The Boston Chinatown Resident Association met at the Josiah Quincy Lower School on Jan. 2.

By Ling-Mei Wong

The Boston Chinatown Resident Association named three consultants and discussed medical insurance benefits for seniors at its monthly meeting on Jan. 2 at the Josiah Quincy Lower School.

As temperatures dropped to the 30s, the cafeteria remained nearly full of Chinese senior citizens. “Thank you for turning out and showing your concern for the community,” said Chairman Henry Yee.

Yee named three honorary consultants at the meeting. They were Wing Kay Leung of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association; Gilbert Ho of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association; and Michael Wong of Lun Fat Produce and head of the Chinatown Crime Watch.

Wen Xian, Community Outreach for SWH, presented changes to medical benefits for seniors covered by SWH. Changes included coverage for a pair of glasses every five years instead of every seven years and a new management company for mental services.

State benefits depend on Massachusetts residency, which requires seniors to live in the state for at least six months of the year. “If you travel, don’t stay for more than 30 days,” she said. “Your Social Security and federal benefits will be cut.”

Insurance fraud was discussed, as many of the elderly citizens traveled to other states or overseas to visit their children. Wen advised them not to claim benefits from multiple states or countries. “An older person was caught claiming benefits from both the United States and China,” she said. “When he told the government officials that his U.S. retirement benefits went a long way in China, he lost his benefits.”

The senior citizens were urged to install phones in their homes, with several stall phones in their homes, with several

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Chinatown Safety Committee reviews local crime

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The Penang Restaurant at 685 Washington Street, Boston sought the committee’s approval for a new management company for mental health services.

Barbara Rubel, President of the Penang Restaurant, said the restaurant would go before the Boston Health Department for mental health services.

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Three robberies took place in Chinatown over the weekend, said Chief climbs. “Unless they dramatically change their proposal, they’re not going to get a positive reaction from this group,” Moy said.

Community announcements included free dental exams on Jan. 9 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, 1 Kneeland Street. Senior dental students will see patients who haven’t been to the dentist in years, said Barbara Rabel, Director of Community Relations for Tufts University.

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Event Calendar

Guzheng winter concert
Saturday, Jan. 12
2:30 p.m.
114 Centre Street
Hall
Malden
To help Malden residents facing foreclosure, the Malden Redevelopment Authority will present a winter guzheng concert for her students. Guzheng is a 21-stringed Chinese zither that has about 2,500 years of history. In the ancient time it was played by court and folk musicians. Students will perform both traditional and modern music. Concert is free to the public.

Contact: Shin-Yi Yang: 617-679-3000, or contact@shinyiyang.com

BALA lecture
Saturday, Jan. 12
6 - 10 p.m.
315 Tang Center, MIT E51
ACDC
Boston Asian Landlord Association (BALA) will hold their January lecture with the theme “Landlord and law - possible civil and criminal responsibilities.” Lawyer Jia Jiawen is invited as the speaker. After the lecture, there will be a meeting to discuss the accomplishment of BALA in 2012, and to look forward to programs in 2013.

Boyle: Liu will also give a solar panel memo.
Contact: Sharen Pan: 617-834-4671, or midtown.com

Malden foreclosure forum
Thursday, Jan. 17
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Jackson Suite Function Hall
114 Centre Street
Malden, MA 02148
A free informational event to help Malden residents facing foreclosure will be held at Jackson Suite Function Hall. Residents are welcomed to join in to hear presentations on face-to-face with local leaders in foreclosure and eviction prevention, as well as get tips on Lead Paint grants through the Malden Redevelopment Authority. Refreshments will be served. Free parking at the Jackson Street Garage.

Contact: 781-873-0230
Free financial management lecture
Saturday, Jan. 19
10 - 11:30 a.m.
ACDC
Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC) will hold a free lecture to house owners talking about financial management. Lecture content includes taxes paying, energy saving, court prevention, how to save money, how to hold your house value, and how to fill out a tax form. Lecture will be given in English with Mandarin and Cantonese translations.

Sign up: Lihua Li: 617-482-3280, or chopi@asiancde.org
May Liu: 617-482-3056

Lowell lecture
Thursday, Jan. 24
6 p.m.
Rabb Lecture hall, Central Library
700 Bolyston Street
Boston, MA 02116
Maya Lin, designer of the Vietnam Veteran Memorial, will speak in the Lowell Lecture Series with the theme “Common Ground,” which is part of the Building Boston initiative. Lin has created a remarkable body of work that includes large-scale installations, intimate studio artworks, architecture, and memorials. Her artwork has been shown in museums and gallery exhibitions around the world. For more information about the Lowell Lecture Series, please visit www.bpl.org/news/lowell/

Islamic art exhibition
Jan. 31 - June 1
Harvard Art Museum/Arthur M. Sackler Museum
485 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02138
The special exhibition “In Harmony: The Norma Jean Calderwood Collection of Islamic Art” will be presented to the public. The display of 150 objects includes ceramics, illustrated manuscripts, drawings, and lacquerware, and represents 30 years of committed collecting by a scholar and teacher of Islamic art. Other events include gallery talks, a performance of stories from the Shahnama by acclaimed storyteller Xanthe Gresham, and special programming for K-12 educators.

For more information please visit www.harvardartmuseums.org/calendard.

National Pancake Day
Tuesday, Feb. 5
7 a.m. - 10 p.m.
IHOP Restaurant
1850 Soldiers Field Road
Brighton, MA 02135
Want a free pancake for breakfast to start the National Pancake Day? IHOP restaurants are inviting guests to enjoy a complimentary stack of IHOP’s signature delicious buttermilk pancakes while celebrating Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals’ 30th Anniversary. Guests are encouraged to make a voluntary contribution to local charities. The restaurant chain hopes to raise $3 million as the first national fundraising campaign to kick off the 2013 fundraising year for Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals. For more information on National Pancake Day, please visit www.ihoppancake day.com/.

Subsidized Waiting List Open
Waiting list for one and two bedroom subsidized apartments open at Bedford Village Apartments, Bedford MA. For one-bedroom, rents start at $777 and up. Two bedroom apartments start at $934 and up. Includes heat, hot water, and cooking gas. Income restrictions apply. EHO 781-275-1038.
Chinese Nobel laureate celebrates new book in Boston

BY LING-MEI WONG

Nobel laureate Gao Xingjian spoke about his work and identity on Jan. 3 at the Westin Copley Hotel.

“Gao is now a French citizen and has not returned to China since 1987, apart from Hong Kong and Taiwan. I identify myself as a citizen of the world,” he said.

“His wonderful mind.”

“Gao Xingjian is the perfect author to include in this series of ours,” said Vic Mair, general editor of the Cambria Sinophone World Series, which published Gao’s new book. “He’s a writer and speaker of Chinese, and an émigré and filmmaker. “He has written in many genres and that is what this book is all about,” said Mair.

“She has everything.”

Gao was born in 1940 during the Japanese invasion. He studied French in college and became a translator. After writing several plays in the 1980s, he moved to Paris in 1987.

“When I heard the report about Tiananmen Square, I knew I couldn’t go back, so I began my life abroad,” Gao said.

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BY LING-MEI WONG

When Danfeng “Annie” Chen came to America, she had no family and no English skills.

She enrolled in basic English classes, but felt stuck in terms of improvement. That changed when she signed up for the Next Steps Transitional English Program in 2009 at the Asian American Civic Association. (The Sampan newspaper is published by the AACA.) “My English skills have improved greatly,” Chen said. “If I hadn’t taken part in Next STEP, I wouldn’t have gotten my brother’s license and my English would have been much worse.”

Today, Chen is the senior marketing director for the World Financial Group (an Aegon company). She educates middle-class and low-income families on how to manage money, with no charge to the clients.

“Each person is affected by money, but many don’t understand inflation, taxes or financial management,” Chen said. “After we educate them, they will tell us about their personal money issues and we try to help them.”

Along with improving her career, Next STEP made Chen feel welcome. “My teacher Richard Goldberg didn’t just give me English and job training skills, he gave me a ‘family’ feeling, because I was alone in America,” she said. Goldberg is Next STEP’s education director. “Annie was a great student, she really pushed herself,” he said. “It’s just a pleasure to teach folks like her, who are there because they want to be.”

“Next STEP is a good bridge to go to college and join the work force,” Chen said. “It’s a good platform for new immigrants to greatly improve their English, job skills and go to school.”

Next STEP celebrates its 20th anniversary at 5 p.m., Jan. 17 at 87 Tyler Street. Before 2010, the program was known as Massachusetts English Literacy Demonstration and later as the ABE program. Current and former students can RSVP at rsvp.aaca-boston.org.

Incident

Danfeng “Annie” Chen, a graduate of the Next STEP adult education program.

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Chinatown crime blotter

SUBMITTED BY THE BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

All reports are submitted by the Boston Police Department. The time period is from Dec. 28, 2012 to Jan. 3 for District 1 and Chinatown.

To report a crime or suspicious activity, call 911. Interpreters are available for Chinese speakers.

The American Diabetes Association, the nation’s largest voluntary health organization leading the fight to stop diabetes, announced Dr. George King of Dover, Mass., has been named a member of the board of directors for the association. As a board member, King is responsible for the oversight of the association’s key strategic objectives. Additionally, he will work closely with the association’s volunteers and staff on initiatives in support of the organization’s mission during his tenure.

King is senior vice president, chief scientific officer and head of the section on vascular cell biology at Joslin Diabetes Center, as well as a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School in Boston. His work focuses on finding the causes of diabetes complications, exploring insulin actions on blood vessels, discovering factors and new treatments for diabetes complications, and understanding the reasons for the high rate of diabetes in Asian Americans.

King has been actively involved with the American Diabetes Association for more than 30 years. On a national level, he has served as chair of the Council on Complications and held memberships on the Scientific Review Committee, Asian Pacific American Diabetes Action Council Advocacy Committee and the Scientific Program Committee for Scientific Sessions. He also served as associate editor for diabetes. Additionally, he is involved with the local New England office.

King received his doctor of medicine degree from Duke University School of Medicine in Durham, North Carolina.

Diabetes is a serious disease that affects the body’s ability to produce or respond properly to insulin, a hormone that allows blood glucose to enter the cells of the body and be used for energy. Recent estimates project that as many as one in three American adults will have diabetes by 2050, unless they take steps to stop diabetes.

For more information, please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit www.diabetes.org.
By day, Phil Amara teaches fourth grade at the Josiah Quincy Lower School. By night, he battles masked villains and saves villages from dooms. “The Treehouse Heroes and the Forgotten Beast,” Amara’s first picture book, was published November 2011. Five young superheroes and their teacher reside in a tree house. They band together and rescue the magical Zez from the evil General Moon.

The book features lush watercolor drawings, illustrated by Lucasfilm animator Alina Chau. Amara, a former comics editor, came up with the story’s concept and would bounce ideas off Chau. Unlike a traditional storybook with the illustrations filled in after the writing, Amara and Chau created the words and illustrations filled in after the writing, and Chau developed the story and illustrations together.

“There are lots of good artists with technical skill, but not everyone is a collaborator,” Amara said. “It was a match between me as a creator and Alina as an artist.”

The Treehouse Heroes combine their superpowers — incredible strength, shape shifting, remarkable speed, teleportation and a voice like the wind — to shape shifting, remarkable speed, telepotation and a voice like the wind — to help others. While the book has magical elements, it incorporates teamwork and environmental awareness as well. When the Zez is freed, it brings an old tree to life and learns when people care for the land.

“We both believe to make a good story for kids, it doesn’t need to be violent, vulgar or outrageous to get children’s attention,” Chau said. “It’s a good story that kids can learn a lesson from. They are not reading it because it must be read, but because it’s fun.”

The book’s look is based on traditional Chinese art. “The Zez character is based on the qilin,” Chau said. “The bad guy, General Moon, is totally inspired by Peking opera costumes.”

Chau has worked on 3-D animation for “Star Wars: The Clone Wars,” but the Treehouse Heroes book was the first time she had so much input into the final product. “Working with Phil is very fun,” she said. “It’s very hard to find a creative partner or collaborator because artists have a strong style or vision. But Phil and I, we have similar taste and philosophy, especially in writing books for children.”

Amara and Chau established several guidelines for the Treehouse Heroes. For Amara, the book combines his passions. “This came from two sides of my brain. One is the teacher side that wants to create something my fellow teachers and I can use in class,” he said. “The other side is I wanted to take the next step after comics.”

There may be more Treehouse Heroes books to come. For the first book, Amara hopes it entertains children and inspires them. “What the heroes realize is magic is one part, but the rest is up to you,” he said.

The book’s look is based on traditional Chinese art.
Ward off dry winter skin with homemade facials

BY SUDAN ZHUANG

The weekend is the best time of the week to pamper and unwind. It’s finally time to get off work and spend time with family and friends. Most people hang out with friends and family on the weekend. However, the wintry weather is harsh on skin with blisterly winds and indoor heat. To re-store your skin’s moisture, homemade face masks repair and brighten your skin. A homemade mask is designed to treat dry sensitive skin, as well as pimples and irritation. In general, masks should stay on for 15 to 20 minutes. You can prepare with a steaming hot washcloth first, apply the mask and then gently wash it off with your hands in a circular motion. While some homemade masks work best for dry and sensitive skin, there are amazing recipes that work on all skin types.

The best homemade facial is honey. Use a hot washcloth to open your skin pores and then apply the honey. Leave it on for 15 to 20 minutes, rinse it off with warm water and then use cold water to close your pores. Use it twice in a row and once a week. Mix honey with little ground oatmeal, which makes a great exfoliating face mask.

The second best homemade face mask would be egg white. I use egg white to cure my allergies. Some and once a week. Mix honey with little

yolk, then beat the egg white until it is frothy. Spread it all over your face. Wait until it dries, then rinse it off. Your face will feel very clean and tight after this application. You can also use the yolk you have left over for cooking.

The kind of mask that is best for you depend on your skin type. For dry skin, try combining an egg yolk mixed with olive oil and warmed honey; sour cream; plain olive oil and avocado.

Directions
1. Place ingredients in a bowl
2. Mix until you get a paste
3. Immediately apply to face and leave for 15 to 20 minutes
4. Add cucumber slices on top of your eyes for softening and soothing
5. Go to the sink and gently scrub the mask into the skin
6. Rinse with lukewarm water
7. Rinse again, with cool water
8. Pat skin dry with towel

These homemade and do-it-yourself face masks are easy, quick and affordable. Most of these ingredients are probably in your kitchen or fridge. If not, you can find them easily at supermarket and make a face mask for yourself.

Are you ready to make one to beat the wintry weather and make your complexion smooth? If yes, what are you waiting for? The moisture of your skin can be restored from the comfort of your home.

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Korean playwright to unveil play in Boston

BY LING-MEI WONG

Playwright Mia Chung celebrated her new play in Boston on Jan. 5.

Chung’s play “You for Me for You” will be presented by Company One from Jan. 8 to Feb. 16 at the Boston Center for the Arts Plaza Theatre. The new play was produced in November by the Woolly Mammoth Theatre in Washington, D.C., the first of Chung’s works to appear on stage.

The play is about two sisters in North Korea who decide to flee. One stays behind, while the other sister reaches New York and raises money to bring her sister overseas. “You for Me for You” refers to the sisters’ efforts to help each other. “One theme of the play is sacrifice,” Chung said. “As family sacrifices for each other, it’s an ongoing chain.”

More than 60 actors, community activists and supporters gathered at the home of Mary Chin, president of the Asian American Civic Association. (The Sampan is published by the AACA.)

Guests watched a scene from the play and enjoyed two piano solos by Soomi Lee. Lee’s mother escaped from North Korea, making the play deeply personal. Like the protagonist Junhee, she never saw her siblings again.

“The script is beautiful, relevant, important and necessary,” said Shawn LaCount, artistic director for Company One. “There is no value for its social mission, not just entertainment.”

"It’s a dangerous play; it’s a funny play,” LaCount said. With North Korea launching nuclear missiles, Chung’s work reflects current events. At the same time, Chung celebrates universal themes that transcend borders.

For more information on “You for Me For You,” please visit www.comp-aac.org

HIRING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Board of Commissioners of the Saugus (MA) Housing Authority is presently accepting resumes for the full time position of Executive Director requiring a 37.5 hour work week. The Saugus Housing Authority is a medium size PHA, managing 100 units of Federal housing, 205 units of State added Conventional housing; 150 Section 8 Rental Assistance vouchers, 8 units of Chapter 689 housing, and 24 units of State Family housing, for a total of 473 units. The present staff includes 10 full time employees, and one part time employee. Minimum qualifications are four years in housing, community development, public administration, or another closely related field. In addition, knowledge of the principles and practices of housing management, finances, and maintenance systems in public or private housing is preferred. The candidate should possess written and verbal skills, and must be bilingual. One year’s experience overseeing at least three staff persons or program administration is required. Knowledge of laws regulating State and Federal housing programs is preferred. Certification as a Public Housing Manager from a HUD approved organization is required, or the ability to obtain a PHM certification within one year of hire. The qualification may also be substituted by certification as a property manager or similar classification by a nationally recognized housing or real estate organization or by certification as a MPHFA of a DHCD approved Massachusetts Public Housing Administrators Certification Program. A bachelor’s degree in a related field may substitute for up to two years of experience. The salary range is $41,626 - $47,000. Interested applicants can submit a resume and cover letter by Fridays, February 8, 2013 via regular mail or e-mail to: shaexdirsearch@yahoo.com.

The Saugus Housing Authority
Attn: Stanley T. King, Chairman
19 Talbot Street
Saugus, MA 01906

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If you would like more information or to apply, please call 1-800-225-3151.
Understand radon lung cancer risks

BY HAO LU

Just arrived in Boston? Need to relocate because of work? Renting or buying a house for your family? No rush. Before moving into your new home, make sure that the apartment or house has been tested for indoor radon levels and you are not at risk for radon gas exposure, which may cause lung cancer.

January ushers in a new year and National Radon Month. It is time to raise awareness about the dangers of high radon levels in homes, as well as to learn the danger of this odorless, invisible gas and its effects on the body.

Radon, a radioactive gas that is found in nearly all soils, has been identified as one of the leading causes of lung cancer in the United States. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, radon causes between 15,000 and 22,000 lung cancer deaths every year in the United States.

On the National Radon Month website, a radon map shows where the gas is most prevalent in the United States. Massachusetts areas have moderate to high radon levels on the map. According to the map, areas that have a predicted average indoor radon screening level greater than 4 picocuries per liter would be considered as high radon level. On the other hand, if the average indoor radon screening level is less than 2 pCi/L, the radon level is relatively low.

How does radon get into homes? Radon is a naturally occurring, odorless, colorless and radioactive gas produced by the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water. Since air pressure inside homes is usually lower than the pressure in the soil around the foundation, radon will move up through the ground to the air above, being drawn into the building through openings or cracks. Radon may also be found in well water and be released into homes when water is used for showering and household uses.

Once radon enters a home, it accumulates over time and radon levels can become elevated. The radon gas usually decays into radioactive solids, which are called radon daughters. Radon daughters attach to dust particles in the air and can be inhaled. The radioactive decay elements may affect the cells in the lung and eventually lead to lung cancer.

There is no known safe level of exposure to radon. For more than 20 years, the EPA’s action level of 4 pCi/L has been the U.S. standard. However, recent findings by the World Health Organization have led to the establishment of a new standard for action of 2.7 pCi/L for indoor radon levels, which is a more conservative figure than the EPA’s. Recent studies have confirmed that the risk of lung cancer that radon leads to is evident even at levels much lower than once thought to be suggested.

Early awareness of potentially high radon levels can eliminate the health risks associated with the gas. Families are encouraged to have their homes and water sources regularly tested to make sure the indoor radon levels are low enough. You may consider renovating your home if the test result shows more than 2 pCi/L. Testing and taking action to reduce radon are particularly important for families with small children. Making plans for home improvements that reduce radon levels and scheduling annual radon testing to ensure the radon level is below 4 pCi/L are ways to help families reduce the risk of lung cancer.

According to Jamey Gelina, a radon mitigation specialist with the Air Quality Control Agency, if people take action when radon levels exceed 2.7 pCi/L rather than the previous limit of 4 pCi/L, there will be a large increase in the number of homes being tested and improved enforcement of radon-resistant new construction requirements.

The EPA recommends homeowners to have a qualified radon mitigation contractor repair their homes. However, you can also do the work yourself. For more information on training courses and copies of EPA’s technical guidance documents for home repairs, please visit www.epa.gov/radon/pubs.

Four traditional Chinese recipes for growing children

BY ALEX YU

Children have unique developmental needs. We look at Chinese supplements appropriate for their needs as they grow. Based on their bodies, the best supplements for children are not the same as adults. They need food that is easily absorbed and strengthens their lung, spleen and kidney functions. However, the recipes below are also suitable for adults and elderly people to consume as well.

1. Take 30 grams of walnut kernels, 30 grams of hyacinth bean and 100 grams of brown rice.
2. Cook the above ingredients with three cups (about 750 milliliters) of water for 50 minutes.
3. Add a little dark brown sugar or salt.

Sweet sesame syrup

1. Take 250 grams of sesame, 200 grams of fresh ginger and 200 grams of honey or crystal sugar.
2. Stir-fry the syrup in a heated pan until the sesame crackles.
3. Make some ginger juice by smashing fresh ginger or using a blender.
4. Melt the crystal sugar in a little water, then mix it with the ginger juice. If using honey, simply mix it with ginger juice
5. Stir-fry the sesame in a heated pan until the sesame crackles.
6. Stir and store in a dry and clean bottle.

Ginkgo nut honey

1. Take 6-9 grams (5-10 pieces) of shelled ginkgo nuts.
2. Cook the shelled ginkgo nuts with one cup (250-300 milliliters) of water for 20 minutes.
3. Add one to two tablespoons of honey.
4. Drink the soup and eat the ginkgo nuts. Caution: Ginkgo nut can be toxic. Pay attention to the dosage, and do not use raw nuts. They should be cooked.

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Honey. (Image courtesy of Flickr.)

Walnut kernel gruel

1. Take 30 grams of walnut kernels, 20 grams of soybean and 30 grams of grain rice.
2. Bring to a boil, then turn to low heat.
3. Continuously cook for 15 minutes.
4. Drink the soup and eat the ginkgo nuts.

Luo Han Guo Tea

1. Take two tablespoons every morning and evening with water.

 Beard and Buy. Contact Maxine at 508-520-4949 or mkinhart@franklin.ma.us

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Finding Boston’s best ramen

BY ANNA ING, A FOOD AFICIONADO

The cold weather calls for hot, soupy noodles. With a willing friend, we tried out two of Boston’s ramen places.

Uni
Ramen nights start at 11 p.m. on any Thursday, Friday or Saturday at Uni, attached to Ken Oringer’s uber-fancy Clio Restaurant. This Japanese restaurant serves a limited menu of ramen, pork and duck buns, and even a Japanese style hot dog.

The compact space that usually is a sushi bar is darkly lit and each table has a simple menu written on a piece of cardboard. Don’t be fooled, though, this is not a cheap Japanese ramen stand by any means. The price point was a bit pricey. For example, a lone pork belly bun was $8. Although the pork was good quality, it was a bit on the dry side.

As for the ramen, the braised beef with kimchi sounded appetizing but the regular ramen was better. Served in a large bowl, we were disappointed with the small portion and the broth barely covered the noodles. The noodles were acceptable, with good chewiness. The broth for the kimchi ramen was too subtle but the highlight was the braised beef, despite the tiny portion. The soy-based broth for the regular ramen was better, with a heavenly slow-cooked poached egg. A bowl of ramen goes for $10.

Sapporo Ramen
Sapporo Ramen is located in the restaurant stall row inside Porter Square. It has limited seating, always has a line and accepts only cash. Patrons are seated when everyone in the party is there. Service is efficient and a menu with photos is handed out while you wait.

The house meat broth is cooked over high heat for more than 10 hours to extract collagen for a hearty, cream-colored broth. Vegetarians can enjoy a vegetable-based broth as well. The appetizer prices are cheaper than at Uni’s but ramen prices are the same at $10. Sapporo offers more entrées, such as curry rice plates.

There were two pork buns which we enjoyed more. While the meat was not Berkshire pork belly, they were moist with a tiny bit of mayo. The house ramen had great flavor and body with nori, corn, egg, scallions and bean sprouts. We liked the heartiness of the soup broth and the noodles were just right for texture and chewiness.