

Laotian American National Alliance



LANA Board of Directors

Sourichanh Chanthyasack
CEO

Khamphoui Singvongsa
Chair

Howard Phengsomphone
Vice Chair

Anasone Silivongxay

Co-Vice Chair

Vilay Chaleunrath

Treasurer

Hongphayvanh Vatthana

Co-Treasurer

Alex Vilaythong

Secretary

Email us: first name @lana-
usa.org

Celebrating Lao New Year



In San Francisco, LANA & Center for Lao Studies co-hosted San Francisco's 4th Annual International Lao New Year Festival (ILNYF) 2555 on the United Nations Plaza. An estimated 10,000 people came out to enjoy the day festival which included live concerts, cultural performances, a baci ceremony, tak baht, the beer Lao garden, water splashing activity, live Muay Lao/Thai fights, and a national papaya salad contest.



Miss Lao International,
Queen Nai Choy Saechao

April was a very busy month for the Laotian American community, who celebrated the annual Lao New Year in their own community across the United States and abroad at various venues. Lao New Year is considered one of the most beloved and celebrated holiday in the Laotian community.



World Team USA

Queen Nai Choy Saechao will be representing the Laotian American community at the 26th Miss Asian America on August 4, 2012 at the Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco.

Inside this issue:

ILNYF	1
APAHM	2
LAC	2
Upcoming Events	2
Memorial Day	3
Mission & Vision	4
Asian Inspiration	4

Word from the Editor

One of our goal this year as a national organization is to communicate, connect and network with all Laotian organizations in the United States. To highlight many hardworking organizations, we will be featuring several stories submitted by the organizations themselves. If you are a Laotian nonprofit organization, you

are encouraged to submit a 200 word description telling us what your mission and objectives are as well as upcoming events in your community. Make sure you include a picture to go along with your story. You can email the story and picture to me, Anasone Silivongxay at: Anasone@lana-usa.org .



Asian Pacific Heritage Month



May was Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. LANA participated and supported various celebrations throughout the community. The CEO of LANA, Sirch Chanthyasack sits on the steering committee as a representative for LANA to show solidarity and unity with other Asian organizations and communities. The committee plays a significant role in planning major events and cultural celebration such as the one held the first Monday of May in San Francisco by the mayor. According to Sirch, "This year we are happy to report that both Wat Lao Saysetta of Santa Rosa and the Lao Khmu

American Community of the Bay Area was part of the cultural procession finale. This is just another example how we are making our community more visible among other Asian communities."

For those unfamiliar with the historical background of the Asian Pacific Heritage Month here is more information. According to the apiaheritagesf.org, "On October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed the Joint Resolution into law which proclaimed the week of May 4-11 Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week. The drafter of the bills selected the week of May 4th because of two

significant historical events that took place during that period: the arrival date of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States was recorded as May 7, 1843, and the date of completion of the Transcontinental Railroad was May 10, 1869." Many significant individuals fought long and hard to ensure that the Asian population has a special time in U.S. History to celebrate their culture and traditions. For more information about APAHM, please visit: apiaheritagesf.org.

and dances and concluded at 12:00 AM. This celebration brought more than 300 Laotian American families and friends across Connecticut and neighboring states to celebrate and to wish one another good luck, good health and prosperity. Howard Phengsomphone, Executive Director of Lao Association of Connecticut, Inc. expressed gratitude to participants, sponsors and volunteers who made this celebration possible.

Lao Association of Connecticut, Inc. Celebrates

The Lao Association of Connecticut, Inc. a 501 c 3 non-profit organization founded in 1980, celebrated Lao New Year in grand style. The celebration was held on May 19, 2012 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The celebration began at 6:00 PM with introduction followed by Lao tradition dances and entertainment. A Representative of Congressman Christ Murphy and Mui-Mui Hin-McCormic, Executive Director of the Connecticut Asian American Affair Commission was also in attendance. The entertainment highlight of this year's

celebration was Jonny Olsen, an internationally known professional Khaen player. The Khaen is a Lao bamboo mouth organ of Lao origin whose sound mimics that of a violin. Jonny also plays the Khup/Lum folks melodies from the north to the south of Laos. He can perform multiple styles found in Laos and Northeast Thailand as well as many other types of international music genre on the Khaen. Jonny Olsen is a trailblazer and is the first American or "Farang" to ever make an album of Lao Folk music in Laos. The celebration went on with a variety music

and dances and concluded at 12:00 AM. This celebration brought more than 300 Laotian American families and friends across Connecticut and neighboring states to celebrate and to wish one another good luck, good health and prosperity. Howard Phengsomphone, Executive Director of Lao Association of Connecticut, Inc. expressed gratitude to participants, sponsors and volunteers who made this celebration possible.

Upcoming Events

On August 17th & 18th, 2012 LANA will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota for its third annual Laotian National Conference at the Crowne Plaze Minneapolis North. The conference theme is: Leaders: Building the Future. All the workshops will center on education, advocacy, and unity. Organizations, individuals or businesses

are encouraged to become a part of this momentous occasion. If you are interested being a part of the event as a speaker, volunteer, donor or supporter, please contact the CEO, Sirch Chanthyasack, at: Sourichanh@lana-usa.org or **Anasone Sillivongxay**, Co-Conference Chair at Anasone@lana-usa.org.



Laotian American National Alliance

Laotian American National Alliance
1628 16th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
Email: Sourichanh@lana-usa.org
Phone: (202) 600-9707
Website: lana-usa.org

Like us on Facebook

MISSION

The mission, of the Laotian American National Alliance, Inc. (LANA) as a national organization, is dedicated to advancing the social, and economic well-being of Laotian Americans in the United States through civic participation and public policy advocacy.

VISION

The Laotian American National Alliance (LANA) is the premier resource and advocacy organization in the United States who strives to cultivate the strengths and leadership of all Laotian Americans comprising of the diverse ethnic communities from Hmong, Iu-Mien, Khmu, Lahu, Lao, Tai Lue, Phu Tai, Tai Dam, Tai Phuan and other descendants from Laos who make up the dynamic, collective Laotian American community.

Asian Inspiration

Into Bo Champon received his Bachelor of Sciences degree in information systems from the University of Southern California (Los Angeles, California) and his Juris Doctor degree from the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law (Sacramento/Stockton, California) where he received the honor to write and publish a 62-page law review article in the Spring 1990 issue of the law school's Transnational Lawyer law review journal. Into passed the California Bar Exam on the first attempt in 1991 and has been in private practice since 1992. His law firm employs three full-time attorneys and has represented clients successfully against highly-rated law firms. His firm's areas of practice include (personal) injury law (car, truck, dog bite, pedestrian, bicycle, motorcycle, ship, plane, ...), employment law, immigration law, bankruptcy law, real estate law, family law, business law and criminal law. See, www.LaoLawyer.com for details. Since he became a lawyer, Into has made time to volunteer to give free advice and seminars to indigents in the minority communities in Southern California. He was awarded numerous certificates of appreciation for his services. Among the many pro bono cases was a case that his law firm spent hundreds of hours to litigate and successfully tried to recover a temple

for the Lao community in Stanton, California.

During his junior and senior years at the University of Southern California (USC), Into had participated in the USC program to tutor low-income high school students. Prior to entering law school, Into had worked in the real estate investment field and was awarded a Certified Commercial Investment Member (C.C.I.M.) designation. During his 2nd and 3rd year of law school, Into had worked for the Community Legal Services as a certified student attorney to provide free services. In Summer 1990, he was employed as a law clerk for the State of California Attorney General Office in Sacramento, California.

Into is a first-degree black belt in Taekwondo and an accomplished real estate and stock investor. He also owns more than 300 internet domain names including some of the most desirable names.

In an interview, given in April, he gave LANA more insights about law and the Laotian community.

1. What is the most challenging aspect of your profession?

Convincing clients that not every case is worth pursuing even if they were right and telling them that justice is not always served as lawyers can only work with evidence.

2. What types of issues or legal matters do you often see in the Lao community?

Generally, the types of issues vary with the periods of immigration and the groups within the Lao community.

3. What advice do you have for anybody who wants to practice law?

Volunteer at a legal clinic, law firm, or office of a public defender, district attorney, attorney general or a congress member/senator who is in the judiciary committee to find out whether he/she truly wants to be a lawyer.