



From the President's desk

Dear members;

It is with deep sorrow and sympathy that I have to announce that Amanda Choo passed away at 3.30am on February 14th 2006.

Amanda was part of the core committee that set up MSSA (Malaysian Singaporean Student Association) at the University of Calgary back in the late 80's. Having a strong desire to see people of similar backgrounds meet and share their lives, Amanda worked with the other founding members through the lengthy and difficult process that resulted in the MSBCA being registered as a non-profit organization in 1989. Amanda was then the first VP Malaysia.

She was never the center of attention, thus few had the privilege of getting to know Amanda well. I met her only a few times, although we spoke on the phone several times. Her sweet, gentle and welcoming smile and easy-going nature was never an indication that she had an incurable disease. Amanda will always be remembered as a caring aunt, a hard working and loyal colleague, and a key founding member of the MSBCA.

I would like to extend our deepest condolences to Amanda's sister Saw-Yah, and nieces Allyson and Grace. A special thanks to Grace for allowing us to publish her tribute to Amanda this issue. Thanks also to Fabian Wong for helping me complete my message.

On to other matters — The MSBCA Chinese New Year 2006 dinner was one of the biggest in club history - with a total of 42 tables (seating 420). VIPs — including the Chinese Consul of Calgary, and key figures from over 20 associations — attended the dinner, and were very impressed with the team spirit displayed by our committee members and volunteers. I want to express my personal thanks to all committee members and volun-

teers (too many names to list) who participated, in particular the two MCs - Daniel Sario and Lin Wah - who did a remarkable job, all the sponsors (names and organizations listed separately in this issue), our MSBCA choir groups and singers, guest singers Veronica Carte from the Canada Indonesia Club of Calgary, Sandy Su of the Calgary Taiwanese Canadian Association, Kaew Mckinnon of The Alberta Thai-Canadian Association, and of course, all members, friends and relatives who attended the event.

I want to especially thank our major sponsors of the event: Mr. Jacques Malaspina, the Western Regional Manager of MAS, who once again helped donated an LA - KL return air ticket for our fundraising auction (please continue to fly MAS!), Mr. Alvin Kang, owner of Kang Construction Ltd. who donated the Calgary-Vancouver return air tickets (need a good construction company, call Alvin!), and Vernon Ng, VP of Sunridge Nissan who sponsored the cost of the Lion Dance (for good new or used cars, call Vernon!).

Everyone was impressed, and I often heard comments like: "Wow, MSBCA not only has a good committee and group of volunteers, but has good singers too!"

Now that the first major event of the year is over, we are now working towards getting involved with activities for the Asian Heritage Month 2006 in May, alongside all other activities that are occurring in MSBCA. With the strong and good team work spirit of MSBCA, I am confident that we will succeed in all future undertakings, be they big or small.

Khin Chew



"I would like to extend our deepest condolences to Amanda's sister Saw-Yah, and nieces Allyson and Grace... Amanda will always be remembered as a caring aunt, a hard working and loyal colleague, and a key founding member of the MSBCA."

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Committee 2005/2006 — contact information



President:

Khin Chew 605.6638
president@msbcacalgary.ca

VP Malaysia:

Kai Loo 246.1338
vp_malaysia@msbcacalgary.ca

VP Singapore:

Geraldine Sng 242.2621
vp_singapore@msbcacalgary.ca

Secretary:

Jesse Cheah 274.3541
secretary@msbcacalgary.ca

Treasurer:

Jennie Soo 280.0327
treasurer@msbcacalgary.ca

Social:

Peter Tan 280.2011
social@msbcacalgary.ca

Membership:

Khin Chew 605.6638
president@msbcacalgary.ca

Bingo/Fundraising:

Jesse Cheah 274.3541
bingo@msbcacalgary.ca

Editor:

George Heng 242.2621
editor@msbcacalgary.ca

Webmaster:

Yuee Farn 226.1697
webmaster@msbcacalgary.ca

MSBCA Mailing address:

#301, 114-3rd Ave SW
Calgary, AB
T2P 0E7

Tel/fax: 403.289.7711

Editorial



"Despite its grim nature, for those of us who accept its inevitability, Death brings with it a sense of calm and an incomparable sense of clarity."



As some of you may be aware, one of MSBCA's original founders passed away recently. Several committee as well as regular members attended Amanda Choo's wake and assisted the family with various tasks.

Funerals tend to have a strange effect on people.

Some think it is "bad luck" to attend such events, and those who inevitably do usually perform any number of rituals after the wake, to ward against misfortune (like washing one's face immediately after or throwing salt over one's shoulder). Others who attend are fearful to approach the coffin, for one reason or another. And then there are those of us who prefer to avoid attending or talking about funerals and death completely.

Acknowledging our mortality is indeed a sobering experience. Death has been referred to as the "great equalizer of men" - and with good reason; from the poorest to the richest; the least educated to the most; from evil-doers, to do-gooders, and all those in-between; Death views us all with dispassionate equality and precision-like objectivity. It is the one immutable constant in life (or one of two if you include taxes), and in the universe.

Despite its grim nature, for those of us who accept its inevitability, Death brings with it a

sense of calm and an incomparable sense of clarity; it tells us what is truly important about life; whom we hold dear; what we value, and the multitude of things we take for granted when we wake up in the morning. Death teaches us all these things - but only if we're willing to listen.

It can break a child's heart, create saints & martyrs, start (and end) wars, incite revolution, or bring closure and justice. To those of us who're willing to learn from Death, all of a sudden, mundane events that frustrate and irritate us on a daily basis shrink and pale in comparison; a traffic jam doesn't precipitate into road rage; a friend's callous remark is quickly forgiven; a missed promotion becomes an incentive to do better; a quarrel with a loved one seems petty and foolish.

Death has a way of humbling even the biggest egos, and cutting the biggest problems down to size, all in a blink of an eye.

Instead of whittling our time away on self-glorifying or destructive things, we should be using it meaningfully to create a worthwhile legacy. After all, whatever we do for ourselves in this life is gone after we die; but whatever we do for others lives on.

Ironically, if we let it, Death can be our best teacher about Life. We only have to learn how to listen.

MSBCA Chinese New Year Banquet 2006 – George Heng

This year's Chinese New Year celebration was held at Treasures of China Restaurant, and like Khin Chew had mentioned in his message, was one of the best attended events to date. We'd like to thank everyone for attending, and especially the following:



Main sponsors:

MAS - one (1) return airline ticket Los Angeles to Kuala Lumpur; Sunridge Nissan - Lion dance; Khin & Siew Chew - oranges; Eric Ng - Chinese New Year ang-pow (hong bao); Joyce & Danny Wong - DJ; Ken & Rita Preston - DJ; Kim & Paul Roe - champagne; Melissa & Jesse Cheah - champagne; Intersphere International/Kang Construction - 2 return airline tickets (Calgary to Vancouver); Crowfoot Cruiseship Centers - cruise package for 2



Volunteers:

Melissa Cheah; Priscilla Wong; Joyce Wong; Adeline Chan; Elizabeth Tan; Lin Wah; Daniel Sario; Ken Preston; Rita Preston; Kim Roe; Jane Lim and Li Ming Liew.



Door prize sponsors:

Jill & Gerry Vogt; Nora & David Koong; Melissa & Jesse Cheah; Elizabeth & Peter Tan Priscilla & Jeff Wong; Gigi Chin; Karen & George Chin; Susan & Edmund Tan; Jennie & John Soo; Dr. Ming Hsu (Pro-Grace Dentistry); Kim & Paul Roe; Joyce & Danny Wong; Geraldine & George Heng; Siew & Khin Chew; Kensington Flowers; Singapore International Airlines; Adeline & Philip Chan; CK Tang; Lee Pow & Teck Leong Lim; Consulate General of the PRC



Thanks everyone, for your support! We apologize if anyone has been inadvertently left out. Please check our website for more photos!!



Amanda's Life Story — Grace Choo

There was no one like Amanda Choo in this world. Ask her about a variety of issues ranging from art to Chinese history to business, and one might think she had a PhD in all of those areas. But no, it was not her intelligence that impressed upon one's heart, but her warm-heartedness and kindness.

Born on February 13, 1948 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, she grew up in a traditional Chinese family with seven siblings - five sisters and two brothers. She had two pre-deceased sisters, Siew Qiong and Qiong Hwa, and a brother Qiong Fu whom she missed tremendously.

In a traditional Chinese family, the word 'love' is seldom mentioned, but she felt her parents' love through the way they supported her and their large family. She grew up in awe of her parents; of their hardworking nature and the kind of people they were.

Her father was always a role model to her and she was daddy's little girl, mesmerized by his knowledge in Chinese history and many other areas in life. Her mother was the most hardworking and intelligent woman she had ever known. Not only was she a homemaker, she also took care of many legal and administrative issues in the family. She handled the small family business very well too, and even in those days, she understood what investment was - and trusted in the banking system. Yes, Amanda was a reflection of her parents; she had her father's intellectual nature and her mother's hardworking and entrepreneurial ability.

After finishing her secondary education in Malaysia, she proceeded to Hastings College in England to further her studies. During her two years there, she took no break at all and worked through the summer to earn her living. After two years of hard work, she earned her Secretarial Certificate. Upon graduation, her sister Saw Yah, who was living in Canada, encouraged Amanda to immigrate to the land of opportunity.

In 1978, Amanda immigrated to Canada and became a full-fledged citizen in 1983. The starting point of her lifetime successful career began in 1979 when she joined Bechtel Canada in Edmonton. Slowly, her employers noticed her capability and gave her opportunities to later transfer to the Bantrel Engineering Company in Calgary in February 1985. Working with Bantrel was one of her major accomplishments

and commitment in life - of which she was proud of.

Amanda also had a highly active social life, which she spent her energy on. In 1986, she founded the Kattiget Group along with a few other friends. This group met periodically to form lifetime friendships through laughter and tears - not unlike the Joy Luck Club. The Chinese cultural roots were certainly ingrained in her and it was her desire to see people of similar backgrounds meeting together to share their lives.

With this passion, she started the Malaysian Singaporean Bruneian Community Association (MSBCA) in Calgary along with a few others in 1989. The initiation process was a lengthy and difficult one, but through her determination and hard work with the rest of the founders, MSBCA became a strongly established cultural club, and is still so till this day. The last two meetings she attended with MSBCA were in 2005 when they had their annual barbeque at Bowness Park and the Malaysian Merdeka Day (Independence Day) at the Club House. During the last two outings, she felt a sense of pride of having helped found this cultural association, which is now thriving under the leadership of capable people.

She was very much a people-person and had a heart to serve and help others. Her dedication as a member of the Providence Association attests to that as she served the poor in providing for their material needs and in uplifting their spirits. She also committed a year in her life volunteering at the Brentwood Nursing Home in Calgary on a weekly basis.

During this period in her life, her mother back home in Malaysia fell ill, and she served the elderly in the nursing home in hope that someone would treat her mother in the same manner. There, she had a special bond with an elderly Chinese lady whom she showered with much care and love.

Amanda will always be remembered for her quiet gentle kindness towards others. It is not a cliché to say that her actions spoke louder than her words, for one was captivated by the person she was through her kindness.

Nearing the end of her life, friends and family loved her in ways that they could because of who she was and what she represented. Indeed, she showed many of us how to live and how to love. May we learn how to love from her, and when we do, to remember her in our hearts.

Announcements

**Clubhouse Rental
(updated, please read)**

Holding a meeting, presentation or social event?

The MSBCA clubhouse features 1000 sq ft of space, a licensed commercial kitchen, state of the art audio and video equipment, plus a seating capacity of 80 people.

Rental Rates & Terms (with effect 1 May 2006):

Rental Hours: 9am to midnight

Members (including sound system):

Mon-Fri: \$120

Sat-Sun, Holidays: \$150

Non-members (excluding sound system):

Mon-Fri: \$160

Sat-Sun, Holidays: \$200

An additional \$100 is chargeable for the use of the sound system

Damage Deposit: Mandatory for ALL (refundable if there is no damage or loss to property):

- Building rental \$100
- Sound system \$400

With immediate effect, there will be a cleaning surcharge of \$50.00 if the clubhouse is not properly cleaned after each rental. If applicable, this will be deducted from the damage deposit.

For more details, contact:

Geraldine Sng @ 242-2621 or email
vp_singapore@msbcacalgary.ca

Condolences

The committee and members of MSBCA-Calgary extend our deepest sympathies to Robert and Angie Kerr on the loss of their mother / mother-in-law, Elsie Kerr, on January 21.

Our deepest sympathy also goes to Saw-Yah, Allyson and Grace on the loss of their sister / aunt, Amanda Choo, on February 14.

We will keep Elsie and Amanda in our thoughts & prayers.

Membership Fees

For those who have not done so, please re-new your membership ASAP.

Hand your payment to any committee member or mail your cheques to the clubhouse at this address:

**MSBCA
#301, 114-3rd Ave SW
Calgary, AB T2P 0E7**

MSBCA 2006 Badminton Schedule

- 6 Jan to 23 Jun (25 sessions)
- Every Friday evening from
- 8pm-10pm @ Talisman Centre Gym 4

Fees:

- \$5 drop-in
- \$70/\$50 for Single
- \$140/\$100 for Doubles
- \$188/\$138 for Family



NB: Lower rate applies to Bingo volunteers

MSBCA Calendar

(Volunteers for events are most welcome!)

Sundays: Martial Arts & Tai Chi (if no rentals)

March:

- 3 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 10 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 17 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 18 - MSBCA Event - Tombola / Potluck
- 24 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 26 - MSBCA event - Sunday Lunch
- 31 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)

April:

- 7 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 8 - MSBCA Event - Movie Night
- 9 - MSBCA Lunch - Nasi Briyani
- 15 - rental by Frank Zhou (Full day)
- 16 - rental by Frank Zhou (Full day)
- 21 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 22 - MSBCA Event - Karaoke
- 28 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 30 - Talk on Ovarian Cancer

May:

- 5 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 6 - MSBCA Event - Food & clubhouse prep
- 7 - MSBCA Mosaic of Flavours (AHM)
- 12 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 19 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 26 - rental by Folkdance Group (6 hours)
- 27 - MSBCA Event - Food & clubhouse prep
- 28 - MSBCA Mosaic of Flavours (AHM)

June:

- 10 - MSBCA Event - TBN
- 24 - MSBCA Event - Bak Chang Nite / Tombola

July:

- 1 - MSBCA Event - TBN

22 - MSBCA Event - Bowling (tentative)

August:

- 5 - MSBCA Event - Singapore National Day
- 26 - MSBCA Event - Malaysia National Day

September:

- 30 - Casino fundraising

October:

- 1 - Casino fundraising
- 14 - MSBCA Event - AGM

Notes:

For those marked TBN (To Be Notified), stay tuned for more details in upcoming newsletters!

Clubhouse rentals take precedence over "TBN" events. If you'd like to rent the clubhouse on those dates, please approach any of the committee mem-



MSBCA Sunday Lunches

26 Mar: Singapore Laksa by Adeline Chan
9 Apr: Nasi Briyani by Rajean Pillay

\$6 per person, 12 pm — 2 pm
First-come, first served!

MSBCA Mosaic of Flavours - Khin Chew (special announcement)

Once again, we are close to the time where plans and preparations are being made for one of the three main events in the MSBCA calendar - Cultural Night 2006.

Many members see Cultural Night as a social event with ethnic dishes and performances by volunteers, as well as an opportunity to get together and share in our common heritage. Traditionally, for the past several years, it has always been staged as a single, large event.

We'd like to try something different this year.

As MSBCA grows & evolves as a community association, the committee & I feel that our efforts to preserve and promote Southeast Asian culture may be better served by participating in better-publicized, more impactful and manageable events that form part of the overall multicultural initiatives in Calgary.

We have to ensure that our efforts are maximized and yield the best results for the club. With this in mind, we have decided to adopt a decentralized, more open-to-the-public concept for "Cultural Night" this year.

In place of Cultural Night, we will be holding MSBCA Mosaic of Flavours - A taste of Southeast Asia 2006, which will be made up of two food fairs at our clubhouse, on 7 and 28 May, as part of Asian Heritage Month.

MSBCA Mosaic of Flavours will showcase ethnic dishes as well as cultural performances, much like Cultural Night. We will be coordinating promotional efforts with other agencies/associations in Calgary, and the events will be open to members and the general public.

While the committee is still working out the details, we welcome ideas and constructive suggestions from the membership. Lots of help is required to make this a success, so please step up and volunteer!

MSBCA will also be involved in Global Fest in August this year. We are finalizing details to coordinate efforts with the Canadian Indone-

sian Club and Alberta Thai-Canadian Association on a cost-sharing basis. More details will follow in upcoming newsletters.

We believe that this new format is more cost effective, and more efficient in promoting our cultures through co-operation with other groups. MSBCA-Calgary has proven and will continue to prove that we are able to work together with the society-at-large, in our efforts to preserve and promote Southeast Asian culture.

Khin Chew



"...we have decided to adopt a decentralized, more open-to-the-public concept for 'Cultural Night' this year."

Tombola Nite / Potluck

18 March 2006, 6.30 pm

MSBCA Clubhouse

**Dinner starts at 6.30 pm, followed by Tombola.
Please bring your favourite entrée!**

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Talk on Ovarian Cancer

Speaker: Dr Lai Mooi Cheong

Venue: MSBCA Clubhouse

Date: Sunday, April 30, 2006 @ 1:30pm

**Contact: Jennie Soo @ 280-0327
or any committee members**

**Includes presentation, video, and Q & A
ALL ARE WELCOME**

Marketplace—goods, services & other announcements



**“Thank You” to
Malaysia Airlines
For sponsoring tickets
for these 2006 events:**

**Chinese New Year
Asian Heritage Festival**

Change of address?

**If your contact info is not
up to date, you may be
missing out!**

**Please contact Khin
Chew to keep your details
current!**



Got something to say?

Send your questions,
comments or articles to:
editor@msbcacalgary.ca

Please note that the
newsletter is now a bi-
monthly publication and all
submissions are due by
the 15th of each even-
numbered month.

We'd like to hear from you!



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