

US Area Joint Canada/Caribbean Convention in Las Vegas

August 4-6 2017

Following the Area Council Meeting on Thursday night, I was joined by our Hawaii contingent of **Ray Seto, Duke & Linda Chung, Rick Lau, Bobby Stivers-Apiki** and **James Dang** at the pre-convention VIP Dinner at the *Feast Buffet* in the spectacular Red Rock Casino, Resort & Spa encompassing over 70 acres that must be over 3 football fields long. International Council Members who held their council meeting at the Hampton over the last week leading up to the convention along with US and Canada/Caribbean attendees enjoyed a night of food and fellowship, finally with all the council meetings out of the way.

The Hampton Inn Tropicana located about 20 minutes from the McCarran Airport and about halfway between the airport and the California Hotel where the Vacations Hawaii group was staying, is a cozy non-gambling hotel that caters to smaller conventions and business conferences, situated across the I-15 just outside the southern end of the Vegas Strip in view of the more well-known Luxor and Mandalay Bay Hotels.

The convention kicked-off bright and early Friday morning in the Hotel's Event Center with welcome messages and opening remarks, and the Installation of International Officers **IP Henry Grindheim, IPE Sang-bong Moon, IPIP Joan Wilson, IT Phillips Cherian, AP/ICM Tibor, AP CAC/ICM Reginald Springer** and others; and a message from **International Secretary General Takao Nishimura**. The weekend was filled with food, entertainment and speakers, and a 2 session workshop on Club Improvement. One hour *Information Update Sessions* were held simultaneously in 3 different conference rooms covering various topics, for attendees to choose from, including *Portalbuzz Demonstration, Survival, Youth in YSCs, TOF/RBM, Membership, Brotherhood Fund, YMCA & Youth Development, ASF/DFS* and *Public Relations*, and on the lighter side, *Health & Wellness* and *Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate*. The **IPE Moon** and his entourage had set up a booth to promote the next 2018 International Convention to be held in Seoul, Korea.

Overall the convention took on an international flavor, but did not take away from being the US Area, Canada Area/Caribbean Convention. I think we all enjoyed ourselves, having to share our thoughts and ideas with members sharing the same cause from all over the world.

Having to wake up at 3 a.m. Sunday morning to make my early flight home, I choose skip Saturday's convention dinner and share an Uber back to the Cal with **Maurice Shimonishi** (who was splitting time between the Convention and his high school reunion) to relax a bit before hitting sack early. I will leave to the others who attended to offer their perspective of the convention in their respective club bulletins.