

Malibu East *Dialogue*

February 2012

Your Communication and Information Resource

Conserving water can benefit your pocketbook

By Maria Damp

Water conservation is something few of us think about at Malibu East. Since we don't get the bill directly, we're not aware of the cost and quantity of our consumption.

Did you know that the building pays the city of Chicago about \$140,000 per year for water and sewer? Each unit consumes huge quantities of water, so saving at home should be everyone's business as more than \$20 for water and sewer is included in the average unit's monthly assessment. In addition to saving money on Malibu East's water and sewer bill (and, in turn, our assessments), water conservation helps prevent water pollution in our surrounding lakes and waterways.

Here are some tips to help Malibu East conserve water and save money:

1. Check faucets and pipes for leaks. A small drip from a worn faucet washer can waste 20 gallons of water per day. Larger leaks can waste hundreds of gallons.
2. Don't use the toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket. Every time you flush a cigarette butt, facial tissue or other

small bit of trash, potable water is squandered. Newer toilets waste 1.1 to 1.6 gallons of water, and the original Malibu East toilets need almost four gallons.

3. Check your toilets for leaks. First, put a little food coloring in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl within 30 minutes, you have a leak that should be repaired immediately. For new installations, buy "low-flush" toilets, which use one to two gallons per flush instead of the usual three to four gallons. By installing low-flush toilets, you can cut indoor water use by about 30%.
4. Insulate your water pipes - it's easy and inexpensive with pre-slit foam pipe insulation. You'll get hot water faster, plus avoid wasting water while it heats up.
5. Install water-saving showerheads. Water-efficient showerheads help reduce water consumption by up to 40% and are easy to install.
6. Take shorter showers. One way to cut down on water use is to turn off the shower after soaping up and then turn it back on to rinse. A four-minute shower uses approximately 20 to 40 gallons of water.
7. Rinse your razor in the sink after filling the sink with a few inches of warm water. This will rinse your razor just as well as running water, with far less waste of water.
8. When you are washing your hands, don't let the water run while you lather.
9. Turn off the water after you wet your toothbrush. There is no need to keep the water running while brushing your teeth. Just wet your brush and fill a glass for mouth rinsing.
10. Keep a bottle of drinking water in the fridge. Running tap water to cool it off for drinking water is wasteful. Store drinking water in the fridge in a safe

drinking bottle

11. Don't let the faucet run while you clean vegetables. Just rinse them in a stoppered sink or a pan of clean water. Use a dual-setting aerator.
12. Use your dishwasher only for full loads. Automatic dishwashers should be fully loaded for optimum water conservation. Most makers of dishwashing soap recommend not pre-rinsing dishes. Today's detergents are designed to attack food particles, so if dishes are rinsed clean, the detergent may abrade glassware instead. Just scrape dishes of food scraps instead of rinsing.
13. Do use the dishwasher instead of hand-washing dishes. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, using an Energy Star qualified dishwasher instead of hand-washing dishes saves you nearly 5,000 gallons of water a year.
14. When buying new appliances, select those that offer cycle and load-size adjustments. They're more water- and energy-efficient.
15. Help your houseplants! When you give your pet fresh water, don't throw the old water down the drain - use it to water your houseplants. If you accidentally drop ice cubes when filling your glass from the freezer, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in a houseplant instead.

Each of these steps helps Malibu East, and our city, save the world's most precious resource. Please try incorporating one of these water-saving techniques in your unit today. If we each promote water conservation today, we'll see savings tomorrow!

Malibu East events and meetings

Life/Fire Safety Presentation

Saturday, February 11

9:30 a.m. - Windjammer Room

Dialogue staff meeting

Wednesday, February 15

7:30 p.m. - Community Room

Thursday afternoon discussion

Thursday, February 16

2:00 p.m. - Community Room

(every 3rd Thursday of the month)

Board of Directors meeting

Tuesday, February 28

7:30 p.m. - Windjammer Room

Leave event and meeting notices at the desk for the *Dialogue*.

Our condolences to the family and friends of Mary Ann Miranda Mead



Board meeting notes

By Neil Warner

Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012

Attendance: 11 board members, 2 management representatives and 8 residents

Excused: Kim O'Neal

Presiding: President Marcel Molins

REVISIONS TO AGENDA

- 1) "Real estate tax" added to Items Requiring Immediate Board Action.
- 2) "Mail room carpeting" added to Items Requiring Immediate Board Action.
- 3) "Garage membrane" added to Items Requiring Immediate Board Action.
- 4) "MECA website" added to Items Requiring Immediate Board Action.
- 5) "Delinquencies" added to Items Requiring Future Board Action.
- 6) "Atrium lighting" added to Items Requiring Future Board Action.
- 7) "Constellation Energy" added to Items Requiring Future Board Action.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Neil Warner

1) Financial statement

Balance on hand, cash and reserves
\$2,537,566.59

2) Delinquencies

Approx. \$264,900

3) Holiday fund

Employees' holiday party will be moved to earlier date in December.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1) Social - Sandy Chaet

Exercise/belly dance class begins Feb. 9, each Thursday for five weeks. Cost: \$50. Speaker from Chicago Fire Department will talk about fire safety at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 11 in the Windjammer Room.

2) Garage - Martina Molins

Board will study the possible elimination of tandem parking, which would leave only valet parking and self-parking. Such a change would require reconfiguration of the garage.

Standard Parking report as of Dec. 31 - Alex Diakoumis, Mgr.

Claims

Approved:	2
Denied:	3
Pending:	0
Total:	5

Waiting lists

Single self-park:	4
Tandem self-park:	0
Second car:	0

Monthly parkers

Single:	145
Tandem:	9
Valet:	268
Preferred:	1
Tandem/valet:	4
Engineer:	NC
Total:	427

Garage capacity

Single	152
--------	-----

Tandem:	40
Valet stalls:	298
Valet aisles:	20
Motorcycles:	3
Total:	513
(Under capacity)	86

Changes

New monthlies:	7
Cancellations:	4
Upgrades:	0

3) Sports & Entertainment - Neil Warner

A new yoga class will begin Mar. 5.

4) Communications - Tom Vaughan

Dialogue continues to publish monthly eight-page issues.

MANAGEMENT REPORT - Janet Hope

Items requiring immediate board action

1) Directors and officers insurance renewal

Travelers' quote approved for one year of coverage, a 10% increase over 2011 premium and approx. 5% over budget.

2) Captain's Walk insurance reimbursement

Association was reimbursed for electrical breakdown claim of \$46,895, less \$5,000 deductible.

3) Life safety upgrades

Tabled motion to select vendor for life safety project, pending the receipt of quotes for possible additional installations. Board authorized management to submit requested status report to Chicago Dept. of Buildings regarding compliance with life safety ordinance.

4) Filing cabinets

Authorized management to purchase additional file cabinets.

5) Real-estate tax

No action taken on proposal from prospective real-estate tax attorney.

6) Mail room carpeting

Approved motion to purchase new carpeting for mail room.

7) Garage membrane

Garage membrane will be installed this winter in area that is no longer under warranty.

8) Malibu East website

Board authorized the transfer of the MalibuEast.org domain name to Malibu East Condominium. Board unanimously approved a motion thanking Larry Rosen for his many years of service maintaining and updating the Malibu East website without remuneration.

Items requiring future board action

1) Laundry contract

Special committee is investigating our options for new washers and dryers in preparation for the expiration of the cur-

Please keep in mind that the meeting notes are not the official record of the Malibu East Condominium Board of Directors meetings. The official minutes are generally approved during the next meeting and may be viewed or copied in the management office.

rent contract. Committee may also recommend new flooring and lighting.

2) Delinquencies

Board will consider options for removing access to some amenities by delinquent owners.

3) Atrium lighting

Board is considering various overhead lighting options for atrium.

4) Constellation Energy

Board authorized the Executive Committee to lock in 50% of our electrical usage cost for the next two years at a fixed rate that it deems favorable.

Items not requiring board action

- 1) None

RATIFICATION OF ACTION TAKEN DURING CLOSED SESSION

- 1) None

NEW BUSINESS

- 1) Board approved hiring an Illinois company to serve as registered agent for Malibu East Condominium at a minimal cost.
- 2) Board fined an owner for allowing a tenant to move into the building without complying with the admissions procedures, and it suspended the tenant's parking privileges until the fine was paid.
- 3) Board will revoke a resident's self-parking privileges if the police report indicates the resident caused an accident in the garage.

NON-AGENDA INFORMATION

1) Unit sales and leases

40F \$146,000 exercised

The meeting ended at 9:55 p.m. and went into closed session.

Special owners' meeting notes

Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012

Attendance: 11 board members, 2 management representative and approx. 25 residents

Presiding: President Marcel Molins

The regular Board meeting was preceded by a special owners' meeting to discuss one agenda item:

1) Approval of the sale of unit 12E

Owners voted unanimously to approve the sale of unit 12E at a price of \$195,000. Malibu East owned the unit for nine months and made a profit of approx. \$47,000 after deducting the real-estate sales commission, the cost of improvements and repairs, and assorted carrying costs.

Go for Jin Thai - it's worth it!

By Tracy Poyser

Did Edgewater really need another BYOB Thai restaurant? Of course we did - when it has the quality, ambiance and deliciousness of **Jin Thai Cuisine** at the southwest corner of Catalpa and Broadway, where it replaced Panda Panda last June 17. It's a true family venture: Chai Roongseang, the father, is the general manager. His wife, Jintana, cooks and lent her nickname to the restaurant; their 26-year-old daughter designed the space; and their 24-year-old son helped with the financing.



I had scoped out the place from the outside a few times and was attracted by its colorful corner sign and the sleek, inviting interior look - and in January, the *Dialogue's* own Neil Warner, his wife, Debbie, and I finally made it there. It's small with eight or so nicely sized tables, generously spaced and conversation-friendly. The décor is simple and tasteful, including a charcoal gray side wall featuring a projection TV where classic Thai movies and dance performances (with subtitles, no sound) are screened - a fascinating and novel idea.



Jin's extensive menu has a bunch of selections for lovers of bright Southeast Asian flavors and dishes that stray from the norm, as well as your usual Thai staples such as *pad Thai*. There are unfamiliar Thai specialties: Angel Wings, an appetizer of minced chicken, vegetables and cellophane noodles stuffed in deboned chicken wings, then steamed, battered, and deep-fried, or savory *kanom buang*, a thin, crisp crêpe stuffed with shrimp, tofu, dried coconut and

(Continued on page 8)



What's happening around the building

By Janet E. Hope, Malibu East Manager

Assessments are due the first of the month. The Management Office cannot accept assessment payments.

Fire safety: In light of recent events, Social Committee chairperson Sandy Chaet has scheduled a presentation by the Chicago Fire Department on life safety and fire prevention to be held on Saturday morning, Feb. 11. Please take note of the fliers that will be posted and plan to attend this important informational session. It may save your life.

As a basic rule, in the event of a fire, NEVER use the elevators. If you need to leave your unit because of fire or smoke, close but do not lock the door, and exit to the stairwell. If you are inside your unit and trapped by fire, call 911 to tell them your location. Keep your door closed and place damp towels at its base to prevent smoke from entering. As a general rule of thumb, if the fire is elsewhere in the building and not directly affecting you, stay in your unit with the door closed unless directed by the Fire Department or building staff to leave. This is a concrete building, and the likelihood of fire spreading from one unit to another is fairly slim. Again, call 911 and notify them of your location. Try not to call the front desk unless you are reporting the fire, as this would be used as the command center in the event of a fire, and the staff will be unable to answer the phones.

Storage lockers: There are numerous lockers being used by people who weren't assigned those specific lockers. In an attempt to correctly document the lockers, I sent out a registration form a couple of months ago, and less than half of the units returned it to me. If you did not complete a resident registration form, please stop by or call the office to obtain one. It is vital that the records be accurately updated. I plan to start cleaning out unregistered lockers later this year. Please don't let yours be one of them, simply because you didn't verify its registration!

Bicycle storage room: Please be

advised that in early spring, when the weather warms up a little, the building's staff is planning on cleaning out the bike room, power-washing and repainting it. When this project is undertaken, all unregistered bicycles will be removed. If you haven't registered your bike, please contact the Management Office to do so. If you have an old bike in the room and would like to dispose of it, please contact us, and we will arrange for it to be donated to charity.

Learn about bed bugs

Chicago ranks No. 4 nationally among the cities with the most reports of bed bug infestations, according to ASCO, the Association of Sheridan Condominium/Co-op Owners. To combat this danger to public health, ASCO is sponsoring a seminar on bed bug prevention at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 16, at Park Tower Condominium Association, 5415 N. Sheridan Road.

The theme of the program is "An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth Thousands of Dollars of Cure." The program will begin with a presentation by Tim Patriccio, the manager of Park Tower, who will share his association's experiences. Following Patriccio will be a presentation by ASCO general counsel Michael C. Kim and his associate, Elliott G. Schencker, on this growing field of condominium law. Concluding the evening will be a demonstration by Scout, a bed bug-sniffing dog from the Aegis Bed Bug Detection Service, and an opportunity for attendees to see live bed bugs (in a jar).

The seminar is open to residents of ASCO member buildings, including Malibu East. Free indoor parking will be provided by the Park Tower Condominium Association.



Community Calendar

By Betty Mayian

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

BROADWAY ARMORY

Indoor park, six gym floors, trapeze classes, senior activities, athletic equipment, meeting room, computer center, dancing floor, shuffleboard, weights, arts and crafts, aerobics, ping pong, after-school activities and more.

5917 N. Broadway

312-742-7502

tinyurl.com/27YYYN

EDGEWATER BRANCH LIBRARY

Library building is closed during construction. A bookmobile is now available in the Broadway Armory parking lot:

Tue-Thu: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., 2 - 6 p.m.

Fri-Sat: 9 a.m. - noon, 1 - 5 p.m.

(closed on Sundays and Mondays)

tinyurl.com/5L55TL

EDGEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"Edgewater Grocery Stores 1886-today"

Regular museum hours:

Saturday and Sunday 1-4 p.m.

5358 N. Ashland Ave.

773-506-4849

www.EdgewaterHistory.org

WHITE CRANE WELLNESS CENTER

Adult day wellness programs for persons 60 and over. Gentle yoga, tai chi, music, exercise, lunch and snacks. Transportation provided within boundary area.

1355 W. Foster Ave.

773-271-9001

whitecranewellness.org

THEATER/SHOWINGS

LIFELINE THEATRE

"Hunger"

During the 900-day Nazi siege of Leningrad, a Russian botanist is charged with protecting valuable seeds.

Feb. 3 thru Mar. 25

6912 N. Glenwood

773-761-4477

lifelinetheatre.com

PEGASUS PLAYERS THEATRE

"Heat Wave"

In 1995, more people died in Chicago (739) than the combined deaths in Hurricane Katrina. This play exposes it and answers some questions about it.

Feb. 21 thru Apr. 6

1145 W. Wilson

773-878-9761

pegasusplayers.org

RAVEN THEATRE

"Dating Walter Dante"

A dark and delicious comedy about why a woman is dating a man whose previous two marriages had dangerous endings.

Feb. 7 thru Mar. 24

6157 N. Clark

773-338-2177

raventheatre.com

STEEP THEATRE

"Love and Money"

Humorous and harrowing example of materialism and its effect on love.

Thru Feb. 28

1111 W. Berwyn

866-811-4111

www.steeptheatre.com

Hear legislative candidates

Two of the leading candidates in the Democratic primary for 14th District state representative will be speaking at the ASCO (Association of Sheridan Condominium/Co-op Owners) annual meeting March 1.

Incumbent Kelly Cassidy and challenger Paula Basta will give introductory remarks, answer identical questions prepared by a committee, and then answer questions from the audience.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, at Shoreline Towers, 6301 N. Sheridan Road. Free parking inside the building will be provided, and the meeting is open to all residents of ASCO member buildings, including Malibu East.

2011-12 Board of Directors

Marcel Molins, President

Richard Strauss, 1st Vice President

Thomas Vaughan, 2nd Vice

President

Neil Warner, Treasurer

Kim O'Neal, Assistant Treasurer

Marcia Fishman, Secretary

Carl Stahlheber, Assistant Secretary

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Allan Eckardt, Director

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Dear Readers:



I have received many complaints about the happenings in the bulk rooms of the various floors and decided to address them in one response.

Some complain that owners (or tenants) are not careful where they place papers in the bulk rooms, so that papers are strewn all over the floor. This is a hazard for others coming into the room to deposit their recyclables. Paper on cement floors is slippery. It also creates enough of a mess that others do not know where to deposit their paper and other items. One complainant disclosed that she spent time stacking the papers in neat piles so that no one would slip and fall. Since Waste Management uses single-stream processing, all recyclables, including newspapers, can be placed in the large bins inside each bulk room. Waste Management separates the items at its recycling facility.

Another resident complained about food being left in the plastic recyclables and also about items having a bad odor, such as cat litter, being placed in the room without first being thoroughly wrapped and sealed. Food left in containers in the bulk room could cause a problem with insects or bad odors, so recyclable items should be emptied of food and rinsed.

I can only hope that the owners and tenants read the Dialogue and see themselves in the complaints. Mostly, people in this building are careful about their premises and like to know that they are clean and orderly. The same should hold true for the bulk rooms. They should be kept clean and orderly so that they don't present a hazard for residents or a headache for the janitors who have to empty them.

If you have questions about our recycling program, read Beth Robinson's article on page 4 of the January 2012 issue, which is available at www.MalibuEast.org/dialogue or go to the Waste Management website:

wmchicago.com/RecyclingServices.html and look under "Recyclable Materials."

Signed, Etta Kitt

'Town Crier' announcements

by Rodica Ilc



We welcome all new residents to our building, including:

If you have information concerning talented or famous Malibu East residents, please contact the Dialogue.

Balcony Man by Scott Virzi



THE ADVENTURES OF BALCONY MAN BY Scott Virzi

AT THE BOARD Meeting. ANY QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR RESIDENTS TONIGHT?

UUMM? WELL I A...?

MEANWHILE (...AND PEOPLE PARK illegally blocking THE PEDESTRIAN AND GARAGE ENTRANCES.

WOW! LOOK AT THAT!

WHAT, I DON'T SEE A THING. THIS IS A JOB FOR BALCONY MAN

COME WITH ME MAM.

So TELL ME DON'T YOU THINK THAT WOULD BE A GREAT IDEA FOR THE BUILDING. WELL I DON'T KNOW IT MIGHT...

Yeow! ZIP!

AND Soon.

BOARD OFFICERS AND FLOOR CAPTAINS ATTENDANCE IS FULL.

Remember to ATTEND BOARD Meetings. Lets get INVOLVED AND Do OUR GRIPING WHERE IT WILL COUNT. THE END.

East African safari

By David Kelley

In the summer of 1964 I landed my dream job. A large educational publisher based in New York was sending me to Lagos, Nigeria, to cover West Africa as a pioneer salesman. My job was to call on potential customers in a territory ranging from Zaire to Senegal, seeking business from universities, private international schools and government ministries.

Lagos was not a pretty city. In fact, it was smelly, dirty, crowded, unsafe and expensive. Because of this, the large expatriate community banded together and led a very active social life. Each American employee who worked for the U.S. government had his own government flat and domestic help. There were dinner parties during the week and nonstop, outdoor cocktail parties on the weekends. Life was good.

During all this socializing I met and became friends with a tall, attractive blonde from New York City who was employed in the U.S. Embassy. Her name was Margaret. She worked as the secretary to the commercial attaché.

In December 1965, Margaret met two

American pilots who owned a small air charter company using an old DC-4. They flew tourists to places in East Africa where they could connect with tours to the great game reserves in that region.

She had always wanted to go on a safari and decided to see if other expatriates would be interested. She advertised via the embassy newsletter. Seventy-five people sent in their deposit, and a contract was signed. We flew nonstop on Dec. 23, 1965, to Nairobi. The flight was uneventful.

After spending the night at a hotel in downtown Nairobi, 10 of us boarded a van and traveled to the largest game reserve in Kenya. We saw herds of elephants, antelope, wildebeests, impala and giraffes. It was a nice beginning. At midday we drove through a pride of lions in our Land Rover. They were dozing and didn't even glance at us. Our last stop was at the Ngorongoro Crater where thousands of flamingos live.

Our next stop was at a resort named "Tree Tops." This lodge was built on stilts near a very large watering hole. In midafternoon we were served "high tea," which consisted of fresh scones with strawberry jam and clotted cream, and English tea. We were standing around on a

balcony overlooking the pond when suddenly a group of baboons arrived. I think they expected us to share the scones. One of the bold ones approached Margaret in a demanding way. She jumped back and yelled at him to go away. Rather than backing off, he became more aggressive and lunged at the scone in her hand. At this point some of the servers came out and drove the brazen baboons away. By the way, Queen Elizabeth was visiting "Tree Tops" in 1953 when notified that King George had died and she was now queen.

We then settled down for the main event. As the sun began to set, we saw something moving toward the water. It was a herd of elephants! They stood in the water and began to drink and drink and drink until you could see the water level drop. As the elephants were finishing, the next group of drinkers arrived. It was the big cats.

It appeared the animals waited in line by species for their turn to drink. First, the elephants, then the big cats, then the zebras, wildebeests and impala. All were well-behaved and proper. About this time something long like a fire hose dropped from the rear of the bull elephants, and

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East African safari
(Continued from page 6)

almost on cue, all the bulls began to urinate. You could see the water (?) level rising. The other animals continued drinking as though nothing had happened.

Our next destination was Mount Kilimanjaro. We drove through Masai territory. They are a primitive African tribe whose economy is based on cattle herding. It was midafternoon, and everyone was dozing when suddenly there was a loud thump and the van pulled off the road.

We had run over a Masai herdsman who had been standing too close to the highway. Everyone was upset and concerned we get help for the man. Except the driver. He had the co-driver take the women and go to the nearest town and notify the police. The men and driver remained behind. When the police arrived two hours later, the Masai was dead. Our driver had made no attempt to help the man. When I asked why, he explained that two weeks earlier the Masai had killed one of his fellow Italians in an accident, and

this incident was a kind of payback.

After a short time the police allowed us to continue to our last stop, which was a large game reserve in Tanzania. We saw hippos in the river, a leopard in a tree with his kill and huge numbers of monkeys. I'll never forget the time we were driving down a dusty road when suddenly a large elephant appeared 50 yards in front of us. The driver slammed on the brakes and told us to be quiet. He could tell the elephant was agitated because the elephant's ears stuck straight out, and he was trumpeting and stomping his feet. We slowly backed up until he was out of sight, and then we returned to the lodge for our last night on tour.

The next day we returned to Nairobi for our return flight. After several hours in the air, our pilot notified us we were low on gas and would have to make an emergency stop in Mali. The officials at the small airport weren't happy to see us since the country was in the middle of a coup! Armed soldiers came on board and took our passports. After money passed hands, barrels of gasoline were rolled out and we refueled, using hand pumps.

We were about 200 miles from Lagos when one of the two engines stopped! The pilots told us to fasten our seat belts. We continued flying at about 300-400 feet above the treetops. The ground looked pretty close. I responded by falling asleep until we landed in Kaduna, Nigeria. We changed planes there and finished our trip without incident. The DC-4 was decertified and never flew again.

But Margaret wasn't grounded. We were married five months later in Lagos. During the past 43 years we have lived in Asia, visited Europe and traveled extensively. But nothing has ever provided the fantastic experiences and excitement of the "East African safari."

Editor's note: *The Dialogue would like to publish other articles recounting interesting or unusual experiences by Malibu East residents. You can write your own article and email it to the Dialogue at Dialogue@MalibuEast.org or you can notify the Dialogue and we'll assign a staff writer to interview you and then write your story. The Dialogue reserves the right to edit and/or condense articles and to decide which stories to publish.*

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Dialogue reprints

Back issues of the *Dialogue* (from 2000 to the present) are available on the Malibu East website for viewing or printing.

MalibuEast.org/dialogue



Jin Thai Cuisine

(Continued from page 3)

bean sprouts. Fans of *tom yum* can go for the spicy, sweet and sour broth of Sukothai noodle soup packed with ground pork, green beans, peanuts and rice noodles. Hot curry catfish features a blanket of fried basil leaves, with green-and-white Thai eggplants in curry sauce below.

For a *pad Thai* alternative that satisfies with similar comfort-food simplicity, there are *gai-kua* noodles, which are broad rice noodles stir-fried with either chicken or tofu and egg on a bed of green leaves, served with a side of siracha, a Thai hot sauce.

It took the three of us a long time to select what we thought would be nice menu choices ranging from the more sedate to the adventurous, and decided on easy-to-share items. For appetizers, we opted for chive dumplings – two large, pillowy-soft steamed vegetable dumplings (you can also get them fried), quartered and filled with chopped chives and a sweet and sour chili soy sauce; *moo ping*, six scrumptious skewers of marinated grilled pork with an amazing tamarind chili sauce that had a nice kick to it; and an order of *shumai* consisting of eight delicious, small steamed dumplings filled with minced shrimp and vegetable, this time with a more traditional soy sauce. My personal favorite was the *moo ping*; Neil concurred, primarily because of the distinctive sauce, although he liked all three appetizers.



I always think that a true test of a good chef is impeccably cooked duck breast – and Jin didn't disappoint! My pick for our shared main courses was *duck bahmee*, Chinese-style egg noodles tossed with bok choy and a nicely flavored soy-based light sauce and topped with a generous portion of perfectly seasoned, crisp-skinned duck

breast – not greasy and super tender with just a touch of pink inside. Delicious! More spicy, but equally delicious, was Neil's pick of *pad ped talai*, a mix of shrimp, squid, mussels and tilapia stir-fried with garlic, chili, green peppers, chunks of Thai eggplant, green beans, herbs and basil leaves. A complex and addictive marvel that packed quite a punch without being overpoweringly spicy! Debbie's choice of *rama* (steamed spinach and broccoli mixed with tofu and a mild curry peanut sauce) was fresh and delicious but more ordinary-tasting in our joint judgment. We mopped up any extra sauces with an order of grilled roti bread, just enough for the three of us. Entrees come with white Jasmine rice, but for an extra \$1 you can substitute brown rice.

Our portions were just the right size, but we sure didn't have room to test three desserts after all that – so we shared a soothing order of warm chunks of banana in sweet coconut milk with sesame. Not super-exciting, but refreshing! They also offer Thai custard, banana wonton, roti ice cream and, in season, mango and sticky rice.

Prices are a touch higher than ordinary Thai storefront joints but on par with Indie Café or Summer in our



neighborhood. We thought the quality of the preparation, the freshness of the ingredients and the exceptional taste of several of the sauces were worth the extra couple of bucks. Service may be a bit slow at the start (it took awhile for us to get our water and menus after getting seated), but we were very happy after that with the personal attention and pacing of the meal. Jin makes you feel like family – and they also do takeout and delivery (will need to try that next!).

Jin Thai Cuisine

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Monday-Thursday: 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Friday-Saturday: 11 a.m.-10:30 p.m.

Sunday: 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m.

www.JinThaiCuisine.com

The Dialogue

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