

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - APRIL 12, 2011

PROCLAMATION - MAY AS ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Recreation and Culture, recommends:

- 1) That Council proclaim the month of May as "Asian Heritage Month" in the City of Vaughan; and,
- 2) That the "Asian Heritage Month - List of Activities" as found in Attachment 1, be received.

Contribution to Sustainability

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in the Green Directions, Vaughan, Community Sustainability Environmental Master Plan, Goal 4, Objective 4.1:

- To foster a city with strong social cohesion, an engaging arts scene, and a clear sense of its culture and heritage.

Economic Impact

The cost of programs associated with Asian Heritage Month celebrations will be covered by the organizing/host group and agency.

Communications Plan

The proclamation of May 2011 as Asian Heritage Month and the List of Activities (Attachment 1) will be posted on the City website, in community centres, schools and at Vaughan Public Libraries.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to proclaim the month of May as Asian Heritage Month and to present an overview of the activities to be held in May across the City of Vaughan and York Region.

Background - Analysis and Options

In May 2002, the Government of Canada signed an official declaration to designate May as Asian Heritage Month in Canada. Asian Heritage Month is a time to honor and celebrate the achievements of East, South, Southeast and Western Asian Canadians, their descendants and their contribution to the social, economic, cultural and political life in Canada. The 2006 Canada Census identified approximately 20% of Vaughan's population being of either East, South, Southeast, and Western Asian descent. This geographical area includes countries such as, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, The Philippines, Vietnam, China, Korea, Japan, Cambodia and Indonesia. This month provides an opportunity to learn about and experience the history and culture of Asian-Canadians.

In honor of Asian Heritage Month, there are a number of activities throughout Vaughan that are presented on Attachment 1. Highlights are as follows:

- **New City Hall:** Elspeth Heyworth Centre will be presenting a **Dandiya Raas** Celebration – Women’s Stick Folk Dance in May. Dandiya Raas is the traditional folk dance form of Vrindavan, India, where it is performed in full traditional costume depicting scenes of Holi, (Spring religious festival) and it is the featured dance of Navarti (Nine nights of Sanskrit) evenings in Western India. Human Endeavour lead by Noor Din will be presenting a traditional dance performed by organization members. On display will be Human Endeavour’s new book, ***The Canadian Babel*** showcasing social and cultural diversity through storytelling from seniors in the South Asian community
- **Vaughan Public Libraries:** Each branch will have a variety of activities for all ages that include: Japanese poetry, art exhibit, guest authors, origami workshops, Chinese brush painting and more.
- **York Regional Police:** Asian Heritage Month celebrations, performances and displays will be part of the festivities at the Safety Village.
- **Community Organizations:** Human Endeavours will be hosting an Asian Heritage Festival with performances and refreshments.
- Elspeth Hayworth Centre will present a free Yoga for Seniors workshop at Vellore Village Community Centre and will begin St. Joan of Arc Catholic high school will have their annual Multicultural Global display and food festival. York Region Annual Multimedia Film festival will feature many film shorts created by residents throughout all municipalities including City of Vaughan.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, this report will provide:

- **STRATEGIC GOAL:**
Service Excellence - Providing service excellence to citizens.
- **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**
Preserve our heritage and support diversity, arts and culture.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council, and the necessary resources to implement this program have been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

In celebrating Asian Heritage Month, the City reaffirms its effort to build an inclusive community. More so, it is an opportunity to highlight Vaughan’s rich diversity and celebrate and learn about the traditions and culture of our East, South, Western and Southeast Asian community.

Attachments

1. Asian Heritage Month – List of Activities

Report Prepared By

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Respectfully submitted,

Marlon Kallideen
Commissioner of Community Services

**Asian Heritage Month in Vaughan and York Region
May 2011**

List of Activities

Community Centres - City Hall

City of Vaughan - City Hall

Elsbeth Heyworth Centre & Human Endeavours will present traditional south Asian dance
Multi-purpose room 1st floor
Tuesday, May 3, 12:00 p.m. (tentative)

Early kick off celebration in traditional Dandiya Costumes with stick folk dance and music. The 50th Birthday Celebration of the Gujrat State of India will also be celebrated. An evening of music, dance and refreshments for all.

Vellore Village Community Centre - Cafetorium

Elsbeth Hayworth Centre -Yoga for Seniors
Sunday, May 28, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Open to all Seniors in Vaughan. The focus of the class involves quieting the mind throughout practice as well as during guided relaxation to encourage healing.

Vellore School House

Elsbeth Heyworth Centre presents:
Sikh Gurdwara Gathering for Seniors
Sundays starting in May
10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

9545 Weston Rd.

Gurdwaras are open to everyone regardless of faith. Visitors remove their shoes, wash their hands and cover their head with a cloth before entering the Gurdwara. Spiritual words and peaceful worship.

Human Endeavour –South Asian Heritage Day Celebrations!

Location/time: TBA

Contact: Noor.din@humanendeavour.org

South Asian Heritage Day is a signature event of Human Endeavour that is celebrated every year with cultural performances, displays and an award ceremony in which Human Endeavour recognizes the individuals, groups and organizations who have made significant contributions to the community. This event is attended by Members of Parliament, Members of Council, community leaders and a large number of community members.

Thornhill Seniors Club-Culture Night

Date/Location: TBD

Saturday or Sunday between 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Food will be served. Performances: Dance, Music and theatre.

Possible charge/donation request: \$5 per person.

Vaughan Public Libraries

Asian Heritage Festival

May 7, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Ansley Grove Library

Kicking off Asian Heritage Month activities will include performances, and martial arts demonstrations, activities for whole family and guests visit from creators of The Legend of Ninja Cowboy Bear.

Ansley Grove Library

Chinese Brush Painting
May 17, 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Taiwan Sublime – Photo Exhibition

May 3 – May 31

Series of photographs taken by famous Taiwanese photographers.
Photos include celebrations, traditional arts and Taiwan landscape

Bathurst Clark Library

A Splendid Chinese Morning
May 15, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Singing, folk dancing and martial arts

Dufferin Clark Library

Chinese Brush Painting
May 21, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Art Exhibit

May 1 – May 31

Various Chinese artists

Maple Library

Author visit: Arlene Chan

May 4, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Dragon boat racer and author of Awakening the Dragon: The Dragon Boat Festival.

Origami

May 18, 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Origami Society of Toronto reveal secrets of paper folding and creations

Woodbridge Library

Hindi Kavi Sammelan (Poetry Conference)

May 14, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Hindi Literature and Culture Circle present free poetry readings in Hindi language by local poets

Mantra Meditation

May 28, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Mantra Meditation, a magical chanting of sound vibrations in a calm and relaxed atmosphere. Presented by Meditation Toronto

Pierre Berton Resource Library

Get Inked!- Henna body art

May 10, 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

YRDSB / YCSDB

Multi-Cultural Food Festival – School Fundraiser

St. Joan of Arc Catholic High School

April 28, 2011 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (doors open at 6:45 p.m.).

Tickets are \$5 prior to the event and \$7 at the door. The night consists of a variety of about 20 student-created pavilions representing various cultures that make up our school, including the Philippines, Iraq, Spain, Latin America, Italy, and Africa. Students decorate pavilions with information and images about the country, some wear traditional dress, play music, and dance. Food also plays a big role in the night and attendees are given a plate upon arrival so that they can sample traditional foods from the various stations. Half of the proceeds from ticket and bottled water sales will be donated to Creation of Hope, a charity which provides support for the poor in Africa.

Arts and Culture Night

St. Jean de Brebeuf Catholic High School

May 5, 2011 6:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m.

Arts Night and Culture Celebrations

Stephen Lewis Secondary School

Thursday May 26, 2011 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Drama, dance, music and visual arts will be scheduled throughout the evening. Youth lead and will include original performances, scripts and artwork created throughout the year.

Elementary and Secondary Schools Citywide

Exhibits and Asian/South Asian traditions will be on display in the foyers of many schools throughout the schools boards. Each classroom teacher will do an activity/project with the students as well as the school on a whole.

School Assemblies will include acknowledgements for Asian Heritage Month

Some schools will have an assembly which would consist of performances and speakers regarding Asian and South Asian cultures.

Every school varies in what they do and changes year to year with staff changes.

York Regional Police / York Region

Asian Heritage Month - Celebrations at Safety Village

May 12, 2011 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Coordinated by the Diversity and Cultural Resources Bureau of York Regional Police
Annual celebration includes -Music, Performances, Art displays and refreshments.

Region-Wide

Beauties of Asia Grand Final Competition

May 29, 2011 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Grand York Ballroom at Sheraton Parkway.

600 Highway 7 East Richmond Hill, Ontario

Chinese Orchestra String Concert

April 30, 2011

Markham Theatre for Performing Arts

Taste of Asia 2011

Saturday and Sunday June 25-26, 2011

4350 Steeles Avenue East

The Festival promotes the multicultural mosaic of Canada and encourages a celebration of harmony between different ethnic groups through an event of mutual respect and cooperation. Hosted annually by the Federation of Chinese Canadians in Markham and Association of Progressive Muslims of Ontario.