



# OLD TOWN CHINATOWN

# CRIER

SPRING EDITION 2005

A Publication of the Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association

## Christopher Yarrow Champions Old Town Chinatown

Portlanders, be we natives or imports, take great pride in our city. We know the tourist spots, from Washington Park and the International Rose Test Garden to shopping on NW 23<sup>rd</sup>, from exploring NE Hawthorne to slipping into the Bagdad for a cheap movie. We know interesting stores and restaurants, but more importantly, we know interesting people. Maybe we dig a little deeper into our city, get a little further off the beaten path and take our visitors to places they might not find on their own. Here in Old Town Chinatown, Portland's most energetic, eclectic, and exciting neighborhood, we have it all: the sublime Classical Chinese Garden, moody Old Town Pizza, the buzzing Roseland theater, the uber-hip Voodoo Lounge. Yet even the most knowledgeable native revisiting Old Town Chinatown with friends might miss Christopher Yarrow's store, The Monkey and the Rat, one of the neighborhood's, and the city's, true treasures.

*The Crier* finally caught up with Christopher, not the easiest task considering he splits his time between Thailand and the neighborhood he loves. After reading the thoughts of this Old Town Chinatown champion, everyone will know one more interesting Portland store and, better yet, one more fantastic Portland person.

### Where are you originally from? What brought you to Portland?

I was raised in New York City, attended college at Oberlin in Ohio, studied Studio Art and Art History, and came to Portland in March 1999. I had a few friends here and a desire to be closer to the Pacific Ocean and mountain ranges to ski.

### What is The Monkey & the Rat?

It's a retail store of fine and friendly objects from faraway places. Located in the historic Merchant Hotel Building, my eclectic shop focuses on imports from Southeast Asian countries: Thailand, Laos, Burma. Also, you can find objects from India, China, Vietnam, and Indonesia. You can find vintage teak furniture, buddhas, silver jewelry, silk lanterns, ceramic tea sets, blankets, paintings, and lacquerware.

### Have you owned any other businesses?

This is my first business.



Christopher Yarrow is The Rat and owner of The Monkey and The Rat

### Why the name?

The Monkey & The Rat comes from the Chinese Zodiac. I am born in the year of the Rat, and my ex-partner, Kya Exstrand, was born in the year of the Monkey. They are normally compatible signs (Monkeys, Rats & Dragons all should get along). We are no longer together, but we did start something wonderful.

### What does your store offer to residents and visitors of OTCT?

The Monkey & The Rat offers a collection of objects carefully selected by me and my staff from their countries of origin. We have stories and references for all of the objects. We like sharing our experiences about when we bought a certain piece—a vignette from our travels that connects people to the sources and the histories. The store is a place where people

can take a break from work and come to wonder and relax. Many customers bring their family members when they come to visit from out-of-state. Couples come here to buy furniture for their home or special gifts for one another. This is a special place for many of our customers and wanderers. Some say it is their favorite store in Portland!

### Why did you open TM & TR?

After traveling to Thailand and purchasing my first shipment, I returned to the United States and sold objects to friends, at festivals, and as a street vendor. I set up at the Skidmore Saturday Market and worked there for two months before opening a store. I fell in love with the space through the window. All the old-world charm and proximity to the market made me think this would be a good place to start. I started out with a three month lease with the Naito Corporation. I had only a handful of objects in each room of this space (2,100 square feet). All my objects were dwarfed by the space. Now I am packed to the gills.

### What makes TM & TR unique?

I am a direct importer of goods from Thailand. Some of these objects are one-of-a-kind and very rare. Others are very affordable and beautifully crafted. I think the balance of reasonably priced goods and valuable objects meets a happy medium. Everyone should feel welcome here and be able to afford something unique and wonderful. Most importantly, the staff here is charming and friendly. They set the tone for the store.

*continued on page 4*

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## Three Questions: For Neighborhood Association Chair Howard Weiner

**Can you update us on the three projects for the downtown core announced by Mayor Katz just before the end of her term?**

The projects were identified by the Mayor's Downtown Oldtown Chinatown Livability Group, which came out of the Weed and Seed initiative. In 2003 we held a series of community forums here in the neighborhood in order to complete our application for a federal Weed and Seed designation. At that time we identified our priorities of community policing, homelessness, and street level issues in mental health and drug and alcohol use.

After reading our Weed and Seed application, Mayor Katz decided to form the Livability Group. Through that group the three projects for Old Town Chinatown and Downtown were identified and funded with \$400,000 from the police budget. The goal is to show that social services are the logical first responders to homelessness rather than having the police respond to social issues.

One of the three programs is Access. This provides an entry point for getting those suffering from mental illness or drug and alcohol addiction into services. It doesn't offer services but gives easy access for people to get into services. Specifically, it follows and mentors each individual to ensure they stay with the program. The success of the program will be evaluated in terms of the individuals' progress. The program concentrates on five individuals at a time, people for whom conventional approaches have failed.

A second program is funding through the downtown non-profit JOIN. JOIN's outreach team is the first responder to people sleeping in doorways and on the streets of Old Town Chinatown and Downtown. It provides a limited number of vouchers to get people into permanent housing and to start building a relationship with those individuals with a view to getting them into permanent housing and employment. The success of this program will be based on whether clients are still in permanent housing a year after placement in it.

The third program is in community policing. There are now more



Howard Weiner, OTCTNA Chair

police on the streets to stop the open air drug market that continues to be a hindrance to livability. This program focuses on the top tier offenders, that is, those who have the most previous arrests. But it's not just incarceration. The program is designed to get people to deal with their drug or alcohol issues on a long term basis, to help them so they can help themselves.

Within the Livability Group we have an oversight sub committee that is creating a structure to evaluate the three programs. We are also starting to address related livability issues, such as panhandling, which is of concern to both the business and homeless communities, albeit from different perspectives.

Travis Koopman, a graduate student at PSU working with ONI, will help evaluate the three programs. My hope is that they'll be shown to be successful after one year and that through the Mayor's Livability Group we can then tap into the police budget to fund other programs.

***Apart from your OTCTNA duties, you've been working on homelessness policy lately. What've you been doing?***

I continue to serve on the 15-member Commission to End Homelessness. This work dovetails with the work of the Mayor's Livability Group. The Commission's work concentrated on the 10% individuals who use 50% of the available resources.

My long term view is to free up funds to deal with people who suffer from situational homelessness. The goal is to get more people into housing and the attached services. As of late my focus is on our homeless youth system and which results in part in part the discharge of young adults from our foster care system into homelessness. I spend time with different providers trying to get a better understanding of this situation which leads to a discussion of actions which can be taken. Our first year goals, stated in the report *Home Again*, are to place in permanent housing 175 individuals and 250 families with children, with special attention given to the chronically homeless.



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## Howard Weiner, Cont.

**What would you like to see happen in 2005 both in terms of overall public policy and in the Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association?**

In the area of public safety I'd like to see us continue the path of community-rooted solutions and be on the forefront of developing community-based projects for which we can look for support. This is something we've been successful at already.

The role for us here in the neighborhood is to continue to have a strong, well-informed and involved public safety committee. In fact, I think we have the strongest Public Safety Committee in the entire city. As long as our meetings continue to be of value to individuals and we continue to work on community-based solutions to crime and fear of it, we can change the perception of Old Town as "crime-ridden".

As for the Neighborhood Association we will continue to have an open seat at the table for each and every constituency. This is the way to respect the uniqueness of this neighborhood. Around this "one table" we all build relationships with one another – property owners, business owners, residents, faith-based and non-faith-based services and the arts, culture and history groups. This is how we have made progress so far.

Editor's Note: *Home Again: A 10-year plan to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County*, the December 2004 report of the city's Commission to End Homelessness, can be found online at <http://www.portlandonline.com> (enter Home Again in the search box.)

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## Opinion: A RAP Victory

by Michael P. Ciarlante, RAP member

One of our greatest forefathers, President Abraham Lincoln, once said, "Of the people, by the people, and for the people." This is what compels an organization called The Recovery Association Project (RAP) to organize members and develop leaders to speak out at public hearings and reduce the stigma associated with alcoholism and addiction. RAP represents the recovery community and advocates for resources to meet its needs. Members voice the stories of the homeless, the addict in recovery, and the less fortunate.

This organization has had many accomplishments since it began organizing people in recovery in 1998. Accomplishments affecting Old Town Chinatown neighborhood include RAP members battling the Hepatitis C crisis by providing leadership to Multnomah County Commissioners and citizens. RAP also negotiated with the Portland Development Commission to remove obstacles in the development of the new 12 story, \$11 million, 180-unit alcohol and drug free community housing building at 8 NW 8<sup>th</sup> that opened in October, serving this neighborhood.

Bringing people in recovery together as a single voice to be heard is with no doubt its greatest accomplishment. On the evenings of February 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005 the Recovery Association Project once again proved they were a voice to be heard with numerous RAP leaders attending the Multnomah County Community Strategy Meetings to give input on the priorities for the next county budget.

RAP was victorious in the first steps needed to get the county's budget directed to affordable housing, housing for the homeless, addictions services, and the support needed within the recovery community. This organization does not have the goals of fame or fortune, but as a member of this community, I for one would like to give thanks to their efforts for helping our community to become a safer and better place to live.

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## The Money and The Rat, continued from page 1

### Who do you employ?

I have a PSU student, Elsbeth Allanketner (a Rooster). A new mother and my store manager, Amy Patrick (a Tiger). An active member of the gay community and retired school teacher, Stan Cass (an Ox). A master of Social Work, Ronit Fahl (a Horse). The Voodoo Doughnut-selling fix-it and deliver-it man, Craig Burgardt (a Buffalo).

### Where does your work take you?

I travel to Thailand on a regular basis. I spend about three to four weeks a trip there. Mostly finding things in the Northern region of Thailand and the markets in Bangkok. I have made other side trips too. My travels keep me in Thailand about 60-90 days a year.

### What keeps you in Old Town Chinatown?

All the ethnic food, all the history, all the myths, all the street charm, all the bars, and the Merchant Hotel Building...ah. It is so beautiful. I love the diversity. It is inherently a challenge, but that makes me feel right at home.

### How does being in OTCT benefit TM & TR?

The traffic from the Saturday Market and is invaluable. People come down and check it out. Especially visitors are curious. They want to look at the old buildings, they want to see the infamous "Portland Underground," they want to hear Jazz music and drink booze until they are spinning with love. Then, the Chinese Garden is so beautiful. How lucky we are to have it here. Then, the food...Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Pizza, Thai, brunch, Elephant Ears.

### How does TM & TR benefit OTCT?

This is a special place. It is a labor of love. I hope that when people come down to OTCT they remember me. I love to see people as they stroll past the windows and stop. They look inside, step onto my stoop and peer deeper into the space. I can tell they want to come back and investigate more. There are things you will not find anywhere else in this country. This is a little slice of Asia that you will not find anywhere else in Portland. It fits in this neighborhood with its Asian roots and old-world charm. We clean the streets every day, we use local banks, we eat at local "eats" every day. We advertise and bring people down here for events, openings, new shipments, and holidays. We give people a reason to come to OTCT.

### Do you sense that OTCT is becoming a destination neighborhood?

Absolutely. People work here and people play here. There are very few residents in the neighborhood compared to the rest of the city. People come here for the restaurants, the nightlife, to pay their gas bill, to visit a favorite store, to sing karaoke. People choose to come here. I have seen more traffic from the Convention Center and visitors walking through the neighborhood with their heads buried in maps. They are curious to find out what the current incarnation of "Old Town" is, what "Chinatown" has to offer, and what lies beneath the streets of "Japantown." We are filled with small businesses fighting to survive. Our customers, neighbors, visitors, employees, and delivery people are all a part of this community. As much as it is a destination neighborhood, we are an established community. I love the people here. These are my kind of people.

### What, in your opinion, is the perception that others have of OTCT?

I have heard from many people that have seen Portland through several decades. They know that this neighborhood was tough. They know it as a traditionally "skid-row" community. Everyone who comes back for a visit is impressed with the condition it is in now. Things are looking up for OTCT. Visitors are often un-impressed with our Chinatown. They comment on the adult bookstore as the first thing they see. They are looking for an Asian grocery. Sometimes people come hunting for a tour of the Portland Underground. I hand them a card to the Cascade Geographic Society and they are thrilled. It's hard for them to understand why this is not a more established tour. They compare it to Seattle's tour of their historic underground. For the people that know and frequent this neighborhood, we know our favorite spots, we know where to find the good food and the cheap drinks, we know where to find a peaceful spot to unwind.

### What does OTCT offer to make it a unique neighborhood?

There is no other neighborhood like it in Portland. We are juggling a mix of ethnicities, transients, sex-offenders, professionals, transvestites, imbibers, Chinese doctors, horticulturists, homeless, skateboarders, residents and city officials. On top of all that, it is one of Portland's historic neighborhoods with beautiful old buildings still in tact. Right at the foot of the Burnside bridge, we are the first neighborhood you see when you enter downtown. Most importantly, we are a neighborhood set for growth. Like many other cities and towns in this country, many of these old, beautiful buildings have too many vacancies. The challenge is to find a balance with all of the

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diversity and build a community that is thriving once again. This is a new era for OTCT, and the answers will come from within.

## **Does TM & TR bring in people who might not otherwise have visited OTCT?**

Word of mouth has always been our strongest advertisement. Once someone steps into my store, there is NO WAY they will ever forget about it. Sometimes people have a hard time finding it again, though. When someone says "I have to bring my husband back," or "oh, I can't wait to tell my friend, this is their kind of store," then I know I have reached one more mind. And maybe they will turn into a customer.

Having other businesses in this community is invaluable. When people come from the Chinese Garden and are already in the mood of serenity and aesthetic, they simply wander through the store and are prepared to take in more. When they are done, we suggest a good lunch around the corner at one of our favorite restaurants or another shop to discover. This is important for people to know that they can spend a whole morning or afternoon in this neighborhood. Then they come back.

## **How do you see OTCT developing in the future?**

With the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue project, the face of OTCT will be polished. This will bring new businesses and residents to the neighborhood. I hope that the existing businesses will survive through this transition. Also, the growth of the Pearl District will start to spill over the Park Blocks and across Broadway, and into Chinatown and onto the waterfront. Soon, maybe in four-to-six years, this neighborhood will grow into a connected River District, as delineated by the City Council. Several projects that are on the table, like the Burnside Couplet and a year-round farmer's market, may change how people move through this neighborhood and why they come to our neighborhood. This means significant change.

## **What is your sense of the future of the OTCT community?**

I see the OTCT community taking steps to solidify, improve and preserve itself. I see visitors coming to this neighborhood and getting a taste of a charming and thriving city. I see the generations of Oregonians returning to OTCT with a sense of awe at the fresh start for an old neighborhood. I see OTCT as a cornerstone of this city. As long as I am a part of this community, I will work for its successful growth into a thriving, diverse, charming, kind-hearted neighborhood.

## **How do you, and TM & TR, give back to the OTCT?**

I attend OTCT monthly meetings. I spend time talking with local business owners and inform them of changes and issues in the neighborhood. I donate items for auctions. I support my local businesses with patronage. I bank in the neighborhood with Bank of the West. I pick up trash. When I am not sleeping, I live here.

Visit *The Monkey & The Rat* from 11 am-6 pm, Tuesday-Sunday at 131 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, on the corner of NW 2<sup>nd</sup> and Davis, or contact the store at [christopher@themonkeyandtherat.com](mailto:christopher@themonkeyandtherat.com), 503.224.3849, [www.themonkeyandtherat.com](http://www.themonkeyandtherat.com).

## **NW Documentary Earns Prestigious Awards**

Local filmmaker Ian McCluskey of the Old Town Chinatown based NW Documentary Arts & Media has received two CINE Golden Eagle awards for "Sun Gu Ja: A Century of Korean Pioneers" and "Gardner's Garage." The CINE Golden Eagle awards, distinguishing excellence in professional and amateur cinema, are recognized internationally as symbols of the highest production standards in filmmaking and videography.

Founded in 1957, CINE has awarded such great documentarians as Ken Burns, Charles Guggenheim, Stanley Nelson, and Frederick Wiseman. In the Fall 2004 Competition, over 300 judges viewed and evaluated hundreds of distinguished entries. McCluskey's films will be automatically entered into the competitive awards, which will be held in Washington, DC on April 14, 2005.

"Sun Gu Ja" premiered July, 2004 to a sold-out crowd at the Portland Art Museum's Whitsell Auditorium. The work portrays the history of Korean immigration in the Northwest. Among other awards, the film received four Telly Awards, four Videographer Awards of Distinction, and an Appreciation Award from the president of the Korean Society of Oregon, H.J. Yu.

"Gardner's Garage," also completed in 2004, was produced in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity's Portland chapter. The 12-minute film details the Gardner family's struggle to break out of the poverty cycle. Through Portland's Habitat for Humanity, the Gardners eventually found an alternate to their garage dwelling.

McCluskey is Executive Director of Northwest Documentary Arts & Media, a non-profit organization begun in 2003. NW Documentary produces quality documentary works in the Pacific Northwest that exhibit artistic excellence and cultural significance. It also provides educational opportunities and strengthening local communities through the research, creation, and presentation of documentary arts. NW Documentary's Winter 2005 workshop series just kicked off, with a public screening at The Hollywood Theatre slated for March 18th. *More information can be found at [www.nwdocumentary.org](http://www.nwdocumentary.org) or by calling 503.227.8688*

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## NW 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Streetscape Project to Start Construction in March

After almost four years of community planning, Old Town Chinatown will soon see the beginning of construction on N.W. 3rd and 4th Avenues between Burnside and Glisan Streets. The \$5.35 million project is a partnership between the Portland Development Commission (PDC) and the Portland Office of Transportation (PDOT) to achieve goals laid out in the Old Town Chinatown Development Plan. The goal of the improvements is to strengthen the identity of this historic district, foster cultural and economic diversity, and promote a vibrant pedestrian environment for commercial, retail and residential uses.

The project will include new streets, concrete sidewalks with granite paver accents, new street trees and streetlights throughout the area, and festival streets on N.W. Davis and Flanders Streets, complete with public art installed on large granite planters. The festival streets will allow cars but can be easily closed to accommodate neighborhood festivals.

On January 25, 2005, after a new round of bidding, PDOT opened new bids for the project. The selected contractor is Robison Construction Incorporated of Tigard, Oregon and the contract is within budget, at approximately \$4 million. PDOT will continue with due diligence over the next few weeks to ensure the validity of all received bids.

"This is wonderful news for the Old Town Chinatown neighborhood and everyone is anxious for construction to get underway," said PDC Chairman Matt Hennessee. "The improvements will bring a fresh look and vitality to this core section of Old Town Chinatown," Hennessee added.

PDC and PDOT will continue to work with businesses and property owners in the area to encourage private redevelopment while also retaining the current businesses throughout construction. An open house is planned for mid-March for the neighborhood and local businesses to meet the contractor and get more information about PDC programs for redevelopment and assistance during construction. Construction is expected to last approximately 18 months with a grand opening slated for fall 2006.

Funds for the NW 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Improvement Project are made possible through tax increment proceeds from the Downtown Waterfront Urban Renewal Area.

## Neighborhood Welcomes New Businesses

Live music has returned to 33 NW 2nd Avenue on the site of the old Jazz de Opus. **The Jazz** features Ron Steen and other top local musicians in a format that serves the needs of a range of patrons. Kid-friendly dining from 5-10pm is followed by a groove lounge with DJs from 10 pm-2 am and after-hours breakfast from 2-6am. For jazz lovers who want to catch a set after work, the music typically begins at 6pm. Behind the leaded beveled glass windows that face Couch Street, owner-manager Andy Gainer has renovated a private dining room with its own period bar. *Reserve at 503.227.0668*

In its opening week of business at 323 NW Fourth Avenue, every chair at **MC Salon** was full. That's because the three collaborating stylists-colorists-texturists have brought their customers with them from all over the city. When asked why they'd chosen to set up in Old Town Chinatown, Marty Castellanos replied unequivocally, "It's hopping here!" The small salon in Pacific Tower, between Monte Rossa Coffee Shop and the Hop Sing Tong, does hair and only hair. Lois, Gina, and Marty are consummate professionals who love their work and are a welcome addition to NW Fourth Avenue. *For an appointment anytime between 9:30am and midnight, call 503.890.4313 or 503.796.1616 or email [maylois@aol.com](mailto:maylois@aol.com)*

**Ford's on Fifth** is the twenty-first century incarnation of the venerable Henry Ford's steak restaurant on Babur Boulevard. At their new location at 121 NW Fifth Avenue, Brian Ford and Gabe Felton serve up the same quality beef in classic American sandwiches. Everyday they concoct a new homemade soup. Open during the week from 11am-7pm, Ford's welcomes the late night crowd until 3am on Fridays and Saturdays. The restaurant also offers home- and office-delivery as well as corporate catering. *Call 503.226.2828*

**Chinese Shao-Lin Center** teaches the ancient arts of the monks of Honan temple for health, self-defense, and mental and physical conditioning. Offering Kung Fu, T'ai Chi and an array of styles, beginners are welcome to train 11 hours a week. For 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Black Belt Instructor Mike Behrens, the attractive traditional studio at 325 NW Couch is ideally located for access to Chinese culture and to transportation links to greater Portland. *Register at 503.819.1575. More information about the Denver-based group is available on their website: [www.shao-lin.com](http://www.shao-lin.com)*

South of Burnside, in the New Market Theater Block, is the comfortable and sophisticated **Voleur** at 111 SW Ash. With its large windows, the space is as handsome on the inside as it is from the outside. There are tables under a 24 foot ceiling, a long dramatic bar, booths with large tables for working lunches, and a cozy mezzanine for a discreet meeting or lively gathering of close friends. Manager Randy Capron has put together a menu of northwestern cuisine with exotic touches, interesting vegetarian options, and a nice selection of wines by the glass. The restaurant is open for lunch, offers happy hour from 3-6pm, and serves breakfast as well as the regular menu from 6pm-4am. Smoking is permitted on the mezzanine after 10pm, while downstairs remains smoke free. *Call 503.227.3764*

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## Another Chapter of American, and Portland, History

The Freedom Trail that runs along the oldest streets of Boston, Massachusetts has guided the way that generations of school children have thought about their country. Now Portland's Old Town is becoming a place whose streets tell the stories of people from many lands who came together to build the country and who had their early start as Americans in this neighborhood.

The brilliant new incarnation of the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center has thrown open the door on the compelling chapter of American History that is the stories of our fellow citizens of Japanese ancestry. Visitors experience the early days of the neighborhood, the contributions of the Oregon pioneers who crossed the Pacific, and the chilling and cautionary tale of how the human rights that many American citizens take for granted can disappear under the pressure of international events.

In fall of 2004, ONLC moved to its new home in the historic Merchant Hotel. This structure, which dates from the early 1880s, is the traditional heart of Nihonmachi, or Japan Town and once housed a laundry, bath and barbershop run by Japanese families. The new center offers a library, a community room for programs and meetings, storage space for artifacts and the historical exhibit "Oregon Nikkei: Reflections of an American Community".

At once comprehensive and comprehensible, the exhibit invites visitors to follow the lives of Japanese pioneers in Oregon from the 1800s to the present. Perhaps the most compelling aspect is the experience of the Nikkei in 1942. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 suddenly forced American citizens of Japanese ancestry from their American homes and farms. People living in our neighborhood closed up shop, took only what they could carry and moved to Portland Assembly Center en route to internment in more isolated camps throughout the west.

The ONLC exhibit recreates the experience of suddenly being sequestered in a hastily converted livestock exhibition pavilion on the site of today's Expo Center in North Portland. Japanese Americans found themselves living in cattle stalls with wooden army cots with flies, noise, a lack of privacy, and an unknown future. Yet in their austere new surroundings they recreated a sense of community as they managed cooking, dining, bathing and laundry services and organized athletics and entertainment. The exhibit speaks to the weight of this national injustice while celebrating the response of Portland's Japanese American community.

As is the case with all ONLC exhibits, this semi-permanent display is the work of volunteers. They focus the theme, develop a storyline, map out the physical flow of ideas and artifacts, conduct interviews, search for photos, verify dates, write captions and text, paint walls, install the exhibit and welcome the public. "It's deeply personal.

Nothing is detached," says Schumann. For museums to be meaningful it's important to know whose voice is being heard. It's the community's voice."

Planning for a Japanese American museum project began more than a decade ago when citizens from diverse Japanese American organizations started spelling out their vision. "Most people thought it couldn't be done," says ONLC Executive Director June Schumann with the knowing sigh of a woman who's witnessed what a small team of committed individuals can do.

Bill Naito offered early support and upon his death in 1996, his brother Sam picked up the ball, offering a 5-year lease on a space in the former Rich Hotel. Then Japanese American families started bringing treasures from home: letters by the Oregon pioneers, photographs of their lives on Japan Town streets and the farms of along Columbia Boulevard and Hood River, and heart wrenching memorabilia from the terrible chapter of internment during the Second World War. Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center invited the public to its first event in 1998. Fourteen more exhibits followed with several going on the road to other cities.

The Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center is located at 121 NW 2nd Ave, Portland, OR 97209. Exhibit hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 11 am to 3 pm, Sunday 12 to 3 pm. Admission is \$3. 503.224.1458 [www.oregonnikkei.org](http://www.oregonnikkei.org) Materials for self guided tours of the neighborhood are available for purchase. Complementary sites include the Japanese Historical Plaza on the Old Town Waterfront. This commemorates the Bill of Rights and President Ronald Reagan's signing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, the government apology for the evacuation of 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry. Nearby the Yellow MAX leads to the Expo Center stop at the end of the line. There, marking the site of the Portland Assembly Center are five large wooden gates by Japanese American artist and Portland resident Valerie Otani. Integrated with the sculpture are reproductions of news articles of the period documenting the evacuation.



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# OLD TOWN CHINATOWN CRIER

A Publication of the Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association

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[carolmccreary@comcast.net](mailto:carolmccreary@comcast.net)

## **New Neighborhood Map and Directory Published**

Visitors to the neighborhood now have a new Old Town Chinatown Map & Directory to guide them to our shops, restaurants and cultural attractions. The brochure was published by the Portland Business Alliance to support neighborhood businesses during the 3rd & 4th Avenue Streetscape construction. The Portland Business Alliance partnered with neighborhood businesses and organizations to create and publish "Discover Old Town Chinatown", which is similar to the map used successfully to promote the Pearl. Over 40,000 copies will be distributed throughout the year to neighborhood businesses, downtown hotels, Pioneer Courthouse Square Visitor's Center, convention delegates and visitors, local businesses, and Downtown Sidewalk Ambassadors. The Alliance devoted over 100 staff hours to the brochure design, information collection and advertising outreach. The Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association, the Portland Development Commission, and the Portland Department of Transportation collaborated to produce the brochure. If you'd like copies of the Directory, please contact the Alliance at 503.224.8684.



**Please submit short news items, opinion pieces and letters to the editor to Ted Occhialino at [topdx@comcast.net](mailto:topdx@comcast.net). The Crier reserves the right to abridge letters which should be no more than 150 words.**

## **Upcoming OTCTNA Meetings**

**Tuesday, April 5, 2005** A discussion of the relocation of Fire Station #1 will be the main item on the agenda of the April 5 meeting of the Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association. At this joint meeting with the Old Town Chinatown Visions Committee, members of the Station Advisory Committee (SAC) will report on plans to vacate the present station on Ash Street and build a new station on the site on NW First Avenue and Naito Parkway between NW Couch and NW Davis. Everyone is encouraged to attend the meeting at the Port of Portland, 121 NW Second Avenue from 4:30 - 6:30 pm.

**Tuesday, May 2, 2005.** Elections for the Board of Directors of the Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association will take place at the General Meeting on Tuesday, May 2. Everyone who lives, works, volunteers, or owns property in the Old Town Chinatown neighborhood is urged to attend. In addition to the slate of nominees for vacant positions, nominations will be welcomed from the floor. At the Port of Portland, 121 NW Second Avenue from 4:30 - 6:30 pm.

**Tuesday, June 7, 2005** At the regular monthly meeting in June, officers of the Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association will be confirmed. At the Port of Portland, 121 NW Second Avenue from 4:30 - 6:30 pm.

### **Association Committees and Neighborhood Meetings**

Membership in OTCTNA and attendance at all meetings is open to people who live, own businesses or property, or work or volunteer in the neighborhood.

**Old Town Chinatown Neighborhood Association Board of Directors.** Meets first Tuesdays from 4:30-6:30 PM in the ground floor conference room of the Port of Portland, corner of NW Second & Everett. Everyone is welcome! Contact: Howard Weiner ([howard@calsk8.com](mailto:howard@calsk8.com))

**OTCTNA Joint Land Use & Design Review Committee.** Meets, as required, first Tuesdays from 3:00-4:30 PM at Central City Concern, 232 NW Sixth Avenue. If you have issues to bring before the committee, contact Paul Verhoeven ([paul@saturdaymarket.org](mailto:paul@saturdaymarket.org))

**OTCTNA Public Safety Committee.** Meets third Thursdays from 11:30 AM-1:00 PM at Central City Concern, 232 NW Sixth Avenue. The public is welcome at this brown bag lunch meeting. Contact: Howard Weiner ([howard@calsk8.com](mailto:howard@calsk8.com))

**OTCTNA Communications Committee.** Meets last Mondays from 4:00-5:00 PM at Northwest Resource Federal Credit Union, 221 NW 2nd Ave. Contact: Carol McCreary ([carolmccreary@comcast.net](mailto:carolmccreary@comcast.net))

**Old Town Chinatown Visions Committee.** Meets second Wednesdays from 11:30 am - 1:00 PM at Central City Concern, 232 NW Sixth Avenue. The public is welcome at this brown bag lunch meeting. Contact: Mark Riesmeyer ([mark@centralcityconcern.org](mailto:mark@centralcityconcern.org))