

E-Newsletter of the Organization of Chinese American Women

June 2022



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(from Linda Devine, Editor)

As always, I would like to thank those who submitted material for this issue. I also appreciate my husband Ed for his work in preparing the photos.

I continue to 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. Publishing a wide variety of material is my goal.

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

Table of Contents

	Page
News from the Virginia Chapter.....	1
News from the Silicon Valley Chapter.....	9
News from the Hawaii Chapter.....	17
From and About Our Members.....	19
Culture Corner.....	22

News from the Virginia Chapter

(from Maria Yang, President)

Spring is here, and with the weather getting warm, the OCAW Virginia Chapter held two in-person activities in May. Participants very much enjoyed them.

Book Reading/Storytelling

(from Cathy Roberts, Treasurer – with additional details provided by Maria Yang)

On Saturday, May 7, 2022, in honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, the Patrick Henry Library in Vienna, Virginia invited author Pu-Chin Waide to share short stories and memories with community residents. Pu-Chin is a lifetime member of the OCAW Virginia Chapter. Chapter members

Rosemary Hsu Brooks, Maria Yang, and Cathy Roberts attended the Book Reading/Storytelling event along with Cathy's husband Dick.

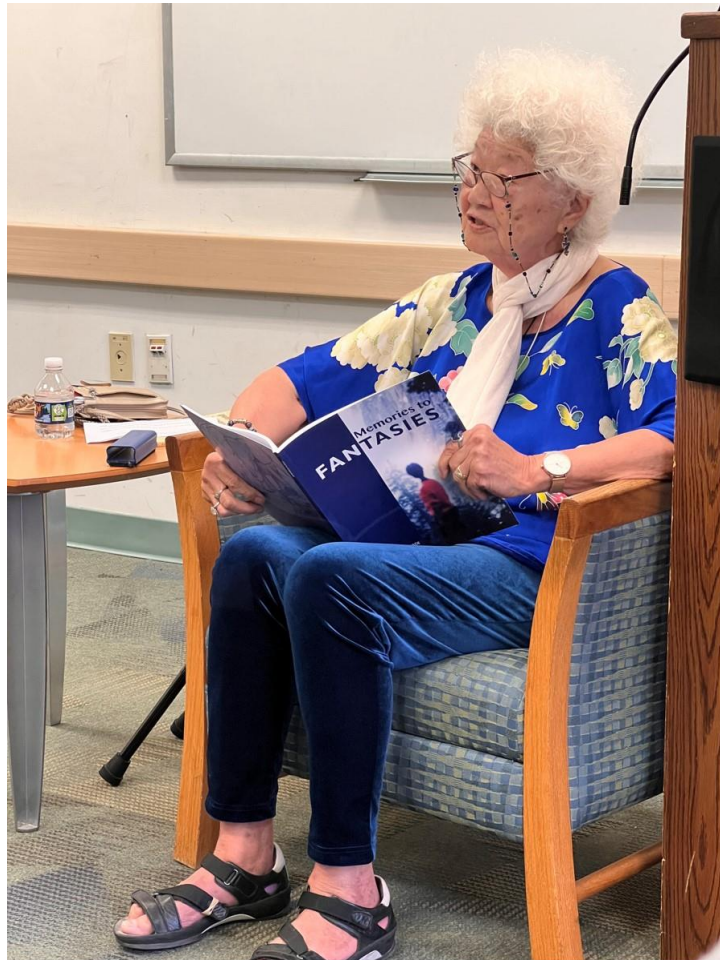


Pu-Chin Waide



The room was full of attendees, and several had to stand. After the introduction, Pu-Chin presented her first story, “The Chicken Soup,” from her book, *Fantasies, Imaging and Memories*. In the story, one night, an artist came home drunk and hungry, and he found a pot and cooked a big pot of soup. The next day, he invited his friends to share the soup for dinner. They enjoyed it and wanted to know what kind of soup it was and why it was so white. Did he use milk or Tofu paste? One guest asked what kind of meat it was, one said that it had a lot of bone, and one complained that he did not find any meat in it. Finally, his best friend’s daughter, a little girl, said, “Uncle, Uncle, why did you use only chicken neck?” (Do you know what they were eating?)

The next story was “The Girl with the Golden Voice” from Pu-Chin’s book, *Memories to Fantasies*. It was a story about an Indian family eager to marry off their 26-year-old, Stanford-educated son during his vacation home. He resisted their pressure. Finally they got him to agree to meet Indian girls and found that he was attracted to a beautiful girl who had a golden voice. However, she would only sing for him “behind a screen.” The son was smitten and agreed to marry the singer. But on their wedding night, there was a shocking surprise! (You will have to read the book to learn the ending of this story.)



Everyone enjoyed the book reading. Pu-Chin is a skillful writer and a masterful storyteller. She recently completed two collections of short stories. Her stories give glimpses into the places in Asia and elsewhere in which she had lived.



Maria Yang, Rosemary Hsu Brooks, Pu-Chin Waide, and Cathy Roberts

(Photos taken by Dick Roberts and Maria Yang)

National Shrine Tour

(from Maria Yang)

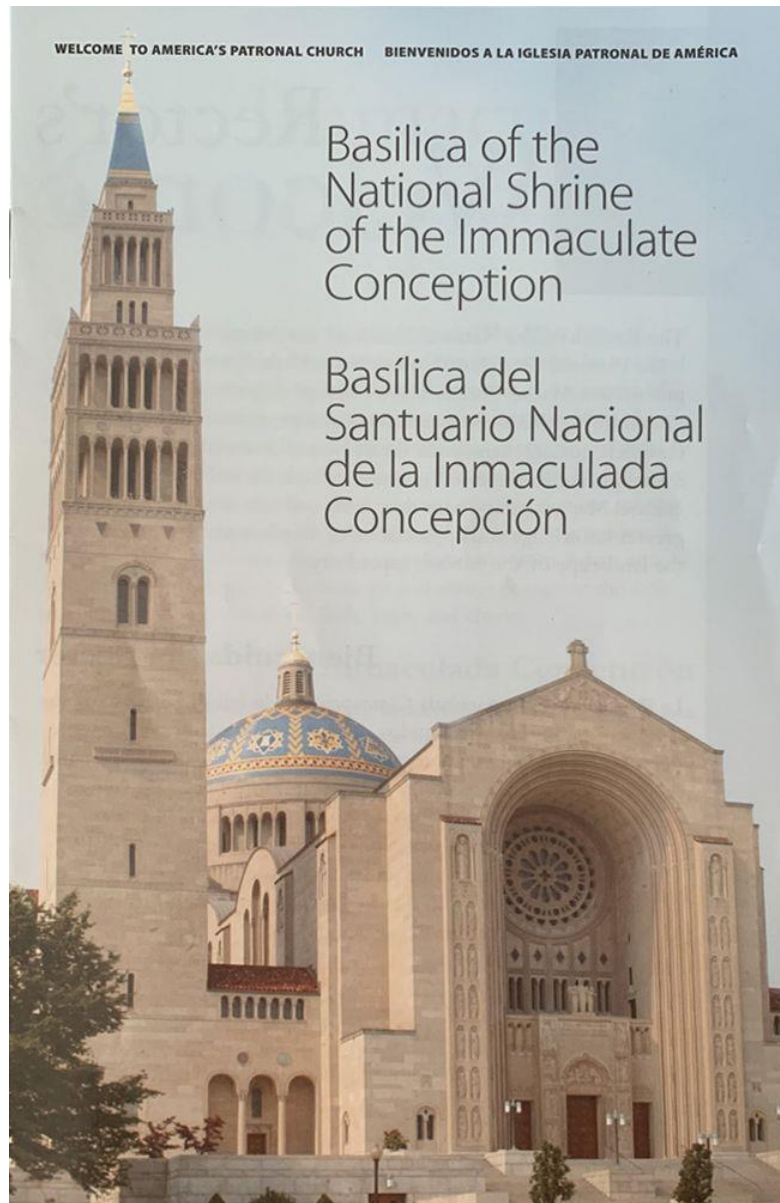
On Saturday, May 21, 2022, members and friends of OCAW-VA visited the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC. I did not know of this place until I started to teach the Chinese language at The Catholic University of America last year.

The Basilica is just at the entrance of the university campus and is a place of pilgrimage and prayer visited by hundreds of thousands of people annually. This majestic church is not only renowned for its beautiful sacred art, but also for its unique architecture and richness in Catholic and American culture. We spent a few hours inside the Basilica with a tour group and were impressed by the magnificent designs and spiritual atmosphere.

The following passages about the history of the shrine are quotations from the tour booklet:

“In 1847, at the petition of the bishops of the United States, Pope Pius IX named the Blessed Virgin Mary

patroness of the United States under her title of the Immaculate Conception. In 1910, Bishop Thomas J. Shahan, rector of The Catholic University of America, suggested building a national shrine to honor Mary. Bishop Shahan presented his plan to Pope Pius X in 1913 and received not only the enthusiastic support of the Pontiff but also a personal contribution...The Crypt Church inside the Basilica was completed in 1926 and the Crypt level in 1931. During the Marian Year 1953-54, the American Catholic bishops renewed the effort to complete the national shrine, and Catholics throughout the United States responded enthusiastically to the fundraising effort. On November 20, 1959, the National Shrine was dedicated. Pope John Paul II elevated the National Shrine to the rank of a minor basilica on October 12, 1990.



Christina Chang (National OCAW President),
husband Steve, and grandchildren



Amy Lee, Noreen Hom,
Maria Yang, and
Becky Hwang





Pu-Chin Waide



News from the Silicon Valley Chapter

(from Anne Hu, President)

Blossom Festival

(from Cynthia Chang, Public Relations and former President)

It was with great pleasure that the OCAW Silicon Valley Chapter joined this event on a beautiful Saturday, April 9, 2022, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., in the city of Saratoga, CA. The Blossom Festival was a day of family fun in the Saratoga Heritage Orchard and Civic Center area. It was produced by the Saratoga Historical Foundation and sponsored by the City of Saratoga, as well as joined by many local organizations such as

OCAW-SVC. The free event was reminiscent of the original Blossom Festival that debuted in 1900 and was popular for over 40 years.

The Festival commemorated and preserved the memory of the historic celebration of Saratoga's agricultural and community-focused life. The valley was once the leading producer of prunes, and agriculture was an important industry. Holding the event in the blossoming Heritage Orchard and the surrounding area was a reminder of the importance of that period.



OCAW-SVC's booth was one of the most popular ones, with hands-on activities such as making paper lanterns and the Chinese "Spring" character, as well as Chinese calligraphy of Blessings, Spring, and Tiger. OCAW-SVC members worked in different shifts and all had a great time. We were so glad to be able to share our culture and heritage at this wonderful community event!







A video was produced by a reporter with *World Journal*, a local Chinese newspaper. Below is a link to that video:

<https://youtu.be/ZkaFzobir-M>

The following is a link to more photos of the Festival. Please refer to it to obtain more of a taste of this event:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/MUzXvMdYs5c5rbwt8>

(Editor's Note: Chapter President Anne Hu reported that a few of the Chinese women participants at the Festival expressed interest in joining OCAW-SVC.)

"About Wine" Zoom Presentation

(from Carol Yuan, Immediate Past President)

OCAW-SVC President Anne Hu hosted this event on Sunday, May 15, 2022, and about a dozen chapter members and friends participated.

Speaker Mr. Kee Tung is an executive of a high-tech company in Silicon Valley. Kee is a wine lover and has been taking classes, researching, and self-studying wine for over 20 years.

Several SVC officers, including President Anne Hu, Treasurer Sophia Yang, and Public Relations officer Cynthia Chang went to Kee's house for a small private gathering of the presentation. Kee provided wines, and Sophia prepared food for pairing. Other members joined via Zoom, relaxing at their own homes.





Speaker Kee Tung

Participants were encouraged to prepare a few wines to taste together during the presentation. Kee suggested buying \$10-\$20 Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Pinot Noir from Costco.

The presentation included topics such as Wine Facts/Fun, Wine Regions – New World and Old World and wines in each world, Types of Wine, Wine Glasses, Wine Tasting, and Tips for Wine and Food Pairings.

For wine tasting, Kee explained how to experience wine by sight, smell, and sip. While tasting, he explained the different flavors in each wine – Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Pinot Noir – in detail, and demonstrated how to taste and identify the flavor in each.

Smell

- Fruit: Berry, tropical, citrus and tree (Primary Aroma)
- Flowers: Rose, orange blossom, violet (Primary Aroma)
- Mineral: flint, wet stone and chalk (Primary Aroma)
- Spices: Cinnamon, cloves, orange peel, licorice, black pepper (Primary Aroma)
- Vegetables: Olive, asparagus, bell pepper and mushroom (Primary Aroma)
- Earth: Dust, mud, forest (Primary Aroma)
- Other: Cigar, leather, cedar, tar, tea and tobacco, chocolate, vanilla etc. (Secondary Aroma)



Kee delivered the presentation in a cheerful atmosphere and took questions as they came up. The presentation was informative, well-organized, and fun. It was a sweet joyful afternoon for all.



Sophia Yang, Kee Tung, Anne Hu, Carol Tung (Kee's wife and an SVC member), and Cynthia Chang

News from the Hawaii Chapter

(from Edwina Lee, President)

Premiere at Consolidated Kahala

(from Roberta Wong Leung, Immediate Past President)

On Tuesday, April 12, 2022, Hawaii Chapter President Edwina Lee, my daughter Robbieana, and I were fortunate to attend the world premiere showing of the excellent documentary film of our member Crystal Kwok, *Blurring the Color Line*, at Kahala Mall Theatres. Other members Kelly Tan Peterson with her husband and Claire Chao were also there.

We were all impressed with the quality and well-thought-out events in Crystal's PhD program documentary of race relations in Georgia. She had conducted numerous interviews with her family members, especially

her grandmother, and residents. The script was so masterfully created and the scenarios so well chosen out of thousands. She displayed tremendous thought and detail in how she presented the characters and their interviews in the film. She cleverly asked many thought-provoking questions and presented viewpoints.

Crystal truly deserved the standing ovation she received at the end. She conducted an interesting Q&A after the showing which was very stimulating.

We are proud to have her as our member. We wish her the very best in the future of her excellent film.



Robbieana Leung, Roberta Wong Leung, Crystal Kwok, and Edwina Lee

Second General Membership Meeting

The OCAW Hawaii Chapter held its second General Membership Meeting of the year on Sunday, May 22, 2022. A report of this event will be published in the next issue of the *OCAW E-Newsletter*.

From and About Our Members

COVID Hair Donation

(from Patricia Ellzey, New Orleans Chapter President)

When COVID hit and beauty shops closed, I couldn't get a haircut and my hair grew long. This happened to many people across the country.



By the time my hairdresser could finally cut my hair, it was quite long and I didn't want to just throw it away. So I decided to grow it longer and donate it to make wigs for people who had lost their hair.

There are several organizations which make free wigs for cancer patients, people with alopecia, etc. I did a lot of research, and found entities such as "Children with Hair Loss."



Ponytails donated

In the end, my hair was donated to “Locks of Love.” My daughter has long black hair and has sent her hair there several times.



After



Pat hadn't had a haircut since February 2020. Finally her hair was cut, permed, and styled on April 26, 2022. Pat is now her 'usual' self.

I thought I would share this with my OCAW “sisters” so that they would consider this or encourage others to do this to help those who are suffering as victims of hair loss and can't afford a wig. The aim is so that they might not feel embarrassed by their appearance and can feel more normal.

It is certainly an easy, selfless, and thoughtful gift which is well worth it. The only cost is normal hair grooming which one usually does anyway.

AAPI Historic Sites

(from Roberta Wong Leung, Hawaii Chapter Immediate Past President)

Roberta thought that OCAW members might be interested in the following AARP article.

“7 Historic AAPI Sites That Reveal Contributions to America's Past”

Parks, monuments, memorials explore Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage and culture
by Ellen Lee, AARP, May 11, 2021

<https://www.aarp.org/home-family/friends-family/info-2021/sites-that-honor-aapi-heritage.html>

The seven sites covered in the article are:

Angel Island – San Francisco, CA

Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience – Seattle, WA

Golden Spike National Historic Park – Promontory, UT
Minidoka National Historic Site – Hunt, ID
Honouliuli National Historic Site – Oahu, HI
Iolani Palace – Honolulu, HI
The Forty Acres – Delano, CA

Memorial Day Taps

(from Patricia Ellzey, New Orleans Chapter President)

Pat Ellzey's husband, Dr. Will Ellzey, played Taps on his trumpet, answering the National Call to play Taps on Memorial Day 2022 at 3 p.m., to honor our American Veterans. OCAW sister Mayling Hew held our national flag.



(Photo taken by Pat Ellzey)

Culture Corner

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Activities

by Cathy Roberts

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

Chinese American Museum DC Awards Gala

On Tuesday, May 3, 2022, the Chinese American Museum DC hosted the Inaugural Unsung Hero Gold Lantern Awards Gala to celebrate outstanding Asian Americans for their achievements, leadership, and contributions to the community. Among the recipients was **Jane Pan**, a member of the OCAW Virginia Chapter, who served as the Chapter President from 2005 to 2009.

Jane has served as the Executive Director for the Hepatitis B Initiative of Washington DC (HBI-DC) since 2009. She has engaged key community leaders to work with health clinics, pro bono physicians, university researchers, and advocates to promote the understanding of hepatitis B and C through a public-private partnership. In addition to the Unsung Hero award, she has received numerous awards and honors for her dedication to community service.

The Asian Festival on Main

The Asian Festival on Main (AFM) was an outdoor event on Main Street located in Historic Old Town Fairfax City, Virginia. It was held on Sunday, May 15, 2022, and was organized by the Old Town Fairfax Business Association. AFM's mission is creating togetherness, love, and the celebration of diversity.

The event attracted over a thousand visitors to watch performances and to enjoy various Asian street foods.



In addition to over 30 street vendors, there were 22 groups which performed on the Main Stage and 27 activities on the Auxiliary Stage.

We enjoyed watching The Fairfax Chinese Dance Troupe's beautiful girls performing graceful Chinese dances and beautiful ladies modeling exotic traditional Chinese gowns (Chi-Pow). We were excited to cheer for our OCAW model friend, **Christina Chang**, the National President.



Christina Chang (center)

(Photos taken by Dick Roberts)

Also as part of Culture Corner:

The Seven Sisters Festival

Hawaii Chapter President Edwina Lee provided an article which she found very interesting. It is titled “The Seven Sisters Festival: Heavenly Love and a Rock Near Wan Chai” and was written by Tom Billinge. It appeared on August 24, 2017, in *Zolima City Mag*, a publication about Hong Kong.

The following are excerpts from the article. If you are enchanted with the story, read the complete piece at:

[The Seven Sisters Festival: Heavenly Love and a Rock Near Wan Chai \(zolimacitymag.com\)](http://zolimacitymag.com)

The Seven Sisters festival falls on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month.

A steady flow of young couples weave their way from Bowen Road in Wan Chai up into the hills of Hong Kong Island. In their hands are various offerings of incense and flowers that will be handed over in return for a successful relationship and a fertile marriage. There is no banging, crashing, or any of the other uproarious sounds of a temple festival, because the destination is not a temple; it's a natural site whose phallic shape has earned it spiritual significance.



As the couples reach the end of the path, they encounter a stone outcrop that juts proudly into the sky. It is decorated with daubs of crimson paint, small shrines, and banners. Incense smoke pours out from nooks and crannies all around as couples light more and more joss sticks and place them around the rock. Single women also pray to the rock, hoping for a husband, while men offer up bottles of rice wine to improve their potency and produce male offspring. This is Lovers' Rock, known in Chinese as “Marriage Destiny Rock,” and it's the focus of the Seven Sisters Festival.

Some traditional festivals become less prominent as the slow march towards progress leaves much folk culture by the wayside. The Seven Sisters Festival, also known as the Qixi Festival, is a yearly event that has retained some aspects of its significance, but has lost others. Nowadays the focus is entirely on lovers, which is why it is known to many as “Chinese Valentine’s Day.” In the past, young girls prayed for skills, such as weaving, so that they could secure a husband. Modern Hong Kong doesn’t have much time for weaving anymore, but the festival still exists through its romantic element.

The amorous nature of the festival lies in the myth surrounding the two stars, Altair and Vega. They sit on either side of the Milky Way, and they are closest to each other on the day of the Seven Sisters Festival. A third star, Deneb, forms a symbolic bridge between the stars, which is why the phenomenon is known as the Summer Triangle in astronomical terms. Qixi actually means “Night of Sevens,” and the festival is also called the Double Seventh Festival. This is because the festival falls on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month. It is also known as the “Plead for Skills Festival,” due to the practice of girls praying for needlework and domestic skills. The name “Seven Sisters” refers to the seven daughters of the Chinese deity, the Jade Emperor, the youngest of whom is Zhinu, the Weaver Girl, symbolized by the star Vega.

The story of The Weaver Girl and the Cowherd is one of the most ancient in Chinese culture. The Classic of Poetry, written 2,600 years ago, refers to the myth, meaning it certainly predates the earliest Chinese literature. There are various versions of the story, with a few different details, but the essence remains the same.

The most common version tells of a boy named Niulang, meaning “cowherd,” who lived with his cruel older siblings. No longer able to take the torment of his brother and sister, the boy left with his old ox and took to the road. Working hard all day in the fields, Niulang struggled to support himself. The ox, feeling sorry for him, revealed that he was once a god, but had been turned into an ox as punishment for stealing seeds from heaven to give to the humans. The ox told Niulang to go to a secret forest pool at a certain time.

When the boy went to the pool, he saw the seven daughters of the Jade Emperor bathing there...

There are two Seven Sisters temples in Hong Kong, but they are both comparatively quiet during the festival, as Lovers’ Rock is the main focal point...

The bigger temple is in Kwun Hang, Shap Sze Heung in the north of Sai Kung. The temple is called the Seven Saints Ancient Temple and is dedicated to the heavenly Seven Sisters, including Zhinu. Some girls still visit the temple during the Qixi Festival, making offerings of toiletries in sets of seven, including combs, mirrors, powder puffs, and paper flowers. Much like the Mid-Autumn Festival, the Double Seventh is more of a home affair, with girls making offerings to the stars in their own houses and apartments. Fruits and small pastries called “skill fruits” are a traditional offering, as they hope for “sweet love” in return...