How Far We Have Come Since 2016!

The St. Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden of Whispering Willows and Flowing Waters at Phalen Park opened in 2019 and welcomes all visitors year round. It is good to take a look back to see just how much progress we have made.

Before: Pictured on left is the site of the future Xiang Jiang Pavilion taken at the 2016 Site Dedication Event.

During: Pictured on right is the same site at the July 2018 Groundbreaking Event.

After: Pictured above is the same site, now with the Xiang Jiang Pavilion at the November 2018 Open House.

On July 9, 2016, the China Garden Society held a Site Dedication, in conjunction with the Dragon Boat Festival. This celebration really energized the China Garden Society Board and Chinese and Hmong communities to work together to obtain the necessary donations to pay for the upcoming construction.

Two years later, as the China Friendship Garden Society was preparing for the July 2018 Groundbreaking Event, it held a Feng Shui Ceremony led by Feng Shui Expert and MCFGS Advisor Carole Hyder on May 29, 2018, to prepare the land to be “broken open.” This was followed by a Hmong Blessing Ceremony led by the Hmong community on May 30, 2018, with cultural offerings and a Qeej musician.

Finally, the moment we had all been waiting for—since the founding of the China Friendship Garden Society in 2005—Construction began and we commemorated it with the Groundbreaking Event on July 14, 2018. It began with a parade of hundreds of community members following the Hmong Qeej players and the Chinese lion dancers. St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, Former Mayor George Latimer, Senator Foung Hawj, Representative Tim Mahoney, and Director Mike Hahm were among the dignitaries.
MCFGS Hmong Advisory Committee Chairman Ying Chu-Yang-Heu

Known as Miao Zu in China, Hmong in the US, Laos and other countries, we are a minority ethnic group that originated from China and that have emigrated all throughout the world from France to Australia. A colorful traditional Hmong costume can be seen on Lucy, the Peanut’s character which was given from St. Paul to our Sister City Changsha in Hunan. This mix of Yin and Yang, Western and Eastern, is at the heart of this China Friendship Garden Gift Exchange between the sister cities of St. Paul, MN USA, and Changsha, China. This is also why this project has a personal significance to me. Having spent close to 30 years in the US, with the majority here in the Twin Cities, I, Ying Chu-Yang-Heu, have been privileged to be selected as the chairman of the MCFGS Hmong Advisory Committee to this project. Through this project, I have had the pleasure and honor to represent the City of St. Paul, MN which is home to one of the largest Hmong population in the U.S. I have also had the great honor to represent China, where Hmong people originated from and where the largest Hmong population still lives. Thank you to the city of St. Paul and the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society for giving the Hmong community the opportunity to be part of this very important project.

Garden Updates or Opportunities:

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

November 19: Give to the Max Day—Support your Saint Paul - Changsha China Friendship Garden

**WE NEED YOUR HELP — YOU CAN CHOOSE TO:**

1. Contribute to paying off promissory note for PHASE I, ...$190,000.
2. Then PHASE II can begin: the Hmong Plaza, Garden, Donor Wall, Bridge, contribute to this.
3. Leave a Legacy: volunteer, become a member.

Be part of the garden, we have volunteer opportunities, please contact us.

Make a donation: http://mnchinagarden.org/donation-options/

Individuals who make donations of $1,000 or more will have their name on the website and Garden Donor Wall.

Garden Symbols on Xiang Jiang Pavilion

- **祥云 = Auspicious Clouds**
  The Ancients believed that the immortals stepped on clouds to enter this world. This cloud pattern represents the clouds of the immortals; brings good fortune and happiness.

- **Peony: The King of flowers, represents virtue and beauty (symbol of spring).**

Garden Stories:

- **Haiku by: Atticus Theodore Wolford, 14, from Hopkins West Middle School**
  
  The Tree
  A tree leaf falls on grass, 
  Wind makes the tree sway 
  The tree is peaceful.

The Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society—2020 Board of Directors

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