Within the three-week first phase of reopening, the public health department will consult with members of specific communities to determine if it’s safe to proceed on to the next phase.

Features

First phase of reopening

As state reopens, Asian restaurants wait and adapt

By Angela Zhang

On May 9, an announcement was made on the website of the Chinese Embassy in the U.S. about the process for obtaining tickets on charter flights for Chinese students seeking to fly home.

The announcement provided new guidelines for obtaining a flight by signing up for the opportunity, filling out an application form and uploading related materials by May 11. According to the statement, one needs to meet two requirements to qualify for a flight. The first is that the individual needs to be a Chinese citizen who completed studies in the U.S. (with F, J-1 or M visa), or whose tenure ended in Confucius Institute as a teacher or a volunteer. The second is that one’s I-20 or DS-2019 has expired or is going to expire soon.

Articles about the new notice were shared by Chinese students in the U.S. on the popular Chinese social media app WeChat. Many students commented that they had filled out the necessary forms and were looking forward to getting on a flight home.

Those who qualified and were admitted by the embassy get a phone call or message from an airline company and are required to submit documents. The charter flights are a luxury for students who are on edge awaiting a flight as they confront the test.

See page 2, Flights to China.

As state reopens, Asian restaurants wait and adapt

By Carey Lin

Since Massachusetts went into lockdown due to COVID-19, restaurants have been coping by continuing their takeout business with no-contact deliveries. Some restaurants are weathering the storm as the state begins its first phase of a four-phase reopening, announced Monday by the governor.

However, restaurants are not included in phase 1, but will be allowed to open in phase 2, but that start date is uncertain as it’s dependent on public health data. If the virus rate is climbing, that could delay the second phase.

As for the current state of restaurants in restaurant-dependent business areas of Boston like Chinatown, they are trying to adapt and stay open under current restrictions as they wait for a green light from the state to open their doors again to customers for dine-in service.

Like many restaurants that have done, Xiang’s Hunan Kitchen blocked their entrance with tables for their strict no-contact takeaway counter. (Photo by Carey Lin)

“This is a huge change in the way business is done,” said Xiang’s Hunan Kitchen owner Tyler Street in Chinatown. “It’s been very hard to adapt to this new normal. We are doing our best to make sure our customers are safe and still enjoy their meals. We’re all in this together.

But those who rely heavily on the dine-in experience like hot pot, are not as fortunate.

See page 2, Restaurants Reopening.

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See page 2, Restaurants Reopening.
Flights to China
Continued from page 1
multiple barriers. After the Chinese government regulated international airlines to cut their routes to China to one per week, buying a ticket home is more difficult than ever for Chinese students. Some of them even turn to scalpers looking for expensive tick- ets charging them more than $6,000. Some students are buying multiple tickets, only to find them getting can- celled again and again.

Yihang Liu, 24, a Computer Sci- ence student who got his master's degree at Boston University in Janu- ary, was one among those who could not wait to get back home but got tickets canceled twice. He filled out the air travel application form right away. After a friend shared him the information, and got a phone call from China Eastern Airlines on May 11. The airline noti- fied him that he gotten off the flight from New York City to Shanghai on May 13. After talking with parents, Liu decided to purchase the ticket, and paid around $3,400 through the exclu- sive link sent to his email.

At the time of the interview, Liu had already arrived at a hotel in China where he was going through a mandatory 14-day quarantine. When asked about his feelings on his arrival home, he said he was impressed by how things were handled for the corona- virus.

“When I got off the plane and passed the security, a sense of respect raised from the bottom of my heart seeing those staff at the airport,” Liu said. “I think China is really serious about the pandemic compared with the U.S. All the staff is responsible for their work.”

All the passengers temperatures were taken, he said, before boarding the airplane. After the flight landed in Shanghai, they needed to conduct nucleic acid testing (NAT), blood draw and test body temperature before getting on their specially ar- ranged buses to quarantine hotels.

Zhuoyun Zhang, 24, a graduate student majoring in Public Rela- tions at Boston University, is another lucky person who got admitted on a temporary flight. After receiving a notice from Air China, she doubted its authenticity and posted to Wechat checking that the message was not a fraud.

Zhang’s flight was scheduled to fly from New York City to Chongqing on May 17. On the day before the board- ing date, she received notice from the embassy stating that the flight had to be postponed for one day or two. She was not worried about the sudden change, but could not fall asleep until getting updated that the flight was go- ing to fly on May 18.

From the day of getting the mes- sage from Air China, to the scheduled departure date, Zhang had two days to pack up everything, deal with getting rid of her furniture and settling the apartment lease. “Students studying abroad can achieve anything,” she stated proudly, concerning her ability to deal with an emergency like this.

“I have these mixed and compli- cated feelings,” Zhang said. “I was like a refugee, and don’t have time to dispose of anything.”

Luxurious, wasteful, hurried and misery were four words Zhang used to describe her experience at the time. If it was not for her hasty depar- ture, Zhang had planned to donate her clothes and groceries that she could not bring back with her. Now she had no choice but to throw them in the trash.

Looking through Zhang’s posts on social media in the past few days, they are brimming with the joy of being able to go back home. On the other hand, there were multiple things that she could not realize in such short no- tice during the pandemic. She did not get graduation photos with her friend like they had planned. She did not have a graduation ceremony, where she was expecting to reunite with her twin sister, who was going to be there for her. According to information offered by Insight, a WeChat subscription account popular among Chinese stu- dents in the U.S., from May 13 to May 31, there are 24 temporary charter flights scheduled from the U.S. to China in June, with 11 of them suc- cessfully completing their flights by May 20.

Restaurants Reopening
Continued from page 1
Hot pot restaurant Shabu-Zen has closed their store temporarily since the lockdown, unable to deliver the same experience to customers’ homes. As such, they have not been doing well. “Some stores are having a much harder time staying afloat than oth- ers,” said Evelyn Chen, from Dolphin Bay. “A lot of our part-timers has been staying afloat despite being short-staffed.”

Another restaurant, Xiang’s Hunan Kitchen, has also applied the same safety measures. They have blockaded their entrance and only allow take-out pick-ups right by the door. “We’ve built quite a reputation and business has always been good to the point where there is often a line outside waiting to dine-in,” said Chang, own- er and manager of the restaurant, who only wanted to give his last name. Despite not earning the same revenue by relying on takeout only, they have managed to stay afloat, he said. The PPE relief funds they have received have also definitely helped them pay their employees during this time.

In response to Gov. Charlie Baker’s announcement to re-open some small businesses on May 18, restaurants have remained hesitant to re-open. “We might even remain take- out only until the fall semester begins or when we have college students part-time again,” Chen said. “With- out first class, we would not be able to handle the work load of a dine-in service.” As a family business, the staff of Dolphin Bay will remain so until they can get the help they need.

Chang said that the restaurant would operate the same way until he is certain of the reopening date for dine-in service and when he receives exact details by the state for operating guidelines.

Mr. Chang’s greatest concern is about how to separate customers with a safe distance between them, and find a solution that is safe for employees to interact with customers.
Food for Thought

Don’t have a green thumb, try growing scallions indoors

By Anna Ing

Growing up, my mom had a green thumb. She loved having houseplants, and our living room had a lot of them. Ironically, she never wanted to have her own garden to grow her own food. Only once did we grow something edible; we planted a small cherry toma- to plant outside of our restaurant. We were lucky to get a handful of lovely cherry tomatoes. Then that was the last time I’ve grown a plant, because I don’t inherit my mom’s green thumb. I can’t even take care of a lucky bamboo plant.

Over the years, I have read about growing micro greens and food with special indoor lighting for those like myself without access to a garden or backyard. I even heard other herbs were simple to grow, but I was not interested in getting potting soil and needing to put unnecessary plant con- tainers in my tiny apartment. My current place lacks a kitchen window and tons of natural sunlight. So I never really entertained the idea of realistically growing food at home.

Recently, while scrolling through my Instagram and Facebook news feeds this last month, I noticed many friends starting to try to grow their own scallions. It looked easy. Just take a bunch of scallions, cut off the top green part and leave about 1-inch from the bulb. Then find a container and put in about an inch of water, but don’t fully sub- merge them. Make sure to put the bulb part down and have the scallion white stems standing up. Supposedly within a few days, you should get some green leafy parts sprouting up. Do remember to check on it and change the water every other day. It is recommended that the ideal place be in a sunny area or in a windowsill. I really think this could be done using water and not needing to get any soil.

So I decided to jump on the band- wagon. It seemed easy enough, plus I love scallions. I live far away from Asian markets, so I have been stuck paying the high prices of the neigh- borhood local market. I just happened to have a wilted bunch in my fridge. What luck! This is a perfect time to try this project. Since I did not have a sunny apartment or many windows, I had to place it in front of my sliding door into my tiny balcony that gets some daytime sunlight. I struggled to find the right container.

My glass salsa jar was too high and the scallion white parts kept fall- ing down. I found an old, clear takeout container. It was small enough and not too tall for my needs. Maybe it is the scallion whites, but they kept falling down into the water. So I had to keep fixing the positioning a lot. It seems like it is fool proof to get your own scallions based on the many YouTube videos and online articles. It would be nice to save some money growing your own. I hope you have wait and see if I can overcome my lack of a green thumb.
Youth to collect Covid-19 stories for ‘Chinatown Story Cart’

By Ling-Mei Wong

Two local artists will return to Chinatown with more public art. Artists Lily Xie and Crystal Bi Wegner united for the “Chinatown Story Cart,” which received a Creative City Boston grant for $21,500 from the New England Foundation for the Arts.

The cart will be designed by Chinatown high school students trained in interviewing and storytelling from Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center’s Chinese Immigrant Student Leadership (CHISL) group and the Castle Square Tenants Organization’s Media Makers group. The high school students will interview younger students and adults in the community to collect Chinatown stories and make visual art.

“We want to make the stories of Chinatown residents tangible so that people can hold and connect with them, and they are highlighting portions of those stories and making visual art,” Bi said.

The cart was intended to travel through the neighborhood with zones for people to take home, but now students will produce digital art through open-source design websites. It will have a story kit for community members to record more stories.

“In these workshops, young people are brainstorming the communities and individuals they want to highlight during this health crisis, they are interviewing folks in the community to collect stories,” Bi said.

The youth programming in the spring has gone online due to Covid-19, keeping the artists busy. Bi teaches art to high school students at the Margarita Muñiz Academy, Boston’s only bilingual Spanish-English high school in Jamaica Plain. Xie is a researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Media Lab. Both women are children of immigrants and wanted to share stories from Chinatown’s immigrant community.

“The core of our project is giving people the power to decide what happens to their neighborhood,” said Bi.

“That’s what we hope our art can do: To affect the future of the neighborhood and make that process as democratic as possible.”

The duo founded the Moon Eaters Collective for queer Asian-American artists in 2018, which has grown to include many other artists. Bi and Xie were invited as a team in residence with Residence Lab, working with ACDC, the Pao Arts Center and the residents of 66 Hudson and 88 Hudson. The women heard concerns from residents about open spaces and air pollution, which went into their art installation “A House Shaped Dream” with residents Pilhsa Lin and Yuyi Li.

“The feeling of vulnerability to health, we felt we could do a lot more with art to work in the neighborhood,” Xie said.

“We started to think about how we could uplift stories about Chinatown for a time of gentrification.”

The duo can relate to many Chinatown residents. Xie’s parents emigrated from Shanghai, while Bi’s mother came from Taiwan. Both were born in America, with Xie growing up in Chicago. Bi lived in Boston and visited Medford frequently, and Xie plans to return to Medford to teach in 2021.

“The core of our project is giving people the power to decide what happens to their neighborhood,” Xie said.

“It’s a new theoretical framework for the preservation of culture, but brings more power to residents.”

The Chinatown Story Cart plans to roll out during summer and fall community events, such as Films at the Gate and the Lantern Festival.

Affordable Housing Lottery

Medford Framingham

266 Waverly Street, Framingham MA

Studios @ 1,401*; 1BRs @ $1,577*; 2BRs @ $1,736*; 3BRs @ $1,889*

*Rents subject to change. Rents do not include utilities. One parking spot included in the rent.

A Public Info Session will be held on May 20th, 2020, at 6:00pm via: YouTube Live Stream https://youtu.be/GW498N1 or just search “SEB Housing” in YouTube and click the thumbnail for Medfield Meadows Information Session, AND

• Conference call (425) 436-6200 (Access Code 86267)

Completed Applications and Required Income Documentation must be delivered, or postmarked, by 2 pm on June 23rd, 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 May 7th, 2020, at 6:00pm via:

• YouTube Live Stream https://youtu.be/KwQX2G1 or just search “SEB Housing” in YouTube and click the thumbnail for Medford Meadows Information Session
• Conference call (425) 436-6200 (Access Code 86267)

For Lottery Information and Applications, or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, go to www.sebhousing.com or call (617) 782-6900 x1 and leave a message or postal mail SEB Housing, 257 Hillside Ave, Needham MA 02494. For TTY Services dial 711. Free translation available. Traducción gratuita disponible.
Remote learning poses challenges for immigrant families

BY LING-MEI WONG

The coronavirus has disrupted school classrooms across the state, and Boston Public School students, like Boston Public School students Martin and Emily Chang work on classroom assignments at home poses unique challenges.

Martin and Emily Chang are US-born children attending school in China, like many other immigrant families. The award of the resulting contract is subject to approval by the BPDA

The Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") d/b/a Boston Planning & Development Agency ("BPDA"), by its Chief Procurement Officer ("CPO"), requests the submission of proposals for the CHINA TRADE CENTER BASEMENT WATERPROOFING PROJECT. The RFQ will be available on www.bidx.com forthwith after the bid submission deadline. No paper copies of bids will be accepted. Bidders must have a valid digital ID issued by the Authority in order to bid on projects. Bidders need to apply for a digital 1D with Bid Express at least 14 days prior to a scheduled bid opening date.

Electronic proposals for the following project will be received through the internet using Bid Express until the date and time and stated below and will be posted on www.bidx.com with the Bid submission deadline.

The BRA, acting for and on behalf of the BPDA, hereby requests proposals for the CHINA TRADE CENTER BASEMENT WATERPROOFING PROJECT. The RFQ will also be available from the Office of the Secretary, Boston Planning & Development Agency, One City Hall Square, Room 910, Boston, MA 02201-1007.

Pre-Submission Respondent Conference: all interested designers are invited to attend a virtual pre-submission conference on May 15, 2020 at 10:00 A.M. Attendance at the pre-submission conference is optional. Please email the BPDA Procurement office at bfd@boston.gov to participate in the pre-submission conference. Further notice regarding the virtual pre-submission conference will be emailed to all plan holders at a later date.

Submission Deadline: all responses to this RFQ must be received no later than 12:00 P.M. (noon) on May 29, 2020. By Tessa Palhemus, Secretary, Boston Planning & Development Agency, One City Hall Square, Room 910, Boston, MA 02201-1007.

Absolutely no responses will be accepted after the due date and time. Contract Award: After evaluating and ranking the finalists in order of qualifications and documenting the rationale for rankings, a contract will be awarded to the top-ranked finalist. The BPDA reserves the right to reject any or all responses and to waive any minor informalities. The award of the resulting contract is subject to approval by the BPDA Board and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Brian Connolly, Director of Finance/Chief Procurement Officer
From China to America, a family finds its final resting place

By Rosann Tung
Special to Sampan

My parents raised my brother Mark and me in Raleigh, North Carolina, an airplane flight away from any relatives. My father’s Taiwan left him and his brother lived in Los Angeles. We took one family vacation to each during my school years. Taiwan money for the future was more important than knowing our cousins. My father was a returning immigrant who survived the trials of war, immigration, and economic hardship that their ancestors did. My father had to endure the tragic loss of his elder son to mental illness. Gong Gong’s bourgeois background and ties to the Chinese civil war’s Nationalist opposition, which supported democracy over dictator- ship, were a further persecution of all male family members who remained in China. He wanted to ensure that his remaining son would have a prosperous future in the free world.

I wonder whether Gong Gong had any inkling, as he hugged his wife (my Po Po) and his growing son, that one day his grandson (my Gu Ma) goodbye in Shanghai, that he would never see them again. As the end of the calamities that were soon to happen in China. The Chinese Communist Party sought to create a new society by creating a communal society in which distinctions between the peasant and the upper classes disappeared. Gong Gong knew that families like theirs, missionary-educated and middle class, at the very least would lose property, status, and power. Yet, I’m sure they had no idea that communication between Chinese people and the outside world would be cut off for decades, and that the Great Repatriation would soon lead to starvation to death, and that Mao’s draconian implementation of commu- nism would harm human freedom.

From Hong Kong, then a British colony, Gong Gong was able to bring my father out of Communist China in the belly of a ship. After working in construction for a couple of years, Daddy gained ad- mission to a doctoral program in engineering in the US.

During those few years when we were apart, Daddy and I would write. Gong Gong wrote Daddy every two weeks. I imagine he returned to his spare room after a long day at work and a steaming bowl of noodle soup. He wrote his letters on blue Aerogram letter paper, the kind that you folded, sealed, and addressed. With no margins, he used as much of the paper as possible for his words of ad- vice, love, and longing. Without the aid of an international graduate student in California, Gong Gong himself had at- tended graduate school and in the midst of what he could imagine my father’s life and struggles. Unable to support him in person, Gong Gong felt that his father’s success was learning English, so he wrote letters to him in English, even though it was their second lan- guage. He encouraged my brother and me to make friends who were not Chinese.

The lines of communication among Gong Gong in Hong Kong, my father in Berkeley, California, and my grand- mother Po Po in Shanghai were tenu- ous. In 1968, he started sending blue Aerogram letters to his wife, daughter, and baby granddaughter Xiao Yi. People mailing letters landing in a mailbox would alert government officials to the fact that the residents had a close friend or rela- tive outside of China. The blue letters would be opened, read, and censored, so Gong Gong could not ask questions about the political situation nor give them information about Dad- dy in the US; if what mattered couldn’t be written, it was pointless to write at all.

Nobody was aware of any health issues regarding Gong Gong such as depression or heart trouble. We do not know how he died, whether it was while sleeping or brushing his teeth or lying down after dinner due to discomfort from eating too much. But we do know that he was alone when he died, despite having a loving fam- ily. When Gong Gong didn’t show up at work for a couple of days, someone knocked on our bedroom door and then entered to find his body. Gong Gong had died of heart failure alone in Hong Kong. He had sacrificed his own life for his family’s future.

Under Mao, Chinese citizens were forbidden to travel and communicate with the outside world. Unknowingly fam- ily and relatives were told that Gong Gong’s ultimate sacrifice and the hope it gave the family to have a son thriv- ing in the US.

During these years, owing a debt equal to his father’s life, my father never strayed from the course Gong Gong had envisioned. He fulfilled his duty to become a professor, marry into a “good family,” have children, and earn tenure. Once, learning of his love for architecture, I asked my father why he became an engineering professor. “Because once you have tenure, you can’t be fired.” As a recent immigrant with too much to prove, he chose financial stability over passion for a more creative career.

Because of Chinese government censorship, my father had no way of sharing his successes, nor his chal- lenges, with his family back in China. Thus, he could not ask his mother and sister for advice about matters like racial discrimination against non-white professors at his Southern university, a difficult marriage exac- erbated by his wife’s mental illness, a cultural gap between him and his American-born adolescent children, and the isolation of being Chinese in the South.

Gong’s death and China’s burgeon- ing economic ties to the West in the 1980s allowed my father’s mother and sister to emigrate to Hong Kong to be a less restrictive society. Po Po moved Gong’s urn for a second time to an in-law’s Shanghai joint venture. Why move Gong out of his homeland, only to take up valuable space in a tiny Hong Kong apartment? As soon as China’s government al- lowed citizens to leave without fear of persecution for the first time in de- cades, Daddy sponsored my brother Xiao Yi to live with us and attend the university where he taught.

Xiao Yi graduated, married, had children, and settled in Salem, New Hampshire. In time, Xiao Yi brought her parents and Po Po, who was 99 years old, from Hong Kong to live in Salem. The immigration of this small apartment almost complete. I imagine Gong Gong belonged with his family.

My family flew to Shanghai, lo- cated the death certificate, transmitted his father’s pulverized remains from the bronze urn to a smaller, lighter urn, and checked it as baggage. In Gong Gong’s third post-mortem move, he emerged from the United Airlines bag- gage carousel at Raleigh Durham Air- port.

When Po Po died at 101 years old, I saw my father cry for the first time and offer admissions about his first and strongest bond. He had been separated from his mother for almost forty years. His one attempt to bring her from Hong Kong to live in our home when I was a baby had failed, because his mother’s easy relationship with the baby (me) made his wife (my mother) insecure.

My aunt and uncle searched for a final resting place for Gong Gong and Po Po. They chose Pine Grove Ceme- tery, where they bought four plots, two for my grandparents and two for themselves. When my parents learned the plots would cost $1000 each, they bought two plots as well. It didn’t seem to matter that the plots were 500 miles from the place my parents called home.

“Daddy, why did you buy burial plots in Salem, New Hampshire, when you have lived in Raleigh, North Caro- lina for over thirty years?” I asked over the phone. “To me, Salem was a place to conduct er- rands at strip malls and big box stores with parking lots and no sales tax, or to buy a home and commute to Boston like my cousin. I imagined a final rest- ing place that was grander, more fitting with their histories of migration due to war, revolution, and sacrifice.

In his matter-of-fact way, Daddy answered, “They have a great view, and my sister said it’s pretty. That way, we can all be together, and you and Xiao Yi can visit us.” I’ve often wondered whether immigration makes people not only irrationally brutal, but also drivers by the practical rather than emotional. My parents don’t have the luxury of sentimentality.

My family now owns six plots in the veteran’s section of a cemetery in a place far from China both in distance and in culture, a small town with all of three percent Asian residents, not dis- similar to how I grew up in Raleigh. At the end of his un’s fourth and final journey, a 100-year-old man was reunited at Pine Grove Cemetery.

Gong Gong never found out how his surviving children, and granddaughter in Shanghai turned out. My father ful- filled his father’s dreams for him, and enabled the rest of the family to immi- grate and prosper in the US.

Even though my parents did not have the means, the freedom, or the enemy, their family bond across distance, I prioritize quality time with family and friends. If it can’t happen at home, I make family din- ner happen in cars with leftovers or in parking lots with takeout. Even though it can be a hassle, I want to avoid the small harms, the small pains, the small errors, on Saturdays I insist that all three of us pile into the car to together to complete them. Family traditions, ritu- als, and vacations form my daughter’s childhood memories. I want her to know and love all of her aunts, uncles, and cousins, including those who are not related to us, so we dine and vaca- tion together, call and text all the time.

Gong Gong’s and Po Po’s great grandchildren did not have to endure the trials of war, immigration, and economic hardship that their ancestors did. And they have never visited Pine Grove Cemetery, but they have been raised to know that families stick to- gether, even in death, despite the separa- tion caused by political upheaval and migration across oceans and con- tinents. I strive to uphold my grand- parents’ legacy, the lesson that home is anywhere and everywhere one is cher- ished and nurtured.

Rosann Tung of Boston began write- ing creative nonfiction after a career in law. She was named a Chang- er of the Year by the New Hampshire Women’s History Project for her work on racial justice in public education. She has published a personal essay about being an adoptive mom. “Who’s the Lucky One?” in the Boston Globe and performed her story, “Identity Lost and Found,” for PRX Podcast Garage.
Quincy has come a long way since its first Chinese restaurant

Quincy has an abundance of excellent Asian restaurants and eateries, from Japanese to Thai, Korean to Chinese. For example, you’ll find TheChina, maybe the only Chinese restaurant and Sports Bar in Massachusetts. MoMo Café, where you can find unique and delicious Durian Doughnuts and Chili Square, where you can order Duck Wings, Heads and Necks.

However, in the early 20th century, there were few Chinese in Quincy, and around 1960, the census found only around 100 Asians in Quincy.

Interestingly, the first two Chinese restaurants which opened in Quincy were owned by white Americans. This may be the only Massachusetts city where that occurred. Why was Quincy such an anomaly? Unfortunately, that seems to be a question without an answer.

As was reported in The Patriot Ledger, January 8, 2019, “Quincy has more residents of Asian descent per capita than any other city in Massachusetts. The city’s Asian population jumped from 1,744 in 2010 to 13,546 in 2000 and 5,577 in 1990. That means 24 percent of Quincy residents are Asian, compared with 15.4 percent in the state.”

24 percent of Quincy residents are Asian, compared with 15.4 percent a decade ago, and the population has grown by about 64 percent in that decade.

The first Chinese restaurant in Quincy was the Green Dragon Inn, also referred to as the Green Dragon Café. It opened in the fall of 1919 at 1609 Hancock Street. The restaurant was owned by Mrs. Ida Morgan and was located on the second floor of the building. On the first floor, there was a deli and lunchroom, which were also owned by Mrs. Morgan.

The restaurant was supposed to serve Chinese and Chinese cuisine. Mrs. Morgan hired Wong You to be the chef at the Green Dragon, although their relationship with her chef might have been a bit stormy. In June 1916, Wong You was arrested and charged with threatening to assault Mrs. Morgan, and he ended up going to jail.

The restaurant was also involved in some controversy over its sign, which was owned by the same individual who illuminated the flag of the United States. The restaurant’s representation of the flag was not connected directly or indirectly with any advertising.

It was noticed that there were similar signs in use in other cities and towns in Massachusetts.

Mrs. Morgan refused to remove the sign, and despite opposition to the flag, no action was taken against the restaurant. However, less than a year later, in March 1917, Mrs. Morgan decided to remove the sign and offered it for sale in the local newspaper.

She was not surprised that there were similar signs in use in other cities and towns in Massachusetts.

The second Chinese restaurant in Quincy opened in 1919, again with a controversy over its sign. In February 1919, Henry Saunders, who, for the last several years, already owned a restaurant, arrived. He used an original victualler’s license at 1514 Hancock Street, and had recently closed for extensive repairs.

An advertisement for the New American and Chinese Restaurant on the Patriot Ledger, August 23, 1929, spread to the restaurant on the second floor. The Green Dragon was never rebuilt, and the building was later occupied by a different business.

The second Chinese restaurant in Quincy opened in 1919, again with a controversy over its sign. In February 1919, Henry Saunders, who, for the last several years, already owned a restaurant, with a common victualler’s license at 1514 Hancock Street, had recently closed for extensive repairs.

When I received my results, I felt a flood of emotions: relief that I had tested negative for the virus, sadness at the positive antibody test, worry that I might have been contagious without knowing it. We don’t yet know enough about Covid-19 to fully understand what level of immunity might come with antibodies, and the tests also have a 1-2 percent false positive rate. But I do know that along with all the emotions, I also felt a sense of clarity. Everyone deserves to have access to information about their status. We need widespread testing, especially in the hardest-hit communities in Boston.

Ramping up Covid-19 testing and contact tracing will also be necessary for a safe reopening. Boston is now past the first surge of hospitalizations, but epidemiologists warn that we could see another surge of hospitalizations unless we can identify who has been exposed to the virus and act to contain it.

I share my results to help reduce the stigma of testing positive, and to emphasize the importance of continued physical distancing and wearing masks in public.

Anyone can be infected with the virus and potentially spread it to others without even knowing it. As we continue to advocate for an equitable recovery, we also all need to continue prioritizing public health and safety for everyone in our community.

Thanks for all that you do.

MICHELLE WU
Boston City Councilor At-Large
Musings from China

Spring flowers were blooming along the path to our school administration building. I especially liked the four newly planted peach trees, each corolla resonated with a new-found brightness of color that I found to be especially delightful after having spent 10 tiresome weeks under quarantine in Guiyang No. 1 Middle School, here in the center of Guiyang’s Future Ark development. It’s located in the pocket of a once fertile mountain valley, presently a sterile concrete rose bed built with steel vines, deep aluminum roots, and lots of wire-mesh.

Each city block is hung with dreamy digital display ads. Flags flapped in the cool breeze on top of gleaming skyscraper dragons that ring their iron belts. In contrast to Noah’s Ark, this futuristic passenger liner is a gleaming skyscraper that rises above the yellow clouds, was mind numbing, still radiated the confident eye of the Cyclops with his Olympian call to duty. The New World Order needed gods to shape its destiny. Empires can launch their former self. But the school’s large bronze mural found at the entrance way still radiated the confident eye of the Tao of physics. The combined visage magically filled grains of colored sand with flashes of hope among the polluted green candies that swirled around the broken bones of Nanning River’s old abandoned factories.

Could Chinese rockets could ever be seen bursting above the yellow construction cranes – celebrating a victory over the sun – with the evening rise of Venus above the western horizon. Each night millions of apartment lights gathered up their collective voices and sang together: joining forces with the Milky Way as its ethereal aural cloud of LEDs swam into view. Pausing from these thoughts, I stooped lower to observe the virus unfazed through the lens of a tiny tree leaf, as a passing orange bubble bee danced and paraded about in its little neighborhood, reminding me of our shared environment. The ark of Life – Mother Earth. The strange idea that a mighty ship had lost its rudder, in its quest to build a Utopian pleasure dome above the clouds, was mind numbing, perhaps the consequence of a failed experiment of the Industrial Revolution in 2020. Regardless, our grade nine students were filled with new ideas, too. Future sailors and spacecaptain captains. Middle school students finally returned to class May 4, arriving in their blue and white school track uniforms. We had to wait for the signal from HQ. Radar scans indicated that the Covid-19 virus may re-surface again anytime soon. So we need to get the vaccine rafts ready ASAP. Meanwhile, we are relaxing our guard.

For a brief spell, I was standing in the wave of my own smile, participat-
ing in the Beauty Way of the Navajo, next to some students wearing Tibetan mandalas of the Tao of physics. The combined visage magically filled grains of colored sand with flashes of hope among the polluted green candies that swirled around the broken bones of Nanning River’s old abandoned factories.

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The mirror reflected the past as we departed into the future.

I had arrived at one of my favorite places in Guiyang, the 16th century architectural gem, Jiaxu Pavilion. A walk across Floating Jade Bridge and voila I would enjoy a lovely afternoon without TV. The smell of deep fried tofu and pork from street vendors drifted through the air. Here I could feel the pulse of the community greening in open pedestrian fields of blue. Silk tiger ties could be worn as badges of joy. Red and white paper lanterns hung in the doorways. This has been a famous meeting place revered by the community for centuries, built during the glorious days of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Its structural complexity was intertwined with organic features of the indigenous Miao, Dong, Shui, and Buyi people with mathematical precision.

April sun showers had brought everyone out to escape the post-virus melancholia. City fountain squares were engrossed in black and white terminal scans to detect contact. “Imagination is more important than knowledge” (Einstein). Holistic technologies matter.

At long last, I finally got the chance to explore the city as I wished. The government had lifted the lockdown in Wuhan, and it was quickly apparent that people all over China were excited to travel and attend to social needs as they saw fit. The wall had faded into the ether. Where would the Time Tunnel bring us next? Trains, planes and buses could once more scurry about in ritualistic patterns. My taxi driver was elated, uninhibited by his N95 mask. His open car windows allowed the warm air to flow freely between us, and our intermittent conversation, reflected that relaxed occasion. We sailed along Beijing Lu, following the river curves as it wandered amongst mammoth iridescent Legos, under bridges, and past manicured parks crowded with citizens.

“Okay stop here, this is fine,” I told him. He nodded his round head and took my money, pointed to his small picture of the Buddha, hanging from the car’s rear-view-mirror. “One good man,” I said, and he grinned at me with a glint of amusement in his sober eye. The mirror reflected the past as we departed into the future.

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April sun showers had brought everyone out to escape the post-virus melancholia. City fountain squares were again brimming with families and pets. Dogs paralyzed about on short nylon and leather leashes. Some of them comically dusted with bright pink and yellow dyes. Visitors celebrated their liberation by taking selfies with friends, while artists captured the moment with colored plants from the scenic vantage points along the river’s edges. The ancient game of Go was being played under tinted trees, transformed into green park umbrellas. Both actors and gawkers alike were engrossed in black and white territional claims. Black stones circumnavigated white stones. Go is the old- est continually played game on earth. Stone Age pass-times practiced under the agreeable Jade Spirit of change. And here and there, elderly folks stopped long whips, spinning tops lighting up the eyes of children who watched in spellbound amazement. Birds overhead gathered among the sills of the pointed gray pagodas peer down, amused at the rolling traffic as it meandered in and out of mountain tunnels in the hazy distance. The eye of heaven peacefully spread its velvet wings above the oblique, oblivious to the pandemonium below.

My mission was to pick up groceries at the popular grocery store, Carrefour, located underground in City Mall. The shift from a ghost town situation, to one suddenly animated with electric hyperactivity, was obviously surreal. Basic WeChat web tags had to be presented upon entry, as AI secure antennas continued to track your unique biometric pattern. Including the time, date, and your whereabouts in the store(s), or under a moss-covered Neo- lithic arch in a remote corner of China. Some aspects of social-distancing protocols were still in effect (masks), but clearly, things had seriously been relaxed since Beijing had officially allowed Chinese society to reopen its doors on April 8. Shoppers were again exploring local traditional markets and those omnipresent new fangled gadget and fashion shops that lined the corridors of modern Chinese malls.

Having completed my shopping and whirwind tour of the downtown core, I grabbed a taxi back to Future Ark, relieved to return to my private sanctuary in the Hall of the Mountain King.

James Mercer completed graduate studies in both art and science at Queen’s and the University of Toronto. He has taught all over the world, and currently teaches in Guiyang, China.