

The Familiar "Shanghai Morning" is Coming Back

By Gao Liang & Wang Wenlue

Due to the pandemic control requirements, Shanghai citizens stayed at home for over two months, saying goodbye to many ordinary breakfast food items such as steamed buns with stuffing, fried dough sticks, pan-fried buns stuffed with pork... How they missed them! With the city-wide lockdown lifted in June, life is returning to normal and people couldn't wait to resume their old breakfast habits.

In the morning, everywhere you can see people eating or buying their favourite items for breakfast. The familiar "Shanghai morning" is back.

At 7:30 in the morning, Ms. Li, a local, came to a store selling steamed stuffed buns. She took out her phone and scanned the venue code of the store, and then walked to the end of the line and started queuing.

Two store assistants there were busy serving the customers while constantly reminding those in the queue to scan the code. "I always come here to buy breakfast. This store enjoys good business. You see, I came a little late today, so queuing line got very long," said Ms. Li.

The most popular buns of the shop are meat-stuffed ones and those stuffed with bean paste. They are selling at the same prices as before the lockdown, 3.5 yuan for each meat-stuffed bun and 3 yuan for bean paste-stuffed bun. Ms. Zhang is also a frequent customer of this store. "My daughter likes the buns here very much. She missed the taste very much during the lockdown. Now that it's open, she often comes here. In addition to the taste, the hygiene is

also good."

There is a wonton store across the street from the bun store. Many people come to the store to buy a few boxes of handmade wontons and go back home to cook them. In the kitchen, a chef was busy making wontons. Even so, each customer had to wait a few minutes before getting what they ordered because there were so many waiting in the line. Mr. Liu, a customer of the store, before leaving, told the reporter that he loved handmade wontons very much and bought his favourite kinds of wontons this morning for himself and also bought some for his neighbor.

The reporter noticed that in addition to wontons, the store also sells dim sum. But on the shelves, there were only a few kinds on display. According to Mr. Feng, the clerk here, only half of the items on the menu are currently available, mostly handmade wontons, plus a few kinds of pastries, and other semi-finished products are not available yet, mainly because the factory supply wasn't fully restored and part of the employees were not back to work yet. But in the past few days, there was a big rise in the number of customers. Mr. Feng believed once the supply problem is gone and all the staff come back, the store will see much better business.

Mr. Yu runs a breakfast restaurant on Anshan Road, specializing in pan-fried buns stuffed with pork, fried meat dumplings, and steamed buns with beef stuffing, etc. A few days ago, Mr. Yu put up a promotion message in front of the store, which reads "4 pan-fried buns stuffed with pork or fried meat dumplings for only



Photo by Wang Xiuyuan

5.5 yuan, and if you buy 8 of them, you can get another 4 for free; steamed buns stuffed with beef for 3.5 yuan each, or 10 yuan for 3."

The pandemic has undoubtedly been a shock to street shops. After businesses re-open, store operators tried their best to save themselves and overcome the difficulties.

"At present, the turnover of my store is about 50% of that before the pandemic. This promotion is not only a giving back to old customers, but also a stimulus to business," said Mr. Yu, who also told the reporter that he faces pressure from rising rent and

raw materials costs. For example, he used to buy a bag of flour (50 pounds) for 100 yuan, but now the price is 130 yuan, and the price of soybean oil also rose a lot. However, he sells his pan-fried buns stuffed with pork and fried meat dumplings at the same prices as before. "I have been running the store here for more than 10 years. As long as my products are good and I don't raise the prices, I will get more repeat customers. I hope to achieve small profits but quick turnover," Mr. Yu said.

On Anshan Road, there are many operators who are in similar situation

as Mr. Yu, and they are exploring new ways to improve business operation. Some want to add online channels to improve sales, and some want to launch promotional activities to attract customers. Mr. Ding, owner of a breakfast restaurant selling pancakes and deep-fried dough sticks, told the reporter that they have been running stores here for many years, and the store owners and customers are like old friends and neighbors to each other. He believed all the current difficulties would be overcome by store owners and customers supporting each other.

10 Billion Yuan Available for Loans to Enterprises

By Mao Xinhui

The Financial Office of Yangpu District recently launched a program that will organize 16 commercial banks in the district to set aside 10 billion yuan for loans to key enterprises affected by COVID-19 in the district to help them resume production and operation.

It is reported that under this program, eligible enterprises can get a loan of up to 20 million yuan at a cost 30 basis points lower than LPR30. So far, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Agricultural Bank of China, Bank of China, China Construction Bank and Bank of Communications have joined the program.

"In the past 20-plus years, financial institutions are an important force which Yangpu District has relied on for transformation and development," said Li Changyi, Director of the Yangpu District Financial Office. He hopes that the commercial banks will help small, medium and micro enterprises overcome liquidity difficulties and help with the resumption

of work and production as well as economic and social development in the district through measures such as offering preferential interest rates, increasing credit support, negotiating loan renewals, and adjusting repayment plans.

Since 1 April, the District Financial Office has guided financial institutions and organizations in the district to increase the issuance of inclusive small and micro loans, and refrain from tightening credit aid to enterprises in financial difficulty due to the pandemic.

At the same time, the District Financial Office, together with relevant departments of the Yangpu District government, Shanghai Stock Exchange, some commercial banks, securities companies and other market participants, held 3 online financial service events to share financial assistance policies and inclusive financial products with more than 200 participating companies.

As of the end of May, major commercial banks in Yangpu District had renewed loans and adjusted re-

payment plans for 176 small and medium-sized enterprises, involving 2.452 billion in loans.

In response to the new financing needs of small and medium-sized enterprises and enterprises involved in COVID control, people's livelihood security, etc., the District Financial Office has collected more than 90 types of financial products from commercial banks in the district to form a financial products package with standardized core product elements such as entry threshold, loan scale, and interest rate. The package is promoted on the WeChat public account "Shanghai Yangpu" so that enterprises can quickly find suitable banks and products according to their own needs.

At the same time, for loans obtained by enterprises through the guarantee by the Municipal Small and Medium Enterprise Policy-based Financing Guarantee Fund Management Center during the pandemic period, a subsidy up to 100,000 yuan will be given to each of those loan-receiving enterprises.

All Blood Donation Sites Opened in District

By Mao Xinhui

June 14 marks the 19th "World Blood Donor Day". In the morning, Wu Yilun, a student from Shanghai Institute of Technology, rushed to Yangpu District Xiangyin Blood Donation Site for the purpose of donating platelets. Staff stamped the limited edition seal of "Great Sage Sun Wukong" on his blood donation certificate.

Until June 30, citizens joining in voluntary blood donation at blood donation sites of Shanghai Blood Center could get the seal of "Great Sage Sun Wukong" stamped on blood donation certificate. "I saw on the Internet that Shanghai Blood Center launched the limited edition seal activities of Great Sage Sun." Xiao Wu said that he lived nearby, and while devoting love, he can also collect his favorite cartoon characters. As introduced, on June 1 Children's Day, Shanghai Blood Center and Shanghai Animation Film Studio had a "dream connection", and launched short film of blood do-

nation science Hot-blooded Wukong. On June 14, officials further rolled out the limited seal activities beyond that.

The reporter learned from District Health Promotion Center that all blood donation sites had been opened throughout the district since June 14. In order to optimize blood donation process and prevent crowd gathering, the sites encourage online reservation and off-peak blood donation. In the next step, the center intends to provide door-to-door free blood donation service for residential areas and entities where 15+ people join in blood donation at a time, together with blood collection and supply agencies and sub-districts in the jurisdictional area, and hold corresponding blood donation activities by involving voluntary blood donation vehicles; convenient onsite squad blood collection service is available for entities with 50+ blood donors in the jurisdictional area. Each blood donation activity is controlled within 2 hours, thus ensuring no gathering on site.