

Gulf Coast Chinese Association (GCCA) Newsletter
Inaugural (First) issue - Summer 2005 (release date August 1, 2005)

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Newsletter Table of Contents:

- News of the Association:**
- GCCA Officers and Organizational Structure**
- GCCA Charter**
- Association Goals for 2005**
- Notice of GCCA **Good Sundays****
- Hurricane Preparedness**
- Tropical fruit tree cultivar recommendations**
- Solicitation for Articles and Reports**

News of the Association:

[Message from the president](#)

Dear fellow members of the GCCA:

It is my honor and privilege to serve as your Association President and I will endeavor to work for the greater good of the Chinese community in our area to the best of my ability.

First, I wish to acknowledge the vision and initiative of Dr. Hammond Chen and Dr. Frank Shao who helped start our Association and nurtured it during the past two years. I am thankful for their contributions of leadership and their steadfast and continued support.

Many, if not most, of us lead very busy lives with heavy professional and family responsibilities. It takes a special effort to go the extra mile -- beyond what is absolutely required of us. Yet it is not uncommon to find high achievers amongst us; after all, that's what enabled most of us to establish ourselves in this land of opportunity. I hope that in spite of your schedule, you will find it possible to donate some of your time as a volunteer for our Association. As the saying goes, "you always find time for what is important to you."

My own personal journey in life has been blessed with an incredible number of people who appeared out of nowhere and gave me a helping hand when I needed it the most; so I am a believer in that the more you give, the more you'll receive. Here is a true story about friendship and giving I'd like to share with you:

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to make a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog (swamp). He dropped his tools and ran to the bog.

There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. "I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.
"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to a man you can be proud of."

And that he did.

In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia.

What saved him? Penicillin. The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill.
His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

Now, isn't that a heart-warming story? As you reach out to your fellow beings, and help in whatever way you can without expectation of remuneration, life has intrinsic and sometimes miraculous ways to reward you. At the very least, you will be enlightened with a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction that you have made a positive difference, and you also grow in self-worth and new abilities. May you enjoy the special blessings that comes with paying forward (instead of only paying back) and from random acts of kindness.

In order to lay the foundation for our Association's growth and help protect its fiscal soundness, we will be incorporating the GCCA as a non-profit corporation. On behalf of our members, I wish to thank Paul S. Cherry, Esq. for kindly agreeing to provide his legal services, pro bono (at no charge) to the GCCA community.

In order to be an all-inclusive organization and in the interest of reaching out to all Chinese families in our community, we will also attempt in the future to mail hardcopy notices to those who are not conversant with computer or English usage. This adds to the manpower demands and costs of the Association and can only succeed to the extent that we have sufficient volunteers. Please place yourself in the position of those less fortunate than us and recognize the value of the service we as an association can

provide. Volunteers in desktop publishing, translation, programs organization, etc., are needed.

Running the GCCA in the way that it is meant to be is an almost impossible task for a few. But entirely do-able if YOU are willing to pitch in and help. Every little bit of help adds up and is welcome. So, please contact your officers and offer to help.

Our Association charter and slate of officers and advisors can be found at the end of this message. I wish to express publicly my gratitude to my fellow officers and advisors of the GCCA. Without their altruistic spirit of service and willingness to be the workhorse of this Association, the mission of bringing our organization to a higher level of activity and service would not be possible. Please remember to thank them for their contributions, and better yet, participate and lend them a hand in whatever activity that you can help with. You will be doing your part to help our Association become even better, and we all thank you.

In order to support the Association's activities, membership dues of \$10/household (defined as immediate family unit including spouse and children) will be assessed. Dr, Hammond Chen, our honorary chairman and I have each made a \$50 donation towards our Association coffers.

Many of you know I put in exceedingly long hours. In addition to my R&D projects, I also serve on the Board of the Pine View Association and am active in my residential community. I'd never be able to do all that I do if my wife, Suzanna, had not stood by me, shouldering an inordinate amount of new responsibilities I continually pass on to her. I owe her my heartfelt thanks for her support and sacrifice.

On behalf of your Association officers and Directors, we encourage your active participation and look forward to meeting new members and old friends alike at our monthly social and Association functions.

Best wishes to you and your family,

Ed Lin

IMPORTANT IMPORTANT IMPORTANT IMPORTANT

Our Association directory is almost ready for private publication for members only. However, we have only 50 or so families who have filled out the Association data sheet. We believe there are several times that number of Chinese families in our area and we do not wish to leave them out. We need a more comprehensive data base to effectively reach and communicate with our members. This is YOUR association. PLEASE HELP us reach as many Chinese families in our area as possible by doing the following:

- 1) Look through the attached membership directory as soon as possible;
- 2) Make a note of all Chinese in our area you know who are missing from the directory;
- 3) Please email and call your "missing" friends and forward to them the Membership

Data Form;

- 4) Email to Dr. Kevin Hu, our VP of Information and Communications, a list of your Chinese friends with their name, email, telephone number and address (Note: name, email and telephone number are essential, but the address is optional). Dr. Hu and his team will sort through the data and add the “missing” households to our data list.

NOTE: We respect your privacy. If you wish the Association to have your contact data on file for official communication, but do not wish contact info to be published in the GCCA directory, simply let us know and we will abide by your wish.

The sooner we complete our membership database, the sooner we can get the directory published and into your hands. So please hurry and get your list in by August 15. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance

To reach GCCA officers, see contact info below. Thank you.

2005 GCCA Organization Structure

Honorary Chairman (Dr. Hammond Chen 925-0362; email: yayacc@netscape.com).
The Honorary Chairman does not vote on Association matters except when a tie-breaker vote is needed.

Officers

1. President (Dr. Edward Lin 966-0890; email: elin@ingenious.com)
2. Vice president – Information and Communications (Dr. Kevin Hu; 923-3712; email: cunkuohu@yahoo.com)
3. Vice president – Management and Organization (Dr. Xueji Zhang; 926-3273; email: zxj001us@yahoo.com)
4. Vice President – Public and Community Relations (Dr. Jonathan Fong 484-8004; email: ctguy4@comcast.net)
5. Secretary (Mrs. Helen Wu Pollak 929-9299; email: HwPollak@Comcast.net)
6. Treasurer (Nancy Cao 365-4617; email: NCao@kbgrp.com)

Past-President & ex officio: Dr. Frank Shao, 924-6708; email: QiShao4@hotmail.com

Board of Directors – Directors should represent diverse professional background and actively assist with the leadership activities of the organization. Anyone interested in advancing the goals and interests of the Association may serve run for a Director position.

Legal advisor of the Association, Paul S. Cherry, Esq. Tel: 921-2044

Committees and chairpersons:

a) Membership Committee: Assists with compilation of membership data and Association communications. Reports to VP of Information and Communication. (Chairman: Dr. Hexiang Zhu, Tel: 758-2051, email: hexiangzhu@hotmail.com; Mingtang Liu, Tel: 926-1760 email: mintliu@hotmail.com; Tony Shih, Tel: 929-0564, email: tonyshih88@msn.com)

b) Programs Committee: Assists with organization of membership activities and programs. Reports to VP of Management and Organization. Chairperson: Jinbo Yin. Members: Judy Doan-La, JinLin Guo, Mike & Kim Hung, Tracey La, Jason Liu, May Meng, Lin Yang, Yan Yang, Jinbo & Kitty Yin and Barry Zhang

c) Community Relations: Assist with liaison with other community organizations such as the American Friendship Organization, Families With Children from China (fwcc.org) and governmental agencies on an as needed basis. Reports to VP of Public and Community Relations.

7. Officers and Directors serve one-year term with a limit of two consecutive terms.
8. The Association strongly supports and advocates equality of all individuals and expressly prohibits any discrimination on the basis of sex, religious beliefs or political views.

Gulf Coast Chinese Association Charter

1. GCCA is an independent member-based association that is neither affiliated with, nor controlled by, any political, religious, or other organization. All of its officers and Board of Directors are volunteers who are not paid. Funding for GCCA's activities comes from membership dues and other revenue sources.

GCCA organizes the Chinese American communities on the Florida gulf coast, helps them integrate into the local society, responds to their needs, promotes Chinese culture, leads young professionals and other youth groups, publishes educational seminars, newsletters, entertainment activities and festival celebrations, receives cultural, athletic and business delegations to and from China.

GCCA also reaches out to Chinese Americans of young and old generations, American families who adopt children from China, and seek to expand and increase our activities in local communities through cultural awareness and exchange.

2. GCCA intends to register with Internal Revenue as a non-profit charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
3. Minutes of meetings must be kept in the secretary's office, and approved by the Board at the next meeting.

4. The Association strongly supports and advocates equality of all individuals and expressly prohibits any discrimination on the basis of sex, nationality, religious beliefs or political views.

Association Goals for 2005

- 1) Implementing an organizational structure of officers and committees who will work as a team to serve our members. Communication and Social Programs are priority issues.
- 2) Incorporating our Association as a non-profit entity
- 3) Publishing a directory of members and quarterly newsletters
- 4) Institute an informal venue via which Chinese families can conveniently socialize and get to know each other better.
- 5) Organize formal social events for Chinese New Year and one or two other major holidays (such as Dragon Boat and Mid-Autumn Festivals).

Please reserve Sunday September 25 on your calendar for a mid-Autumn Festival Celebration in the form of an afternoon beach party and picnic. We need volunteers and ideas for fun and entertainment. More info to follow. Please contact Dr. Xueji Zhang; 926-3273; email: zxj001us@yahoo.com, or Jinbo Yin at 966-4355; email: best_ck9103@yahoo.com with your offer of assistance

Notice of GCCA Good Sundays (Note: changed from Saturdays at 6:30PM to Sundays at 5:30 PM to maximize attendance.)

NOTICE----- NOTICE ----- NOTICE----- NOTICE

The GCCA has set one day a month when all Chinese families interested in meeting other Chinese families can get together and socialize over dinner at a Chinese restaurant. This is an unofficial monthly event and whenever schedule permits, some of your officers will be present.

Please join other Chinese families for a good time of friendship and camaraderie.

When: **First Sunday of every month starting at 5:30PM**

Where: Oriental Buffet (For Aug & Sept, 2005), 4458 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota

Tel: (941) 377-6699

At the southeast intersection with McIntosh in Sarasota.

NOTE: LOCATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE! Please check for monthly reminders for ACTUAL location.

To help the restaurant plan staffing and food, please RSVP no later than Friday night. Please email Ed Lin elin@ingenious.com stating how many people in your party will be attending. You are always welcome, even if you cannot or forgot to RSVP ahead of time. Thank you.

Hurricane preparedness by Ed Lin

Please be sure to review and familiarize yourself with Herald Tribune's May 2005 Hurricane Preparation Guide. Copies may still be available at the Tribune Office. Their guide is the most comprehensive and helpful of all the hurricane preparation guides (such as those provided by local TV stations) and covers what to do before, during and after a hurricane. There are too many important areas of preparation for me to repeat here, so I will touch on just a few important areas that may be overlooked:

Do not pay a contractor a deposit for work until you have confirmed with the Better Business Bureau or Chamber of Commerce that they are of sound reputation. There are crooks out there who will take thousands of dollars in deposit from you (to guarantee a slot in the schedule) and never show up again! If possible, pay your deposit with a credit card (not a debit card) so that if you do not receive the work you contracted for, you will have some recourse to dispute the charge.

Chamber of Commerce, Long Boat Key 383-2466

Chamber of Commerce, Siesta Key 349-3800

Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce 955-8187 Valerie @ Ext 246 (Venice Chamber of Commerce has its own BBB: 488-2236)

When calling the Chamber for reference, they will only tell you how long the business has been a member of the Chamber, how many complaints they have had in the past two years and whether the complaint has been resolved.

SW Florida Regional BBB 800-525-1447 [www.bbbwestflorida.org] covers Clearwater to Ft. Myers

SRQ County Building Dept (permits) 861-6441

FL Dept of Professional & Business Regulation (Tallahassee) 850-488-6603

Even if you decide to use (the most economical) metal panels to shutter your windows and doors, BE SURE to pay the extra dollars to have two quick exits that are of a type that can be opened quickly (such as accordion shutters) in case of fire or other emergency. Do not let a thoughtless contractor install a "fire trap" for your home with no quick exit. If you use steel or aluminum panels, ask for one piece of clear Lexan panel on each side of your house so that light can come in and you can look out to monitor the hurricane status outside.

During hurricane conditions, an exterior door that opens outward is pushed by wind against the entire door frame and seals out wind and rain as the door is pressed ever tighter against the door seal. However, if you have front (or any exterior) doors that open inward instead of out, you should consider installing shutter panels on the outside, or at the very least brace the door from the inside to keep it from being blown in by hurricane force wind. Severe winds can drive rain horizontally for many hours flooding the interior of your house by allowing rain entry around the door seal.

Document using digital photos, all your belongings and home structures and furnishings for insurance purposes. Upload the pictures to your website for retrieval later even if your home is destroyed.

If hurricane shutters is not a suitable option for you, consider installing a steel or concrete "Safe Room's in your garage or home for only a few thousand dollars. A model is available for viewing at Florida House at the NW corner of Proctor and Beneva in Sarasota.

Tropical fruit tree cultivar recommendations by Ed Lin

If you enjoy gardening and tropical fruits, why not grow your own?

If you like the following fruits, try to buy the following recommended cultivars (cultivated varieties). I recommend them for their excellent flavor, reliable harvest and overall low maintenance (disease and pest resistance):

Mango: Carrie, Glenn, Dot or Nam Doc Mai (NDM is frost sensitive; avoid if you are east of I-75)

Lychee: Hak Yip (black leaf), Emperor or Mauritius. Brewster tends to alternate bear.

Sapodilla (also know as Ren Sen Guo or human heart fruit): Alano, Oxlutzcab, Hasya

Carambola (star fruit): Sri Kembangan, Fwang Tung

Longan: Degelman, Kohala

Persimmon: Saijo (astringent unless ripe), Matsumoto (can be eaten unripe)

Atemoya (cross between sugar apple and cherimoya): 4826, Bradley, Gefner

Avocado: Brogdon (ripens summer) Choquette (ripens in winter)

CITRUS:

Honey Murcott: Probably the sweetest eating tangerine (harvest Jan-March)

Dancy Tangerine: Tangerine with a nice blend of sweet and sour; eating or juice

Cara Cara: Red navel from Venezuela (sweet navel with a hint of raspberry)

Minneola honeybell: Good for juice blending; usually not as sweet as the name suggests

Lime: Bearss (when small, flavor is all lime; when ripe, flavor is lemon)

Pomelo/Pummelo: Hiraldo Butan or Sweet Siam

A great repository of info on proper cultivation of tropical fruit trees and vegetable crops is the University of Florida's Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences website:

http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/MENU_TF

Before buying the trees, verify that your community deed restrictions, if any, will not prohibit or penalize you for owning such trees

Where can you buy these fruit trees? Many of them (esp. citrus) can be bought at Home Depot or Wal-Mart. The more exotic cultivars are usually available only from tropical fruit nurseries located in Ft. Myers or Miami. Luckily, they will be bringing their plants to a special tree sale sponsored by the Sarasota Fruit and Nut Society on Sunday September 25, 2005 - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Rain Date: October 9, 2005)

Phillippi Estate Park, 5500 S. Tamiami Trail at Constitution Blvd., Sarasota, Florida

It is located just south of Phillippi Creek, on the west side of US 41.

Expert advice from Professional Growers and County Extension Master Gardeners will be available. Go early for best selection

The Sarasota Fruit and Nut Society holds its monthly meeting at the Phillippi Mansion at 7PM on the second Wednesday of each month. You are welcome to attend a few meetings before deciding whether or not to join. Membership is only \$15/year per family and includes fruity snacks and treats before each meeting, interesting lectures on fruit cultivation, etc.

Solicitation for articles and reports

Since this is our first issue of Newsletter, I have taken the liberty of providing some information that I hope you will find interesting or useful. We need contributors to our

Newsletter and welcome your letters, comments and articles. Please send to
elin@ingenious.com

Free for sale or want ads for GCCA members:
Send your ads to elin@ingenious.com.

Future issues will include a variety of topics we hope will be helpful or interesting to you:
Chinese service providers in our area
Home and Environmental safety
How to protect yourself if your wallet is stolen, etc.

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