On Friday, March 29, Neighbors gathered to celebrate Spring Traditions around the world. We enjoyed interesting stories about colorful Japanese customs and tried delicious dishes presented by our members Aki Kashiwagi, Satoko Sakurai, Aya Amo and Midori Iso. Zarrin Foster, Vice-President of Harvard Neighbors did an elaborate presentation on Nowruz, the Persian New Year’s celebration. The guests tried Easter crest buns and sweets, and learned about the roots of the holiday which pre-date Christian times, from our Art Exploration Interest Group Leader and Cultural Traditions Leader, Marsha Knoll. We also heard about Bulgarian and Ukrainian traditions, and tasted homemade goods and desserts.

In Early March, a new dining venue called The Heights, opened at the top of the Smith Campus Center. The restaurant offers dishes that are daily prepared by the executive chef Joseph B. Santos and his team from homemade ingredients and locally grown produce. During lunchtime, guests can either place their order to go or dine-in and enjoy the spectacular views. The Heights is open to Harvard affiliates and their guests and set amidst sweeping views of the campus and the campus.

Lace up your running shoes and join the Harvard community for a University-wide 5K! This untimed 5-kilometer fun run will do three loops around historic Harvard Yard and the northern Law School campus. Harvard students, faculty, and staff, along with their friends and families are welcome to participate. Registration, refreshments, and activities will be held on the Plaza.

Kitty Pechet, one of Art Explorations Interest Group’s Leaders and renowned local artist will lead an Introduction to Calligraphy Class on Thursday, April 11 from 5:30pm to 8pm. Kitty will show you the basic calligraphy alphabet and teach you beginner techniques you can use to practice making letter forms. You’ll learn about the tools and materials every calligrapher needs, and how to hold and use the pen, starting with simple strokes. At the end of the class you’ll be able to write letters you love, play space games with them using the broad-nib pen and learn some simple calligraphy rules to enjoy a visual harmony. This class is full to capacity! Due to the high interest, we will add another date very soon!
Today we offer you a recipe provided by our longtime member and Interest Group Leader, Marsha Knoll. Her Raspberry Shortbread was an instant hit at the Celtic Night event recently!

**RASPBERRY SHORTBREADS**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 cup (= 2 sticks) butter, softened at room temperature (I use Kate’s Sea-salted butter)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg yolk (no white) (I use Country Hen eggs, size Large)
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 cups sifted all-purpose flour (I use King Arthur, unbleached)

**Topping:**
- 3/4 cup raspberry jam, seedless. (Smuckers or Tiptree brands are good—be sure to use jam, not jelly)
- approx. 1/2 cup chopped pecans

**Method:**
- Preheat oven to 350°F
- Cream together sugar and butter and beat until smooth.
- Add the egg yolk and almond extract, and continue beating until fluffy.
- Add flour, half at a time, and mix until combined. Mixture will become very stiff.
- Spread evenly in an ungreased 10x15 jelly roll pan (i.e. baking pan with 1/2” high sides). Dough is difficult to spread, but keep pushing and spreading and smoothing evenly with spatula until it reaches all corners of the pan. Dough will be slightly less than 1/4” thick. If you use a smaller pan (e.g., 9x13 inches, dough will be thicker and more puffy, and take longer to bake.
- Bake without the topping about 10 to 15 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. The middle may still be puffy and soft. If you use a larger pan like a 9x13 (no white) (I use Country Hen eggs, size Large)

- Heat seedless jam in saucepan on stovetop at medium heat, stirring until the lumps are smoothed out and jam is able to be poured.
- Let the partially baked shortbread cool about 10 minutes before adding the jam, but don’t let shortbread cool completely.
- Spoon jam gently over baked shortbread and carefully spread to edges of pan.
- Sprinkle chopped pecans over jam to leave some of jam showing through for color.
- Return pan to oven for another 5 to 10 minutes to set the jam and help it dry out. This will also toast the pecans for nice flavor, and finish the baking of the shortbread.
- Immediately when it comes out of oven, make cuts into the shortbread to mark 1 inch pieces (or larger if you prefer). I use a serrated knife and cut about halfway to bottom of cookie—but do not remove them from pan yet—they need to cool completely to become strong enough to handle. The ‘score’ cuts will allow the shortbread cookies to keep their shape and not crumble when you fully cut them apart later.
- Store between layers of waxed paper in a container with an air-tight lid.

**Art in Bloom at Museum of Fine Arts**

Celebrate the return of spring with **Art in Bloom**, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston’s annual festival of fine art and flowers! Enjoy art from across the MFA’s collection paired with magnificent floral interpretations. Art in Bloom begins with a public preview on Friday, April 26 from 3-10 pm and continues through Monday, April 29. On Sunday, April 28, enjoy children’s activities during a special Art in Bloom Community Day. Daily events include tours of arrangements throughout the galleries; flower-arranging demonstrations; light bites in the Art in Bloom Café and outdoor walking tours. Returning this year is the MFA Art in Bloom Market featuring a curated assortment of one-of-a-kind, handmade items from selected vendors. The MFA Associates’ Garden Cart will offer unique gifts and treasures. Visitors can purchase fresh flowers by visiting the Fivefork Farms Flower Cart located outside the Huntington Avenue entrance.

**Cambridge Science Festival**

Every April the MIT Museum presents the Cambridge Science Festival in collaboration with the City of Cambridge, community organizations, schools, universities, and businesses. Come to the Museum and enjoy a week filled with workshops, hands-on activities, demonstrations, tours and more. Visit the festival website for more information on programming across the city, and the MIT Museum website for programs at the Museum.

**Weekend Ideas**

**Art in Bloom at Museum of Fine Arts**

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**Around Harvard**

In the week leading up to the **Boston Marathon** on Monday, April 15th, the Martin Richard Foundation will be holding a collection drive in support of items needed for the Spring Service Day on May 19th. This non-profit foundation was started by the family of Martin Richard, the 8-year old boy who was killed in the Boston Marathon bombing in 2013, to provide opportunities for young people to “learn, grow, and lead through volunteerism and community engagement. They are teaming up with the **Wonderfund** to create “Emergency Hero Kits” for children who enter DCF foster care often with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The organization will be collecting night lights, earbud headphones, and small stuffed animals to be sorted on Spring Service Day that will then be delivered directly to a DCF Office. **Harvard Neighbors** is happy to host a box for donations in our meeting room at 17, Quincy Street, Cambridge the week of April 15! Thank you for considering a contribution in making the lives of these children a little more comfortable.

**Harvard Neighbors**

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