



From the Commander's Desk



Dear Members and Friends,

Happy Holidays to everyone! Yes, once again the Holiday Season has crept up on us. I want to take this opportunity to again thank everyone for your tremendous support. I truly believe and feel that you have made this one of the greatest posts in the United States.

Last month was another busy month. I am very proud that so many of our members took the time to visit and bring gift bags to the disabled senior veterans at the Veteran's Hospital. I began tearing up when the veterans told me how grateful they were that our Post visited them. Again, thank you to everyone who took time out of their busy lives to visit our disabled veterans.



The Post visiting veterans at Fort Miley

I am happy to announce that Room 206 at the Veteran's Memorial Building is coming together. In fact, last Saturday, the Post co-hosted a Casting Call that was attended by many young models and fashion industry professionals for a photo shoot. I am proud to showcase Cathay Post to our younger citizens. Events like this con-

firm the Post's commitment in supporting local talent. This event gave our young talented friends an opportunity to break into the fashion industry.

Not surprisingly, December promises to be another very busy and productive month. So, let me start with the invitations.

First, there will be a

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NEXT BOARD MEETING: Saturday, Dec. 11, 2010 @ 1100 hours. All Cathay Post members and supporting friends are welcome. Lunch will be served immediately after the Board meeting.

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Cathay Post. No. 384
American Legion

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Fax: 415.399.0551

www.chineseamericanveterans.org

Tickets: \$35 per person or \$350 per table

The American Legion Department of California

&

American Legion Cathay Post No. 384

Invite you to a holiday dinner to meet the
National Commander of the American Legion Jimmie L. Foster



December 10, 2010 at 6 p.m.

Far East Cafe
631 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA

RSVP by November 30, 2010
Commander Ron Lee, Post No. 384
rlee288@aol.com

From the 1st Vice Commander

Let me start off by asking those members who have not renewed their 2011 membership to please do so immediately. Please remit your payment as soon as possible to ensure that the Post continues to have the largest and most active membership in the recent history of this organization. By the way, the Post has formed a membership retention committee to achieve this goal.

Please join me in congratulating Steven Jin Lee on his reappointment as Commissioner on the Relocation Appeals Board for the City and County of San Francisco. Steven and his wife frequently participate at the Post's Tuesday afternoon dance class. Steven also serves as a director on the Post's board.

Congratulations to Ed Wong, the Post's Treasurer and a member of the Executive Board, on his election as President of the Golden Gate Park Senior Center. This organization has over 1,000 plus members, many of whom are also members of the Post's Support Group.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the editors of Cathay Chronicle for putting out a first class newsletter. Editor Galin Luk, assistant editor Jinny Kim, and assistant editor Mike Louie have done an outstanding job in producing the newsletter in a timely manner. Soon, the monthly newsletter will be available on the Post's much improved website.

Many thanks to Teresa Lai for heading up the Monday afternoon dance class along with her superb networking efforts in re-



cruiting a large number of new support members to the organization this past year. Thank you to Support Unit members Tina Mak, Linda Peng, and others for working on the administrative and bookkeeping duties for the Post's various classes and functions. Thanks to Stephen Lau for his donation of the large flat panel LCD television to the Post. Thanks to Amy Qu, Sandy Su, and a other members for their active support during the year.

Cathay Post will be hosting a dinner on Friday, December 10th in honor of Jimmie Foster, National Commander of the American Legion. Please see page 2 for more details. Commander Foster, who is from Anchorage, Alaska, was elected on September 2, 2010 during the 92nd National Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Vice Commander Nelson Lum attended the event, representing our Post.

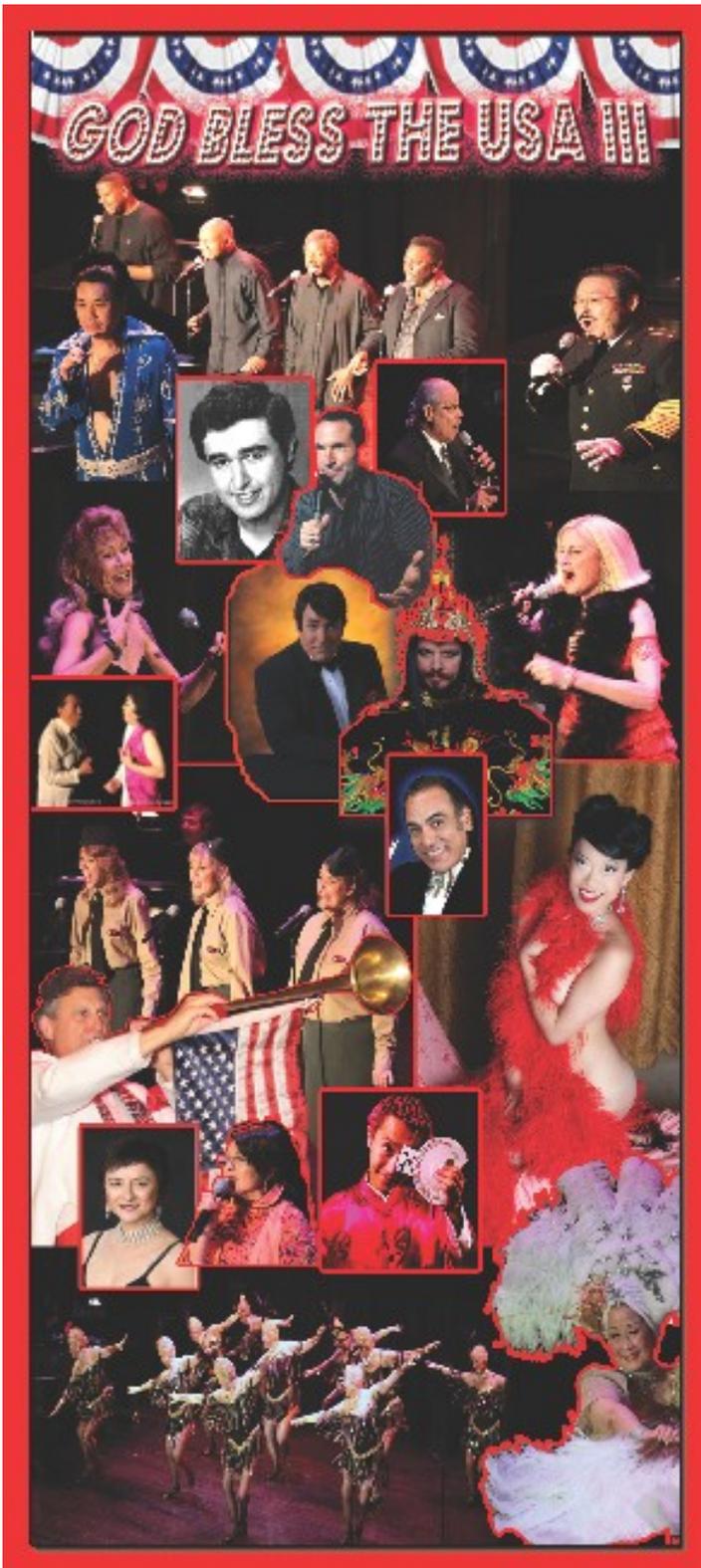
There are strong suggestions

that the next American Legion National Commander will be an Asian American from the Lt. B. R. Kimlau Chinese Memorial Post 1291 (New York City). Needless to say, the senior officers of Cathay Post are extremely proud of such a historic event. I would encourage you to ask members of the Executive Board for this individual's name. Here's a clue: his last name is the same as mine.

Please come to the Post's holiday party on Friday, December 17th in Room 206 of the Veterans Memorial Building at 401 Van Ness Avenue. This will be a special party to commemorate the inaugural grand opening of the Commander Bok Pon Memorial Hall. This dedication is a realization of past Commander Bok Pon's dream in securing a larger space in the Veterans building and for members to acknowl-

(Continued on page 12)

God Bless The USA III



Cathay Post # 384

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Friday, January 14, 2011

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From the 2nd Vice Commander

You just can't stop Cathay Post No. 384! We had four very successful events last month: 1) the Thanksgiving Meal; 2) the Veterans Memorial Project; 3) the American Chinese Cultural & Art Dinner; and 4) our visit to Fort Miley's VA Hospital.

The Post is on pace to host over 50 events this year. With the addition of Room 206 in the War Memorial Building, you can bet on Cathay Post hosting even more events! Hats off to the Commander and all of you for keeping Cathay Post a positive force in our community.

This month I want to take the time to reflect on our American Legion Charter. This reflection was triggered by Cathay Post member Luther Lee Jr. who invited us to participate in the December 6 event in Sacramento to celebrate the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943. Even after the repeal, only 105 Chinese were allowed to immigrate to America annually. It wasn't until the Immigration Act of 1965 that Chinese were allowed into the U.S. in greater numbers. Today Chinese Americans represent 1.2% of the U.S. population.

As you can see from the reproduction of our Charter, Cathay Post No. 384 was established on August 14, 1931, when there were approximately 200,000 Chinese Americans in the U.S. I'm not sure how many of those served in the U.S. Armed Forces, but I am sure grateful to those men who served our country, founded Cathay Post and for the American Legion being color blind and issuing a charter to Cathay Post No. 384. Believe it



or not, the original charter can be found in our board room.

Looking forward, I want to quickly remind you of three additional events this holiday season (for a few more, please read Commander Lee's article): 1) dinner with the National Commander on December 10 at Far East Cafe (see Page 2 for more details), 2) Christmas Luncheon on December 11 at the Post, and

3) the Remembrance of Nanking on December 12 at 1044 Stockton Street.

With all these events I might as well bring a cot down to the Post and sleep there!

May joy and happiness follow you this holiday season.

Jay Pon
2nd Vice Commander



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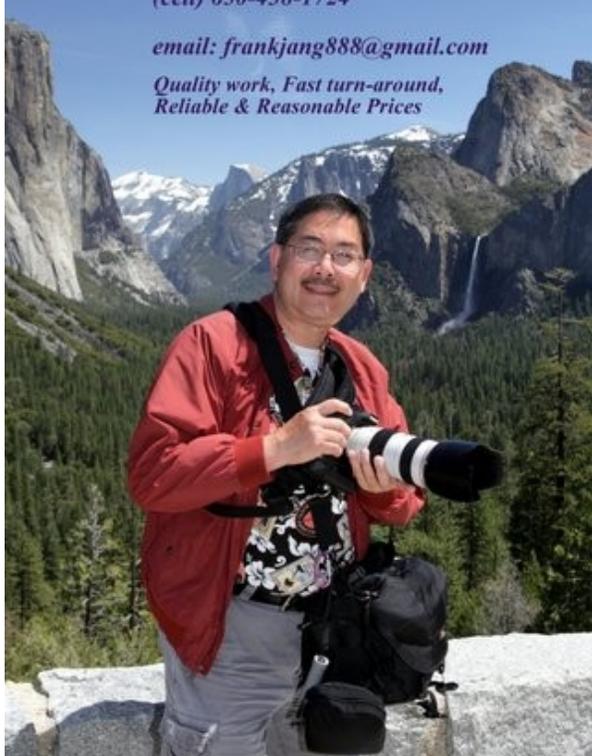



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From the 3rd Vice Commander

As I indicated in last month's newsletter, I vacationed in China during the first half of November. I missed the opportunity to celebrate Thanksgiving with you at our Post. I hope that you all had (and will continue to have) a wonderful holiday with your family and friends. I know you will all be very busy as Christmas is just around the corner.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of the latest development at the War Memorial Veteran's Building. Chairman Roger Dong is trying to bring in the Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) to create a one-stop shop environment for returning vets. One of the first organizations that can establish its presence is the USO. While the USO generally provides services to active military members, its presence in the WMVB can be a great beginning towards establishing our goals.

As most of you are aware, nothing at the WMVB is easy since we've had years of adversarial relations with the Board of Trustees. While some trustees are sympathetic to the plight of the veterans, they have grown to distrust the Commission based upon some alleged or perceived unethical practices perpetrated by some past leaders of the Commission. I must also mention to you that some of the trustees simply want to relegate us to the back room.

So, the stage is set for the first of many battles between the Post and the Board of Trustees. While I've always favored negotiation whenever possible, I be-



lieve this issue is not negotiable and we must stand firm to assert our rights.

We must understand that it is not just the idea of bringing in the VSO, it is the fundamental rights of the American Legion, as the beneficiary of the trust, that we are fighting for. If we fail, future generations of veterans will be deprived use of the WMVB.

On a brighter note, Room 206 was finally turned over to Cathay Post No. 384. In my absence, 2nd Vice Commander Jay Pon along with members of our Post have worked hard to convert the room into a workable facility.

We have already started to conduct martial arts classes there. We will introduce more pro-

grams in the future. Please join us for the official dedication of the hall on December 17 so you can see the result of our late Commander Bok Pon's vision. I look forward to seeing all of you at our next meeting.

Nelson Lum
3rd Vice Commander

Vice Chairman, American Legion War Memorial Commission.



The Editor's Corner

Season's greetings. It has been quite some time since I've dropped a note. No excuses, aside from the ol' standby of "it just got busy."

Well, there are some matters we need to find time for, including helping a fellow "comrade in arms." I recently received an email from a friend and professional colleague, Lieutenant Colonel Bill Arnold (Retired). Below, is a copy of that email requesting your help in sending a note of encouragement to Corporal Kyle Thompson and Corporal Todd Love, USMC. These motivated Devil Dogs and true heroes were seriously wounded while serving in Afghanistan. Despite their tragic circumstances, these heroes would truly appreciate a note of encouragement online. Now is the time to fire up your PC or MAC and to thank them and to send them your best. Just in case you're wondering, this is not a "chain email." Bill and Stuart are friends and I've been communicating with Corporal Thompson's uncle, Greg.

Corporal Thompson is rehabilitating in the Bay Area. I would encourage you to make that short drive to visit him. If you want to visit these Marines, or send them a package, here's their contact information:

Corporal Kyle Thompson
C/O Veterans Affairs Hospital
Building 7, Unit D, Room 120
3810 Miranda Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Corporal Todd Love
C/O Walter Reed Army Medical Center
6900 Georgia Ave. NW
Ward 68, Room 34
Washington D.C., 20307-5001

Hi Stuart and Bob:

I am reaching out you two because

you're the only two Marine lawyers I know. [Editor's note: I deleted a sentence that has no bearing on this letter]

Today I'm simply asking for you to either send an email or post words of encouragement on the website listed below. It would mean a lot to my nephew to hear from people all across the country and from all walks of life.

My nephew is Cpl. Kyle Thompson, USMC. His father is Linda's brother. Kyle is a member of the USMC 1st Recon Battalion, B Company, from Camp Pendleton, California. He was seriously wounded while on foot patrol in Helmand Province of Afghanistan on 25 October 2010. Kyle and his point man, Cpl. Todd Love, were hit by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) during a routine patrol. The IED ripped into Kyle's face, resulting in the loss of Kyle's left eye, and severely damaging the retina in the right eye. In early November his left eye was surgically removed. He is currently totally blind, although the doctors tell him his sight in the right eye may eventually return. Last week Kyle had surgery to remove large pieces of shrapnel from his face and jaw. He will need additional reconstructive surgery to replace his jaw bone and his lost teeth.

Kyle is a 2005 graduate of La Pine High School in Central Oregon. He served one previous tour in Iraq, and extended his commitment earlier this year so he could remain with his squad when it was deployed to Afghanistan. Kyle chose to stay with his team because of his

sense of honor and duty to his men.

Kyle is only 24 years old now permanently blinded in his left eye, and his future ocular recovery remains uncertain. In the next week or so Kyle will be transferred to Palo Alto, CA for further treatment.

Here's the pitch: ***Kyle would appreciate any words of encouragement you could offer—even a simple "thank you" would boost his morale immensely.*** You can reach out to him at either logging onto this website (it's pretty easy to do so) <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/kylethompson> or by emailing his father, Michael Thompson, at miket4k@yahoo.com. All emails and posts will be read to Kyle. His father [and my brother-in-law] says Kyle's spirit is lifted by the emails he receives.

Finally, I would be remiss in failing to mention that Kyle's fellow platoon member, Corporal Todd Love, was also injured in the same IED attack that took Kyle's left eye. Cpl. Love lost his legs and part of his left arm to the IED. Both Todd and Kyle were transferred to NNMC Bethesda together, where they have been able to visit one another frequently and boost one another's morale. From all reports, all who have met these fine young men are awed at their spirit during this time of personal tragedy. You can reach out to Todd Love at <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/toddlove>. Many of Todd's family and friends have given Kyle words of encouragement over the past three weeks.

Editor Galin Luk is a San Francisco civil trial attorney and Marine Corps veteran.

Cathay Post No. 384 at American Chinese Cultural and Arts Association Thanksgiving Karaoke Contest



Game time. Can you spot the differences in these two pictures?



Chinese American Military Hero Coming to San Francisco

Major Kurt Chew-ee Lee, US Marines Corps, (Retired) has accepted an invitation from Chinese American Heroes to visit San Francisco and Cathay Post from February 7-13, 2011.

Major Lee lives in Washington, D.C. so that he can be close to his late wife who is interned near their home. He was born in Hawaii, but spent most of his youth in Sacramento.

Major Lee was the first Asian American/Chinese American officer in the United States Marine Corps, and he joined the military to be a role model and prove that Chinese Americans were tough, loyal and brave warriors. His courage and leadership were proven on the battlefield beyond anyone's expectations. Today, at 85 he is still training new Marine recruits at the Marine Corps training center at Quantico, Virginia. Major Lee served in WWII, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

Preparing his machine gun company for the Korean War, 1st Lieutenant Lee was extremely tough in training his men, who initially hated him for demanding so much of them. After meeting the enemy and defeating them in every battle, his men realized that they owed their survival and victories to the man who had trained them to be tough and unbeatable.

Major Lee's heroism was rewarded with the US Navy's second highest award, the Navy Cross. He is also the recipient of two Purple Hearts. The Presidential citation for the Navy Cross beautifully described his

well earned award for bravery, leadership and heroism and reads as follows:

"The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Navy Cross to First Lieutenant Kurt Chew-Een Lee (MCSN: 0-48880), United States Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United Nations while serving as Commanding Officer of a Machine-Gun Platoon of Company B, First Battalion, Seventh Marines, FIRST Marine Division (Reinforced), in action against enemy aggressor forces in the Republic of Korea, on 2 and 3 November 1950. Immediately taking countermeasures when a numerically superior enemy force fiercely attacked his platoon and overran its left flank during the defense of strategic terrain commanding approaches to the main supply route south of Sudong, first Lieutenant Lee boldly exposed himself to intense hostile automatic weapons, grenade and sniper small-arms fire to carry out a personal reconnaissance, well in advance of his own lines, in order to re-deploy the machine-gun posts within the defensive perimeter. Momentarily forced back by extremely heavy opposition, he quickly reorganized his unit and, instructing his men to cover his approach, bravely moved up an enemy held slope in a deliberate attempt to draw fire and thereby disclose hostile troop positions. Despite serious wounds sus-



tained as he pushed forward, First Lieutenant Lee charged directly into the face of the enemy fire and, by his dauntless fighting spirit and resourcefulness, served to inspire other members of his platoon to heroic efforts in pressing a determined counterattack and driving the hostile forces from the sector. His outstanding courage, brilliant leadership and unswerving devotion to duty were contributing factors in the success achieved by his company and reflect the highest credit upon First Lieutenant Lee and the United States Naval Service."

Since he is a Chinese American distinguished veteran and hero, Cathay Post and Chinese American Heroes will honor Major Lee and arrange for appropriate events to celebrate his visit.

We will be holding press conferences at either the Cathay Post Headquarters or the Bok Pon Memorial Hall.

For 65 years, the heroic story about Major Lee was known pri-

(Continued on page 11)

Chinese American Military Hero Coming to San Francisco



marily by his own men in his unit and among some of the 4,000 plus Marines he saved

during the Korean War.

That is now starting to change. This past year, the Smithsonian Institute learned about Major Lee and told his story on the Smithsonian Channel on cable TV. Because few people subscribe to this cable channel, his story is still not well known. We have a DVD of

that program and will try to show it during lunch at the next

Cathay Post monthly meeting on December 11, 2010.

Don't miss this very inspiring and extraordinary story of Major Kurt Lee who had to battle racial discrimination while risking his life for his Country.

I know that everyone is looking forward to meeting a true American military hero, Major Kurt Lee, at Cathay Post when he visits us after Chinese New Year on February 3, 2011.

I know I will be very proud to meet him and thank him for his very exceptional service.

Roger S. Dong, Chairman,
Chinese American Heroes

From The Commander's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

noon luncheon on December 10th in Room 206, Veteran's Memorial Building. You will have a chance to meet and greet the National Commander, Jimmie Foster. Our members are invited to attend this luncheon.

I am honored that the American Legion Department of California has asked me to co-host the National Commander's Dinner on December 10th at Far East Cafe beginning at 6 PM. There are still plenty of seats available at \$35 a seat or \$350 a table.

I want to invite everyone to our Holiday Luncheon on December 11, 2010. Great food and great

company will make this another memorable get together.

You should plan on attending the Rape of Nanking viewing on Sunday, December the 12th, at 10 a.m. at CACA Hall (1044 Stockton Street). This will be a history lesson you will not forget.

Next, we will be having the official opening ceremony of "Commander Bok Pon Memorial Hall" (Room 207) on December 17th at 6 PM. Securing a room in the Veteran's Memorial Building was Commander Pon's dream. I want to thank Vice Commander Nelson Lum for his hard work in helping make the Hall a reality.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that "God Bless America III" will make its debut on January 14, 2011 at the Herbst Theater. This is a great stage play put on by many talented professional entertainers and actors who donate their time and talent to our Bay Area senior veterans. This will be the 3rd year that Cathay Post will be hosting this show. The suggested donation for tickets is \$10.00. Please see me for tickets. As it has been in past years, I expect a full house. Now, is my call for help. I am looking for volunteers to serve as Color Guards, ushers, and to provide other general assistance.

Ron Lee
Commander

Cathay Post Visits Senior Veterans at Fort Miley

On Saturday, November 20, 2010, Commander Ron Lee and many **Cathay Post** members and our supporting members visited the senior veterans at the Fort Miley nursing facility. This was the Post's third visit to Fort Miley. Every year, we have more and more participating members. This year, we had almost as many of our team in red shirts as there were senior veterans.

The American Legion team included Commander Ron Lee and Suzie, Vice Commanders David Y. Wong and Jay Pon, John Li, Patrick Mak, Allen and Kim Leong, Sandy Su, Gary Gee, Joel and Mary McClure, David Lang, and American Legion War Memorial Commission Chairman Roger and Christy Dong, Jack Jair and family, Jenny Liang and

Harriet Chiu. Other members also participated, but due to my not having a photographic memory, I apologize for not identifying you.

Of course, this just means I better make my reservations for the nursing home. They will have another patient soon.

Colorful gift packs with individual facial tissue packs, vanilla/butterscotch/chocolate pudding servings, chocolate Hershey Kisses, fruit chews, colorful Post-its, Christmas sweets, and custom made Cathay Post pens were happily distributed to the seniors. The beautiful ladies of the Post spent time talking to the seniors. They will probably remember those moments more than the gift packs we delivered.

Afterwards, we trekked several

blocks to the home of Vice Commander Jay Pon who left our group earlier to get ready for the rowdy and hungry Cathay Post crowd. Jay put some shrimp on the Barb-B, but everyone opted for BBQ chicken and hamburgers. Beer flowed from his "kegameister." We were all very thankful for Jay's effort and no doubt the significant costs he undertook to feed the red shirted beasts from 1524 Powell Street. We thank the entire Pon family for sharing their warm home for the afternoon. I should actually thank Jay twice because he fed and nourished our Post the last time we visited Fort Miley.

Roger S. Dong

Chairman, American Legion War Memorial Commission

From the 1st Vice Commander

(Continued from page 3)

edge Commander Pon's long and dedicated services to our Post. Special thanks to Chairman Roger Dong and Vice Chairman Nelson Lum of the War Memorial Commission, for their coordination and assistance in this assignment. We will provide additional details of this event during the December 11th monthly meeting.

In closing, I would like to thank my colleagues on the board of directors and the Executive Board for their continuing support and contributions to the

Post. This has been a busy year and we have accomplished much.

While there are 17 American Legion Posts in San Francisco, Cathay Post is the City's premiere post and one of the most active Posts in District Eight, the reporting unit in the Department of California, American Legion.

I am proud to say that the future is promising. Cathay Post has a number of young and dedicated veterans. Someday the command leadership will be turned over to them, to carry out the legacy of this great Post.

August 2011 will mark the Post's 80th Anniversary. Additional information about this special occasion will be available in the coming months.

It has been a pleasure serving as one of your vice commanders these past five years. I wish you all a joyous holiday season and the very best for the New Year, filled with happiness and good health.

Respectfully yours,

David Y. Wong
1st Vice Commander

Cathay Post No. 384 Visits Veterans at Fort Miley





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Chronicle Staff

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Assistant Editor Jinny Kim is a San Francisco non-profit civil attorney.

Assistant Editor and Chief Technical and Design Editor Michael "Young" Louie is an IT specialist based in San Francisco.

The Editor welcomes article or letter submissions but reserves the right to publish, republish or not publish any submission and to edit articles or letters as appropriate. Submissions must include your name, address, and phone number. The Editor will call to verify authenticity. All submissions should be emailed to the Editor at galinluk@hotmail.com by the 25th day of the month preceding the next month's Newsletter.

Thanks to all our Post Commanders for contributing to this edition of our Cathay Chronicle.

Cathay Post No. 384, American Legion, Executive Board

Commander Ron Lee

1st Vice Commander David Y. Wong

2nd Vice Commander Jay Pon

3rd Vice Commander Nelson Lum

Adjutant Tony Zhang

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