

**This Week
 Mid-Year Club
 Assembly
 Guest Program
 Host: Mark
 Mariscal**

This week, our brilliant musician, new mother, friend and Club President, Sarah O'Brien, will lead our Semi-Annual Club Assembly. Club Assemblies are usually the first meeting in July and the first meeting in



ing in January. The purpose is to give club members

an opportunity to hear reports from the various Committee Chairs and Board Officers on the status of the club. This is also an opportunity for questions and answers regarding the many wonderful activities and community support our club provides.

Our club is better when we have informed and active members. I encourage each of you to come hear from our fellow Rotarians. Remember, *Be The Inspiration* is our international theme, and we should all continue to participate. ○

**The Strange History of
 Chinese Fortune
 Cookies**



Brought to you by Jacque Foreman for President Sarah O'Brien

The fortune cookie's origin: *Solving a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside a cookie*

By JENNIFER 8. LEEJAN. 6, 2008

Some 3 billion fortune cookies are made each year, almost all in the United States. But the crisp cookies wrapped around enigmatic sayings have spread around the world. They are served in Chinese restaurants in Britain, Mexico, Italy, France and elsewhere. In India, they taste more like butter cookies. A surprisingly high number of winning tickets in Brazil's national lottery in 2004 were traced to lucky numbers from fortune cookies distributed by a Chinese restaurant chain called Chinatown.

But there is one place where fortune cookies are conspicuously absent: China.

Now a researcher in Japan believes she can explain the disconnect, which has long perplexed American tourists in China. Fortune cookies, Yasuko Nakamachi says, are almost certainly originally from Japan.

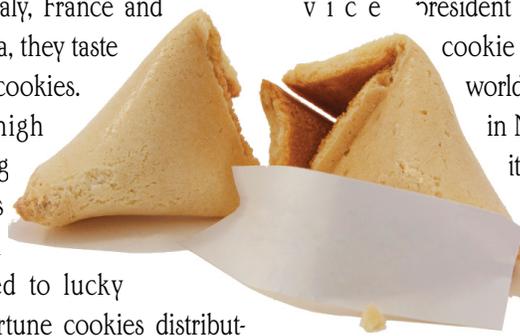
Her prime pieces of evidence are the centuries-old small family bakeries making obscure fortune cookie-shaped crackers

by hand near a temple outside Kyoto. She has also turned up many references to the cookies in Japanese literature and history, including an 1878 etching of a man making them in a bakery – decades before the first reports of American fortune cookies.

The idea that fortune cookies come from Japan is counterintuitive, to say the least. "I am surprised," said Derrick Wong, the vice president of the largest fortune cookie manufacturer in the world, Wonton Food, based in New York. "People see it and think of it as a Chinese food dessert, not a Japanese food dessert," he said. But, he conceded, "The weakest part of the Chinese menu is dessert."

Nakamachi, a folklore and history graduate student at Kanagawa University outside Tokyo, has spent more than six

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Greeter of the Week

- January 10
Ed Jasnow
- January 17
Julius Johnson
- January 24
Steve Kerekes

Program Review

Nick Santangelo Pursuing a Passion for Music



One of the best parts of being a part of the Rotary Club of Altadena is welcoming new members to the club. One of the requirements of becoming a new member of the club is to

make a presentation to the entire membership which we affectionately call the *Craft Talk* Last Thursday, we heard from our new member Nick Santangelo, who described his upbringing and his passion for music.

Santangelo was born in Garden Grove, California in December 1958. He was part of the foster system and was eventually adopted by the Santangelo family. That family originally came to California from the state of Massachusetts. He and his family lived in Orange County in the community of Costa Mesa. He enjoyed his childhood in Costa Mesa very much.

While a youth, he learned to play the Hammond Organ owned by his family. This skill started him on his love for playing music. He soon developed the skill to play other instruments, including the guitar, piano, drums and various keyboard instruments. He soon found other musicians, and they came together to play music gigs in clubs around southern California – primarily blues and jazz. They also played at Elks Club events, and performed at a clothing-optional nudist colony in Glen Ivey California.

Santangelo was married in 1982, and he and his wife moved to Los Angeles in the late 1980s. He was associated with the Car-



Photo courtesy of Jim Gorton

penters Union. He and his wife eventually moved to Montecito Heights in the Mount Washington area of Los Angeles County. His wife developed cancer in late 2006, which after treatment, went into remission. However, in 2014, the cancer returned and she passed away in 2017. They had no children.

The couple moved to Altadena in 2014 and they enjoyed living in the community. An added plus to the new house was that it

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Congratulations

Birthdays

7 - Helen Zivkoviche (M. Hill)
16 - Sarah O'Brien
27 - Ann Rider Hill

Anniversaries

03 - Jim & Karen Gorton
04 - Mike & Carol Zoeller
22 - John & Joan Frykenberg

January
Vocational Service

Program Chair: Ruben Alvarado
03 - Nick Santangelo, *Craft Talk*
10 - Mid-Year Club Assembly
17 - To be Announced
24 - To be Announced

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Frank Cunningham.....Membership
Jacque Foreman.....Public Awareness
Jacque Foreman.....Acting Publicity
Jacque Foreman.....Sparks/Website
Mike Zoeller.....Club Projects
Doug Colliflower.....Community
David Smith.....International
To be Announced.....Asst. International
Tony Hill.....Youth Contests/Awards
Mike Zoeller.....Youth Projects
John Frykenberg.....Vocational
Editor, Design & Typesetting.....Foreman Graphics
Photography.....Jacque Foreman

Our Foundation



The Rotary Foundation transforms your gifts into service projects that change lives both close to home and around the world.

During the past 100 years, the Foundation has spent \$3 billion on life-changing, sustainable projects. With your help, we can make lives better in your community and around the world.

Our mission

The mission of The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International is to enable Rotarians to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the

alleviation of poverty.

Why should I donate to The Rotary Foundation?

Your donation makes a difference

to those who need our help most. More than 90 percent of donations go directly to supporting our service projects around the world.

How does The Rotary Foundation use donations?

Our 35,000 clubs carry out sustainable service projects that support our six causes. With donations like yours, we've wiped out 99.9 percent of all polio cases. Your



donation also trains future peacemakers, supports clean water, and strengthens local economies.

What impact can one donation have?

It can save a life. A child can be protected from polio with as little as 60 cents. Our partners make your donation go even further. For every \$1 Rotary commits to polio eradication, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has committed \$2

Program

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had a separate recording studio in the back.

Santangelo was been active for over twenty years in Los Angeles Big Brothers and derives a great deal of satisfaction from this voluntary effort. He is excited about becoming more involved in the Rotary Club of Altadena. He has been very impressed with the quality of the speakers at our weekly meetings.

Nick Santangelo's membership in our club is off to a great start. We look forward to hearing more from him in the future.

Boyd Hudson ○

Form & Line by Jacque Foreman

Words that Sound the Same, aren't Spelled the Same, Mean Different Things, but are a Proofreader's Nightmare

Two words that I see very often used incorrectly are **it's** and **its**. In the case of these words, the one with the apostrophe is NOT a possessive. **It's** is a contraction of the words *It is*, while **its** – without the apostrophe – is the possessive form.

My next example are two words that I

seldom see when editing *Sparks*, but have. They sound alike, are not spelled alike, and mean different things: **herd** and **heard**. The problem is in writing the word not meant. **Herd** is a group of large animals, e.g. cows. **Heard**, on the other hand, is the past tense of the infinitive *to bear*. ○

In Tune

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years trying to establish the Japanese origin of the fortune cookie, much of that at National Diet Library (the Japanese equivalent of the Library of Congress). She has sifted through thousands of old documents and drawings. She has also traveled to temples and shrines across the country, conducting interviews to piece together the history of fortune-telling within Japanese desserts.

Nakamachi, who has long had an interest in the history of sweets and snacks, saw her first fortune cookie in the 1980s in a New York City Chinese restaurant. At that time she was merely impressed with Chinese ingenuity, finding the cookies an amusing and clever idea.

It was only in the late 1990s, outside Kyoto near one of the most popular Shinto shrines in Japan, that she saw that familiar shape at a family bakery called Sohonke Hokyokudo.

"These were exactly like fortune cookies," she said. "They were shaped exactly the same and there were fortunes."

The cookies were made by hand by a young man who held black grills over a flame. The grills contain round molds into which batter is poured, something like a small waffle iron. Little pieces of paper were folded into the cookies while they were still warm. With that sighting, Nakamachi's long research mission began.

A visit to the Hokyokudo shop revealed that the Japanese fortune cookies Nakamachi found there and at a handful of nearby

bakers differ in some ways from the ones that Americans receive at the end of a meal with the check and a handful of orange wedges. They are bigger and browner, as their batter contains sesame and miso rather than vanilla and butter. The fortunes are not stuffed inside, but are pinched in the cookie's fold. (Think of the cookie as a Pac-Man: the paper is tucked into Pac-Man's mouth rather than inside his body.) Still, the family resemblance is undeniable.

"People don't realize this is the real thing because American fortune cookies are popular right now," said Takeshi Matsuhisa as he deftly folded the hot wafers into the familiar curved shape.

His family has owned the bakery for three generations, although the local tradition of making the cookies predates their store. Decades ago, many confectioneries and candies came with little fortunes inside, Matsuhisa said.

"Then, the companies realized it wasn't such a good idea to put pieces of paper in candy, so then they all disappeared," he added. The fear that people would accidentally eat the fortune is one reason his family now puts the paper outside the cookie.

The bakery has used the same 23 fortunes for decades. (In contrast, Wonton Food has a database of well over 10,000 fortunes.) Hokyokudo's fortunes are more poetic than prophetic, although some nearby bakeries use newer fortunes that give advice or make predictions. One from Inariya, a shop across from the Shinto shrine, contains the advice, "To ward off lower back pain or

joint problems, undertake some at-home measures like yoga."

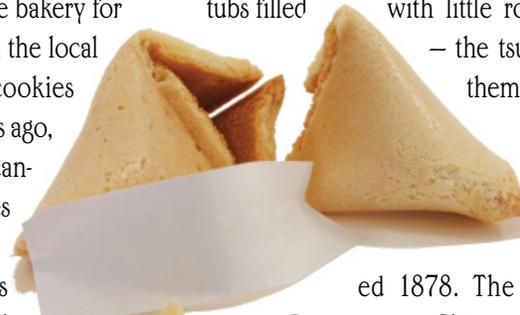
As she researched the cookie's Japanese origins, among the most persuasive pieces of evidence Nakamachi found was an illustration from a 19th-century book of stories, *Mosbiogusa Kinsei Kidan*. A character in one of the tales is an apprentice in a senbei store. In Japan, the cookies are called, variously, tsujiura senbei (*fortune crackers*), omikuji senbei (*written fortune crackers*), and suzu senbei (*bell crackers*). The apprentice appears to be grilling wafers in black irons over coals, the same way they are made in Hokyokudo and other present-day bakeries. A sign above him reads "tsujiura senbei" and next to him are tubs filled with little round shapes – the tsujiura senbei themselves.

The book, story and illustration are all dated 1878. The families of Japanese or Chinese immigrants in California that claim to have invented or popularized fortune cookies all date the cookie's appearance between 1907 and 1914.

The illustration was the kind of needle in a haystack discovery academics yearn for. "It's very rare to see artwork of a thing being made," Nakamachi said. "You just don't see that."

She found other historical traces of the cookies as well. In a work of fiction by Tamenaga Shunsui, who lived between 1790 and 1843, a woman tries to placate two other women with tsujiura senbei that contain fortunes.

Nakamachi's work, originally published in 2004 as part of a Kanagawa University report, has been picked up by some publications in Japan. A few customers



In Tune

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have bought senbei from Hogyokudo, the Matsuhisa family said. But otherwise, the paper has drawn limited attention, perhaps because fortune cookies are not well known in Japan.

If fortune cookies are Japanese in origin, how did they become a mainstay of American Chinese restaurants? To understand this, Nakamachi has made two trips to the United States, focusing on San Francisco and Los Angeles, where she interviewed the descendants of Japanese and Chinese immigrant families who made fortune cookies.

The cookie's path is relatively easy to trace back to World War II. At that time they were a regional specialty, served in California Chinese restaurants, where they were known as *fortune tea cakes*. There, according to later interviews with fortune cookie makers, they were encountered by military personnel on the way back from the Pacific Theater. When these veterans returned home, they would ask their local Chinese restaurants why they didn't serve fortune cookies as the San Francisco restaurants did.

The cookies rapidly spread across the country. By the late 1950s, an estimated 250 million fortune cookies were being produced each year by dozens of small Chinese bakeries and fortune cookie companies.

One of the larger outfits was Lotus Fortune in San Francisco,

whose founder, Edward Louie, invented an automatic fortune cookie machine. By 1960, fortune cookies had become such a mainstay of American culture that they were used in two presidential campaigns: Adlai Stevenson's

and Stuart Symington's.

But prior to World War II, the history is murky. A number of immigrant families in California, mostly Japanese – have laid claim to introducing or popularizing the fortune cookie. Among them are the descendants of Makoto Hagiwara, a Japanese immigrant who oversaw the Japanese Tea Garden built in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park in the 1890s. Visitors to the garden were served fortune cookies made by a San Francisco bakery, Benkyodo.

A few Los Angeles-based businesses also made fortune cookies in the same era: Fugetsudo, a family bakery that has operated in Japantown for over a century, except during World War II; Umeya, one of the earliest mass-producers of fortune cookies in Southern California, and the Hong Kong Noodle company, a Chinese-owned business. Fugetsudo and Benkyodo both have discovered their original "kata" black iron grills, almost identical to the ones that are used today in the Kyoto bakery.

"Maybe the packaging of fortune cookie must say 'Japanese fortune cookie, made in Japan,' " said Gary Ono, whose grandfather founded Benkyodo.

Nakamachi is still unsure how exactly fortune cookies made the jump to Chinese restaurants. But during the 1920s and 1930s, many Japanese immigrants in California owned chop suey restaurants, which served Americanized Chinese cuisine. The Umeya bakery distributed fortune cookies to well over 100 such restaurants in southern and central California.

"At one point the Japanese must have said, fish head and rice and pickles must not go over well with the American population," said Ono, who has made a campaign of documenting the history of the fortune cookie through interviews with his relatives and by publicizing the discovery

of the kata grills.

Early on, Chinese-owned restaurants discovered the cookies, too. Nakamachi speculates that Chinese-owned manufacturers began to take over fortune cookie production during World War II, when Japanese bakeries all over the West Coast closed as Japanese-Americans were rounded up and sent to internment camps.

Wong pointed out: "The Japanese may have invented the fortune cookie. But the Chinese people really explored the potential of the fortune cookie. It's Chinese-American culture. It only happens here, not in China."

That sentiment is echoed among some descendants of the Japanese immigrants who played an early role in fortune cookies. "If the family had decided to sell fortune cookies, they would have never done it as successfully as the Chinese have," said Douglas Dawkins, the great-great-grandson of Makoto Hagiwara. "I think it's great. I really don't think the fortune cookie would have taken off if it hadn't been popularized in such a wide venue." ○

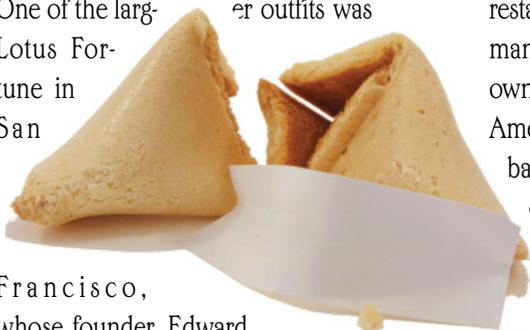
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A version of this article appears in print on January 6, 2008, in *The International Herald Tribune*.

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Recently, when we ordered food from *Go China*, a restaurant in Pasadena. Bruce opened a fortune cookie and found what he said was the most profetic fortune he had seen in a fortune cookie:

The man who learns to laugh at himself will never cease to be amused.



Another Successful Altadena Rotary Social Event

by Steve Kerekes, Club Social Committee Chair with pictures by Jacque Foreman

On Saturday, December 20, our club held its annual Holiday Party that brought together Rotarians and their guests. The event was held in the beautiful dining facility at MonteCedro where "Creative Living is an Art". Rotarian Ruben Alvarado served as our host. In addition to many of our club

members and their spouses/partners, the club invited Mario and Michell Guajardo, the new owners of the Grocery Outlet Retail Store on Lake Avenue and Captain Vicki Stuckey from the Altadena Sheriff Station who will be retiring in March of this year.

Since I was not able to attend, thanks to

Mark Mariscal for stepping in and handling the coordination of the event along with David Smith who went to the North Pole to bring us Santa Claus. David did such a good recruitment job that we didn't have to pay Santa for any traveling expenses ... like reindeer food. ○



More Photos on the Next Page

More Fun from our Party



*Thank you, Ruben for a great venue,
Mark for putting it together, and all
who attended for a wonderful party!*



**Altadena
Libraries**

**Second Saturdays, 6:30pm
at the Altadena Main Library
600 E. Mariposa Avenue**

Second Saturdays



October 13*

Upstream
Reggae, Soca, Caribbean

November 10

Past Action Heroes
80s & 90s Covers

January 12

Pasadena Playboys
Country

February 9

JazzZone
Smooth Jazz, R&B

March 9

**The Allan Wasserman
Jazz Ensemble**
Jazz

April 13

Sangre Nueva
Salsa

May 11

The Leapin' Lizards
Rockabilly, Blues, Swing

June 8

Harbor Groove
Latin Rock

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**October 13th's Second Saturday Concert is sponsored by the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger.*

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Reserve Deputy Program

Back in the 1800s, the Sheriff would look to the community to form a posse and deputize citizens to assist him in the apprehension of horse thieves, murderers, or other criminals. Thankfully, we have thousands of full-time deputies to perform those duties today, but, in 2018, just like the 1800s, the Sheriff is looking to the community to find citizens to volunteer and help by becoming reserve deputy sheriffs.

Reserve deputies undergo the same training and background checks that full-time deputies receive. It's a year-long process, but, after graduation, reserve deputies can perform a wide array of duties and service to the community.

The *Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Reserve Program* is one of the largest in the country, with over 600 all-volunteer sworn reserve deputy sheriffs. Last year they worked 182,000 hours keeping the citizens of Los Angeles County safe. Those 182,000 hours represent millions of dollars in savings to taxpayers.

Patrolling our communities is only one of many functions performed by reserve deputies. Lifesaving search and rescue missions are performed every week by reserves as part of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Search and Rescue Program. Last year reserve deputy sheriffs performed 684 missions throughout the county, saving countless lives.

Another opportunity for reserve deputy sheriffs to serve is by becoming a member of the Sheriff's Department's Posse. Posse members work patrolling trails and various community events on horseback.

Reserve deputies also help solve crimes by working in many of the Sheriff's Department's detective units, such as Homicide Bureau, Narcotics Bureau, Fraud and Cyber Crime Bureau, and Special Victims Bureau. We also have reserves who ride street and off-road motorcycles for the Department.

Reserve deputies come from all walks of life and from a wide variety of professions. The common thread of all is a burning desire to give back to their community and assist their fellow citizens.

If you are interested in signing up – just like citizens did over a 150 years ago – there is a **reserve deputy academy scheduled to start in February 2019**. Please contact the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Reserve Forces Detail at 323-526-5100 and ask for Assistant Director Mike Leum to get started.