ages and experience. She has included Indian, Latin, and Chinese folk songs and dance steps to add variety and fun.



National River Cleanup



This year's National River Cleanup was held on every Saturday in May. Due to the pandemic, each group selected its own date and route, and arranged picking up tools ahead of time.

On Saturday, May 22, 2021, from 10:30 a.m. until noon, the Silicon Valley Chapter held its cleanup. Our former president Alice Chiou helped to pick up tools the day before and brought them to the site we chose, which was Calabazas Creek in Cupertino, CA. When we learned that the entrance of the creek was locked, we decided to go to Memorial Park in Cupertino instead.

Fifteen members and friends participated. Everyone was happy to see each other after over a year having to shelter in place. It was like a social outing while serving the community.



News from the Hawaii Chapter

(from Roberta Wong Leung, President)

The OCAW Hawaii Chapter was pleased to host a fascinating and pertinent Zoom speaker, Crystal Kwok, on her topic “Blurring the Color Line” on Sunday, May 23, 2021. It was a popular topic, and many people from various Chinese community groups were invited and attended.

Crystal is in the process of completing the production of her documentary film entitled “Blurring the Color Line,” which addresses the Chinese American situation of those living in the segregated South, namely in Augusta, Georgia, from the 20th century. Queenie Chee wrote an informative article about Crystal which

appeared in the April *OCAW E-Newsletter*, and I refer you to that piece to learn more about Crystal's background, experiences, education, and career.

Blurring the Color Line

Presentation and discussion by filmmaker

Crystal Kwok

Sunday May 23, 2021 1:00 pm Hawaii time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/42378545047pwd=jakeRNqS3QWNPf8-4H-xjOXjIX9TPw> Passcode: 185628

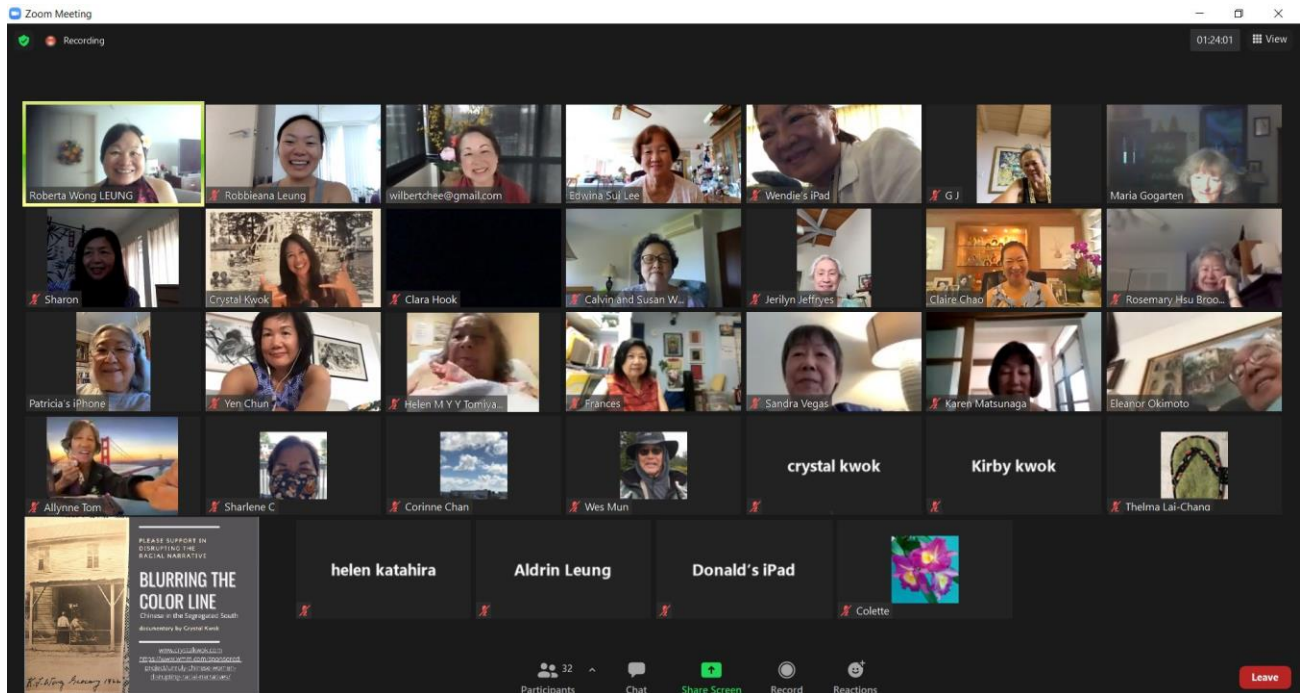
Event is hosted by

OCAW

(Organization of Chinese
American Women)

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a white short-sleeved shirt with a small floral pattern, stands in profile looking out a large window. Her right hand is raised, touching the window frame. In the foreground, a professional video camera with a large microphone is visible, partially obscuring the view. The window looks out onto a residential street with trees and a fence.

**CONFRONTING AFRO-ASIAN TENSIONS AND
RELATIONS, HOW DO UNTOLD STORIES OF CHINESE
WOMEN REVEAL OUR RACIAL PAST?**



(Photo taken by Robbieana Leung)

Upcoming Events

Queenie Mow Chee will be hosting an information session on OCAW history and background at our August 8 General Membership Meeting.

Hawaii is still in Tier 3 which limits meetings to not more than 10 people. Unfortunately, this prevents us from having our General Membership Meetings face to face. However, our Zoom meetings have been popular with good attendance.

We are hoping to have our annual Christmas lunch and officer installation on Sunday, December 19 at Oahu Country Club.

From and About Our Members

Montgomery Blair High School Donation Ceremony

(from Karina Hou, Maryland Chapter President)

On Wednesday, March 24, 2021, Karina Hou participated in the face mask and hand sanitizer donation ceremony hosted by the CEO of Asialinks, George Deng. The ceremony was held at Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, MD, and focused on providing support for schools and senior centers of Montgomery County, MD.

Guests attending the ceremony included Montgomery County Council Member Hans Riemer; Christina Poy, Administrative Director of the Maryland Governor's Commissions; David Blair, businessman and philanthropist; and Dr. Henry H. Sun, President of Tasly Pharmaceuticals, Inc. A total of 30,000 face masks was donated to help the community. Last year, the Tasly North America Pharmaceutical Company contributed 3,000 bottles of hand sanitizer to frontline medical staff and essential workers. This year, the company was able to donate another 3,400 bottles of hand sanitizer to the county.



Karina participated in the donation ceremony as President of the Chinese American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Washington (CACCGW) and as President of the OCAW Maryland Chapter. She was very thankful for the guests and participants of this event.

Breaking Through the Glass Ceilings

(from Dr. Roberta Wong Leung, Professor Emeritus and OCAW Hawaii President)

(Editor's Note: Roberta's summary bio also appeared in the April OCAW E-Newsletter.)

With great appreciation to my many mentors and supporters, I was able to achieve wonderful career opportunities not possible for a young Chinese American woman from Hawaii. I have been blessed to have worked in two wonderful career fields, Hospitality and Tourism and Education. I have been able to break through many glass ceilings, climb the corporate ladder quickly, and travel to 195 countries.

I was fortunate to achieve many "firsts." Back in 1972, I was chosen to be the first Chinese American woman to be on the Executive Management Team at the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco. I was the first Chinese American woman to be Personnel Director of a five-star international hotel. I was the first in my family to obtain an MBA and DBA. And I achieved many more "firsts" in my career after that.

I worked around the world as a Senior Lecturer, Professor, and Dean. I am active in community organizations and have served in officer positions. I also volunteer for many organizations.

In 2018 I was honored by the United Chinese Society to be the Model Chinese Mother of the Year for Hawaii.



I was able to break through many glass ceilings as a Chinese American from Hawaii.

Editor's Note: The following article from Karina Hou, as well as the one from Patricia Fenn which follows, also touch upon the recent spike in anti-Asian hate in this country, and these pieces provide an appropriate segue into the next section on anti-Asian American hate.

Westfield Montgomery AAPI Ceremony

(from Karina Hou, Maryland Chapter President)

On Thursday, May 13, 2021, Karina Hou participated in the AAPI Ceremony at Westfield Montgomery Mall in Bethesda, Maryland, to show support for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the greater Washington, D.C. area. Westfield Vice President of Government Affairs Abby Jagoda presented leaders of the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center and the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates) donations of \$10,000 each.

Maryland State Senator Susan C. Lee stated, "The 150% increase in hate and violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders has been very disheartening. We thank and commend Westfield for joining forces with us to combat these vicious attacks against those in our community."





On behalf of the OCAW Maryland Chapter, Karina hopes that she can further support movements of civic responsibility and community partnerships. Westfield's collaboration and donations will help our next generation of AAPI leaders across the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia area.



Karina Hou (*standing*)

Combating AAPI Hate-Violence via Police Reform and Legislation in Maryland

(from Patricia Fenn, former Maryland Chapter Vice President)

(Editor's Note: Pat has been active for decades at the state level, primarily via the Montgomery County Branch of the NAACP. In her current endeavor described below, there were five work groups. Since most of the implementation of the recommendations were going to be about funding, she made sure that she was on the Budget Committee. There were nine members of this committee, including a man who was Korean.)

Patricia Fenn, OCAW Maryland Chapter Life Member, was appointed in late August 2020 to the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force by County Executive Marc Elrich, Montgomery County, MD. She applied for the Task Force, identifying herself as an OCAW-MD Chapter Life Member. There were several others from AAPI citizenry in the 45 members who were appointed from community organizations. Another 45 were appointed from personnel in county agencies.

The inclusion of AAPI members was important because of the rising statistics of hate-violence toward AAPI individuals, even in liberal Montgomery County, and the efforts by county police to contend with some in the Big Lie. *(Editor's Note: By the term "Big Lie," Pat is referring to the falsehood perpetrated by the former President of the United States, that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 Presidential election, and that in actuality, it was he, and not Joe Biden, who won the election. Not surprisingly, this falsehood has been denounced by leaders of both political parties, and has been soundly disproved by election officials of both political parties. Moreover, over 60 court cases were lost, presided over by judges appointed from both political parties, including some jurists who were even appointed by the former President himself. Nevertheless, he continues to make this claim, and many of his followers believe him – the fallout of which has been detrimental to our country, and which led to the violent insurrection of the U.S. Capitol on January 6.)*

The part of Montgomery County on the northeast side of the border with Washington, D.C., joined other police reform think tanks in major counties across the state and at the Annapolis Legislature. Most issued recommendations are now being pressed for implementation in work sessions as local governments hold budget work sessions for the upcoming fiscal year.

At the state level, legislators overturned a governor's veto in days before the Session ended, making Maryland the first state in the country to repeal the Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights.

This means greater transparency in disciplinary actions, provisions for citizen oversight, barring of certain use-of-force actions, and providing a worthier sense of justice particularly for the AAPI community.

Law becomes effective in July 2022.

Anti-Asian American Hate and Violence

Anti-Asian Hate Rally in New Orleans, Louisiana

(from Patricia Ellzey, New Orleans Chapter President)

(Editor's Note: Pat provided preliminary information on this rally in the April OCAW E-Newsletter. Further details are below.)



On Easter Sunday afternoon, April 4, 2021, Patricia Hew Ellzey was invited to be one of the guest speakers at the first Anti-Asian Hate Rally ever held in New Orleans, LA. She was invited to speak in her capacity as President of the OCAW New Orleans Chapter.

The theme of the rally was "Stop Asian Hate: We're All In This Together: Call for Action!" The local New Orleans Chinese Association and the Asian Medical staff of Ochsner Medical Center primarily sponsored this historic event. It was held at the main entrance of the New Orleans Museum of Art in New Orleans City Park.

Guest speakers included:

Cynthia Lee Sheng, Jefferson Parish President
Abigail Hu, Benjamin Franklin High School Senior and member of Asian Youth for Civic Engagement
Dr. Wendy Jung, Tulane University Professor and Chair of the Asian Pacific American Society
Patricia Hew Ellzey, President of the Organization of Chinese American Women New Orleans Chapter
Lauren Owen, local Asian businesswoman and community organizer
Chrissy Changho Bruneau, Chair of the Asian Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Susheng Wang, Associate Professor, Tulane University
Edgar Chase, former Vice President, Dillard University, and former Chair, Metropolitan Crime Commission

Dr. Tony Hu, Interim Professor, Tulane University Association of Chinese Professors
Dr. Hongbing Lu, President of the New Orleans Chinese Association

Pat Ellzey



The guest speakers and Masters of Ceremony
Pat is the 3rd person from the left, seated, wearing a blue sweater.

The Masters of Ceremony were:

Dr. Jeffrey Kuo, M.D.

Dr. David Chen, M.D.

A large group of Asian Americans along with many of all ethnicities came and witnessed this very orderly and well-planned public protest.

The following is a link to a CBS TV video news report on the rally:

<https://www.wvltv.com/embeds/video/289-4302a5a4-b640-428b-93d9-c5d722698b4f/iframe?jwsouce=fb&fbclid=IwAR0aSJtuFroFF4X5mrAFpD4dXuHHovIovDXG8700448pKM-MjMMRMwdvjyM>

Peter Chee: Behind the mask

(from Queenie Chee, Hawaii Chapter Events Committee Chair)

Peter Chee is the son of Queenie Chee. He has a background in print media that led him to a stint as a staff reporter for the *McMinnville/Yamhill County News-Register* (Oregon) earlier in his career. He wrote a thoughtful article for the *News-Register* which was published on April 16, 2021. It discussed how the rise in anti-Asian hate has affected him. Queenie thought OCAW readers might be interested in his piece.

https://newsregister.com/article?articleTitle=peter-chee-behind-the-mask--1618596393--39908--&fbclid=IwAR1I9Ku1e_tNMKQX1qweEYzAP7xsAxK6TFagcxJJrVBMPNGiLHdmqZ7T2Ws

When Lightning Strikes

(from Veronica Li, Virginia Chapter Acting President)

(Editor's Note: Veronica is a published author with several books to her credit. She thought that this article might be of interest to OCAW members and wanted to share it.

Veronica informs us that Congress has since passed with overwhelming bipartisan support the hate crimes bill mentioned at the end of this article. President Biden signed into law the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act on May 21. The law addresses hate crimes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, especially against Asian Americans.)

I was sitting on my mother's bed when she asked me what I was doing that weekend. I burst into tears.

"I have no friends," I blurted.

Your family are your friends," Mom said.

I sobbed louder. This wasn't what a seventeen-year-old wanted to hear.

My family had immigrated to California three years earlier, one of the first from Hong Kong to take advantage of the 1965 Immigration Act. We were middle class, well-educated, and fluent in English – my mom was an English teacher and my dad a businessman.

I went on crying while my mother sat helplessly next to me. Words were useless because I couldn't explain myself. I'd done everything I could possibly think of to worm my way into my classmates' hearts.

When they came to me with, "Veronica, you're so smart, can you show me..." I would let them copy my homework. I went to all the football games, cheering for the school team until my voice was hoarse. I joined extracurricular activities such as Treble Clef and caroled to my schoolmates at Christmas. But at the end of my senior year, when social aptitude was the only skill set left in the high school curriculum, I flunked miserably.

Back in Hong Kong, my peers had liked me well enough to elect me class monitor. In America, nobody ever said an unkind word to me, and yet loneliness sat like an elephant on my chest. I was totally mystified, but that day at choir, one person blew the mystery wide open. Ken, the blind boy I spent time with during choir breaks, said to the tenor next to him: "We're both outcasts. Why else would she hang out with me?"

It took me a few blinks to realize he was talking about me. His words struck like lightning, and for a few seconds the truth flickered before me, painful and liberating at the same time.

Fast forward twenty years. I was a confident officer of the World Bank, traveling around the world to help poor countries develop. I bought a home in Vienna, VA, a prosperous suburb of the nation's capital.

While walking in the neighborhood with my ten-year-old boy, several teenagers sang "Ching chong chang" as we passed. I told my son to ignore them. They're teenagers, I said, as though that explained everything.

On Halloween, somebody threw a pumpkin at my door. When a guest of mine parked on the street, somebody keyed an ugly scratch on his car. The acts of vandalism dissipated over time.

I thought it was because my neighbors had grown used to my overzealous German shepherd barking at every passerby. I thought that until a Black Zimbabwean coworker stayed with me for a couple of months while waiting for her new house to be completed. One morning, I went out and found the back window of my car shattered. Lightning flashed: my German shepherd wasn't and had never been the problem. I called the police to report a hate crime.

Fast forward another thirty years. I was a gray-haired retiree when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Several days after President Trump coined the term "China virus," I was stocking up on essentials at the pharmacy. There was only one worker in the store, an older woman with a hostile face that warned me to stay away. From a safe distance, I asked her when the next shipment of hand sanitizer was arriving. She couldn't or wouldn't say; it was hard to tell.

I took the last few rolls of toilet paper to the self-checkout register. The machine kept dinging at me. When I asked for help, the woman told me to ignore it. Then I overheard her talking to another shopper, something about a stupid customer who couldn't figure out the checkout machine. I got into my car, and suddenly the sky cracked open. The stupid customer she was mocking was me!

After fifty-some years in America, this transplant has grown deep roots. Unfortunately, some of my countrymen still view me as an invasive foreign species. Hostility bubbles below the surface, and when politicians dial up the heat, the simmering erupts into full-throated hatred.

At the start of the pandemic, Asian American organizations donated to hospitals large amounts of face masks and other PPE as well as meals to frontline healthcare workers. But the assault on our communities didn't abate.

Verbal abuse such as "Go back to where you came from!" has escalated to physical attacks on Asian seniors and finally, the unthinkable and yet logical sequence of events – the mass shooting of Asian women. Some say the killings aren't a hate crime because no such intent was expressed. But lightning has struck me enough times; I recognize what I see.

We can't wait for attitudes to change. We need the government to protect Asian Americans with action and the full force of the law. The bill sponsored by Representative Meng and Senator Hirono to address the recent hate crimes is a good start. Congress must pass this bill quickly to end the injustice inflicted on Asian Americans.

(Editor's Note: Veronica's article also appeared in AsAmNews on April 25, 2021, and can be found at this link: <https://asamnews.com/2021/04/25/racism-is-chipping-away-at-my-soul-what-will-it-take-to-stop-it/>)

The Orange Ribbon

(from Camilla Ng, former Maryland Chapter President, and Veronica Li, Virginia Chapter Acting President)



The orange ribbon in our Solidarity Against AAPI Hate logo is used to raise awareness for racial tolerance. The United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and Australia's Harmony Day also use the ribbon for racial harmony.

Maryland and Virginia Chapter members Camilla Ng and Veronica Li attended the National Day of Solidarity Against AAPI Hate rally held on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. on Monday, May 31, 2021. Hundreds of people voiced against the widespread hate crimes against Asian Americans, and made demands for justice and inclusion.

This was one of 20 such rallies across the country on Memorial Day. This movement is supported by about 50 diverse advocacy and community groups, including the Chinese American Heritage Foundation, Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates), Chinese American Citizens Alliance (CACA), 1882 Foundation, APIAVote, Council of Korean Americans, Arab American Institute, Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), and NAACP.



Jason Fong, Evelyn Moy, Lee Wong, Jennings Wong (holding the flag), Alex Chan, Amy Lee, and Alfred Lam (who sang the National Anthem)

A prominent lineup of speakers took the stage. They were of diverse ethnic backgrounds and religions, but all spoke to the same message. They celebrated Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, honored the Asian American soldiers and veterans, denounced the recent spate of hate crimes against Asian Americans, and pledged solidarity to combat this injustice. “Any attack against one is an attack against us all” became the battle cry.

The speakers included state and county officials in the area, such as Justin Fairfax, Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, and our own Christina Wong Poy, former OCAW Maryland president. As the Administrative Director of the Maryland Governor’s Commissions on APA Affairs and South Asian Affairs, Christina delivered a message from Maryland’s First Lady, Yumi Hogan.

Other speakers were individuals and groups from all over the country. Members of Asian Frontliners, a grassroots group created to protect and patrol the streets of Oakland Chinatown in California, marched on stage and made a formidable show of force. Regina Aquino, the first Filipino to win a Leading Performer Helen Hayes Award, told a moving story about how she discovered that she wasn’t “broken,” but was whole and fulfilled in her Filipino heritage.



Speaker Christina Wong Poy, delivering a speech on behalf of Maryland First Lady, Yumi Hogan



Speaker Lee Wong, an elected official of West Chester, Ohio, and an Army veteran. “Is this patriotic enough?” Fed up with people questioning his patriotism because he is Asian American, Wong lifted up his shirt to reveal scars from injuries he had suffered while in the U.S. Army, during a speech against racism at a recent town meeting.



Speaker Jay B, founder of Asian Frontliners, with Asians with Attitude, volunteer street patrols of Oakland and Stockton, CA, holding flags of Laos and Cambodia. A 38-year-old Laotian American truck driver Jimmy Bounphengsy, who goes by Jay B, became an activist driven by the increasing anti-Asian attacks. Jay B drove 40 miles after work each day from San Jose to Oakland Chinatown, to walk the streets to provide unofficial security to stores and escort elderly citizens home safely.



Yellow whistles with wrist bands were given out at the rally. Sponsored by The Yellow Whistle™, the “Yellow Whistle is a symbol of self-protection and solidarity in the fight against historical discrimination and anti-Asian violence. It is a simple gadget with a universal purpose – to signal alarm and call for help for all Americans. We shall not remain silent, because we belong.” To obtain your Yellow Whistle, go to the [THE YELLOW WHISTLE](#) website.

The rally was closed with a powerful soulful protest song, *No More* by KHA, a Vietnamese-American pop soul singer and songwriter, born and raised in the DC area. The lyrics of this beautiful song capture the history of the contributions of Asian Americans and their struggle against discrimination and injustice. It may become the national anthem for the Asian Americans. Ctrl-Click on the link below for this song.
[NO MORE - Original by KHA - Bing video](#)

All in all, it was a colorful, entertaining, and inspiring rally. The message was loud and clear: We belong and we will be silent no more.

About Solidarity Against AAPI Hate (SAAH)

SAAH is the brainchild of the Chinese American Heritage Foundation, created in direct response to the Atlanta shootings and the rise of anti-Asian violence brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Its goal is to amplify the AAPI voice, educate, inspire action, and affect change. Ctrl-Click on the link below for more information.

[Take Action - National Day of Solidarity Against Hate \(solidarityagainstaapihate.org\)](https://solidarityagainstaapihate.org)

(Photos taken by Camilla Ng)

(Editor's Note: It is Camilla's personal hope that more Asian Americans will come out to support our communities under attack.)

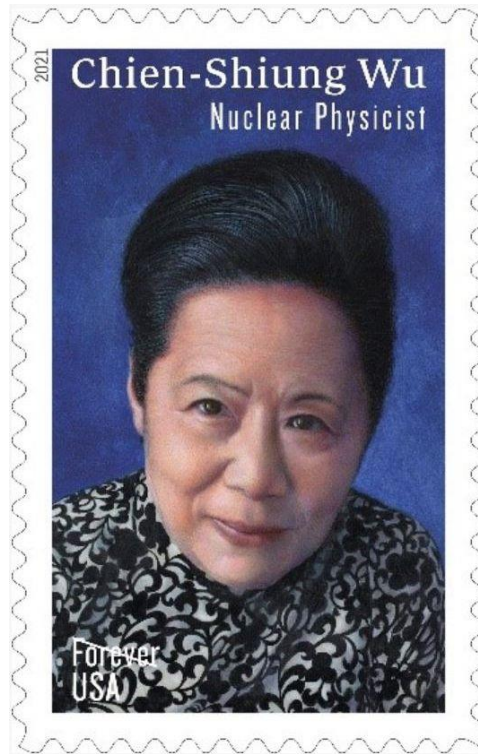
Culture Corner

Commemorative Forever Stamp

(from Susan Young, former Maryland Chapter Secretary)

In the April *OCAW E-Newsletter*, Cathy Roberts wrote a comprehensive article for our Culture Corner on the commemorative Forever stamp of Dr. Wu Chien-Shiung, issued by the United States Postal Service. She is one of only two individuals being honored with stamps this year, and in a year that the USPS is honoring Asian American achievement. Dr. Wu was one of the most influential nuclear physicists of the 20th century.

Susan has thoughtfully provided a picture of this commemorative stamp that she wanted to share with everyone.



The Dragon Boat Festival

by Cathy Roberts

(Editor's Note: Cathy is National Vice President for Membership.)

The Dragon Boat Festival is celebrated on the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar calendar.

Among all the origins of the Dragon Boat Festival, the legend story of Qu Yuan (340 - 278 BC) is the most popular one, and is widely regarded as the real origin. It commemorates the death of Qu Yuan, a Chinese poet and minister known for his patriotism and contributions to classical poetry and who eventually became a national hero.

Qu Yuan lived during the time of China's first feudal dynasties and supported the decision to fight against the powerful state. Although his actions led to his exile, he wrote in order to show his love for the country. Legend has it that Qu Yuan felt such remorse after the capture of his country's capital that, after finishing his final poem, on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, he waded into the Mi Lo River in today's Hunan province as a form of protest and despair over the corruption surrounding him.

Upon hearing news of this tragic attempt, villagers took boats and carried dumplings to the middle of the river to try and save Qu Yuan, but their efforts were in vain. They turned to beating drums, splashing water with their paddles, and throwing the rice dumplings into the water – serving as both an offering to Qu Yuan's spirit, as well as a means to keep the fish and evil spirits away from his body. These rice dumplings became the *zongzi* we know today, while the search for Qu Yuan's body became the intense dragon boat races.

Dragon Boat Races

These are the real highlight of the festival with the ornately carved boats and fierce painted ‘dragon’ heads and tails. It is a vibrant spectacle that consists of heavy drumming and intense racers as they race to reach the finish line.

The Washington, D.C. Dragon Boat Festival continues this tradition through cultural and athletic demonstrations. Dragon boat races and other activities are held annually. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the 2020 and 2021 races were cancelled, but they will resume in 2022.



In the background is the famed John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.
(OCAW's Opera International has held concerts there.)



Zongzi

This is one of the main food items eaten during the Dragon Boat Festival. It is a rice dumpling made out of sticky or glutinous rice, wrapped in bamboo leaves to form a pyramid shape that is tied with plant stems. There are also a number of different fillings available, such as egg yolk, lotus seeds, ham, chestnuts, and pork. Some places even make a mixed sweet and savory filling for the zongzi.

In July 2012, Maryland and Virginia Chapter members gathered together at a member's house to wrap zongzi. Everyone enjoyed the event and feasted on the delicious zongzi.







(Editor's Note: This Maryland and Virginia Chapter joint event was coordinated by Camilla Ng, who at the time was President of the Maryland Chapter and Acting President of the Virginia Chapter. Several members contributed to its success. Cathy and Dick Roberts graciously lent their beautiful home for the venue.

See the OCAW E-Newsletter of September 2012 for a comprehensive article on the Zongzi Wrap gathering. It includes more photos, and also recipes for Cantonese Zongzi, Salted Egg Yolks, and Coconut Jello.)

Cheongsam or Qipao?

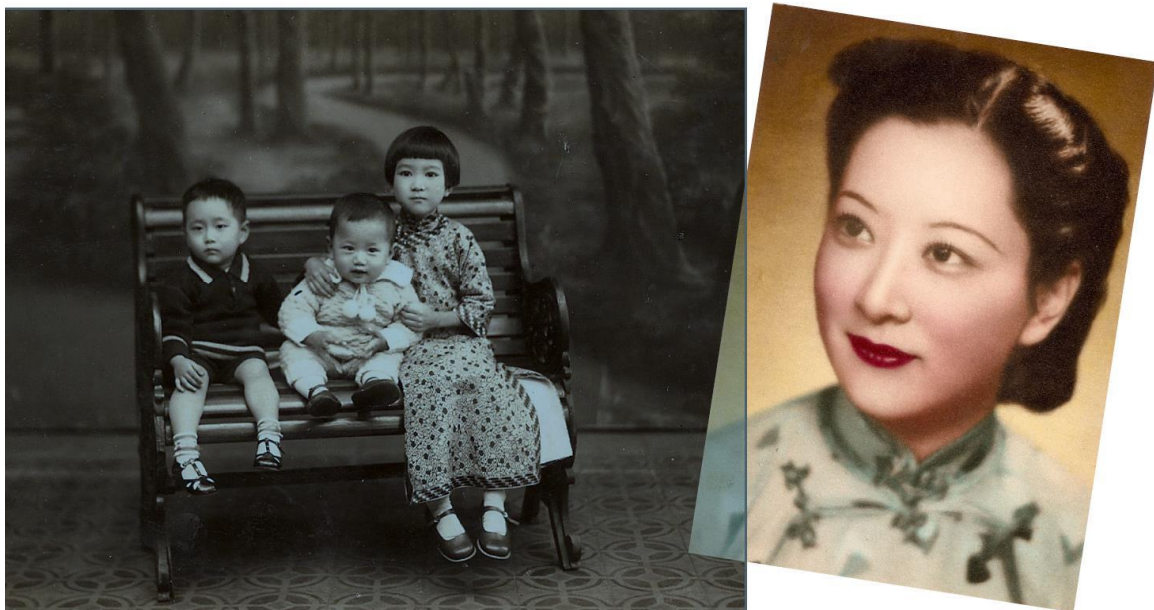
(from Claire Chao, Hawaii Chapter member)

(Editor's Note: I was pleased to receive a submission from one of the chapter's newest members!)

Many of us have fond memories of our mothers and grandmothers, and perhaps even ourselves, wearing elegant cheongsam...or is it qipao? Well, it depends. The qipao, as it's known in Mandarin and Shanghainese, is the traditional men's banner gown of the Manchurians. Women, who traditionally wore loose trousers, began to wear qipao in the 1920s as a feminist statement. In the 1930s, it evolved into the more familiar high-collared, tighter dress. Equally popular among dance hall hostesses and the fashionable elite, the hourglass design is proper yet sensual, revealing a hint of leg under a slit skirt.

In the 1940s Shanghai tailors brought their qipao-making skills to Hong Kong. This is where it became confusing, because Hong Kong locals refer to the dress as *cheongsam*, a loanword based on the Cantonese pronunciation of *changshan*, "long garment" – which outside Hong Kong describes the traditional long robe favored by men.

Enjoy this chronological tour of the ladies of my family in their qipao, beginning in 1930s Shanghai, and interspersed with embroideries from my grandmother's and mother's dresses.



As oldest sibling, my Auntie Virginia (*right*) wore qipao as a child, with my uncle and mom in more casual Western attire, 1933; my grandmother Fei Baoshu, 1939.



(Counterclockwise from top left) My mother Isabel shortly after arriving in Hong Kong in 1950;
with her close girlfriends from St. Mary's high school, Shanghai in 1950;
party time for my parents in Hong Kong in the 1960s.



(Clockwise from top left) Virginia in Paris in the 1960s; Virginia and my grandmother in Taipei in the 1970s; my parents in the 1980s.

Winning the War on COVID-19:
One Chinese American Woman's Significant Contribution

by Queenie Mow Chee

(Editor's Note: Queenie is the Hawaii Chapter's Events Chair and a former President. She wanted to share the national recognition of a young lady from Hawaii who helped establish a distribution system utilizing drug stores in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. Her work was innovative and vital in the nation's fight against the pandemic.)

As of May 20, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that the U.S. had administered 279.4 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccines. To reach the goal of national herd immunity, experts have estimated that 70% to 90% of the population needs to be vaccinated. As of that date, only about 35% of the population had been fully vaccinated.

It was just over six months ago that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the first COVID-19 vaccine for use in the country. The challenge was on to organize mass distribution of the vaccine. With mixed messages and a lack of coordination from the highest levels of government, the program was on a bumpy road of fits and starts. Hospitals, private medical practices, nursing homes, and clinics were not reaching sufficient arms quickly enough.

A young and fairly new member of a New York-based company, Accenture, Kelly Mok "paired her compassion with sharp instincts and bold ideas to help serve our vulnerable communities suffering during the pandemic." Her forward thinking of how to leverage key analytics capabilities to mitigate the health crisis across the nation led her to partner with a lead retail data scientist from a giant national drug store chain to establish the COVID-19 Data and Modeling Center (CDMC).

The team expanded over the last year in size and responsibility, where extensive internal and external data were used to develop models, reports, and insight, which in turn led to teams across this company developing initiatives "affecting thousands of employees and millions of people."

Their work informed the rollout of 5000 test sites, vaccinations at 40,000 nursing homes and long-term care facilities, and thousands of in-store vaccination sites. With locations across the 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D.C., this company was well positioned to help in the distribution and vaccinations of over 20 million people this year through their stores, pharmacies, and partners.

The goal of vaccinating 100 million people in the first 90 days in the term of the new President of the United States was enabled in part by this company's efforts across the nation.

Kelly Mok's innovative ideas, which were brought to fruition, won her a special company award which recognizes individuals for their innovative and value creation that serve to advance society and the human condition. Her bold ideas drove change and inspired others into meaningful outcomes.

Kelly Mok was born and raised in Hawaii, and is the daughter of first-generation Chinese immigrant parents from Hong Kong and Taiwan. She is a recent graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, and Accenture was her first job. Way to go, Kelly!

Quotes were from the Accenture company's article "Innovation Award Winner: Kelly Mok, 10 March 2021, Accenture Health."

Kelly Mok is a Consultant aligned to Accenture's New York City office, but her roots are on the opposite coast – in Hawaii. In her words, as a child “the first thing I learned was to take care of the *‘Āina* (Hawaiian word for land) and its people.”



(Editor's Note: On a personal note, Queenie says that at home in Hawaii, they are so proud of Kelly's work. Queenie still thinks of her as a young girl, and it amazes her to realize that she is now a talented, hardworking career woman living in New York who has made such a significant contribution in the battle against the pandemic.)

A Poem Inspired by a Jade Carving

by Maria Yang

(Editor's Note: Maria was the Virginia Chapter President and Maryland Chapter Acting President for several years. She is a Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at George Mason University in Arlington, Virginia. Knowing of Maria's background, I asked her if she would be willing to write an article for the e-newsletter, and I am pleased that she submitted this piece.)

I have been teaching a course, Social and Cultural Themes in Taiwanese Literature, at George Mason University for 11 years. The course covers an overall picture of Taiwanese literature and its social and cultural value since the 17th century. Some Taiwanese writers' literary works are selected to be appreciated and discussed in the class.

Per the request of the editor of the OCAW E-newsletter, I would like to share a poem by Yu Guangzhong with OCAW members and friends.

**The Emerald White Cabbage
by Yu Guangzhong**

A Sculpture in the Palace Museum

Ore-born of Burmese or Yunnan Descent
By whose hand, sensitive and masterly,
Driving and drilling its way so surely,
Leaving clean all the tendons and bones,
Are you released from the jadeite jail?
Refined further by the fingers of Jin,
The royal concubine, and polished bright
By the spectators' adoring gaze
Focused under the light, year after year,
Until a liquid clarity is lit within,
Verdant and pearly, no longer are you
Merely a piece of Jade or a cabbage
Since the day the sculptor set you free
And left, instead, his own devoted soul
Reincarnate in the womb of the jade,
Beyond the relentless pursuit of time.
Art is simply play become truth,
Truth at play, even truer than real.
Or why is that vivid katydid,
Unmoved in its belief, still holding on
To the fresh green without regret?
Perhaps it's the sculptor in his rebirth.



The Emerald White Cabbage, 19th century, National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan

One of the most popular pieces of jade carving in the National Palace Museum in Taipei, Taiwan, is the Emerald White Cabbage, a piece of jadeite carved into the shape of a cabbage head, and with a large and a small katydid (grasshopper or locust) camouflaged in the leaves. The ruffled semi-translucent leaves in this work are a masterful combination of the various natural colors of the jade piece, recreating the color variations of a real cabbage.

The sculpture of the item in the museum is more than an object made of jade; it embodies the spirit of its artist creator, and thus has a life of its own, free of the materials from which it was carved. The sculptor of the Jadeite Cabbage is unknown. The sculpture was first displayed at Yonghe Palace in the Forbidden City, China, which was the residence of Emperor Guangxu and Consort Jin in the Qing Dynasty.

The Emerald White Cabbage probably was received by Consort Jin as her dowry for the wedding in 1889 and has been considered an allegory of female virtue with the white stalk symbolizing purity, the leaves denoting fertility and abundance, and the katydid representing having many children.

About the Poem's Author

Yu Guangzhong, a prominent Taiwanese writer, was born in 1928 in Nanking, China. Yu and his family were forced to move to Taiwan via British Hong Kong in 1950 after the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War. He enrolled at National Taiwan University and was one of the first students to graduate with a degree in foreign languages. He received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Iowa. After graduation, he began his career as a university professor in 1956, teaching at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Gettysburg College in the United States, and National Sun Yat-sen University in Taiwan. He died in 2017 in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

A prolific and versatile writer, Yu published about 70 books in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Mainland China. Most of his publications were collections of verses and the rest were prose, criticism, and translations. In Taiwan, he was awarded a National Award for Arts in 1989 and a National Cultural Award in 2014. *The Selected Poetry of Yu Guangzhong* was chosen as one of the 100 Best Books in 20th-century Chinese Literature by the academic circles in Beijing, China.

Virtual Tour in the National Palace Museum

The museum has been closed due to COVID-19 since last year, but it is open to the public for the virtual tour online – www.npm.gov.tw. If you plan to travel to Taiwan one day, the museum is a must to visit during your stay in Taipei.

From Wikipedia:

During the 1960s and 1970s, the National Palace Museum was used by the Kuomintang to support its claim that the Republic of China was the sole legitimate government of all China, in that it was the sole preserver of traditional Chinese culture amid social change and the Cultural Revolution in mainland China. It tended to emphasize Chinese nationalism.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) government has long said that the collection was stolen and that it legitimately belongs in China, but Taiwan has defended its collection as a necessary act to protect the pieces from destruction, especially during the Cultural Revolution. However, relations regarding this treasure have warmed in recent years, and the Palace Museum in Beijing has agreed to lend relics to the National Palace Museum for exhibitions since 2009. The Palace Museum curator Zheng Xinmiao has said that the artifacts in

both mainland and Taiwan museums are “China’s cultural heritage jointly owned by people across the Taiwan Strait.”



National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan

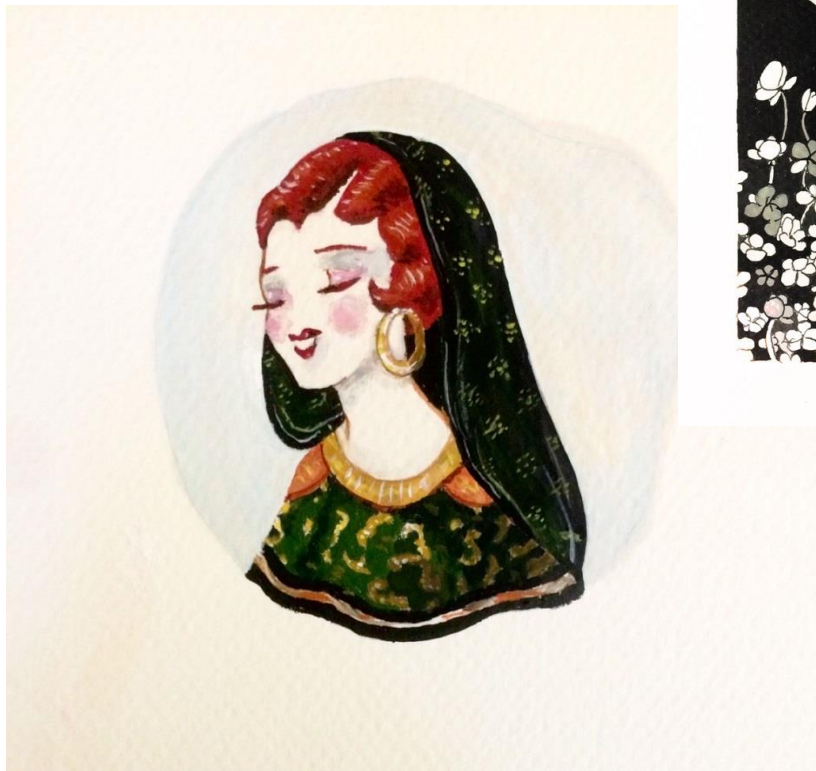
The Artwork of Anny Lai

(Editor’s Note: Anny is the Maryland Chapter Secretary. Aware of Anny’s background in art, I encouraged her to submit some of her artwork for the e-newsletter. I was glad that she obliged with the ink and watercolor drawings below.

Anny is a graphic designer and artist based in Maryland. She graduated from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2014, where she obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. In addition to her work in web design, her projects in the fine arts focus on a range of mediums such as ink, watercolor, and gouache.)







Anny's online portfolio can be found at: www.cargocollective.com/alaidesigns

Celebrating the 17-year Cicada

(from Linda Devine)

Our family has been truly enjoying the reemergence of the Brood X cicada, the most unusual of the cicadas, as they appear only every 17 years. I am bug-phobic, but for some reason, these little guys won over my heart back in 2004, the last time we were lucky enough to experience them, and I've been waiting for them to reappear ever since. However, I did think back then that I'd be an old lady in 2021, but no matter!

In our neighborhood, they are up to 1-7/8 inches in length. We have been happy observing them, watching them emerge from their shells as new white creatures, seeing them climb trees, taking tons of photos and video of them, and having them crawl on our hands and arms. (However, I do find them ticklish when they crawl on my neck. ☺) It has been uplifting to listen to their joyful choruses – their singing permeating the air high in the treetops.

According to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, nearly one trillion cicadas are expected across 15 states over a period of about six weeks.

Jan Stuart is the Melvin R. Seiden Curator of Chinese Art at the Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art (the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery). In 2019, she notably curated the high-profile exhibition, “Empresses of China’s Forbidden City, 1644-1912”, for which Camilla Ng arranged a special tour for OCAW members, and we enjoyed the event very much. *(See the June 2019 issue of the OCAW E-Newsletter for extensive coverage of the exhibit.)*



(Photo taken by Tommy Devine)

Ms. Stuart writes: “The cicada’s role in Chinese culture is a longstanding and fascinating one,” involving “themes such as rebirth and immortality.

In general Chinese lore, cicadas are creatures of high status. They are considered pure because they subsist on dew, and lofty because of their perch in high treetops.

Since ancient times, the cicada has been seen as a symbol of resurrection.” The cicada is also considered a symbol of protection against bad luck.

So during the short period of time that the 2021 Brood X cicadas will be with us, let’s be mindful of one of Nature’s most amazing phenomena, and raise a glass to them! ☺