

E-Newsletter of the Organization of Chinese American Women

September 2018



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(from Linda Devine, Editor)

I hope that everyone had a wonderful summer break.

Once again, I appreciate all of the material that was submitted to me for this issue of the e-newsletter. Thanks to my husband Ed for his work on preparing the photos.

I continue to encourage OCAW members to write articles or submit information for the publication if there is something you think would be of interest to the membership. I have been pleased with the variety of contributions that I have received.

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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OCAW Website

Many years ago, Audrey Chen, daughter of longtime OCAW National President Rosetta Lai, graciously set up the OCAW website. At the time, it was well-organized and well-written, aptly describing OCAW’s many

programs, projects, and events. Over the years, though, it was not updated. Only the most minor of changes were made, such as updating names of chapter officers.

Recently, Rosetta sent Audrey a current OCAW e-newsletter, and Audrey said she was so glad to see so much activity in OCAW! She contacted us and said that she was happy to bring the website up to current standards, if we wished.

In June, Christina Chang set up a conference call to preliminarily discuss the website. Christina, Audrey, Donna Byler, Cathy Roberts, and Linda Devine participated on the call. Audrey explained that the old website platform was out of date, and that she would have to migrate it onto a more modern one. Audrey also had questions as to what we thought the website's content should be, and we talked about ideas. She told us that overhauling the site would take some time, but eventually we would be able to go onto it and update all of the information.

We wish to thank Audrey for volunteering to undertake this laborious task. We will keep everyone posted as to the website's progress.

Closing Report: Sale of OCAW History Books

(from Puanani Woo and Pauline Tsui)

Dear OCAW Members:

Sold out: We are pleased to report all 500 or 100% of the book, HISTORY of the ORGANIZATION of CHINESE AMERICAN WOMEN, 2013, sold out as of Monday, July 9, 2018, as reported by the University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

Mid-October 2010, we initiated a *Long Range Development Plan* for the book and worked that plan. Thursday, May 30, 2013 the book launched at the beautiful historic home of Stuart M. Bloch, Esq. and Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch in the heart of Washington, D.C.

Grateful: We are deeply grateful to the 22 OCAW members who contributed their writings for the book. They are Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch, The Hon. Lily Lee Chen, Dr. Lily K. Lai, Dr. Faith Lee Breen, Jeanie Fong Lee Jew, Rosetta Lai, Dr. Lungching Chiao, Betty Butz, Cynthia Chang, Jean Chen, Cynthia Chin-Lee, Linda Devine, Anne Hu, Florence Kwok, Sybil Kyi, Dorothy Lee, Chelsea Lo, Josephine Lo, Esq., Ai-chu Wang, Margot Wei, Genevieve Puanani Woo, and Margaret Wu.

Purposes: The three purposes for writing the book were **1)** to professionally record OCAW's sustained well-planned educational and social outreach programs to integrate Chinese American women into the mainstream of America's activities and programs during the last quarter of the twentieth century and first decade of the twenty-first century; **2)** to give recognition to those who contributed to the accomplishments of OCAW; and **3)** to have this history available as study material in women's studies and ethnic-Asian studies programs throughout the United States of America, at least, and in selected parts of Asia.

At the start a donor purchased 200 of the 500 books at the 30% discount given to purchases of 10 or more books to achieve **purpose 3** above, leaving **ONLY 300** books for sale to the public.

Of the 200 books, 35 were presented to various writers named above to personally gift them to interested individuals they knew and 10 to a member with scholarly ties in Taiwan.

The remaining 155 books were mailed PRIORITY MAIL FLAT RATE per book and not the cheaper book rate to universities and colleges in the U.S. with women's studies or ethnic-Asian studies programs. Each mail-out included an introductory letter with the book, was hand-written to the addressee, and noted Puanani's Hawaii P.O. Box return address. She received two brief handwritten thank-you replies from women professors of two colleges out of the 155 mailed out.

With deep respect to the President, Officers, and members of the Board of Directors of OCAW National and all OCAW Chapters and to all members of OCAW Chapters, we submit this closing report.

Sincerely yours,

Pauline W. Tsui and Puanani Woo

News from the Virginia Chapter

(from Chi-Hua Yang, President)

Visit to OCAW Founder Pauline Tsui

On Thursday, June 14, 2018, members of the Virginia Chapter visited Pauline Tsui at her new residence in Rockville, Maryland. National President Christina Chang, Executive Director Donna Byler, and National Treasurer and Virginia Chapter President Chi-Hua Yang brought fruit, cookies, and snacks.



Donna Byler, Pauline Tsui, and Christina Chang

(Photo taken by Chi-Hua Yang)

Pauline explained all of the hard work that had gone into founding OCAW. She had such sharp memories of all of the details. Chi-Hua commented that she thinks that keeping active with OCAW helps all of us look young and stay smart!

They all enjoyed the afternoon, and Pauline very much appreciated their coming to see her.

Lunch Meeting

OCAW Virginia Chapter members had a lunch meeting on Friday, July 27, 2018. President Chi-Hua Yang, Vice President Alice Way, Norman Way, and Alice Ling enjoyed wonderful Thai lunch specials.

We discussed the upcoming Asian Full Moon Festival that the Virginia Chapter will host. The location will be high atop the 23rd floor in the Penthouse of member Amy Lee's building in Alexandria, Virginia. This was the location of the chapter's Chinese Lunar New Year Pot Luck Dinner held earlier in February. We want to thank Cathy Roberts and Amy for securing this wonderful place overlooking the Potomac River.

Alice Way suggested preparing appetizers and finger foods before the pot luck dinner. Alice Ling said that she wanted to prepare dumplings. We will set up a table for the traditional moon cakes for the celebration. How romantic the setting will be for eating moon cakes with such a beautiful view before us!



Alice Way, Norman Way, Alice Ling, and Chi-Hua Yang

At the meeting, we also discussed other administrative items for the chapter, such as the election of new officers.

It was a very productive meeting and delicious lunch!

News from the New Orleans Chapter

(from Patricia Ellzey, Vice President)

The Silver Liners in the News

One of the OCAW New Orleans Chapter's ongoing activities is the participation of chapter members in the Silver Liners dance troupe. With this group are Treasurer Nancy Chung, Secretary Mayling Hew, Mangjee Yeh, and Li Lee Chen. They practice at the Chinese Presbyterian Church in Kenner, Louisiana, and perform at nursing homes, the Annual Asian Festival, and events like the Chinese New Year celebrations.

The dancers were featured in an article in the *New Orleans Times Picayune* newspaper, published Wednesday, July 11, 2018. It was titled, "Silver Liners continue to bring smiles," and it was written by Rosalyn Eason.

Here are some excerpts:

On a recent rainy day, the Silver Liners brought a ray of sunshine to the residents of Brookdale Senior Living in Kenner. Despite the weather, this group of line dancers was determined to entertain their admiring audience. Every Tuesday they bring their dance moves and smiles to a senior facility in order to brighten the day for all.

...For the next 60 minutes, the Silver Liners followed choreographed moves to popular tunes as the residents laughed, sang along, and clapped. The room was filled with joy...

Dance members also visit with the residents. For their performances, they celebrate the seasons with costumes appropriate to various holidays. They rotate performances at 11 local senior centers.

Kudos to OCAW members and other dancers for giving of their time in such a meaningful way!

News from the Silicon Valley Chapter

(from Wendy Chang, President)

The Longest Day Dance for Life

For an individual with Alzheimer's and his/her caregiver, every day is The Longest Day. The Alzheimer's Association has created The Longest Day fundraising event that both symbolizes the daily challenges of Alzheimer's and honors those who battle these challenges daily.

On Saturday, June 9, 2018, to support this fundraising event, our longtime member and former president, Aichu Wang, led the Dance for Life team and hosted a dance assembly with the California Line Dance Association of America (CLDAA), the Silicon Valley Folk Dance Club (SVFDC), and our organization to raise funds and awareness for the Alzheimer's Association. More than 70 people attended the event and raised more than \$15,000.





(Editor's Note: Sophia Yang, Immediate Past President, provided an article on the fundraiser. Following are excerpts from it.)

Dancing out of her comfort zone for The Longest Day

by Michelle Johnston

August 28, 2018

Alzheimer's Association: Northern California and Northern Nevada Chapter Blog

This San Jose resident turned her love of dance into a successful fundraiser.

While Aichu Wang has been dancing all of her life, she'd never hosted a large fundraiser. Peining Chang, Community Outreach Specialist with the Alzheimer's Association, suggested that Aichu turn her love of dance into an event for The Longest Day.

A passion for dance

Aichu is involved in several dance-related organizations and has many friends who dance. She also has a passion for supporting the Alzheimer's Association. Aichu had reached out to the Association when she was a long-distance caregiver for her mom, who had Alzheimer's.

After considering Peining's suggestion, Aichu decided to host a dance assembly for The Longest Day. Aichu put together an event involving international folk dance, line dancing, and Zumba. This allowed participants to take part in familiar dances, as well as some that were new to them.

Finding partners

First Aichu contacted three major dance organizations with which she has been involved... These groups like to support activities that benefit good causes...

Working out the logistics

The next task was to find a large indoor facility to rent for an affordable rate...

Family and friends helped Aichu create the promotional materials. The dance organizations shared the information with their members. Aichu invited her friends and social groups.

Setting a goal

Initially, Aichu set her fundraising goal at \$2,000. "I wasn't sure I could raise \$2,000," shared Aichu. "I had never really done any fundraising."

...She encouraged people to come and exercise and help raise awareness about Alzheimer's.

"Just come, you don't have to donate," Aichu told people. "If you're willing to donate, that will be a bonus. The more that people know about the Alzheimer's Association and how it can help families, the better it will be for our community."

Early fundraising success

...Aichu raised her goal...and kept increasing it more as people donated. She raised over \$15,000...

It all came together



Dance participants

...The event agenda included three separate dance sessions led by volunteer instructors. The Organization of Chinese American Women and other friends provided drinks and snacks.

After the dancing, guests had an opportunity to mingle with each other. They were also able to learn more about Alzheimer's Association programs and services.

Many of the participants had experience with folk dancing, line dancing, or Zumba, but not all three. They got a good workout and enjoyed the opportunity to learn a different type of dance.

The three-hour event was a great success. Aichu appreciated all of the people who participated. She also had friends who donated, even though they could not attend.

The generosity of friends

Aichu was very moved by the individuals who supported her efforts. Some friends secured matching gifts from their employers.

One of Aichu's friends has a large loquat tree. The friend climbed the tree to gather the fruit and sold it. She donated her sales, \$600, to Aichu's event...

...Aichu reflected on what helped her be successful. "I'm very happy that I was able to take an activity that I have loved for so long and use it as a tool to raise funds for such a good cause," she shared. "I could not have accomplished this goal without the support and generosity of my friends, family, and the dance community."

This is the link to the complete article:

<http://www.alzheimersblog.org/2018/08/28/dancing-comfort-zone-longest-day/>



Aichu Wang

(Editor's Note: Congratulations to Aichu for organizing this successful event, and compliments to SVC members and others for their participation and donations to this very worthy cause!)

Annual Officers Installation and Youth Achievement Awards Presentation

On Sunday, July 29, 2018, we held a members' luncheon at China Stix Chinese Restaurant in Sunnyvale, California.





After the delicious lunch, we had the 2018-2019 officers installation and youth achievement award presentation. Wendy Chang, who served as Vice President last year, is serving as President this year.



Incoming President Wendy Chang, former President Cynthia Chang, and Outgoing President Sophia Yang

Following are the Silicon Valley Chapter Officers for the upcoming year:

President: Wendy Chang
Vice President: WenMei Tai
Secretary: Carol Yuan / Jen Tsao
Treasurer: Sophia Yang
Public Relations: Cynthia Chang / Nai Hsueh
Membership: Hong Tai
Historian: Alice Chiou / Lisa Lu
Hospitality: Annie Chang / Cynthia Ho
Photographer: Michelle Huang / Yufan Lu
Event Committee: Aichu Wang / Monica Hsiao / Sherry Hsu / Anne Hu /
Candice Huang



This year's youth achievement award recipient is Justine Chen. She is currently a senior at Lynbrook High School. Besides her excellent academic standing, Justine has broad interests in many areas. She has played soccer from a young age and continues to play on the high school team. She earned a Gold reward from the Girl Scouts where she learned about giving back to the community and helping others. In the summer of 2016, she traveled to Taiwan with other high school students from the Bay Area to teach Taiwanese students English for several weeks through the Wisdom Culture and Education Organization (WCEO) Connexpedition.

She was also the President of the Lynbrook High School Key Club. The club was involved with many different community service activities which included raising funds for the Pediatric Trauma Program, providing the homeless with basic necessities, cleaning up the local food pantry, and more. Justine will also be serving *The Epic*, the Lynbrook High School newspaper, as Editor-in-Chief in the fall.

Congratulations to Justine for all of her achievements!



We had a special guest speaker, Rick Sung, who is Santa Clara County Undersheriff, at the luncheon. Rick delivered a well-informed presentation on school campus safety and community safety.



It was a very enjoyable afternoon for all.

From and About Our Members

Women and the Asian Century: Promoting Diversity in Diplomacy

National President Christina Chang and Executive Director Donna Byler represented OCAW at the “Women and the Asian Century: Promoting Diversity in Diplomacy” event organized by the US-China Education Trust. It was held on Thursday, June 14, 2018, at the DACOR Bacon House in Washington, D.C. A program of noted speakers was followed by a dinner reception.

This special event commemorated the 25th anniversary of USCET and marked 25 years since USCET Founding President Julia Chang Bloch served as the first Asian American Ambassador of the U.S. It also celebrated the 26th year of the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowships, a flagship recruitment program dedicated to increasing Foreign Service diversity.





David Yao, Special Advisor for USCET, with OCAW National President Christina Chang



(Photos courtesy of the US-China Education Trust)

About Teresa Ma, OCAW member and benefactor

(from Dr. Ann Ma)

Marie Teresa Ma passed away on July 20, 2018. She was a great supporter of Opera International and the Organization of Chinese American Women, and Happy Children's Home of China. She came to the U.S. in 1949 from Beijing and was a nurse in New York City before marrying David Ma. She was a devoted wife and mother, and after raising her children, she helped her husband start the Beijing office of Ernst and Young in 1981. After his retirement, Teresa cared selflessly for her husband who preceded her in death.

Teresa graced many with her wit, humor, and generosity. She will be missed by her daughter, Ann, and granddaughter, Zoey.

(from Mimi Hom, OCAW National Vice President for Programs and Opera International Producer-Director)

With much regret, I wanted to pass along the sad news that Teresa Ma has passed away. Teresa was an active OCAW member for many years. David and Teresa Ma's Foundation, The Herman Lissner Foundation, was a major donor to OCAW and Opera International over a long period of time. You might have noticed that the Foundation's name and David and Teresa Ma's names consistently appeared under "Grand Patrons," the top contributor category, in Opera International programs. I am particularly grateful that with Teresa's generosity, Opera International was able to produce many wonderful operas and concerts for all to enjoy.



Teresa Ma with Hai-bo Bai, Opera International star

Hai-bo is pictured in her operatic role in Verdi's *Otello*.

Teresa was so impressed with Hai-bo's musical talent that she personally granted her a scholarship.



Teresa Ma with Mimi Hom, Opera International Founder and Producer-Director

International Leadership Foundation Learning Leadership Workshop

(from Maria Yang, Virginia Chapter Immediate Past President)

On Saturday, August 4, 2018, I attended the “Learning Leadership Workshop” organized by the International Leadership Foundation at the Cultural Center of TECRO in Gaithersburg, Maryland. The International Leadership Foundation, founded in 2000, is a nonprofit organization which promotes the civic awareness, public service, and economic effectiveness of the Asian Pacific American community. The goal of the workshop was for the attendees to utilize their newfound leadership traits and to work to make the community better.

The four presenters in the workshop were: Chiling Tong, Founder of ILF and President and CEO of Asian/Pacific Islander American Chamber of Commerce and Entrepreneurship; C. Marie Taylor, President and CEO of Leadership Montgomery; Jorinna Zuber, National Certified Counselor; and Dr. Matthew Lin, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health and Director of the Office of Minority Health (OMH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The topics covered at the workshop were: the Power of Personal Image and Leadership; Health, Leadership and Networking; Increasing Emotional Quotient Performance; and the Art of Communication.

I was very impressed and inspired by Dr. Matthew Lin's presentation. He was an orthopedic surgeon spending most of his professional career in the San Gabriel Valley of California before being appointed as Deputy Assistant Secretary of HHS in 2017. His presentation was about Health Issues of U.S. Minorities and Team Leadership. He stressed that leadership is a team sport which brings people together around a common purpose, sets a direction to help others move forward, shows the ability to lead in a kind way, builds trust and encourages collaboration, picks good people and helps them do their best, and sometimes follows in order to lead when it is necessary.



Mrs. Matthew Lin, Dr. Matthew Lin, and Maria Yang



“Letter to the Editor”

(from Chu Lan Shubert-Kwock, former Hawaii Chapter President)

Chu Lan Shubert-Kwock has been forcefully advocating for change to rein in organizations and super pacs that she feels are unethically campaigning against candidates in elections in Hawaii. She believes that the Hawaii Campaign Spending Commission should levy heavier fines when these organizations run unethical advertisements against political candidates. Her “Letter to the Editor” on this subject appeared in the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* on Sunday, August 12, 2018.

She also believes that the Supreme Court should ban super pacs in the U.S.

More Health Information

by Dr. Lihua Zhang

(Editor’s Note: The following is more health news provided by Dr. Zhang, New Orleans Chapter President and medical doctor. As she was providing such information to New Orleans Chapter members, we asked her if she would be willing to share this information with all of the OCAW membership, and she graciously consented to do this. She provided health advice in the April OCAW E-Newsletter, and she sent me the information below for this issue. Thank you, Dr. Zhang!)

The two abstracts below were recently published in *Physician’s First Watch*. They are related to our daily life. Links to the complete articles follow.

Moderate Carb Intake Seems Best for Longevity

by Amy Orciari Herman

A *Lancet Public Health* study suggests that moderate intake of carbohydrates is associated with the lowest mortality risk.

Over 15,000 U.S. adults aged 45–64 completed food-frequency questionnaires and were followed for roughly 25 years, during which 41% died. After multivariable adjustments, the highest mortality risk was observed in participants with the lowest carbohydrate intake, followed by those with the highest carb intake. Meanwhile, the lowest mortality risk was observed with carbohydrate intakes of 50%–55% of daily calories.

Of note, low-carb diets that were high in animal protein or fat were associated with increased mortality risk, but low-carb diets that were high in plant protein or fat were associated with lower mortality risk.

An analysis combining this study with seven others corroborated the findings.

The researchers concluded that the data provided further evidence that low carbohydrate diets favoring animal-derived protein and fat sources, such as lamb, beef, pork, and chicken, were associated with higher mortality. Alternatively, low carbohydrate diets favoring plant-derived protein and fat intake, from sources such as vegetables, nuts, peanut butter, and whole-grain breads, could be considered as a long-term approach to promote good health.

This is the link to the complete article:

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(18\)30135-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(18)30135-X/fulltext)

Oat Cereals Test High for Weed Killer Ingredient

by Kelly Young

Common oat cereals, like Cheerios and Quaker oatmeal, contain elevated levels of glyphosate, the active ingredient in the herbicide Roundup, according to a study commissioned by the Environmental Working Group (EWG).

The EWG tested oat-based foods, including snack bars and cereals, for the herbicide. All but two of 45 product samples made with conventionally grown oats had detectable levels.

Only five of the 16 samples marketed as organic had detectable levels.

A daily, 60-gram serving of food containing 160 parts per billion of glyphosate would pose a 1 in a million risk for developing cancer, the EWG estimates. Most of the tested oat products surpassed the 160-ppb mark. Three Cheerios samples, for instance, averaged 497 ppb. Quaker Old-Fashioned Oats averaged 930 ppb.

The group says that glyphosate is sprayed on oats, wheat, barley, and other grains close to harvest. It kills the crop, drying it out so that it can be harvested sooner than if the plant were allowed to die naturally.

This is the link to the complete article:

<https://www.ewg.org/childrenshealth/glyphosateincereal/#.W3b8G85Ki72>

My Great Wall Journey (Part I)

by Chi-Hua Yang

(Editor's Note: Chi-Hua is the OCAW National Treasurer and President of the Virginia Chapter.)

I enjoyed a trip to China from April 17 to April 26, 2018. I was with the Hupa D.C. Chinese organization, and the name of the trip was "Root-Seeking Journey."

The first part of my trip was the Juyong Pass. This part of the Great Wall was historically the last defense of the capital city of Beijing. After passing this gate, the Mongolian army and riders could reach the city within days.

The terrain in this area is very steep. It is very windy and a difficult area to cross. The Pass is the only way onward, so it set up as a great defense gate in the past.

This section of the Wall is very narrow. Some parts are only wide enough for one person to pass by.

The steps are huge. Most of the time, I had to use both hands to climb up.

We could also see the beautiful, cheerful flowers in the fields. The fields with the pass in the background is a famous view.







(Editor's Note: Chi-Hua plans to write Part II for the next issue.)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation – Clean the Bay Day

by Camilla Ng

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

Inspired and stirred by the images of plastic ocean that I have seen in documentary films screened by the D.C. Environmental Film Festival, I decided to participate in the 30th Annual Clean the Bay Day, on Saturday, June 2, 2018. The Chesapeake Bay is an estuary in the states of Maryland and Virginia. Each year, on the first Saturday of June, thousands of volunteers of all ages and walks of life descend on the rivers, streams, and beaches of the Chesapeake Bay watershed to remove harmful litter, a program that is sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF). This has become a 30 years strong Virginian tradition and an annual opportunity for families, military installations, businesses, clubs, schools, Scout groups, civic groups, and church groups to take action to give back to local waterways.

The site at which I signed up to volunteer was Mason Neck State Park. In southern Fairfax County, Virginia, just 20 miles from Washington D.C., Mason Neck's wetlands and forest, with the open water of Belmont Bay and Kane's Creek, is an ideal environmental study and wildlife observation spot. It is adjacent to the Elizabeth Hartwell National Wildlife Refuge, a sanctuary for American bald eagles. During the warm months, I frequently go to Mason Neck and nearby Pohick Bay Regional Park for kayaking and Stand Up Paddle Boarding (SUP). It is through my participation in nature tours in these parks, in kayak or on SUP, that

I have come to appreciate the beauty of the watershed, and have become keenly aware of the threats to the Bay watershed, like degrading habitat, polluted runoff, and nutrient pollution.

On Cleanup Day at Mason Neck, we had the choice of cleanup either along the trails or by water crafts. I chose the latter, and shared a canoe with a friend to collect harmful debris floating in the waterways or trapped along the shore or tidal area. Volunteers were provided with trash bags, grabbers, and gloves. In the brief three hours, the 15 volunteers at Mason Neck gathered over 650 pounds of harmful debris.

Across Virginia, 6,000 volunteers at over 250 sites picked up 128,817 pounds of litter on Clean the Bay Day 2018 in just three hours, according to the CBF Press Release. Virginia Governor Ralph Northam and First Lady Pam Northam, and other Virginia state officials and delegates also participated in this year's cleanup by picking up litter. It is encouraging to know that those in state and local governments care about our environment.

In addition to Clean the Bay Day, the CBF offers other volunteer programs such as tree planting, oyster bed restoration, underwater grass planting, etc. I encourage anyone interested in stewardship of our watershed to go to www.cbf.org to learn what you can do.



Part of the group of Clean the Bay Day volunteers at Mason Neck State Park, standing with some of the 650 pounds of harmful litter that they collected. Camilla is pictured second from the left.

(Photo taken by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation)

2018 Crepe Myrtles in New Orleans

by Betty Butz

(Editor's Note: Betty is a former long-time President of the New Orleans Chapter.)

Photos taken by Betty were featured in the September 2018 issue of "Living On The Green," A Social Magazine for the Residents of English Turn. Below are a number of beautiful pictures from the magazine spread.











This arrangement is entitled "A tall tree catches the wind."



“Crazy Rich Asians”

From Chu Lan Shubert-Kwock, former Hawaii Chapter President

(Editor’s Note: Chu Lan was one of many who has seen and enjoyed the very popular movie, “Crazy Rich Asians.” It features an all-Asian cast. The story follows Rachel Chu, an American-born Chinese NYU economics professor, who travels to her longtime boyfriend Nick Young’s hometown in Singapore for his best friend’s wedding. Much to her surprise, Rachel soon learns that Nick is from a family that is extremely wealthy, and he is one of the most sought-after bachelors in the country.

Chu Lan sent me a comprehensive review. In her writing, though, she described details of the plot, including the climax and ending. Rather than insert “Spoiler Alert!” throughout her article for those who haven’t yet seen the film, I chose to omit important plot details and focus rather on her general comments.)

I was so happy to see day and night photos of lavish events staged at Gardens by the Bay and the Marina Bay Sands, the new iconic hotel topped by the rooftop infinity swimming pool.

There are many concurrent storylines that run throughout the movie. One relationship is that of Eleanor and her mother-in-law – the grandmother, the all-powerful Chinese Matriarch in any Chinese family, the true DRAGON LADY! There is an undercurrent of discontent.

There is the silliness and parody of some wealthy families, depicted by the younger generation as sponges, “failures,” and eccentrics.

Wealth is opulently displayed by insane exaggeration as in the bachelor and bachelorette parties, yet laced with cruelty and jealousy as in the scene of the dead fish on the bed.

There are characters like Astrid, the love-starved daughter who disobeyed her parents by marrying a “commoner,” and who hides her luxurious shopping sprees from her unfaithful husband.

Rapper and star Awkwafina is featured in the movie. She is like the truth sayer in the role of a Court Jester and was my favorite character, seeing through all of the pomp and hypocrisy.

A game in a “common mahjong parlor” is a pivotal scene.

Overall, this lavish modern film is a departure from the usual “poverty” rags to riches story. Rather, it is a story of snobbery, and insane wealth with insane values and expectations, gravely missing the point that in life, love should be the basis of marriage and family, and that the American notion of individuality and independence, and equality between men and women and people, are much preferable to the age-old British sensibility of superiority based on wealth and “breeding.”

Enjoy your movie!

From Camilla Ng, former Maryland Chapter President

I recommend this movie. It is a romantic comedy satire, with much humor and wittiness. It has turned into a blockbuster, and I have been surprised to see that it has had the support of a large mainstream audience.

For the last several weeks, I have been receiving email after email from my friend Betty from Singapore about this film – about the actors, interviews with the actors, film locations in Singapore, etc. It has been quite a sensation for us Asians of whatever flavor.

This is Jane Austen Singaporean Chinese American style, with layers and layers of cultural flavors, from the many languages spoken – Hokkien, Mandarin, Cantonese dialects of Chinese, to Malay-Singaporean patois or slang – not to mention the rich variety of foods, from street foods to haute cuisine – all Chinese/Paranakan/Malay creole mix.

Then there is the ultra glam – that fairytale fantasy, big sell of materialism, even though most of us could only look or dream, but never touch those items. There is the distinct Chinese snobbery, jealousy, Peyton Place, mean girls you want to hate. But of course, being Chinese Americans that we are, we cheer for the heroine who is Chinese American, with her wholesomeness and non-pretentiousness, who is challenged by the Singaporean Old Money royalty.

This movie has proven to be a great box office success. So in my humble opinion, there will be sequels made of Kevin Kwan’s second and third novels, China Rich Girlfriend and Rich People’s Problems, which all three books together is a trilogy. Like “Game of Thrones,” we are hooked!

(Editor’s Note: Among the several ways that Camilla volunteered to help with the OCAW 40th Anniversary National Conference last year, she set up a bookstore which featured various Asian titles for sale. Among the many books were copies of Kevin Kwan’s Crazy Rich Asians and China Rich Girlfriend.

Camilla would recommend reading all three of Kwan's novels, if people are interested in the dynamic of the many Chinese types.)

From Steven Hom, friend of OCAW

Steven recommends seeing this movie. He commented that it has been one of the top movies in America, not only among Asians but throughout the general population. *Variety* wrote that in its opening weekend, "Crazy Rich Asians" topped the U.S. box office. It repeated as the top movie in its second weekend, grossing almost as much money as in its first weekend.

As of August 28, it had generated over \$79 million in North America and \$86 million worldwide.

From Faith Breen, former OCAW National President

"Crazy Rich Asians" is a great movie for OCAW members to watch and discuss. It addresses many relevant intergenerational and social/cultural issues.

(Editor's Note: If other OCAW members have comments about the movie that they would like to share with the readers, I would be happy to publish them in the next issue!)