

Virtual bus tour implorers AAPIs to save themselves and country by voting

By Mahlon Meyer
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

It started with the Bruce Springsteen song, “We Take Care of Our Own,” playing in the background.

Then, one after another, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Democratic leaders from Washington state appeared on the screen in a “virtual bus tour” in support of the Biden-Harris presidential campaign. They appealed for action to rally AAPI voters in the upcoming presidential election, arguing that issues crucial to their future would be decided and that they could help swing the election.

The future of the Afford-



able Care Act, hate crimes, and unemployment are all affecting AAPIs more deeply than ever, they said, and implorers people to take action to spur voter turnout. “Can you all imagine

waking up knowing there is someone in the White House thinking of ways to heal?” asked Rep. Grace Meng (D-New York), who also joined the virtual event. While AAPI turnout in

past elections has been relatively low, getting them out to vote is crucial because they represent the

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ID restaurants rewrite recipes for success amid pandemic

By Janice Nesamani
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

On July 23, 2020, a GoFundMe page seeking support for the historic Japanese restaurant Maneki went live. The simple message read, “Our beloved Maneki Restaurant in the heart of Japan Town has been an anchor of the community for generations. During this unprecedented Seattle chapter, we are extending an invitation to those that are able to support us through these challenging times. We are so accustomed to having our reservations and Tatami rooms filled to capacity! It



A cartoon showing Jean Nakayama thanking patrons on Maneki’s GoFundMe page.

is so unusual for us to not be part of your celebrations and conversations. We miss you all.”

Over the next few days, loyal Maneki patrons wholeheartedly supported the restaurant with their generous donations, including \$1,000 from Shiro

SUPPORT MANEKI RESTAURANT

\$40,000 raised of \$20,000



A message thanking donors on Maneki’s GoFundMe page.

Kashiba, the chef of Sushi Kashiba. The page has raised over \$44,000, more than double the amount

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NWAW takes home a record 24 awards, including nine 1st place wins

2 reporters win “News Writer of the Year”



Carolyn Bick Mahlon Meyer Kai Curry



Samantha Pak Sam Le Jason Cruz



Stacy Nguyen Joshua Holland Andrew Hamlin



Janice Nesamani Evangeline Cafe Ruth Bayang

Northwest Asian Weekly (NWAW) publisher Assunta Ng called it an “amazing night.”

NWAW won 24 awards at the annual Washington Newspaper Publishers Association (WNPA) 2020 Better Newspaper Contest—the winners were announced in a first-ever virtual awards ceremony on Oct. 9.

“This is a record-breaking year in the number of awards and first place awards. Five years ago, we won 13. Last year, 11 awards and four 1st place awards,” said Ng.

The annual contest is a chance for non-daily papers across Washington state to compete in a variety of writing, photography, editorial content, advertising, and design categories. The contest covered works published between April 2019 and March 2020. NWAW competed against other newspapers with circulation between 5,001 and 12,500. However, NWAW won five awards in categories spanning circulation groups of all sizes:

Carolyn Bick and Mahlon Meyer won first and second place, respectively, in the News Writer of the Year category for their writing on social justice issues and Asian American immigrants,

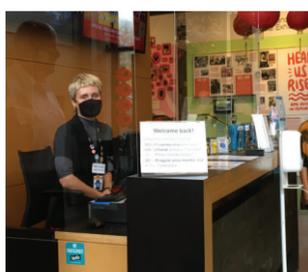
Kai Curry took third prize in the Feature Writer of the Year category,

Samantha Pak and her monthly “On the Shelf” book recommendations took first place in the Topical Column category,

And Sam Le won first place in Video Groups: Lunar New Year Parade.

“It takes a village to put together an event,” said Ng of the Lunar New Year Parade. “The number of people

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it had set out to collect.

However, comments posted on the page struck a chord with Nakayama, who spoke before starting to prepare orders coming in on Sunday evening.

“You can’t plan for a situation like this in which things keep changing. We’re hanging in and just waiting — for a vaccine or a cure,” Nakayama said.

The idea to use the internet and GoFundMe came from “one of the young kids” at her restaurant in the wake of limited online orders and changing regulations. Nakayama offers a gracious thank you to all her supporters. She even sent out emails thanking each of them for their donations. She’ll be sticking to the takeout and delivery methods.

Even before the virus made its way to Seattle and its surrounding cities, businesses in the International District (ID) were adversely affected due to misinformation. Regulations limiting indoor dining and abiding by health guidelines has meant lost jobs, lost incomes, and uncertainty. While it has been difficult, several businesses have cooked up a creative storm to keep their doors open and customers coming back for more.



The siblings pose at their New Wave Summer Weekend venue with mini cheesecakes from Hood Famous Bakeshop

Take Phở Bắc for instance. When Gov. Jay Inslee ordered restaurants to stop dine-in services in March, Phở Bắc was in the same boat as other restaurants in the ID. Yenvy Pham and her siblings, Khoa and Quynh-Vy, whose parents opened the store in Little Saigon in 1982, have turned into a creative collective to find novel ways to help their family business thrive.

“First, we thought of it as something new and were able to adjust with online orders and takeout. Now, it has become the new normal,” Pham said.

The first offering from the restaurant was the ‘Phokit Family Meals’ in two variations with 25% discounts for takeout only. They still offer the bucket with online ordering, but in addition they have Pho Now and Pho Later which offers customers a PhoCup that can be had on-the-go and the latter that packages broth, fresh noodles, and toppings separately with heating and eating instructions.

The siblings also found a novel way to deliver food to customers—the Pho Mobile.

“My brother and I bought the vehicle three years ago at an auction with the idea to use it for festivals and Little Saigon events. We realized we had to really up our game for out-of-restaurant dining, so he revamped the Pho Mobile,” Pham said.

When outdoor seating was allowed by the county, Phở Bắc converted their parking lot into an outdoor seating area.

“We usually participate in Little Saigon events and had used the parking lot before. We thought why not do



The latest offering from Mangosteen at Pho Bac's boat

the end of September.

“City officials were really efficient and fast,” Pham said. “To do it right with the barriers would have cost me \$4,000. I didn’t have that kind of money,” she said.

Pham then connected with the community, local businesses, and the city.

“Ching Chan, who works with the Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority, saw barriers that were donated by the Boy Scouts in their storeroom and loaned them to us,” she said. With help from friends at Mangosteen Boba Bar Seattle and Crawfish King, they collectively had enough tables and chairs.

Phở Bắc has also returned the favor. Their Phokits came with Filipino-inspired cheesecakes from Hood Famous Bakeshop. Mangosteen, which doesn’t have its own brick-and-mortar, leased the closed ‘boat’ space at the restaurant and chef Thai Ha’s smoker was fired up to create the smoked brisket Pho that’s still on their menu.

As Seattle’s rain dampens their outdoor setting, Pham said, “We opened up the second part of our restaurant and are currently building dividers. We are maxed out at 50% in-door seating, but nobody likes to eat outdoors in the rain.”



Purple Dot Cafe storefront

For Carol Xie of Purple Dot, things haven’t changed much since May.

“We are still depending on takeout and delivery. We’re evaluating if opening up for dine-in is a good option now as takeout and delivery is slowing down,” Xie said.

Xie, who operates as a one-woman marketing team to help her family business, began offering gift certificates through an organization called Intentionalist, but stopped when it got too much for her to manage.

“We do have our ongoing social media special. If a customer mentions they follow us on social media, they get an extra 10% off their order,” she said.

again. My siblings and I brainstormed about the theme and what we should do over dinner,” Pham said.

The next day, she applied for a permit to serve alcohol outside, a month later they were approved, and that’s the story behind New Wave Summers that ran every weekend from the end of August to

Crawfish King, on the other hand, had set itself up with online delivery and takeout a few years ago.

“We didn’t have to go through the two or three week transition to get on the platform. A lot of our regular customers just learned to order online,” Torrey Le said.

While Le hasn’t had to lay off his kitchen staff, he had to furlough some of his serving staff.

“My main concern was how they would be able to keep up with mortgages and rent while we didn’t have enough work for them during the takeout phase,” Le said.

His wife and he worked the front for more than a month, not knowing where the situation would lead them. The restaurant that serves Viet-Cajun food improvised by introducing their patrons to home boil kits.

“We offer a home boil kit, complete with the ingredients, sauces, pot, tablecloth, and cooking instructions,” Le said.

He admits that they didn’t know what to expect and definitely didn’t think they would sell out. “We organized only 100 home boil kits and sold out within 24 hours,” Le said, adding that he was left scrambling to find more pots. Now, the home boil is a permanent fixture on their menu.

“When we realized our numbers balanced out, I decided to change protocol in the restaurant with temperature taking and installing barriers. I asked my serving staff to come back once a week provided they wanted to, so we can transition seamlessly through the pandemic,” Le said.



A variation of the Home Boil Kit Crawfish King put together for Mother’s Day, complete with flowers and something sweet.

While Crawfish King played around with outdoor dining, Le said it’s not feasible.

“A lot of our street parking has been given to International Community Health Services for drive-through testing and I didn’t want to take away from that,” he said. The restaurant still does indoor dining, contact tracing by automatically making people join the waitlist, and has started informing patrons of a 20% gratuity that goes directly to support their staff.

“Indoor dining has been busy for us and customers seem comfortable. We have a lot of barriers, we put our dining tables on the perimeter of the restaurant so a customer can get up to use the restroom without passing another table,” Le said.

With 11 years of business behind them, Le is grateful to customers that came in to support them. “Some come monthly, others weekly, and some came in daily even if it was to order just one item to make sure that we are still here,” he said.

All he asks of people is to go out and support as many small businesses as they can. “It’s more for the workers of small businesses who don’t make as much or have the perks that those who work in larger corporations do,” he said. ■

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REFUGEES from 4

promised to pump the annual refugee goal to 125,000.

There are no voter registration figures for refugees, but the National Partnership for New Americans predicted that 860,000 immigrants of all kinds would gain that right this year by becoming citizens even in the face of barriers like an 83% increase in naturalization fees, from \$640 to \$1,170.

Through its citizenship classes, the International Rescue Committee has helped around 6,000 refugees and other newcomers become Americans each of the last few years. Other groups have also helped refugees become naturalized.

Department of Homeland Security figures in recent years have shown refugees and asylum-seekers are the immigrants most likely to gain citizenship, with a naturalization rate of over 70% during their first decade in the country. Refugees can apply for citizenship after five years as permanent residents.

Once they become Americans, they can register and vote.

Here are a few refugees around the United States voting for the first time:

BAWI UK was a small child when his parents fled Myanmar, leaving him and his siblings to be cared for by their maternal grandmother.

Uk said the family suffered discrimination as Christians in a predominantly Buddhist nation. The military government was also trying to forcibly conscript his father.

“To run for office, you had to be a Buddhist; to rent a house, you had to be Buddhist,” said Uk, a social work student at Rhode Island College and a youth leader at the Refugee Dream Center, an advocacy organization in Providence.

NADA AL-RUBAYE said she never voted in her native Iraq, which she fled after her oldest son and several other family members were killed in the country’s widespread violence.

The Baghdad-born artist and another son spent a few

years in Turkey, but in 2013 were settled in Phoenix.

A U.S. citizen since September 2019, she now paints landscapes featuring the red rock outcroppings of her adopted Arizona and sells her paintings and jewelry online.

“I am so excited!” she said about the upcoming election, flashing a broad smile. “It’s so important for a person to feel like they belong to a country.”

LIAN KUAL never cast a ballot in Myanmar, where elections were criticized as fraudulent during decades of military rule.

In 2008, Kual initially fled his country for Malaysia, and in 2014 was resettled in Salt Lake City, where he works on the overnight shift stocking shelves at Walmart. He was naturalized this year.

“I feel so free to be part of the United States of America,” he said. “I already registered (to vote) at the DMV, and now I’m waiting for my ballot. It’s a really big deal.” ■

Goodbye, Momo!

Closing after 13 years



Tom Kleifgen and Lei Ann Shiramizu

By Vivian Nguyen
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

In the International District (ID), on the corner of South Jackson Street and Sixth Avenue South, sits Momo—the Asian- and Scandinavian-inspired clothing, jewelry,

and home goods shop. Long viewed as a must-visit destination by locals and tourists alike, the shop will soon come to a close after 13 years of operation.

For Lei Ann Shiramizu and Tom

see **MOMO** on 9

22 arrested during Labor Day demonstration



Demonstrators near 5th and Jackson on Sept. 7.

Twenty-two people were arrested after a large group marched from the International District down to the Seattle Police Officer's Guild building on 4th Avenue South on Sept. 7. The arrests were for arson, assault, obstructing and failure to disperse.

Officers recovered intact molotov cocktails dropped by rioters outside the building as officers began making arrests. Officers arrested a number of individuals on 4th Avenue South as they continued to receive rocks, bottles, and explosives thrown at them by rioters. ■

State colleges grapple with fewer international student enrollments



Gauri Nayak

By Janice Nesamani
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

If things had gone according to plan, 22-year-old Gauri Nayak would have been on campus at the University of Washington (UW), one step closer to fulfilling her dream of becoming a User Experience Researcher. But if anything, 2020 showed her how even the best laid plans can go awry.

“I got my admission letter on March 14, 2020 and was very happy. I didn't have a clear idea of how bad things were in the United States, because at the time, the pandemic hadn't reached India yet,” Nayak said. “There were rumors, but couldn't

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New Public Health report on COVID-19 deaths in King County

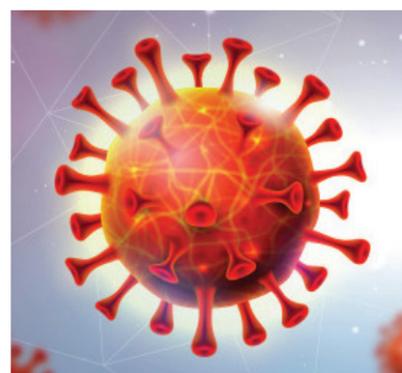
An analysis of deaths associated with COVID-19 in King County published on Sept. 1 shows that deaths have slowed dramatically since the early peak of the outbreak in April. However, COVID-19 still ranks overall as the 6th leading cause of deaths in 2020 in King County.

These are among the findings in a new report from Public Health—Seattle &

King County, “Summary Report on Deaths Associated with COVID-19.”

Through Sept. 1, there have been 724 deaths attributed to COVID-19, with 680 of those confirmed and another 44 that are suspected or pending. In March, the report found that COVID-19 ranked as the third

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wait to complete my internship in July and fly to Seattle in September,” she said.

A few weeks later, Nayak received an email that changed everything. “UW said they might have to conduct all their courses online due to the pandemic, in which case it would be safer, especially for international students, to not come to campus,” she said. UW sent out a form asking if she would like to defer the course or do it virtually with the option of coming to campus when the situation improved. Nayak chose to defer.

“I was very skeptical about remote education. To me, taking classes online defeats the very purpose of wanting to study at a foreign university. You are in the same environment and though you meet new people virtually, the value of physical meetings is priceless. You can’t have those same conversations online,” Nayak said. “When you pay that high tuition fee, you’re buying the whole experience of being in Seattle, at the university, and having conversations with your professors and peers,” she said, “Paying that much for an online experience was not really worth it to me,” she added.

Then, the Trump administration announced foreign students taking virtual classes would not be allowed to stay in the country. “That was very scary. I felt if I decided to go, the policy may change and they could kick me out,” Nayak said. She admits she was depressed by the turn of events. Since then, however, she has had some time to process the situation and hopes to head to UW in Fall 2021. Her experience is just one among thousands whose plans for a life-molding experience at college or university has either stopped in its tracks or switched gears virtually.



Former Gov. Gary Locke

Former Gov. Gary Locke, who is the Interim President of Bellevue College (BC), agrees that enrollments at colleges and universities across the state are down, especially among international students, and the drop is hurting education institute revenues.

“Add to that the fact that the state is also reducing funding for all public universities, whether it’s UW, BC, or Seattle Community Colleges. It is all going to hurt and all colleges are having to look at reducing programs and cutting back and reducing cost,” he said.

While international student enrollments have dropped, BC is still accepting applications and Locke said that when it comes to students within the United States, they might be close to the enrollment figures compared to last year.

“In these tough economic times, people want more job training and retraining, they want that education BC offers. People who have been laid off want new skills they can apply for jobs with, and if they are already working at a company, they want to upgrade their skills so that they can move up and avoid being laid off,” Locke said. “Community colleges are very affordable and we offer programs that range from up to a few months to even a four-year program,” he added.



Scott K. McClellan

Scott K. McClellan, Vice President for University Affairs at Seattle University, explains they will not know the final numbers for a couple of more weeks.

“Overall, our numbers look strong across continuing and transfer undergraduate students with both tracking on goal. The law school has exceeded its goal (they are on semester and started Aug. 24) and it is too early to know overall graduate enrollment numbers, although we expect those numbers to be within range,” McClellan said.

“Our incoming freshman class, like at many institutions, will be lower. We expect to be down at least 100 in our first-time-in-college class over last Fall,” he said. “With the

added expenses for our COVID-19 safety measures, lost revenue from student housing, and a lower than expected freshman class, like other institutions, we are having to address some financial challenges as a result of the pandemic,” he added.

Executive Director of Communications & Recruitment of Seattle Colleges, Barbara Childs, said, “International FTES saw a significant decrease due to coronavirus international travel restrictions and visa regulations. Seattle Colleges had a 30% decrease (327 International FTES) in the Summer Quarter 2020, compared to 2019.” “Although a dramatic decline, the international programs’ office has continued to recruit and enroll students who are attending both in the United States and in their home countries,” Childs said.

Childs shared that in Seattle College’s most recent quarter, Summer 2020, they enrolled 4,155 FTES, 8% less (357 FTES) than their 2019 Summer enrollment. “It’s important to note that both Seattle Central College and North Seattle College increased FTES compared to Summer 2019, despite remote operations and the majority of online-only classes due to COVID-19,” she said. “Seattle Central College was at 108% and North Seattle College was at 105% of their summer enrollment targets,” she said. “South Seattle College, our college that offers proportionately more hands-on professional technical and apprenticeship programs and faced traffic impacts due to the West Seattle bridge closure, decreased by 37% (520 FTES),” she added.

For Seattle University, the health and safety of its campus community has been paramount in its planning. “We are in a primarily virtual learning format for the fall with 90% of classes being taught remotely. The exceptions are a limited number of performance-based, clinical and laboratory courses and a small number of other courses,” McClellan said. With the exception of some programs that include licensure requirements, every student has been given the option to take their courses virtually and every faculty member, the option to teach remotely. “We also moved the Fall quarter up to start September 9 and end November 24 to reduce the amount of travel for students living on campus,” he said.

Childs confirmed that Seattle Colleges will be operating remotely with Fall 2020 classes held online and are taking measures to ensure all students have the access and support they need.

“We are providing for in-person, by appointment, student services for the two weeks leading up to the start of the Fall quarter and for the first two weeks of the quarter,” Childs said. “We will provide computer hardware and hotspots for students in need and have increased virtual services to students by using online video conferencing, web chat tools, and other software to advise and assist them remotely,” she said. Seattle Colleges will also offer a limited number of in-person classes for programs that have been approved for instruction because of their subject matter.

“We are providing a virtual orientation or Summer Bridge program for Seattle Promise students, which will include information on how best to access technology for classes and have adopted a directed self-placement tool for English classes that can be completed online,” Childs said.

At BC, too, some courses will be hybrid. “You can’t teach brain surgery, how to draw blood, or how to use an MRI machine over the internet. Some of these sophisticated, health-related courses need to have in-person instruction. Those students will come to campus for instruction a few days a week,” Locke said.

Nicole Beattie, Associate Director of Communications at BC, said, “Some of the precautionary measures we’ve taken for in-person classes include mandatory social distancing, mask wearing, temperature checks, and daily health assessments prior to coming to class or work.”

Explaining that the health and safety of the community is their top priority, Beattie said. “Some of the measures we have taken are health screening stations for buildings that are holding class (like the T Building for our healthcare labs), and we’ve also developed required training for faculty, staff, and students.” “We also have a process in

place if we do learn a member of our community has tested positive for COVID-19,” she said.

Most faculty and staff at Seattle University will be working remotely and most students learning remotely. “We have taken a comprehensive approach to our health and safety practices that are consistent with or, in some cases, go beyond the state’s guidelines for higher education, and all our planning has been closely coordinated with a highly respected epidemiologist,” McClellan said. “We have limited university-owned housing to single occupancy only rooms, with few exceptions for two students who request to room together,” he said. “All students coming to campus are required to be tested for COVID-19 before arriving. All students, faculty, and staff on campus are also required to perform a daily Safe Start health check screening. Masks, or face coverings, are required of all on campus, whether indoors or outdoors. Enhanced clearing protocols and measures are in place,” he added.

“As a Jesuit university that places a high value on the care of each individual student, we have made equity a priority through technology access and other academic accommodations,” McClellan said. Seattle University has made laptops and internet hotspots available for those who need them. “Additional academic accommodations have been carefully considered and are available for those with disabilities. We developed an enhanced, one-stop student support center to respond to and help students in a timely manner,” he said.

The pandemic has created huge challenges for many students as everything is going online, so ensuring students have laptops and high-speed internet is critical.

“During the Spring of 2020, BC was awarded \$2,072,545 in federal CARES Act funding to allocate to students through emergency financial aid grants. They disbursed about \$1 million to 1,310 students in the Spring Quarter, with the remaining \$1 million set aside for students enrolled in Summer and Fall. “Through our Foundation’s Safety Net Fund, we were able to support more than 50 additional students who weren’t eligible for federal aid,” Beattie said.

BC also received a federal grant of \$1,473,625 to support its campus’ TRIO program, which serves low income, first generation or students with disabilities.

“Our associated student government allocated \$100,000 to fund laptops for students who didn’t have access to technology, which is a great example of students finding creative ways to help each other,” she added.

BC transitioned its student support services to a virtual format, for example, offering remote counseling sessions through an online HIPAA compliant platform called Doxy.Me.

“Everybody is grappling with the challenges of this pandemic whether you are a faculty member, a student, or even a parent. We have counselors to help our students, especially faculty members and students of color who have the added concerns over social issues such as racial injustice,” Locke said.

McClellan points to surveys from last spring at Seattle University that indicated high student satisfaction with its virtual learning with overall numbers meeting and, in some cases, exceeding last fall’s levels.

“Our Center for Digital Learning and Innovation has provided great support and extensive training for faculty to make the transition even smoother this fall as we had more time to prepare for the transition than last March,” he added.

Locke points out that BC was very quick to pivot to online teaching.

“I have to applaud our faculty and staff at BC with how quickly they were able to move online. They were very nimble and dedicated,” Locke said. “The reason we were so successful is we already had some online and hybrid courses. Even so, we want to make sure that the online experience is useful and beneficial, so we have ongoing programs to help our faculty to be even better teaching online,” he added. ■

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YOGA from 8

“It helps you feel more empowered to deal with many situations that are beyond your control,” said Grant.

She teaches yoga with Satya Yoga Cooperative, a Denver-based group operated by people of color that was launched in June 2019, inspired partly by the Black Lives Matter and (hash)MeToo movements. The co-op’s mission: Offer yoga to members of diverse communities to

help them deal with trauma and grief before it shows up in their bodies as mental health conditions, pain and chronic disease.

“When I think about racism, I think about stress and how much stress causes illness in the body,” said Satya founder Lakshmi Nair, who grew up in a Hindu family in Aurora. “We believe that yoga is medicine that has the power to heal.”

Satya’s efforts are part of a growing movement to diversify yoga nationwide. From the Black Yoga Teachers Alliance

to new Trap Yoga classes that incorporate the popular Southern hip-hop music style to the Yoga Green Book online directory that helps Black yoga-seekers find classes, change appears to be happening. According to National Health Interview Survey data, the percentage of non-Hispanic Black adults who reported practicing yoga jumped from 2.5% in 2002 to 9.3% in 2017.

Blacks and Latinos consistently top national health disparities lists, with elevated risks for obesity and chronic

conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and some forms of cancer, which has made them more susceptible to contracting and dying of COVID-19. They also face an elevated risk for depression and other mental health conditions.

Yoga is obviously not a panacea for racism, but it has shown positive results in helping people manage stress, and as a complement to therapeutic work on trauma. ■

ID's first mural sparks a movement across ID, Seattle



Keoke Silvano poses against the mural at Jade Garden restaurant that sparked a movement



The artists that painted the first mural at Jade Garden restaurant

Photos by Keoke Silvano

By Janice Nesamani
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

Halfway around the world on the Indonesian island of

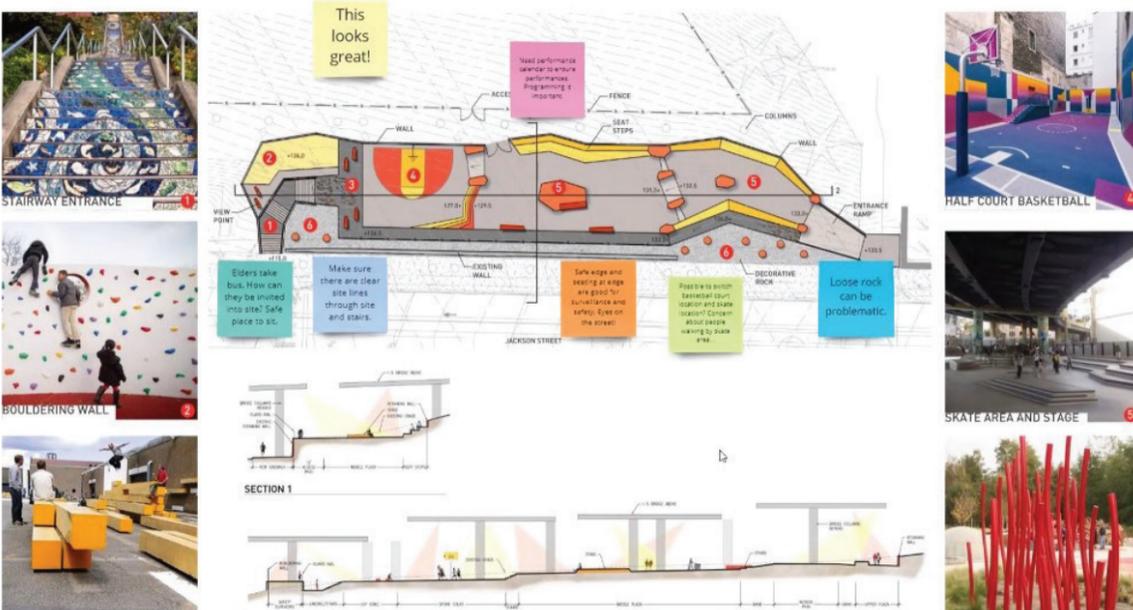
Sulawesi are a series of hands stenciled on the walls of a cool, damp cave. A neighboring cave has the image of a Babirusa, dating back roughly 39,900 years. Scholars call them the first human figurative art. The murals bear

testament to a people and their way of life. They seem to say: “We were here!” “Look, what we lived through!”

see **JADE GARDEN** on 11

I-5 Underpass Park Steering Committee strives to please community, preserve culture

WHERE WE ARE NOW
JACKSON STREET DESIGN



Example of brainstorming done in breakout sessions where ideas were added with sticky notes.

By Kai Curry
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

“When the (I-5) freeway was built in the 1960s, it created a blighted community, a very unattractive space, and it also cleaved the community in half.”

These words, spoken by Tom Im, began the first community meeting of the I-5 Underpass Park Steering Community, part of Interim CDA. Delayed due to the pandemic, the committee, which has been

in place since 2016, decided to get moving again on plans to improve the area underneath I-5 at Jackson and King Streets.

The Committee has sought community feedback before, when it collected close to 300 surveys in 2016 from International District residents as to their thoughts on what to do with this mostly unused space that is an aesthetic and safety concern.

see **I-5 UNDERPASS PARK** on 9

Nikki Haley defends Trump at RNC

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley took aim at Democrats during a prime speaking slot at the Republican National Convention (RNC) on Aug. 24—who she says label America as racist: “That is a lie. America is not a racist country.”

Born Nimrata Randhawa to Indian immigrants, Haley served as President Donald Trump’s first ambassador to the United Nations.

While she spent much of her speech criticizing Democratic candidate Joe Biden and praising Trump, she also invoked her Indian immigrant heritage and position as a “Brown girl in a Black-and-white world” as she argued for a constructive way of uniting the country in the face of racial hatred.

Haley’s speech took on added symbolism coming on the heels of the Democratic National Convention (DNC)’s nomination of Kamala Harris, a Black woman with Indian and Jamaican immigrant parents, for vice president of the United States.

Haley has long been seen as one of the rising Republican stars who may be positioning herself for a next step. She served at the United Nations until



Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley

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Courtesy of SiteWorkshop and Interim CDA

■ ASTROLOGY

Predictions and advice for the week of August 29–September 4, 2020

By Sun Lee Chang



Rat—Even if you are invited in, there are still some boundaries that should be respected in order to maintain harmony.



Dragon—Be careful about what you offer, as you could be asked to assist with more than you initially intended.



Monkey—Practicality has been at the forefront recently, but do find a way to incorporate your creative side.



Ox—Do you want more help than you are letting on? Despite your reticence, it is available for the asking.



Snake—Before you get too carried away making detailed plans, slow down and wait for the results to come in.



Rooster—As you transition to a new routine, there could be a few hiccups. Instead of getting flustered, adjust accordingly.



Tiger—Don't waste time trying to obscure what is really going on. There is no benefit in hiding the obvious.



Horse—As you make progress on your own terms, each successful step will embolden and strengthen you for the next one.



Dog—Add some spark to your day. Rather than doing the same old thing, change it up a bit.



Rabbit—A refreshing new approach has piqued your interest. Experiment with it, including making slight modifications, to suit your needs.



Goat—Shining a light will illuminate both the good and bad. It is to your advantage to get the whole picture.



Pig—Have you been approached for a leadership role? Despite the substantial commitment, it could be quite rewarding.

WHAT'S YOUR ANIMAL SIGN?

RAT 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, 2020 OX 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009 TIGER 1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010 RABBIT 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011 DRAGON 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012 SNAKE 1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013 HORSE 1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014 GOAT 1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015 MONKEY 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016 ROOSTER 1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017 DOG 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018 PIG 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019

*The year ends on the first new moon of the following year. For those born in January and February, please take care when determining your sign.

JADE GARDEN from 1

Seattle in 2020 seems a long way from those rudimentary images, but in Chinatown-International District (ID), the rock face is boards covering storefronts and the artists have access to more color and technology. While some murals simply depict what stores sell, others echo the social conversation in the city. The murals are a sign of solidarity—a community coming together to awaken, heal, and help. And it all began on King Street at Jade Garden.

In March, Keoke Silvano was driving by the restaurant on King Street and noticed construction workers boarding up windows. Wondering if they were going out of business, he went over and spoke to Eric Chan, whose family owns and runs the restaurant. He found out the business had been vandalized and decided to board up to prevent further damage.

“It was completely organic. I didn't set out to start a movement,” said Silvano, who is Filipino. He shares that when he sees something, he is compelled to do something about it. “Boarded up businesses, homes, or warehouses make it seem like nobody is there, nobody cares for the neighborhood. I didn't have a personal connection with the restaurant owners, but this is my neighborhood. I live in Chinatown,” he said. “My aim was to make sure Jade Garden kept going and people knew that it was open,” he added.

A mural, Silvano felt, could do that. He put a callout on Facebook seeking volunteers to help protect Jade Garden and make it look aesthetically pleasing.

“I was expecting to put more work on the request, but within 30 minutes, I had five volunteers. The artists were from the Latino community and really emphasized that our strength is in unity with other communities,” he said.

“Especially with the work that Uncle Bob, Larry Gossett, Roberto Maestas, and Bernie Whitebear put into developing all our communities of color,” Silvano said. “It's a reflection of what they envisioned our communities doing to support each other,” he said. The Jade Garden mural even pays homage to the Gang of Four. This instance soon gained momentum and Silvano is pleased.



Vivian Mak painting her mural at Washington State Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Center on King Street

“The Jade Garden mural served its purpose and business picked up,” he said. Other restaurants on the same block—Tai Tung, Kau Kau, and Harbor City—benefitted, too. The owner of Kau Kau approached Silvano.

“He was apprehensive about boarding up because customers might assume the business was closed,” he said. Turns out businesses are responsible for clearing out graffiti from their property. Otherwise, they can be fined by the city.

However, the threat of fines did not deter Chan from celebrating the murals that sparked this movement.

“It is a beautiful gesture of solidarity. It was touching how the community came together to support us,” he said. Chan hasn't been fined yet, but expects to be next year. That said, he isn't taking the murals down anytime soon. “We're thinking about donating it to Wing Luke Museum,” he added.

After the Jade Garden mural went up, more ID businesses decided to board up their windows after damage from violent protests.

“Che Sehyun worked with the Seattle Art Museum and City of Seattle Arts Commission for financial support,” Silvano said. “He helped organize a lot of other artists and material for a lot of murals to go up,” he said.

“Everybody pitched in. I got some paint, the artists got some material, and people came together and pitched in for supplies,” Silvano said. “We'd put out the time, place, and date, and people would come,” he added.

A young artist, Vivian Mak, saw Sehyun's post on Instagram asking for people to sign up to paint murals in the ID, and said why not.

“I showed up there by myself to create my



Sophia Haddix and Lucy Htoo pose with their completed mural at Sun Bakery.

first mural. There were so many artists and supplies. It was a unique experience with people from all walks of life and cultures—a true representation of Chinatown and Seattle,” Mak said.

Mak's mural adorns the storefront of the Washington State Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Center.

“It was inspired by my last sculpture—a ceramic mask. I was inspired by Blue Willow china. Just like how those traditional blue and white plates or tea sets tell a story through each symbol, I wanted to tell my own story. Each symbolic gesture encapsulates our moments of uncertainty and entangles it with resilience and hopefulness,” she said.

“It was special because Chinatown is close to my childhood when we would go to temple. Having a little part of me inside, it is really nice. The whole process was also different from normal artwork, which is done in isolation. Here, people were passing by and wanted to know more about me and the art I was creating,” Mak said. She also mentions how the owners of Tai Tung kept her well fed with snacks and drinks and made sure she took breaks during the two days she was painting the mural.

Sophia Haddix, a visual artist who painted the mural at Sun Bakery, also heard about the movement through Sehyun and came out to paint her first mural. She collaborated with her friend Lucy Htoo to do the mural.

“We wanted to do something that represented the business. The owners said they wanted something sunny,” Haddix said. So, Htoo and she decided on a vision of the times. “We wanted to show that even though we are in this darkness, there still is light present. Even in the night, the sun and moon are still shining and we also wanted to make it fun and incorporate some food,”

she said.

“I'm a part of Seattle and the ID is part of the community. To be able to stand in solidarity in support of this community and see what we can do to beautify and bring joy in these sombre times just felt right to me,” Haddix said. While she didn't paint a whole mural outside the ID, Haddix went on to help other artists complete another mural in Pioneer Square.

Silvano's favorite mural is the one done at Tai Tung.

“It pays homage to the history of Tai Tung and its connection to Bruce Lee, whose favorite restaurant it was. He is iconic in films and took a strong stance against colonialism through his films,” Silvano said. “The presence of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar with Lee calls to attention the Black Lives Matter movement. It illustrates the unity Lee believed in, the social justice work he was doing in the 1970s, and what that means for us today in contemporary times,” he said.

Silvano remarks that Seattle today is one big art walk all the way from Chinatown through Little Saigon, and Japantown to Pioneer Square, Downtown Seattle, Belltown, and CHOP. Murals across town convey messages talking to different issues.

“All these artists and creatives from different cultures who are going beyond the norm and expressing what these times mean to them when businesses are shutting down and people are losing jobs,” he said. “There is a lot of talent within the community and the murals give them an opportunity to channel their art and express themselves in a positive manner,” he added.

What's more important to him is what happens to these works of art 100 years from now? “If another quarantine breaks out in the future, we are going to be a point of reference. Just like we looked to the Spanish Flu pandemic,” Silvano said. “In 2020, we have the technology to preserve this art. Where do we go to record this? What happens to the art? This is for years to come, this is our answer to a crisis. We have to find a way to preserve it so people in the future can look to us for answers,” he said. ■

Janice can be reached at info@nwasianweekly.com.

Chipped, but not broken

Business at nail salons continue to lag due to coronavirus effects

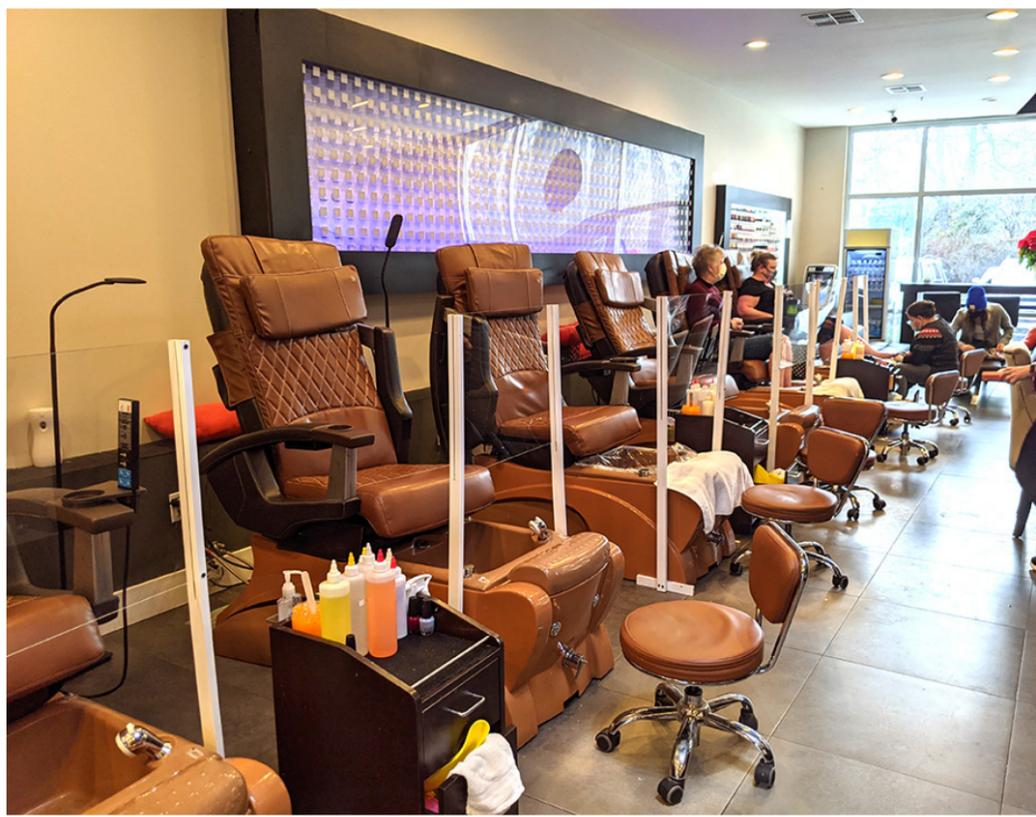


Photo by Janice Nesamani

Empty seats at Wynn Nail Spa

By Janice Nesamani
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

You've had a rough work week and a reward sounds good—for most women (and some men), there's probably nothing more comforting than sinking into a plush massage chair and entrusting your hands and feet to the care of a

nail technician at one of the many nail salons across the city. A warm soak and some TLC later, your hands and feet look and feel ready to take on the world again.

But in a world where we have retreated into the safety of our homes, rely on the protection

see **NAIL SALON** on 12

First COVID-19 vaccines arrive in Seattle this week

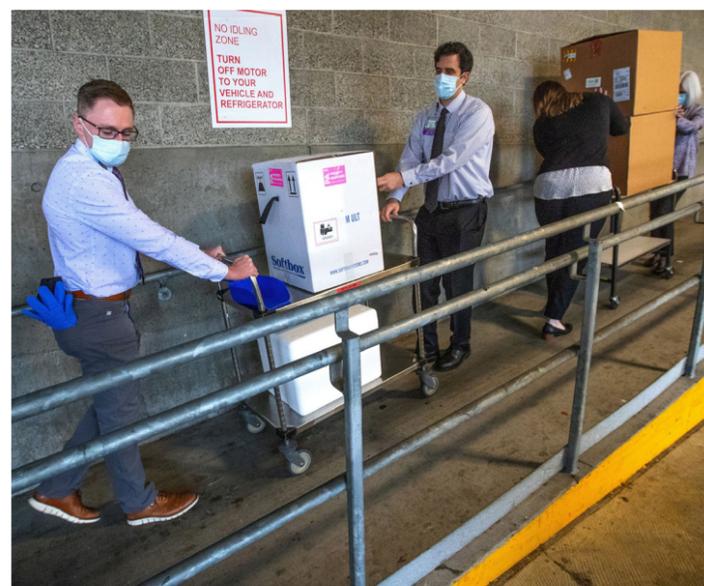


Photo from WA DOH

UWMC Montlake campus Pharmacy Administration Resident Derek Pohlmeier, left, and UWMC Pharmacy Director Michael Alwan transport a box containing the Pfizer coronavirus vaccines toward a waiting vehicle headed to the UW Medicines other hospital campuses on Monday morning, Dec. 14.

“We are ready to go,” Gov. Jay Inslee said during last Sunday’s news conference, referring to the COVID-19 vaccine. “We believe that we can take our first shipments hopefully tomorrow and the first vaccinations start in our state safely as early as Tuesday.”

The day after this press conference, 3,900 doses of

Pfizer’s coronavirus vaccine arrived at the UW Medical Center. This delivery was among the first in Washington state. About 62,400 doses in total have gone out to 40 health facilities across the state.

Here in Seattle, among the first to be dosed with the vaccine

see **VACCINE** on 9

Chinese American World War II vets take life in stride, even while receiving highest honor

By Mahlon Meyer
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

This month, 75 years after the end of World War II, U.S. Congress awarded the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal to the Chinese American veterans of World War II in recognition of their patriotism, loyalty, and courage during a time when our nation denied citizenship to Chinese immigrants. The medal was presented on Dec. 9 by the Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, in a virtual ceremony.

This award puts the veterans in a direct line with George Washington, who was the first recipient.

As many as 20,000 Chinese Americans, including 40% without citizenship, served in World War II. Today, there are only somewhere

between 300-550 still living, according to the Chinese American Citizens Alliance (CACA), which spearheaded and led a decade-long campaign that culminated in the bill.

The bill, enacted into law on Dec. 20, 2018, was bipartisan legislation introduced by Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Thad Cochran (R-MS), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), and Congressmembers Ed Royce (R-CA) and Ted Lieu (D-CA).

“Without this ceremony, many people may not be aware that Chinese Americans had served,” said Ming-Ming Tung-Edelman, the founder of the Seattle chapter of CACA.

For others, it had personal significance.

“My father, Captain Moon Chen, served during World War II and

inspired me to follow in his footsteps,” said Major General William S. Chen, U.S. Army Ret. “Chinese Americans served across the U.S. Armed Forces—Army, Army Air Forces, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine. The award of the congressional gold medal completes the story arc for the Chinese American World War II veterans and paves the way for future generations to serve. They are a source of inspiration and motivation for our younger generations.”

The ceremony also encouraged and educated family members to look through their veteran parents’ documents and increase their understanding of their stories, said Tung-Edelman.

see **VETS** on 9



Courtesy of Gene Moy

Gene Moy

NAIL SALON from 1

of our facemasks, and subconsciously maintain a distance of six feet from others, something as routine as getting a manicure or pedicure is not as comforting as it once was.



Wynn Nail Spa

Just like restaurants and the travel industry, the nail salon industry has lost some of its varnish. Lynn Tran is the owner of Wynn Nail Spa in Issaquah. Pre-pandemic, a weekend appointment was something that would be tough to get, but if you did manage to make your way into one of their massage chairs, your nail technician would offer you a glass of wine to go with the pampering you were about to receive.

Today, while she has managed to find some normalcy by swapping out her wine glasses for throw-away plastic cups and having masked and gloved technicians scrub away at customers' hands and feet across plexiglass barriers, things weren't looking too good a few months ago.

"We all had to go on unemployment when the shutdown was announced in March," Lynn said. In the summer, when things got better, she was happy that they could open—much better than keeping the shop closed. However, business was bad.

"We saw an almost 50% decline in business when we opened, things got a little better in the summer, but then cases went up again and we now have to operate at 25% capacity," Lynn said.

"Earlier I had thirteen girls working for me, but now I have only eight," Lynn said. Though she decided to cut hours instead of jobs. "Some of my girls left because their husbands got laid off, and they needed the insurance or because they had to make the decision to stay home and look after their kids who now had to attend school from home," she said. "A few others left because they couldn't make ends meet due to the reduced hours," Lynn said, adding that she would really like to hire them back when things get back to normal.

Lynn was very particular about having safety measures at the salon. Bottles of sanitizer greet you when you enter, masks are mandatory, and seats and equipment are sanitized after every customer. That's what's keeping employees safe and customers comfortable.

"We have had to increase our prices by \$5 to pay for the extra costs though," Tran added.

Waiting to get her nails done at Wynn Nails was Betsy Alementor, a retired paraeducator who's a regular at the salon.

"They make you wash your hands before you do anything, they have screens put up, and they make everyone wear masks. That's important to me. I see how the pandemic has impacted them because I've been here when there were only two people in the salon," she said.

Lynn is cognizant that she is among the lucky few who have seen loyal customer support carry her through these tough times.

Kathy Tran (no relation to Lynn Tran), who owns Seattle Nail Supply, a beauty supply store in International District, says her business has taken a hit because of the tough times being faced by nail salons in the city. "Honestly, my loyal customers are doing really badly, and I think it's the same for every nail salon today," Kathy said. She knows of many salon owners who have had to cut employee hours or ask them to share hours because business is so bad.

"Sales have seen a 75% drop, and it's roughly the same for salons," Kathy said. "For my business, I have tried and succeeded in keeping all my employees working their normal hours. I have tried my hardest to do it, but it is difficult," she said.

In the meantime, Kathy has trained her staff to sanitize the store, wear masks, and use hand sanitizer to keep them safe. "I'm hoping that the vaccine comes out soon, so things can get back to normal," she said.

For Lam Huynh, who owns and runs Sen Salon on East Madison Street, the stakes are high. Hers is a family business that has been operational since 2004 and she is stressed by the downturn in business.

"Our sales went down 25% and I had to let go of half of our staff," Huynh has had to trim her budget and staff. "Without her regular volume of customers, she



Lam Huynh at Sen Salon

Photo provided by Lam Huynh

has resorted to opening an hour later and closing a little earlier, too."

Between scheduling efficiently and speaking to her landlord to allow her to pay lower rent until business picks up, Huynh has to ensure the health of her staff and customers.

"So far, my staff is taking care of themselves very well. I often remind them to maintain social distancing and wash and sanitize their hands," she said. So far, her salon has seen no infections and her customers are appreciative of the measures she has taken.

When asked if she hopes the holiday season may have things looking up, Huynh is skeptical. "We haven't seen a rise in sales during the holidays as people are still scared," she said. To drum up business, she even offered a special Black Friday discount, but says with sales being low, she doesn't have the bandwidth to offer any more deals.

"Sales in winter are normally low and I don't see things looking up until May," Huynh said. "I hope the government can help, but so far we have to try to survive with what we have as there is nothing we can do. Everyone is struggling," she said.

While news of the vaccine has her looking up, she said, "I think some things are here to stay, I see us wearing masks and putting up barriers in our salons for a while."

While we're all looking forward to the day when the masks slip off and the barriers come down, a little support may keep your local nail salon in business long enough to pamper you... when things get back to normal. ■

Janice can be reached at info@nwasianweekly.com.

SUGAR & SPICE from 8

a tremendous Asian American following. It's a way to say thank you to them."

In Hollywood, it can often feel like studios only cast Asians in narratives where there's some kind of hardship or East-meets-West struggle. And with TV holiday movies, they're almost nonexistent. Meanwhile, there are white actors who have made a baker's dozen of them. Like any other group, Giroux says, Asians deserve to see themselves in lighthearted fare regularly.

"I think it's so important to have all sorts of stories with any culture—for them to have exposure to the stories of struggle but it's such a delight to see something lighter, to see aspects of culture that aren't surrounded with times of difficulty," Giroux says.

Giroux, who is Canadian, is also looking forward to queuing up a movie where his grandparents can see themselves.

"I'm really excited for them to see a story that covers part of their story. My grandparents immigrated here from China in the '50s," Giroux says. "That's why being part of

this project is telling a story that I'm really a part of."

Lai grew up loving romantic comedies. She remembers unexpectedly getting emotional watching "Crazy Rich Asians," the first major Hollywood studio film with an all-Asian cast in 25 years.

"You hear people say there hasn't been a movie like this in 25 years. You hear those things. But it's not until I sat in the theater and watched someone who looked like me on screen who wasn't a ninja or a nerd but someone just like me. I remember the way it felt," Lai says. "I am so excited that there's another movie like that and hopefully we bring joy and open some minds with this movie and more opportunities."

The movie is lovingly sprinkled with Chinese American nuances on script and screen. These include a photo of Suzy's deceased grandma flanked by incense sticks and the entire family eating with chopsticks. And it is definitely the only Christmas movie to feature both gingerbread and stinky tofu, a beloved Chinese dish known for its pungent smell.

"I love that we were able to kind of include a lot of nice details. ... It's really a romantic comedy where the

characters happen to be Asian American," says Jennifer Liao, the director. "It's nice to make an Asian American movie that's not necessarily completely frontloaded with having to carry the weight of cultural identity issues and things like that."

"Sugar & Spice" is not the only holiday movie expanding the definition of who can lead these kinds of flicks. A handful of networks, including Lifetime and Hallmark, have a Christmas-themed movie on their slate featuring a same-sex pairing. Tony winner Ali Stroker, who uses a wheelchair, stars in Lifetime's "Christmas Ever After."

Does Liao feel pressure as "the first" even on such an innocuous project to bring in a sizable audience? "I feel like the pressure is more to deliver something that I and everybody else (who) worked on (this) can be proud of. That was really No. 1," Liao says.

Lai doesn't see the point of getting caught up in things like ratings.

"I think that it is really, really nice to hear when someone says 'I got to see someone who looks like me on screen.' That will never get old," Lai says. "We get more responses like that—for me, the movie did its purpose." ■

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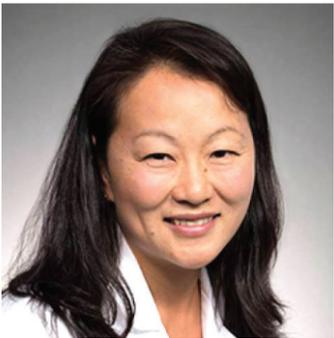
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Antiviral drug, tested at UW School of Medicine, shows promise in fight against COVID-19



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.

VIRTUAL CALENDAR

5.7 - 5.31

PIANIST SATOKO FUJII AND TRUMPETER NATSUKI TAMURA ARE PRESENTING DAILY
Facebook live at facebook.com/fujii.satoko

5.8

MOHAI'S BEHIND THE SEAMS: ZOOM IN ON THE DETAILS FASHION LECTURE
Register at <https://bit.ly/3fv6TFJ>
5 p.m.
Webinar
programs@mohai.org

5.10

ASIAN HALL OF FAME INFLUENCERS JOIN FORCES IN MOTHER'S DAY CONCERT

Livestream from LA
3 p.m. PST
asianhalloffame.org

5.11

THE VIRTUAL SCREENING AND DISCUSSION, "WORLD AND WGBH PRESENT ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION"
WGBH & PBS
7 p.m., EST
<https://bit.ly/35CQBFT>

5.13 - 6.24

EVERY WEDNESDAY COVID-19: PIVOTING TO RECOVERY AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH
5:30-6:30 p.m.
Register at <https://bit.ly/35ysQPz>

LIU from 4

entry, authorities said.
Liu's wife was not home at the time of the shooting, and it did not appear that anyone else was in the residence.
Liu was a research assistant professor in the computational and system biology department in the School of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh and had recently started working on a project involving the coronavirus. A statement issued by the department said Liu was an outstanding and prolific researcher and an excellent mentor. ■



MASKS from 1

who incidentally has family and friends in China that manufacture medical protective equipment. She reached out and was able to secure 50,000 surgical masks for health care workers in Washington state, shipped directly to her home.

"I heard many medical professionals were being asked to reuse masks and personal protective equipment (PPE). There is a huge shortage and I realized we couldn't rely only on state and federal agencies to provide PPE. We needed a public initiative to help our health care workers," Chin said.

Chin's family in China had to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic earlier and she realized that a shortage of masks would hit America soon. Her mother, who works with Food with Love that provides meals for health care workers, was able to use her network of medical professional contacts to guide the girls to identify which hospitals needed urgent help.

Chin spoke about her idea to three of her close friends — Isha Rudramurthy, Faith Lee, and Claire Kang — who decided to pitch in and help pay for the masks and bring them to Washington.

"When Angelina told us she had secured about 50,000 masks but needed funds to pay for them and get them here, I really wanted to help," Lee said. She helped spread the word, draft the campaign on social media, and speak to the media.

The foursome also used social media to spread the

word, set up a website and organization committee, and rallied funds on GoFundMe to buy medical masks. Soon, they attracted a willing army of local student representatives across the state.

"Many have started small businesses such as tutoring, music lessons, writing blogs to spread the word, and selling clothes or crafts to raise funds," Chin said.

This statewide response has really inspired Rudramurthy.

"We saw a lot of people stepping up, especially kids. A lot of us have seen young people acting irresponsibly and not following social distancing norms," she said. "We felt helpless that we couldn't stop them, but starting this initiative and bringing about actual physical change that will help slow the spread is really inspiring," Rudramurthy added.

Within weeks, Washington Youth for Masks has raised around \$17,000 and made a delivery of 24 large boxes of surgical masks to a grateful staff of medical practitioners at UW Medicine.

For Kang, helping out was personal. Before the pandemic, she volunteered at Issaquah Swedish Hospital and UW Medicine Center.

"I saw the impact the shortage of PPE equipment could have on doctors, patients, and everyone else on staff," Kang said. "When the stay-at-home order was announced, I felt privileged that I could spend time with my family, but front-line health care workers have to work around the clock. The least I could do was to try and give back by providing PPE equipment," she said.

"Handing over the masks and seeing the gratitude from people I'd worked with gave me a warm feeling. I spent a lot of my time in the summer volunteering there. I know how hard it can get. And if it is hard for volunteers, I can only imagine how hard it is for employees in these times," she added.

The girls also have another motive behind their initiative and that is to show the Asian community in a positive light. Impacted by news, messages, and videos she saw on the news and online, Chin wants to raise awareness that this is not one race's fault or one race's disease.

"This is everyone's fight and we have to unite. Our initiative tells everyone in the community that this is everyone's fight and everyone has a role to play to stop the spread of the disease," she said.

While the girls are trying to keep the momentum of their campaign going, they have chalked up plans for what they can do in case they reach their goal.

"We would like to expand offering PPE masks to smaller hospitals. We could also partner with local businesses to provide health care workers with meals or other services, it would be beneficial to the workers and also boost local businesses," Kang said. ■

Contribute to Washington Youth for Masks' campaign at gofundme.com/ff/washington-youth-for-masks-covid19-support-fund/donate.

Janice can be reached at info@nwasianweekly.com.

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