

## Wellesley celebrates Chinese New Year



Chinese New Year delicacies wait to be uncovered and enjoyed at the Morton Circle Community Room, January 27, by Chinese residents and guests greeting The Year of the Rooster with music and feasting.



Wellesley's celebration of Chinese New Year included a party at the Morton Circle Community Center on Friday, January 27, the first day of the week-long holiday. On most Fridays, local Chinese meet to sing, socialize and play ping-pong, but this was a special concert to welcome The Year of the Rooster.

It was also a feast of Chinese New Year delicacies, with drinks and paper goods contributed by guests from Wellesley Neighbors

(WN), a local organization for seniors. They included Barbara Offenhartz and Janet King, who regularly play recorder and piano with the singers. Many local Chinese are studying English as a Second Language (ESL), and Barbara sees the Friday gatherings as "not only fun, but a kind of ESL through music."

She explains that a few WN musicians began performing at Morton Circle a few years ago. The programs were for all residents of subsidized housing, but Chinese residents, led by Lehe Wang, were especially interested. "They soon drew us into their own music," Barbara says. "But this is the first program to be entirely Chinese, and it was quite wonderful!" Lehe's husband Zehu Xu took many photographs.

Other WN guests were Penny Post, who has performed as a storyteller at Morton Circle, and Janet Giele, founding WN president. Another contributor to the festivities was Karen Mondell of Wellesley Friendly Aid, who had the aging piano tuned. WFA coordinates many activities for town residents of subsidized housing.

The "all Chinese" program actually included "Auld Lang Syne," sung in English. Its tune is well known in China as a love song, so everyone could hum along. The New Year's party was well attended, but a few Friday regulars were away, greeting The Year of the Rooster with family in China.



Chinese singers, with accompanists and guests, performed Auld Lang Syne in English in an otherwise all-Chinese concert on January 27 at The Morton Circle Community Room.