

# The art of Chinese tea comes to Broadway



Yin Na and Mark Celletti of Tea Artist.

R.J. Marx

## SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



Chinese tea culture rose in the Tang dynasty in the seventh century and spread to Japan, Korea and throughout Asia.

For Yin Na and Mark Celletti, tea is their passion. The couple are opening Tea Artist in the city's historic Gilbert District, serving teas, baked items, puddings, fruit drinks and ice cream.

Na, a certified tea art specialist and university professor from Chongqing, China, calls the venture "a dream come true."

"She's been an art and calligraphy student, and she has a master's and now a doctorate in Chinese art history," Celletti said. "And tea studies are a part of that."

Drinking tea is not simply to quench thirst, but is artistic, a way to appreciate the realm of aesthetics," Na writes in her book, "Tea Art of China," which was edited and designed by Celletti.

People have come from all around the world to take her weeklong course in China, Celletti said, including a variety of tea tours through provinces. "For some teas, you must walk to the land where they grow, and personally see," she said. "You will understand it if you experience it in person."

She also has a Chinese government certification. "If you want to serve tea, you have to pass the test," Na said.

Na and Celletti met through their passion for tea during Na's visits to the Pacific Northwest to lecture and share her knowledge of teas. They married in China in 2018.

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"People are really fascinated by what she has to share and have a great fascination with Chinese culture and she's a great ambassador for the Chinese culture," Celletti said.

Seeking to establish their own store, they scouted locations, looking from Bellingham, Washington, south to the California coast. They landed in Seaside in January, a city where Celletti has long vacationed. "This was always my childhood fantasy place when I was young," he said.

Like Celletti, Na fell in love with Seaside, describing it as a "city of stories."

Tea Artist is designed to be a fun place, Na said, decorated with an ocean theme using silk wall prints.

Drinks will be prepared using a blend of Western and Chinese methods, Celletti said.

Na advises visitors to create their own style, using fruit, flavorings and different kinds of teas.

"My experience associated with tea taught me a lot," Na writes in her book. "These experiences are not just a look, a dip and a drink. These outward observations are ultimately for inward reflection — in order to find the most authentic self and the most beautiful thing in my heart."

Tea Artist, at 737 Broadway, is set to debut in May.

"We can't wait to open," Celletti said. "People have been walking by every day and asking when we're going to open. There's a real buzz in the community."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Kudos for wellness center

Kudos to Seaside's Community Wellness Center aka Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District, where there is indeed something for everybody.

COVID-19 compliant, the board, administration and staff have created a safe environment inclusive of activities covering the life span. Silver and Fit benefits, youth sports and playgrounds, a skate park are all available. It is heartening to see a community invested in public health.

**Patti and Tom Smith Gearhart**

create healthy, resilient and economically vibrant communities": This is social equity and a goal of the SEPRD board.

Reelect us and reject those who don't grasp the benefits and very high quality of our programs, especially our Sunset Pool.

As a special district, SEPRD has been on this path for decades striving to achieve equity with a balance of cost recovery and inclusion providing broad community benefits. We continue to engage with everyone as we expand community access with expanded indoor recreation, our scholarship programs and sensible cost recovery.

We want to serve those "who can't see over the fences." We will tirelessly advocate for those who cannot do so. SEPRD has grown to be more than a pool.

The acquisition of the Sunset Recreation Center prioritizes increases for youth and adult sports for

broader community benefit, visitors, too. We continue to have charrettes with stakeholders to focus on the highest best use = of the campus.

SEPRD used a governmental flex-lease to purchase the campus without any new taxes. It is manageable debt within a carefully crafted budget. We've saved our residents about \$14 million and will generate millions in revenue that feed our local economy.

SEPRD has laid the cornerstone for the next generation of SEPRD users and wellness partners. We've secured the indoor gyms and classrooms to provide preschool and child-care venues that are safe; the highest priority of the District.

Unfortunately, Patrick Duhachek, my opponent, has aligned himself with a vicious misinformation campaign. Apparently he doesn't understand our mission or our community values, though he sits on

our budget committee and voted to approve our budget this fiscal year. He belittles our strong financial position and tax rate established in 1969.

SEPRD brings equity and inclusion every day to our underserved families and youth. Build our future. Please reelect the current Board: progressforSEPRD.com. Join our Facebook page.

Thank you.

**Michael Hinton  
SEPRD Board  
Vice-President**

### Will work to improve district

I'm John Huismann and you've read my writing many times before if you read letters to the editor.

I'm writing today to let you know I am running for the board of directors of Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District in the May 18 election. You know I've been a vocal critic of

SEPRD. Well, I'm not just a critic, I'm also willing to step up on behalf of my community and work hard to make things better there.

I'm joined by four like-minded people who are also very disappointed with the way the current board has discharged their responsibility to care for SEPRD. We are all running under the banner "It's time for a change." My fellow candidates are Jackie Evans, Stephen Morrison, Patrick Duhachek and Al Hernandez. We all have different life experiences and bring different skill sets to the table. The great thing is that we all spend some time together each week and have grown to like and respect each other in the process.

So, what's the latest at SEPRD? In the due diligence process, prior to buying Broadway Middle School, they learned the school is contaminated by asbestos, black mold and lead paint. They did not

immediately remove the child care that they have been running there for three years. They actually put more kids at risk by moving their preschool to BMS!

There are no statements by any engineering firm stating it is safe to occupy the building given the contaminants found there. Have all parents been provided this information so they can make a safe choice for their children? If not, I believe this could raise large liability issues for SEPRD going forward. I have to wonder if their insurance carrier is aware they are using a contaminated building for child care.

Given what I'm seeing I have to ask: Are you satisfied with the job the current board of SEPRD is doing? I'm not and that's why I'm here asking for your vote! Please also vote for those running with me. We will work for you!

**John Huismann  
Seaside**

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

**MONDAY, APRIL 26**

**Seaside City Council**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway and livestream on YouTube; cityof-seaside.us.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 27**

**Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors**, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A.

**TUESDAY, MAY 4**

**Seaside Planning Commission**, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 5**

**Seaside Urban Renewal Budget meeting**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

**THURSDAY, MAY 6**

**Gearhart City Council**, 5 p.m., public hearing, state revenue sharing, cityofgearhart.com.

**MONDAY, MAY 10**

**Seaside City Council**, 7 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

**TUESDAY, MAY 18**

**Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board of Directors**, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A.

**Seaside School District**,

6 p.m., www.seaside.k12.or.us/meetings.

**Gearhart Small Business Committee**, 6 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 19**

**Gearhart Parks Master Plan**

**Citizens Advisory Committee**, 5:30 p.m., work session, cityof-gearhart.com.

**MONDAY, MAY 24**

**Seaside City Council**, 7 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

**Seaside Planning Commission**, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

**SEASIDE Signal**

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