



SEATTLE
CHINESE
GARDEN



Summer 2009

Welcome to the SCG e-newsletter

Appropriate for a garden project, the newsletter is “**going green**” to reduce costs and use of resources such as paper. A new electronic format will bring you updates and event announcements more frequently than has been possible in the past. Check it out at:

www.seattlechinesegarden.org — click **Newletters** in right column

To receive the next issue by email, please provide or confirm your email address at: info@seattlechinesegarden.org.

Knowing the Spring Courtyard

\$200,000 in New Funding

Funding success is always great news, especially during an economic downturn. Earlier this year the Seattle Chinese Garden was truly pleased to receive a \$200,000 grant from the Norcliffe Foundation. The funding supports construction of Knowing the Spring Courtyard. We are grateful for the foundation’s generosity and enthusiasm for the vision of the Chinese Garden as a cultural and community asset for the Puget Sound region.



Cultivating Patience and Persistence

The generous donations and support we have received to date are still not sufficient to close the \$2.5 million funding gap needed to complete Knowing the Spring Courtyard. In late 2007, as construction work began on the foundation and walls, we launched the second phase of the capital campaign to bring the Chinese artisans to Seattle to create the courtyard’s traditional elements. The trailers that will be their living quarters are on site and furnished, awaiting their arrival. Our timing was unfortunate, as the economic downturn that began in early 2008 dived into a tailspin that has affected almost every sector of society — nonprofit, corporate, and government.

The shortfall in funding means that we must postpone the arrival of the artisans, which is a frustrating setback for all involved. We believe strongly in responsible budgeting, and like every other (*cont. pg 2*)

Upcoming Events

Sundays at 3 pm: Work Party and Tai Chi at the Garden

See page 4 for information.

Saturday, August 8: Docent Tour at 10 am

Everyone is welcome to attend the guided docent tour, starting at 10 am at the Chan Education Center. Learn about the significance of gardens in Chinese culture and visit the Knowing the Spring Courtyard site (under construction) and Song Mei Pavilion. *Reservations are not necessary.*

Upcoming tour dates:
September 12, October 10

Save the Date Tuesday, November 10 Benefit Dinner for the Garden

Join Garden and community friends for a delicious dinner at the Imperial Garden Seafood Restaurant at the Great Wall Mall in Kent. Special thanks to event hosts Omar and Christine Lee. Watch for more details and an invitation in early fall.

Volunteer! A successful benefit requires many volunteers with diverse skills. It’s a fun way to get involved and meet other Garden supporters. Help with planning as a member of the benefit steering committee, or join one of many subcommittees such as decorations, program, procurement, publicity, or registration. Call the office at 206-282-8040.

Knowing Spring *(from page 1)*

nonprofit, we have made significant changes to our operations and procedures to increase efficiency and cut costs, and to redouble our fundraising efforts (details in the president's message). We are determined to bring the artisans to Seattle next spring to complete the courtyard and open it to the public in 2010.

Friends and supporters — thank you for your patience. People are the most important element of the Seattle Chinese Garden, and you are helping us build it for the community. We welcome your suggestions, your participation, and your talents. With patience and persistence, together we can reach our goal.



Artist's rendering of Knowing the Spring Courtyard.

President's Message



As we head into summer, many of us close to the Chinese Garden are thinking about the vision for Knowing the Spring Courtyard as an exceptional venue for cultural events and educational activities, and a draw for visitors from near and far. We are all extremely disappointed that this vision will be postponed for another year. The typical challenges associated with building the first-ever Chinese Garden in Seattle are compounded by the difficult economy that is forcing most nonprofits to batten down the expense hatches. To continue to advance toward our goal, we have been taking actions to reduce our operating costs, adjust our programming and strategic planning, and seek new channels for raising both capital construction and operating funds. We are determined to be good stewards of your donations.

To that end, we have cut our monthly operating expenses in half by making some tough decisions, including eliminating one of three staff support positions and reducing hours for another. We are also relying more on volunteers to cut down on administrative and maintenance expenses. On the bright side, our staff are doing excellent work and board members and others are stepping up to fill gaps. We are investigating and implementing other longer term cost-cutting measures. One example is the new electronic newsletter, distributed through an online service that allows us to create and send the newsletter at a fraction of previous costs. Please sign up to receive it. Perhaps the silver lining in this economic crisis is the stimulus to think outside the box and streamline operations.

Now the challenge is to reformulate our capital campaign and raise \$2.5 million to enable us to complete Knowing the Spring Courtyard and emerge from the economic downturn as a stronger organization. We hope that a gradually improving economy and new funding sources will allow us to restore staff positions next year as we ramp up for completing and opening the courtyard. The \$200,000 grant from the Norcliffe Foundation is cause to cheer and to inspire other such gifts.

As always, thank you to those who have helped us get this far — your time, energy, and generosity are what keep us moving forward. Your continuing support at this difficult juncture will be especially welcome and deeply appreciated.

Jon Geiger, President

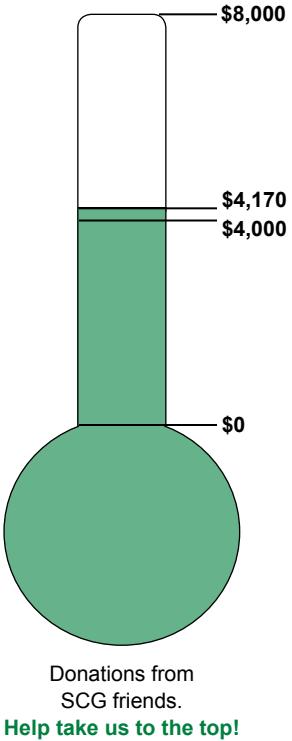
A handwritten signature of Jon Geiger, followed by his Chinese name '高' (Geiger).

Sister City Matching Initiative: Round One = \$8,340

The devoted members and friends who responded to the recent matching initiative by the Seattle-Chongqing Sister City Association (SCSCA) have earned our enthusiastic thanks. Their donations contributed \$4,170 for Knowing the Spring Courtyard. SCSCA will match this amount, bringing the total raised to \$8,340.

Thank you to \$500 level donors — Mimi Gardner Gates, Jon and Heidi Geiger, Lorraine Toly, Beverly Weber, and Steve and Jan Whitner. **Many thanks** to David and Kristi Buck, who contributed \$1000 as a “Matching Circle Patron.” Other friends who helped steer us closer to our goal are Roberta Devine, Sandy Marvinney, Tese Neighbor, and Dewey Webster.

Round Two Starts Now — An additional \$3,830 of the \$8000 offered by SCSCA remains to be matched. **We can't let this money just slip away ...** The sister city association has kindly agreed to extend the matching initiative, so if you didn't get a chance to make a gift during round one, here's another opportunity to help us secure every last dollar. Gifts of any amount are welcome. Anyone who makes a gift before the matching funds run out will be recognized for double the gift amount on the Knowing the Spring Courtyard recognition plaque. To join the match, please visit www.seattlechinesegarden.org or call 206-282-8040.



Docent Program Hits Ten-Year Milestone

A photo from one of first docent programs shows a group of enthralled grade school children watching a master stone carver from Chongqing putting the final touches on a small sandstone “Happy Buddha.” Since the spring 1999 construction of Song Mei Pavilion, the docents have introduced the Chinese Garden project to thousands of Seattle area residents of all ages and to visitors from afar. Board member Judy Koenig (red jacket in photo), Garden Society president at the time, created the docent program with the goal to present construction of Song Mei Pavilion as an engaging educational experience for the community.

Song Mei and its lovely demonstration garden then became the centerpiece of public Saturday morning docent tours, led off with a slide-illustrated presentation on the historical and cultural significance of Chinese gardens. For the past decade, the docent program has been central to fulfilling the Chinese Garden’s education and community outreach missions. The docents have led well over 150 special programs and tours for groups such as garden clubs, Rotary and professional organizations, school classes, retirement communities, and UW East Asia Center continuing education programs for K-12 teachers.

Over the past decade, five docent training programs have educated more than 50 docents and garden guides about garden architecture and horticulture and aspects of traditional Chinese philosophy and arts. Judy organized and helped teach three of these programs in cooperation with South Seattle Community College to enable students in horticultural program and other disciplines to learn about Chinese gardens. Instructors included SSCC faculty and SCG board member Jan Whitner, who chairs the Horticulture Committee. The spring 2008 training program partnered with SCC Extension and was open to the public.

Public tours continue on second Saturdays from March through October, and special group tours can be arranged. The centerpiece now is the construction of Knowing the Spring Courtyard.

Thank you to Judy Koenig, South Seattle Community College, and the docents and garden guides who have devoted so many volunteer hours to our educational and community outreach mission. Happy Tenth!



June 6 Work “Party” Lives Up to Billing

Okay, we didn't have a band, but there was food and an enthusiastic group of volunteers who turned the year's first work party into a fun event that wrought magic around Song Mei Pavilion. Guided by Aaron Skinner, our new gardener, the tenacious volunteers pulled up weeds, cut back bamboo, and trimmed off dead leaves. It took nearly four hours, but the garden area around Song Mei Pavilion is now absolutely picturesque. Volunteers said it was satisfying to see such a dramatic difference in so few hours.

A big thank you to James Aung, Margaret Britton, Jim Dawson, Ron and Sandi Hanson, Ting-yau Li, Wendy Liu, Sandy Marvinney, Yang Min, Therow Phillips, Frank Su, Jade Wang, and Dewey Webster. We could not have done it without your hard work.

And, they practically begged to do it again! We are now planning regular but shorter work parties to keep the garden looking lovely for the monthly public docent tours and specially scheduled hardhat tours for community organizations and prospective donors. See sidebar.

Watch your email and check the website for announcements on upcoming volunteer events. If you or any family members or friends would like to get more involved on an individual level (in the office or serving on a committee), please contact us at 206-282-8040 or info@seattlechinesegarden.org.



Build the Garden’s Tai Chi & Yours Too Sundays at 3 pm

Come help build the chi flow in the garden by weeding, watering, mulching, and planting. We'll spend an hour tending to the garden, followed by informal tai chi practice with Aaron Skinner for those who wish to join in. Both gardening and tai chi have numerous health benefits. This informal, weekly gathering is for those who would like to pursue a more personal relationship with the Garden and enjoy a traditional aspect of Chinese culture. Meet at the Chan Education Center at 3 pm, or find your way back to Song Mei Pavilion.

Changes on the Board of Directors



Welcome to Susan Heikkala

Over a 20-year career with Weyerhaeuser, Susan Heikkala held diverse management positions, including senior vice president of the Quadrant Commercial Division, and from 2006 to 2008, general manager of Weyerhaeuser Real Estate Development Consulting in Shanghai. While in China she chaired the Real Estate Committee for the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai. She holds a BA in urban design from Stanford and earned a masters degree in urban planning and an MBA at the University of Washington. Susan is contributing her considerable expertise to the Garden Society as chair of the Strategic Planning Committee.



Congratulations to Jill Wakefield and Welcome Gary Oertli

As an ex officio member of the board during her tenure as president of South Seattle Community College, Dr. Jill Wakefield offered valuable insight and staunch support for the garden project. We are thrilled with her well-deserved appointment as chancellor of the Seattle Community College District. The board is delighted to welcome Dr. Gary Oertli, interim president of SSCC, who is an equally enthusiastic advocate for the garden.

Dr. Peter Ku Retires

Dr. Peter Ku has retired from the Seattle Chinese Garden board after serving as an active and productive member of the team for many years. He was an early supporter of the Garden during his tenure as president of South Seattle Community College and later as chancellor of the Community College District. Please join the society board and staff members in thanking Dr. Ku for his service.

Meet the New SCG Staff

The SCGS is pleased to announce the appointment of Adrian Soucek as our development manager, Aaron Skinner as our new gardener, and Susan Su as our development and program intern.

Adrian Soucek, development manager, is a graduate of Carroll College and has had extensive experience in communications, human resources, recruitment, and new-media marketing. She was drawn to the society because of her desire to foster friendships and economic growth in our region. Past co-workers have described her as a “go getter,” and she has truly made remarkable improvements in the short time that she has been with us.

Aaron Skinner, gardener, has 15 years of experience in the field of horticulture and specializes in organic agriculture, horticultural sustainability, innovative pruning techniques, Asian garden design, and penjing. He has studied horticulture in Australia, Guatemala, Mexico, and many other regions. Aaron recently relocated from Bellingham to Seattle, and is a landscape foreman and project manager for Camden Gardens. He is a long-time practitioner of hung gar and tai qi, and we are fortunate that he has chosen to devote time and expertise to the Seattle Chinese Garden.

Susan Su, development and program intern, just completed her sophomore year at Lewis and Clark College, majoring in international affairs with a double minor in East Asian studies and Chinese. She is especially interested in the relationships between the United States, China, and the Middle East. This summer, Susan is working closely with development manager Adrian Soucek to assist with communications, volunteer coordination, and event planning. Susan’s enthusiasm for the project is contagious and we couldn’t be happier to have her.



L to R: New staff members Susan Su, Adrian Soucek, Aaron Skinner, and long-time staff member Melanie Blommel.