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Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month celebration will focus on promoting wellness rooted in Asian practices

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(Courtesy of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Coalition)

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The Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Coalition will showcase Asian culture, wellness and food in its annual Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month celebration Saturday at the Spokane Valley Library.

“We like to gather as a community and celebrate our diversity, but at the same time, we want to share it with the community,” said Jacqueline Babol, president of the Spokane Valley-based coalition.

The public is invited to learn about Eastern medicine and holistic health from keynote speakers Megan Matulis and Rho Zaragoza, who practice acupuncture, and Lisa Ma, who will discuss qigong energy healing. Attendees can also experience interactive demonstrations of kendo and tai chi martial arts, as well as power yoga, and enjoy performances by the Spokane Chinese Dancers, Indian Youth Club of Spokane and the Filipino American Northwest Association.

Babol, who is Filipina, said they will also honor the 11 dead and dozens injured after a car plowed through a crowd at a festival celebrating Filipino heritage Saturday in Vancouver, B.C. She said they will recognize them through prayer and/or a moment of silence.

Babol said they are “saddened” by the tragedy.

“We are praying for a safe environment with celebrating cultural diversity and community, and sharing the traditions and practices interactively with people,” she said.

Hyun Schroeder will share how to make kimbap, a popular Korean dish that Babol described as the Korean version of sushi.

Babol said Spokane Valley Mayor Pam Haley will read a proclamation. A Hawaiian food truck will offer food for purchase.

The coalition has hosted the annual event since the organization started in 2022, but Babol and others started gathering, eating and dancing unofficially in 2020, she said.

“This celebration shines a spotlight on the rich traditions of Asian Pacific cultures that have long valued holistic health, community connection, and personal well-being,” the coalition said in a news release. “At a time when wellness is more important than ever, learning from centuries-old practices like acupuncture, Qi Gong, Tai Chi, and martial arts offers people new tools for physical, mental, and emotional health.”


The celebration runs noon to 4 p.m. at the library, 22 N. Herald Road.

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