

Proclamation

- WHEREAS, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders (AA and NHPIs) Heritage Month is an annual celebration every May that recognizes the historical and current contributions of individuals and groups of Asian, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander descent within the United States. The AA and NHPI umbrella term includes communities from the entire Asian continent, including East, Southeast and South Asia, the Hawaiian Islands, and the Pacific Islands of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. As of last year, there were about 24.3 million people of Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander descent in the United States; and
- WHEREAS, the U.S. and Vancouver story, as we know it, would be impossible without the strength, contributions, and legacies of Chinese Americans who have helped build and unite this country in each successive generation. Throughout history the Chinese American community played a major role in shaping the US from laying railroad tracks, starting businesses, to creating medical and technology advancement and honorably serving our Nation in uniform, Chinese American communities are deeply rooted in the history of the United States and Vancouver; and
- WHEREAS, while we celebrate the achievements and contributions of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders that enrich our history, society and culture, we must also acknowledge a darker aspect of the AA and NHPI experience in America – structural discrimination, prejudice and injustice that most recently has manifested in hate crimes and racist attacks on Asian Americans related to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- WHEREAS, present-day inequities faced by Chinese American communities are rooted in our Nation's history of exclusion, discrimination, racism, and xenophobia against Asian Americans. Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders have endured a long history of injustice — including the Page Act of 1875 and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882; and
- WHEREAS, Chinese immigrants in Vancouver have arrived since the 1800's and have contributed to community life in various ways, creating a legacy that has remained poignant but also sparsely documented and often had to rely on personal initiative and family resources in settling into business, labor, industry, service, and education; and
- WHEREAS, in the 1880's, ten Chinese immigrants worked at Vancouver Barracks and in 1886, soldiers from Vancouver Military Barracks were dispatched to Seattle to protect Chinese immigrants who were under attack from racist and xenophobic mobs; and
- WHEREAS, Leah Hing was the first Chinese American woman to earn a pilot's license and trained at Pearson Field, then housing her planes in a hangar at Pearson; and
- WHEREAS, Louis Lee was a Chinese American photographer known for the artistic images of everyday life that he captured at the Kaiser Shipbuilding Company's shipyard in Vancouver during WWII; and
- WHEREAS, this month we proudly celebrate the rich culture and history of Asian American, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islander heritage and history in the City of Vancouver, as we dedicate ourselves to working together to address the challenges that still face so many of our neighbors and members of the Vancouver community.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Anne McEnery-Ogle, Mayor Vancouver, Washington, do hereby proclaim May 2023 as:

Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

and urge all members of our community to learn more about Chinese heritage and join us in striving to make our community vibrant, safe, prosperous and inclusive for all.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the seal of the City of Vancouver to be affixed this 8th day of May, 2023.


ANNE McENERY-OGLE, MAYOR