

# Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha Hawaii Dazaifu Tenmangu

VOLUME IV JULY 2008

Where ancient traditions thrive

## Chinowa - Ring of Renewal

The shrine's annual Chinowa event took place on Saturday, July 12



from 4:00 pm.

We are each filled with universal life force energy. This energy is the essence of our being, our consciousness, our soul. As the flow of life force energy moves through our physical, emotional, and spiritual bodies, it can become unbalanced, stagnant, or blocked. When this happens, we experience what is called dis-ease.

"Dis-ease," as the spelling suggests, is "lack of ease." It is the inability of one's life force energy to flow freely. Disease is our reaction to unbalanced life force energy in our physical, emotional, or spiritual body. This unbalanced energy can manifest as physical problems or life patterns and cycles that keep us from growing.

The busy pace of our lives keeps most of us stressed and out of balance – moving us at sonic speed from one activity to another, pushing us through an endless schedule of so-

cial obligations. This frantic pace takes a toll on our bodies, minds, and spirits.

There are many techniques we can use to release stagnant energy. However, with all healing techniques, or medical intuitive healing, the healer can only assist in restoring balance to our life force energy. We must be willing to release stagnant energy ourselves in order to experience its affects on physical, emotional, or spiritual levels.

The ancient people used rituals to initiate the process of release, revitalization and renewal. Revitalization is the shedding of an old form to permit expansion into a new and more inclusive form with a greater capacity for expression of Spirit.

Chinowa is an ancient ritual dating back to the eighth century, meant to invoke a greater flow of energy, of continuous revitalization and renewal and to promote a sense of connection, of interdependence, of gratitude to our existence.

Our Chinowa is constructed with Ti-leaves, the sacred symbol of our host culture.

Through rituals such as this, we are grounded in the past; we celebrate the gifts of the present, and anticipate the promise of the future.

A big Mahalo goes out to our event chair Axel Obara, mem-



bers, supporters and volunteers for their kokua in the event.

Our heartfelt appreciation also goes out to Paul Uyehara of Aloha Tofu Factory for their donation of soy products, Hanayagi Dancing Academy Hawaii Foundation for their donation of the Hachimaki crafts, Principal Michael Weaver of Damien Memorial School and Scott Kaichi of Marshall's Shell Service for use of their parking facilities, Jun Shiatsu Seitai



## Mahalo for your generous donations

Thomas & Linda Agawa  
Aloha Tofu Factory  
Dan & Chieko Billick  
Dazaifu Tenmangu, Fukuoka  
Toshiko Fujisaki  
Hoh-chigai Jinja, Osaka  
Hanayagi Dancing Academy  
Bob Harada  
Ryuji & Yumi Hoshino  
Mitsuru & Pam Igarashi  
Kyoko Isa  
Lorraine Kadota  
Elaine Komatsu  
Ernest & Chiyoko Lau

Roy Morioka  
Shinken & Marilyn Naitoh  
Rocky Nakahara  
Hatsuko Nakazato  
Diane Ogasawara  
Nakazato Fish Market  
Pat & Jeanette Nakata  
Craig & Diane Nishida  
Jill Nishida  
Bryan & Kayoko Ross  
Kenneth & Kumiko Saiki  
Sakura Kai  
Yasuko Takeuchi  
Hiroko Warner

Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha - Hawaii Dazaifu Tenmangu is a 501C3 nonprofit church.  
All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

## MAHALO NUI LOA



DAMIEN MEMORIAL SCHOOL

*JUN*

Shiatsu Seitai  
531-5400

Marshall's  
Shell Service



## SHRINE CALENDAR 神社スケジュール

### August 八月

- 2 Clean up & Preparations 掃除と準備
- 3 Back-to-School Education Blessing てんじんさん学業成就
- 10 Tsukinami-sai Monthly Service 月次祭
- 23 Kapahulu Community Center Bon Dance カパフル盆ダンス
- 24 Hanayagi Dancing Academy Bazaar at the Shrine  
花柳舞踊学校バザー

## GIVE 5 Campaign - July Mahalo Volunteers

Bob Harada  
Arthur K Isa  
Arthur MJY Isa  
Axel Obara

## Mahalo Chinowa Volunteers

Dane Canida  
Melissa Castillo  
Michael Chang  
Thomas Chung  
Loreto Coloma  
Paul Fung  
Bryson Goda  
Bob Harada  
Stephanie Honda  
Ryuji Hoshino  
Yumi Hoshino  
Emi Igarashi  
Kai Igarashi  
Pam Igarashi  
Arthur Isa  
Arthur MJY Isa  
Kyoko Isa  
Lorraine Kadota  
Shinano Kawahara  
Kathy Kwok  
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Jill Nishida  
Axel Obara

Natsu Okamura  
Gwen Shigeoka  
Tiffany Shigeoka  
Peggy Su  
Naomi Teramoto  
Nishie Tomiyama  
Tomoko Uematsu  
Yasuko Yokoyama  
Richard Yoshinaga









# Asian Gambling Superstitions

Gambling has held human beings in thrall for millennia. It has been engaged in everywhere, from the dregs of society to the most respectable circles.

Pontius Pilate's soldiers cast lots for Christ's robe as he suffered on the cross. The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius was regularly accompanied by his personal croupier. The Earl of Sandwich invented the sandwich so that he could avoid leaving the gaming table in order to eat. George Washington hosted games in his tent during the American Revolution and gambling is of course, synonymous with the Wild West.

Even at Dazaifu Tenmangu in Japan, an ancient stone dice (see photo) dating back to the 10th century, was dug up on the grounds of the shrine. Archaeologists believe it was presented to the shrine as an offering of a rare foreign object. Stone dice from China is documented as being imported to Japan sometime in the 10th century

Gambling is one of the most superstitious businesses in the world and it's not limited to the players. The casinos also respond to superstitions of all kinds, especially those of their high rollers.

Asians believe that picking the right numbers can affect one's fortune. For the Chinese, '8' is associated with prosperity. Numbers such as '3', '6' and '9' are also considered 'good' numbers that, when combined appropriately with '8' or other numbers, can contribute to chances of winning.

A combination of 'good' numbers include '1388' which sounds similar to 'prosperity in one's lifetime' in Cantonese and '168' which sounds similar to "prosper all the way." Another good combination of numbers is '998' which sounds like 'prosper for a long time.'

Some Chinese gamblers deliberately avoid hotel room numbers like '4.' In Chinese and Japanese, the word for the number 4, *sei* in Cantonese and *shi* in Japanese, sounds like the word for death and is therefore avoided. Also avoided are the room numbers '58' which sounds similar to 'won't prosper' in Cantonese. Popular hotel room numbers are '84' which sounds like 'prosperous till death' or '18' which sounds similar to 'definitely prosper.'

However, picking the wrong number or combination of numbers can be potentially disastrous. For example, a Chinese gambler who boarded a shuttle bus to a casino in Macau noticed later that the bus license plate was 'QF 1358' which sounds similar to 'won't prosper in one's lifetime' in Cantonese. Thinking that he should not be overly superstitious, he ignored it but kept it at the back of his mind. When he lost that night, he put the blame on the shuttle bus with 'lousy' numbers as the main cause of his misfortune.

The Rio in Las Vegas has traditionally been very popular with the Asian crowd. To accommodate their Asian clientele, the Rio decided to skip the 40s in the Masquerade Tower. Allegedly for the same reason, the Palms also chose to omit the 40s when numbering the floors in its towers.

When it came to the design of its high-roller accommodations, the Rio paid even closer attention to Asian superstitions. The Palazzo Suites, a self-contained nine-suite "villa" at the back of the Rio was custom-built for the casino's high rollers, paying close attention to their personal likes, phobias, and idiosyncrasies. Not only was the number 4 omitted from all room signage and floor numbering, but also from any promotional product literature.

The hotel even commissioned original "lucky" artwork featuring multiple figures of 8, a number considered to be highly auspicious in Chinese cultures because of its similarity to the word for "prosper." By the same token, the toll-free numbers for all Asian gamblers are always on 888 area codes, rather than just 800 numbers.

In Chinese, the word for "book" sounds like the word for "lose," and one high-stakes gambler from China was troubled by this. As the hotel could never be certain of which suite he would be staying in, whenever he showed up, they not only removed *all* the books from *all* the rooms, but even cut the spines off the TV guides, so that they were reduced to piles of paper with no conceivable resemblance to books.

Close attention was paid to the principles of *feng shui* in all aspects of the design. For example, there is water at the entrance to the facility and real plants throughout with nothing artificial or dried. The placement of the corridors and walls is designed to allow *chi* to flow and circulate, with views of gardens and water all the way from the Suites to the casino. Each master bedroom is located as far as possible from the front door and no bedroom has its entrance at the foot of the bed, both considered important for peace of mind and good fortune. The extensive collection of original antiques features no "headless" statues. Some genuine antique Roman figures had to be removed as they were missing body parts.

The most famous example of a casino in Las Vegas deferring to superstition was MGM Grand's decision to re-design the entire front entrance to the property in the late 1990s. Originally built as a gigantic lion's head, patrons were obliged to walk in through the animal's huge gaping mouth. When it came to light that this was considered a very unlucky practice by the Asian clientele, since it seemed like an act of submission, the hotel replaced the head with a conventional entrance and the trademark MGM lion is now represented by a 45-foot-tall bronze sculpture that looks out onto the Strip.

The Wynn also skips the 13th floor and the 40s, plus floors 1 through 4, so the first floor is the 5th and although



the top floor is the 60th, in reality it's only the 45th.

Research has shown that the Chinese are willing to pay extra for auspicious house numbers, car plate numbers and telephone numbers. Last year, the newspapers reported the license plate number AW6666 which sounds like 'smooth all the way' was bought for US\$34,000 in Guangzhou while the license plate number AC6688 which sounds like 'prosperity in every way, fetched US\$10,000.

In keeping with auspicious numerology, the Venetian Macao-Resort-Hotel opened on 8/28 while the Beijing Olympic will begin on 8/8/2008 at 8 pm.

There are probably as many superstitions as there are gamblers, even among the pros -- witness World Series of Poker champion Johnny Chan and his ever-present "lucky" orange. Like the movie *The Cooler*, some Asian card rooms feature people who are acknowledged to be lucky or unlucky and are paid by players either to stay close or go away.

Foxwoods Resort Casino and Mohegan Sun Resort and Casino, the world's two largest casinos, are both Indian casinos situated in Connecticut. It is the wealthiest US state per capita, with a population that is predominantly white, at 76%. Only 3.2% are Asian American, yet over 2,000 Asian Americans gamble daily at Mohegan Sun, or 20% of all customers. Whether residents or tourists, Asian gamblers have indeed become a segment no casino can afford to lose.

Here are some of the other popular gambling superstitions:

### **DO:**

- Wear red, especially underwear (originally a Chinese superstition)
- Check into a room with 8 in the number.
- Stack your chips neatly.
- Sit on a handkerchief.
- Sit astride your chair.
- Switch on all the lights at home before you go out to gamble.
- Keep a horny-toad toenail on your person.
- Gamble with borrowed money.
- For crap players: Blow on the dice to breathe life into them/seal in the good luck during a winning streak; give the dice to a woman who's never rolled them before; or rub them on the head of a redhead.
- For slots: Wait until someone gets up from a machine that hasn't paid out in a long time as it's "due" to hit
- If you're Filipino, bring your wife to the game if she's pregnant, or they let a pregnant women play for you.
- If you're Chinese, stay away from monks and nuns before gambling.
- Change machine/dice/cards if things aren't going your way.



### **DON'T:**

- Wish a player good luck.
- Lend money while gambling.
- Pick up cards with your left hand.
- In poker: Count your chips/money at the table; or allow anyone to look over your shoulder; or sit at the #10 seat; or drop a card during a game.
- In craps: Play at an empty table, or say -- or even *think* -- the word "seven"; or allow a male who's never rolled the dice before to roll; or allow the dice to roll off the table; or speak to or touch someone who's having a good roll.
- In blackjack: Cut the deck or look at your double-down card (although for some people, to look is lucky),
- Let dogs anywhere near a gambling table.
- Touch someone's shoulder while he/she is gambling.
- Enter a casino through the main door.
- Talk about books around Chinese gamblers (the word "book" sounds like the word "lose").
- There are Chinese gamblers who refuse to stay at the Luxor pyramid because a pyramid is a tomb.
- One superstition in Las Vegas is to play on your birthday.
- Play in a new casino the night it opens because someone's bound to hit a big jackpot. (A highly dubious premise that owes its origins to Elmer Sherwin's \$4.6 million Megabucks win on the opening night of the Mirage, in 1989.) A better theory might be to play with Mr. Sherwin, who went on to hit another Megabucks jackpot at the Cannery in 2005, the only person "lucky" enough to have hit the big one twice.





# Dazaifu Tenmangu Sukei Kai Festival

78 members of the Dazaifu Tenmangu Sukei Kai, headed by Chief Priest Nobuyoshi Nishitakatsuji, visited the shrine on Sunday, June 15. The ceremony was held in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Sukei Kai and the 55th Anniversary of Hawaii Dazaifu Tenmangu.

The ceremony was followed by lunch and entertainment by lion dance and kung-fu demonstrations by Siu Lum Pai, Nihon-buyo by Sensei Hanayagi Mitsutamae, Bryson Goda and Jill Nishida of Hanayagi Dancing Academy Hawaii Foundation and Sensei Yasuko Takeuchi and her Sakura-kai Taisho-goto students accompanied by Stanley Kawaguchi on Shakuhachi.

Japan entertainers included Shukuyo Sanban and Shimai by former Mayor Yukio Moriyama and his group, Nihon-buyo and calligraphy by the famed calligrapher, Master Shigeo Endo.





## MAHALO Volunteers

Hanayagi Dancing Academy	Brandon Lee
Bob Harada	Jon Lower
Ryuji Hosihno	Debbie Matsuo
Emi Igarashi	Marilyn Naitoh
Kai Igarashi	Shinken Naitoh
Pam Igarashi	Axel Obara
Arthur MJY Isa	Mitsunobu Ohashi
Kyoko Isa	Natsu Okamura
Stanley Kawaguchi	Sakura Kai
	Naomi Teramoto

