

2005-2007 Commander's Report

By PPC Richard Shin (單志然)

I must mention something about my other two years as Vice Commander (2003 – 2005) serving the Post under Commander Wan Yu (Paul) Tam. Under his leadership, with help from all elected officers and others, I believed we had done a good job and served the Post well. During these times, I learned a lot from Commander Tam and admired his sincerity towards everyone, both members and non members. I was appointed to be the co-editors, with Fang A. Wong, for the 60th Anniversary Journal, and I was given the opportunity to attend the American Legion conventions, the Department and the National, and the Legion College with four other post members. I treasured and valued what I had learned through these 2 years from serving the post, from attending the conventions and the Legion College.

In May, 2005, I was elected Commander of the American Legion, Lt. B.R. Kimlau Chinese Memorial Post 1291 (Kimplau Post 1291). It was a great honor indeed. In my first year as the post commander, I knew I had great shoes to fill, but I also had great role models to follow. During the year, I had met many wonderful people, and I always looked up to the leaders who had inspired me to get involved, and stayed involved with the American Legion as well as the community. I hoped to inspire others to become and stay involved. At that time, I told myself that I would adhere to the principles of the American Legion and follow the principles of our Post.

In May, 2006, I was again elected Commander of the Kimlau Post 1291 for another term.

At the end of my two years as commander, I asked myself what I had done for the post the last 2 years. Was it better or worse? Since I did not have much to say about my accomplishment, but I could share the followings with you:

- The worse moment was: Just a few days after becoming the commander, I received a phone call early in the morning from the post superintendent saying that the Post was burglarized. The intruders drilled a hole through the 2nd floor wall and drilled another hole on the floor. Police were summoned. After investigation, the police believed that the target was a store just below the floor. Nothing had been taken from the post but we need to repair the wall and the floor.
- Continue to file the IRS Form 990 to report the post annual incomes and expenses to satisfy the IRS Code 501 (c)(19).
- Continue to file the NYC Property Tax Exemption Form for the post Building.
- Gabe Mui and I went to the Benjamin Cardozo High School to present the first SPC Roger Ling memorial scholarship to an outstanding young man, Quaintan Santana, who was a graduate from the high school where Roger graduated and will attend the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. As you shall remember, SPC Roger Ling was the first Chinese-American casualty from the east coast who lost his life in Iraq while serving our country.
- The Kimlau post web-site has been established: www.ltkimlau.com in which the 60th Anniversary Journal, Newsletters, and Announcement can be viewed, and various application forms can be downloaded from there.
- The post scholarship program is growing and awards scholarships to the members' children as well as grandchildren.
- The passing of Vice Commander, Hong C. Chin, was one the hardest things everyone could swallow since he was serving the post dedicatedly and was well like through out. and we all missed him.
- Scholarship fund – our post has been receiving contribution and/or donation to the scholarship fund from the family and friends of the deceased members. Particularly, after the passing of Vice Commander, Hong C. Chin. My sincere thanks to them. So I personally wrote a 'Thank you' letter and sent them a 'Tax Deductible' receipt. A total of \$5444 had been collected, of which \$1980 was in memory of Hong C. Chin, \$300 was in memory of Michael Yam, \$150 was in memory of Kam P. Chin (from Florida), \$200 was in memory of Mrs. Louie Leong, \$2219 was in memory of Richard Lee (who was also a Tai Chi for Life class teacher) and \$595 from others.
- Presented the Blue Stars to the Returnees from the Persian Gulf at the Intrepid Air Museum in New York City.
- Help members and members' family to obtain or reinstate benefits, Veterans and Governments, which they are entitled to. We had some success in this area.

- Support the CPLDC's (Chinatown Partnership Local Development Corporation) campaign – Adopt-A-Basket Sponsorship Program.
- In lieu of the post annual picnic, organized an overnight trip to Washington, DC for the Legionnaires to visit the 'World War II Memorial' which was dedicated in May 2005.
- Hurricane Katrina relief fund – Donate a total of \$15,800 to the American Legion National Emergency Fund (NEF). Of which \$10,000 from Kimlau post, \$2,850 donation from post Legionnaires, and a \$1,000 each from Fang A. Wong, Kai S. Chung and Gabe B.L. Mui.
- Continue support CCBA activities.
- With Downtown Hospital – continue the successful 'Tai Chi for Life' program. Held six health related seminars and provide Flu shots to Legionnaires and families.
- With St. Vincent Hospital – Ear acupuncture becomes a successful program, and growing from 40 patients to about 60 patients each session. Held a 'Stroke Screening and Awareness' seminar.
- The Post was invited by the Honorable Elaine Chao, the United States Secretary of Labor, to attend two Lunar New Year celebrations in Washington, DC. In our first visit, we had the honor and privilege to receive a guided tour to the Department of Labor building including her office. One particular picture on the wall, just outside her office, attracted us and caught our eyes was the picture that was taken in the Kimlau Memorial with her and post members during her visit to Chinatown in the aftermath of 9/11. So you see that Secretary Chao's deep respect of the veterans for their contribution to the nation will not be forgotten by us. On April 20, 2006, she also invited us to attend the 'White House Welcome for President Hu Jintao' ceremony at the Rose Garden, the White House. Hu Jintao is the President of the People's Republic of China.
- The highest highlight during my two years as the post commander was to invite and accepted by the Honorable Elaine Chao, the United States Secretary of Labor, to attend our 62nd Anniversary Officers Installation dinner. She and her father, Dr. James S.C. Chao, were present. I had the honor to introduce her to the podium at the dinner and presented an award to her and Dr. James S.C. Chao.

Without the help from everyone, elected officers and non-elected officers, I could not have made it through those two years. My sincere thank to them. They deserve the best. I could not evaluate myself regarding my two terms as the post commander, such as:

What kind of Commander was I?

How well had I done?

What were my accomplishments? ...Etc.

I like to leave these questions to be answered by the Post members.

We serve with Pride

