

Gulfcoast Chinese-American Association (GCAA) Newsletter

Issue May – June 2009 - Released on May 11, 2009

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1. Upcoming Events & Attractions --- **Mark your Calendar!!**

Dragon Boat Festival

Saturday 10am~4pm, May 30, 2009

Coquina Beach, Long Boat Key, FL

On May 30th, GCAA will be hosting Sarasota area's first Dragon Boat Festival and Asia Fest. Everyone in the community is cordially invited to celebrate the month of May as Asian and Pacific Islander's Heritage Month, as designated by President Obama. The festival will take place on Coquina Beach, Bradenton (Middle of Gulf of Mexico Drive at the northern point bordering Longboat Key). We shall showcase a Dragon Boat on display; there will be storytelling, educational materials for cultural exchange, costume show, martial art exhibition, kayak race, kite flying competition and Asian Food Festival introducing cuisines from 7 different nations.

This exciting event is open to our entire fun-seeking communities. Please join us for a day of Asian cultural extravaganza!

Activities:

Dragon Boat Exhibit/ Story Telling/
Kayaks/ Kites/Fishing/ Swimming
Martial Arts Demonstration/ Costume Show/ Beauty Pageant
Face Painting/ Circus Acrobats/ Professional Photography (Costume or Beach Portraits)
Arts and Crafts Sales and many more...

Asia Food Fest:

Chinese | Indian | Indonesian | Japanese | Korean | Singaporean | Vietnamese

What to bring:

Sunscreen, beach chairs

NATURAL HEALTHY WAY TO LOSE WEIGHT

May 13th at 6:30pm

East-West College of Natural Medicine

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Sponsors

The GCAA Newsletter is sponsored in part by **Feng Shui advisor-practitioner, Gigi Freeman**, member of GCAA since 2005, now available for consultations for those interested. Gigi has been practicing Feng Shui for more than 20 years under the guidance of her Chinese-Filipino-Spanish father who was knowledgeable in Feng Shui principles. She has a certificate from the New York School of Feng Shui where she studied Classical Feng Shui focused on the Compass School and Form School. Feng Shui aims to balance the environment in your home or office, very much like an "acupuncture of your living or work space" to

3808 South Tamiami Trail • Sarasota, Florida

SARASOTA, FL - On Wednesday, May 13th at 6:30 p.m. The "Best of Science, Best of Nature" Team will present an informative, free, no obligation program on healthy and natural weight loss at East-West College of Natural Medicine. This seminar is open to both Health Care Professionals and the general public. Seating is limited; please call Pamela Robbins (941-822-6828) to reserve your space today.

For centuries, Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine have been shown to have an effect on the function of the nervous system, endocrine system, digestive system, food cravings, and metabolism.

All of which can help to energize the body, maximize the absorption of nutrients, regulate elimination, control overeating, suppress the appetite, and reduce anxiety.

Monthly Social:

<http://www.gulfcoastchineseamerican.org/gcaa/event.html>

2. SSCA Reports

SSCA Report : XIAMEN ARTISTS ENJOY TWO WEEKS IN SARASOTA

By Dr. Carolyn Bloomer



Professors Luo Ping 罗萍 and Zheng Shenglong 郑盛龙 of Xiamen University arrived in Sarasota on April 17 for a two-

achieve harmony in your life, promote prosperity, success, good health, and good relationships. Gigi has lived most of her life in Asia and Mexico; she moved to Venice, Florida in 2004 with her Cuban-Canadian husband, Larry. You may call her at (941) 484-3917 or (941) 932-1642 for appointments.

The GCAA Newsletter is sponsored in part by **J&K Kitchen & Bath, 4141 Tamiami Trail S.**

Sarasota, FL 34231 Phone: (941) 922-6981 Mobile: 646-831-8181 email : jk58inc@hotmail.com

The new owners, Mr. KongBiao Ni and Ms. JinXing Yang, started their business in January 2007 They warmly welcomes GCAA members and friends with a 20% discount. If you are planning a remodeling or building a custom home, put J&K to work for you. They are also hiring sales staff. If you are a good salesperson and have computer skills, please call Ms. Yang as soon as possible.

GCAA acknowledges with sincere thanks the generous support and sponsorship of the **Marco Polo Restaurant** in our past annual CNY and MAF festivities.

The Marco Polo International Buffet & Grill is located at 549 US Highway 41 Bypass North, Venice, FL 34292 in Bird Bay Plaza (near Big Lots), just south of the bifurcation of Business 41. Tel: 941-412-3988. When you visit the restaurant for their wide selection of seafood (including crawdad, oyster and crab) and Chinese, Mongolian, Japanese and Italian food, please say hello to the owners: Mr. & Mrs. Lau and let them know GCAA appreciates their support.

week whirlwind schedule hosted by Sarasota Sister Cities Association (SSCA), Art Center Sarasota (ACS), and Gulfcoast Chinese American Association (GCAA). This was their first visit to the United States.



Professor Zheng, an ink painter and calligrapher 书画家 teaches in the Fine Art Department of the Xiamen University Art College. Professor Luo, a watercolor artist 水彩画家, teaches advertising design and visual perception in the Journalism and Mass Communication Media Department, and is the author of two books on these subjects.

The artists spent a couple of quiet days recovering from jet lag at Irene Leung's home on Long Boat Key, and for the remainder of their visit were graciously home-hosted by Cheyenne Wu and Ian Kempner.

At Art Center Sarasota, Zheng and Luo exhibited, presented, and demonstrated their work to the public -- an event nicely covered by two articles in the *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, which termed them "artistic ambassadors".

Also at ACS the artists attended five workshops, including an exhilarating plein aire painting session at the Bay Preserve in Osprey. One memorable morning they demonstrated and interacted with 25 fascinated middle-school students from Venice. Another day, Zheng demonstrated ink painting techniques to the local Sumi-e

Job Wanted

FCC parent of 2 adopted girls seeks employment. Extensive experience as award winning graphics artist and designer and creative ad director for Fortune 500 clients as well as small businesses. Also all around handyman. Willing to do anything to support my family. Please call 941-266-1882 or email JFlyer2@aol.com. Thanks.

Recommended Services

Certified Inspection for Hurricane-Resistant Home Discount

If you have purchased a hurricane resistant home or made structural improvements to your home (hurricane shutters and straps, reinforced trusses, etc.) to render it hurricane resistant, you may be entitled to substantial discounts from your homeowner's insurance carrier. However, a written inspection report by a My-Safe-Florida-Home-certified home inspector, architect, engineer or general building contractor is required. Our GCAA member and FCC parent, Jamie Milholland is one of a few My-Safe-Florida-Home-certified home inspector in our area. Dr. Lin saved a significant amount on his homeowner's insurance and recommends you look into whether or not you may qualify for similar savings. Give Jamie a call at 941-362-4862.

Society. In four separate sessions the artists exhibited, demonstrated, and discussed their work with faculty and students on the campus Ringling College of Art and Design.

Hosted by Dr. Chang Qing 常青, Curator of Asian Art, the artists visited the Ringling Museum of Art. Other aspects of the Sarasota art scene included visits to downtown galleries and discussions with gallery owners, viewing the National Watercolor Society exhibition in Bradenton, braving the crowds (minimal by Chinese standards) at Siesta Fiesta. At the Embracing Our Differences exhibition at Bayfront Park, Luo and Zheng were utterly thrilled to have their picture taken with the prize-winning entry from Xiamen's own Lujiang Elementary School.

In addition, the artists had opportunities at privately hosted dinners and brunches to talk informally with small groups of local artists and intellectuals, including faculty members at Ringling College and New College

Luo and Zheng both expressed a desire to taste "American food". This desire was amply fulfilled by attending numerous "pot luck" dinners and brunches – including a welcome dinner hosted by the Sarasota Chapter of the U.S. China People's Friendship Association -- and by several cafeteria lunches on the Ringling College campus, where they were fascinated by students' elaborate tattoos and piercings.

For a taste of local culture: the artists shopped at Red Barn, attended the Siesta Beach drumming circle, visited Selby Botanical Gardens, ate Amish buffet brunch, and watched a performance of OZ at the Van Wezel (probably just as strange to them as an American listening to Beijing Opera) preceded by a pre-performance buffet dinner catered by Michael's on East.

On their last day, the artists were hosted to a farewell luncheon by SSCA at which their works were displayed. The artists showed slides highlighting their visit, and presented an official letter from Xiamen City Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries to SSCA and the Sarasota City government, which was accepted by Carla Rayman, SSCA president.

The artists' schedule was orchestrated by Carolyn Bloomer and Irene Leung, City Director and Vice Director respectively for Sarasota's Sister City relationship with Xiamen. The artists' time at Art Center Sarasota was arranged by Daniel Petrov, ACS Program Director. Transportation was provided by a fleet of generous volunteers: Tom Walker, Dave Harralson, Lolly Baervelt, and Pat Amsel. As the artists' English ability was limited,

Stitches

Looking for a good local seamstress for all your alteration needs, or looking for some embroidery work to be done? Well, look no further! Sara Malave, a FCC parent and magna cum laude graduate of Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising can help. Stitches is a home owned business that has been in operation since 1998. She also offers sewing camps for children at various times throughout the year. Call 366-4406 with any questions or for an appointment.

First National Travel

I have a top notch travel agent I'd like to recommend:
Toni Liang of
FNTC (FIRST NATIONAL TRAVEL)

3166 CHESTNUT DR
CONNECTOR
SUITE
101
ATLANTA GA
30340
TELEPHONE: 678 530
0840 or 800-888-0208
FAX : 678 530 0768
Email: toni.liang@att.net

Who to contact about what

General info and past issues of Newsletters: www.GulfcoastChineseAmerican.org for updates

Info and articles to be included in upcoming issues of Newsletter
Editor, Pamela Ho-Robbins
ewc.sarasota@gmail.com

unexpected translation assistance was constantly in demand. Irene Leung and Cheyenne Wu both virtually gave over their entire lives during this time; Ma Jing and Chang Qing also assisted in translations and hosting.

Selected works by the artists have been printed as note-cards and reproductions and will continue to be for sale throughout the coming year. Proceeds will be divided equally between SSCA and GCAA and will be applied to defraying the costs of hosting the artists/.

More photos of the artists' visit will be posted on the GCAA web-site.

More Coverage:

Please see the great coverage in Sarasota Herald Tribune of the Chinese artists' presentation yesterday morning at Art Center Sarasota at the following link.

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20090420/ARTICLE/904201046>

**EMBRACING OUR DIFFERENCES 2009
6th Annual Outdoor Art Exhibit Celebrating
Diversity
On display at Island Park, Sarasota Bay Front,
April 2009**

By Dr. Carolyn Bloomer & Irene Leung



Best in Student Show prize was won by a 6 year old First Grader from Sarasota's Chinese Sister City!

Matters relating to GCAA programs
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Matters relating to membership and how to join
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Co-Director of
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Matters relating to monthly
socials
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(941) 351-0995

Other issues:
Dr. Sean Kuang,
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libinh@linkingbt.com
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Shen Hongying 深虹颖
Lujiang (Egret River) Elementary School Siming
District, Xiamen
思明区鹭江新城小序

promptly removed from the
list of ALL GCAA
newsletters and other
electronic notifications.

The prize includes a \$1000 cash award to the Lujiang
Elementary School.

Title: "We Are All Good Friends"

The young artist's statement:

"I am a young Chinese friend from Xiamen, China. My
hometown and America's Sarasota are sister cities. I like to
meet new friends. I drew myself with an imaginary
Sarasota friend as if we had our picture taken together. I
hope I will get the opportunity to exchange conversation
with young Sarasota friends about each others' countries,
current news, our friends and the latest trends."



Photo of Winner 6 year old Shen Hongyin in front of her
school with big flower bouquet and her original artwork in
hand. Her artwork is titled "You and Me".

Xiao Shen's art teacher, Huang Sefen 黄瑟芬 commented
"The opportunity for this student's work to be exhibited and
seen in Sarasota gives us closer personal ties with
Sarasota's Sister Cities Association. I thank the
governments and organizers from both countries for this
event. My wish is to help my students obtain more chances
to go abroad to develop friendship and communication with
their American counterparts, gain mutual understanding and
form everlasting friendships.

The principal of Lujiang Elementary School, Guo Zhenyao

added “We would like to welcome children from Sarasota to visit Xiamen to share happiness and cultural exchange with our children. We live in the same world, different countries – however we share the same expectations for our children, and the same aspirations and dreams for our future generations.

The mission of Embracing Our Differences is “to use art as a catalyst for creating awareness and promoting, throughout our community, the value of diversity, the benefits of inclusion and the significance of the active rejection of hatred and prejudice”. Community Partners include: Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, Ringling College of Art and Design, Sarasota-Manatee Jewish Federation, SCOPE, Sarasota Sister Cities Association, and Florida Holocaust Museum.

2009 “Young Playwright Award”

By Dr. Carolyn Bloomer & Irene Leung

A play by a team of five 6th Graders from Sarasota’s Chinese Sister City (Siming District, Xiamen) was one of six international winners in the “Seven Up” category of Florida Studio Theatre’s *2009 Young Playwrights Festival*, selected from more than 5600 entries worldwide.

The winner’s names are: Wu Shuyin 吴舒因, Lin Ziyu 林姿瑜, Dai Jingxuan 戴靖萱, Li Xiaofeng 李晓凤, and Zhu Jiaying 朱家莹. They are 12 years old and are students at the Lujiang (Egret River) New Town Elementary School 思明区鹭江新城小序. They are shown in the picture with their teacher Huang Minglin 黄明琳, who commented “I am so very delighted to have this opportunity to do cultural exchange with all of you from the other side of the world. I hope one day soon the children of Sarasota can pay a visit to our school in Xiamen to enjoy our beautiful school environment and have quality play-time with our children.” .

The humorous and refreshing play “The New Snow White” 白雪公主新编, was translated by GCAA member Wei Qinghong, and will be performed by *Florida Studio Theatre* during the award ceremony May 14-16, 2009. (For more information, call the FST box office at 941-366-9000.)



In addition, two plays by pupils at the Lujiang Elementary School were among Honorable Mention winners in the International “Under Six” category. “Unity, Love, and Friendship”, translated by GCAA members Katherine and Christine Yin, was written by 5th grader Pan Yinjia. “Meeting Again is Like a Song”, translated by GCAA member Jason Liu, was written by 4th grader Yan Min.

A total of nine plays were submitted by Lujiang Elementary School students. Other volunteer translators included GCAA members Xie Luping, Irene Leung and Carolyn Bloomer, Sarasota Chinese Academy students of Wen Huimin, and Dr. Zhang Jing’s 2nd year Chinese language students at New College. THANK YOU ALL!!!

3. Special Announcement or Tributes

2009 GCAA Board Election Result

By Dr. Edward Lin

This is the first time GCAA has conducted an electronic online voting system so I requested Dr. Sean Kuang, Helen Wu Pollak and May Thomas to monitor the election results. Due to overseas travels, May is unable to access the results. Only dues-paid GCAA members were eligible to vote or run as candidates.

In spite of multiple reminders and seemingly clear voting instruction, only a total of 31 families cast their votes, and there were very few errors. Although each family membership entitles that family to two sets of votes and each single/individual membership is entitled to one set of

votes, a few families cast only one set of votes while two individual members voted twice and the husband and wife of one family each cast two sets of votes.

Counting the actual number of votes and rejecting those few extra (double-set) votes that were not permissible, we obtained the following results:

Libing Huang 45 votes; Jason Guan 42; Laurie St. Denis 42; Irene Leung 41; Jing Ma 40; Rong Wang 29

With the exception of two families that cast different first-set and second-set votes (and in these two instances, their specific different votes were properly counted), when the number of single-set votes cast by those with family membership were doubled, we obtained the following results:

Libing Huang 51 votes ; Jason Guan 46 ; Laurie: 46 ; Irene: 42 ; Jing Ma: 42 ; Rong Wang: 32

As you can see, the outcome is unchanged regardless of tally method. There are a total of 6 candidates vying for the 5 open seats. Each of the top four vote getters have won 2-year terms, while the candidate receiving the 5th highest votes won a one-year term. Therefore, Attorney Jing Ma will serve a one-year term and may run for re-election next year along with Dr. Sean Kuang and Dr. Carolyn Bloomer whose 2-yr terms expire next May, when we hold our board election again.

I wish to thank each and every one of our Board candidates for their willingness to serve GCAA. Regardless of election outcome, they are winners in our eyes for their spirit of public service. Congratulations! We look forward to your contribution and leadership. I urge all GCAA members interested in serving to actively participate in GCAA's governance/leadership activities.

With the conclusion of this election, it is time for me to step down as GCAA Chairman and pass the baton to the next generation of GCAA leaders. At the urging of Dr. Hammond Chen, in early 2004, a young fledgling organization then known as Gulf Coast Chinese Association (GCCA) was formed with Dr. Frank Shao serving as our first president and I, as Vice President. I am thankful for the pioneering leadership and guidance of these two gentlemen for the inception of GCCA. When I took over as President in 2005, we incorporated officially and became known as GCAA (Gulfcoast Chinese-American Association) to reflect our inclusive nature and our goal of service to not just Chinese Americans but also Euro-Americans and all ethnic combinations in between who are interested in our heritage and friendship. We started a monthly social; a newsletter which after just two issues went from quarterly

to bimonthly; acquired IRS 501c3 non-profit status in 2008, retroactive to 2005 and began adding other programs and services. This was possible and accomplished only with the tireless efforts and dedication of many individuals whom we cannot thank enough, but have tried to recognize and honor in our CNY celebrations. Also stepping down from the board are Valentina Pippin, Dr. Xueji Zhang (GCAA's third President), Helen Wu Pollak (GCAA's longest serving Secretary, Volunteer Extraordinaire, and Board member).

Although we are stepping down, we will continue to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board and assist as needed. We pass on GCAA to her new keepers with the strongest slate of Board members and officers it has ever had, and a sound treasury. For me personally, it will enable me to spend more time on civil rights and equality issues on a national level in my capacity as Director of 80-20 Initiative.

On behalf of my fellow retiring Board members, let me say it has been an honor and privilege to have your bestowed trust in us. Working together hand in hand, we have met and overcome many challenges that face a fledgling cash-strapped all-volunteer organization. We have been humbled and bettered by the experience and we thank all those who have supported and worked beside us to turn GCAA into what it is today. Let us continue to work together so not just GCAA, but each and every one of us, can become all that he is capable of being.

Sincerely,

Ed

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4. Feature Articles and Helpful Info

H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Update

For more updates, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>
There are now 55 confirmed cases in State of FL with two confirmed cases in Sarasota, both involving children.

What You Can Do to Stay Healthy

- Stay informed. The CDC website will be updated regularly as information becomes available.
- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- Take everyday actions to stay healthy.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Stay home if you get sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Develop a family emergency plan as a precaution. This should include storing a supply of food, medicines, facemasks, alcohol-based hand rubs and other essential supplies.
- Call 1-800-CDC-INFO for more information.

Leave it up to Google to come up with something like this!!!

By Dr. Edward Lin

Here's a number worth putting in your cell phone, or your home phone speed dial: 1-800-goog411 or 1-800-466-4411. This is an awesome service from Google, and it's free -- great when you are on the road. Don't waste your money on information calls and don't waste your time manually dialing the number. I am driving along in my car and I need to call the golf course and I don't know the number. I hit the speed dial for information that I have programmed (1-800-goog411). The voice at the other end says, "Say the name of the business and the City & State." I say, "Firewheel Golf Course, Garland, Texas ." He says, "Connecting," and Firewheel answers the phone. How great is that? This is nationwide and it is absolutely free! Works on cell and landline phones. Note: Not yet available for residential numbers.

Click on the link below and watch the short clip for a quick demonstration.

<http://www.google.com/goog411/>

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