Local farm advocates for funding state Health Incentive Program

BY YIMING ZHAO

Chris Kurth has run Siena Farms for the last 20 years. The farm grows organic vegetables on about 45 acres of land, selling them at three farmers market locations in Boston. Kurth grows vegetables for Asian customers, such as daikon radish and bok choy. He hired bilingual staff three years ago when Massachusetts’ Health Incentive Program (HIP) began, which rewards recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) with extra benefits if they purchase produce at farmers markets. Now Kurth welcomes hundreds of HIP customers every day.

“When the HIP program started, it brought a whole new customer base to the market. A lot of Chinese Americans, Russian Americans and other immigrant communities, it’s a wonderful thing for the farm. It’s really the focus of our growth right now,” Kurth said.

The HIP program provides SNAP recipients a 100 percent incentive for each SNAP dollar spent on targeted fruits and vegetables purchased at farmers markets, farm stands, mobile markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs nationwide. The program aims to benefit family and community health by increasing access to fresh produce, and support farms and the local economy. SNAP recipients will receive $1 for each dollar spent on eligible fruits and vegetables. A six-person household can receive up to $80 a month. Unfortunately, due to the popularity of the program, funding runs out every year. HIP campaign manager Becca Miller at MA Food System Collaborative believes it will take about $10.5 million to run the program year-round, instead of the $6.5 million the state issues right now. This year, the program will be suspended from Feb. 23 to May 15 due to funding shortfalls.

“The department didn’t really give notice to farmers and shoppers. It’s making it hard for them to plan what really they’re going to sell at the markets and also for shoppers [as in] how can they budget without further funding,” Miller said.

Catherine Yu has used her family’s SNAP benefits for fresh produce from Siena Farms’ Boston Public Market location for the past two years. She was disappointed to hear the program would be suspended. Yu had to shop elsewhere since she could not use SNAP for produce anymore.

Kurth added it was scary to see the program suspended again, because the program made up to 90 percent of the farm’s daily sales during winter and spring.

“Going without income for a few months impacts how we’re going to plant our fields,” Kurth said.

For the first time, the Quincy Dragons and New England Blazers tied in the wheelchair basketball game held on Feb. 14 at Josiah Quincy Elementary School. This Valentine’s Day marked the school’s fifth annual wheelchair basketball game with the New England Blazers and the Rollin’ Celts, students from the Carter School came to the game and cheered for the players. The Carter School serves grades six-to-12 school for students with cognitive delay, physical handicaps and complex medical conditions.

“Many of our students are wheelchair-bound,” said Josiah Quincy Elementary School Principal Cynthia Soo Hoo. “When we learned about the wheelchair basketball league they had, we were very interested in having them come here. Having events come here allows our students to see that it doesn’t matter their disabilities, it matters that you could still make things happen.”

Principal Soo Hoo played in the game and successfully scored two points for the Quincy Dragons. Physical education teacher Tom Levett organized the first game back in 2016. He wanted to make students using wheelchairs feel like part of the community. The Quincy school, completed in 1976, is one of the wheelchair-accessible buildings for the Boston Public Schools district.
Tufts MC welcomes Year of the Rat

Tufts Medical Center celebrated Lunar New Year Feb. 7 with performances by children attending the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

Tufts Medical Center celebrated Lunar New Year Feb. 7 with children’s performances and crafts.

“Year of the Rat” is the most exciting day of the year,” said Tufts MC president and CEO Dr. Mike Apkon. “I wish you a happy and healthy Year of the Rat.”

Chinatown meeting roundup: TCC, CNC

BY LING-MEI WONG AND YIMING ZHAO

The Chinatown Coalition met Feb. 13 at Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center to discuss smoking and vaping in Chinatown.

Sherry Dong of Tufts Medical Center explained heart disease and lung cancer are connected to tobacco use. Access to mental health counseling and behavioral help is essential to people trying to quit smoking and vaping.

Edgar Elmasiede from Health Resources in Action spoke about the teenage vaping epidemic. He showed vaping products shaped like USB drives or correction tape that pass as school supplies for teenagers. What also drew teenagers to vaping were flavored tobacco. There are more than 8,000 flavors currently on the market. Many are sweet and teens won’t get the same nauseous feeling from smoking combustion cigarettes.

Boston City Councilor at-large Anissa Essahib-George plans to bring more family-sized affordable housing projects to Boston in the new year and have at least one nurse in every Boston public school. She also expressed concern over a sudden increase of HIV cases and more needles around the city. “The City last year collected 700,000 needles, “Essaibi-George said. “But two years before that, we only collected 300,000. That’s because the drugs have changed.”

CNC

The Chinatown South Cove Neighborhood Council discussed a proposed restaurant opening Feb. 18 at Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association.

El Jefe’s Taqueria will open in March at 80 Boylston Street, the Little Building of Emerson College, said founder and co-owner John Schall. He is applying for a common victualler license to serve food and will not apply for a beer and wine license.

Report finds adult ESOL offers returns

BY THE BOSTON FOUNDATION

A new report released Feb. 6 from the Boston Foundation and the Latino Legacy Fund found vocationally-focused English for Speakers of Other Languages programs can have an almost immediate payback for students, but student seats fall short of need. (From left) Keith Ma-honey, Juan Carlos Morales, Aixa Beauchamp, Joanne Pokaski, Kermit Dunkelberg, Wyvonne Stevens-Carter, Shinshu Ando. (Image courtesy of the Boston Foundation.)

BY LING-MEI WONG

Over walnut shrimp and crab rangoon, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh enjoyed lunch Feb. 18 in Chinatown at Jade Garden. The visit highlighted his commitment to local businesses in Chinatown, which have undergone a steep drop in business since the Covid-19 outbreak.

Jade Garden general manager Peter Cao said, “It’s great to have support from the mayor. It means a lot to Chinatown.” Walsh ate at Great Taste Bakery too.

Boston Mayor Walsh shows love to Chinatown restaurants

Tufts Mayor Marty Walsh enjoys lunch Feb. 18 in Chinatown at Jade Garden. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)
Public charge workshop
Friday, Feb. 21
10 a.m. to noon
1458 Hancock St, Unit 306
Quincy, MA 02116
Greater Boston Legal Services’s Asian Outreach Unit will host a Mandarin workshop on the public charge rule at BCNC Quincy. Register at (617) 635-5129 x 482 or email mandy.situ@bcnc.net.

Autism parent support group
Friday, Feb. 21
10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
1458 Hancock St, Unit 306
Quincy, MA 02116
Parents for children with autism or parents who are interested in autism intervention can attend a free support group at BCNC Quincy. Child care available upon advance request.

First-time homebuyer classes
Feb. 22 to 23
9 a.m.
38 Oak Street
Boston, MA 02111
ACDC offers HB101 classes in English and Chinese. Each session is a nine-hour class over the course of a two-day weekend. Tuition is $50. Sign up for a workshop, graduate and receive a certificate, and become eligible for discounted mortgage products. Registration required, by calling (617) 482-2380 x 208 or 202, emailing CHOP@asiandoc.org or visiting https://asiandoc.org/hb101.

Career fair
Sunday, Feb. 23
9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
52 Oxford Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
FTSANE will host a career fair at Harvard for international students.

Advanced English for jobs
Monday, Feb. 24
8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
The AACA’s Career Advancement for Professionals program is for people with a degree from their native country who needs more English and job readiness skills to attain a job related to their field of study. For more information, call (617) 426-9492 x 250 or email intake@aaca-boston.org.

Downtown open house
Monday, Feb. 24
5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
885 Washington Street,
Boston, MA 02111
A downtown Boston open house with Mayor Marty Walsh will take place at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School.

Water drop tea house
Tuesday to Saturday
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
711 Concord Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
Water Drop Teahouse offers light vegetarian dishes, coffee and tea at the Fo Guang Budhhist Temple.

Free evening meals
Every Tuesday to Friday
5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
493 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148
Bread of Life offers free evening meals for low-income families and individuals in the North area. Evening meals are served Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at First Baptist Church. For more information, call (781) 397-0404.

Financial aid assistance
Wednesdays
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
Get free assistance on college planning and applying for financial aid to higher education. Service offered in Mandarin, Cantonese and English. To make an appointment, call (617) 426-9492 x 0.

Breakfast seminar
Thursday, Feb. 27
9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.
120 Shawmut Avenue
Boston, MA 02118
All are welcome to attend at the BCNC auditorium. Refreshments provided. For more information, call Terry Yin at (203) 893-7963.

Boston job information
Thursday, Feb. 27
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
A Boston information session on jobs as commercial drivers and emergency medical technicians will take place at AACA on room 408. For more information, email employment@aaca-boston.org.

AREAA Boston gala
Friday, Feb. 28
5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.
60 State Street, 33F
Boston, MA 02109
Asian Real Estate Association of America (AREAA) - Boston will hold its eighth annual gala at the State Room. Tickets at www.areaa.org/boston.

Happy families program
Feb. 28 to May 29
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
1458 Hancock St, Suite 306
Quincy, MA 02116
Boston, MA 02116
The Strengthening Families Program is an evidence-based training program for children age 3-6 years old and their parents at BCNC. Free, with childcare and dinner provided.

Elder fitness program
March 1 to May 31
8 Oak Street West
Boston, MA 02116
The Wang YMCA of Chinatown offers Healthy Habits, a fitness program for people 62 and older. Free membership for three months. Sign up by calling (617) 904-6165 or emailing kklei@ymcaboston.org.

English for college or job training
Monday, March 2
8:30 a.m.
87 Tyler Street
Boston, MA 02111
Attend testing for the Asian American Civic Association’s English classes for college or job training.

Event Calendar
A coronavirus community meeting took place Feb. 7 at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. Resident Mr. Lau asked a question.

Boston officials held a community meeting Feb. 7 with residents about the coronavirus or COVID-19 in China-town at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. Dozens of residents asked about risk and were given tips to prevent infection.

Dr. Jennifer Lo, Boston Public Health Commission medical director, spoke about the first confirmed case in Massachusetts, a UMass Boston student in his 20s returning from Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the outbreak. His case is the eighth case of COVID-19 infection in the United States, with a total of 15 cases nationwide.

“The risk to the public from the virus remains low in Massachusetts,” Lo said. “However, we are monitoring the situation and will dispatch them to community and patients if the time should arise.”

Nick Duncan, Tufts Medical Center director of emergency management, said “We have enough masks in our hospital and will dispatch them to community and patients if the time should arise.”

The Centers for Disease and Control does not recommend to use masks to help prevent this virus, Lo said. The CDC recommends people use standard precautions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases. Wash your hands often with soap and water. If you sneeze or cough, cover it with your sleeve.

Continued on Page 6

BY IVY HUANG

Chinatown crime blotter for Feb. 4 to Feb. 21

BY THE BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

All reports are submitted by the Boston Police Department. The time period is from Feb. 4 to Feb. 21 for District A-1, which includes Chinatown.

Drug arrest

Feb. 4, 9:21 p.m.: District A-1 Drug Control unit arrested a suspect for possession of Class B, and possession with intent to distribute a Class B substance (believed to be crack cocaine) on Boylston Street.

Breaking and entering, trespassing

Feb. 11, 8 p.m.: Five suspects were arrested at 78 Tyler Street for breaking and entering, along with trespassing.

The Village at Sawmill Woods

Drum Drive and Keyhole Drive, Plymouth MA

Affordable Housing Lottery

Thirty-seven 2BR Duplicates for $273,600

$100/mo HOA fees

The first affordable homes will be ready in Spring 2020.

This is a lottery for the first thirty-seven (37) affordable homes being built in Phases I and II at the Village at Sawmill Woods. These 37 homes will be sold at affordable prices to households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income.

Village at Sawmill Woods is a unique residential development that will eventually consist of 200 duplex-style homes, sixty of which will be affordable. The project is situated off the desirable Shallow Pond Estates Subdivision in the Manomet Section of Plymouth MA. Located on 58.39 wooded acres of land, only approximately 30 acres will be used and the rest will remain open space. The project borders 3,000 Acres of Conservation and Town-owned property to the West and Cranberry bogs to the south. All Affordable Homes will have a full basement, and energy efficient appliances and heating systems. The Village is served by Town Water and has a private state of the sewerage treatment facility. Condo Fees are $100 per month, which includes sewer, common area landscaping and snow removal.

Maximum Household Income Limits:

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<th>Type of Household</th>
<th>Income Limit</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Person</td>
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<td>3 Person</td>
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<td>4 Person</td>
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<td>5 Person</td>
<td>$107,000</td>
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The Maximum Household Asset Limit is $75,000.

For more information on the Development, the Units or the Lottery and Application Process or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, please visit: https://s-e-b.com/lottery or call 617.782.5900 x2. A Public Info Session will be held on February 13th, 2020, at 6:00pm in the Lucia Mastrangelo Meeting Room in the Watertown Public Library, 123 Main Street, Watertown, MA 02472

Affordable Housing Lottery

The Aver

385 Pleasant Street, Watertown, MA

65% AMI Affordable Units: 3 studios $447, 2 BRs $51,000*
80% AMI Affordable Units: 2 BRs $50,022**

*Rent subject to change. Rent includes water and sewer, but does not include gas heating, hot water, cooking or electricity. One parking spot included in the rent.

The Aver is a new 55 unit rental apartment community located in Watertown on 385 Pleasant Street. There will be 5 affordable apartments made available through this process, with the first units ready for occupancy starting in the Spring of 2020, and the balance of units coming online over the next year. Free 2 bedroom units will be rented to households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income, and one studio unit and two 1 bedroom units will be rented to households with incomes at or below 65% of the area median income. The affordable units will be spread out among four first-class residential buildings. Parking is located within the community via covered parking and additional surface parking spaces. Unit interiors boast custom cabinetry, stainless steel appliances, wood-plank style flooring, granite countertops, walk-in closets, and in-home washers and dryers.

80% AMI Units MAXIMUM Household Income Limits:

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65% AMI Units MAXIMUM Household Income Limits:

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<td>$80,475</td>
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A Public Info Session will be held on February 13th, 2020, at 6:00pm in the Lucia Mastrangelo Meeting Room in the Watertown Public Library, 123 Main Street, Watertown, MA 02472

An Information Session and Required Income Documentation must be delivered, or postmarked, by 2 pm on March 10th, 2020. Applications postmarked by the deadline must be received no later than 5 business days from the deadline.

The Lottery for eligible households will be held on March 30th, 2020, at 6:00pm in the Rayn Storm Treatment Room in the Watertown Public Library, 123 Main Street, Watertown, MA 02472

For Lottery Information and Applications, or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, go to www.s-e-b.com/lottery or call 617.782.5900x2 and leave a message or postal mail SEB Housing, 257 Hillside Ave, Needham MA 02494. For TTY Services dial 711. Free translation available. Traduction gratuite disponible. Applications also available at the Watertown Public Library.
**Massachusetts older adult chief visits Hong Lok House**

**BY THE GREATER BOSTON CHINESE GOLDEN AGE CENTER**

Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs Secretary Elizabeth Chen wished older adults a happy Lunar New Year Feb. 5 at Hong Lok House. Hong Lok House houses adults day care, senior housing and an activity center for the Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center. Chen toured the facilities to understand the needs of older adults and spoke with staff.

Chen gave an update on her work with Massachusetts older adults. She also answered questions from older adults at Hong Lok House.

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**Playwrights Kit Yan and Melissa Li share six decades of stories of Boston’s Chinatown**

**BY LINDA CHIN**

Company One Theatre’s Ilana Brownstein and Pao Arts Center’s Cynthia Woo spoke Feb. 5 at the Pao Arts Center. (Image courtesy of GBC.)

A multigenerational multicultural group of community citizens gathered Feb. 5 at the Pao Arts Center. Some arrived hungry, but after good food, music and company, many left with their tummies and hearts full.

They gathered to celebrate playwrights Kit Yan and Melissa Li’s new theatrical work, "Interstate." Audience members reflected in small groups on individual connections to Boston’s Chinatown, and then shared ideas about creating a collective narrative. Yan and Li emphasized the creative process was iterative and collaborative. The content and form the theatrical work might take would be determined over the next year, such as being musical theater or play with music, alongside languages it would be presented in.

In the airy, artistically lovely Pao Arts Center with about 60 other community members, I wondered how many knew we sat on a significant piece of land. In the 1960s, hundreds of Chinatown residents were displaced to make way for a highway. Did they know without activism, Chinatown would have lost important parts of its history, culture, and soul.

Chinatown history will be critical to project success, along with local presence. A community producer was built into the project, led by Christina Chu, local playwright and codirector of the Asian American Playwright Collective. Their creative collaboration will serve the project well, as it offers the lens of individuals and community members, I wondered how many knew we sat on a significant piece of land. In the 1960s, hundreds of Chinatown residents were displaced to make way for a highway. Did they know without activism, Chinatown would have lost important parts of its history, culture, and soul. "Interstate".

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**Elders learn how to read food labels**

**BY SOUTH COVE MANOR**

Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center dietician Sophia Ding explained how to read nutrition facts on food labels on Jan. 30 at the Boston Chinese Evangelical Church. (Image courtesy of South Cove Manor.)

Ding emphasized reading food labels can help you make healthy choices when you shop. The "Nutrition Facts" label is key to understanding the nutrient makeup of a packaged food. Some key ingredients are energy, protein, fat, carbohydrates, sugar, sodium and fiber.

The Food and Drug Administration uses a 2,000-calorie diet as an example on the Nutrition Facts label that provides information about Daily Values and Percent Daily Value (%DV). Some older adults may have higher or lower calorie needs. On May 27, 2016, the FDA published final rules on the new Nutrition Facts label for packaged foods to reflect new scientific information. The new label makes it easier for consumers to make better informed food choices.

Food should be healthy when fiber, Vitamin D, calcium, iron and potassium over 20 percent of daily value; and the saturated fat, sodium, sugar and trans fat are less than 5 percent of daily value.

Ding asked participants to look at the number of servings on the package. For example, Tostitos chips label one serving as seven chips. If you ate 14 chips, you would be consuming two servings. That is twice the calories and nutrients shown in the label, so you would need to double the nutrient and calorie amounts, as well as the daily values, to see what you are getting in two servings.

Additionally, calories provide a measure of how much energy you get from a serving of this food. For Tostitos, there are 140 calories in one serving. What if you ate the entire package? You will have consumed 2,520 calories.

Eating too much saturated fat and sodium is associated with an increased risk of health conditions such as cardiovascular disease and high blood pressure. Consuming too much added sugar can lead to diabetes. At the food label reading activity, each participant had a chance to compare which label is healthier.

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**Notice of Public Open Houses**

Connect Downtown is the City of Boston’s project to improve walking and bicycling in our downtown neighborhoods. We invite you to attend an Open House to learn more about the project and share your thoughts on the proposals.

More Information: Website: boston.gov/connect-downtown Email: connect-downtown@boston.gov

Phone: 617-635-0738

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Phone: 617-635-0738
By the American Lung Association

Tobacco use remains the nation’s leading cause of preventable death and disease, taking an estimated 480,000 lives every year. This year’s “State of Tobacco Control” report from the American Lung Association calls for proven tobacco control policies in light of the fact that the country’s youth vaping epidemic worsened in 2019. This dire situation is a result of states and the federal government’s failure to enact policies called for in the report such as increased tobacco taxes and stronger federal oversight of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. This year’s 18th annual report finds that in 2019 Massachusetts’s grades declined from a B to a C in the tobacco taxes category, from a C to a D in for access to cessation, and remained at failing levels for prevention and control funding. The American Lung Association applauds Massachusetts for its bold action to prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products within the Commonwealth, but maintains that the modernization of tobacco policy must include stronger support and resources for prevention and cessation to support public health and save lives in 2020.

The need for Massachusetts to take action to protect youth from all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, is more urgent than ever, with the youth vaping epidemic continuing its alarming rise to 27.5% or more than one in four high school students. This is a staggering 135% increase in high school e-cigarette use in just the past two years, and close to three million more kids started vaping in that time period, setting them up for a lifetime of addiction.

“In Massachusetts, our high school tobacco use rate remains at 24.6%. Massachusetts has been a leader on tobacco control policies, by being the first state to prohibit tobacco sales in pharmacies, the first to remove all flavored tobacco products from the market, and joining the early adopters in raising the tobacco age of sale to 21. Sadly, it’s simply not enough. The youth vaping epidemic is still rising and without funding for prevention and cessation programs, we will lose the opportunity to make the current generation of kids the first tobacco-free generation,” said American Lung Association director of advocacy Elizabeth Hamlin.

The 18th annual “State of Tobacco Control” report grades states and the federal government on policies proven to prevent and reduce tobacco use, and finds that while Massachusetts has taken significant steps to reduce tobacco use, elected officials should do more to save lives and ensure all Massachusetts residents benefit from reductions in tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke.

Massachusetts Grades

Funding for State Tobacco Prevention Programs: Grade F

Strength of Smokefree Workplace Laws: Grade A

Level of State Tobacco Taxes: Grade C

Coverage and Access to Services to Quit Tobacco: Grade D

Minimum Age of Sale for Tobacco Products: 21: Grade A

The American Lung Association encourages Massachusetts to put in place all the public policies called for in “State of Tobacco Control,” and this year’s report noted the need to focus on increasing funding for tobacco prevention and quit smoking programs. An investment in prevention is critically important given the skyrocketing number of youth who are vaping. “Massachusetts is the 8th worst state in the country in terms of high school use of electronic cigarettes. Despite Massachusetts receiving $836 million from tobacco settlement payments and tobacco taxes, the state currently funds tobacco control efforts at only 10.5% of the level recommended by the Centers for Disease Control for prevention. The American Lung Association believes the funds should be used to support the health of our communities, and to prevent tobacco use especially among our youth, and to help smokers quit tobacco for good,” said Hamlin.

The Commonwealth also lost some momentum this year in both the tobacco tax and access to cessation categories, as coverage of counseling for state employees was found to be minimal, as opposed to last year when all 3 for tobacco counseling and the investment per smoker on the state quintile decreased. Fortunately, Gov. Baker’s recently released budget did indicate potentially positive changes for 2020, including nearly $4 million for the state’s prevention program. Specifically, his proposal included funds for a vaping awareness campaign; enforcement support; expanded cessation support, including Quitline capacity and an enhanced SBIRT screening tool for schools; additional youth programming; and to evaluate and inform decision-making in the public health response to the vaping epidemic. The American Lung Association urges state lawmakers to pass the budget as well as increase the tax on tobacco products, which has proved to be one of the most effective ways to reduce tobacco use, not only among low-income individuals but also for youth to significantly increase the tax on all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.

Nationwide, the report celebrated a victory at the federal level, as the U.S. Congress finished off 2019 by passing a law to increase the national tobacco sales age to 21. While Massachusetts had already adopted a tobacco sales age of 21, this federal law will ensure all states have a sales age of 21 in 2020.

Virus: Residents told not to panic

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Lo noted the coronavirus was a respiratory virus and not an airborne virus, meaning it does not exist in the air. Human-to-human transmission occurs when a person infected with the virus coughs or sneezes, and if another person is within six feet or closer, there is a chance of infection. Viruses will not survive on any surface, making it similar to the flu.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infection, Lo said. The best way to prevent it is to avoid exposure to it. Frequently disinfect objects. If you feel sick, stay at home.

For more information, call the Mayor’s hotline 311, visit the CDC online at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html or Boston Public Health Commission online www.bphc.org.
Filmmaker Valerie Soe talks about documentary ‘Love Boat’

BY YANXUAN LI

February 21, 2020

Taiwanese American filmmaker Valerie Soe attended a screening of her documentary ‘Love Boat: Taiwan’ Feb. 14 at the Paramount Center. (Image courtesy of Valerie Soe.)

“Stories of the Sahara” is written by Sanmao, a famous Taiwanese woman author who was born Chen Mao Ping. The book sold 15 million copies in Chinese and Spanish, making it one of the best-sellers of all time. “Stories of the Sahara” has been described as a memoir travelogue, which inspired a generation.

Sanmao was born in China and later fled to Taiwan with her parents before the Communist revolutionary forces triumphed in 1949. In 1973, she crossed the oceans for love, following her fiancé Jose Maria Quero to the turbulent Spanish Sahara, where the Iberian government lived in uneasy coexistence with the Sahrawi Arab population. Eventually, she returned to Taiwan after her husband died in 1979. “Stories of the Sahara” was published in 1976, collecting 20 of her Chinese diaries illustrating her adventurous life in the desert.

For me, Sanmao was not a stranger. My mum used to tell me the stories about Sanmao’s life when I was little in Taiwan. In my mom’s stories, she described Sanmao as a brave and strong woman, who chose her dream and solved the problems she encountered. After all, this lady gave her comfortable life to travel the world. In my mind, I pictured Sanmao as a heroic figure.

Some terms are not commonly used in English, which translators may catch. However, translator Mike Fu remains faithful to most of the Chinese terms. For example, Sanmao used the word “meal ticket” in “A desert diner” to describe Jose as the source of income for the family. However, in English, a meal ticket mostly indicates the ticket that you need to get food at a event. I feel kept the literal meaning from the Chinese keep the authenticity of the narrative parts. But it could give slight confusion for native English speakers.

“Stories of the Sahara” followed Sanmao’s daily life in the desert in the first person. By looking through Sanmao’s lens, the readers could experience how Sanmao saw Sahrawi traditional rituals and habits.

Sanmao was excited when she accidentally discovered the bathing place — a “hot spring” in “The desert bathing spectacle.” I could smell the mixture of heat and pungent smells, feel the sticky black mud wall, and rush out with Sanmao.

The intimate tone Sanmao sets made me feel immersed in the Sahara life. Her memoir shows her passion for life.
Caring for Cancer
對癌症的關顧

Dedicated to the health needs of Boston’s Asian community.
致力於波士頓亞裔社區的健康需求。

Yu Cao, MD
血液科醫生 / 腫瘤醫師
Fluent in: Chinese-Mandarin
掌握語言：中文-廣東話

Lilian Chen, MD
結直腸外科醫生
Fluent in: Chinese-Cantonese, Chinese-Mandarin
掌握語言：中文-普通話, 中文-廣東話

Young Bae Kim, MD
婦科腫瘤部總主任; 婦癌科專科醫師

Jason Law, MD
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