Ha Jin opens up on creative process for nonfiction work on poet Li Bai

BY YIYAN ZHENG

Ha Jin spoke about his nonfiction debut “The Banished Immortal: A Life of Li Bai” at Boston University Law School. (Image courtesy of Valerie Li)

“The Banished Immortal: A Life of Li Bai,” Ha Jin’s newest book was published by PublicAffairs in January. It is Jin’s nonfiction debut and the first full-length English biography of Tang dynasty poet Li Bai. Using Li’s poetry as milestones in the narration, Jin spent nearly three years in portraying this unique and rich life of the legendary poet.

Ha Jin spoke with the author at Law School of Boston University to discuss his connection with Li Bai and the story behind his writing.

What kind of change has Li Bai brought you after two years?

Ha Jin: The style of this book is really different from my other works. The poetry of Li Bai has permeated into my narration. Some say the book is beautifully written. That is owing to Li Bai himself.

I came to understand more after two years. Li’s principle in writing poetry is, in his words, “out of clear water lots崐tus springs up by nature.” In English, we say “effortless.” It requires many years’ efforts so that it does not appear to take great pains to do it well to the eyes of the audience.

Li also said, “bright moonlight shines through, and there is no space for the heart to play.” Some contemporary poetry is made foggy, leaving readers in the clouds. But the real state of being profound is as the moon spreads through and occupies our heart, instantly, we don’t have to guess. It is the sensation of the thought.

Have you changed your view on Li Bai?

Ha Jin: Yes. We regard him as a genius. But his life was not smooth at all. He couldn’t find his position for half his lifetime. He had no stable income either. I came to realize the real path of an artist in his time.

The book had another name, “the Way to Heaven”. There were two heavy points for Li. One was the way to the Tang Empire. The other was his Taistian pursuit. Li appreciated Tao Yunnan, the countryside poet of the Six Dynasties period. But nature only acted as a poetic imagination for him. He was not able to live a life of farming in reclusion. Li desired to be a Taistian immortal, but he also wanted to be successful in his political career. He walked two ways, but both led him nowhere. He was torn apart.

Did writing about Li Bai have any similarities to your life?

Ha Jin: He never returned home after he left. Me neither. I really wanted to go back to China when my parents were still alive there. I got used to it now, since I left my country for more than 30 years.

Li Bai was an outcast as well. Technically, he is not Chinese. He was born in the city of Suyab, located in present-day Kyrgyzstan. As a western military outpost, Suyab belonged to the Tang Empire in Li’s time. It was difficult for him to travel and find his place in the capital.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
Community partners propose more affordable housing at downtown site

BY VALERIE LI

Lisa Alberghini of the Planning Office of Urban Affairs presented on plans for 41 LaGrange Street in Downtown Boston. At a public hearing on Jan. 24 at SFH, leadership from both organizations presented project details for community input.

The mixed-income building will include a range of housing, from low-income to market-rate units. The housing mix meets the dire need for affordable housing downtown.

“We are hoping to build an inclusive community in an area that has suffered from gentrification. All people should be able to share the benefits of a booming economy,” said POUA president Lisa Alberghini.

The 8,500 square foot lot was purchased by SFH and POUA as part of 48 Boylston Street, the former Young Men’s Christian Union. “We just completed phase one of 48 Boylston Street. The 46 affordable units will see the first tenants move in,” said SFH president and CEO Karen LaFrazia.

“The 270-foot building will feature studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments with no parking spaces. Under a development agreement the Kenington, a no-build zone by the Kensington’s amenity deck will be created to ensure its privacy,” said architect Jay Szymanski.

Some residents from neighboring high-rise buildings were concerned about privacy. “We designed the building in a way that avoids windows facing other apartment complex directly,” Szymanski added.

Boston resident Warren Wong was worried about the affordable housing changing to market-rate units over time. “The whole purpose of the project is to protect low-income families from losing their homes. The units will remain permanently affordable,” LaFrazia said.

The public comment period ends on Feb. 14. Community members can submit their comments online or write letters of support to the Boston Planning and Development Agency.

Chinatown meeting roundup: CCBC, CSC, CRA

BY VALERIE LI AND LING-MEI WONG

Boston Police Department District A-1 Sgt. Steve Moy gave an update on local crime for the past 30 days. There was one larceny, one robbery and three aggravated assaults, along with minor disturbances.

“It was a fairly light month, due to the cold weather present,” Moy said.

The Josiah Quincy Elementary School (JQES) has deeply impacted working-class community members, said assistant principal Winn Chin Ng. Previously, homeless individuals had slept in the area, leaving trash and drug paraphernalia.

CRA

The Chinatown Resident Association met Feb. 6 at JQES.

The Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) said. “Last year, Quincy was left out of the conversation for a long time because of severe flooding. Boston’s Chinatown is on a lowland and therefore, very vulnerable to the effects of climate change.”

Representatives from St. Francis House and Planning Office of Urban Affairs presented on the 41 LaGrange Street housing project.

Lydia Lowe of the Chinatown Community Land Trust asked for community input to develop the Boston Chinatown 2020 Master Plan, engaging people to envision future neighborhood development.

“In the past decade, we added a couple hundred units of affordable housing but we also see luxury buildings rising up. So does it accomplish our goal?” Lowe asked.

Mayor Walsh and Boston Tax Help Coalition launch 2019 tax season

BY YIYAN ZHENG

The Boston Tax Help Coalition kicked off its 18th season of free tax preparation services with Mayor Marty Walsh and community partners at the Roxbury Center for Financial Empowerment on Jan. 29.

Cynthia Jones, a mother of four and founder and CEO of the Women’s Group of New England, received the largest tax refund with the help of her coach.

“The coaching is such a wonderful thing,” said Jones. “It allows you to have an accountability partner with your finances and plotting your goals to go forward.”

In addition to financial coaching, other services the Coalition provides include help with Boston’s initiative to help Boston residents achieve economic mobility through access to reliable and non-predatory financial products and services. It also offers Boston Builds Credit, a build-a-credit program.

The Coalition serves approximately 13,000 taxpayers yearly. Last year, hundreds of volunteers returned $24 million in refunds and credits directly to taxpayers.

HAPPY YEAR OF THE PIG!

Make a CORCORAN Community Your New Home

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON

Andover

NORTH SHORE

SOUTH SHORE

Weymouth

Taunton

Lowell

Hingham

Lincoln School Apts

Mashpee

Plymouth

School Street Apts

Southfield

Hanover

Machines Mills Drive

Chelsea

Dorchester

North Andover

Lowell

Beacon Hill

Medford

McNamara House

W. Brockton

Avalon Drive

Morgan Hill

Ward

Fall River

The Commons at

Stevens Corner

Waterford

Southfield

St. Francis

Trinity Mills

The Heights Amesbury

W. Brockton

BOSTON

Allston

McNamara House

South Boston

一项完全可定制的微网格项目，这有助于帮助准备极端天气条件。

“According to study, climate change has deeply impacted working-class communities of color,” Baolian Kwang of CPA said. “Last year, Quincy was left out of power for a long time because of severe flooding. Boston’s Chinatown is on a lowland and therefore, very vulnerable to the effects of climate change.”

Representatives from St. Francis House and Planning Office of Urban Affairs presented on the 41 LaGrange Street housing project.

Lydia Lowe of the Chinatown Community Land Trust asked for community input to develop the Boston Chinatown 2020 Master Plan, engaging people to envision future neighborhood development.

“In the past decade, we added a couple hundred units of affordable housing but we also see luxury buildings rising up. So does it accomplish our goal?” Lowe asked.

Mayor Walsh and Boston Tax Help Coalition launch 2019 tax season

BY YIYAN ZHENG

The Boston Tax Help Coalition kicked off its 19th season of free tax preparation services with Mayor Marty Walsh and community partners at the Roxbury Center for Financial Empowerment on Jan. 29.

Cynthia Jones, a mother of four and founder and CEO of the Women’s Group of New England, received the largest tax refund with the help of her coach.

“The coaching is such a wonderful thing,” said Jones. “It allows you to have an accountability partner with your finances and plotting your goals to go forward.”

In addition to financial coaching, other services the Coalition provides include help with Boston’s initiative to help Boston residents achieve economic mobility through access to reliable and non-predatory financial products and services. It also offers Boston Builds Credit, a build-a-credit program.

The Coalition serves approximately 13,000 taxpayers yearly. Last year, hundreds of volunteers returned $24 million in refunds and credits directly to taxpayers.

HAPPY YEAR OF THE PIG!

Make a CORCORAN Community Your New Home

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON

Andover

NORTH SHORE

SOUTH SHORE

Weymouth

Taunton

Lowell

Hingham

Lincoln School Apts

Mashpee

Plymouth

School Street Apts

Southfield

Hanover

Machines Mills Drive

Chelsea

Dorchester

North Andover

Lowell

Beacon Hill

Medford

McNamara House

South Boston

一项完全可定制的微网格项目，这有助于帮助准备极端天气条件。

“According to study, climate change has deeply impacted working-class communities of color,” Baolian Kwang of CPA said. “Last year, Quincy was left out of power for a long time because of severe flooding. Boston’s Chinatown is on a lowland and therefore, very vulnerable to the effects of climate change.”

Representatives from St. Francis House and Planning Office of Urban Affairs presented on the 41 LaGrange Street housing project.

Lydia Lowe of the Chinatown Community Land Trust asked for community input to develop the Boston Chinatown 2020 Master Plan, engaging people to envision future neighborhood development.

“In the past decade, we added a couple hundred units of affordable housing but we also see luxury buildings rising up. So does it accomplish our goal?” Lowe asked.

Mayor Walsh and Boston Tax Help Coalition launch 2019 tax season

BY YIYAN ZHENG

The Boston Tax Help Coalition kicked off its 19th season of free tax preparation services with Mayor Marty Walsh and community partners at the Roxbury Center for Financial Empowerment on Jan. 29.

Cynthia Jones, a mother of four and founder and CEO of the Women’s Group of New England, received the largest tax refund with the help of her coach.

“The coaching is such a wonderful thing,” said Jones. “It allows you to have an accountability partner with your finances and plotting your goals to go forward.”

In addition to financial coaching, other services the Coalition provides include help with Boston’s initiative to help Boston residents achieve economic mobility through access to reliable and non-predatory financial products and services. It also offers Boston Builds Credit, a build-a-credit program.

The Coalition serves approximately 13,000 taxpayers yearly. Last year, hundreds of volunteers returned $24 million in refunds and credits directly to taxpayers.

HAPPY YEAR OF THE PIG!

Make a CORCORAN Community Your New Home

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON

Andover

NORTH SHORE

SOUTH SHORE

Weymouth

Taunton

Lowell

Hingham

Lincoln School Apts

Mashpee

Plymouth

School Street Apts

Southfield

Hanover

Machines Mills Drive

Chelsea

Dorchester

North Andover

Lowell

Beacon Hill

Medford

McNamara House

South Boston

一项完全可定制的微网格项目，这有助于帮助准备极端天气条件。

“According to study, climate change has deeply impacted working-class communities of color,” Baolian Kwang of CPA said. “Last year, Quincy was left out of power for a long time because of severe flooding. Boston’s Chinatown is on a lowland and therefore, very vulnerable to the effects of climate change.”

Representatives from St. Francis House and Planning Office of Urban Affairs presented on the 41 LaGrange Street housing project.

Lydia Lowe of the Chinatown Community Land Trust asked for community input to develop the Boston Chinatown 2020 Master Plan, engaging people to envision future neighborhood development.

“In the past decade, we added a couple hundred units of affordable housing but we also see luxury buildings rising up. So does it accomplish our goal?” Lowe asked.

Mayor Walsh and Boston Tax Help Coalition launch 2019 tax season

BY YIYAN ZHENG

The Boston Tax Help Coalition kicked off its 19th season of free tax preparation services with Mayor Marty Walsh and community partners at the Roxbury Center for Financial Empowerment on Jan. 29.

Cynthia Jones, a mother of four and founder and CEO of the Women’s Group of New England, received the largest tax refund with the help of her coach.

“The coaching is such a wonderful thing,” said Jones. “It allows you to have an accountability partner with your finances and plotting your goals to go forward.”

In addition to financial coaching, other services the Coalition provides include help with Boston’s initiative to help Boston residents achieve economic mobility through access to reliable and non-predatory financial products and services. It also offers Boston Builds Credit, a build-a-credit program.

The Coalition serves approximately 13,000 taxpayers yearly. Last year, hundreds of volunteers returned $24 million in refunds and credits directly to taxpayers.

HAPPY YEAR OF THE PIG!
Professionals of color ring in Lunar New Year

BY LING-MEI WONG

The Lunar New Year of the Pig was celebrated Jan. 29 at Explorateur. (From left) NBC Boston anchor Joy Lim Nakrin, Medstro CEO Dr. Jennifer Joe and Carbonite CEO Mohamad Ali. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

The Lunar New Year of the Pig was celebrated Jan. 29 at Explorateur, hosted by Get Connected and the National Association of Asian American Professionals chapter of Boston. “This room reflects how diverse and inclusive Boston should be,” said Colette Phillips, president of Get Connected.

Swan Lee, NAACP Boston president, welcomed guests and wished everyone a happy Lunar New Year in Korean. A fireside chat with Medstro CEO Dr. Jennifer Joe and Carbonite CEO Mohamad Ali was hosted by Joy Lim Nakrin, NBC Boston anchor.

Joe spoke about her childhood, growing up one of the few Chinese families in Canton, Mississippi. “It was the hardest time of my life, living in a racially charged town where the Ku Klux Klan would regularly march and burn crosses on people’s lawns,” she said. Today, Joe runs Medstro, a medical technology company. Her grandparents fled the Cultural Revolution in China, opening a grocery store in the Mississippi Delta. Joe’s parents went to medical school, before raising Joe and her two siblings.

Ali came to America with his mother when he was 11. They came from Guyana to New York City, settling in Jamaica, Queens. Ali attended the prestigious Stuyvesant High School and Stanford University, before founding data protection company Carbonite.

“I attended the second worst junior high school in New York state and was fortunate good people helped me,” Ali said. “It’s incumbent on us to help others.”

HA JIN: Author finds parallels to classical poet

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

What was your writing process?

Ha Jin: The frame of his life was out there. I followed the chronology of his poetry. Intuitively, I felt each of his poems represented a small moment of crisis or climax in his life.

How to make nonfiction intriguing?

Ha Jin: Details. The back cover of the book used a small scroll of calligraphy inscribed by Li Bai. It is the only extant family album in my family. My son lives close to us. He is about to graduate from graduate school, studying American studies. His mum speaks to him in Mandarin, and he responds in English. Apart from teaching, I had to do a lot of work in our yard and garden, especially after a winter snow. My wife is not physically well. I love to go shopping in the supermarket with her. It is the only physical exercise she can afford.

In this book, you spent time crafting the end and reunited the poet with his family. How is your family now?

Ha Jin: As a migrant family, my family is very small. My son lives close to us. He is about to graduate from graduate school, studying American studies. His mum speaks to him in Mandarin, and he responds in English. Apart from teaching, I had to do a lot of work in our yard and garden, especially after a winter snow. My wife is not physically well. I love to go shopping in the supermarket with her. It is the only physical exercise she can afford.

Chinatown crime blotter for Jan. 26 to Feb. 8

BY THE BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

All reports are submitted by the Boston Police Department. The time period is from Dec. 26 to Feb. 8 for District A-1, which includes Chinatown.

Unarmed robbery

Jan. 29, 8:26 a.m.: The victim reported an unknown person assaulted him and stole his backpack while he was standing at Harrison Avenue and Pine Street.

Assault & battery

Feb. 4, 3:54 a.m.: The victim stated while in Chinatown, he was assaulted by an unknown person. The victim sustained two swollen eyes.
The Asian Real Estate Association of America (AREAA) Boston chapter celebrated its annual gala with 300 guests Feb. 1 at the Park Plaza Hotel.

Tom Truong, AREAA national president, said, “Today I am home. AREAA is dedicated to increasing sustaining homeownership for the Asian American community.”

Truong founded the Boston chapter of AREAA seven years ago, to bring together Asian American realtors. “When we do well, we’re supposed to do good,” he said.

AREAA Boston president Elena Lau said, “AREAA Boston is getting louder because of you. Together, let’s be strong.”

She recalled the difficulty her parents had buying a home without credit when she was in college. One of AREAA’s national efforts is advocating for alternative credit scoring for Asian American homebuyers, who often don’t believe in borrowing money.

The AREAA Boston board was installed. Lau was elected 2019 president, taking over from Don Choi. Bonnie Lai was elected vice president, with Dick Lee as treasurer and Colin Wehrung as secretary.

The lion dance was performed by the Imperial Lion Dance Team.

The AREAA national convention will take place in Boston from Oct. 17 to Oct. 19.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

### Affordable Homeownership Opportunity

**“Sugar Maple Lane”**

Powers Road, Westford

Six 2-Bedroom Townhomes - $158,400
One 3-Bedroom Townhouse - $179,400

Income Limits are 80% of area median household income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Limits</th>
<th>Earning</th>
<th>Earning</th>
<th>Earning</th>
<th>Earning</th>
<th>Earning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$83,780</td>
<td>$96,230</td>
<td>$108,680</td>
<td>$121,130</td>
<td>$135,700</td>
<td>$149,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The asset limit is $75,000 per household; applicants must be first-time homebuyers.

The opportunity to purchase a home at Sugar Maple Lane will be done by lottery. Applications are available February 4th through April 5th. An information session will be held at the Westford Housing Authority, 65 Tadlock Road in Westford, MA on Tuesday, February 26th at 6:30 p.m.

Applications will be accepted via the Westford Housing Authority website www.westfordha.com, by calling the Chelmsford Housing Authority at 978-256-7425 x513 (TTY/TDD), 978-256-7425, x513, or in person at 10 Wilson Street, Chelmsford, MA. Applications will also be available at the Westford Public Library.

The deadline for submitting completed applications is April 5, 2019 at 4 p.m.

Use & Resale restrictions apply.

*Defined as not having owned a home within the past three years. Some exceptions apply.

**Boston Health and Human Services chief discusses ‘public charge’ and immigration**

BY YIYAN ZHENG

Boston Health and Human Services chief Marty Martinez (middle) held an event Jan. 24 at Hei La Moon. (Image courtesy of Yiyan Zheng).

Marty Martinez, Boston chief of Health and Human Services, spoke to the community Jan. 24 at Hei La Moon.

Along with An Le, policy and community engagement director with the Asian Real Estate Association of America (AREAA) Boston chapter, and Bonnie Lai, treasurer and Colin Wehrung as secretary, the office aims to deliver services on the ground and values welcoming and protecting immigrants.

“Public charge” is a term that has made news as the Trump administration has increased the criteria of when public assistance payments can disqualify a new immigrant from getting approved for legal permanent resident status, instead of the visa of choice needed for someone to work in the U.S.

The policy has resulted in thousands of families with children struggling to pay for health and other costs.

“We’re talking about protecting American families,” Martinez said.

The Asset Test is a crucial component of the public charge policy and it’s currently set at 130% of the area median income.

“Since so many of our clients are either first-time homebuyers, who often don’t believe in borrowing money, we have been working with the mortgage process,” said Martinez.

Job Posting

**In себе Center**

**Director:**

The In себе Center Gallery welcomes applications to serve as Director of the In себе Center Gallery. The Director will be responsible for the operation and expansion of the In себе Center Gallery, located at 1100 Cambridge Street in Hoboken. The Director must have a degree in a visual art-related field as well as at least five years of professional experience in the nonprofit sector.

**Position Description:**

The Director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the In себе Center Gallery. This includes overseeing the gallery’s finances, managing the gallery’s relationships with the community, and developing new projects and initiatives. The Director will be expected to work closely with the gallery’s board of directors to ensure that the gallery’s mission is met.

**Qualifications:**

- A degree in a visual art-related field
- At least five years of professional experience in the nonprofit sector
- Strong organizational and leadership skills
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Experience with event planning

**Salary:**

Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.

**Application:**

Applications should be submitted to the In себе Center Gallery at 1100 Cambridge Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030. Applications should include a cover letter, resume, and three references. Applications are due by April 15, 2019.

**Contact:**

For more information, please contact the In себе Center Gallery at 201-515-4720.
HEALTH

Seven digestion tips to stay healthy in the New Year

BY DR. GUIPING GE

When we are visiting family friends, it is common to indulge ourselves with a little too much food. Having self-control is necessary because going home with a full belly after every meal is dangerous, especially for people with pancreatic issues. Stay away from unhealthy food, because it can cause diarrhea and nausea.

1. Keep a well-balanced diet with vegetables and meats.

The improving quality of life leads to many health problems, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and high blood sugar. It is advised to stay away from oily and salty dishes during the festival. Also, keep in mind no oily food for people who have gallbladder problems. People with diabetes should avoid sweet food.

2. Eat regularly but control the amount.

HEALTH: Boston chief supports immigrants

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Le said the office communicates with immigrants and organizations that serve them, shaping their work based on priorities. Over time, priorities have shifted from celebrating all cultures represented in the city to advocating for immigrant rights. Over time, priorities have shifted to push back against the narrative that immigrants are not valuable to the city, shaping their work based on priorities.

3. Don’t drink too much.

This is especially important for people with chronic liver disease. It could worsen the symptoms and lead to other bad consequences. Alcoholism could also cause internal bleeding.

For traveling and entertainment, here are some helpful tips:

4. Don’t exhaust yourself.

It is not wise to spend a whole night mahjong tables or karaoke bars. For people with high blood pressure, they need to keep it quiet. For people with coronary heart disease, they can’t get too exhausted. Otherwise, exhaustion could trigger a cardiovascular attack.

5. Don’t spread the flu.

If you have unfortunately contracted the flu, stay home and drink some water. It is not worth it to go out and pass the flu to other people.


The Lunar New Year marks the beginning of spring. It is the time that our pores open up, which means we become more susceptible to cold wind and get sick.

7. Drive safely.

Don’t take risks when driving. Follow the traffic rules and be a good citizen.

About the author

Dr. Guiping Ge is a gastroenterologist in Suzhou, China.

Tufts MC supports tobacco cessation work of six Chinatown groups

BY LING-MEI WONG

The Asian Health Initiative (AHI) of Tufts Medical Center met Jan. 31 at the downtown hospital. To promote tobacco cessation, it awarded three-year grants to six neighborhood organizations who serve the Chinatown community. Each organization reported on their efforts for July to December 2018.

The AHI community partners for 2017 to 2019 are the Asian American Civic Association, Boston Asian: Youth Essential Services, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center, Josiah Quincy Elementary School and the Rose Kennedy Greenway. Together, the partners reported more than 500 community members.

The Josiah Quincy Elementary School taught 377 students in grades K-5 about smoking prevention and its harmful effects, said instructor Sally Connors. Students learned about e-cigarettes and how much a tobacco habit costs. Signage to prohibit smoking and vaping will also be displayed prominently throughout the building.

“A student was in a store with his father, who was about to buy cigarettes. He insisted that his father buy an e-cigarette, and asked him to put the cigarettes down,” Connors said. “Hopefully we create a generation of nonsmokers. What scares me is vaping.”

Boston Asian: Youth Essential Services is educating high school students on tobacco, who developed a “Choose Health” campaign, said youth worker Trinh Britton. The Chinatown campaign was led by 14 youth leaders and 20 activists, who engaged 85 other youth and 125 community members.

The Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center held health workshops for seniors and employees, reaching 101 Chinese-speaking adults. Smoking knowledge increased through pre and post-tests, said social service director Megan Cheung.

Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center developed its Smoke Free Chinatown project to educate staff, adult students and daycare children about smoking, said Yoyo Yau, director of family services and community engagement. A total of 12 youth participated in anti-tobacco activities, while 104 adult students learned about the dangers of tobacco and new forms, such as vaping. During home visits, 38 families learned about tobacco.

The Asian American Civic Association (AAC/A) is working with the Greenway to reduce smoking at Chinatown Park and the Mary Soo Hoo Park. It expanded to Mission Park, Tai Tung Village and Quincy Tower to reduce tobacco use, with 257 people engaged in tobacco education sessions. Smoking cessation specialist Kiki Tsang launched a women’s support group for wives and mothers of smokers. She provided case management services to 23 smokers, with one person quitting and all smokers reducing the number of cigarettes they smoked.

The AAC/A publishes the Sampan Newspaper, with health content funded by the AHI. A booklet of smoking-related articles was distributed every six months, for readers who missed an edition of the newspaper. Sampan published 30 health stories over the past six months, with more than 3,500 views online.

Tufts Medical Center’s AHI has worked with the Chinatown community to address health needs for over two decades. The AHI identifies health priorities from public health data, community engagement and advisory committee feedback. With community partners, the AHI has addressed various health priorities over the years, including chronic disease, mental health, family violence and promotion of healthy lifestyles. Community partners are presently focused on the harmful effects of tobacco, including smoking or vaping cessation, prevention and education.
Asian American women celebrate wins to local, state office

BY VALERIE LI

The Asian American Women’s Political Initiative held a panel discussion on Feb. 2 at WeWork Cambridge. (From left) Rep. Maria Janella Rivera, Mayor of Wakefield, Mass. Robinson, Councilor Mehreen Butt. (Image courtesy of Valerie Li.)

The Asian American Women’s Political Initiative held a panel discussion on Feb. 2 at WeWork Cambridge. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley made a special appearance and delivered inspiring remarks to the young attendees. “People all want to be part of things when they’re already established,” said Pressley. “But to have the vision, to labor in love, to have the equity, to coalition in movement is something special.”

Celebrating historic wins for gender diversity in the November 2018 election, the panel featured three elected women of color. It was moderated by Boston Teacher’s Union president Jessica Tang, the first person of color and woman president. “I remember the time when I walked into United Teachers Los Angeles, I saw Asian faces and I started crying,” Tang said. “That’s how I realized representation matters and I hope the future generations will look back at us and feel the same.”

“There was no one who looked like me on the Wakefield town council,” said Tram Nguyen, the first Vietnamese-American state representative representing the 18th Essex District. “As women of color in a first-year class, we back each other up in different ways,” said Marta Robinson, the first Korean-American state representative for the Sixth Middlesex District. Asian American Women’s Political Initiative is an organization that offers training and mentoring programs to young women.

February 8, 2019

Nature’s Nation exhibit examines native identity and environment

BY VALERIE LI

The “Nature’s Nation” art exhibit opened on Feb. 2 at the Peabody Essex Museum, with coordinating curators Austron Barron Bailly (left) and Karen Kramer. (Image courtesy of Valerie Li.)

“The Nature’s Nation,” the first art exhibit to analyze how American and Native American artists depict the environment over the last three centuries, opened on Feb. 2 at the Peabody Essex Museum (PEM). The exhibit features more than 300 major paintings, photographs, works on paper, and sculptures from artists, including Ansel Adams, Winslow Homer, Dorothea Lange, Georgia O’Keeffe and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (Salish-Kootenai).”

“The exhibition underscores the power of artists and the art of influence that imparts and helps us understand our relationship to nature and what it means to all of us,” said Karen Kramer, coordinating curator and PEM’s curator of Native American and Oceanic art and culture.

The exhibition opens with a contemporary piece named “Repellent Fence/Valla Repellente” by Postmodernist, an indigenous artist collective. “In 2015, the collective installed 2676 balloons along a two-mile route crossing the United States-Mexico border. Each 10-feet wide and 50-feet high balloon looked out on setting up their own ‘Scarecrows’ graphic intended to repel wildlife from the property. From the Scare Eye, it sees land, communities and ecosystems connected as a unified whole, not divided by manmade borders,” said Kramer.

“One particular art piece that symbolizes what the exhibit thinks about the works of art is Thomas Moran’s 1893 painting of Yellowstone National Park. It captures the grandeur Yellowstone region but when we step down from the land when the park was established and what does it mean to appreciate the harmony between nature and us,” said Austron Barron Bailly, coordinating curator and PEM’s George Putnam curator of American art. Nature’s Nation also places historical art pieces with contemporary responses. One example is Valerie Hegarty’s “Fallen Bierstadt,” which questions the way Alfred Bierstadt’s 1871-73 painting “Bridal Veil Falls” idealizes nature as an untouched wilderness. The scorched and crumbling version of the painting sends a message that nature is more vulnerable than we imagined.

Organized by Princeton University, Nature’s Nation is on view at PEM through May 5.
Patty the pig is the charming and cute character in Oliver Chin’s “Tales from the Chinese Zodiac” book series. The story is a delightful barnyard tale, recalling the simple but profound magic and wisdom of Aesop’s Fables or Grimm’s Fairy Tales. Patty the pig is the charming and cute heroine. She rises from the role of lovable underdog to embody the compassionate characteristics associated with her zodiac sign. True to her zodiacal nature, she displays warmth, kindness, concern for others, perseverance, and determination. Her impulsiveness and stubbornness comes across as benevolent, playful, and endearing as she saves the day. As we all hope and work for 2019 to be a fortuitous year, it would be good for all of us to exemplify these traits.

Miah Alcorn’s illustrations flow with vibrant energy. His crisp, clean style is reminiscent of classic hand-drawn animation of Disney and Warner Bros., making the book a nostalgic pleasure to read and to view. The sharply kinetic drawings come to life as the chromatic palette shifts from bright to bold in beautiful colors, rich textures, and cool shades. The facial expressions are friendly, amusing, and full of personality. The artwork complements the story perfectly. The book sweeps children and adults into a magical adventure, a testament to how Chin and Alcorn created something beautiful to be enjoyed by people of all ages and of all backgrounds.

The Year of the Pig, written by Oliver Chin and illustrated by Miah Alcorn. (Image courtesy of Immedium.)

The Chinese yam with blueberry ($5.95) is a cold appetizer. Our three scoops of mashed Chinese yam, drizzled with a slightly sweet blueberry sauce, tasted refreshing. Do note the dish is presented differently from the image on the menu. Chinese yam is good for your health and great for digestion!

Crispy fried spice pork strip ($6.95) had plenty of crunch, with tasty pork strips served in a basket. Five spice powder is my favorite, this dish reminded me of Taiwanese style fried pork. The pork hit the spot, with lemon and pepper salt on the side.

If you are craving a different kind of noodle soup, check out the Yunnan style “mi xian” at South of the Clouds. The food is fresh and delicious.

South of the Clouds
412A Market Street
Boston, MA 02128
(617) 787-1686
www.southnoodles.com

Celebrating the New Year with “The Year of the Pig,” the newly revised entry in Oliver Chin’s “Tales from the Chinese Zodiac” book series. The story is a delightful barnyard tale, recalling the simple but profound magic and wisdom of Aesop’s Fables or Grimm’s Fairy Tales.

The Chinese yam with blueberry ($5.95) is a cold appetizer. Our three scoops of mashed Chinese yam, drizzled with a slightly sweet blueberry sauce, tasted refreshing. Do note the dish is presented differently from the image on the menu. Chinese yam is good for your health and great for digestion!

Crispy fried spice pork strip ($6.95) had plenty of crunch, with tasty pork strips served in a basket. Five spice powder is my favorite, this dish reminded me of Taiwanese style fried pork. The pork hit the spot, with lemon and pepper salt on the side.

If you are craving a different kind of noodle soup, check out the Yunnan style “mi xian” at South of the Clouds. The food is fresh and delicious.

South of the Clouds
412A Market Street
Boston, MA 02128
(617) 787-1686
www.southnoodles.com

Book review: ‘Year of the Pig’ charms with magical story of friendship

BY ADEN MAKRIS