The pig in the Chinese zodiac represents good character traits such as compassion, diligence and generosity. But a river of dead pigs? Director Cathy Yan’s “Dead Pigs” is one of many Chinese films in this year’s International Film Festival. (See p. 13)

Minnesota exports up 6 percent in fourth quarter
Strong growth in Asia, the European Union and North American markets
SAINT PAUL — Minnesota companies exported $5.3 billion worth of agricultural, mining and manufactured products in the fourth quarter of 2017, a 6 percent increase from the same period a year earlier, according to figures released today by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

Annually, between 2016 and 2017, Minnesota exports increased almost 8 percent to $20.6 billion, while U.S. exports grew almost 7 percent.

“Steady export activity, fueled by Minnesota businesses both large and small, continues to contribute to Minnesota’s strong and diverse economy,” said DEED Commissioner Shawntera Hardy. “Growth in Asia, the European Union and North American markets led the increases in the final quarter of 2017.”

State exports to Asia grew 9 percent to $1.9 billion in the fourth quarter, while exports to Europe were up 10 percent, reaching $1.2 billion. Exports to North American markets were up 5 percent to $1.7 billion.

Exports to Central and South America were flat at $247 million. Sales declined to the Australia-Pacific region ($135 million, down 7 percent), the Middle East ($98 million, down 19 percent) and Africa ($47 million, down 19 percent).
Publisher's Pronouncements

Greetings:

Now that spring has arrived and we’ve survived another typical Minnesota winter, we can focus on getting ready for summer.

Although we normally do not report on what we feel mainstream media adequately covers, we did include an update on page 5 about the Harvard admissions lawsuit that alleges Harvard discriminates against Asian Americans in its admissions process. On the local level, the Minnesota Department of Education has implemented a Data Disaggregation Law, which has caused much consternation with the parents of Chinese American students as to the need for such data to be compiled and how it will be used. (Read the Data Disaggregation Report at www.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2018/mandated/180150.pdf and why United Education for All objects to it at www.unitededucationforall.org/) Where do you stand on this issue? We invite your comments on this topic and will consider a more thorough follow up on this matter based on your feedback. Please send your comments directly to me at ghugh@chinainsight.info.

As many of you know, the Chinese Heritage Foundation Friends has discontinued its annual Passage to China event at Mall of America, but the Chinese community can continue to celebrate and share its heritage at Festival of Nations from April 12-28. Also, the Chinese American Association of Minnesota is seeking volunteers to be involved in this event. See page 14 for details.

This year the 37th Minneapolis-St. Paul International Film Festival will be featuring many films from China. You may wish to check their upcoming schedule (see page 13 for more information). If you have a bad case of “cabin fever” and can’t escape the Twin Cities area, you should schedule a visit to the Minneapolis Institute of Art to see the “Power of Beauty in China’s Last Dynasty” exhibit, which continues through May 27, 2018. We know of many individuals who have seen it more than once. Visit https://new.artsmia.org/power-and-beauty/ for details.

2018 is also Global Minnesota’s Year of China and has a number of events scheduled for April along with a June gala. For details see page 14 or visit www.globalminnesota.org.

You also might be interested in a follow-up article on the book “Parallel Universes: Essays and Conversations” by Chang Wang, China Insight contributor, on page 11.

Thank you for your continued support of China Insight. We strive to encourage mutual understanding between the U.S. and China, especially during these contentious times. We also welcome recommendations as to topics you would like to be included and invite you to submit articles for our consideration.

Finally, we still need to work on getting a Congressional Gold Medal for World War II Chinese American Veterans approved by Congress, so please visit www.chinainsight.org to learn how you can get involved to make that happen.

Happy Easter. (for our Christian readers), Happy April Fools’ Day for everyone and enjoy the April showers that’ll bring us May flowers!

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Hugh
Publisher-CEO
China Briefs

Angry passenger

A 65-year-old hothead slapped, pushed, chowed and kicked the windshield of the bus he was on when the driver did not let him off after the bus had left his desired stop in Hong Kong. He started arguing with the bus driver before turning on the windshield. He finally headbutted the windshield, putting a hole in it. Police arrived and he was taken to the hospital with cuts from his actions.

Unlucky pedestrian

An elderly woman walking along a particularly narrow turn in Kowloon was pinned between a metal handrail and a truck carrying water tanks and other materials to a construction site. Firefighters had to remove the handrail to free the woman, who was taken to hospital.

Oversized “luggage”

Hong Kong’s subway system allows each passenger one piece of luggage not exceeding 67” in total dimensions and with any one side not exceeding 51”. A man traveling with a trash bin (typically 48-51” in height) was “advised” by subway staff to leave the carriage in mid-March. He complied, but the incident started a debate about why mainland Chinese parallel traders were allowed oversized luggage in the past while students with large musical instruments are turned away. Sounds like a good cause for tube and metro players to take up!

New life

A Chengdu man diagnosed with HIV in 2008 during his pre-marital medicals had been awaiting the Grim Reaper’s arrival since. His fiancée walked, his family ex-communicated him, and he became a recluse for seven years, living on a government medicals had been awaiting the Grim Reaper’s arrival since. His fiancée walked, his family ex-communicated him, and he became a recluse for seven years, living on a government

Fraudulent zoo

Visitors to a Guangxi zoo saw in the zoo’s advertisement.

Disputed waters

Lofty rents

In March, we showed a 40-square-foot space renting for close to US$400/mo. This month’s unit is bigger, at 160 square feet. It has a sliding glass door separating the kitchen counter and the toilet, AND, it also boasts a loft bed that is directly above the kitchen. Beats sleeping inches away from the toilet featured in last month’s column. The rent for this unit? Only US$741/mo. Because it’s located in the New Territories (north of Kowloon peninsula). However, judging by the photos, there does not appear to be much storage space – steps leading up to the mattress are cubbyholes for storage. But it does have a wall of windows letting in sunlight from one end.

Pricey plates

New Year, Hong Kong’s Transportation Department had 45 such plates up for auction, but the surprise was a plate that did not have the number “8” but the letters “VW.” It fetched US$1.19 million! Apparently, “V” for victory” counts for something.

And what was the highest-priced plate? 28. It went for US$2.31 million, followed by “18,” which fetched US$2.11 million.

Pesky phone

that, a technician said the lock-out time is random and can go up to 80 years! Can’t wait that long? Reboot your phone and risk losing some files as not all files can be transferred. Not sure what this Shanghai lady will do, but I bet she isn’t the first person to be in such a dilemma. What would you do?

Lumpy skin

A 68-year-old from Hunan Province started developing fatty lumps from his neck to his upper torso. Doctors diagnosed his condition as symmetric lipomatosis, which affects mid-age-headed heavy drinkers. He started drinking at 13 and by 40, had increased his consumption to a litre a day.

Pricey plates

A Shanghai woman’s 2-year-old got his hands on her iPhone and entered an incorrect passcode for no-one-knows how many times. As a result, she’s been locked out for 47 years! Apparently, the first time an incorrect passcode is entered, iPhone locks up for a minute. Two tries? Five minutes. Third try, 30 minutes. After
Before remodeling, consider these basic feng shui principles

By Elaine Dunn

While in a desperate attempt to “clean house” before Chinese New Year, an old book purchased decades ago revealed itself. It was as if it the gods were telling me that perhaps the house needs more than a mere “cleaning.” However, since remodeling is not in my stars at the moment, I figured leafing through an encyclopedia of feng shu wouldn’t hurt!

N o p e ,  m y  h o u s e  w i l l  n o t  b e...
Harvard admissions lawsuit could get summer trial

By Xu He, China Daily, March 21, 2018

A lawsuit that claims Harvard caps the number of Asian-Americans it admits could go to trial in Boston as early as this summer, CNN reported.

The lawsuit, filed by the advocacy group Students for Fair Admissions in 2014, is currently in late stages of discovery, with discovery and depositions scheduled for completion May 1. The lawsuit alleges Harvard discriminates against Asian-Americans in its admissions process.

Lawyers for both sides submitted a status report and proposed schedule March 9 in US District Court in Boston, according to a new filing in the case.

Harvard has asked a trial begin in July or August. SFFA wants a trial to begin no earlier than Oct 1, as it would need extra time to prepare for a trial of the size and scope anticipated.

SFFA has recently finished data analysis of about 200,000 Harvard undergraduate admissions files from a six-year period and have been trying to detect patterns that would support the group’s claim Asian-Americans are held to a higher standard than other applicants. Harvard lawyers noted they have not yet been able to complete analyses of the same set of admissions data.

From the start, Harvard has rejected the assertion that it sets Asian-American caps. Harvard spokeswoman Anna C Owenhoven emphasized the college’s goal of broad student diversity in a recent statement, also saying the university’s admissions practices consider the “whole person” - not only the applicants’ capacity for academic excellence, but also their ability to contribute to and learn from people profoundly different from themselves.

China’s top universities open elite math classes for high school students

By Xinhua, March 22, 2018

China’s Tsinghua and Peking universities have both announced they will select top students from senior high schools for their new elite math classes.

Peking University said on Tuesday that it will select 30 senior grade two students this year. Tsinghua University said it will select 30 senior grade two schools for their new elite math classes.

Universities have both announced they should exceed the enrollment level for college entrance exam and their scores for high school students.

In addition to the schools’ independent enrollment tests, the candidates must sit the national college entrance exam and their scores should exceed the enrollment level for China’s first-class universities.

Sun Zhaojun, deputy Party chief of the Mathematic Science Institute of Peking University, said most world-renown mathematicians achieved their major achievements at the ages between 18 and 40. Those who received the Fields Medal, an international medal for outstanding discoveries in mathematics, were all aged under 40.

Peking University hopes the elite math class can foster a group of Chinese mathematicians who will make international achievements.

Employment and economic development

continued from page 1

Canada was the largest national market, with sales of $1.1 billion (up 7 percent).

Other countries in the top 10 were China ($676 million, up 12 percent), Mexico ($574 million, up 1 percent), Japan ($375 million, up 37 percent), Germany ($259 million, up 44 percent), South Korea ($208 million, down 12 percent), Belgium ($167 million, up 1 percent), the United Kingdom ($152 million, down 11 percent), Singapore ($140 million, flat) and the Philippines ($122 million, up 12 percent).

Gains in exports of optic/medical products were led by Japan ($122 million, up 18 percent), Ireland ($70 million, up 52 percent) and Canada ($57 million, up 23 percent). The strongest performing segments were optical fibers ($160 million, up 40 percent) and artificial body parts ($120 million, up 33 percent).

The full 2017 fourth quarter export report and recap of the state’s exports in 2017 can be seen at DEED website, mn.gov/deed/date/export-stats/.

DEED is the state’s principal economic development agency, promoting business recruitment, expansion and retention, workforce development, international trade and community development. For more details about the agency and its services, visit mn.gov/deed/ or follow DEED on Twitter.
10 springtime foods to indulge your palate

By Li Wenrui, China Daily, March 14, 2018

Spring declares the great rejuvenation of nature from its wintry slumber. As the temperature picks up, animals and plants all start a new growth cycle - which offers the perfect window to nip the freshest ingredients to add some seasonal delights to your dining table.

Since the quick weather transition may leave your body vulnerable to diseases like the flu, spring is also high time for you to recover vitality and have a healthy kick-start to 2018!

1. Spring bamboo shoots Bamboo shoots are rich in various amino acids, vitamins and inorganic salts. Braising them with pork or shrimp brings out the best flavor of this seasonal delicacy.

2. Chinese yam Steamed, stir-fried or put into gruel, Chinese yam is always the key to a healthy meal.

3. Strawberries Fresh strawberries contain tannic acid, which is anti-toxic and are said to have cancer-fighting properties. In addition, strawberries are said to help protect your body from blood diseases.

4. Leeks Spring leeks are the most tender and delicious of the year. Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) says that eating this fragrant vegetable can strengthen the spleen and nourish the stomach.

5. Honey On dry and windy spring days, adding honey to your lemon tea creates an ideal detox drink. Have one spoon of honey every day and night, and keep the flu away.

6. Soybean sprouts Soybean sprouts are a perfect source for Vitamin B2 and dietary fiber.

7. Red dates Traditional Chinese medicine recommends more sweet and less sour foods during spring. Red date avoids drowsiness.

8. Duck Instead of mutton or beef, meats like duck, chicken and fish are said to be better suited for springtime. Enjoy some homemade duck soup or even better, go to a restaurant with friends and order a Peking duck!

9. Shepherd’s purse As an edible wild herb widely spread across China, shepherd’s purse is the signature of spring. According to TCM, it can fight against stomach cancer and improve gastrointestinal motility.

10. Turnip Turnip soup with pork rib, carrot and Chinese wolfberry helps to increase the appetite and nourish the blood.
The Great Leap Forward

By Pat Welsh, contributor

In 1957 Mao Zedong (毛泽东) initiated his Hundred Flowers Campaign (百花運動) designed to relieve tensions within the Party. It promoted free speech and criticism. To some extent he was surprised and taken aback by the criticism leveled at the party. In the end, however, it merely identified individuals who might be hostile to Mao’s next campaign, the Great Leap forward (大躍進).

By 1958, many of the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party realized that Russia’s Stalinist model of industrial development was not suited to China’s situation. There is general agreement among scholars of China that Mao sought to transform China from an agrarian-based economy into a socialist state by rapid industrialization and collectivization of agriculture. To support his argument Mao believed that an increase of agricultural production could finance both a rapid industrialization and an increase in the foreign trade needed to acquire more advanced technology needed for the achievement of his plan. Mao held to a romantic zeal and nationalism that could replace a citizen’s natural personal and economic motivations. While during Mao’s Yenan (延安) experience, zealotry did achieve a successful revolution, nonetheless it turned out to be a poor model for his plan to transform industrialization.

In most cases, a nation would use agricultural activities to finance the development of the light industries that would produce consumer goods. The availability of consumer goods in turn tended to motivate and gradually finance a gradual growth of heavier industries. While most of the Party hierarchy was inclined to use this model of development, Mao was not patient enough to follow this path.

In an attempt to change the situation, Mao persuaded his colleagues that the Party could undertake a program of making over the countryside through a massive organization of labor power. Mao theorized that what happened in Yenan before, revolutionary zeal and nationalism, could both replace material incentives. Revolutionary zeal, mass reorganization, massive application of manpower along with the decentralization of the bureaucracy should motivate the peasants to endure temporary sacrifices. Embedded in this romantic theory was the idea that clever organization of the peasants and city workers could increase their productivity. This included the unrealistic notion that the size of the population would be more effective in production than any basic economic factors.

This approach did have some successes in the areas of irrigation channels, damming up flowing waters, dike building, the development of water power and the reclamation of land. Towards his ends, Mao pushed through a plan for rapid collectivization of agriculture. Starting in 1949 the Party established mutual aid teams of five to 15 households. In 1953, these mutual aid teams were collapsed into elementary agricultural cooperatives of 20 to 40 households. These in turn were reorganized into higher cooperatives of as many as 300 households in 1956. Under the Great Leap Forward in 1958, private ownership was abolished and the peasantry now lived in state-owned cooperatives referred to as communes.

Eventually, resentment from the peasants appeared as the Party work teams forced long meetings that seemed to never end for the peasant farmer until he had agreed to join a commune. Also arousing peasant resentment was the Party’s insistence on abolishing religious institutions and beliefs. Efforts by the Party to replace these institutions with hour- and day-long propaganda sessions fell flat.

Adding to the peasant farmers’ misery was the progressive taxation and compulsory purchases of grain that had to be used by China to repay her debts to the Soviet Union. While grain production in 1958 did slightly improve in 1958, the lack of needed surpluses, bad weather and other factors saw a disaster the produced widespread famine and millions of deaths in the 1959 to 1962 period.

Very visible during the Great Leap Forward that ensued was the personality and the ego of Mao. His great strength in the pre-1949 era was his rebellion against the established order. This strength, however, proved to be his great weakness in the era of the post 1949 and Great Leap Forward
Dong brocade motifs

By Zeng Lixia and Bu Aihua, The Center for Hunan Cultural Heritage at Huaihua University, contributor

The Dong people, one of 55 officially recognized minority groups within China, originally lived in Guangxi Province in southern China. Nowadays, they have moved to Guizhou and Hunan provinces as well. They are an agrarian community and wore outfits made from home-spun cloth—the Dong brocade.

Colors of Dong brocade

There are plain brocade and colorful brocade. Each piece of plain brocade consists of only two colors, such as cyan with white, cyan with dark blue, or dark blue with white. In Dong culture, the white color represents honesty, cyan and blue represent simplicity, diligence and honesty. Dong women weave the two colors together to symbolize the great characteristics of the Dong people.

Colorful brocade, as its name suggests, comprises of beautiful bright colors, such as blue, green, rose red, purple, yellow, etc., which symbolize happiness, auspiciousness and wealth. Blue is often inflamed into the colorful brocade as accent color to achieve romantic and poetic moods.

Symbolism of motifs used

The values of Dong brocade lie in its impressive outer beauty as well as profound and rich inner culture. The motifs used in Dong brocade bear various meanings for the Dong people, like a vocabulary of color and form, rich with allusion to natural surroundings, Dong myths and ritual beliefs. The most common motifs are those of traditional, auspicious animals and plants in Dong culture: the stars, sun, moon, mountains, rivers, and some intricate geometrical patterns. Dong women have made the best use of these motifs, finely weaving, embroidering, stitching and appliquing them into Dong brocade, passing down beliefs and culture from generation to generation. Generally speaking, Dong women use generalized, abstract, exaggerated motifs, such as totems, geometric patterns. The geometric patterns may be the shapes of rhombus, rectangle, square, and round, among others. Frequently used animal and plant motifs are spider, fish, bird, horse, dragon, phoenix, octagonal flowers, plum flowers, cedars. These images are thought to bring blessings of happiness, health, prosperous life, or avoidance of harmful spirits.

Motif of herringbone

Dong legend has it that the Goddess Sa Man, mother of human beings, became incarnate as a spider. Another version of this story says the king of Yue Empire was defeated by his counterpart. The king was inspired by the spirits of spiders, never giving up weaving webs in the cave until the goal had been achieved, working harder and harder for years and finally succeeding in taking revenge. As descendants of the Yue Empire, the Dongs regarded spiders as a symbol of wisdom and ambition. Dong women like adopting the motif of spiders to make baby belly wraps and baby bibs in the hope that the Goddess Sa Man would protect their children, and to grow up healthy and happy, with the characteristics of perseverance, diligence and ambitious.

Motif of the fish

The ancestors of Dong people once lived by the lakes and seas and were fond of eating seafood, especially fish. They have been worshipping fish and using the fish motif in the Dong cloth for thousands of years for the blessings of prosperous life.

Motif of birds

Dong people believe that birds in the sky are their gods and goddesses. The most common motifs of birds are cranes, eagles, wild geese and phoenixes. These winged creatures are supposed to bring hope for a happy and peaceful life.

Motif of the horses

Although the Dongs are not able to raise horses like their ancestors once did because of their migration to the south of mountainous areas in China, they have maintained a continuity of traditional worship of the horse. They adopted the horse motif in brocade for blessings.

Motif of plants and flowers

Modern changes and challenges

In the past, the treasured heritage of Dong brocade in China was hidden in the depth of remote mountainous Dong areas and the Dongs struggled to make a living. The brocade was produced only for their daily use. Poverty, poor transportation and almost no connection with the outside world prevented Dong brocade products being used beyond the Dong community. Now, the treasure of the Dong handicrafts has caught the eyes of the people from the outside world. The products have gained much popularity among consumers at home and abroad in large Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Changsha, even in Russia and South Korea.

The Dong people are beginning to realize that the outside world is open to their handicrafts, which will help them reduce poverty and become better off. With further communication to the outside world, new ideas and materials have been introduced to Dong communities and have created an outside market for the sale of Dong brocade.
Brocade motifs

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Colorful wall-hangings—photo from tadao.com

Wait-hangings and purses—photo from tadao.com

Table runners and coasters—photo from tadao.com

Attendees in the training courses—photos from Jiang Liang

Dong women organized together to exchange and explore the weaving skills—photo from tadao.com

The opening ceremony of the national training program at Hua-hua University—photo from Xu Jiakui

Menu by artist Zhang Daqian sell for more than $1M

By Zhang Rainian in New York, China Daily USA, March 21, 2018

Work by a famous artist can command a very high price - even if it’s a stack of dinner menus.

A collection of handwritten menus by the prodigious Chinese guohua (traditionalist) painter Zhang Daqian was sold at Christie’s in New York on Tuesday for about $1.2 million. Zhang was a committed foodie who would meticulously handwrite menus for his private chef.

“Today Christie’s sold in our March New York auction of fine Chinese paintings all the menus handwritten by Zhang Daqian; the total price was more than eight times the combined low estimates,” said Elizabeth Hammer, head of sales for Chinese paintings at Christie’s.

“Today Christie’s sold in our March New York auction of fine Chinese paintings all the menus handwritten by Zhang Daqian; the total price was more than eight times the combined low estimates,” said Elizabeth Hammer, head of sales for Chinese paintings at Christie’s.

These listings of Zhang Daqian’s favorite dishes were given to Hsu Min-chi, who worked for Zhang as his private chef in Taiwan from 1977 to 1979,” Hammer said.

Zhang (1899-1983), born in Sichuan Province, was also an expert chef and “known to be a real gourmand,” said Jennifer Tang, specialist in Chinese paintings at Christie’s. “He loved food and loved painting food and considered cooking a form of fine art.

He was known to tell his disciples that it was impossible for a student who ‘does not appreciate cuisine to really understand art,’” said Tang. “He would write down exactly what dishes he wanted to eat that night and give it to his chef to create.”

Zhang often depicted humble fare such as mushrooms, carrots, asparagus, cabbage and persimmons.

“Zhang Daqian treated me like family, and we would eat together for almost every meal I cooked,” Hsu said in an interview with Christie’s. “Because Zhang was such a foodie himself, he was not shy about critiquing my final product and would make recommendations on how to improve each dish. He treated me like one of his elite art students and took time to teach me calligraphy.”

Hsu worked for Zhang as his private chef after the artist had moved to Taiwan from Brazil. Hsu had completed culinary training and was introduced to Zhang through a friend’s father, who was studying painting with him at the time. All of Zhang’s works on offer were sold at the auction, including his Bodhisattva, which commanded $588,500.
Impact of Chinese eliminating presidential term limits

By Nicholas Gordon, contributor

On March 11, delegates to China’s National People’s Congress voted to amend the country’s constitution to remove term limits on the President1. A few days later, on March 15th, National People’s Congress (NPC) unanimously elected President Xi Jinping to a second term in office2. Now, Xi is no longer limited to two five-year terms and can hold office past the end of his current and second terms in 2023. If Xi decides to hold office past that date, he will be the first leader since Mao Zedong to serve in the top leadership position longer than 10 years.

This amendment is the latest instance of the Chinese president garnering more personal authority for himself. Other amendments passed in the National People’s Congress embraced “Xi Jinping Thought” in the Constitution; the only other named school of thought is named after Mao.

With these moves, Xi and the Chinese Communist Party are moving away from the “collective leadership” model that had governed China since Deng Xiaoping’s reorganization of the government. Cary Huang, a columnist for the South China Morning Post noted that “In making constitutional changes to ensure his indefinite rule, China is morphing from one-party rule to one-man rule, backtracking to the Mao era. The development has in effect overturned the party’s most important political norms and rules regarding governance and power succession – rules that were agreed by post-Mao party leaders led by Deng.”

Included within these important “norms and rules” were defined term limits, orderly transfers of power, space for internal debate between policymakers within the Chinese Communist Party, a focus on “meritocracy” and a (post-Mao) concern about personal rule.

Recently, these norms have been cited in what has been described as “The Mao model”3: an alternate model of governance that, while still being a single-party authoritarian state, had enough internal checks and balances to prevent it from devolving into chaos or personal rule. The decision to remove term limits is a move away from this model. Whatever the internal balances were, they were not strong enough to prevent this kind of change. The decision did look like there was much disagreement within the Party: these changes were approved near-unanimously.

Thus, the idea that China presents an alternate model of good governance has been weakened, even if Xi never turns into the authoritarian dictator people fear.

From Hong Kong’s perspective, it is not immediately clear whether the amendment will have any direct effect on the city. It likely acts as more evidence of the Chinese government’s growing assertiveness and self-confidence, including towards Hong Kong. The question for Hong Kong is whether this decision affects Hong Kong’s political status: whether it slows or halts Hong Kong’s move towards democracy or, even worse, whether it portends a rollback of the city’s autonomous status.

Most expect that a more assertive China will lead to a “harder line” towards the city. South China Morning Post’s Senior Writer Alex Lo (whose views could perhaps be best described as conservative) argued around the announcement of the term limits decision that “the hard line taken by Beijing on Hong Kong will continue, and possibly even toughen. The city’s limited democratic system cannot be reformed any time soon. But at least we can aim to maintain the status quo and not give Beijing reasons to interfere.”

There are some worrying signs that Beijing is looking more closely at Hong Kong, such as encouraging Hong Kong’s government to disqualify pro-independence or “self-determination” politicians and the new obligation for the city to pass legislation punishing degradation of the national flag and anthem. As of now, none of these moves have sparked mass protest among Hong Kong’s population (unlike the proposed Article 23 legislation in 2004 or Occupy Central in 2014).

Recently, Hong Kong’s only member on the National People’s Congress Standing Committee suggested that people calling for an end to “one-party dictatorship” be disqualified if they chose to run for election. While many criticized the statement, commentator Alice Wu read the statement differently, writing that “abolishing presidential term limits means Beijing’s hardline policies on Hong Kong are here to stay, indefinitely, and may get tougher yet ... Beijing has gone from playing political flashpoints to taking advantage of radical political stunts as justification for assertiveness.”

Up to now, Hong Kong’s political and social system has been strong enough to resist any attempts by Beijing or the pro-Beijing lawyer for Wang in Hong Kong to change the status quo. Past attempts to make changes were often met with mass protests, at which point both the establishment and Beijing would back down. Will this pattern continue even as China becomes more assertive? Perhaps: Hong Kong’s institutions and civil society are no weaker now than they were in the protests of 2004, 2012 and 2014. The real test will be the next time a Beijing-supported legislative change by the Hong Kong government is met by mass protest. Will a more “assertive” Beijing still back down, deciding the effort is not worth the hassle? Or continue to push change?

2. “Xi Jinping is re-elected as China’s president,” CNBC, March 17, 2013
3. “President for life?” Xi risks repeat of China’s Mao-era mistakes,” South China Morning Post, March 11, 2018
5. “Too late to pocket first as Xi seeks to abolish term limits,” South China Morning Post, February 28, 2018
6. “Hong Kongers who lobby for end to ‘one-party dictatorship’ run risk of election disqualification, top Beijing delegate warns,” South China Morning Post, March 17, 2018
7. “Tam Yiu-chung has a point: Beijing’s Hong Kong policy will only get tougher,” South China Morning Post, March 25, 2018

Nicholas Gordon is a researcher and writer for a Hong Kong-based think tank and has written on Hong Kong issues for local and regional publications. The views expressed are his own.

Committee of 100 concerned about unfair prosecution of Chunzai Wang

[NORTH CHINA] — In another example of the harsh treatment of Chinese Americans, United States District Judge Cecilia Altonaga recently criticized the federal government for pursuing prosecuting Chunzai Wang, Judge Altonaga, who presided over the case involving Wang, said “[m]y only regret . . . is that I have to adjudicate Mr. Wang.” The judge, whose court is located in Miami, Florida, holds a lifetime appointment from President George W. Bush, confirmed by the United States Senate.

Accepting a plea deal in which Wang, a naturalized citizen of the United States, was sentenced to one night in jail, which he served while being held prior to the case starting, the judge added, “given the nature of Mr. Wang’s contributions to an area that is at the forefront of our daily review of news, climate change, given the nature of the research he conducts and – and the information he supplies and how valuable it is to all of us, certainly he made certain mistakes here, but it’s regrettable that it could not have been taken care of, I think, by some type of pretrial diversion so that he would not be an adjudicated felon.”

She added that the prosecutors had issued a request to the judge for a “modest fee per diem for mentoring students and helping them with their research.”

In the American system of checks and balances, the judge expressed concern about due process, equal protection, and fairness. At a time of prejudice toward Chinese Americans, even those who have served the interests of the United States, officials such as Judge Altonaga are crucial to protect our principles. Like Wenyi Lee, Sherry Chen, and Professor Xiaoxing Xi, Wang has been subjected to unfair treatment. He has had a benefit of a judge taking unusual measures to explain the situation.

His predicament also shows the importance of being aware of all of the rules governing the American workplace, some of which can be technical in nature.

The lawyer for Wang, Peter Zeidenberg, has stated, “Dr. Wang was unfairly targeted and victimized by his own government, a fact recognized by the judge in his case.”

Zeidenberg added that the United States government’s campaign against Chinese-American scientists.

In a letter to the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Zeidenberg added that the prosecutors had issued a press release with unproven allegations presented as if they were established facts. He commented, “There can be only one hope to issue a false and misleading press release: not satisfied with making Dr. Wang unemployed in the U.S., the government now seeks to vindictively impact his job by forcing the independent judgement of all Americans who believe in the rule of law that the Department of Justice violated its own policies to smear Dr. Wang in order to extract an extra-judicial penalty in a case that the Court believed should never have been brought.” Zeidenberg, who successfully represented Chen and Xi, has defended against many unfair prosecutions being conducted against Chinese immigrants and Chinese Americans.

The Committee of 100 reiterates its support for protection of our national security and commitment to civil rights. The United States is harmed, not helped, by turning away and rejecting people who can make it more competitive. These cases are damaging the lives of people who are innocent and people who are being punished even when others who have done worse are not.

The Committee of 100 (C100) is a non-profit leadership organization of prominent Chinese Americans in business, government, academia, and the arts. Founded by world renowned architect I.M. Pei and internationally acclaimed cellist Yo-Yo Ma, among others, it is an institution for U.S. citizens of Chinese heritage to join by invitation based on their extraordinary achievements. For over 25 years, C100 has served as a preeminent organization committed to the twin missions of promoting full and equal participation of all Chinese Americans in all aspects of American life, and encouraging constructive relations between the peoples of the United States and Greater China.
Parallel Universes: law, business, and the arts

By John Loscheider and Chang Wang, contributors

Loscheider: Why is the book titled “Parallel Universes”?Wang: For the past few decades, I traveled between different time zones and parallel worlds: from East Asia to North America, to Western Europe. I believe I inhabit simultaneously in parallel universes: law, business, and the arts. Born in Mao’s China, trained as an artist in Beijing’s cultural renaissance, studied law and admitted into law practice in the U.S., I have first-hand experience in 1984 style alternative reality and have also witnessed unprecedented challenges to the universal values and common sense.

Loscheider: Who is the intended audience of this book?Wang: The book is dedicated to all Chinese Americans, but the book is for anybody who is interested in U.S.-China relations, comparative law, art and politics.

Loscheider: I think one of the articles I found most intriguing was “Truth and Lies” by John Loscheider and Chang Wang: “Beyond deception in Beyond deception in Beyond deception in...*April 2018 / PAGE 11
China Center hosts 17th annual Bob and Kim Griffin Building U.S.–China Bridges Lecture

By Greg Hugh

Memorial Hall at the McNamara Alumni Center at the University of Minnesota was the setting for the 17th Annual Bob and Kim Griffin Building U.S.–China Bridges Lecture. Presenting the keynote presentation, “China in the New Era: What Lies Ahead? Mega Shifts in China and Strategic Implications,” was Haiyan Wang, managing partner of the Minnesota China Center, host of the talk, held a reception for invited guests to meet Wang.

Her lecture covered a lot of material and Wang delivered. Her lecture included many slides that showed graphically the points she continued on page 13
37th International Film Festival includes many films from China

The 2018 Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival (MSPIFF) brings bold, exciting and moving works by emerging and veteran filmmakers to the Twin Cities April 12-28, 2018, presenting 250+ new films from more than 70 countries.

MSPIFF, one of the longest-running film festivals in the country and the largest film event in the Midwest, draws an attendance of 50,000 annually. This year, MSPIFF expands to include select screenings at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, in addition to screenings at its hub at the St. Anthony Main Theatre, the Capri Theater, the Uptown Theatre, Metropolitan State University’s Film Space in St. Paul and the Marcus Weidenberg 14 Theater in Rochester.

This year’s unique slate of award-winning, critically acclaimed international films include many feature and short films from or about China.

Ticket prices are $14 General Public, $11 Film Society Members, and $8 Youth under 25 and Students w/ID.

Feature Films from China

Angels Wear White follows the aftermath of an assault of two young girls and the sole witness: Xiaomi, a motel cleaner who witnesses a district commissioner force his way into the girls’ room. Afterward, Xiaomi attempts to fight for justice, even as surrounding society would rather look the other way. Program: Asian Frontiers, Women & Film. Directed by Cathy Yan. China. 2018. Chinese (Mandarin) w/English subtitles. 130 min. Documentary Feature.

Dead Pigs Good fortune and wealth, elements associated with the pigs in the Chinese zodiac, are potentially thrown out the window when an epidemic wipes out the swine population. With pig corpses drifting in the nearby river, a cast of characters in the surrounding city deals with the present. Program: Asian Frontiers, Women & Film Directed by Cathy Yan. China. 2018. Chinese (Mandarin) w/English subtitles. 130 min. Documentary Feature.

Dragony Eyes Reality sneaks a new fiction in artist Xu Bing’s directorial debut. Blurring the lines between the real and surreal, the film pulls off an impressive feat; transforming 10,000 hours of surveillance footage into 81 minutes of a new narrative that centers on a woman called Qing Ting, or “Dragony.” Program: Frame Forward, Emerging Filmmaker Award. Directed by Xu Bing. China. 2017. Chinese (Mandarin) w/English subtitles. 81 min. Narrative Feature.


Arh (Ten years ago, detective Chen hangs on as the driver takes shocking steps of measures for his love. A heart-racing, dynamic 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to managing the University of Minnesota’s and businesses who provide support to help fund the China Center’s work since 2015 had increased, stated Wang, as China replaced Japan and illustrated how per capita incomes of the U.S., China and India will develop from 2016-2025. China needs to be concerned about its “moderately prosperous society in all aspects” and how to handle a declining labor force, resolve structural imbalance, control systemic risks and non-conforming loans. Wang noted that China will continue to change between 2018 and 2030, and that may affect companies in every industry worldwide. She provided an inside-out and outside-in look at major shifts – demographic, social, economic, political and geopolitical – and their strategic implications.

Harson moderated a lively question-and-answer session after Wang’s presentation. The discussion included how China might respond to tariff actions from the United States, how U.S. firms can preserve their intellectual property and autonomy when doing business in China, and the role of alliances and networks in preserving harmony in the world order.

Wang was then presented the Griffin Plaque by Meredith McDaid, associate vice president and Dean of International Programs at the University of Minnesota.

The Griffin Lecture Series was created from an endowment from Bob and Kim Griffin. The substantial gift reflects their commitment to promoting the mutual respect between the two cultures and their passion for connecting with the people of China. The China Center was established in 1979 to manage the University of Minnesota’s exchanges with the greater China area. For more than three decades, the China Center has reflected the firm and long-standing commitment of the Grifﬁns to international research, teaching and outreach. The China Center appreciates individuals, organizations and businesses who provide support to help build bridges between China and the U.S. Visit www.chinacentral.umn.edu to ﬁnd out more about China Center.
Global Minnesota’s Year of China upcoming events

Culture Through Cuisine: China
Monday, April 30; 6 p.m., Tea House Restaurant, Minneapolis

Get ready for a delicious evening and dine on a custom menu of Meizhou fried rice, pan-fried pork buns, kung pao tofu, scallion sole, soy sauce duck, Chung King spicy chicken, sweetened sesame balls, and more! Chef and co-owner Yolanda Wang will talk about Tea House’s history, unique flavor, and nod to the regional tastes of China.

$30 for Global Minnesota members; $40 for nonmembers
Registration includes dinner, non-alcoholic beverages, tax, and gratuity. Advance registration required.

Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society says bon voyage to Peanuts statues as they head to Changsha

By Greg Hugh

The bon voyage party for the Peanuts statues was a bittersweet occasion for supporters of the Saint Paul-Changsha Friendship garden. As many of you know, the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society (MCFGS) agreed to the exchange of sister-city gifts between the City of Saint Paul and City of Changsha, Hunan Province, China, a sister-city relationship that was established in 1985 by then mayor or George Latimer. The MCFGS, on behalf of the City of Saint Paul, is presenting a sister-city gift to Changsha a set of five statues of Peanuts characters to be installed at Yangsha Wetlands Park, the “sister park” to Phalen Regional Park since 2015. This gift has cultural significance and symbolizes Saint Paul. Charles Schulz, creator of the Peanuts characters, is Saint Paul’s famous son. The city has hundreds of Peanuts statues throughout as a tribute to Schulz.

Volunteers needed for Festival of Nations

CAAM, Chinese America Association of Minnesota, will sponsor a food booth and a cultural booth at the Festival of Nations (www.festivalofnations.com) May 3-6, 2018, at the Xcel Center in downtown Saint Paul. Volunteers for various shifts are needed.

Questions? Contact connie-melledford@gmail.com or call 612-804-8208.
Chinese American Association of Minnesota (CAAM) celebrates 50th anniversary

By Greg Hugh

Members of the Minnesota Hmong and Chinese communities along with many city and state government representatives recently attended a special unveiling ceremony for Nkauj Hmong Lucy as guests of the Hmong Cultural Plaza Advisory (CAAM) was observing its 50th anniversary. Actually, CAAM decided to make it a triple-header by celebrating the CAAM Chinese Language School’s 40th and the CAAM Chinese Dance Theater’s 25th anniversaries.

CAAM is the oldest and largest Chinese American community organization in Minnesota. Tracing its history to the Chinese American Club gatherings at Nankin Café (a downtown Minneapolis landmark for over 80 years, which closed in 1999) dating back to the 1930s. CAAM was founded by Nankin Café’s owner Walter James in 1951. It incorporated with his help in 1967 and this was the starting point of CAAM.

CAAM is a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization. Its mission is to provide cultural, educational, recreational, and other programs to promote the cultural heritage and enhance the quality of life of Chinese Americans in Minnesota. This mission is being carried out through CAAM’s community service programs and by its CAAM-Chinese Language School and its CAAM-Chinese Dance Theater.

On display throughout the event center were posters created by Charles Lee, former CAAM president (1982), that illustrated the chronological development of CAAM and highlighted many milestone events that CAAM was involved in throughout the years. Some of the posters highlighted the CAAM’s Chinese Arch that was part of the 1970 Minneapolis Aquatennial; Festival of Nations participation, which first began in 1973; Circle of 88 charity meals (started in 1997 to serve the poor and homeless at Dorothy Day Center); Dragon Festival as well as many social service events, scholarships, concerts and other cultural and historic events.

Since this celebration was scheduled as a luncheon, guests were free to view the posters during the social hour prior to the program and lunch that was catered by Peking Garden. Lauren Moy entertained the guests during the social hour with the guitar, followed by the lion dance performed by the Ha Family Entertainment and Lion Dance Troupe.

Bingwen Yan, CAAM president, welcomed the gathering with opening remarks and introduced Yanzhu Wu, CAAM-CDT president and Hun Zan Tao, CAAM-CLS president.

Consul General Hong Lei from the Chinese Consulate General in Chicago was then introduced as one of the lead donor and having the cooperation of the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department. Each of the speakers acknowledged their joy in seeing the garden take root and that such a diverse group of people are making it happen. Tchou (founder of Chinese Heritage Foundation) was also acknowledged for being the largest contributor in this first phase of the project. The only glitch so far in getting these statues to China is the fact that a 20 percent tax may be assessed by China.

Some of the posters highlighted the important pavilions in China, the Hmong Culture Wall Scupture, which will represent the historical connection between the Hmong in Minnesota and the Hmong in the Chargsha area, the ancestral home of the Hmong community, and a site for a future cultural gift from the Hmong in Chargsha. Subsequent phases will include a Hmong Cultural Plaza and a Lakeside Pavilion with covered walkway and an arched bridge. Phalen Park is now home to the “Meditation” sculpture, created by internationally famous Changsha Master stone carver Lei Xixin, who also carved the Martin Luther King Jr. Stone of Hope Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The China Friendship Garden is a multimillion dollar project of which Phase 1 is now complete. Soon the Peanut statues will be on their way to China, so if you ever want to see them in person, you will need to visit them at the Yangha Wetlands Park in Chargsha, China. For current information on the China Friendship Garden project, visit www.mncchinagarden.org.
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keynote speaker. Lei talked about China’s One Belt One Road initiative. Next to speak was Minnesota Senator Foung Hawj who spoke about “How to build a better community.” Kaimay Yuen Terry, former CAAM president (1999-2000), followed with her comments about CAAM’s remarkable journey, which pretty much mirrored the posters that were on display throughout the hall. The last item on the program was awarding the CAAM-Stanley Chong Scholarships to three students, Nur Azalea Hassanadin, Isabeau Hill and Lauren Moy.

Dancers from CAAM Chinese Dance Theater entertained during lunch with performances of “Blossoms in the Rain,” “The Peacock Dance” and “The Fern Leaf Bamboo in the Moonlight.”

For more information on CAAM, visit www.caam.org. Please consider volunteering.

Former CAAM presidents