



GSGV Lodge Endorses Chinese American Candidates for Monterey Park City Council and LA County Superior Court Judge at Forum

In the February 3 Lodge meeting, three Chinese American candidates for the Monterey Park City Council on the March 3 election were invited to participate in a forum debate. They were Bob Gin and Yvonne Yiu for District 2 and Henry Lo for District 4, all members of C.A.C.A. Citizenship Committee Chair John Wong served as the moderator and Charles Mau was the time-keeper.

Bob Gin, a long-time MP resident, has a long track record of being a Board Member and President of Alhambra Unified School District. Under his leadership, the schools



Candidates for MP City Council, from left: Bob Gin, Yvonne Yiu and Henry Lo.

in the West San Gabriel Valley have undergone many improvements with the issuing of bonds. Yvonne Yiu immigrated from Hong Kong at a young age, graduated in economics from UCLA and had an MBA in Finance from Loyola Marymount, and managed an investment consulting firm, while at one time she was a newscaster in a local Chinese language TV station. Yvonne is a community activist and served on the Monterey Park 2040 Commission. Henry Lo grew up in neighboring El Serrano and later moved to live in Monterey Park. He has held various positions as aides for State Senator Gloria Moreno, and later for Assemblymen Mike Eng and Ed Chau. He was very active in education,



Bob Gin making a point.

Eng and Ed Chau. He was very active in education,

having served on the Garvey School Board and is presently President of that board.



Yvonne Yiu speaking.

After the candidates presented their campaign platforms, they were asked their views on marijuana dispensaries, commercial development and senior housing, and ethnic diversity on the city government top management. All three candidates opposed to varying degrees the growing and retailing of marijuana within the city boundary, even though the state has passed legislation legalizing such activities.

In particular Bro. Bob brought up his past experience running a liquor store in South Central, seeing kids and adults drunk and on drugs in the neighborhood. Taking cannabis would have a similar effect on people and MP doesn't need such unsavory characters hanging out in the city. Yvonne said she talked to a city council member in neighboring Montebello, who mentioned there are also pollution issues related to growing and dispensing marijuana in cities.

All candidates stressed that MP needs commercial developments in order to bring in revenue for the city to improve the quality of life, but that has to be done in a balanced manner. Yvonne Yiu said that the North Atlantic Blvd. area is already quite developed causing traffic congestion, and suggested that further commercial development should be focused in other areas in the City. In terms of senior housing, Henry Lo brought up the fact that many seniors in MP stay alone in their own houses at old age because of affordability issues with senior care facilities, leaving no room for much needed younger families to make their homes in the City, so more affordable senior housing need to be built. The other candidates made similar remarks.



Henry Lo pondering a question.

On the issue of lack of Asians in the upper echelons of city management, for Monterey Park that has a two-thirds Asian population, all three candidates appeared to answer by deflecting to evidence of the success of having a diverse workforce in the City government. They all said

that qualifications are the main considerations for promotion to the top management level. Henry Lo pointed out that Asian parents usually have high hopes for their kids becoming high professionals rather than getting involved in being government employees, which may explain the lack of Asians in city management. However, Bob Gin stressed that there are actually quite a few Asians who rose up high in the educational field in the various school districts. Nevertheless, it seems that Asian American youths should be made aware of promising careers in city government in general, and special attention should be paid to nurturing their development as qualified future managers.

Linda Sun, a candidate for County Superior Court Judge Seat 42, was brought to us via Lodge Associate Angela Lai, seeking our Lodge's endorsement. Linda, also a Hong Kong native, is presently Supervising Deputy Attorney General who has an 18-year record as a Prosecutor going after unscrupulous professionals who prey on their clients.



Linda Sun talking to Lodge members

She graduated from UCLA in Economics, and worked for Secretary of State March Fong Eu, who inspired her to pursue a career in law. While in Southwestern University of Law, she externed with US District Judge Ronald Lew and the California Department of Justice. After graduation, she was hired as a Deputy Attorney General in the same department.

Linda's involvement in the community is impressive, including a stint as Director of Friends of the Chinese American Museum. She garnered a long list of endorsements from prominent persons in the State for her campaign. Her opponent is Los Angeles Deputy District Attorney Robert Villas, himself a veteran prosecutor.

After the candidates' presentations, Lodge members cast their ballots on the endorsements. Since all the candidates had obtained over 60% of the votes, the Lodge was very happy to formally endorse all four candidates' election campaigns, and wish them well in getting themselves elected.

Reporting from distant Dunedin, New Zealand

Brother Charles Mau, on a cruise along the east coast of South Island, New Zealand, made a stop in Dunedin in the province of Otago, and discovered a history of Chinese

immigration during the gold rush in New Zealand in the 1860s. Just like in America in roughly the same period, Otago voted on inviting the Chinese to work on the gold fields because they were "valuable colonists", well-behaved, hard-working and very productive. It was reported in late 1866, upwards of a hundred Chinese had settled in the gold districts, and were working harmoniously with the European population. However the Chinese encountered huge challenges, and as the gold deposits declined in the late 1870s, European ill-feeling



A Chinese historical exhibit at the Settlers' Museum in Dunedin, NZ.

grew and some miners returned to China while the rest moved to urban areas to take up other occupations. Some moved to the city center of Dunedin, where they found work in laundries, groceries, and fruit farms. The "Chinese street" had minimal facilities, dirt, gambling dens and brothels, and was called the "Devil's Half Acre" by Europeans. In Dunedin in the 1900s, the Chinese were mainly engaged in fruit and vegetable retailing, market gardening, and laundering. By that time Chinese market gardens were established in many areas in Otago. As reported in a recent publication at the University of Otago, "inviting the Chinese to immigrate to Otago had a significant impact on the region as the Chinese community played a 'major role in the economic and cultural development of the province' and helped establish Otago as a commercial center." It is amazing how early Chinese immigrants in NZ met very similar fate as those in America.

GSGV Lodge Joined Yvonne Yiu's Fundraiser on Thursday, February 20, in NBC Seafood Restaurant in Monterey Park.



At Yvonne Yiu's Fundraiser, from left: Sam Gee, Pete Chin, Dean Ng, John Wong, Councilman Peter Chan, Albert Young (Yvonne's husband), Candidate Yvonne Yiu, Shirley Hwong, President Sharon Wong, Jason Dhing, Shirley Ng, Sophie Wong and Pek Chan.