

## **The Lady must be weeping**

Two years ago, a master stone carver bravely flew thousands of miles to a strange land at the beckoning of people whose language he did not even understand. From a block of lime stone, the face of a lady like no other, emerged, meditating. This lady exudes love, peace and serenity—feelings that are exactly opposite to the hatred, outrage and turmoil that must have been behind the defilement. This statue that is meant to be a bridge to multicultural understanding, is now a bridge to nowhere. The act left Dragon Festival board members utterly bewildered, anguished and at a loss to find words to describe their feelings. The Lady must be weeping along with many others who love her and who understand her mission.

At the time of the dedication of Master Lei Yixing's statue at the 2007 Dragon Festival, another beautiful artwork was unveiled and given to the Asian Pacific Islander community. Seexeng Lee designed and oversaw the creation of a painting that captured the spirit and the ultimate goal of the festival: Unity in Diversity. It is our mission to bring together people of the greater Twin Cities and beyond, through a celebration of the diverse and rich cultures of the Asian Pacific Islander. The hope is that we get to know, respect, and accept one another, so we may live in harmony and work together to build a better world to live in. This year, over ten thousand people of all ages, of all ethnicities, and of all colors came to the festival. Their presence is a validation of our goal. Their message is that there is something good happening at Phalen Park.

E Pluribus Unum, Out of many One. These are the words carved on America's Great Seal. Thirteen states became one and through the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, they spelled out their dream, their wish and their vision for this new country choosing liberty, justice and equality for all as the foundation. Fifty states and multitude of people later, their dream of uniting all has been challenged numerous times. To make this dream come true is a mission like no other, requiring leaders like no other. We require stalwart leaders and torchbearers if we were to succeed, and succeed we must.

It is this realization that propelled the Dragon Festival to move forward with our mission. The outrage against this kind of crime has only energized us. Additionally, the support that we have been receiving will only propel us forward.

The Lady must be weeping. I propose that this is a good time for all us to meditate on the circumstances of this crime, and on our responsibilities going forward to prevent repetition. If the cause is ignorance, let us eradicate it, for ignorance breed mistrust and prejudice that in turn, is the spring that feeds racism and racially motivated crime. We invite you all to join Dragon Festival in this effort, and build a bridge to multicultural understanding so out of many there may indeed be one. Let us not let the Lady weep much longer.

Evelyn Lee  
August 15, 2008  
Unity Ceremony