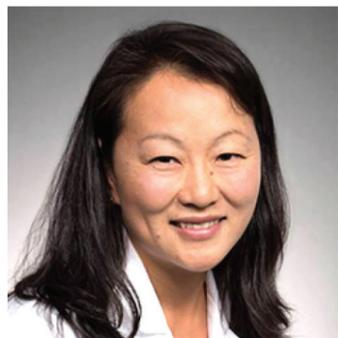


Antiviral drug, tested at UW School of Medicine, shows promise in fight against COVID-19



Dr. Helen Chu

UW School of Medicine researchers who participated in a clinical trial are encouraged by data indicating that the trial drug remdesivir can treat COVID-19.

The FDA on May 1 granted emergency use authorization for remdesivir, so that it can be used to treat hospitalized severe COVID-19 patients. Preliminary results from a National Institutes of Health (NIH)-sponsored study showed that patients who took remdesivir—originally tested against Ebola—usually recovered after 11 days, four days faster than those who didn't take the drug. The UW School of Medicine was one of the sites in the NIH trial.

Dr. Helen Chu, assistant professor of medicine at the UW School of Medicine, said the drug not only decreased recovery time, it also improved mortality outcomes.

"It's really a game changer for the field to know first of all having an antiviral drug that works to prevent real clinical outcomes, to improve clinical outcomes is just so important."

see COVID-19 on 12

Mother's Day: Give your mom flowers and support local flower farms

By Rizaniño "Riz" Reyes
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

A familiar and festive sight to behold in Seattle's Pike Place Market is sadly missing. The iconic flower stands that draw massive daily crowds at this time of year sit eerily empty. Where are the hundreds of buckets filled with tulips and daffodils? The white paper sleeves stuffed full of sumptuous blossoms? What about the people tending these stalls: the Hmong, Mien, and Filipino farmers? They're around still working from dusk till dawn, but they're all still trying to figure out what to do. For the 30-40 small flower farmers who rely on the Market as their sole means of income, many have had to be creative and more assertive to keep their businesses afloat so you may find them at unexpected locations outside of their farms.

White tents, propped up with

familiar buckets of flowers being unloaded from a truck, can be found in different neighborhood convenience stores and even gas stations around Seattle and the Eastside. It's easy to spot the vibrant colors and feel compelled to pull over. It's nowhere near the energy of a public market, but still inspiring: buckets of fragrant daffodils and a cheerful array of different tulips make up the focal flowers for their extravagant bouquets. Family members of Xai Cha's Farm, masked and wearing gloves, waved a friendly, "Hello! What would you like?"

Like the market, they don't mind having people just have a look. Each white paper sleeve is bulging in beautiful blossoms in various combinations of flowers, foliage, and filler accents making each one as unique as the individual potential customer. Looking for something

see LOCAL FARM on 12



Angie Vang of Cha Doua Lor's Garden

Photo by Rizaniño "Riz" Reyes

Issaquah teens rally students to procure masks for health care workers



Chin, Lee, Kang and Rudramurthy hand over the masks to UW Medicine on behalf of Washington Youth for masks

By Janice Nesamani
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

Classrooms across the state are empty, malls and restaurants deserted, while freeways and parks show only a trickle of life. Beneath this eerily quiet cover, the state's youth are stirring up a storm to reach out and help. Washington Youth for Masks is an initiative that was started by four students at Issaquah High School. Their aim is to source face masks to health care workers who are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The idea came to Angelina Chin,

see MASKS on 9

Virtual celebration: API Heritage Month

By John Liu
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

Seattle's API Heritage Month Celebration went virtual on May 3 with more than 2,300 viewers tuning in on Zoom while streaming on Facebook Live. The API Heritage Month committee prepared for many hours to make sure the show would not

have any major technical difficulties, and there were none.

The highlight was the Hum Bow eating competition. Since the competition was virtual, all nine competitors had to acquire his and her own hum bow for the competition—from Safeway,

see API HERITAGE on 12



The API Heritage Celebration committee participates in virtual Hum Bow eating contest.

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simple or only have a few dollars? Flowers a la carte/by the stem is also fine. They'll gladly place your flowers in a plastic bag with just a little water to get them home still fully hydrated and carefully wrapped in Kraft paper. It's exactly the same customer service and gracious greetings one would expect, it's just a little different.

When asked how they're coping, "It's been going alright," said Angie Vang of Cha Doua Lor's Garden with a gentle sigh. "It's been challenging as flowers are really coming on in the field and we've been picking like crazy, but then we often don't have anywhere to take them with farmers markets being closed and our regular buyers no longer buying flowers. We have a cooler, but can only hold things for so long and the next crop we harvest needs the cooler space as well," she explained. "It's been really hard trying to find or get to different places to try and sell flowers."

With Mother's Day coming up and graduations, along with other ceremonies, being cancelled or postponed, the farmers rely on such events to sell their products. When asked specifically about Mother's Day and if they're doing anything different, "We are still figuring it out. We ask convenience stores and gas stations to see if they're willing to let us put up a tent so we can sell our flowers. A few family members have been driving around so we can offer no-contact delivery. It's just more time consuming and really hard on us because we have to be out in the fields as well."

With many of the Hmong growers being closely related family members, they are working together during this whole ordeal and adapting as best as they can. A community Facebook group encourages people to support businesses (primarily restaurants) in the Chinatown-International District and there have been several mentions of flowers being offered alongside establishments open for carry-out. Those offering delivery of food are also offering flowers to accompany their meals.

Back at Pike Place Market, open shops for takeout, like Piroshky Piroshky Bakery, Indi Chocolate, and a number of produce vendors, are allowing farmers to bring in their bouquets just to keep the spirit alive. A Drive-Thru Flower Festival—the first ever—is scheduled for May 9 when you can pick up flowers (pre-ordered by May 6) at three pop-up locations in Seattle and one in Renton.



Photo by Rizaniño "Riz" Reyes

A flower stand at a 76 gas station in Bothell, along Hwy 522 and NE 180th.

In Kent, Clarita Santos of Santos Farms was wrapping bouquets as she took a moment to talk to the Northwest Asian Weekly about what their business is doing for Mother's Day. They have a seasonal farmstand where customers can come and pick up freshly cut bouquets from their fields. Business seems to be running as usual and Santos expressed no serious concerns, except for a shortage of materials and supplies from their usual sources. Extended family members help out by delivering a handful of bouquets to Constantino's Produce, who are open for pick-up from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily at Pike Place.

The state of Washington considers farmers as essential and recently declared flower shops and garden centers as essential in late April, as long as they follow safety guidelines. In the current climate of social distancing, quarantine, the thousands of people falling ill, many fighting for their lives, and those grieving the loss of loved ones, flowers have always been a universal gesture of sending well wishes, heightening the senses to sort-of distract oneself from the pain, sorrow, and anxiety they might be enduring. ■

To support the local flower farmers at Pike Place Market, visit pikeplacemarket.org/blog/help-support-pike-place-market-flower-farmers.

To support a GoFundMe campaign for Hmong and Mien flower farmers, go to charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/wa-hmong-farmers-relief-fund.

Tai Tung and Purple Dot Restaurants will give out flowers with to-go orders on Mother's Day.

Rizaniño can be reached at info@nwasianweekly.com.

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Remdesivir has not been formally approved to treat the virus, and U.S. health officials caution new data on the drug has yet to be peer-reviewed.

Drug maker Gilead said it will be able to produce "several million" rounds of remdesivir next year.

The World Health Organization said on May 4 it will speak with the U.S. government and Gilead on how remdesivir could be made more widely available. ■

API HERITAGE from 1

Trader Joe's, HK Dim Sum Restaurant, Tai Tung Restaurant, Delite Bakery, and Homestyle Dim Sum Restaurant. I was also in the contest and my hum bow was made by my wife, Tracy! Luisa Laulile ended up taking 1st place, while Marci Nakano and Nora Lance took 2nd and 3rd place, respectively. Congratulations!

The hour-long show featured Fei Chua playing the national anthem on his trumpet and Po Leapai singing an original song, called "Love Exposed." There was also a video of past performances. Patranya Bhoolsuwan addressed attacks on Asians, specifically the hate stickers found in Seattle's Chinatown in April.

John Chen, the emcee, best summed up the API Heritage Month Celebration.

"I'm so impressed with the team work to put on a well-structured and highly-viewed program. I think it embodies API values, such as hard work, planning, and collaboration. I believe we represented much of the API well during the program. The Quarantine Karaoke competition starts this weekend, go to quarantinekaraoke.eventbrite.com to sign up."

The Quarantine Karaoke competition will be on May 9, May 16, and May 23 from 9-11 p.m. Winners of each day get \$25, and the finalists will compete on May 30 for a \$75 top prize! ■

If you missed the show on May 3 and would like to get future updates, check out facebook.com/apiheritage.

John can be reached at john@nwasianweekly.com.

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