

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear China Council friends,

The weather is warming up and the days lengthening! I returned from a fantastic road trip down to Texas with my family, including my son and grandson who were visiting from China, to view the recent eclipse, making various stops in between. Whew!



Big news was shared at our China Chat back on March 13th by our guest speaker James Zimmerman, author of *The Peking Express*, who informed us that a film deal was about to be announced. *The Financial Times* called his book, "a film-like true story" and it was reported in the entertainment magazine *The Beijinger* that director Chen Daming and producer Chris Lee had signed a deal with him which he then officially announced on March 22nd. At our China Chat it was my pleasure to host his incredible story that is now on our YouTube channel; click [here](#) to view. More on Page 2.

I also had the privilege to jaunt down to Corvallis on February 28th to attend a Linus Pauling Day open house at Oregon State University. Dr. Pauling was born February 28th, 1901 in Portland. After his death in August 1994, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber declared February 28th as "Linus Pauling Day" to honor this great man and his numerous achievements. Newsletter Editor Shireen Farrahi and I visited with Dr. Emily Ho, Director of the Linus Pauling Institute, as well as with other faculty and students. Read about Linus Pauling in China on Page 4.

Take advantage while you can! There's currently an exhibit on display at the Pittock Mansion called *From Near and Far: Chinese and Jewish Americans and the Making of Portland*, on view until July 11th, 2024. More on Page 3.

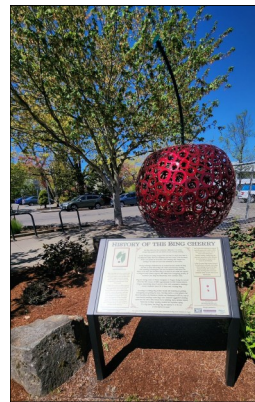
I watched the news of Secretary of State Anthony Blinken's visit to China at the end of April as we completed this newsletter and noticed the photos of his and Ambassador Nicholas Burns' tour of the famous Yu Gardens (Garden of Happiness) in Shanghai, also known as the garden of "Peace and Comfort". I thought of my recent visit to Lan Su Garden in Portland and how it serves as a place for reflection and preparation for tasks that need clear-minded attention to bring about success such as the resolution of issues

between the U.S. and China. As Secretary Blinken noted in the *New York Times*, "We have an obligation for our people - indeed an obligation to the world - to manage the relationship between our two countries responsibly." The story reported Secretary Blinken's speech to students at NYU's Shanghai campus where he stated "educational exchanges the students were engaged in provided a 'ballast' for a complicated and confrontational relationship." Oregon's educational institutions are challenged to support programs that offer Chinese language and cultural studies and the NWCC has played a small role in assisting the Albina Mandarin Immersion program with its exchange program in recent years. We hope that the community will join us in expanding these efforts in the coming year.

Also, the Albina Mandarin Immersion Program Taiwan Research Residency students returned from a successful exchange in Taiwan in April and their TRR Showcase will be held at Harriet Tubman Middle School on June 4th at 6pm. Some of the students were also involved in hosting Taiwanese students visiting Portland over the Memorial Day holiday too. Photos to come hopefully in our next newsletter.

The NWCC will present a program about Chinese stamps at the Oregon Stamp Society on June 25 at 8pm as part of their monthly meeting. See story on Page 3.

We're also looking forward to the opening of *Bong Wai Chen: Reframing Tradition*, an exhibit at Portland Chinatown Museum which will debut on May 16th with an opening reception on May 18th from 3-5 pm. More on Page 6.



In 2023 we supported the Milwaukie Arts Committee's presentation of the story of Ah Bing, inventor of the Bing cherry, that resulted in the installation of the cherry sculpture created by artist Tyler Fuqua at the Milwaukie Sculpture Garden in front of the old city hall building that will reopen as a new taproom and coffee house operated by Pfriem Family Brewers and Keeper Coffee. The sculpture project was recently completed with the addition of a historical plaque created by Nick Lee and Studio Sign Company. You will notice our NWCC logo included at the bottom with other supporting organizations. We hope you'll enjoy visiting the Bing cherry sculpture this summer.

-Jim Mockford

“PEKING EXPRESS” CHINA CHAT AND BIG SCREEN DEBUT!

The NWCC’s China Chat with James Zimmerman, held on Zoom on March 13th, went memorably well as he discussed his 2023 nonfiction literary thriller, *The Peking Express: The Bandits Who Stole a Train, Stunned the West, and Broke the Republic of China*. The video link is on Page 1. The *Blue Express* luxury train was attacked and derailed just 2.5 miles south of the Lincheng Train Station (bottom right), on the night of May 5-6, 1923, as it was traveling from Shanghai to Beijing with 300 passengers aboard. The Chat was privileged to have several descendants of those who endured this crisis in attendance. Candace Pinger’s grandfather was held by the bandits for a period of six weeks. Her father, 8.5 years old at the time, was held for four days. Harvey Kline’s grandfather was Reverend Carroll Yerkes, a Presbyterian missionary in Shandong Province who assisted in rescue efforts by providing food and support to the hostages. The anecdotes they shared about their family members’ individual experiences during this harrowing time as well as their own identities as living links to this incident lent a uniquely personalized and sentimental layer of depth to the Chat. In addition, as mentioned on Page 1, this real-life disaster is set to appear as a movie! Learn more about this exciting development [here](#) and [here](#) ...and, of course, the movie will eventually be included in our Movie Chat lineup!



NEW AAPI CURRICULUM SERIES FOR EDUCATORS NOW AVAILABLE

Now that Asian-American Heritage Month has dawned, it’s no surprise that we’re now likely to see announcements for various exciting new Asian American Pacific Islander-related projects and initiatives emerge. Here’s just one of them: The Committee of 100, a nonprofit organization that promotes Chinese-American participation in all aspects of American society, has teamed up with the Asian American Education Project to create a new curriculum for Grades 6-9 titled, *From Foundations to Frontiers: Chinese American Contributions to the Fabric of America*, a free [resource](#) which educators can use when teaching about the Chinese American experience. The lesson plans focus on the multi-faceted Chinese American contributions to business and entrepreneurship, science and technology, food and cuisine, and art and film; as well as how the stereotype of being the “perpetual foreigner” creates and barriers and challenges for this population.

As taken from the Committee of 100’s original email announcement: “The history of the AAPI community in the United States is rooted in innovation, creativity and beauty, but also hardship, racism and xenophobia,” said Cindy Tsai, Interim President, Committee of 100. “All of that history—the highs and lows, the good and the bad—should be on full display to all Americans. We are thrilled to partner with The Asian American Education Project on this important project.”

It is the hope of those involved in this project that the prioritization in public education of Asian American history will continue to spread to every U.S. state and ultimately result in AAPI studies requirements in all. Committee of 100 research indicates that 11 states, including Oregon, have already codified AAPI studies requirements, while 16 states have introduced legislation that would create AAPI studies requirements. With such a treasure trove of teaching material now at hand for educators, it should only follow that this goal should soon be realized.



EXHIBIT AT PITTOCK MANSION

Have you been to the Pittock Mansion lately? You won't want to miss their latest exhibit titled *From Near And Far: Chinese and Jewish Americans and the Making of Portland, 1840s-1930s*. On display from March 11 to July 7, this memorable showcase, as described on the Pittock Mansion website, "chronicles the transformative impact of Chinese and Jewish Portlanders on the city's business landscape, agricultural development, political evolution, and industrial growth. In the face of different, but overlapping challenges and prejudices, Chinese and Jewish Portlanders developed ways to care for their own communities." The Portland Chinatown Museum and Norm Gholston are two of several contributors to this exhibit. Additionally, there are a few lectures and walking tours scheduled in April through June, which you can learn more about by visiting the press release on their website by clicking [here](#). You may wish to purchase tickets in advance. Hope you can make it to the exhibit and these special events!



COLLECTING STAMPS IN CHINA - JIM MOCKFORD 2024

The NWCC is presenting an exhibit of Chinese stamps at the monthly program of the Oregon Stamp Society on Tuesday, June 25th, with the program at 8pm for OSS Members and NWCC members and friends. Please join us at Oregon Stamp Society at 4828 NE 33rd Ave, Portland, 97211. We will present a small exhibit of stamps collected by the late NWCC member Frances Shui-Sin (Wong) Lau (1950-2014).

This exhibit is made possible by NWCC Secretary Joanne Wakeland and it reflects the interests and connections that Frances Lau had with China during her career and as a volunteer with the NWCC where she had worked to form the Fujian book committee and created connections with Beijing University, Xiamen University, Fujian Provincial Library and Xin Ximeng, Librarian of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

During my recent trip to China I learned about stamp collecting by young people including activities at Chinese primary schools such as Philately Class described in this YouTube video [here](#). It is also a practice by Chinese families to purchase stamps-of-the-year albums for the birth year of their children or grandchildren so we stopped by a stamp store and purchased a stamp album book for each of my grandchildren shown in the photos below.



LINUS PAULING OPEN HOUSE

On February 28th, which is Dr. Linus Pauling's birthday, NWCC President Jim Mockford and Newsletter Editor Shireen Farrahi attended an open house at the Linus Pauling Institute at Oregon State University in Corvallis. Events are held there every year on this day to celebrate Dr. Pauling's life and legacy. He was born on February 28th, 1901, and the celebration this year featured this scrumptious and unforgettable cake at right. Dr. Pauling most certainly would have approved!



Dr. Pauling's chocolate birthday cake was infused with orange essence and had orange slices on top. So good!

The NWCC is excited to be hosting a talk about Linus Pauling on September 4th, 2024, in honor of the 30th anniversary of his death. Chris Petersen, Editor of [Visions of Linus Pauling](#) (World Scientific Publishing 2022) will tell us about Dr. Pauling's youth in Portland and the challenges he faced when his father died, which left the family in poverty, but overcame that chaos to leave Washington High School at age 15 to attend OSU on a career track that led him to become one of the great scientists of the 20th century and the Nobel Laureate in Chemistry in 1953. His humanitarian efforts to seek peace in a world stunned by the atomic bombings of Japan in WWII were recognized by the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1962. He died in August 1994 and is buried at Oswego Pioneer Cemetery in Lake Oswego. We want to thank the Oswego Heritage Council for inviting us to co-present this lecture at First Wednesday Chautauqua on September 4th at Oswego Heritage House and Museum. It's located at 398 10th St, Lake Oswego, 97034.



Jim Mockford holding a copy of *How To Live Longer and Feel Better* by Dr. Linus Pauling

We will also learn about his visits to China. In the 1970s the US-China relationship began to develop following Ping Pong diplomacy in 1971 and the 1972 visit of President Richard Nixon to China. Among the very early American visitors there were Linus & Ava Pauling in March 1973 at the invitation of Wu Yuhsun, Vice President of the Scientific and Technical Association of the People's Republic of China. "It is my belief that your visit will contribute to the promotion of the traditional friendship and scientific exchanges between the scholars of China and America," Wu wrote [here](#) in The Pauling Blog.



Philatelic enthusiast Shireen Farrahi with a Linus Pauling stamp poster

This exchange of scholars developed over the decades and in 2018 OSU presented a lecture by visiting scholar Gongdong Chen, "Across Different Lands: The History Behind the Chinese Translations of Linus Pauling," available [here](#) on the OSU website. Visit [The Pauling Blog](#) for even more about his life, work, and all other things Linus Pauling. We hope you can attend what promises to be a fascinating talk!

EASTER IN CHINA

When we think about Easter we normally don't associate it with China in any respect. But many of us do know that the Middle Kingdom has a significant presence of Chinese Christians. The adherents of this growing religion number around 100 million and are concentrated mainly on the eastern coast. It naturally follows that as part of their faith, Easter is celebrated just like elsewhere around the world.

China is home to a wide range of Christian traditions including Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant denominations, all of which hold special services in celebration of Easter, and congregations treat the holiday like a mini Chinese New Year by decorating their church buildings and homes with red paper slogans known as chūnlíán (春联).



Tibetan Catholics at an Easter service in Yunnan Province

Easter eggs, known as fùhuójié cǎisèdàn (复活节彩蛋), have their own distinct appearance. The Chinese like to drain the eggs and then paint them with intricate designs of women, scenery, and other themes. In the Catholic and Orthodox faiths in Heilongjiang Province, which are influenced by Russian culture, painting Easter eggs is an established custom. Numerous legends and archeological clues suggest that the ancient Chinese painted eggs red for the spring festival 3,000 years ago. But also, non-Christian Chinese pragmatically use the holiday to sell Easter eggs

and hold Easter sales, thereby promoting the tradition in a secular way. But because China does not officially observe Easter, many families like to go to Hong Kong during this holiday period to partake in many more festive activities.

Easter in Hong Kong is celebrated more avidly due to its 156-yearlong history of British rule, during which time numerous churches of various denominations were established. There are also a lot of foreign Christian expats living there. As of 2022, Christians numbered about 1.3 million people - or 16% of the population - in Hong Kong. The official Easter holiday weekend runs from Good Friday through Easter Monday and is a golden opportunity for families to spend four whole days together engaging in activities they enjoy such as visiting the Sha Tin horse racing track or participating in children's Easter egg hunts held at various restaurants or staying at hotels which offer Easter packages such as children's packs and movie tickets. Of course, many people also attend Easter church services on that Sunday, which are then followed by large buffet celebration lunches. Streets and shops are decorated with Easter bunnies and Easter eggs, providing a welcoming atmosphere for shoppers and tourists.



Easter at Hong Kong Disneyland

Since Easter is celebrated in so many different ways in China, it will be interesting to see how it continues to evolve over time in both the mainland and Hong Kong.

SPRING 2024 MANDARIN CLASSES BEGAN THE WEEK OF APRIL 8, 2024

Foundations of Mandarin

Beginning Mandarin I

Beginning Mandarin II

Beginning Mandarin III

Advanced Mandarin

10 weeks of these Mandarin Chinese language classes are being taught this Spring by Willow Zheng, a native Mandarin speaker with 24 years' experience teaching Mandarin as a second language. Classes are being held online via Zoom teleconference. If you're interested in joining classes this summer, please stay tuned!



BONG WAI CHEN: REFRAMING TRADITION

Portland Chinatown Museum will open a new exhibit called *Bong Wai Chen: Reframing Tradition* on May 16th. Curated by Roberta May Wong, this exhibit highlights the remarkable career and legacy of Portland artist Bong Wai Chen. Chen founded the Chinese Art Studio, served as principal of the CCBA Chinese Language School, and mentored calligraphers and painters at Reed College during the civil rights era. His art is a mesmerizing fusion of traditional techniques and 20th-century themes, exploring the intersections of culture, identity and the human experience. The opening reception for *Reframing Tradition* is Saturday, May 18th, 3:00–5:00 pm.

Chinese-American artist Bong Wai Chen (1911-1968) was born in Japan and moved with his family to Taishan, Guangdong, China where he began painting at age 6. In 1920 he won first prize at the Chinese National Art Show in Canton. After graduation from Kwong Tung Polytechnic College, he began teaching art at a high school and with

money he won in a calligraphy contest purchased passage on the S.S. McKinley to visit the U.S. in 1936 where he began studies at Polytechnic College of Engineering in Oakland, California and later Lincoln University in San Francisco where he completed a Master of Arts degree. In



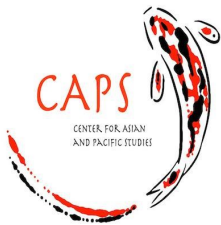
Bong Wai Chen and Lloyd Reynolds at a demo at Reed College, 1965. Reed College Archives.

1950 he arrived in Portland from San Francisco with wife Virginia Marie Wong and raised a family while serving as the first principal of the CCBA Chinese Language School. In 1960 he opened the Chinese Art Studio in downtown Portland and presented calligraphy demonstrations at Reed College through his friendship with Professor Lloyd R. Reynolds. In 1966 he published his book *Chinese Painting Lessons* and then sold his business to another

artist Wing K. Leong before moving to Oakland to be close to family. He died in 1968 at age 57.

For more information about the exhibit see this [link](#). It runs May 16th - October 27th, 2024. You won't want to miss it!

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



MOVIE CHATS

2024 continues for the Movie Chat program! The lineup for our Movie Chat series for the second quarter of 2024 is below. Please visit the NWCC website for more event details, including movie links. See you at the Chats!

April 29: *The Blue Kite* (1993, Kanopy) - Chat attendees enjoyed exploring the emotional depth of this movie’s plot, which then gave way to discussion of the greater significance in Chinese cinematic history that characterizes this film, given that it’s lauded as a shining example of the “Fifth Generation” of Chinese film directors.

May 20: *A Touch of Zen* (1971, YouTube) - This *wuxia* (martial arts and chivalry) favorite produced in Taiwan is based on the classic story *Xianu*. Ku is an artist living aimlessly with his mother when he meets a princess on the run from a murderous general. When she brings him into her circle of protectors, Ku transforms into a valiant fighter.

June 24: *Garden in Heaven* (2005, Kanopy) - This provocative documentary tells the horrific story of date-rape and murder victim Huang Jing in 2003 and her mother’s difficult fight for justice in China, plus covers the period 2003-2006 as China establishes a constitutional mandate to protect human rights.

Then, please save the dates for the following chats in Summer 2024:

July 29: *Hanzi*

August 26: *Ash is Purest White*

September 30: possible in-person event!



As one of the NWCC’s educational programs, the objective of the Movie Chat program is to facilitate further understanding of China-oriented affairs from the perspective of cinematic expression. Join us at 7pm on usually the last Monday of each month on Zoom video to discuss the movie of the month. Please view the movie beforehand. They are available on Kanopy and YouTube as noted.

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 _____ Research

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